

SPARC

Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers

Annual Report

2015-16

Contents

PROCESS



SPARC

Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers. SPARC is a registered NGO as of 13th 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.



MAHILA MILAN

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, SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak undertakes/manages construction projects with the partnership of organized informal dwellers to access affordable housing and sanitation.

Director’s Reflections

5-6

Sustained communities federated for action

7

Compiling the report of activities and processes

7

Why should slum dwellers federate at scale

8

Value of transformative knowledge for the urban poor

9

Types of surveys and data collection

10

Savings and loans

11

Gender and federation building

12

Vision of what the alliance seeks to do

13

Building relationships with government at city, state and national level

14

Designing projects that serve the needs of the poor

15

Projects and federation

16

Practice

Housing	17
Looking at housing interventions of the alliance	17
State subsidized projects	18
Market subsidized projects	19
Incremental housing	20
Relocation and resettlement	21
Relocation	22
Sanitation	23
Community sanitation	23
Sanitation	24
Other projects and programs	25-28

Reflections

Evaluations and response	29
Leverage and scale	30
Refining practice, advocacy and learning	31
Events and activities	32
Looking forward	33
New explorations	34
SDI and the Indian alliance	35



Directors Reflections

Set up in 1984, SPARC founders had modest expectations of what our explorations in seeking Alliances and partnerships with community networks would produce. This process has moved our work far beyond our plans and imagination and confirms the belief of the founders that this strategy of alliance building between formal professional organizations and large federations of the urban poor has produced many innovative practices and strategies in the creation of identity, voice and capacity of these organisations of the urban poor to dialogue and negotiate with the city, the national government and international development institutions. It has also produced a transnational network of such affiliates called Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) where large inter-city federations of slum dwellers form a national federation that is affiliated with SDI and seek to teach, learn and support each other through precedents and projects that each city federation explores. So knowledge created by the poor and co-produced projects with the government or other partners now get shared to explore possible choices so that the ideas can be copied, refined, reformulated or adapted and can be used by the network and hopefully begin to get mainstreamed as and when the ideas and outcomes work for the poor.

SPARC and its Alliance turn 32 this year, and SDI, of which the Indian Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan are founders, turns 20 years old. This coming year forms the beginning of three global agreements on sustainable development, on habitat issues and on climate change. This year our annual report is crafted to present the aggregation of the processes and projects we have done and share systems we have developed to examine their links to SDI and other partnerships that we have had the privilege of having been part of. Where does our process and strategy link to these global agreements? How can our commitment to make global choices become accountable to local demands, expectations and needs? Such milestones facilitate not only looking into the past but initiate our examination of the choices before us. To envisage the challenges we should anticipate; how we need to grapple with the changing externalities of city development plans, national strategies to invest in cities and global compacts on Habitat II, SDGs and Climate change.

The challenges for those who champion development across the world have multiplied. Paradoxically, though the world produces more wealth than ever before, its distribution gets skewed increasingly in favor of a few and while global discourse to end poverty gets discussed more and more, this disparity is escalating.

The world has finally begun to explore urbanization and anticipates more and more poor people living in cities over the next ten years. However investing in cities to accommodate them still faces contradictions with cities competing for investments and producing gated housing and businesses set up with very good infrastructure while increasing numbers live in informality with hardly any security of tenure, basic amenities and services.

Nations, states and cities that have denied the inclusion of informal settlements and livelihoods in their cities face a double challenge. If they can't sort out the challenge of existing informality in cities, which again is a deeply political governance issue, all plans to deal with increased urbanization in the next two decades seem like good sound bites without much substance. Given the volume of past deficit in addressing the challenges faced by those living and working in informality, most interventions have neither the tenacity to explore robust solutions, nor do they learn from mistakes that did not work. Almost all government subsidies for the urban poor are pitifully inadequate, yet they are not absorbed or utilized, and those that do get utilized, don't impact the majority of the informal households.

