



SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF AREA RESOURCE CENTRES

# ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



# 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

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## Reflections from the Director

To the readers of this annual report:

This year's reflection piece makes me wonder whether I should just cut paste what I wrote last year... Covid and what it has done to deepen and worsen the condition of the poor and vulnerable... to continue to remind ourselves and others that we should change the way we act, think, and feel about addressing poverty and vulnerability. Regretfully the webinar chants of BUILD BACK BETTER are fading rapidly and development discourse has rapidly gone back to its pre-covid style, although phrases of the devastation it has created get mentioned repeatedly. Yet all may not be lost (we should hope) because many new alliances have been forged, webinars led to expanded awareness of who is doing what; knowledge and opportunities to explore new networks that have sprung up; and the people who would otherwise be locked in different development spaces are now E -friends, waiting to meet and interact and work together. So, a few new possibilities to explore.

Lockdowns and travel restrictions curbed a critical part of the alliance's peer exchanges which served to produce learning opportunities, sharing of skills that help make representation to the city and state, and producing demonstration and innovative projects and build new memberships. This was in competition with the urgent ongoing need for diversion of resources to cope with challenges of assisting families to survive the lockdowns and to seek medical support. Yet, web-based meetings despite all their challenges emerged as a valuable alternative. All possible ways to have meetings, share news and continue the development dialogue were done on phones... always considering access to Wi-Fi, its strength and always keeping in mind especially the archaic phones that women ended up having.... Interestingly now women speak with each other more often than they did before, have more routine discussions on specific issues and exchanges of experiences.... These are practices we will stay with even after the covid travel challenges go down. Undoubtedly the past several decades of face to face meetings helped deepen the conversations.

The most vital journey that began for us (the Indian alliance of SPARC, Mahila Milan and NSDF as well as SDI (Shack/Slum Dwellers International), a transnational network of federation members and their national affiliates of which we are a founding affiliate) is that just before the covid crisis, we, as a social movement of the urban poor had begun to explore the impacts of the climate change process on our work. Social movements are like behemoths that don't turn around quickly and we took several years before and during the covid lock down period to reflect on how we should explore this space. As an anchor, I was already engaged in several explorations seeking to understand how to embed this new knowledge and challenges in our ongoing work. That journey took some time, however, I feel good about the position we have now taken, which is that climate change is happening NOW, it has an embedded and intrinsic foundational role in all choices we make in our development work and we need to accommodate this new science and knowledge in all our activities. So, we juggle with several challenges simultaneously: one is that **development investments and climate investments are two sides of the same coin** and both need to form the basis of choices we make. The second more serious and difficult one is that with both these seemingly parallel UN deliberating challenges, they converge with huge deficits and back logs where the poor are concerned. To add to this crisis, **many routine development initiatives are actually mal-adaptations** e.g., water based sewage disposal. We don't have access to this universally for informal settlements in the first place in most informal settlements, but we also don't have laws or technology that will help make the transition. Therefore, new science and new municipal laws are needed universally for adaptation activities. In the top-down architecture of development in general and its financing in particular, the

challenge of urban poverty and habitat and climate adaptation are yet to get serious attention. Governments, mayors, and global decision makers see cities as producers of carbon emissions and seek mitigation strategies and markets whose needs have to change , yet most have not considered including the needs of the most vulnerable. And the list where the poor are invisible goes on and on.

Our role as organisations seeking social justice and seeking not to be left behind means working harder to produce both evidence and solutions and demanding investments for an already highly ignored constituency of the poor and vulnerable. Now research in sustainable alternatives and legitimating them in municipal procurement and financing seems a distant unattainable strategy.

Covid has highlighted the plight of the poor vis a vis health as never before. It is ironic that the Indian alliance began to work on water and sanitation as the most foundational needs of informal habitat to improve health and now we come back to examine it decades later, deepening our knowledge for action in health and wellbeing. Globally we are told that 97% of all investments in health care are for curative health - this includes insurance and hospitals - and only 3% is for preventive interventions. Our own findings show that the 3% of health - primary, preventive, and promotive health are most critical in all aspects of populations in general and especially of the vulnerable and poor. Promotive, preventive and primary health care can potentially be able to give local communities maximum control through knowledge and practice of what choices to make, what to look out for so as to reduce health burdens of households. It also can potentially change roles and relationships of the people with health professionals, the city and its health delivery and the accountability from policy makers and local politicians. In the next few years examining diets, testing for chronic and infectious diseases, and exploring what households and communities can do themselves as well as what they can do with cities will be undertaken with the same processes of evidence gathering, examining, changing habits and roles and demanding changes in the ways city administrations deal with health.

Whether it is relocation of large volumes of people due to large mitigation projects, natural calamities or deep poverty that compels people to relocate, governments have ignored the needs of those households and informality and illegal squatting continues to increase exponentially. It's is yet a long way to make cities equitable and work for all. New ways to manage good quality air, water, greenery and making cities habitable for all remains a crucial project in which the poor have a huge stake. Their own actions and that of their cities and national and global focus needs to include them just as other excluded groups, urban and rural, need to participate to change their own lives and save the planet. The change should have started a long time ago and even as we enter 2022 we are still talking but actions are inadequate for the changes we need to address.



Sheela Patel

Director SPARC

## **Vision**

It was in 1983-84 that the founders of SPARC began to build on a vision of partnering with a social movement of the urban poor, starting with the most vulnerable communities setting agendas for actions, with women's central participation driving the transformation needed to produce social justice, equality and citizenship for those living intergenerationally in informal settlements.

NGOs working in urban areas were by and large working on projects at that time, defining where they worked and what activities they undertook by the time frame emerging from the funding they received. Yet, to the founders of SPARC they all (including those who worked in this sector at that time) were unable to address the challenges of invisibility, the lack of rights and entitlements and lack of identity that the poor faced when living in informality. It was clear to us that that change would never be delivered by projects and that too quickly and efficiently.

SO our vision was a quest... a quest to explore the possibility of an equal partnership between professionals working in a NGO (us) and the emerging or existing leadership of the urban poor with women's central participation to explore the development of a long term vision of community driven strategies assisted by us. Thus began THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF AREA RESOURCE CENTERS.

## **Mission**

The mission of SPARC initially was to explore a partnership and develop terms of engagement with the leadership of informal settlements. To craft a symbiotic relationship that would lock us in a long term sustainable alliance in which we would craft the strategy together. Discuss, argue and even have a good fight to craft a solution that we then collectively took forward.

Between 1984 and 1988 this alliance was formed and the mission of working together, crafting our strategies together and refining roles and functions developed. SPARC was set up in 1984 and began to work with women's collectives of the pavement dwellers in Mumbai who called themselves Mahila Milan (Women Together). In 1986 NSDF (the National Slum Dwellers Federation) comprising of slum leaders who set up this organisation to fight evictions and operated in 8 cities came to work with SPARC and Mahila Milan. Together we pooled our visions and values and agreed that we would work in a symbiotic partnership, debate, argue and negotiate with each other to define priorities and design who we work with.

Our mission was a secure habitat and recognition of informal settlers as people with rights in the city. This meant secure tenure for housing and land and access to basic infrastructure and services which form the most essential safety nets against poverty in urban areas. This was our central focus collectively. Deep at the heart of this mission commitment was that it was women centered and community led. Its was a long term commitment for which we needed the patience and stamina for a marathon ie., it was a decadal or multidecadal process with no short cuts.

## Goals

The overarching goal was to be recognised as an alliance that would develop strategies, explore possible solutions and demonstrate to the State and civil society and the urban poor that the poor themselves were drivers of change and drivers of solutions.

1. Develop and showcase knowledge produced by and for the poor that would make large volumes of the urban poor at all levels, local to national and later global demonstrate that poor communities need to be part of the problem solving and execution for the solution space.
2. Demonstrate the ability and capacity of the informal communities in cities to develop knowledge practices and participate in negotiations and programs for change.
3. Drive for Partnership for change to establish a working relationship with professionals, financial agencies, politicians and administrators where the organizations of the poor are equal.

For the alliance to be seen as a learning laboratory so others can learn from the experiences. We knew then what is evident now - that the world has to address urban poverty and that urbanization is not reversible and change may begin with modest steps but its champions have to ensure it adapts to work for all.

## Guiding Principles

The principles that have guided our partnership, our strategies and our values are simple: The stark reality is that of the urban poor always fending for themselves, that they generally have no safety net of amenities and services in the present exclusionary development planning norms, that their solutions are for survival and not to produce resilience. This has to change and the poor must drive this change with the other stakeholders in the city .

1. Partnerships for change are necessary and must be explored. The duty bearers, the city, state and international organisations must transform the architecture to produce partnerships for change and we who are aligned with movements of the poor must play an active role in this transformation.
2. Large, aggregated, organised communities of the poor in as many geographies (local, national, international) that produce data, produce solutions for exploring alternatives and participate in the change they seek are critical to change present marginalization and exclusionary practices.
3. Although the alliance has memberships, the solutions they seek and that must be sustainable should be for all poor and not exclusively for the members of the organisation alone.

Patience with persistence is critical. This (once again) is a marathon, not a 100 meter race even though all development investments want solutions to emerge in 2-3 year project cycles when the problems have been multi-generational.



# Federation Strategy & Process

## Our overarching strategic tools

Over the past twenty years, the Alliance has developed what we call **the federation strategy** to achieve its goal of ensuring identity, secure housing and infrastructure for the urban poor. The tool kit to do this was developed in the first 5 years.

**Area Resource Centres** were located in the physical spaces where communities reside. These were owned and managed by the communities themselves to meet and work in. (Hence our name: “Society for the promotion of Resource centers”)

**Create women’s central participation at the neighbourhood level:** *Savings and Credit* program brings the grassroots women together on an everyday basis. The leaders not only collect the savings amounts, they collectively decide on disbursement of loans which simultaneously helps build trust within the settlement and strengthens the financial assets of participating families. Womens collectives affiliated to Mahila Milan by default began to be the leadership in neighbourhoods due to knowledge exposure and finance management of the savings groups they managed.

**Knowledge is power: Designing and collecting data about themselves and defining their needs; aggregating it with all settlements facing similar challenges produced data and evidence to process to the outside stakeholders.** The alliance supports communities to collect detailed information about themselves, at household, settlement or ward levels through **Enumerations, Mappings and Surveys** to define their collective challenges, solutions and strategies to negotiate with local authorities from an informed position.

**Learning from each other and appropriating strategies and solutions.** *Peer Exchanges* that facilitate communities to visit each other, share ideas and learn from each other’s experiences and lessons through physical meetings. The Covid-19 pandemic did not allow such visits but the alliance developed a strategy of virtual meetings/exchanges through which women leaders especially could exchange experiences and working out solutions for issues in their settlements.

**Housing Exhibitions or community sanitation blocks which communities designed constructed and showcased to the professionals and the city as well as to the communities of the poor.** *Precedent setting* allowed the urban communities to undertake demonstrating solutions that were not in the city policy and getting the city or government to accept these. This was as much to drive the elements of the solutions they needed as much as to convince the state to adopt these solutions and finance them.



