



SPARC

Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers

Annual Report

2019-20



Contents



SPARC

Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers. SPARC is a registered NGO as of 13 December 1984 and has 25 years of experience till date in mobilizing the urban poor to gain access to basic facilities.



NSDF & MM

SPARC began its work with Mumbai's pavement dwellers and in 1986 tied up with the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF), a broad-based organization of the urban poor founded in the mid-1970s.



In partnership, SPARC and NSDF formed another community-based organization, the Mahila Milan (MM) (a decentralized network of poor women's collectives).



SSNS

Set up in 1998, SSNS undertakes/manages construction projects with the partnership of organized informal dwellers for affordable housing and sanitation.

PROCESS

S NO	Contents	Page No
1.	Creating statistics about yourself	6
2.	Linking manually created data with advancing technology	7
3.	Savings and Loans and the Federation model	8
4.	Exchanges: Learning from seeing	9
5.	Peer to Peer learning	10-11

Practice

S NO	Contents	Page No
6.	Housing	12
7.	Incremental Upgrading	13
8.	Relocation and Resettlement	14
9.	Relocation and infrastructure investments	15
	The burdens of relocation	
10.	The case of relocated households from Sabarmati riverfront	16
11.	Impact of R&R housing on households	17
12.	Dealing with the Covid crisis	18-19
13.	Sanitation	20
14.	Swacch Bharat	21
15.	Research Projects	22-23
16.	City News	24-25

Reflections

S NO	Contents	Page No
17.	Advocacy and events which were critical milestones	26
18.	SDI and the Alliance	26-27
19.	Events and Workshops	28-29
20.	Publications	30-31
21.	Looking Back Looking Forward	32-33



Reflections from the Director

From April to December 2019, activities occurred in what now seems a routine way. Little did we know that by mid February 2020 the news of Covid, that seemed distant when its outbreak in Wuhan, China was reported would change our lives and our work across the world in unimaginable ways. It has engulfed and drowned what we did before and it will definably influence what happens from now onwards.

Mumbai the location of the largest federation presence continues to be the hardest hit, and informal habitats across the city produced wave after wave of cases resulting in lock downs when no one was prepared and became logistical nightmares for local, state and national government institutions which seemed to be at odds with each other and sent confusing advice and regulations to the people. Instead of the state institutions being an overarching, caring and trustworthy presence in times of crisis, almost all in the city, but definitely the poor felt abandoned, abused and alone.

As if that was not enough, as crucial evidence we can see that the complete exclusion of and insensitivity to the poor living in informality by the global institution, the World Health Organization (WHO), demonstrated the complete marginalization and invisibility of the billion plus people living in dense small spaces with no water and inadequate sanitation. Imagine telling slum dwellers “wash your hands and sanitize them, maintain two feet distance between you and others, don't worry about masks... no, no, wear masks”.

Nobody is looking at the reality that the world turned more that 50% urban a decade ago, state and national governments and global institutions seemed to prefer to live in a world where development investments in rural areas would reverse migration. We have seen this before in the climate change space, in national government allocations for addressing poverty, health care and welfare and so on and so on.

We saw the health allocations at national and state levels in urban areas while being dismal, were not even used, that the investment of fresh borrowings by the government (over 3 million USD) went to ICUs and ventilators, but did not go towards comprehensive testing and primary health care or good quality quarantine facilities. More hungry households were fed by citizen networks and NGOs while food grain rotted in the Food

Corporation of India godowns. This litany of failures demonstrated clearly the outcomes of long term dismissal by the nation to care for the poor in urban areas, as a result of which there were no set systems in place of how the state institutions responded to this crisis.

Clearly all of us respond to crisis with behavior patterns that kick in for survival - leaders of Mahila Milan and NSDF with SPARC staff, all in lock down, using phones and internet, began by setting up groups to undertake three sets of communications.

First to start with, was the precautions to be taken, how to keep hands clean and away from eyes nose and mouth; how to make masks at home; how to address the households with no food at home; when to seek treatment and where to go? Second to distinguish between real advice and fake advice: for every good piece of advice ten fake ones appear, some genuinely believed by senders, to be "good for you". Third was for the network leadership to begin to take on their roles of assisting others.

The federation model of our work where women's groups and their savings networks ensure they are in touch with each other on a daily basis were the foundations; they have been routinely feeding 100-200 households every month in relocation colonies where there were no earning member. We started with them, the systems to buy whole sale groceries, make packets and decentralized delivery to their doorstep kicked in, and very soon this number increased by almost three or four times every week. Individual and trusts began to give us funds, or purchased what we needed, which we had to collect. NSDF got permissions to move around during curfew to get food delivered; soon many other organizations began to give us food and money they had collected, as many found that their good intentions but lack of management in distribution led to almost riot like situations with police coming to disperse them with "dandas" or sticks!

Information gathering, collecting data about what residents in various settlement were experiencing via phone was both possible and happened because this was on phone rather than

in person with people and institutions with whom they had a relationship of trust.

NSDF leaders' networks began to get in touch with police stations and ward offices to get information, advice and also gave suggestions of what people wanted to get done in their neighborhood that the city or state could do. Most of the savings stopped as people did not go to work and many also drew down their funds to survive. Covid 19 not only depleted the buffer of savings that people had created, they now could not repay their loans also. We began to hear about increased domestic violence, women at their wits end dealing with young children with nothing to do, unable to go out and play and no space in the home, no equipment or games to play. Those with access to community toilets soon found that with everyone at home, three times the number of users now needed toilets and with no money to provide for maintenance this aggravated the hygiene crisis.

The burden of other diseases - malnutrition, TB, organ failure, hypertension, diabetes, stress related challenges all seemed to increase as hospitals now did not take non critical cases. Gradually, after the first six weeks, some sense of rhythm came into addressing things themselves and demands of what they needed from the city and state began.



Sheela Patel
Director SPARC

Section I: Process

Creating Statistics About Yourself

The importance of data

Collecting data about their own communities and federations has helped the poor dialogue with the municipality and the state to obtain land security, amenities and services. This information is used to negotiate with local authorities for security of land tenure and services. Now it has become a normal process for the informal settlements to document and map their own communities. Apart from the process of enumeration which is the main focus of our activities the other kinds of research that people get involved in is surveys about sanitation, about water supply, about drainage, about land ownership, about materials that people use to build or upgrade their homes. Data collection is getting more and more embedded into the routine of the federation and Mahila Milan. In this process the main people to ask the questions are by and large the women in the community. Questions are framed around specific themes and discussed with Mahila Milan in case they have any further suggestions or changes to be made. Any enquiry into issues that are of priority to poor people take place is formulated in this manner.

How surveys and enumerations help communities: the senior leaders of the federation have dealt many times with legal notices either put up by the residents against them or against the government authority on whose behalf the federation did the surveys, thus challenging the enumeration that has been done for a particular settlement under a particular project. A lot of these cases happened when the federation carries out surveys and enumerations for government projects like MUIP or MUTP. However, the federations always does a proper documentation along with visuals so the alliance is able to defend our case.

Surveys and enumerations done for relocation also collect information on demographics, income levels, literacy, education and housing conditions within the affected community. The data collected helps to analyze to some extent what the consequences of the R&R will be on their education social life, livelihoods, what impact it will have on the women who are employed vs ones who are not employed as it gives the percent of women that are employed and unemployed.

Similarly, when the mapping of settlements is done, it forms the basis to negotiate for re-housing or for relocation or even for infrastructure provision. For instance, the Pune Mahila Milan did a mapping exercise for the in-situ housing project under BSUP, to identify clusters of households that wanted to stay together and also how the ones spread across could be brought as one cluster. In another example, in Nasik, the

Surveys/ Enumerations Cumulative Upto March 2020		
	Settlements	Households
TOTAL	10,627	2,06,789
Housing Projects	609	59,767
R &R Projects	1596	1,44,722
Sanitation Projects	2023	
Settlement Profiles	6238	
Disaster Projects	19	338
Others (Vulnerability Survey)	4	537
Post Relocation	7	685

Surveys/ Enumerations 2019-20		
	Settlements	Households
TOTAL	172	63,712
R &R Projects	20	721

communities did a mapping exercise to identify space where individual toilets could be constructed, where common septic tanks could be installed, where the drainage line could pass through and so on. Mapping their own settlement on paper helps them visualize how their settlement looks like, how it can be re-aligned either to accommodate more people or to free up space to be used for other purposes by the community. There are challenges also in doing these activities as not all surveys done by residents are welcomed by the city authorities.

Currently, for the past three years the federation has been assisting the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority in conducting surveys for the Metro Rail project.

Linking manually created data with advancing technology

“When you survey the first house and move to the next and so on, when you are at the fourth house you don’t remember who you spoke to and what they said from the first house” said Jockin Aruputham, on being asked if the federations are open to new technology such as tablets, mobile surveys etc. “The more we use technology, the less we are connected with the lives of the people” when we do the same with paper and pen, when we have interacted with the family and heard their concerns we reason and understand rather than just note and analyze. These are two very different processes. Technology will give you data but the federation process of dialogue and survey will give “information”.

With time and technology, a marriage of the new methods has produced desired outcomes, the use of GPS (Global Positioning System) is one such tool, it has helped locate settlements on real time and has helped collate city level data. Data Digitizing helps communicate larger voices and make representations in the city development plans. SPARC has done settlement mapping through GPS and satellite imagery overlapped with community hand drawn maps to ensure that the maps interact at all levels. Drone based mapping is a highly sophisticated technology that casts out the limitations that satellite imagery has, slums have diverse morphological constructions that makes it difficult to distinguish between houses etc. Drone mapping for slums is useful to understand land coverage, density, large scale mapping, heat stress, disaster risk mitigation and climate change data analysis. The drone lens zooms upto 3 cm accuracy which allows for accuracy and work with large indicator sets.

However, this questions the privacy of individuals and if slum dwellers are willing to participate in such studies, the outcome of such techniques in direct relation to slum dwellers remains unanswered. If members from within the communities become a part of such processes and are given training to use these technologies, the use of drones may be useful to both research and communities.

The data collected then manually feeds into the attributes of the imagery that is digitized, so information collected manually which is accurate can be linked to images, without which high resolution maps are merely images with incomplete information about the lives and challenges of residents.

Drone-based digital mapping of country begins with K'taka, Maha

Will Create A More Realistic, Accurate View

LIKELY TO BE READY BY 2024

Ashtosh Sharma said 20% of the work will be completed by 2020 and the map should be out by 2024. Government agencies hope confusion and border-related disputes (among districts, states or countries) will be resolved with the clarity the map will provide. Officials plan to provide a robust base map which will be developed and updated with every little change. “Every citizen or society will be able to create their own map once things fall in place,” Sharma claimed. The digital map will be synced with revenue land records and other municipal ones in future.

completely and for the Ganga basin, Namami Ganga agency will share the cost. Several agencies have come forward with contributions for the project,” Sharma explained. The map will be available in the public forum with features, highlighting, hospitals, canals and other minute details. Survey of India has set reference points called Continuously Operated Reference Stations (CORS) networks at intervals of 20km across the country, which increase the accuracy by 10 times as well as provide instant online 3D positioning, Sharma said.

With several organisations involved in the mapping endeavour, extensive groundwork will be done to match the aerial findings of drones, he added. “Citizens will be able to make informed choices while buying properties. The map will help them understand where the property is located and its accessibility, among several other key details,” he said.