Many Civil society organizations ponder about the scale and levels at which they should operate since none have the bandwidth to operate at all levels - settlement level, city level national level and international levels. However, because the world is now undeniably interconnected, alliances and partnerships produce a possibility to breach these levels and different geographies impact resources, choices and opportunities at each level and location. SPARC with its alliance with NSDF and Mahila Milan has been exploring working with municipalities, state and national governments and has begun to see value in such a networking process. Its links with SDI and SDI's links with other federations in Asia, Africa and Latin America and with global institutions provides the Indian alliance outward linkages that help transfer development possibilities to include communities of the urban poor in development world wide.

It is evident that real change needs everyone to participate in the process of change yet this change will not come without transforming roles and relationship between civil society, the state and the market. Yet these actors are locked in a negative spiral of accountability, trust and fear of loss of power and civil society is losing its voice and space at a more accelerated pace. At a time when more and more solutions need to be explored and new scalable solutions to address inequity are needed, co production and collaboration seem more and more distant. Resources to explore scalable strategies cannot emerge without the full participation of the urban poor and the means to create that voice needs more space and resources. Does our attempt to create those voices and to demonstrate that the poor can participate in driving development survive and participate in the potential possibilities for transformation? We hope so.



Section I: Process

Sustained communities federated for action

Compiling the report of activities and processes

The frame of the Alliance is skeletal and operates to sustain and expand its city federations, deepen their skills and capacities to learn, explore and adapt from their peer exchanges, and reach out to city and state governments or state and national institutions. It explores how the partnership approach can innovate ways for the community federations to work and explore solutions that work for them and for the city. A central part of our budget is used to finance Area Resource Centres in all cities, and to cover the costs for meetings, travel etc.

In this section, we report on the cities in which NSDF and Mahila Milan operate, the practices of survey and enumerations we undertake, the savings and loans administered by the women's collectives of Mahila Milan and the various Indian experiences in projects that attract other city and country governments, NGOs and communities to come and explore.

Then we move to the major programs that federations have developed at scale in housing, sanitation and relocation, and to a lesser outreach in Police Panchayat, Sadak Chhap (network of street children) and more recently the exploration of energy justice, defining vulnerability and researches undertaken in collaboration with universities and other partners.

In celebration of three decades of our work, in

some instances the tables presented will showcase the work of three decades and the direct and indirect impact they have had on lives of the poor that in turn has influenced city and state policy.

Though the financial elements of the projects, their execution and how they leverage state and market resources will also be discussed in this report, it is provided in more detail in the annual report of SSNS (SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak) which is a sister organization of SPARC. While SPARC assists the federations in organization and learning, a majority of the projects obtained under contracts are executed by SSNS.

Unlike the more conventional practice of developing policy and seeking to oversee delivery, the federations have sought to design and take on projects both to define what is needed and to build skills and capacity of the poor to participate in the delivery of those outcomes. This requires an increased access to finance, management skills and stamina to change procedures and systems that do not allow the urban poor to execute these projects.



Why should slum dwellers federate at scale

Game changer

All over the world, state investments or NGOs working with the support of the state or foundations have by and large worked with only a few informal settlements. These locations are picked up by the state or the intervening institutions with intervention investments in issues that are chosen by them and delivered through their choice of priority. In the FEDERATION MODEL of community organisation emerging from the alliance, communities seeking to change their lives network and federate; they choose their priorities, they collect data and they negotiate with the city and state.

Outreach of the federations:

In 2016, the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan was working in 81 small and medium towns across 10 states in India. Although each informal settlement varies in size, the Alliance counts the numbers on the basis of how the residents of that informal settlement identify it by its name and by its boundaries. Based on that count the present informal settlements in these towns number 10,265. In all these settlements Mahila Milan is formed and communities are encouraged to save. The NSDF and Mahila Milan leaders will tell you that all settlements have savings groups. Until a few years ago, we did not seek to document and aggregate this data of savers, but more recently we are exploring digitalization of our settlement savings and household data. So we have documented the data from 695 slums, which include 50009 savers. Clearly the data in Maharashtra has been documented more comprehensively and also represents a very large chunk of the membership, especially in Mumbai.