**Developing pro poor policy and practices that are inclusive are the ultimate goal of all our work geared towards strengthening bonds between poor communities and building their financial, managerial and organisational capacities so that they can take on not only housing and infrastructure projects themselves, but also participate in the larger issues of city redevelopment and management.**



# Core Processes

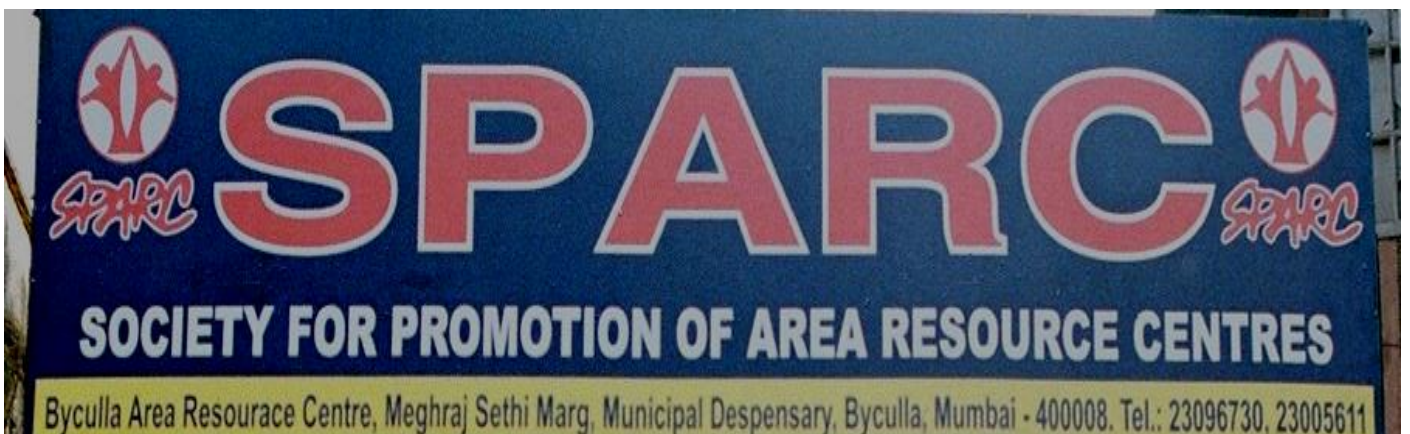
## Area Resource Centres

The concept of the AREA RESOURCE CENTER creating spaces in their own locality which they manage forms a fundamental shift from getting community members to the NGO office for discussions. This implies values that community manages the process, owns the challenges and their engagement is on their terms. Mumbai alone has 15 ARCs. The first ARC is located in Byculla, in a garage of a municipal primary health center in central Mumbai and this is where the oldest members of Mahila Milan and the Federation have been located for the last four decades.

As people gather at the ARC regularly, they begin to feel a sense of collective ownership for the centre, and use it as a focal point for interaction within the community and with other communities, people and organisations. In fact, for many women this is the only place outside of their home where they can meet, work together, manage community meetings and even relax!

This centre is also important because it is the place where the collective savings of the communities are pooled and loans are disbursed. Moreover, it is always accessible and if a person suddenly experiences a crisis, they can and do come to this centre even in the middle of the night to get a loan. And it's a place where visitors come and meet communities.

Supporting the poor to build their savings and providing them access to affordable credit, gather data and own it and explore solutions they need rather than what others impose on them are the most basic and essential building blocks of the entire structure of the federation's mobilisation strategy. In fact, whenever the alliance enters a new community, the first thing it does is to form saving and credit groups and help communities learn to collect data about themselves. As federation members say, this activity represents the pulse of the organisation, **"when savings are strong, the whole federation is strong."**



# Core Processes

## Women managed Savings

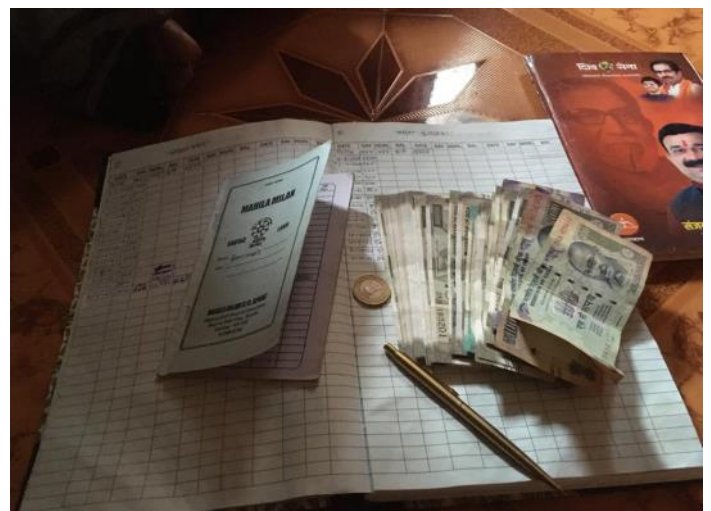
The savings and credit system increases the financial assets of the poor, it provides much needed credit, and, very importantly, because it is designed to truly support communities, it builds trust and strengthens bonds within settlements. The federation has designed its savings and credit system in a way that truly supports poor families to slowly come out of debt, build their assets and begin planning for the future. The process is entirely geared towards building trust and supporting community members. After all, Mahila Milan leaders live on the same street as their members, and know exactly when a family is able or unable to make repayments. The idea is to maximise people's participation and to ensure that the poor do not have to dip into their slowly growing savings when they face a crisis.

The fact that the credit program is run by local women's groups is also a key to the federation's strategy. This develops women's managerial capacities and their confidence in handling large sums of money. Thus, apart from clear financial benefits, it serves as a means to bring women out of the home and into the public sphere in a manner rarely resented by men. Once women and communities become accustomed to this new decision-making role, older Mahila Milan leaders encourage these new women's groups to start addressing other community issues such as solving minor disputes, helping community members obtain ration cards and meeting local authorities regarding water, sanitation and other settlement-level issues.

This is a savers pass book each woman has a unique ID, it has her name, the state, city and neighborhood code



Inside each savings book there are two sections one for savings which is white and which has an entry every time money is saved and it has a yellow section where the loan given is recorded and all repayments are also documented



# Core Processes

## Central feature of savings and women's participation

### The process: at the community center

- Every saver has a book: it has the name/the community /neighborhood/ city/ state. This produces a unique ID that is put on the savings book.
- Each savings made, loan given and repayment is entered in the book. And in the note book of the savings and loans collector.
- At the community center this is documented in their register and money collected is handed over with both signatories.
- This money from loan repayments is collected by the city community center put into a bank account while savings lent out and data and loan forms are sent to the Mumbai MM NSDF which enters data into a computer

### The process: between the center and SPARC and NSDF MM level at city and nationally

- NSDF and MM national leadership does a second checking and transfers the information to SPARC where the data is processed.
- Both national NSDF MM as well as City and local level get summaries of what has been documented as well as anticipated loan and interest to be paid the next month  
The excel sheets also indicate those that did not make payments so that local groups can check why and what to do
- At the end of each year there is a city wise summary for national leaders to decode challenges to address and what changes and improvements to be made.

### Why the Indian affiliates feel this should be done by all federations

- Trust in groups emerges from good management. The minute the trust and systems collapse its an indicator that the network must intervene to find out what is going wrong
- Good management of savings and credit needs external evidence as well as building skills from small groups to national federations require us to be exact. Who does what, how much money, accounting for details.  
Too many poor communities have lost savings because of poor supervision.
- While details remain with each national affiliate the summaries are also useful to SDI.

# Core Processes

## Enumeration, Mapping, Surveys

Enumerations, mapping and surveys of slums are critical tools in the process of community mobilisation. The Federation introduces communities to these tools and encourages them to collect all details related to socio-economic conditions such as housing, sanitation, water, income and education at the individual, household and settlement level. Communities themselves collect information about themselves and then use it to explore solutions and negotiate with relevant state authorities. Moreover, the actual task of collecting and processing data by and for a community generates an understanding that community problems can be dealt with only through collective effort.

Most often, neither the municipality nor state authorities have such detailed information about a slum community. This lack of information often results in allocations being refused to slums and informal settlements.

Cities often have plans at two levels, one at the entire city level and another at the ward level. Information collected will give a clear understanding of the current situation at the ward level providing great opportunities to integrate with the ward plans and insure a ward-wide pilot and city-wide as a larger development goal.

In Mumbai we took up profiling in several wards as the city administration of Mumbai had recently come under severe criticism with the city development plans being far away from the actual situation on the ground. Lack of adequate data – especially of half of the city's population living in slums is one of the reasons for this discrepancy. The city continues to service the slums that are situated on municipal land but if development is to reach all with universally available basic services throughout the city and its wards, it is imperative to collect data on the slums that are on non-municipal owned lands, where the access issues are further exacerbated due to tenure linked issues.

With enumeration and survey data the communities collect themselves, they are in a stronger position to negotiate for their rights with the city and state authorities.

Data at household level is collected when there is a project that needs to be implemented - housing, sanitation or any other related to infrastructure. This is also useful to ascertain the number of households that would be affected by a particular project and the support required for the same. The survey gathers individual household information that serves as a tool while designing housing options for the residents or for provision of sanitation services or to take up any other open space project.



# Core Processes

## Enumeration, Mapping, Surveys

The range of information gathering instruments SDI has

### TYPE OF DATA

1. Slum Profiling
2. Household enumerations
3. Specific amenities and services benchmarking
4. Opinion gathering in groups
5. Settlement registers

### METHODS

1. Paper questionnaires to individuals households
2. Groups discussions written or recorded
3. Amenities mapping and assessments



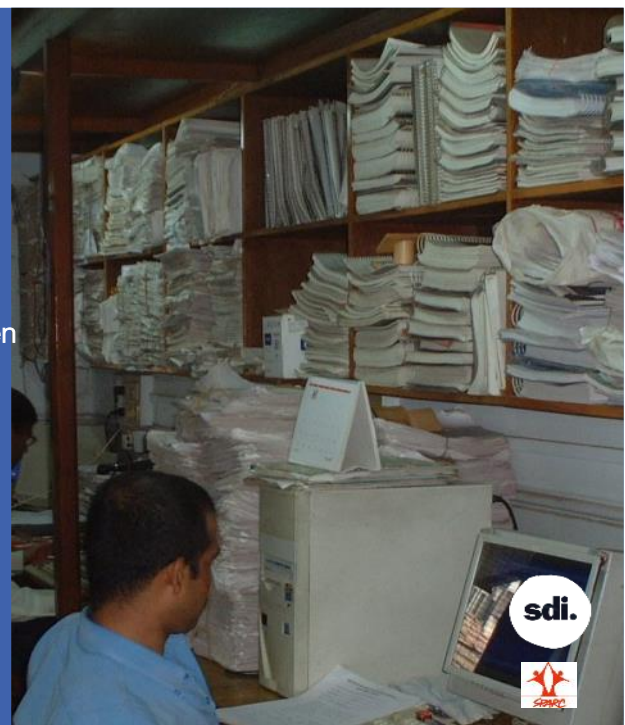
## Who owns, manages the data

### TYPE OF DATA GATHERING

1. One time use and its over
2. Settlements have results as does their federations
3. NGOs maintain records and digitalise material
4. Affiliate city and partner share data
5. Settlement registers

### METHODS

1. Paper questioners to individuals households
2. Groups discussion written or recorded
3. Amenities mapping and assessments
4. Peoples opinions about various issues



# Federation Strategy & Process

## Peer Exchanges

Community exchange programs rest on a very simple concept: the poor learn best from the poor. In these exchanges, federation members and leaders visit each other's settlements to learn about their conditions and problems and their shared experiences.

Exchanges take place between poor communities in the same city, across cities and even across countries. This is an important first step to break the isolation and helplessness that poverty brings because once communities see themselves as part of a large collective and shared challenges, they can together explore solutions to problems they face.

Community exchanges are exciting experiences for everyone involved. People learn to be hosts and guests and the larger neighbourhood learns with the leaders as well. Locating potential leaders and mentoring them is often initiated in these exchanges. Giving opportunities for new members to become acquainted with federation strategies and who must be inspired by veteran federation leaders. For older federation members, exchanges energise and revitalise the federation process through the influx of fresh ideas and perspectives.

For the last thirty seven years, the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan has been committed to supporting community exchanges within and outside India in order to transform community commitments to participate in the change they need, by enabling poor people to plan, control and negotiate their own development strategies. This process of exchange first led to the formation and later growth of Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI), an international network of organisations of the urban poor in over thirty two countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America who share ideas and experiences, and support one another in gaining access to adequate land, infrastructure and housing.