Higher resolution than Google Maps

According to Ashtosh Sharma, secretary, DST, the map will have a higher resolution than that of Google Maps. Such a project is being executed on such a large scale for the first time after almost two centuries when British surveyors Colonel Sir George Everest and his predecessor William Lambton first scientifically mapped the country in 1767.

“Digital mapping has never been done. This comprehensive map will show the exact state, district and country boundaries,” Sharma told mediapersons at Indian Institute of Science on Monday.

He said five years ago, the gargantuan project would have cost the government Rs 10,000 crore but is now expected to be completed at Rs 1,000 crore with deployment of far more advanced technology.

“We have picked the states based on their enthusiasm for the project. For instance, Haryana will fund it



Savings and Loans and the federation model

The importance of community savings for the low-income households in urban areas

The biggest factor is the provision of quick and easy money when needed in case of emergencies and urgent needs. With very low incomes the poor don't always have the opportunity to open bank accounts and that was the prime reason that Mahila Milan began with the activity of daily savings at their community level. They started operating as their own banks, saving people money and lending it back to them when in need. What this model of community savings has produced so far :

- Accountability , trust and solidarity amongst leaders and members
- The women gained self-respect and confidence to replicate this in other cities and states.
- It has helped build their financial skills
- It provides finances to set up a business or an income generation activity, for shelter improvement or for building toilets.
- Helps to prevent families borrowing money from moneylenders whose interest rates are too high
- Through savings, the communities grow in confidence and begin to challenge the negative attitude that others have towards them and develop relations with institutions that were difficult to deal with earlier.

Through their savings groups, the federation and Mahila Milan often negotiate for land tenure or improved infrastructure that lead to improved provisions of water, sanitation , drainage, electricity etc. Within a community savings process, members and leaders learn essential skills that help them address their own needs and those of their neighborhoods. Working together, leaders extend their skills and capacities from their immediate settlement to the challenges facing the city. Most of the federations in India and internationally have set up their own urban poor city fund where community savings accumulate into this fund at the city/local level and can be used for community projects. For instance, Bhubaneshwar Mahila Milan have their own separate urban poor city fund from which they also give out loans and take up projects.

What are community savings:

Community savings are collecting peoples money but in a non-formalized manner. People save individually, but all the money is gathered and managed at a collective level. The community savings process involves the establishment and strengthening of local savings groups. Communities

Total Cities /Settlements Saving Cumulative up to March 2020				
States	Federated Cities	Total	Federated Savings Slums	Savers
10	57	10265	797	50461
Maharashtra	7	1074	139	16995
Andhra Pradesh	6	1100	97	2410
Delhi	1	477	1	200
Gujarat	2	2857	22	
Karnataka	9	1320	112	6168
Orissa	6	1018	137	8060
Pondicherry	1	100	15	532
Tamil Nadu	24	1929	237	6437
Uttar Pradesh	1	390	37	9623

appoint a leader who collects the savings from members. Some groups have a defined savings period, e.g. once a week or a month, while others do a daily savings. Mumbai for instance, has a daily savings, whereas most of the smaller towns have weekly or monthly savings. This also depends on the nature of the work that people do. If they are daily wage earners, they save on a daily basis, but if they are paid on a weekly or monthly basis then savings are done accordingly. There is also another group, that does saving as and when they get work.

Savings is not just about the money but is an organizing strategy, organizing women, organizing men, organizing youth and most importantly organizing the community as a whole. Savings is like a peer support group for the women, thus helping women to address their gendered needs. Women being the main leaders for collecting savings and managing loans has made the savings scheme more successful. In the words of one of the oldest Mahila Milan from the Byculla pavements, *"We did not know how to save and what savings was, whatever we earned and what was left was given to the children, we would overdo things with left money, eat and spend money"*.



Exchanges: Learning from Seeing

For the last thirty years, the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan have supported community to community exchanges in order to transform development options, enabling poor people to plan, control and negotiate their own development strategies. These exchanges are not limited to the local community level but are also organized at city, state, national and international levels. By bringing people facing similar problems and locating them within the federation structure, they encourage face to face exchanges. As they meet more and more people, the poor are able to break the myth that they are the only one's suffering, that they are the only ones who are poor and gain confidence that they can all work as a collective to bring change. These exchanges help copy paste the strategies and processes that worked for one community or city facing similar issues, but at times there also emerges new innovations and new possibilities to explore solutions that were not considered earlier.

Community exchanges rest on a very simple concept: the poor learn best from the poor, and they learn best from seeing. Exchanges are also held to create city level and state level federations which are constituted of a group of community residents in the city so that municipal corporations take the demands of the poor seriously. By linking with each other at different levels, they create a database of experiences based on different approaches they obtain from their own experience or from their networks.

These exchanges are held in area resource centers that are physical spaces created by the communities to be used as offices and meeting places.

Exchanges at every level increase knowledge and communities gain new understanding, develop new insights about the same issue or problem in a different environment. If there is no federation at the city level, the voices of the communities are not heard and they cannot represent themselves as one, they are not considered a part of the decision making process.

There are different types of exchanges also - peer to peer learning, exposure visits to some projects, exposure visit with government officials, exchanges held to celebrate the success of some innovation that has been recognized at a city or state level, exchanges in the form of conventions, exchanges to identify and resolve issues and so on, the list continues.

This year a couple of exchanges have taken place at the city, state and international level, more so to discuss what is happening in each city, what support they need from each other and from the Mumbai federation, what challenges they are facing and how should this be taken forward in the right direction when their mentor (late) Jockin is not there to guide them. When any community/city federation through its

precedent setting exhibits new, innovative ways of achieving something and it becomes a success, that city federation then has many exchanges from different federations who want to come, see and learn and adopt the same methodology. This is how federations refine and scale up their activities. The international exchange was to learn about the relocation and rehabilitation process that the Alliance has adopted, what policy changes it has brought, what has been the role of each stakeholder in providing housing under R&R to slum communities, challenges faced on each end and what have been the positive outcomes of these processes.

Ahmedabad - Mumbai exchange - July 2019

In July, 2019, a team of six people from Vasna - a relocation site in Ahmedabad visited the Mumbai federation and Mahila Milan. Since the residents of Vasna are in the process of formalizing their cooperative society, putting in place mechanisms for maintenance and dealing with other post relocation issues the Mumbai federation advised them that they should visit different relocation sites in Mumbai and converse with the society members on how they manage maintenance, how savings is continued post relocation also, how they communicate with local political leaders for their support as well as collaborate with the local authorities to resolve their issues.

The team visited Milan Nagar, Lallubhai Compound and Dharavi where they interacted with Mahila Milan to understand their role and share their experiences by being vocal about their issues and to make active representation to the local government.

During this visit they decided on -

- getting the ownership documents,
- get electricity bills in their names as they realized that this is one of the legal identity document that can be used at various instances,
- all the residents paying 10 rupees daily towards maintenance as they find it difficult to pay 300 rupees in one go at the end of the month.



Peer to Peer Learning

Odisha and Maharashtra team visits Mumbai - July 2019

Leaders from Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Puri, Paradeep, Kolhapur and Pimpri Chinchwad had a joint meeting with the Mumbai federation and Mahila Milan. This was organized so that all cities could brief each other about the work they are doing and the kind of support they need from the Mumbai team. Odisha cities briefed everyone about the toilet construction being done as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission. Since the subsidy of Rs. 8000 given by the municipality was not sufficient to construct individual toilets, members had to take a loan from Mahila Milan.

The OSDF have initiated a new savings group in the panchayat area of Jagatsingpur since 2014 with 1200 active savers who have saved upto Rs. 5 lakh and given out loans of Rs. 4 lakh. Loans were given for school admissions, toilet construction or repairs, for health etc. It is very interesting to see how having a house patta makes a difference in Odisha, if a person has a patta, he or she can get a loan of from 1.30 to 1.50 lakh from the local government .

In **Cuttack**, 52 slums are part of Mahila Milan through it's savings groups with 3500 savers. In Maharashtra cities the Mahila Milan began the activity of creating slum registers for each settlement in which the names of each household is recorded which in turn gives us the total number of families and the population of that particular settlement. There are some other details that are collected through slum registers. In Odisha if this activity has to be taken up then they would require permission from the government, as previously, under RAY, 477 settlements were covered and all the houses have been numbered. But they said this can be done in settlements that have MM presence.

In **Puri** the federation is active in 8 slums with 1600 members.

Kolhapur is active in 5 settlements, a citywide toilet survey was done in 2017-18 to assess the condition of existing community toilets in the city and to further present the findings to the municipality. Currently, the Mahila Milan is trying to get access to the PMAY scheme.

Pimpri Chinchwad is active in 10 settlements with 475 savers. This group is negotiating with the municipality for the provision of community toilet in one of the settlements that was demolished and has not yet been constructed again. They are also working with the residents of Sanitary Chawl on housing and relocation.

Mumbai team visits Chennai and Pondicherry - June 2019

5th and 6th June were spent with the Chennai federation that is active in 49 slum settlements with 911 savers. Monthly meetings at the TNSDF office are held every Saturday. Mahila

Milan leaders from 7 districts that are closer to Chennai also participated in this meet. Apart from savings, the federation has been active in providing support through eye camps, night school for slum children, nukkad natak on various topics, construction of small bridges in a few settlements, supported flood affected families, conduct educational activities for the old and young, supported families to enrol their names for elections, access to loans from banks for various purposes.

Two slum settlements were visited in Chennai:

Pathinapakkam, Srinivasapuram is a fishermen community. 164 buildings each having 32 families were constructed after the 2004 floods by the World Bank. Savings are being done in eight buildings with 175 saving members. VOC Nagar has 1500 houses in 12 streets in this settlement, water is a major problem. All have individual toilets connected to the main sewer line. Only 35 members are part of the savings group. The slum board has settled them on this land, each family has more or less 600 sq.ft of area with pucca G+2 structures, paved roads and all facilities.

In **Pondicherry** savings is active in 13 slums with 860 members. Till 2012 they were doing monthly savings, but now have started daily savings. Two settlements were visited which fall under gram panchayat, in one of the settlements, tsunami affected families have been provided with houses. Water is again a major problem in these settlements. In the other settlement, houses were constructed also for the tsunami affected groups by the municipality. Savings is active in this settlement as well, loans were given for income generation, house repairs which have all been repaid.

Observations:

The Tamil Nadu federation has a presence in 19 districts where savings is active with internal loans being given. The slum dwellers get access to subsidies through many government projects and the federation is also involved in activities like education, livelihoods etc.

The communities look forward to receiving housing loans for repairs /income generation activities.

Possibilities:

Chennai is now facing a massive relocation of families along the coast. Institutions like Chennai Rivers Restoration Trust are in search of organisations to support the post relocation activities. There is scope for linking TNSDF with them to see what support can be provided and in what way.

TNSDF have been encouraged to send monthly reports (as they were doing previously) to which they have agreed.