Peer learning, producing collective choices leading to making representations

“Horizontal exchange”, “peer learning”, these are words we craft to explain how networks get formed and informal settlements get federated. Marginalized neighbourhoods often perceive themselves as invisible, preferring to stay under the radar, so to speak, because they fear demolition and yet see no other way of surviving in the city.

The rituals of the federations first and foremost demonstrate new possibilities through their exposure to other evolved and energized communities. When locked in survival mode, alternative choices are always seek as RISKY. For the poor SEEING IS BELIEVEING and solutions demonstrated by their peers that show that they work are the ones that get accepted and explored.

Reconciling to their fate has to transform into believing that they can craft change themselves. Getting to know large numbers who face the same situation as themselves produces community and a culture within the network that demands patience when waiting for the big change to happen but also draws confidence as small yet critical issues begin to get explored and solutions emerge.

For example, getting ration cards, getting a bank account, getting children admitted to school, getting loans and exploring new livelihoods seem so simple and something everyone has a RIGHT to, but many of the urban poor, especially women, in the past have found impossible to access these.

Empowerment begins when a set of people obtain this objective and THEY in turn help others to get access to the same resource. THIS ENSURES THAT THE OUTCOMES GET MULTIPLIED AT SCALE.



Value of transformative knowledge for the urban poor

How do the poor become part of knowledge communities and negotiated propositions?

Poor communities collecting data about themselves often create a valuable starting point that serves many ends. It helps communities look at their own lives through data and to use it for themselves. It also remains the most powerful way to communicate their needs.

Womens' savings groups produce a means to engender social movements of the urban poor and to bring in the knowledge and priorities of women in the development agenda.

Peer Exchanges help communities to share insights, knowledge, refine their perspectives and produce much needed solidarity to cast aside the mantle of invisibility.

Learning to dialogue and negotiate is important since cities comprise of many stakeholders often contesting for the same resources.

Exploring solutions and participating in them help convince the urban poor who want demonstrations of possibilities and creating possible solutions and participating in them produces knowledge, problem solving and an opportunity to change their own lives.

These are the building blocks of the alliance's work that define who they are and what they do.

Enumerations surveys and evolving refinements and challenges

Everyone will agree that cities don't have accurate and comprehensive data about their informal settlements, their residents or their work places. Most cities prefer not to know, because to know is to acknowledge.

In India, most states and cities have a list of slums that in our experience mention only about one half or one third of the actually existing slums. The older settlements/slums get on the register and usually these would be the oldest slums on state, city and private lands, and even so there is often a lapse of a decade or two before they get minimum amenities like a water tap or a toilet.

Recognition comes at the time of elections when slum dwellers are actively documented for voting and the 'voting card' often forms the basis of identity in relationship to 'cut off dates' that are also from 15 to 20 years ago. For instance, in Mumbai the present cut-off date is the year 2000 making only those with voting cards issued before or in the year 2000 eligible for benefits.

Clearly the message to slum dwellers is that they have to demonstrate that they can survive in the city without assistance and amenities and with the fear of eviction till, some decades later, you may be given some services, most of which are neither comprehensive nor adequate.

Surveys/ Enumerations Cumulative Upto March 2016		
	Settlements	Households
TOTAL	10344	204438
Housing Projects	606	59286
R &R Projects	1528	143592
Sanitation Projects	1942	
Settlement Profiles	6238	
Disaster Projects	19	338
Post Relocation	7	685
Others (Vulnerability Survey)	4	537

Surveys/ Enumerations 2015-16		
	Settlements	Households
TOTAL	434	2067
R &R Projects	38	1530
Settlement Profiles	392	
Others (Vulnerability Survey)	4	537

Types of surveys and data collection

Who counts whom and why

It was in the midst of exploring strategies to dialogue with the government that SPARC accidentally facilitated the first census of pavement dwellers in 1985. This census was a household survey of people living on the pavements of Mumbai and has resulted in a global movement of slum dwellers undertaking a range of surveys.