# Core Processes

## Peer Exchanges

### Exchange Visit between different social movements this year

Waste picker associations from Shimla and Vijaywada had a one week exchange with Mahila Milan in Mumbai and Pune. Some of the groups are employed by the Municipality in their town for picking up household garbage, some were a part of their unions and the ones from Vijaywada were primarily informal waste pickers. They are being currently supported by the NGO DBRC (Dalit Bahujan Resource Centre) that looks at issues of Dalits and Tribals, the most marginalised groups in India.

The five day exchange included visiting Milan Nagar, Railway Slum Relocation Colonies, Waste picker groups and cooperatives in Mumbai and Pune. They spent most of the time interacting with Mahila Milan to understand how they came together, how they became organised, got access to their rights, tools they used, and got a glimpse of all the processes that the women in Mumbai own.

The main purpose of the visit was to help them realise the possibility of collectivisation and the importance it can bring to their struggle for reclaiming rights and negotiating with the city and other duty bearers. The most powerful message was the value and contribution of women's participation centrally in all processes. Most of the visiting groups do not have many women as part of their groups and one of the purposes of this visit was to help them understand how women led movements can make better decisions and think differently, and therefore are absolutely important.

This was a vital learning that the groups said they would be taking with them and would go back and encourage women to join them and articulate their ideas, take ownership of certain processes and fight jointly side by side in their quest to access their rights as citizens and service providers in their cities.

**“I feel that when women enter a movement, they bring the biggest strength in that they do not think only about themselves, but about everyone. They work keeping in mind that everyone should progress.”**

**Inayat Kakkar,  
The George Institute for Global Health**





# Core Processes

## Policy Changes

It is clear to all working in the development space that policies, procedures, procurements and practical routines exclude the poor both from decision making and accessing and benefitting from development investments. Either allocated resources are not being used (even if their amounts are grossly inadequate), or there are no policies and allocations for the informal urban poor. The alliance sees a direct link between its tool kit of skill building, sustained mobilization of the poor and engaging the state to explore community designed solutions as a way to breach this vacuum.

The starting point was the work with pavement dwellers of Mumbai. It was WE THE INVISIBLE that demonstrated who lives on pavements and why and how they survive in the city. And that census is possible. Their housing design training and search for lands brought in evidence of how the poor can participate in design and execution of a solution to relocation from pavements. Their house model exhibition demonstrated that the 14 feet height small home served to give space to a three-generation family. Savings done routinely and managed by communities gave financing agencies and the state administration assurance of their skills and persistence. Locating critical leadership at city, state and national levels the alliance leadership engaged them to explore possibilities.

In 1995, when the state government of Maharashtra decided to review its slum development policy, the Alliance was invited to be part of the planning committee. The Alliance advocated for its oldest constituency – pavement dwellers – to be included in this policy, and for the first time in the history of Mumbai, under the **Slum Rehabilitation Authority Act of 1995**, pavement dwellers were accorded the same status as slum dwellers and received the same benefits. In **2005 the Mahatma Gandhi Footpath Dwellers Rehabilitation Policy** was announced and Milan, the cooperative of pavement dwellers of 356 households got the land they wanted in Mankurd, Mumbai.

While there are many such instances the relocation of the slums along the railway used many of the strategies the alliance recommended i.e., the baseline survey and mapping of households needing to be relocated was done by the RSDF leadership; the land location, the house design approval and management of grievance redressal was designed by the alliance and undertaken by them as part of the large Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) to upgrade the railway travel for 90% of trips in the city on Mumbai.

Through the exchanges the data collection and women's central participation, communities with different land tenure and basic amenities designed solutions that the state adopted as part of its policy and designed project delivery where communities were involved. Today many communities within the federations and more outside benefit from these processes which are now essential parts of the state process to deliver services and habitat investments to the poor.



# Core Processes

## Pilot or Precedent Setting Projects

The experience of the Alliance reveals that although poor communities have many innovative ideas for solving their problems, they are constrained by numerous technical, financial, legal and other issues. Therefore, they need a lot of support before they can demonstrate the utility and sustainability of their ideas. However, once these solutions are successfully implemented and relevant stakeholders convinced, they become models for authorities to scale up at city and country level. Changing policy of the city or state has two major pathways - one is to design a new policy another is to create precedents which either tweak the existing policy or activate its elements for a constituency that was initially excluded de facto. The alliance chooses the precedent setting mode as it is equally powerful and more manageable for the urban poor to take forward.

One of the Alliance's most successful precedent setting projects was building a community toilet in a slum called Chikalwadi in Mumbai in 1999. While the World Bank's loan to the MCGB wanted individual toilets, the federations demonstrated what was possible in dense slums with little water and no sewage connections. This was initially rejected by the MCGB, but picked up by the Pune Municipal Corporation and then accepted two years later by Mumbai. This toilet went on to form the basis for the Pune Slum Sanitation Project, a partnership between municipal authorities, NGOs and CBOs to construct 2000 toilet seats in Pune and the Mumbai Sewage Disposal Project (MSDP), a partnership between the Mumbai municipal authorities and the World Bank to provide minimum sanitation for slum settlements across Mumbai. On the basis of the Pune project, the central government later initiated the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, a Centre-State cost-sharing subsidy for community toilets.

Another critical precedent setting project was the resettlement of 12,000 families that lived in slums along the railway tracks in Mumbai under the World Bank funded Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) in 2000. Resettlement on such a scale occurring without any police force and with extensive community participation was a first for the entire country. In Mumbai, it transformed the federation's relationships with state and city authorities, resulted in a massive increase in federation membership and formed the basis for the Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Project (MUIP), the next resettlement project of 35,000 families in the city. Today the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has institutionalized this

approach for all infrastructure projects and created a department within MMRDA to manage these elements for larger projects.

The Alliance advocates for pro-poor policy changes in the areas of housing and infrastructure and, towards this aim, works with the state at a variety of levels. The idea is that as leaders of the federation successfully dialogue with local officials to solve settlement-level issues, they can begin to address more complex problems that need policy change. Thus, the credibility of the alliance and the federation and Mahila Milan leaders is drawn from their connections and successes on the ground, rather than from connections above. More importantly creating a pathway for other communities to explore this way to seek their needs to be fulfilled.



Community toilet, Chikalwadi, Mumbai



MUTP, MUIP Relocation, Mumbai

# Project & Practice

## Housing

The challenge to adequately house the urban poor is increasingly understood as a matter of structural and institutional arrangement. Shelter is one of the basic human requirements yet even after 70+ years of independence, the country is still grappling with the growing shelter problem, especially of the urban poor. The problem has further been compounded by the rapid increase in urban slum population. Constant migration of rural population to cities in search of jobs and the growth of existing urban informal slum population finds the city infrastructure not being planned to serve their needs.

Poor communities are constantly facing the price of informality because whatever works for them seems to be outside the purview of the law. Our experience has been that policies are not usually based upon emerging practice: it takes time for something that is initially perceived as unacceptable to gain acceptance by the authorities. The challenge is to create conditions under which poor people can participate in looking for solutions and to experiment and see what works for them; the next step is to publicize the success and get its essentials incorporated into public policy and program. The alliance calls this Precedent Setting.

Mahila Milan has become a very powerful vehicle to mobilize communities on issues of shelter.



In-situ housing at Dharavi, Mumbai



R&R Housing at Hadapsar, Pune



MUIP R&R Housing at Oshiwara, Mumbai

# Project & Practice

## Housing

PROJECT NAME	CITY	PROJECT TYPE	SCHEME	START YEAR	END YEAR	NO. OF HHs
						<b>8,439</b>
Oshiwara 1 (Precedent setting)	Mumbai	In-situ & Relocation	SRA / MUIP	2003	2007	836
Bharat Janta Phase I	Mumbai	In-situ	SRA	2003	2005	147
Milan Nagar Phase I (Precedent Setting)	Mumbai	Relocation	SRA/ MUTP	2000	2006	88
Kanjurmarg Jolly Board Phase I	Mumbai	Relocation	SRA/ MUTP	2005	2011	106
Rajiv Indira (Precedent Setting)	Mumbai	In-situ	SRA	1998	2011	263
Dharavi Markandya (Precedent Setting)	Mumbai	In-situ	SRA	1998	1999-2000	92
Hadapsar (Precedent Setting)	Pune	Relocation		2003	2005-06	713
Mankhurd Transit Camp	Mumbai	Relocation		2000	2000	3,014
Suryodaya Nagar (Precedent Setting)	Pune	Relocation		1997		50
Solapur Mathadi Kamgar	Sholapur	Relocation	Subsidy	2003	2005	34
Sholapur Bidi Kamgar	Sholapur	Relocation	Subsidy	2003	2005	501
Jagjeevan Ram Nagar	Hyderabad	In-situ		2005		71
Nanded (Precedent Setting)	Nanded	In-situ	BSUP	2011	2013	2013
Oshiwara 2 Phase I	Mumbai	In-situ & Relocation	SRA/ MUIP	2004	2011	1036
Nanded II	Nanded	In-situ	BSUP	2014	2015	898
Bhubaneswar Housing	Bhubaneswar	In-situ	Subsidy	2010		249
Puri Housing	Puri	In-situ	Subsidy	2010		53
Sunudugudu	Bangalore	In-situ	Subsidy	2002	2005	75

# Project & Practice

## Relocation

Informal settlements encroaching land because there are no allocations push for only two options for the alliance to explore. One is to seek for land tenure where they live or look for relocation instead of eviction if the land they squat on cannot allow them to build houses under any circumstances. Slums on pavements, slums near the sea or rivers and slums along the railway track cannot get land tenure and must move. While the alliance always prefers the first option to get land tenure, it has conceded that city required infrastructure linked displacement must have a planned relocation. And the work initiated with pavement dwellers has facilitated this.

As part of the MUPT project the alliance was part of the policy for relocation that was approved by the Maharashtra Cabinet and designed and executed the relocation of households living within 30 feet of the railway tracks. Between 1998 and 2005 in Mumbai, 18,000 households voluntarily demolished their shacks along the railroad tracks so that the city could make long-overdue improvements to its vital railroad system which provides public transport for over 70% of all trips taken in the city. With support from SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan planned and managed their own resettlement, avoiding the turmoil of police aided, forced displacement. This relocation ensured that all households got their entitlements.

What we as an alliance learnt is that just the relocation itself is not the end of our involvement: our ongoing association with these and many other relocated households indicates that challenges created by intergenerational poverty do not vanish with secure tenure alone, that there are now more challenges of different kinds to be addressed. Some of these are dealing with access to new jobs, additional money is needed to pay for community expenses for maintaining their buildings, its repair and maintenance and in many instances poorly designed and constructed buildings.

Mahila Milan and the Federation have been working with communities relocated by the city under various projects where the federations relocated households as well as where no other NGO worked before. For instance, in Ahmednagar and Ahmedabad, the federations are working with a group of families that were relocated without any assistance or support system whatsoever. In both cities, these communities are not yet registered cooperative societies, there is no hand holding from the city or any external agency, infrastructure is not in place, buildings are in bad conditions, their ration cards, aadhar cards ( ID Cards issues by the state ) have not yet been transferred from the original location, housing

cooperative societies have not been formed or registered, families are either selling or renting their flats as they are unable to cope with these issues and there is no system of grievance redressal for them.

In such circumstances, with the support of Mahila Milan, local committees have been formed and through exchanges they are learning from those relocated households that have done these activities. The surveys conducted help assess the current situation, making lists of challenges they face, write letters to local municipal corporations, hold meetings to bring in more people from the communities. The idea is also to build systems in these initial locations and then use their strategy impact to help others like them to explore the possibilities, document the process and showcase what people have to go through when they are left all by themselves, when they have no knowledge of how and where are they being shifted to, when they get no support from the city.

Given the huge investments coming in infrastructure the need to develop people centered relocation and rehabilitation is urgently needed to be done in ways that people become participants and not beneficiaries.