Peer to Peer Learning

Surat - Ahmedabad exchange

For a very long time, Surat has been under the leadership of one person who controlled all activities in Surat. He has not been in Surat due to personal problems and when a senior NSDF leader at Mumbai came to know about this, he took a concrete decision of sending a team from Ahmedabad to look for other leaders that have been part of this SSDF. Two women, Banoo and Shanti, came forward acknowledging that they have been part of the Surat federation but know nothing of what has been happening. To put things in place, there were several discussions, a lot of back and forth with the previous leader and the current leadership that wants to take this forward. The women were ready to take on the task of organizing the communities and starting afresh. They visited Ahmedabad on an exchange visit to learn more about opening bank accounts for the savings. Taking a status report on the city and slums as a whole, Banu said that most of the families living in slums have individual toilets and access to community toilets as well and have good water accessibility. The women want to look at opportunities where they can repair old community toilets and form CBOs for their maintenance. They also want to explore possibilities of in-situ upgradation for which they will consult with the municipality and begin enumerations and slum registers.



GRET and Morocco Team visit Mumbai

A team of eight people from Zenata Development company Morocco and one person from GRET participated in the trip from the following departments:

Operation Pole, Finance department, Land management and Social support, Social development agency, Department of Urban Social Development, Head of Social and Cultural Service, Urban Development and Housing Project Manager. During this visit between 3-8th February, 2020, they met different stakeholders at the MMRDA, SRA and with Private Developers who have been involved with long-term planning, implementation of strategic projects, developing financing strategies. Apart from the government institutions, the team met with members of SPARC, NSDF and MM to understand the ground processes, the community process and understanding how the three work collaboratively with the government in bringing about policy changes.

Meeting with educational institutions like KRVI gave them a better insight on how these institutions can influence design related issues.

The team visited relocation and resettlement projects of SPARC between 3-8th February, 2020. During this visit, they met different stakeholders who play an important role in the R&R projects and policy related matters. For instance, they met with Chief of the Social Development Cell, MMRDA to discuss the role and challenges they face while dealing with relocation and resettlement of slum dwellers. Meeting with Mr. Joshi from SRA who is handling the Dharavi redevelopment project gave them an opportunity to learn about the processes involved.



Section II: Projects and Practice

Housing

Construction of houses for the urban poor, providing loans to upgrade their houses has been one of the focus areas of the Alliance. The construction is taken up by the construction company, SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak (SSNS) set up by SPARC and the projects are brought up by the communities. While the construction is taken care of by one team, the Mahila Milan takes care of organizing the communities, developing designs, negotiating for land, meeting different government officials and updating them about the progress, getting involved in the survey and enumeration of eligible households. There is involvement of the federation and Mahila Milan throughout the process which gives them the confidence that they can be a part of the development that is meant for them, not only for them but the government also realizes that they are actually a helping hand in what is being done by the government.

Initially, a lot of housing projects were focused in Mumbai and Pune, which also allowed federations and communities from other cities/ states to come visit these projects and learn from them. For instance, the Alliance also took up a half constructed project under BSUP in Nanded and recently the federation has taken up construction of houses in Telangana state and are also in discussion with municipalities of smaller towns and cities for the ongoing PMAY housing projects.

Federations are grouped and named based on the land they occupy. Thus, we have the railway slum dwellers federation, the airport slum dwellers federation, the Dharavi vikas samiti, the Mumbai port trust slum dwellers, the pavement slum dwellers. The reason behind this is that negotiations around land and tenure are different when dealing with different land ownerships and based on this, communities in different cities can deal with the same authority in a similar manner.

Collection of data and mobilization of communities go hand in hand and the data collected not only remains with the federation but is also shared with the local government.

The federation is now linking up with cities in different ways to provide proper housing facilities and develop sustainable models that can be replicated. Even then, there are cases where decisions have not yet been taken, the airport slum dwellers rehabilitation/redevelopment is an example of a community that is still waiting. In 2019, the state government scrapped the agreement done in 2007 where around 80,000 slum families living on airport land were to be rehabilitated. For rehabilitating these families around 65 acres of land around the airport has been identified, while some families have already been relocated in Kurla. Similarly the Dharavi redevelopment committee has opposed the plan of inviting new bids for redeveloping and wants the government to stick to the previous bids.

COMPLETED TDR PROJECTS		
PROJECTS	Total House Units	Constructed
TOTAL	2,618	2,618
Rajiv Indira-Suryodaya (In-situ)	263	263
Bharat Janata (In-situ) Phase 1	147	147
Milan Nagar (R&R-MUTP) Phase 1	88	88
Oshiwara I (In-situ and R&R – MUTP)	836	836
Kanjurmarg II- Jollyboard (R&R, MUIP)	106	106
Oshiwara 2 Phase 1	1036	1036
Dharavi Markandeya	92	92
Suryodaya (Pune)	50	50

TDR-Cumulative upto March 2020			
Project Name	Total House Units	Ongoing	Completed/ Finishing Stage
TOTAL	780	0	587
*Kanjurmarg 3	780		587

COMPLETED SUBSIDY PROJECTS		
PROJECTS	Total House Units	Constructed
TOTAL	2736	2736
Hadapsar	713	713
Solapur Bidi	501	501
Sunudugudu	75	75
Nanded, Maharashtra	213	213
Solapur Mathadi	34	34
Bhubaneswar, Odisha	249	249
Puri, Odisha	53	53
Nanded II, Maharashtra	898	898

Incremental Upgrading

Incremental housing or upgrading is nothing but a family gradually improving their house as and when they have the money. The pay as you go pattern applies to the urban poor particularly in low income populations/neighborhoods. Poor people have been building and then incrementally upgrading their houses once they move into a city and start squatting on a piece of land. When the pavement dwellers first migrated from their villages to Mumbai, they had only plastic sheets as their homes. Gradually, once they settled with jobs and families, they started growing incrementally not only in terms of adding another floor to their shack on the pavement but also in terms of the materials they used. In slums, one room houses are often converted into permanent structures which are also given on rent to produce an extra income. It is also believed that the poor have some experience of working in the construction field in some way or the other which is an added advantage as they can leverage their own physical labor. Taking place in informal ways and driven by urban residents rather than the state, incremental housing practices remain a challenge to integrate with formal state-led city development paradigms.

The alliance in the past has taken up incremental housing projects in Pune, Nanded and Odisha under BSUP. Individual loans are also given to families to upgrade their homes, there is a 100% repayment of these loans, at times these loans are also an add-on to the subsidy provided by the government as part of housing projects. It will be seen that, by and large in cities, higher proportions of families in lower income-groups have either no access to finance or less access to formal finance. Again, the poorer the type of house, the less there was access to formal finance. Those who have formal employment have better access to loans and finance as compared to the ones that are either self-employed or work in the informal sector. Now studies and research are also being taken up to study the process and challenges of incremental housing, how the urban poor access finance, how the design management takes place, who are the other actors and stakeholders involved in the process. What needs to be really valued and recognized is the value investment put in by the urban poor so as to help them live in cities rather than discouraging them from acquiring a better life in cities and through this process of incremental upgrading the alliance also tries to bring about changes in policy and financial frameworks. In the absence of finance, households save money and over time are able to upgrade their homes gradually. The same rule goes for getting the basic amenities like water, sanitation, electricity and so on.

Cumulative Housing Upgrading Loans Up to March 2020		
State	Members	Loan Amount
TOTAL	2548	6,00,55,500
Andhra Pradesh	709	1,70,71,500
Karnataka	1497	2,79,53,000
Pondicherry	161	87,91,000
Orissa	15	7,30,000
Maharashtra	210	97,40,000
Tamil Nadu	223	68,10,000

Individual Housing Upgrading Loans- 2019-20			
State	City	Members	Loan Amount
TOTAL		219	86,60,000
Karnataka	Madurai	82	24,60,000
Karnataka	Mandya	18	5,40,000
Maharashtra	Kolhapur	55	27,20,000
Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	20	10,00,000
Maharashtra	Pimpri	13	3,90,000
Tamil Nadu	Cuddalore	31	15,50,000

TOTAL ALLIANCE HOUSING PORTFOLIO		
	Total Housing units	Constructed so far
TOTAL	6929	6837
Subsidy	3541	3632
TDR	3388	3205

SUBSIDY- Cumulative upto March 2018				
Ongoing Subsidy projects under (JNNURM)	Pro-	Total House Units	Ongoing	Completed/ Finishing Stage
TOTAL		1100	204	896
Phase 1, Yerwada, Pune, Maharashtra	Ma-	787	55	732
Phase 2, Yerwada, Pune, Maharashtra		313	149	164

Relocation and Resettlement

SPARC has worked on issues of Relocation and Rehabilitation with different groups of slum dwellers in the past. Starting with pavement dwellers in 1985 the survey done by SPARC helped define who were pavement dwellers; in 1995 pavement dwellers were included in the list of slums who were entitled for relocation and presently SPARC works with MCGB and the Government of Maharashtra to relocate households on pavements in Mumbai. In 1995, SPARC was part of the committee that designed the R&R policy for the MUTP affected slum dwellers along the railway track and has since worked with MMRDA to relocate these households. Unlike the pavement dwellers, the families living along the railway tracks have also always wanted to move as the knew the environment and the place was not safe and secure both from habitation and environmental aspects and secondly they knew that they would never be allowed to upgrade their homes. Communities that have been living on different land ownerships and that faced the threat of eviction have worked hard and have come up with means, strategies to stop evictions to secure their claim to housing. From this evolved the alliance's relocation and rehabilitation model which was a planned process done in collaboration with the community and the government.



RELOCATION & REHABILITATION 2019-20		
Projects	HH To be Relocated	Relocated
TOTAL	61219	2239
MUIP (Mumbai)	30441	68
MUTP (Mumbai)	24418	531
Tata Power Phase I (Mumbai)	238	
Tata Power Phase II (Mumbai)	275	
Tata Power Phase III (Mumbai)	393	
Tata Power Phase IV (Mumbai)	240	
MbPT (Mumbai)	1091	37
Warje Relocation (Pune)	1292	583
Metro 3 (Mumbai)	2681	1020
Mumbai Metro Rail Corridor-VII & 2 A Proposed	150	0

RELOCATION & REHABILITATION Cumulative upto 2020		
Projects	HH To be Relocated	Relocated
TOTAL	61219	33003
MUIP (Mumbai)	30441	10768
MUTP (Mumbai)	24418	18592
Tata Power Phase I (Mumbai)	238	245
Tata Power Phase II (Mumbai)	275	197
Tata Power Phase III (Mumbai)	393	79
Tata Power Phase IV (Mumbai)	240	136
MbPT (Mumbai)	1091	919
Warje Relocation (Pune)	1292	1047
Metro 3 (Mumbai)	2681	1020
Mumbai Metro Rail Corridor-VII & 2 A Proposed	150	0

Relocation and Infrastructure Investments

Relocation of slums for infrastructure development is common in most cities. Communities are either beneficiaries or project affected persons depending on the nature of the program and the city looks at creating mass housing stock wherever municipal land is available, usually on the outskirts of the city, and slum communities are moved. Where infrastructure development is pursued in the interest of the larger good, slum dwellers have no choice but to relocate.

Cities in the global south have faced an unprecedented rate of urbanization and increasing poverty and slums was the result. In general, these unplanned and under-served neighborhoods are occupied by squatters without legal recognition or rights. The populations of these informal settlements lack the most basic infrastructure, such as water supply, sanitation, waste collection etc, and become vulnerable to disease, crime and natural disasters.