# Project & Practice

## Sanitation

While the commitment to stop open defecation and provide minimum universal sanitation to all was taken up by the federation and about 15 state and non state agencies in a meeting in Pune at Yashada (Government of Maharashtra training institute ) in 2000, it was a decade and a half later that the Ministry of Urban Development of India created a universal sanitation policy and it was our present prime minister who included issues of universal sanitation in all his speeches. The problem of sanitation for the urban poor in Indian cities is huge and terrible for women especially. Municipal toilets in slums are few and far between. Where they do exist, they are in a state of severe disrepair and are overburdened by queues of people that stretch a mile-long in the mornings. Pay and use toilets are unaffordable as typically they cost Rs. 1 per use, which for an average sized slum household costs Rs. 150/- per month, on the calculation that each family member will use the toilet only once a day.

For children in slums, their playgrounds are also their toilets. These kids can never compete in the long queues for municipal toilets and end up having to defecate outside their homes. In fact, their mothers often encourage them to squat outside as they are afraid that their little kids will slip and fall into the large-sized filthy toilet pans that exist in slums.

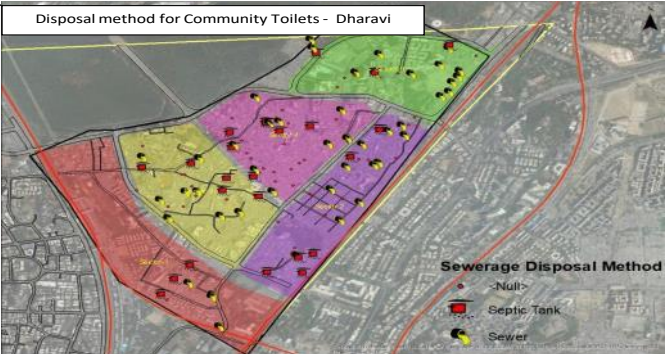
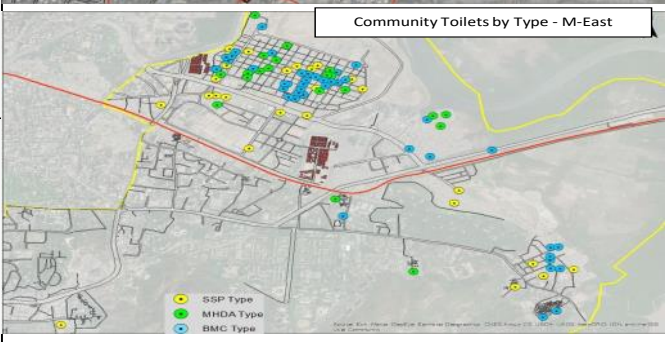
As early as 1984, women pavement dwellers from Byculla identified sanitation as a critical priority and development

aspiration. Byculla Mahila Milan was the first to focus on the need to separate faeces from settlements. Between 1986 and 2016 the Alliance constructed 835 community toilet blocks in Mumbai, Pune, Kanpur and other Indian cities. This evolved into the Zero Open Defecation campaign that the alliance took up across the country and later based on the alliance's work, a National Task Force for Sanitation was set up in 2005 to promote the zero open defecation campaign at a country-wide level.

For many years our campaign for community toilets was misunderstood, as though we promoted it as the only option for slums. We have defended this by stating “ WHERE THERE IS NO SEWERAGE CONNECTION, INADEQUATE WATER AND HOMES ARE SMALLER THAT 200 SQ FT, TOILETS INSIDE THE HOUSE ARE A HAZARD. Over the last fifteen years, cities have begun to lay sewer systems and improved water access and the new sanitation subsidy provides people with individual toilets. Where conditions permit we assist and support households to design and get subsidy for constructing toilets inside the house.

Climate change challenges include anticipating a water scarce planet and also the need to move away from water based sewerage treatment. This means the cities and national policies have to invest in developing alternatives and we will be part of that process.

## Key learning / findings – Community Toilet Blocks

<p><b>Issues identified from the survey</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Periodical cleaning of septic tank a need.</li> <li>•Converting septic tank and connecting to nearby main sewer line.</li> <li>•Arresting leakages of overhead tank, underground tank and septic tank.</li> <li>•Minor repairs such as plastering, tiling, flooring, removing tank vegetation.</li> <li>•Removing and replacing broken WC pans broken/damaged doors etc.</li> <li>•Attending to damaged electrical installation to avoid any mishap.</li> <li>•To appoint proper care taker round the clock for cleaning, maintaining and adopting social distancing etc.</li> <li>•Need for more toilets and seats, but space is a big constraint</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Highlight of what was found in the survey</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 43% BMC toilets, 25% Mhada, 20% SSP toilets (G-North, Dharavi)</li> <li>• 41% BMC toilets, 19.81% Mhada, and 33% SSP toilets (M-East)</li> <li>• 91% toilets in Dharavi connected to sewer line, 51.35% toilets in M-east</li> </ul>	

# The pandemic and the alliance

## Covid and community driven action: Data action and assessments

### Year 2 of coping with Covid

The devastation of Covid in informal settlements is such that it lays open the huge deficits of basic amenities and services and complete lack of systemic ways to address loss of jobs, children sitting at home and expected to study through digital lessons in homes with a couple of non-smart phones while Being locked in small spaces! It also uncovers the huge additional burdens as well as long term impacts of almost two years of facing this critical and devastating crisis.

The initial response was to ensure everyone has food especially when there was no state response. Gradually the state response and city actions sprung up. While Mumbai coped with a better organized city response, some of the cities and towns the federations work in took longer and in some instances the delays or no response put a burden on the Mahila Milan leaders to find relief. Assistance from BMGF, Core and SDI and assistance through SIDA led to a range of activities that provided relief - for food, medicines, safety measure vaccinations and improved basic amenities.

Mahila Milan women's leadership drove these local actions, networked with each other via web based weekly discussions to learn and share what works and what dialogue and negotiations were possible with local philanthropies, city and state administration and political representatives.

Surveys of household needing different assistance produced responses. Food loans to start small alternate income generation, assistance was provided to households that lost earning family members or sources of livelihood through provision of handcarts, sewing machines, and other equipment that could help kick start livelihoods. Medicine distribution to those most vulnerable began early. Once this was stabilized, addressing deficits of water and sanitation, meetings with political leaders, ward officials and communities to improve local hygiene continue.

Vaccinations once announced by the city and state were also areas for action federation and Mahila Milan members living in the neighbourhoods understood the entire management of vaccine administration. Vaccinated leaders and neighbours also instilled confidence among the residents who actively took the vaccination when made available.

Please watch Video on [Community Led Vaccination](#)

### Linking Hygiene challenges with infrastructure

**Our gradual exploration of linking climate change and examining seasonal illnesses and hygiene impact on health began to increase as Covid also drew more attention to health.**

The alliance collected data and evidence to demonstrate that the foundational requirement of good health is infrastructure access to minimum water, sanitation and health services that the city must provide. Two projects sequentially in the last two years produced interesting insights,

1. A Gates Foundation grant that came through CEPT provided us with possibilities to make assessments of the status of water and sanitation in slums and to address these issues. With more sewer lines being set up in many informal settlements we also examined how households could increase their access to individual toilets.
2. A SDI project in 5 countries (India, Uganda, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Ghana) involving 8 cities - three of which were from India (Pune, Bhubaneshwar and Mumbai). The data actually defined the deficits of not only water and sanitation but also of other amenities such as health services, educational and other aspects that the city development plans seek to ensure but historically continue to be denied to informal settlements.

While contribution to the activities may be assisted by different organizations, they all produced the evidence we needed to engage our ward officials and political representatives to reformulate roles and relationships needed to improve these services and redefine what community contribution can be and get an acknowledgement of their roles and critical contributions.



# The pandemic and the alliance

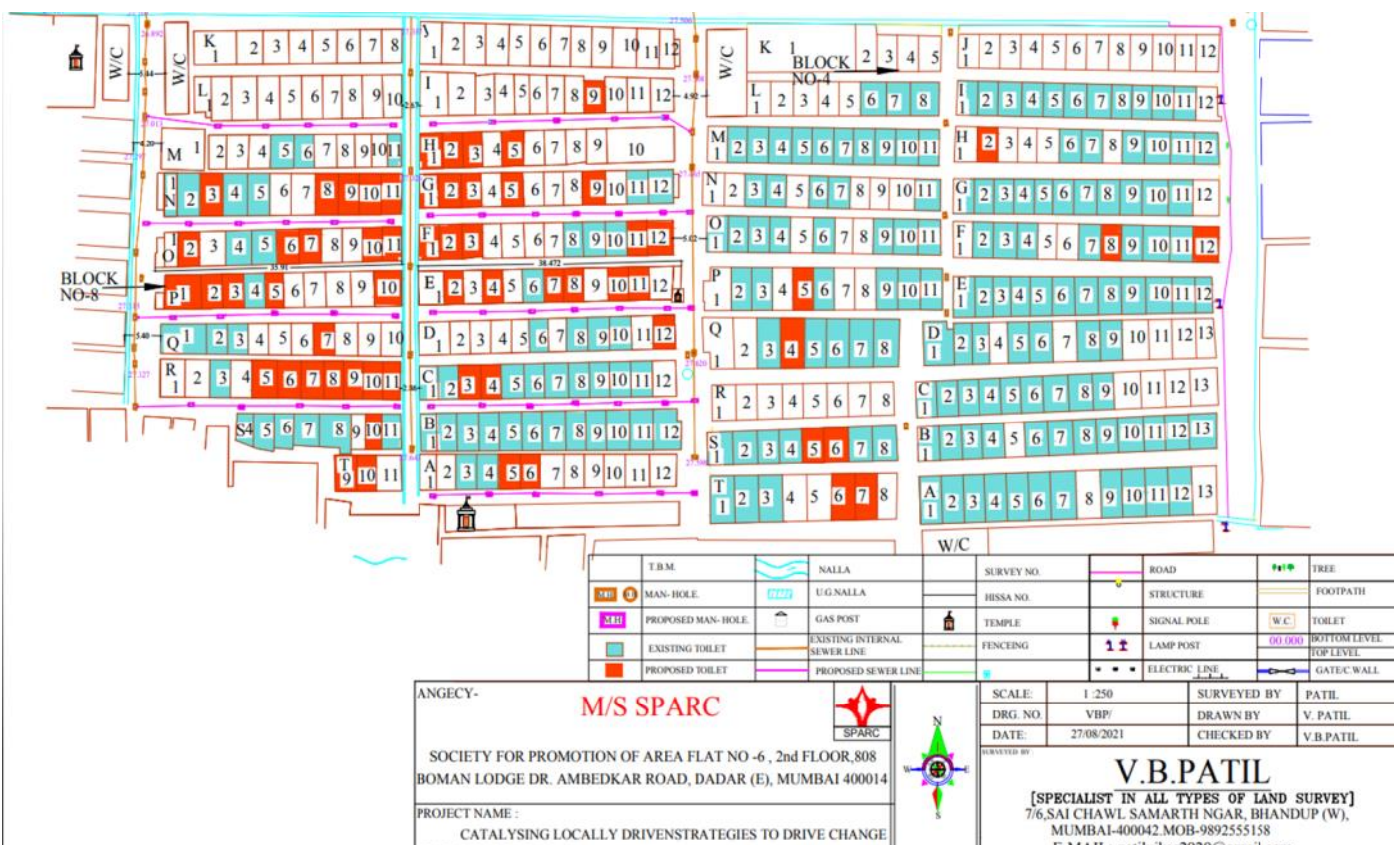
## Covid and community driven action: Data action and assessments



Screening and testing of covid in collaboration with UNICEF and Doctors for You  
 Awareness creation on mask usage and distancing  
 Awareness talks on health and co-morbidities –Tuberculosis, Hypertension etc.