In India several attempts have been made through a series of programs like VAMBAY and BSUP to rehabilitate slum-dwellers by moving them into houses that are of the minimum acceptable living standards. However, there have been many reported incidences when slum-dwellers refused to move into the houses built for them. The problem is more pronounced in the case of relocation of slums. Similar problems about relocation have been reported from other countries as well. Such a waste of resources beats the very objective of any rehabilitation program and raises serious concerns for policy makers as well as urban planners. Why would someone refuse to take a house with more than 90 percent subsidy? The most common explanation for a refusal to accept R&R is that people living in older city slums enjoy several locational advantages since the city has grown around them and moving to a peripheral location could adversely affect their job prospects and access to urban amenities specially since these are newly developed areas without easy access to transportation, schools or medical dispensaries.



Ahmadabad has seen mass relocation due to large scale development and one such is the Sabarmati River Front Development, which relocated 28,000 households between 2003 to 2010 to various locations. One such site is Vasna which has a long standing relationship with the Mahila Milan from their original site 'Shankar Bhawan' along the river.

Upon visiting the site federation leaders found that the residents were in distress and dysfunctional societies had led to poor maintenance on site. Residents said the relocation "has moved them 10 years behind in life" which means that they have to work 10 times more to survive post relocation.

The Ahmedabad Slum dwellers federations have been working with the residents in Vasna 'Swarnim Nagar' to organize communities to create functional societies.

Four exchange visits have taken place between Mumbai and the Vasna residents. Seven buildings have taken the initiative and have begun working on key priority issues such as garbage disposal and society maintenance. In this year the federation aims to have some structure in the society formation and bring in more buildings to work together eventually scaling up to other relocation sites in the city.



The burdens of relocation

The case of relocated households from Sabarmati river front

A majority of the work that the alliance in Mumbai has done has been with creative, committed and ingenious bureaucrats and politicians who included NGO's and communities in designing and formulating policy for relocation of households who would be impacted by infrastructure projects. For those of us who have been working on these issues for the last two decades it is clear that there are many frailties and unintended consequences that emerge from the early projects, because everybody was doing it for the first time. You have a government that accepts that they need a policy, this policy is framed with inputs from community networks and NGO's are involved by actually allocating resources within infrastructure projects, to undertake relocation and involve communities and NGO's. They have to face court procedures and address grievances through the redressal process but it is clear that many of these processes in turn help to formulate policies and practices within institutions of governance, NGO's and communities. So that each time a new relocation takes place the process will be more intelligent, sensitive and practical in ways to improve the quality of current relocation.

As a part of exploring the lives of communities who were relocated, the federations in Ahmedabad asked NSDF and Mahila Milan to work in an area where households from the Sabarmati Riverfront were relocated to a location called Vasna and they formed the "Swarnim Society". In this relocation many of the initial policy and practices from Mumbai relocations have not been done and thus have led to different consequences.

The federations have been engaged with these communities for the last 20 years, when they lived along the river. The residents were allotted these units under JNNURM and have been moved as part of the Riverfront infrastructure development. There are 1440 units in 45 walk-up apartment blocks, the massive area looks like a big concrete jungle with no greenery and no infrastructure in the open spaces. *"The buildings are bare, exposed just as our lives"* said Amitbhai one of the residents. This location also houses residents affected by various projects from within the city. There are socio-cultural differences and unpreparedness for this process that has led to serious challenges regarding the well-being of the people and the maintenance of common infrastructure. The engagement with Ahmedabad federations is to explore possibilities of supporting these communities to build systems, and processes and demand accountability within themselves and from the local governments to build a functional society.

SWARNIM NAGAR BSUP COLONY IN AHMEDABAD
Current condition



Impact of R&R Housing on Households

Reall (earlier Homeless International) has been one of the funder partners providing financial and technical support to SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak (SSNS) housing projects since 1998. This year, different teams of Reall came to visit us. Some visits were done with the idea of reviewing current projects and to physically look at the progress, while the others were done to understand the processes and to assess the impact of affordable housing on the urban poor.

In December 2019, The Reall Assurance Team comprising of Thiery (Assurance Team lead person) and Rajat from KPMG (the financial institution hired by Reall to assist with the financial understanding) visited SPARC/SSNS. This team has been set up to carry out a co-assurance review regarding governance and to understand accounts as well as the process of accounting.

The assessment was based on a Risk and Controls Matrix provided by Reall's Risk and Assurance Department. The assurance review was collaborative and was more to understand the six broad areas mentioned below -

1. Governance Arrangement
2. System of financial management
3. Construction of houses/ projects
4. Selling /making houses available
5. Value for money - business model
6. Staff capacity - HR management

Impact assessment study was done by Reall early this year in January 2020. This project is aimed to undertake research on Reall funded housing projects located in Mumbai and Pune. Two housing projects in each city were selected for the study. These cities have now seen at least 2 years of occupancy, and look at the impact of affordable housing on families that were part of this project, particularly in terms of incomes, health, education and life satisfaction/wellbeing. The assessment was done collaboratively by SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan and the Reall team and in a way that it should benefit both SPARC and Reall. The teams worked together in tailoring the questionnaire to the local context, identify key informant interviews and key project locations.

The locations covered for this were Rajiv Indira an in-situ project for the slum dwellers of Dharavi, Milan Nagar in Mankhurd for the relocation of pavement dwellers, Yerwada in Pune providing in-situ housing for slum dwellers under Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) and Hadapsar also a relocation project (Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana VAMBAY). A total of 184 surveys in Mumbai and 432 were conducted in Pune with the help of eighteen research assistants. Individual interviews, focus group discussions, one-on-one interview with the SSNS staff were all part of the assessment, the fami-

lies to be surveyed were selected randomly by the Reall team. The emphasis of the study was more on the impact the overall housing projects have had on the well being of the urban poor, their education, employment, WATSAN services and their aspirations. Sections on demographics, household composition, ownership details, education level, employment and income status, expenditure, subjective well being, housing environment formed the basis of the questionnaire. A comparative evaluation was done of their situation when they were living in their previous homes as well as in their current homes. The findings of the impact of these housing projects have been both positive as well as negative on their overall development. For instance, they never thought they would own a house of their own, they have better water and sanitation facilities, and to some extent the quality and wellbeing of life has improved, education has improved. Overall household incomes in each location have increased significantly with security of tenure, but living in formal housing has also brought an increase in expenditures.



Dealing with the Covid Crisis

The outbreak of the corona virus was identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019 and the World Health Organization in January 2020 declared it to be a public health emergency of international concern. On March 11, 2020 it was recognized as a pandemic. This changed our lives and world completely over a period of few months. Many a times the city is struck by events and happenings that create history and memories and which determine the direction future events will take. Similarly since March 2020 onwards, the city of Mumbai has been dealing with the crisis of covid-19. The whole city is under lockdown, certain areas are sealed as containment zones, some are under quarantine as a measure to combat the virus. Transport has been shut down and nobody is allowed on the roads; it has been a big loss to the economy, loss of livelihoods of the poor and marginalized. In India the lockdown was announced on March 24th for twenty one days and now has been extended to 31st May 2020 with essential services exempted. Within a few days of the lockdown, the daily wage earners, those working in the informal sectors realized that they could not survive without work and were also not able to get back because of lack of transportation. The pressure is not only due to the economic losses and livelihood challenges of the poor and vulnerable but also on the health of the people.

Every crisis serves as a learning opportunity for civil society organizations and also proves to be a learning curve to deal with such situations in the future. The Alliance has been working with the urban poor in slums and relocation colonies since 1984 and has supported them through various housing, water and sanitation and relocation projects. Since the lockdown was announced, SPARC has been communicating with the leaders of the federation and Mahila Milan through phone calls and whatsapp messages. In this way we are in a position to better understand the ground situation, the support that different groups need and how we can assist them. One major challenge faced by these groups was of food insecurity since most of them are daily wage earners. From each area we could get a list of the families that were most in need of food supplies through their leaders. Amongst the daily wage earners there were even more vulnerable groups like widows, families with a single earning member, the aged and lonely. They were given dry ration as well as cooked food in some cases.

One of the relocation colonies, Indian Oil at Mankhurd has more than 50 buildings which were sanitized by Mahila Milan and the local community volunteers.



What the alliance of is doing to support the network of slum families

- The alliance has been in touch with the community continuously using mobile phones and whatsapp to spread awareness regarding the virus and sharing messages on precautions to take to prevent the infection.
- The federation and Mahila Milan started tracking families and supporting them with dry ration and cooked food.
- Interventions from the government are also being tracked to make sure they reach the urban poor and the neediest.
- Raising funds online to buy food grains for slum communities and for families living in relocation colonies is an ongoing process. We already have a pitch page/ on our democracy for Credit Cards and UPI. Individual donations in cash and kind have also been secured and kept track of.
- In Mumbai Mahila Milan and federation leaders distributed food grains in communities, in cities out side Mumbai the leaders there were asked to give bank details and contact details of a local shop that was paid directly through online banking to provide rations to families in need.
- Movement passes for some leaders were sought since that would allow them to move around the city for distribution.
- For each city and centre, a list with the number of families supported and receipts from the local vendor are being maintained to be made available for the auditors.
- A total of 4716 families in Mumbai as well as in cities outside Mumbai have been supported so far.

What needs to be done post lockdown:

We need to be prepared and start planning to meet a different set of needs once the lock down ends.

- Educational loans
- Income generation /livelihood loans
- Medical loans
- Crisis loans
- Individual toilet loans - considering that social distancing cannot be maintained where slum communities have to use a community toilet that serves 1000 of people on a daily basis and the fact that SBM did not meet people's demand, there needs to be a fresh discussion with the community leaders in smaller towns and cities for the provision of individual toilets. Not only this, the municipality also needs to be roped in to form new strategies and ways of looking at providing individual toilets to one and all.
- Home upgrading loans - As has been the routine process of the alliance to get requirements from cities on home upgrading loans to improve their roofs especially during the monsoon, strengthen walls, put in floors or to have an additional room, it will still be carried out.

Apart from the above, according to NSDF leader Shekhar, there are many domestic servants who are not being paid by their employers, men in the informal non-registered sectors are also not being paid and most probably some of them have even lost their jobs, not to forget the renters who have been asked not to pay rent till the lock down period, but what happens post lock down - will they be in a position to pay off the back rent with uncertain sources of income.

Federations and Covid



Distribution of food grains by Mahila Milan and NSDF in Mumbai

Section II: Projects

Sanitation



Community initiatives

Through the repeated interactions which the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan had with the communities of pavement and slum dwellers in the areas of Mumbai where they were working, they came to realise that the most urgent need was for improved housing and toilet facilities. In Mumbai the first toilet projects in the 1990s were planned for Dharavi and P.D. Mello Road and financed by the Municipal Corporation. While trying to find solutions to the sanitation issues in the informal settlements, the Alliance was also trying to find ways and means by which they could involve the community effectively in the toilet construction and the planning and designing of these toilet blocks. Would the city/state/national government consider slum dwellers as agents of change and most importantly if this demonstration was successful then how should it be replicated and made sustainable.

Since most urban slum communities are basically the providers of services to the formal city around them it seemed very clear to SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan that each slum settlement contained within itself the skills required for building basic infrastructure such as houses and toilets. The slum dwellers included masons, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and all kinds of skilled and unskilled workers. The strategy, to get the community involved in building their own toilets, was a clear consequence of this understanding and not only toilet construction, they were later involved in the construction of their houses as well.

Communities need to be encouraged to take up initiatives on their own and their confidence and skills need to be developed to not only undertake their own initiatives, but also to become partners with formal agencies like city and state governments to work with them in various development projects that have an impact on their lives.