## Mapping of households with and without access to individual toilets under the Gates Foundation and CEPT project





# Catalysing Locally Driven Strategies in Slums of Mumbai

## Projects with CEPT

### Closure Presentation of “Catalysing Locally Driven Strategies in Slums of Mumbai”

The context of the project “Catalysing locally driven strategies” was -

1. Study the impact of COVID 19 pandemic on informal settlements
2. Finding a COVID crisis response
3. Exploring infrastructure solutions—WATSAN

The work was carried out in two wards of Mumbai – G North ward covering Dharavi alone, and M East ward covering both slums and slum relocation colonies during the period 30 June 2020 – 30 November 2021.

This project helped to reconfigure and restrengthen the relationship between the city government, civil society and communities. The city recognizes that communities have capacities to develop their own solutions, supported by local NGOs.

The objective with which the proposal was drafted and project undertaken was the need of special operating procedures to

deal with current pandemic responses in such ill-planned and densely populated areas. Thus, the collaboration between the different teams – Mahila Milan/ technical team/ residents/political representatives will set up a model where they are all trying to address gaps in access to sanitation services as well as in any other service provision gaps in the area of health, water, etc.



Ongoing task	Way forward
Plain table survey/ Cadastral mapping in Maharashtra Nagar	Supervision and monitoring the work by the Mahila Milan and Federation field staff
Replicating the same in at least 2-3 more settlements in Dharavi and M-East, Mankhurd	Replicate the steps and process adopted in the two pilot locations to scale up to the city level
Pushing forward the work of connecting existing community toilets to sewer lines both in M-east and G-North in toilets that have not been connected yet	Follow up with the ward and CBO local councillors Sending reminder letters to the ward
Efforts to obtain financial support from the city towards provision of IHHT subsidies. This can be sought through available subsidies from the Swach Bharat Mission (SBM) and if not, then the ward can make requests for fresh grants.	Case studies of households that constructed IHHT using their own financial resources to be shared by the ward and municipal corporation Check on the provision of available subsidies under SBM or any other fund
Efforts to bring in policy changes to sanitation on two grounds, one where alternatives to community toilet blocks can be explored thus encouraging construction and provision of individual household toilets and the other connecting individual household toilets to sewer lines wherever possible as septic tanks are not an option of IHHTs in slums as the drawback is they cannot be cleaned or emptied	Negotiating with the city with field testimonies of individuals on importance and need of individual household toilets wherever possible Field visits can be done with the technical team of solid waste management department of the ward to do a feasibility survey of laying sewer lines in such locations

# Catalysing Locally Driven Strategies in Slums of Mumbai

## Projects with CEPT



Project Objectives



BUILD STRONG LOCAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH ROBUST DATA COLLECTION BY RESIDENTS AND AIDED BY PROFESSIONALS



MEASURE GAPS IN SERVICES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND OUTREACH OF STATE PROCESSES



USE DATA AND THE MEASURED GAPS TO DEVELOP ACTIONS ADDRESSING THEM AND



BUILD TWO-WAY ACCOUNTABILITY BETWEEN THE RESIDENTS AND THE CITY ADMINISTRATION, WITH ACTIVITIES FLOWING CHRONOLOGICALLY FROM THE FIRST OBJECTIVE TO THE FOURTH ONE.

ISSUE IDENTIFIED	ACTION TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY
Lack of maintenance in MHADA / private constructed community toilet blocks	List of such toilets submitted to the ward and local councillors	Ward and Municipal Corporation
Lack of water electricity in community toilets	CBOs approached ward to get legal water and electricity	Ward, CBOs, Electricity department
Non-functional sewer lines	List of such toilets submitted to the ward	Ward, Municipality, CBO
Non-connection of community toilets to sewer network	Letters from the local councillor to the ward	Ward, Municipality, CBO, SPARC
Unscientific sewage disposal of IHHT	Letters from local resident groups and local councillor to the ward for connecting IHHT to sewer line as well as permission for construction of more IHHTs	Ward, Municipal Corporation, local resident groups



# Hot spot mapping : assessment of amenities for vulnerability

## Project with World Bank - GPURL

in partnership with the World Bank and Cities Alliance, affiliates of Slum Dwellers International (SDI) in India, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Ghana collected data of the most vulnerable slums for improving COVID-19 contagion risk hotspot mapping. To help city leaders prioritize and spatially target resources and to support local partners and communities, the World Bank's Global Practice of Urban Resilience and Land (GPURL) has developed a rapid deployment tool to identify hotspots where risk of exposure and community contagion is likely to be high. This tool is based on (a) potential for keeping people apart (based on density and liveable floor space that make 2m physical distance challenging) and (b) proximity to places where people may cluster, even in a lockdown (accessing public toilets, communal water pumps, etc.).

The foundation of the Contagion Risk Hotspot mapping project rests on the process of community data collection that has been developed and honed for over 30 years. For this pilot project, eight cities within five countries in Africa and Asia were identified collaboratively between all project partners based on demand from the city, level of slum data available, presence of Federation and SDI local affiliates in each city.

The methodology is primarily "participatory", and community led with support from technical persons. Focus group discussions were conducted to inform the 'settlement profile'

by the federation together with local residents. Settlement profile consists of a qualitative and quantitative survey, as well as a geographic reference map of the settlement boundary which marks available basic services. The data is collected through community meetings and through GIS mapping of the settlements.

### Experiences and Key Learnings

The use and application of tools was instrumental in the capacity building portion of this project. Open source tools like Kobo Toolbox, open street mapping, and Google Earth are some of the tools used for collecting and mapping infrastructure.

Loss of livelihoods most notably by those working in the informal sector, lack of sufficient functional facilities for the population, and evictions were most prevalent across all cities in the pilot project.

Overcrowding at the available facilities was a key point that came up in the FGD across all cities, especially by women where the issue of safety and access to WASH is compounded with the fear of assault and rape in using communal facilities during the night.

The mapping aspect of the project has contributed to the availability of factual data/information on existing number of facilities; non- functional facilities; challenges facing facilities access; facilities distribution and underserved communities.

## Vulnerability Index

Parameters	Sub Parameters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Constituency Aggregate
Slum Location										Overall the slums are not located on Hazardous locations
Land ownership										80% of the slums are on Private lands.
Tenability										60% of the slums are declared and have secure tenure.
Size of settlement										30% of the settlements are large, 30% medium and rest Small.
Housing Condition.										60% of the houses are Pucca houses and 30% are semi Pucca, 10% are kutcha.
Access to infrastructure	Water									Overall there is very poor access to Water, 60% of the slum HH Defecate in the open, 30% have access to community toilets and 10% have individual or Good access to community toilets.
	Toilets									30% of the slums have no SWM, 30% have infrequent systems and 30% have regular collection mechanisms.
	Solid waste Management									
	Streetlights									60% of the slums do not have proper streetlights.
Social Infrastructure	Electricity									All the slums have 100% formal electricity supply.
	Health Facilities									Most of the slums have access to Health Facilities
	Education facilities									There is no access to Higher secondary education facilities. 60% slums have below graduation level facilities.
	Banking services									Overall there is good access to Banking facilities.
	involvement with organizations									30% of the slums are not involved with any local organizations.
Legend		10	3	1	2	6	0	6	6	
		71%	21%	7%	14%	43%	0%	43%	43%	
		2	4	6	5	4	5	4	1	
		14%	29%	43%	36%	29%	36%	29%	7%	
		2	7	7	7	4	9	4	7	

# Hot spot mapping : assessment of amenities for vulnerability

## Project with World Bank - GPURL

The methodology is primarily “participatory” and community led with support of technical people. Focus group discussions were conducted in order to inform the ‘settlement profile’ by the federation together with local residents. A settlement profile consists of a qualitative and quantitative survey, as well as a geographic reference map of the settlement boundary which marks available basic services. The data is collected through community meetings and through GIS mapping of the settlements. The settlement profile creates a general picture of the settlement and becomes the foundation of organizing around collectively identified and prioritized needs at the settlement level. Survey teams with the support of Mahila Milan and community leaders collect and analyze data about their settlements.

For all the three cities i.e., Mumbai, Pune and Bhubaneshwar, the framework created for the documentation process has the salient features mentioned below:

**Involvement of Local Community :** The project involved the residents throughout the study. A technical support team along with Mahila Milan and federation networks within these informal settlements led the process of documentation.

**Use of Digital Tools:** GPS devices and smart phones with references from satellite images to inform the documentation process were used. Boundary mapping and marking of the location of amenities was also done through the smart phones and GPS devices.

**Use of community-based data collection formats:** The team used a settlement profiling form which has a questionnaire focusing on demographics, infrastructure and priorities of people in the settlement. The members of Mahila Milan made changes to this form to suit the context of informal settlements in India. Some of the points from the form are as below: Location/accessibility/status of slums, Demographic

characteristics, Nature of water, sanitation, energy, and transport infrastructure, Health and Education amenities, Structure of Governance, perception of inhabitants about the future of the settlement.

### Settlement Details and examples from one slum / Nagar in each city:

Dharavi, Mumbai comprises of a total of 5 sectors and 123 Nagars. A total of 69 Nagars have access to public toilets (56% coverage), 51 nagars have access to water (41 % coverage), 65 nagars have health posts (53% coverage), 64 nagars have access to primary and secondary schools (52% coverage).

Ambedkar Nagar, Dharavi is a declared slum settlement located along two perpendicular lanes to the Jasmine Mill road. The nagar has typically G+1 houses with an area of approximately 200 sq. ft. each. Typically, the first floor of the houses is rented and the owners stay on the ground floor. Since, the first floors are rented in most cases, they have a separate toilet for the use of tenants. Most households are residential with people running small businesses from home.

Bhubaneshwar, Odisha Hotspot mapping was done in 22260 households from 50 settlements with total population of 1,12,417 . The list of the settlements to be surveyed was finalized after discussing with Mahila Milan with focus on areas where there were a greater number of Covid cases.

Kothrud ward, Pune City is spread over an area of 70,603 sqm. One of the slums, Shastrinagar located in Kothrud has around 1419 houses with a population of 12599 people. The slum occupies 12% land of the total slum area in Kothrud ward with 6% slum population of Kothrud ward. Slum densification has been observed over past 10 years.

The Hotspot mapping survey was carried out in two wards in Pune - Kothrud ward with a total of 19 settlements and Sinhgad ward with 19 settlements.

### Pre-profiling phase:

Developing data collection methodology; training team of mappers and surveyors; and Community engagement.



OSM, OSM workflow, OpenDrone mapping, Image processing, Image hosting, Maps.me, Mapillary, Kobo toolbox and more.

### Profiling phase:

Field data collection; Remote mapping and Focus group discussions.



Extracting Satellite Data from Google Earth Engine, Remote Sensing data analytics, Google Earth Engine, HOT Tasking manager, ODK, OMK, Field Papers, Maps ID editor, JOSM editor, and more.

### Post-profiling phase:

Cleaning, combining, processing, visualizing and analyzing the data.



Advanced QGIS, Cloud Data Analytics, Interactive Dashboards (Excel, spatial agent), ArcGIS online, Interactive data visualization (Datawrapper, Flourish, Tableau, Google Studio, e-books and Storymaps)

# Pandemic and Community Action

## Last Mile Connectivity

### Mahila Milan sets up Vaccination Camps

In the PMGP relocation site at Mankhurd, where one of our oldest relocated slum dweller federations currently live, the residents were able to negotiate with their local elected political representative to set up a vaccination centre in the locality premises. Since the public vaccination drive in Mumbai is largely led by the city's Municipal Corporation, the representative was able to set up a centre in a school that is within the premises of the PMGP colony where people above the age of 18 were given both doses of COVISHIELD vaccines. This was repeated in all areas seeking vaccinations.

### Kick starting Mahila Milan support systems

Through this process the federation and Mahila Milan members living in the locality came to understand the entire management of vaccine administration and this was later used for the vaccination drives supported by CORE. As the crowds increased, the leaders came up with an idea of quick pre registration with phone numbers and on a given day only a specific number of people, commensurate to the number of vaccine doses available that day were called in.