Since 1997, the Alliance has constructed more than 800 community toilet blocks in slum communities spread across six states in India, the communities were able to collectively participate in the design, construction and management of these toilet blocks. They were also able to train other communities to take on similar initiatives with their local governments which also led to new partnerships with the local and state government. These community toilet projects also promote community contractors which is a livelihood option for the urban poor.

Cumulative Sanitation Projects Upto March 2020		
State	Toilet Blocks	Seats
Total	820	15747
Maharashtra	759	14894
Andhra Pradesh	38	451
Tamil Nadu	15	266
Gujarat	1	15
Odisha	7	121

Individual Toilet Loans- 2019-20			
State	City	Members	Loan Amount
TOTAL		48	7,15,000
Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	5	65,000

Cumulative Individual Toilet Loans- March 2018		
LOANS FOR INDIVIDUAL TOILETS	SEATS	Amount
Completed	1085	81,35,000
Maharashtra -2013	74	10,45,000
Andhra Pradesh-2010	5	50,000
Karnataka - 2001-11	342	30,22,000
Pondicherry-2003-04	39	1,45,000
Tamil Nadu - 2004-07	606	35,85,000
Odisha -2004-05	19	

Swachh Bharat

Municipalities usually implement sanitation schemes based on the standard procedures and designs that have been approved at some point in time. These designs do not take into account factors such as the availability of water, the quality of construction, privacy for women, separate space for children, use and maintenance, and operational management or a sewerage disposal mechanism.

Many of the toilets in the slums, which were constructed in the initial years by different stakeholders were never connected to the city's sewer line but were instead connected to septic tanks. There are also reasons why most of these toilets could not be connected to the main sewer line and one of them is the distance of the toilet from the main road.

The second issue was of maintenance and keeping the toilets clean and this was mainly done by the municipality, however, the communities were not at all involved in any of these issues. The Alliance experience of working in the sector of housing and sanitation with the involvement of communities has proved that they can be involved in the planning, designing and maintenance of the community sanitation being provided to them.

In view of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), the city municipalities in some instances have denied access to individual toilets to slum communities on the pretext of having achieved their targets. On the other hand, communities that Mahila Milan and NSDF are working with have produced lists of families that need individual toilets but did not get the subsidy from the city under the SBM umbrella. In many cities where the municipalities have declared themselves open defecation free, Mahila Milan and the federation have approached them with lists of families still lacking the facility. Certain surveys have also shown that in states that have declared themselves open defecation free, almost 23% of the people who have built individual toilets with subsidies under the SBM still practice open defecation for various reasons.

While the Swachh Bharat Mission's main focus has been on providing individual household toilets or for the repairing of community toilets, very little resources have been allocated towards the management of waste disposal.



SWACHH BHARAT IN THE CITY

Urban areas require a different approach to end open defecation

HIMANSHU GUPTA

THE SWACHH BHARAT Mission is being executed by two different ministries — the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation for rural areas and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for urban areas. In the rural areas, the major challenge was to change the mindset of the populace so that they would start using household toilets rather than defecate in open areas. As majority of the households did not have toilets in their homes, the main component of Swachh Bharat Mission (SbM) was to construct household latrines and to focus on information, education and communication (IEC) activities. The need for a dedicated sewerage network is less in rural areas as toilets are connected with in-house soak pits. Domestic waste in rural areas is also managed in a much better manner as it is segregated at the household level and a majority of it is used in the fields. Thus, improving the sanitation level in a rural area is much less complex than in an urban set-up.

Urban areas face various challenges — disposal of solid waste and sewerage liquid components. First, waste collection, then transfer of the waste and lastly, proper disposal of the waste. The task of solid waste collection and its transfer to the landfill site requires both manpower as well as an efficient transportation system. The segregation of

water can either be at the source or at the landfill. Segregation at source is more economical. If the landfill is a closely either using high-end segregation plans or manual co-separators. In most urban areas, disposal of solid waste is primarily the responsibility of municipalities. However, these municipalities are not equipped with the manpower, financial resources and technology for the task. Most of them are dependent upon the state governments for resources. These municipalities do not have sufficient human resources in terms of engineers or sanitation staff to manage the waste. Landfill site management is very poor due to lack of technical know-how.

The second challenge is managing sewerage in urban areas. Merely constructing toilets cannot solve the problem as these areas require proper sewerage network. The soak pit system that works in rural areas cannot work in urban areas due to a space crunch and increasing population density. The job of laying the sewerage network is again distributed between the state's public health engineering department and the municipalities.

There is limited provision of funds for laying the sewerage network. The strategy under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SbM) is to yield results in the urban areas.

Hence, there is a need to reorganise the Swachh Bharat Mission (SbM) where the focus is on solid waste and sewer management. The ministry must allocate the state governments to assess their capabilities in waste handling. Recurring funds must be provided for collection of waste and soak pits. A number may be given to municipalities for upgrading their capabilities to augment their revenue collection. Separate funds must be given for the development of landfills. Best possible practices for water and solid waste in cities must be studied and imitated.

Adopting a pilot — a search for collecting toilets and a search for the systemic issue of water supply in cities. Unless we are able to bring water from the source operationally, it is not possible to lay any network. The mission of the Swachh Bharat Mission does not end only on dumping the receding, but also on ensuring the way waste is disposed of by the municipalities and the state government.

The writer is an NGO planning and implementation of a series of rural waste management projects. His views are personal.

Mumbai Mirror

Thursday, November 14, 2019 5

East residents organise funerals for public toilets

An NGO has launched a campaign to draw the BMC's attention to the dismal state of the restrooms in Mankhurd-Govandi

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At around 6 pm in the M East ward, a group of people gathered with lit candles to participate in the "funeral rites" of a community toilet. The group gathered as part of a campaign launched by the Committee of Resource Organisations (CRO), to draw the attention of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) to the dismal state of public toilets.

The "Toilet is dead" campaign is a snarley initiative under the local NGO's larger 'Right to Pee' crusade, which was launched in 2011. The local NGO flagged off the campaign with its first "condolence meeting" on November 11. The group will conduct similar gatherings until November 19, which is observed as World Toilet Day. "We are meeting every evening to pay tribute to our dear toilets, which are no longer with us. They have served us in the toughest of times," says a message on the NGO's poster outside a public toilet.

The NGO has focused on public toilets in Shivaji Nagar, Rafique Nagar, Niranakji Nagar, Mandala, Chresta camp, Vashi Naka, Marikindri, Ambedkar Nagar, Bharat Nagar, Anand Nagar, Santosh Niwas in Poyl Pada - Trombay. Residents said the BMC has only paid lip service to the repairing and reopening of public toilets in these areas.

In Mandala, three people died after falling into a septic tank of a community toilet that collapsed in 2018. "We have sent reminders urging the BMC to build this toilet," Rohini Kadam, co-ordinator of Right to Pee movement said. "People cannot afford to pay Rs 5 to use a public toilet every time. It is the duty of the BMC to provide this basic infrastructure. This toilet was demolished and the construction began six months ago, but not even a plinth is done."

Kadam said the protest is a bid to seek answers. "We have been told that the two-storeyed toilet will be constructed soon. But when is that going to happen?" Kadam asked.

In Rafique Nagar and Vashi Naka, dilapidated public toilets have been demolished to make way for new constructions, but the projects have not begun yet. Three agencies have been involved in the construction of public toilets in M East ward — the BMC, Maharashtra Housing and Development Authority (MHADA), and Mumbai Sewage Disposal Project (MSDP).

The MHADA built toilet in M East ward's Ambedkar Nagar is in a pitiable condition. Its windows, doors and tin roof are broken. Residents collect monthly contributions to get the toilets cleared. In Maharashtra Nagar, the MHADA

public toilet has never been cleaned and does not have water supply. Residents, however, are forced to use the neglected facilities.

In Ambedkar Nagar, a two-storeyed public toilet is ready to use but is yet to be inaugurated. Residents in the area are forced to use the other shoddy public toilets in the area. "If this toilet is opened to the public, people will be relieved from using the choked-up toilets in this area," said resident Vansha Mohite.

In 2018, Right to Pee activists painted walls in protest against the conditions of the public toilets. Five of the NGO's activists were arrested at the Maratalaya when they tried to give Devendra Fadnis, chief minister at the time, photos of the toilets. They had sent 'Ha PEE Diwali' cards to officials responsible for the construction and maintenance of toilets in the area. The NGO has also distributed pamphlets among employees at the BMC headquarters. "All these were sarcastic protests," said Supriya Jaan, who heads the Right to Pee campaign. "With humor we get a positive response. We cannot confront officials on road all the time. Sometimes, we have to be imaginative too."

(Top to bottom) Public urinals in an unusable state in Mankhurd; residents participate in the 'condolence meeting' and a construction site in Mandala, where three people died after falling into a septic tank

Research Projects

ARISE stands for Accountability and Responsiveness in Informal Settlements for Equity. ARISE research takes place within complex systems in which multiple actors, institutions, processes, and entry points shape opportunities for influence. Our approach is underpinned by our collaborative approach to knowledge generation, led by communities in informal settlements. It will build on the excellent partnerships the ARISE Hub brings at local, municipal, national and global levels. Our Theory of Change identifies three levels and spheres of impact towards which our engagement strategies will be directed to maximise and sustain Hub benefits, as follows:

1. Impact at local level (improved equity and well-being in health in selected informal settlements). Engagement with urban informal residents in our study sites lies at the heart of the ARISE Hub vision. The research is designed to build the capacity of people living in poverty within informal urban settlements, particularly those identified as especially vulnerable, marginalised or excluded.

- i. Impact at local level (improved equity and well-being in health in selected informal settlements). Engagement with urban informal residents in our study sites lies at the heart of the ARISE Hub vision. Our research is designed to build the capacity of people living in poverty within informal urban settlements, particularly those identified as especially vulnerable, marginalised or excluded.
- ii. National and municipal levels (embedding learning and tools for multi-sectoral policy, practice and learning in selected context). Strengthened engagement, relationships and alliances with formal and informal governance actors in study sites are key to creating our intended impact for informal urban dwellers. Hub activities will build on existing committed, trusting relationships with non- governmental organisations, health and other service providers, and policy makers.
- iii. Global level (new knowledge and a step-change in concepts to inform responsive global action).

The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda (endorsed at the 2016 General Assembly) have established global goals for improving urban development indicators which include issues of urban informality, but there are important gaps in the priorities and language from the global to the local levels. We will build on our networks and evidence to address these gaps.

SPARC will work on ARISE in partnership with UDRC in Odisha. SPARC will work in 2 cities, Mumbai and Ahmedabad and UDRC will work on 2 cities, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur. Focus in Mumbai and Ahmedabad will be around relocated colonies whereas Odisha will focus on slums.

2. National and municipal levels (embedding learning and tools for multi-sectoral policy, practice and learning in selected context). Strengthened engagement, relationships and alliances with formal and informal governance actors in study sites are key to creating our intended impact for informal urban dwellers. Hub activities will build on existing committed, trusting relationships with non governmental organisations, health and other service providers, and policy makers.