Few among the poor have access to smart phones, fewer women among them even have access to a phone or know how to operate them. So, when a public service requires people to present themselves after registration on an online portal it can act as a deterrent. At all community run camps the staff insured that any person with any identity card and a mobile number (these are basic minimum to be able to register for vaccination) will be helped with the registration and vaccination.

Vaccinated leaders and neighbours also instilled confidence regarding the efficacy and after effects of the vaccine among the residents who then actively got vaccinated when the vaccines were made available.

Please watch Video on [Community Led Vaccination](#)

These are only a few examples of nuanced issues that resulted in many people not being vaccinated despite a large number of public centres in the city administering vaccines at no cost. Public systems are not yet structured to absorb such nuances which are essential to consider, if we have to insure that every single person is vaccinated.

We are proud of having been able to administer this service and have learned tremendously from it and can say that this was the 'last mile connectivity' for COVID vaccinations in

Mumbai, with some guilt knowing that many other Indians and people abroad in the global south are still not vaccinated even once!

### CORE Vaccination Drive: closing the last mile loop

The COVID vaccination administration has been patchy throughout the world. While many in the global north are considering their 2nd booster shots, several remain unvaccinated (even with a single dose) of COVID vaccine. Even within countries, such as India for example, that are providing vaccines, there are large disparities in access to vaccination across regions and in urban and rural areas. Is there a possibility that though state run vaccination drives are plenty, yet many in a city remain unvaccinated? It may appear that the only case when this is possible is when there is a vaccine hesitancy. However that is not the case. SPARC's experience says there is more to it.



With generous donations of vaccines from philanthropists, SPARC and its network of slum federations and largely Mahila Milan which is a federated women's collective conducted vaccination camps at various locations in Mumbai, in slums and in slum relocation colonies, in a program that we call 'the last mile connection'. We call this the last mile, because most of the people accessing these vaccines come from backgrounds that made it very difficult for them to access publicly available vaccines at no cost, and found paying for vaccines at private centres that may be conveniently located, expensive.

# Pandemic and Community Action

## Contd.

The initial plan was to vaccinate people in 5 specific areas with large slums where the federations work, but by the time the vaccines arrived, most people in the city were already vaccinated and the demand had reduced. We therefore departed from this original approach and decided to setup drives in areas with good demand, where the leaders requested us to hold a drive and insured their support. The first drive started on the 23rd of November 2021 and by the end of March 2022, 10,000 were successfully vaccinated.



At first, it was felt that there are more women than men. When asked, women said, this is convenient, as it is closer to home and she can manage filling water, washing clothes, cooking, sending children to school and other care work in between and can come for vaccination. Standing for several hours at the public vaccination centre which is some distance away was not convenient. Plus, “she doesn’t need to travel in the suburban trains for work”.

But at the end of administering about 10,000 doses, there were an equal number of men and women who sought the vaccination, and an equal number of people seeking 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of the vaccine which is administered with a gap of 84 days. Clearly, the reasons as to why so many people were unvaccinated even 6 months after the free vaccination drive conducted by the state were not just one, but many. This became clear during the drive and we call out some very practical challenges that people faced below.

Technological complications often intimidate and deter people from seeking an important public service. Technically, one is required to be registered under a particular mobile

phone number on an online portal to be eligible to get vaccinated, and then use the same number to gain access to the vaccination certificate and is automatically registered for the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose (at the end of 84 days) as well.

For example, in one location, several men living and working there had been in legal detention during their first dose and had no mobile phone access at that time, so their names were registered under the name of the prison staff. Without that same mobile number, the process of locating the person for second dose is doable but difficult and most public vaccination centers have neither the time nor the patience to deal with such issues. The federation and Mahila Milan teams could locate them on the portal and update using other methods of querying and identification and managed to provide them with the 2nd dose of the vaccine.

Watch video on [The Last Mile Loop](#)



# Pandemic and Community Action

## Projects with SDI, Cities Alliance Supported by SIDA

### Managing Uncertainties in Informal Settlements during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic

The alliance's Covid-response efforts were concentrated in 10 cities and approximately 150 slum settlements, supporting the most vulnerable – especially women and children – with basic food stuffs to meet the urgent need to combat hunger in families that lost their livelihoods, supporting communities in minimizing transmission of Covid and to build an overall resilience. The project also supported communities to review existing settlement access to water and sanitation services and to make applications to access individual/group basic services where such services were lacking. Families lost their sole earning member during the pandemic and the alliance provided support through the provision of sewing machines and hand carts to families who had no other means of earning a livelihood.

Through the slum profiling and slum register exercise, we collected data for 100 settlements and a total of 117,537 households. Data was gathered on provision of community toilet blocks and assessment of services carried out. This strategy of undertaking surveys in slums using the slum profiling guidelines used by SPARC, Mahila Milan and NSDF in particular continues to be taken up on an ongoing basis with varied outcomes each year.

In 2020-21 ten cities in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha were self-selected to drive the strategy of utilising the profiling to define the aggregation of evidence and to develop a strategy to deal with covid and to start a long term engagement of the settlements/communities with city and state governments.

This strategy utilises the ongoing strategy of the alliance to use the data at settlement, city, state and national levels. This means that we fulfil our commitment to use the data at each level to build a strategy for what communities can do themselves and what they would demand from the city, state and other stakeholders who would undertake these as well.

The strategy sought to operationalise our Theory of Change:

- I. That solutions can and should be based on what the community as well as the city needs but communities should actively articulate what they want.
- II. Not all resources can come from the community but whatever they can do and drive they should.
- III. The communities and the city along with university

and educational institutions and local political representatives should all be drawn into the solutions that are being explored and executed.

- IV. Every solution, strategy and its execution is both a means and an end, i.e., it serves the purpose for which the investigation was taken, but the process of dialogue, negotiation and action produces confidence, trust and capacity to explore all the other challenges that communities face.
- V. The solutions emerging from this initial process while being part of a larger ongoing information gathering and knowledge creation will in turn encourage others in the city as well as in other cities to undertake similar strategies.



1000 most vulnerable families received food relief kits and 310 individuals, men and women received livelihood equipment. This activity did see a change and is proving to be an achievement for the members. Women are able to get work for themselves and support their families. One such case is that of a woman from Surat, Gujarat who was provided with a sewing machine after recommendation by the local Mahila Milan leaders. She lost her husband and is now the only earning member with two school going children. Online schooling requires the child to have either a computer, laptop or a phone with internet access but since she could not afford any of these, her children were unable to attend online school and she could not teach them as she was herself illiterate. One of her priorities was to buy a smart phone so that the children could continue with their studies. Within a month of getting a sewing machine she managed to earn a livelihood and save enough money to be able to buy a phone!

# Pandemic and Community Action

## Projects with SDI, Cities Alliance Supported by SIDA

Water Arrangements		
	No. of Settlements	%
All have individual taps	51	51%
Group taps by given by Municipality	17	17%
Wells or Borewells	2	2%
Combination of all	30	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Basic amenities have been provided by the Municipality - water, sanitation, electricity were provided for all, although the quality timing and length of time for when water was available varied, but in all instances it was within the settlements. What we need to look at is the access to these, for instance, If we look at the provision of water, while all the residents considered these availabilities acceptable they were well below the required access for all the households in the settlement.

- 51% of the settlements have individual water connections.
- only 6 settlements get 24x7 water supply.
- 60% settlements get water for up to 5 hours a day.
- Minor interventions have been done by certain cities where the water supply has been increased to 1 hour on alternate days as against getting it once a week.

Most of the households had individual toilets, therefore the follow up focus was to look at the sludge management and the need to investigate their sewage disposal system and negotiate for drain/sewer lines or, septic tanks and their management and desludging otherwise the toilets would become unusable Very quickly.

As is clear, 57% of the settlements are covered with drains and sewer connections, an assessment of the households to be connected was the clear follow up needed.

The primary health centre access survey sought to understand what type of primary health care systems are accessible to people, how communities identify what they need for their health, where they go, for which ailments, do children get anganwadi (state provided day care for children below 6) access, food for pregnant mothers and underweight children etc. By and large the focus of the alliance is to examine how the communities of slum dwellers view their own health, and to promote promotive, preventive and primary (PPP) health care which is urgently needed not only during the pandemic but also as an institutionalised service as part of the post covid changes we seek.

Health Care Services		
	No. of Settlements	%
There is no PHC	38	38%
PHC exists but we don't use it	8	8%
Don't know about it	4	4%
Use the PHC	41	41%
No response	9	9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Type of Toilet		
	No. of Settlements	%
All have individual toilets	60	60%
Some have IHHL but most use Public Toilets	23	30%
Most have IHHL but few use public toilets	15	20%
Open Defecation	2	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Individual Household Toilets	
Findings / Challenges	Intervention Needed
Unscientific sewage disposal of IHHT	Efforts to connect IHHT to existing sewer line where they are within 30 ft. Providing the list of families with IHHT in close proximity of sewer line to be connected
Waste from IHHT disposed off in storm water drain which connects to open nallah	Work out ways by which these can be connected to the existing sewer
No permission granted to construct IHHT even when families are in need	Effort to mobilize the local government for provision of household level toilets
Emptying and de-sludging of individual household latrines with septic tank	Check what systems are in place to empty septic tanks of IHHL As already informed by the ward, units closer to the sewer line can be connected to the city's underground drainage network. Checklist of such units and slums by Mahila Milan would be helpful.



# Research Projects

## **ARISE** Accountability and Responsibility in Informal Settlements for Equity

The gradual awareness of health challenges in slums and a need to examine how to bring this into the framework of what we do was greatly helped by our participation in the project called ARISE (Accountability and Responsibility in Informal Settlements for Equity) which is a UKRI funded 5 year action research project, a consortium in which SPARC is one of the partners. In this project we explore the manner in which our ongoing processes of women centered leadership gathering data to learn about local aggregatable challenges gets done in ways that it also seeks communities and the city to develop responses to address the basic causal factors of ill health. SPARC has begun working on health actions and continues with the studies in both Mumbai and Ahmedabad. In Mumbai, SPARC began conducting the Health and Well Being surveys largely conducted in Vashi Naka, and Maharashtra Nagar areas. During this year, women from Mahila Milan also continued the work on TB, where they actively sought cases of TB to understand the challenges of the family. Families that had poor nutrition due to poverty were listed to get nutritional support.

This exploration found that the health burden of families is in both infectious and chronic diseases, and that many families end up ignoring these symptoms and ailments due to lack of knowledge, lack of access to medical assistance and most of all inability of get food and medicines and fall into a downward spiral of loss of work and ill health further deepening the family crisis.

In Ahmedabad, the biggest challenge continues to be the absence of an organised community, which has resulted in poor maintenance of the relocation colonies. Through a year long discussion of the value of doing things collectively, exchanges with Mumbai and observing the value and energy womens' collectives bring to managing tough issues, the participation of women and better involvement of the residents has begun. With the assistance of an intern, a small sample survey on people's access to health insurance was studied, along with serious illness that requires such support systems. Several immediate issues were taken up. With poor public health system access, public insurance systems are an essential source to reduce catastrophic health expenditures. Therefore improving this access in the interim has been an important part of the work that the ARISE team will be taking forward in the following years. During this year, SPARC also published a paper on COVID experiences of the urban poor from Mumbai, where Vinodkumar Rao is the first author.

<https://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/community-engagement-co-production-or-citizen-action-lessons-covid-19-responses-india-and-bangladesh>

In March 2022, before the end of the year, SPARC was allocated an additional grant of £22,000 and an exchange grant of £7500 which was used towards organising an exchange program between waste workers from Vijaywada and Shimla and the Mahila Milan in Mumbai, as well as running a medical camp program in Mumbai. What it takes to build women's participation in social movement is the larger exploration that this exchange was aimed at, and mainly to learn from Mahila Milan who have demonstrated this through their organisation and work over the past 37 years. Through the medical camp, the hope is to understand what are the very primary health challenges of the people and how a case can be built to advocate increasing PHCs in slums and slum relocation colonies. As a result of Covid as well as a deeper connection between health, well being and what communities and cities need to do, health especially promotive, preventive and primary health are now an embedded aspects of the alliance's work.



# Research Projects

## VCA Voices For Just Climate Action

To address challenges faced by climate change a group of civil society organizations have come together to provide a collective voice to influence climate change policies. Community representatives/leaders will make a collective representation towards this. VCA is an alliance of six organizations: Shack Dwellers International (SDI), WWF Netherlands, Hivos, South South North, Akina Mama wa Afrika and Fundación Avina have joined hands as "Voices for Climate Action".

We are at a critical juncture in our fight against the climate crisis and towards addressing the economic and social challenges to transform our societies in a sustainable, just, and inclusive manner. Civil society needs to engage and have a voice to influence climate change policies. Business as usual will no longer suffice and is no longer appropriate.

The five-year strategic objective of the alliance as stated is - "By 2025, local civil society groups have claimed a central role as empowered innovators, facilitators and advocates of climate solutions". The program is about climate justice i.e., climate change is not only an environmental problem to be addressed but is also a societal challenge with ethical and human rights aspects. Hence, we intend to build wide societal support for locally shaped climate solutions through an inclusive and rights-based approach which is truly bottom up. This includes building a broad-based climate alliance at the country and local level, bridging divides (urban, rural, gender, youth) and amplifying voices in new, unusual ways.

SPARC as an affiliate of SDI has continued its relationship with women's collectives in Indonesia (Jakarta) from its previous engagement with Human Cities Coalition (HCC) in 2018. The network of women continue with savings in Penjaringan, North Jakarta.

Through VCA a new alliance of Fedrasi women of Penjaringan with local support from SPEAK Indonesia and SPARC are carrying out an assessment of vulnerabilities in their settlements. This is through gathering information through settlement profiling, GPS mapping and assessment of access to water, sanitation, energy, drainage and people's perceptions of climate change.

During the course of this year the alliance has carried out several learning exchanges locally. Women leaders are exploring new ways to champion alternative approaches to climate crisis. To begin with, this is being done through

working with local governments to address issues of drainage in their settlements.

This year the alliance explores engagements with the University of Islam from Jogjakarta: preparing a profile and doing a vulnerability assessment of other wards of North Jakarta (informal settlements near the coast) and slums in Jogjakarta. The outcomes of this assessment will be presented to the government of Jakarta and the Urban Planning and Disaster Risk authorities to co-create local solutions.

While WWF and Hivos focus on rural Indonesia, working on land rights and food management respectively, SPARC-SDI's focus is on the urban informal settlements of Jakarta. The regional alliance of SPRAC, WWF and Hivos is producing new knowledge in an effort to bridging the urban-rural divide in the climate change advocacy space. For SPARC, NSDF and MM it is no different from its work for the last two decades where on behalf of ACHR and SDI it has visited new cities and set up federations and assisted them with practices, rituals and activities we began and continue to do.



# Research Projects

## BReUCom - Building Resilient Urban Communities

### Building Resilient Urban Communities

The BReUCom project conceives pilots, postgraduate short term professional development programs, targeted at real world problems.

A project funded under EU Erasmus+ Program in the field of Capacity Building in Higher Education, was aimed at -

- Producing Open Educational Resources by developing 10 comparative case studies and 10 descriptions of new courses for graduate students in existing programs.
- Pilot 5 new courses on urban resilience in existing curricula for graduate students.
- Develop 20 new Professional Development Program (PDPs) modules on urban resilience for urban professionals from different backgrounds and working experiences, including internships with NGOs in India and Europe

### CONFERENCE FORMAT

Initially, the conference was to be held physically in Mumbai, but later due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was planned as a hybrid event but since the pandemic went on for a longtime we had to do it as an online even for all in Mumbai where a set of partners, invitees, etc. joined the conference, delivered lectures, engaged with each other.

The three day conference comprised of 6 sessions, with 6 speakers per session. Each speaker was given 10-15 minutes to present, followed by 10 minutes for questions. The participants were encouraged to ask questions around the theme of the conference and the speakers presentations.

For more details on the Conference kindly follow the link - <https://www.breucom.eu/mod/page/view.php?id=861>

### CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Over three days, September 22-24, 2021, the BReUCom consortium brought together practitioners, academics, students, social activists, architects, planners and specialists to think, talk and discuss on climate change and resilience. This proposal envisages the concluding event as serving the following purposes:

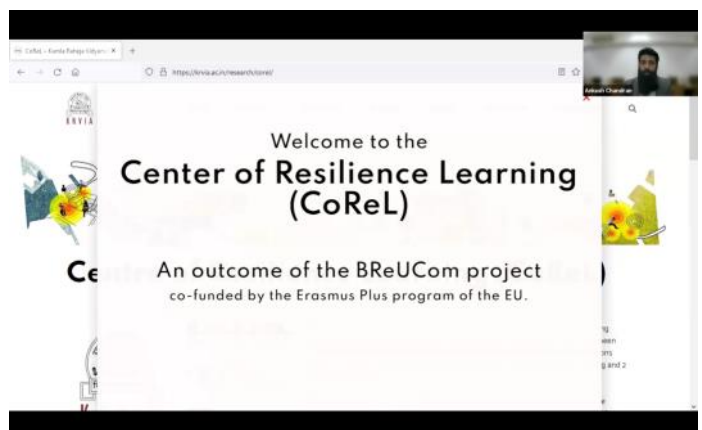
- 1.To create material (alongside the written publishable papers of the research undertaken, audio visual presentations of all the case studies and PDP materials) that can be available to the four organisations and two NGOs after the project is completed as well as to the NGO Academic and other teaching institutions nationally and globally.
- 2.To invite additional materials on issues of interest in areas of the research to build teaching materials from other studies that will accompany this body of materials.
- 3.Demonstrate the traditions of web-based communication used for teaching in Covid times to be usefully harnessed to facilitate wider outreach of this materials within Indian and global institutions.

### CONFERENCE THEMES

- 1.Role of NGOs in Resilience Capacity Building
- 2.Building Institutional Resilience
- 3.Resilience in Planning and Architecture
- 4.Informality and Urban Resilience
- 5.Traditional Wisdom and Resilience
- 6.Urban Resilience and the Future of Higher Education

### CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

- 1.Future collaborations between urban schools/colleges and the NGOs, amongst NGOs themselves
- 2.Collaborations with government and academia
- 3.Compilation of all institutional PDPs and e learning from SPARC and CURE as packaged courses which can be put together on a platform, and can have a longer shelf-life.



# Research Projects

## BReUCom Interns

### School of Planning and Architecture Bhopal Interns

As part of the BReUCom project, SPARC had to host interns from all the partner institutions to work on different projects related to climate change.

During June-July 2021, SPARC had two interns from School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal (SPAB) who worked on **Slum resettlement and rehabilitation: Utilities and problems of Open space - case study of Vashinaka**. Through this study, they examined the real estate dynamics of Mumbai in relation to housing for economically vulnerable groups, specifically on the changes that have been made in the case of slum dwellers impacted by infrastructural Initiatives aimed at altering main metropolitan corridors. In-depth analysis of the influence of the aforementioned rehabilitation and resettlement projects on their daily social, cultural, and economic interactions with the built environment.

The study aimed at analysing their varied richness in usage, the impact of the quality of built environment and open spaces on social and economic dynamics of the precinct and the day-to-day problems faced by the residents in using and managing such spaces.

### KRVIA Interns

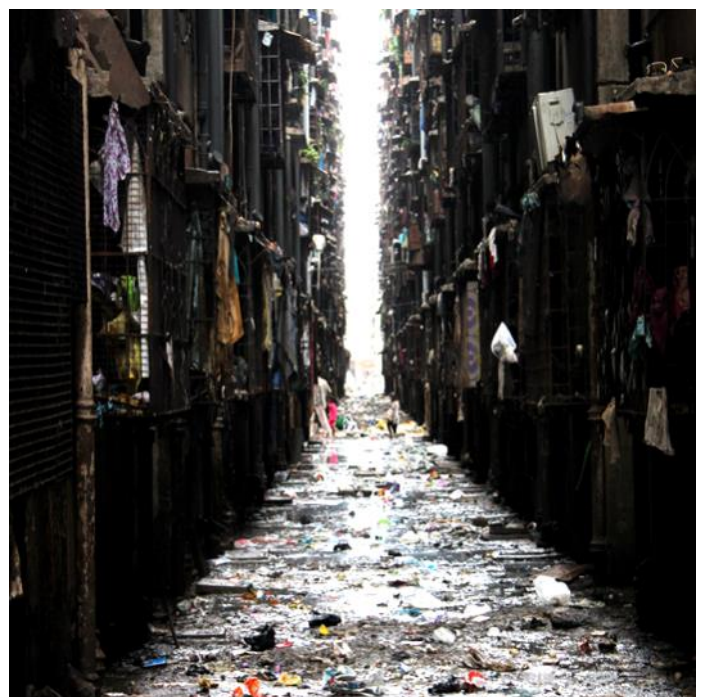
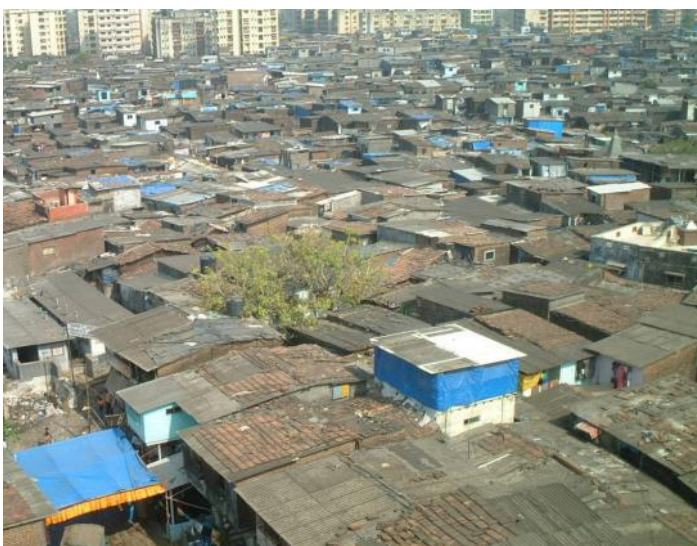
As part of the BReUCom project, SPARC had to host interns from all the partner institutions to work on different projects related to climate change. During August-September 2021, SPARC had two interns from Kamala Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute of Architecture (KRVIA), Mumbai who worked on— **Producing Designs for Individual Household toilets in one settlement of Dharavi**.

The project focused on creating individual toilets inside small homes to reduce stresses on community toilets and provide home-owners control over their own toilets. The site of Dharavi Transit Camp was chosen for the test study. The feasibility Study was conducted to check the conditions of existing community toilets and measure the current individual dwelling sizes. The pilot project focused on 40 such dwellings. The objective was to get clearance from Municipal authority and help dwellers fund their own toilet expansion projects.

### NITH Interns

Interns from National Institute of Technology (NIT), Hamirpur, looked at relocated settlement at Natvar Parekh Compound located in Shivaji Nagar. The main aim was to study the area for problems faced by locals after relocation to the area using preliminary mapping of the area and survey from locals. Issues identified at the site -

1. Internal roads encroached by street vendors for earning daily livelihood.
2. The lanes in between the structures within the compound are being used as dumping site by the residents.
3. Lack of open spaces for recreation.
4. Densely packed structures leave no room for proper ventilation and air flow in between structures as well
5. Parking in undesignated areas causes congestion in the area.



# SDI & The Alliance

## Women's leadership in SDI and India

In parallel to the women's leadership network in India, we began hosting a weekly and subsequently after the covid Crisis a fortnightly meeting of women leaders from different countries across Asia and Africa. We saw that in each country we could identify leaders at five levels, and each level of leadership has a duty and obligation to train the group below in in the same city country hub level and globally for SDI to demonstrate that its women drive the process and representatives aspirations.