ARISE was approved and launched on 13 February 2019 and is planned for 5 years. We are one year into the project where time was invested in administrative setup of the project, developing further understanding on concepts of accountability and governance, discussions with federation groups at relocation colonies and knowledge exchange with partners, both UDRC and the other ARISE HUB partner- The George Institute. While we have strong federated groups in Mumbai's relocation colonies (Lallubhai Compound and Indian Oil Nagar), considerable efforts were spent on establishing relationships with residents in the relocation colonies in Ahmedabad. UDRC will use existing relationships with the communities in the two cities where they have worked for a long time and will explore health and well being challenges of those communities. We also submitted ethics jointly with TGI which has now been approved and we plan to carry out participatory mapping, policy landscaping and health and well being surveys in the next 6 months.



Research Projects

Building Resilient Urban Communities (BReUCOM)

Of the next 100 metro cities in the world about 40 are going to be from India. India is a growing economy with rapid urbanization which is expected to have a total housing shortage from about 18.8 million in 2012 to about 30 million in 2022. About one thirds of the Indian population lives in slums and on an average 48 percent of metro cities lives in informality with poor habitat conditions, living on untenable land with no access to safe water and sanitation, insecurity of tenure and a constant threat of eviction. This carries the danger of growing poverty and - subsequently - of social and political unrest.

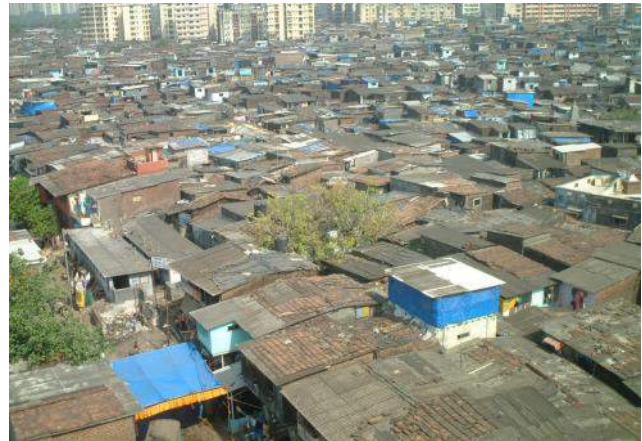
Increased frequency of natural hazards and sea level rise are expected impacts of climate change in India. Marginalized urban settlements are often vulnerable to disaster due to their location in hazardous areas and the use of non-durable building materials, already today the inhabitants in informal settlements are therefore strongly affected by climate change. But amidst striving to meet climate targets, the needs of the poor are mostly overlooked.

In this context, there is an urgent need for paradigmatic shift in the education of graduate students in spatial planning and design as well as in training urban professionals from different backgrounds in order to confront upcoming challenges related to climate change impacts on urban informal settlements.

BReUCOM is a project funded under EU Erasmus + Program in the field of capacity building in higher Education.

BReUCom therefore will:

- Produce Open Educational Resources by developing 10 comparative case studies & 10 descriptions of new courses for graduate students in existing programs following MIT's Open Course Ware model.
- Pilot 5 new courses on urban resilience in existing curricula for graduate students.
- Develop 20 new Professional Development Program (PDP's) modules on urban resilience for urban professionals from different backgrounds and working experiences and pilot 10 modules including internships with NGOs in India and Europe.
- The BReUCom project conceives pilots postgraduate short term Professional Development Programs (PDPs) targeted at real world problems.



City News

Surat Mahila Milan forms new savings groups and starts afresh

For a very long time Surat federation has been in existence but was not managed in the proper manner. The mahila Milan and federation was reformed in Surat after the earlier leader was asked to leave on conduct of mismanagement. The existing women who were also a part of the earlier mahila Milan have now taken over the charge of carrying out the core activities, have started new saving groups, are conducting surveys and looking for opportunities to work with local government. Sometimes a change in leadership is necessary for the benefit of the urban poor communities. Currently, the Surat Mahila Milan is operational in 4 settlements.



Mumbai Urban Slum Eyecare (MUSE)

A project of Vision Foundation of India, supported by NSDF/ SPARC, Rotary Club of Bombay and Seaface Charities Trust MUSE was inaugurated early this year in Cheeta Camp. This also happens to be the place from where the late Dr. Jockin Arputham started his journey as a slum dweller working for the slum communities. However when the work of NSDF picked speed, this office was less visited by Jockin and his team and gradually the office was closed down. Some of the leaders started sewing classes for the neighboring families with two sewing machines. But that was also not a success. Many attempts were made by different people to keep the centre running but nothing worked.

Finally Shekhar a senior leader of the NSDF was in conversation with Mr. Roy to run an eye care center. On 9th January, 2020, the eye care center was inaugurated. Almost 25 patients visited the center for check ups. Now, the doctor visits the center every Thursday from 2.00-5.00 pm and on the other days the staff keeps a record of the all the patients that come for check up and are called back again on Thursday. So far only two operations have taken place.

In Mankhurd, this centre was established on 1st July, 2017 by Jockin and Mr. Roy. There being no eye care services or dental services, the NSDF thought of providing one in this area. Initially the operations were done for free except for blood tests which were charged. Now they have to pay a fee for operations as well, which is cheaper than what they are charged in big hospitals and clinics and is very affordable for the poor. The NSDF provides a car every Thursday when patients have to be taken to the city hospital for operation. 20 patients at a time are booked for operation per week. As of today, 600 patients have been operated and more than 3000 have come to the center for consulting.



City News

Solar Panels installed at Milan Nagar and Solar street lamps at Railway relocation colony at Mankhurd

In dense cities like Mumbai, going vertical is the only option to maximise the utilization of available land. In such a situation, multi-storied buildings require and utilize a lot of electricity for common building purposes such as elevators and pumping water up into overhead water tanks. In the case of the buildings built by the city and by various developers in Mumbai for housing the slum dwellers, the residents see a very high maintenance expense, dominated by the electricity bill. With external funding from SDI, the alliance had put up a proposal for the installation of solar panel systems at a minimum of 10 buildings where slum communities have been relocated. Both the state and central Government in India are giving a great push to the using of renewable sources of energy. Therefore, embedding the usage of solar energy to produce electricity for common electrical purposes in buildings, as a policy feature or within the building norms is a possible approach to maximise its usage.

The pilot testing was done in building no.11C at Indian Oil, Natwar Parekh Compound where the monthly electricity consumption was Rs. 15,692. The first unit was installed in 2017, training was given to few women/girls to clean and maintain the solar panels on a regular basis and especially during the rains, to take meter readings and to see to it that it was not misused. A year later, two more buildings had solar panels installed and the communities have seen a drop in the electricity bill.

Not only were the buildings provided with solar panels, but the federation also was successful in installing solar street lamp posts at the railway relocation colony that has 13 buildings of 7 floor each. 16 such pole mounted 40W LED lamps at different locations have been installed. These are all connected to the main electricity grid so that net metering policy can be availed.

Milan Nagar that houses 88 pavement dwellers families is also amongst the ones to get solar panels installed this year. The main purpose of these experimentations was to demonstrate that these panels can cut down on the electricity consumption costs of common facilities at relocation buildings. Secondly, that it becomes a part of the housing poli

Keeping our societies safe: installation of CCTV cameras for security, as well as led lights

The young generation and the son of one of the oldest Mahila Milan leader, Rajesh, is now taking up most of the work that his mother did for her community while she was on the pavement and even after being relocated from the pavement to a house of her own. He is now getting more and more involved with the paper work, maintenance, repair work of Milan Nagar housing society, and he does not do this alone but

also gets other youth involved. Because there is an open piece of land where Milan Nagar building is constructed, people from the locality and outside tend to misuse the space, thefts take place, etc., so to put an end to this, the youth have installed LED lights in the compound and have also installed CCTV cameras in the building. After the installation of the LED lights, the space is now used by the residents of Milan Nagar - young and old men sit and chat in the night just to make outsiders aware that this space cannot be misused.



Reviving Police Panchayats across the city

Police panchayats were formed way back in 2004 in slum communities to deal with day-to-day petty issues that cannot be taken to the local police station. There are other reasons as well of forming this community based police panchayat. Men and women from the communities along with one police personnel from the local police station are members of this panchayat. As this system started growing and getting recognition, more personal issues were brought to the police panchayats like – divorce cases, fights, robbery, cheating etc which were solved by them at no cost. For a few years this worked well, and then gradually started deteriorating. Cases still come to the Mahila Milan office but because it had become dysfunctional, their cases weren't resolved. Keeping this in mind, Mahila Milan and a few police panchayat members thought of reviving the police panchayat and asking questions like – why did they start with this innovation, how has it helped their communities, what have they as federation and Mahila Milan gained from this, has it helped improve their relation with the local police and the communities, has this system built trust and has it bridged the gap between the slum communities and the police, and the answer was Yes. Therefore, they conducted meetings to review the importance of police panchayat and the need to form new panchayats in their areas. The Mahila Milan at Indian Oil decided to re-form the panchayat, start taking up cases from within their area, meet on a daily basis, keep a record of the cases that are registered and solved as they would do initially.

Section III: Reflections

Advocacy and events which were critical milestones

SDI and the Alliance

Each year there are several routine events related to climate change where people committed to addressing the challenges of climate change meet. SDI and members of the Alliance participated in some of the events.

1st to the 4 April 2019 CB in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Each year IIED and a host of long-term partnerships involved in Climate Change meet for what are called CB8 days. These are days when all these organisations put together a capacity building programme to facilitate grassroots networks, NGO professionals and others to meet similar people from different countries in order to improve engagement, learn new aspects of working in the climate space and build bridges between organisations whose primary work maybe very different but who have developed ways and means to come together to address how their constituency will deal with climate change. A team from SDI participated in this process and for the first time explored the possibility not only of SDI having a group of professionals and grassroots leaders working on issues of climate change but also about cascading this down to national level leadership so that our exposure and our own experiences, networks we create by participating in climate events can become part of the larger learning. It may be recalled that in earlier years SDI had set up a global informal platform and was invited to participate in creating communication and networking and collaboration between organisations that work on issues of urban poverty through representation of the community networks themselves, therefore members of the WEIGO commission and WEIGO also attended this programme.

Our collective major contribution was not only in the main event where we all participated and demonstrated the powerful advocacy potential that community leaders can achieve by themselves but also the value of partnerships with each other and with global institutions. The side meetings give us an opportunity to get to know all the other donors - international organisations and professionals with long experience of working on climate change; it helps to deepen and sharpen our own insights into how to connect Climate Change with the work that we do on urban vulnerability or exclusion in cities and the impact of informality and how it has a deep connection with governance as well as future transformation of our lives.

In many ways the fact that SDI was represented on the Global Commission for adaptation gave a significant and valuable opportunity to make this representation both on behalf of the Global Commission as well as the urban poor and demonstrated that while SDI through this representation got a voice, it was also an opportunity to understand the dynamics of how debates and discussions at the global level help

determine who got support, assistance and help for how many days, why there was so little happening in the issues of urban poverty and Informality.

Senegal Meet

The meeting in Senegal was an interesting one which emerged out of a commitment made by the head of Oxfam, Winnie Byanyima, who said that she would meet with small farmers and informal workers and planned the meeting in Senegal and invited Sheela Patel to co-chair this process. We convened a meeting of small farmers, waste pickers, fisherfolk, different types of people living in informal settlements and at that meeting we also had the head of World Bank join us for the full event and attend all the field visits that took place. At the end of the day we met the President who kindly agreed to meet us even though he was fasting for Ramzan though I am not sure his commitment to the GCA as well as to the issues of poverty in Africa. Winnie had already also invited the Huairou Commission and Prema Gopalan from SSP attended that meeting as well as the CBI.

GCA meeting in Berlin

There was full attendance of all the commissioners and a deep resolve to address the range of issues that were brought out by different commissioners. On behalf of SDI, Sheela focused on locally led action track and the city's track; clearly these were the least popular and were much weaker than the other tracks. As usual it was evident that most organisations felt compelled to address rural issues rather than urban at that meeting. It was clear that the reports would be announced and published and brought out at the October UN summit. Commissioners were invited to attend this, after that would be a year of action and the plans demonstrate what adaptation looked like on the ground.

Climate Change event in Heidelberg

The German government had put together a climate change event for which Sheela Patel and SDI were invited to the plenary. It was a very evident that there was a hierarchy and the facilitator was clearly more interested in what Myers and parliamentarians from the global North had to say than a representative of the urban poor from the global South. In the time that was allocated to Sheela she clearly articulated disappointment at the inability of eight providing institutions that demonstrate the same anti-poor focus in these events as you see in the delivery. At the other side events there were some interesting new people and new networks to explore but the most powerful and amazing experience was on the day two which was a Thursday and at lunch time school children of all the schools in Hiedelburg came out in the streets and demanded change now!

SDI and the Alliance

Another interesting encounter was meeting a representative of the Green Climate Fund and challenging him on why there was no allocation possible for poor communities in cities who never get any resources and to highlight the fact that this fund wasn't able to acknowledge non-state actors and where there were small windows of opportunity to explore this. The registration form took us two years to fill and was still unacceptable! The poor gentleman had many reasons to be defensive, he said that there were rules made by nation states that were responsible for this exclusion and he was questioned as to why it was okay not to spend money that was available or to spend most of it all administrative expenses as the IITs report suggested. Of course he could not respond or answer anything but subsequently we have been informed that all the climate funds are reviewing their policy and are looking at ways to get more involved in facilitating the allocation of resources. This is the space to wait and watch.

C40 at Copenhagen

On August 11 and 12 the mayors network of C 40 invited Sheela and Beth from SDI to attend a meeting of the mayors in Copenhagen. The highlights of that event are several - firstly, the mayor of Copenhagen announced that although the city is famous for all its Michelin restaurants, he was told of the fact that the city and the community were now in the process of ensuring that good quality, pesticide free food would be available to every single person and that will be no person who went to bed hungry. This led to a campaign that then got adopted by many other mayors, we should definitely look at it as something that SDI should pilot and work with and we in India should also look at how we can deepen and strengthen the strategy in our city.

The second interesting event was the announcement of the Report of the New Climate Economy program on which Sheela is an advisor, where it specifically looked at advise that finance ministers would get: I should care about addressing urgently the challenges that city's faces, I will climate change.

The third interesting event was the panel of discussion with representatives from the US, Singapore, leaders from Brazil and Sheela from SDI speaking from the vantage points about the challenges of iniquity, poor governance, informality and the future impacts of not taking these into consideration. There were many side meetings with office bearers, other representatives and the institutions who had heard about SDI and its grassroots network and wanted to know more about it.

UN Climate Change

New School

In October 2019 Sheela and SDI along with other grassroots networks attended two events in New York that were running parallel, one was the UN Climate Change days and the other was the capacity building and learning event at the New School in which SDI was a partner and it was interesting that people who came for one attended the other to work together. There was a huge youth assembly and there are many panel

discussions. There were many opportunities to highlight the challenges that the urban poor were facing in general, anticipating to be addressed with Climate Change and also many networking opportunities that will be followed through.

COP25 Madrid, Spain 2-13 December 2019

The annual COP was supposed to be held in Chile but was moved to Madrid and Sheela was invited to join the COP to represent for the voices of the former as well as a representative of the GCA. There were several opportunities and for both the side networking events, Bisola who is a youth leader from Nigeria and Sheela had the opportunity to speak on panels. It was also an opportunity to get to know more about the work of BRAC who had a very large joint representation with the government of Bangladesh.

In January Sally Mulla invited a delegation of SDI and the Huairou Commission to attend not only the scientific work shop called professional but also to attend the events to develop the network of universities working on climate change and invited SDI and the HUairou Commission to set up a parallel learning process for slum dwellers and informal workers. There is now a commitment to develop the curriculum jointly and to build within each country partnerships between universities, the urban poor and the city.

In February at the World Cup Forum in Abu Dhabi, Smriti and Sheela representing the Indian alliance for SDI and participated in a wide range of events including a discussion on Parveen Sheikh from Pakistan on whom a film had been made. Each of the three speakers including Sheela spoke about how working on urban land issues is a life-threatening process especially as good governance measures to ensure equitable access to land for houses remains a distant dream. There were many panels in which different dimensions of Land and Informality was discussed.

Events and Workshops

INCLUDEeGender Workshop - Mainstreaming Gender in Urban Development Policy

The workshop was a part of the series of workshops that are being organized by INCLUDE member organizations around various themes of urban development. This workshop was on Gender, organized by HomeNet South Asia and its member organization from Maharashtra, LEARN (Labour Education and Research Network) and was centred around looking at urban development policies and livelihood policies from a gender-sensitive perspective.

Labour Education and Research Network (LEARN), has been organising women workers in the urban informal economy to holistically empower them to live and work in conditions of dignity and freedom. Through the INCLUDE network, LEARN in collaboration with HomeNet South Asia, is localising a policy brief on Urban Livelihoods in Maharashtra and discussing urban policy initiatives with a gender perspective was the main objective of the workshop. In the workshop, LEARN spoke about how they are empowering women workers from Mumbai, Nasik and Sholapur to form a network for labour economy.

HomeNet South Asia introduced the policy brief on urban livelihoods which lays stress on the issues and challenges associated with livelihoods especially informal work in the urban sector. Some of the policy recommendations have been - informal enterprises to be recognized as generators of economic growth and therefore this needs to be a part of the urban and economic urban plans, their need for affordable and accessible public transport and public space to be identified, provision of adequate and affordable housing for informal workers as most of the times their homes serve as a workplace for them, legal rights as workers should be given to them and so on were discussed during the workshop.

SPARC being one of the INCLUDE partners, also shared their experiences about how slum people face problems when there is relocation from one place to the other and how this affects their livelihoods. They also spoke a little about how they help the communities to find jobs in the new relocation area.

INCLUDE Roundtable - November 2019

Indian NGOs for Community Led Urban Development (INCLUDE) is a network of prominent NGOs and research institutions in community-led urban habitat development across the country. Members include SPARC, Mahila Housing Trust, CURE, Shelter Associates, South Asia HomeNet, Habitat for Humanity, India and YUVA. SPARC is the chair of INCLUDE steering committee and the Secretariat is hosted by CURE. INCLUDE is an open network which is expected to expand and grow with new NGOs and institutions which come on board.

INCLUDE in partnership with Cities Alliance has in the last 12 months prepared 5 policy briefs and developed case studies based on the extensive experiences of the network partners. The policy briefs are around issues of :

- land tenure,
- access to finance,
- housing,
- livelihoods,
- community participation,
- data and governance

The purpose of this round table was to share these policy ideas and thoughts with urban policy makers and thinkers, and to discuss challenges and constraints in promoting sustainable urban development to address the complexity of today's urban ecosystems and possibly towards achieving SDG 11. The participants included civil society organizations, academics, donors, representatives from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and NIUA.

The roundtable gathered good response in terms of the recommendations suggested for each policy, there were feedbacks on the content and who the audience will be, collaborations between NIUA and INCLUDE were explored during this roundtable, co-creation of data bases at different levels for the data being gathered by different organizations was also discussed which can then be used for effective decision making, the MoHUA agreed to engage more closely to ensure deeper engagement .

Events and Workshops

BReUCOM Symposiums

As part of the BReUCOM project, a series of symposiums were conducted in India as well as at Krems, Austria on different themes. In August, 2019 a symposia on Lessons Learnt from Climate Change Adaptation in Europe was held.

The five day symposium was divided into three parts: Project steering committee meeting to discuss management and organizations issues, along with presentations of case studies taken up by each institute and third was presentations from external experts on Climate Change and Resilience. There was also a site visit planned on the last day of the symposium. The agenda was mainly to talk about the progress made so far for each Work Package and share experiences on climate change & resilience from Europe. This symposium was attended by the following partner institutions – TWENTE (University of Twente) Netherlands, KRVI, Mumbai, SPA – Bhopal, SPA - Vijayawada, and NIT-Hamirpur. There were two NGO partners as well – CURE, Delhi and SPARC, Mumbai who attended the symposia.

Four case studies by each Indian partner have been taken up at different levels viz. Institutional, Intra-Indian and International collaborative. These case studies will ponder on questions related to climate change and resilience at city and community level. These case studies can further be enhanced for better learning into Studios, Theory Courses, Summer & Winter Studios, and Online Courses or as Elective Courses, which will bring value from practice.

There were presentations and lectures from experts on Climate Change, Migration, Green Infrastructure and so on. A site visit to the fire department was arranged to understand the flood management system of Krems, situated along the Danube river. Mechanisms used during the floods to prevent river water from entering the city using aluminium plate walls were observed. During times of floods, when the water level increases beyond the embankment, it is the Fire Department's duty to respond to this situation.

The second symposium in October, 2019 was held on Lessons Learnt from European Informality. Similarly the third and fourth symposiums were held in Bhopal at the School of Planning and Architecture and Mumbai at Kamala Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute of Architecture. The symposium held in Bhopal focused on Defining new Planning and design paradigm and the one in Mumbai focused on Training needs for Urban Resilience in India.

CBA13: Local solutions inspiring global action

The 13th international conference on Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change (CBA13) took place in Ethiopia from 1-4 April 2019. It had the theme: "Local solutions inspiring global action".

CBA13 brought together practitioners, grassroots representatives, local and national government planners, policymakers and donors working at all levels and scales to discuss how we can drive ambition for a climate-resilient future. During the three day workshop, the participants worked together to put up proposals on various themes – waste management, photo-journalism project to empower women and girls, proposals promoting biodiversity and sustainable income generation activities for slum communities etc.

Through the event, there were also discussions around how to deliver climate resilience by 2050.



National leader of National Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda and Director of Slum Dwellers International Kenya talk about their focus areas at the event.