### Internal structure and external explorations

1. In this present phase we have identified 5 levels at community and city level, national affiliate level, at hub or group of affiliate level SDI level and with external audiences of alliances partnerships and in general
2. All our discussion are taped and extracts are circulated to all some have rich content others don't if recoding's don't work members record themselves and send it here is no bar to what they say how they say and its content
3. SDI gathers all this cleans the audios and they are shared internally of externally based on collective decisions
4. The feedback the impact the follow up tells us what is picked up and useful and what is important but has not been impactful and needs another strategy and so on.
5. In 2020-21 over 75 such clips were prepared and half were circulated inside SDI and ne third outside.



### The leadership Cascade & communication in SDI which is women centered



# SDI & The Alliance and climate change

## Rough and Ready Advocacy

Sheela Patel is invited to be an ambassador for the Race to Resilience & Race to Zero with focus on integrating vulnerable voices in the climate adaptation space



### A partnerships we have begun in the climate space : Value of the Race 2 Resilience as an ambassador

800 million vulnerable informal households need to get involved in solutions that make them resilient

1. While formal institutions have begun to make commitments to achieve various resilience targets there is need of participation and evidence building that the most vulnerable are active participants in LOCALLY LED ADAPTATION
  2. ALL SOLUTIONS EXPLORED ARE ALL TOP DOWN, STATE LED; WITH LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT THE INFORMAL HABITATS CAN AND WILL BE FINANCED THROUGH SUCH SOLUTIONS
  3. So what is both symbolic and practical evidence of what is needed and can be driven through choices made available to vulnerable households that they can undertake manage and maintain and ARE GOOD FOR THEIR HOUSEHOLDS AND GOOD FOR THE PLANET/
  4. WHILE THE r2r ASSISTS THEM WE ALL ALSO LOOK AT STRUCTURAL IMEDIMENTS THAT "DIS-ALLOW SUCH POSSIBILITIES
- Why is this valuable for those committed to Resilience building for Climate change :
    1. Local Adaptation needs to emerge from the needs and actions of the poorest and most vulnerable
    2. They need to make informed choices and have support, resources and capacity to explore sustainable resilience solutions
    3. Can all involved stakeholders build solutions around them?

## What we have realized

- Almost all messages are actually the same. SDI voices share processes, ideas, strategies and demands within SDI and outside in the same way
- The real challenge is in amplifying these communications without destroying the powerful testimonials which are experiential, that are unique and most important
- The present media style, design, its budgets and professionals are unsustainable for SDI so we have to develop processes that suits us
- We stay focused on doing and build skills to share it without distracting leaders from their most vital tasks yet always building their voice and potential for representation
- Like in managing data, managing negotiations and other things we do, our communications must first work for us then create waves to reach others
- It is part of our communication strategy for Partnerships, alliances and networks to accept and welcome this practice of communication



# Linking development and climate change

## What Women Want

### What Women Want and the women's leadership program of Shack Dwellers International



In the covid lockdowns SDI women's leadership team identified 5 issues that mattered a great deal for them:

1. ROOH ( Roof over my head) R2R campaign)
  2. Greens in my meals (food security)
  3. Wages and wheels ( links with sustainable transport networks)
  4. Women take care of health and safety ( linking to promotive and preventive health WHO)
  5. WE are warriors not victims ; resilience in cities ) seeking links with traditional
- Why is this valuable for those committed to Resilience building for Climate change :
    - 1. Local Adaptation needs to emerge from the needs and actions of the poorest and most vulnerable
    - 2. They need to make informed choices and have support, resources and capacity to explore sustainable resilience solutions
    - 3. Can all involved stakeholders build solutions around them?

### What next: Develop proposals based on grassroots priorities and demonstrate a new form of scalability and sustainable production of solutions that work for the poor

1. **Finance:** locate modest funds we need
  - Get at least 15 countries and 50 cities/ towns to develop answers that will be compiled
2. **Rough and Ready advocacy strategy**
  - Will share these views through short videos and Twitter and Facebook communication inside and outside and locate interested partnerships
3. Develop options and alternatives that demonstrate a range of solutions

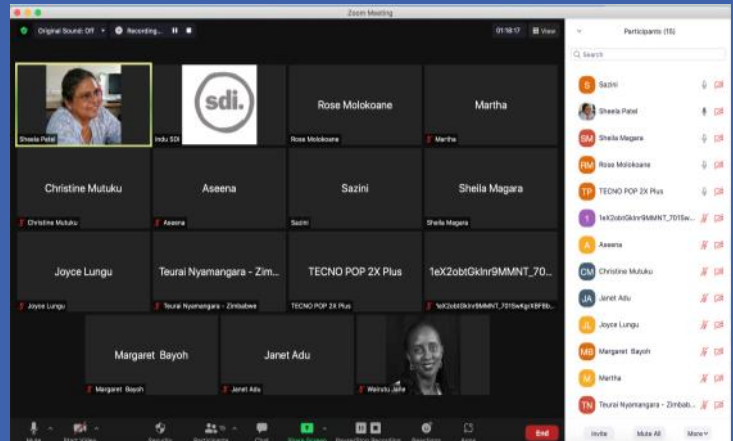


# New ways and means

## Web based meetings are the new exchanges

### In 2020 the pandemic changed two decades of how SDI functioned

- The sense of isolation uncertainty and helplessness created by the covid pandemic needed to be replaced by a sense of collectiveness that built SDI but now with a digital dimension.
- Women in the SDI savings groups leadership were already communicating on Whatsapp, now we introduced Zoom and the discussion which is always a storytelling of what is happening with each women began.



- Coordinators of women's savings groups began discussions at the network level, regional hub level and country level with savings groups, exchanging experiences and reflecting on what they needed to do.
- Information came from country level discussions, Hub level discussions and SDI members' participation in external projects and participation in webinars

And it took a new turn of its own

### Concepts and themes that have emerged

- Myth busting !!! We were liberated from trying to imitate the norther "professional" style when we realised we had our own style. We called it the Rough and Ready style of communication.
- We decided that we would discuss issues that emerged from our communities and what we were dealing with .... It produced many different issues : we named these WHAT WOMEN WANT
- As we began to share with others we realised that while we shared what we wanted there were many things we wanted to learn about and in the climate space we called it Climate 101 ie how technical and science and invention issues in climate space can be explained simply so we understand their logic.
- Nothing can stop our creating a laundry list of what we can explore if we find we have issues to address and if all groups decide that it is a useful communication we go ahead. If needed we give it another name





# SDI & The Alliance

## SPARC and SDI involvement in setting the financing principles for climate adaptation

### 8 Principles for Locally Led Adaptation



(1) Devolving decision making to the lowest appropriate level



(5) Building a robust understanding of climate risk & uncertainty



(2) Addressing structural inequalities faced by women, youth, children, disabled, displaced, Indigenous Peoples & marginalised ethnic groups



(6) Flexible programming & learning



(3) Providing patient & predictable funding that can be accessed more easily



(7) Ensure transparency & accountability



(4) Investing in local capabilities to leave an institutional legacy



(8) Collaborative action & investment

1. The business unusual empowers those worst impacted by climate change to lead more adaptation innovations, initiatives and increase direct adaptation finance that goes to local actors, giving them either decision making powers and what is most appropriate so that other institutions can follow.
2. Address structural inequalities and inequities faced by all marginalized groups and the business unusual, adaptation engages with the structural issues underpinning risks, concretely integrating gender based, economic and political inequalities and the core of activities and supporting marginalized groups to meaningful participation in and lead adaptation processes.
3. Business unusual provides finance over at least seven years, long enough to base sustainable local institutions and their capacities. It ensures communities can effectively influence adaptation and enable adapting management in operating new climate information skills and innovations. It acknowledges that local actors may not be fluent in proposal development practices although it also addresses the structural capacity imbalances in the eight systems.
4. Business unusual builds capacities and develops new structures as needed to ensure local institutions can understand climate risks and uncertainties, generate solutions, facilities acknowledges adaptation institutions over a long term without depending on project based own funding.
5. It is based on adaptation to local, traditional indigenous generational knowledge integrating bottom level climate vulnerabilities, risk assessments, scientific knowledge to enable resilience under a range of future climate systems.
6. Business unusual enables adaptation, management addressing certainties, robust monitoring and learning systems, adjusting finance and flexible programs. It ensures meaningful transparency and accountability.
7. Donors, governments, intermediaries and other adaptation implementers and governance arrangements and financial allocations to be publicly accessible ensuring an increasingly downward transparency in government. Communities have a clear understanding of the aim and objectives of adaptation programs, delivery mechanisms, decision making, governance structures involving in decision making, valuation of learning.
8. It enables collaborated action investment. And the business unusual actors collaborate across sectors and initiative levels to ensure that activities and resources of funding support each other, avoiding duplications, reporting and enhancing the efficiencies in good practices.

# Looking back Looking Forward

To end where with where we began, the world is in a terrible shape. Climate change is here despite more and more governments renegading from their commitments. The Ukraine war, the global shortages emerging from moving away from minimum self sufficiency has produced all sorts of shortages that make the poor poorer. It gives developed nations an opportunity to reduce their developmental assistance and fires, floods, drought, extreme heat and high winds are changing the very basis of how the poor cope with survival and find their resource base of experience to manage crises further depleted.

It was 50 years ago that the first alarm bells were rung in different ways with the formation of different institutional arrangements to seek early responses to what they called the 'planetary emergency'. The Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and MM and SDI are associated with two such arrangements: the club of Rome and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) both of which celebrated their 50 years of existence. Both have invited our organization to play a role in highlighting and championing the role of the urban poor locked in informality to ensure that they are active participants in the change we seek.

Similarly the Champions teams at COP 26 and later next year COP 27 have invited SDI and SPARC to play a similar role in their work and the women's demand to make ROOF Over their Heads a critical campaign to help the urban poor who design, finance and construct their own homes to be assisted by cities, material providers, universities and scientists and the private sector to help provide materials that can increase their ability to have safe homes in the face of climate disasters.

SDI and SPARC are part of the Frontier Funds Accelerator (FFA) a network that demands funds for all frontline immediate responders which are vulnerable communities - both to bring them into the strategy and execution of assistance as well as to recognize that they are the first responders in any climate crisis. SDI is now part of the Global Resilience network through which we work with an extended network of climate change organizations.

Our challenge is to expand our networks but to equally deepen and widen out own social movement and build its capacity to blend climate and development actions instead of treating them separately. The real challenge is to first and foremost fight for the right to sit as an equal on the discussion and decision-making table and be accorded the respect as being the first responders. This continues to be a tedious and difficult journey as we get invited to maintain the politically correct faces on committees and events but this is

rarely accompanied with decision making finance and voice.

Having experienced the same challenge locally, we remain committed to not abandon these possibilities, after all we set up SDI to deal with nationally and globally what small local and city level groups could not access. We see the need to now aggregate other social movements like ourselves who have worked for many decades yet are locked into the same situation as us to produce an aggregated volume of networks that demand the same things despite our contexts being different.



# SPARC on Social Media



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Mumbai, India, showing a dense urban area with many high-rise buildings and a large green field in the foreground. A river flows through the city, and a bridge is visible in the distance. The image is used as a background for the text.

<b>SPARC website</b>	<a href="https://sparcindia.org/">https://sparcindia.org/</a>
<b>Nirman Website</b>	<a href="https://sparcnirman.org/">https://sparcnirman.org/</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SPARC-98181527302/">https://www.facebook.com/SPARC-98181527302/</a>
<b>Twitter</b>	<a href="https://twitter.com/sparcindia2">https://twitter.com/sparcindia2</a>
<b>Instagram</b>	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/sparcindia/?hl=en">https://www.instagram.com/sparcindia/?hl=en</a>
<b>Blogs</b>	<a href="http://sparccitywatch.blogspot.in">sparccitywatch.blogspot.in</a>
<b>Youtube</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/sparcnsdfmm">https://www.youtube.com/user/sparcnsdfmm</a>

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