Publications

NAME	YEAR	TYPE	SUBJECT	COLLABORATOR
Study on the Organization's History	2009-2010	Book	A history of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan	SPARC-Equal in Rights (a Dutch NGO)
Incremental Upgrading	2010 - Ongoing	Book	Study on Incremental Upgrading.	SPARC
Apna Street	2010	Book	Apna Street – a book by Julian Crandall Hollick in collaboration with SPARC on the life of Pavement Dwellers.	SPARC
Re-Dharavi	2011	Publication	Re-Interpreting, Re-Imagining and Re-Development	SPARC-KRVIA
Cuttack Book on Data Collection	2011 – Ongoing	Publication	On the process of data collection for design and proposed house and settlement designs in Cuttack	SPARC
BSUP -11 Cities Review	2011	Report	BSUP -11 Cities Review Report	SPARC-NTAG
Sanitation Analysis	2011	Report	Impact of sanitation facilities on diarrhea in infants	SPARC
Victims or Warriors	2011	Document	Victims or Warriors: Transformation for Human Rights - Implications of slum dwellers especially women being organized and working on their habitat and basic amenities	SPARC
Unintended Consequences	2012	Report	Unintended Consequences Report on post-relocation changes in rehabilitation projects by SSNS.	SPARC
Procurement Guidelines	2012		Compilation of the limitation of current procurement guidelines for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs).	SPARC
Lessons in Empowerment from Urban Odisha	2013	Report	Insights and experiences of the UDRC-SPARC Alliance.	SPARC
Integrating Land Governance into the post 2015 Agenda	2014	Report	Prepared for presentation at the “2014 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty” to describe how community managed data collection can produce secure tenure for slum dwellers while ensuring effective resettlement of households to make way for the implementation of large scale redevelopment programs.	SPARC
Poverty & Vulnerability Study	2010-2012	Report/Paper		SPARC
Inclusive Cities	2013-Ongoing		Understanding reasons to account for the specific nature and impacts of state interventions to reduce urban poverty in India and the influence of civil society on such interventions, through a study of government programs including the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission in five cities.	SPARC-IIED

Publications

NAME	YEAR	TYPE	SUBJECT	COLLABORATOR
Gendered Spaces	2013		A Socio-Spatial Study in the Informal Settlement of Dharavi in Mumbai.	SPARC/Sweden
Wellbeing Study Ongoing	2014	Report/Paper	The study was carried out in three cities - Mega, Secondary and Emergent city to explore the determinants of wellbeing for informal workers in informal settlements.	SPARC / Institute of Development Studies
The path to real partnerships: Exploring the relationship between Academics and social movements.	2015	Report	A box written on the experience of the Promotion of Area Resource Centers (SPARC) in inclusive urban planning. This has been for the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) Report.	SPARC/SDI/GUNI
We Beat the Path	2015	Paper	This paper continues the story of the Indian Alliance, as it designed and built housing with urban poor communities from 1986 to 1995. It focuses on three cases in Mumbai (Adarsh Nagar, Dindoshi-Goregaon; Jankalyan- Mankhurd and Markandya CoOperative Housing Society - Dharavi , where communities with precarious housing developed alternatives to resettlement and redevelopment.	SPARC/IIED
The Contested Realities of Inclusive Cities	2015	Publication		
The 20-year sanitation partnership of Mumbai and the Indian Alliance	2015	Paper	An article written for E&U on the 20 year community toilet program and focussing the Alliance's collaboration with the municipal corporation to develop a system to monitor conditions of the community toilets built	SPARC
Energy Justice for the Urban Poor	2015	Study	A study conducted by SPARC through household surveys in Mumbai, Bangalore, Nasik, Ahmednagar, Jalgaon, Thane and Raipur to get an idea on the energy consumption patterns, issues related to access of energy, needs and demands as well as challenges of the urban poor.	SPARC
Community Finance	2017	Working Paper	Case studies of community finance to demonstrate the potential of community finance to bridge the formal and informal sector and thereby enable private investment in informal settlements.	
Taking Money to Making Money: SPARC , NSDF and MM transform low-income shelter options in India				
SPARC and Indian Alliance Engagement with the Private Sector	2017			
Ongoing		Website	SPARC, SPARC NIRMAN website.	
Ongoing		Blog	City watch is a blog for Alliance activities	

Looking back Looking Forward

Looking at the dawn of the Covid 19 pandemic

The year ends in March 2020 with the lock down not only in India but in many countries all over the world. Unlike SARS and EBOLA no country could say it does not happen in our context! We all began to understand what local impact this global pandemic unleashed in all our lives. It would probably be the first time that neither technology or science nor global or national institutions had any definite procedure to “manage this crisis. None... neither global, national or local actors, state or non state actually knew what to do. With it arises what roles different institutions can play.

Clearly the biggest victims of this process have been the poor people mainly in urban but also in rural areas

The day to day survival of the poor is completely shattered, the foundations of the survival systems they have had in place have been shaken. Every single development intervention that could have been done, that should have been done while social groups demanded that it must be done has now come into the open. This has uncovered the most critical aspects of what development investment did not want to do. The question is how do you deal with it, what should all of us, who have been demanding investments towards basic water, sanitation and habitat for the last several decades to bring attention to these deficits, do at this time of the pandemic.

Communities have shown us their ability to absorb shocks while being very fragile

The poor and vulnerable do what they can collectively as a response to survival threats. They sprang into action in order to survive, making demands of all of us who sought to assist and support them. In the case of the alliance it was their role to support and provide assistance in any which way we can, the local federations which begun to use their networks links and contacts to ensure safety, food and access to medical assistance for themselves and those whom they could assist. This should have been the role the state should have assumed from the day the lock down was announced, but it came much later and not universally.

The initial action was surely not adequate but it was whatever was possible... and done with trust and a spirit of partnership

First and foremost, there is some food on the table which unfortunately only happens to be the main staples and does not by any mean fulfil all the nutritional requirements of the family. Access to potential employment - when you get beaten by the police who have emergency powers that allow them to restrain you and use your desperation to make money - sounds completely illegal, criminal and unjustified and the reality in the complete absence of alternatives that work for the poor developed by the city and the country.

We also found out that all the health advisory sound almost tragically comical when applied to dense informal settlements

When most of the vulnerable people live in the city how do you do social distancing when 8 to 10 people are locked in a small 300 to 400 ft.² (27-35 m²) house. How do you wash your hands as often as possible when there adequate water is not there? How do you deal with the barrage of fake news? Every single advisory is accompanied with fake news that there is more fake news!

Or, how to protect yourself against COVID-19 that ends up taking more of your time than actually putting advisories that work and even the advisories that work constantly get challenged and reconstituted for instance *WHO first said no masks then said yes masks then they said no need to test for people who may have contacted it but don't have any symptoms then they said they should be tested..* so science, technology, policies and routine standard operating procedures to handle crisis have been completely destroyed in the face of the pandemic and so the question that arises in the world of webinars and discussions and meetings on the net is ‘what next’. What has come out very clearly is that the real capacity we need to develop, all of us in the global, regional, national and local is first of all to produce a larger environment of peace and trust and caring in the absence of clear, defined ways to address the unknown. The second most important thing is to ensure that everybody is taken care of - nobody goes hungry; nobody feels insecure or threatened and that supportive behavior locally, nationally and globally embraces people to have the courage to face the unknown. The next very important thing that we have all learnt from past crises is that while we cannot change the nature of the crisis but if we extract every ounce of learning ,from the experience that we either have ourselves or that we observe and learn from others, to look at how to respond rather than react how to study the impact of even thoughtful and caring responses in terms of the value of outputs and the impact it has had, not with a view of punishment and fear that will promote no risk taking but to take measured risks to find ways to address, manage, assist and support all the work that needs to be done with a very clear eye on the value in the long term. For instance, we know how much travel development interventionist of all kinds, politicians, technology professionals, development consultants, you name it - yeah mate - travel in order to negotiate, dialogue, explore, learn etc., we'll find that it's equally costly as the implementation.

The changing environment for civil society in India

In the last few years the fiduciary environment has become very punitive for NGOs. Being part of national attempts to reduce cash transactions for instance has meant that the times have been very tough for SPARC's work with the federations whose entire economy and financial transactions are in cash. While SPARC has been able to address these challenges with support from the trustees and chartered accountants and advisories from NGO sector networks like Vani and others, the

...and some plans for the coming year

cost of these changes in the administrative supervision of financial transactions has increased. FCRA regulations too have become very draconian day by day. Now lapses and mistakes are punishable by very high fines. There is nothing wrong in being rigorous, what is challenging is for community leadership to make this transition at this pace.

Grant makers seek new paradigms: where do we fit in that?

In the present situation, our work to produce strong and consistent community leadership and to build systems within their organization to stay on course while the urbanization processes continue to ignore their developmental needs is at great odds with output and outcome driven grant making which never works easily in the urban habitat sector. We do not seem to fit into these frameworks and face further challenges since most philanthropy that drives grant making works in health and education sectors and that too mainly in the rural areas. We have also lost most of our foreign donors who believe that Indian grant makers should now take their place.

The commitment to stay on course

The commitment to stay on course is a tough choice we have made collectively. And time will test this strategy. We seek to become lean, deepen efficiency and reduce whatever costs we can while staying on course to support federation area resource centers. We constantly seek to demonstrate how the work of federating slum communities across cities, states and nationally is the main strategy that will produce equitable urbanization in the time frame set nationally or internationally.

Exploring new possibilities while deepening existing pathways

The challenge to stay on course, we acknowledge, has to have a parallel track for exploring new possibilities. These new possibilities are in the following avenues:

Firstly, develop new ways to articulate what we do, continue to speak with the state and non state actors; this requires doing what we do but demonstrating its value in different spaces in different articulation. This is still a work in progress. Secondly, as discussed in the project section, we have identified many areas that are needed by federations which are aligned with national and global targets like climate change and energy transitions, which we are exploring (the federation way) and which are more impactful and useful. Thirdly, we are exploring areas which are not familiar to us and the federations, working with youth, working with universalities on health and education research. This we hope will serve to demonstrate to others what contribution community and participatory research brings to research and practice; we use our process systems to build new knowledge and develop livelihoods, and project delivery systems that work for the poor.

Exploring new research avenues to further legitimate knowledge from below

The strange changes in international development financing means that there are more opportunities in bidding for research funds through multi stakeholder consortiums bidding for tenders. So both as SPARC and as part of SDI we are exploring this space.

Exploring climate funds

Research on new climate and other funds indicates that only 16% reaches southern countries (IIED Research) and many of the funds are seriously under utilized. Both SDI and SPARC's use of modest but substantial capital grants indicate total usage with quantifiable outcomes and one of the challenges for the coming years is to either create consortiums where the focus is to use the federations networks to design areas of investments and ensure proposer utilization, or even better, treat SDI and other global network of the poor as the major actor recipients of such funds.

The changing global context and our work

The world is changing as our own country changes and the role of cities changes as well. At no point in the history of urbanization is rapid urban growth so palpable globally and events like the SDG and climate change agreements as well as the new urban agenda challenge the conventional development paradigm. With 2021 approaching fast, clearly national data sets are not producing accurate outcomes against targets. Further, the value of local data produced by federations and grassroots groups is still not considered legitimate.

How federations deal with direct individual and household transfer of subsidy model and its implications

In India more and more state subsidies are going directly to "beneficiary accounts in banks" or through private sector participation in public sector projects. Federations use their networks to assist communities in opening bank accounts, help towns to make sure those who have been given money are using it and providing both communities and cities feedback in what is going wrong. Very often private sector participation induced projects don't reach the bottom 20% and through various strategies (mainly through SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak (SSNS) we either take up projects or go into partnerships with private agencies to demonstrate projects.

Plans for the next year: our strategy

1. We seek to work in 6-8 medium and small towns and develop a multifaceted strategy to build local capacity to undertake all processes in our repertoire and take on a city level project development strategy.
2. At both local, national and international level, explore research and practice engagement with city and university institutions to demonstrate value of partnership with communities.
3. Undertake documentation for work done in various areas to develop historical material of the achievements of the federations.
4. The advocacy focus is both national and international as more and more infrastructure investments coming from national and global funds produce evictions and seek ways to address these at the planning stages.
5. Finally, keep our minds and collective focus on exploring new possibilities and new externally produced solutions to incorporate into the federation knowledge systems without compromising their character, voice and drive.

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