Federation formation with surveys

Initially these surveys were a contestation with the state about statistics regarding slum dwellers that in turn produced a dialogue between communities and slum dwellers and as by-products produced federations of households and settlements that were either facing the same threats or were on land owned by the same individual or entity. Gradually some of the discussions moved to actual projects; in these instances, the household surveys produced a basis for subsidies for housing or sanitation or relocations.

Interestingly, the relationship of communities collecting data and obtaining secure tenure is very clear to the federations and the alliance, and is seen by all involved as the foundation for a bottom up advocacy for land. However, many grant makers interested in assisting slum dwellers in obtaining land don't see it that way.

Making Data work for slum dwellers

The Alliance began undertaking settlement profiles when the realization emerged that there is no comprehensive data about city wide slums. Also household data that is collected changes quickly, as every year 30.5% people either move or subdivide the house or build another floor to get rental income and so the protocol changes. All slums initially got profiled, so that there was a city wide or federation wide register of data of slums, it produced indicators, and produced both internal reflection for agenda setting for communities and a basis for dialogue with the state.

When large cities like Mumbai had their slums profiled, it was clear that the basic unit not only had to be a ward, but actually had to be a sub-ward to produce data that could be used for planning. Communities are often apprehensive about this data collection, but once the information and data is shown to the communities and they are given their own set, their attitudes change since they now own the data.

A very valuable aspect of this process is the numbering of households. The simple task of writing a number on the door with chalk and making it permanent with paint after verification transforms how the households see themselves. Young volunteers sketch out the settlement on paper with numbers and any duplicates (two numbers on same house which has two doors etc.) are discussed publicly. As will be discussed later in housing and R&R projects, this remains the most powerful means of grievance redressal if someone feels that their house was not included.

Surveys/ Enumerations for R&R projects in Mumbai			
	Settlements	Total HHs	Total (PAPs)
TOTAL	1195	102129	386805
Pavement dwellers	468	39772	159652
Tata Power	56	1071	4076
Mumbai Port Trust (BPT)	19	1915	6945
Railways (MUTP)	554	44090	158594
Dharavi	53	12958	57538

SUB-WARD NO:29 of P-North Ward, Mumbai					
Name of settlement	Total No. of HH	Density	Access to Municipal Water	Access to toilets	% open Defecation
Shivajinagar	4000	319	>50%	>10%	0
Pashkalwadi	4000	658	>50%	>50%	0.75
Patelwadi	600	273	>90%	10-50%	0.4
Shankarwadi	750	429	>90%	10-50%	0.2
Chikuwadi malwam	1500	371	50-90%	10-50%	0.3
Manthanpada	100	17	>90%	10-50%	0.25
Manori gaon	3000	256	>90%	10-50%	0.3
Murumkhan nagar	280	605	>90%	>10%	0
Inaswadi Kharodi Gaon	3000	553	50-90%	10-50%	0.16

Increasingly, the data collected by the state does not ensure development investment until a demand comes from below. The only evidence championed by the poor has the potential to create a demand from the poor themselves.

Savings and Loans

The seminal and central function of daily savings within the Alliance is often not clearly understood by the outside world. Unlike the micro credit movement Mahila Milan collects money, manages it, gives loans and ensures that they are repaid. As and when their need for loans is more than their savings, SPARC borrows from external sources and on-lends to groups. Women truly become financial managers in informal settlements giving loans to men and women, creating trust and accountability for loans taken, and through these early acts of community service get their collectives acknowledge them as leaders in the neighbourhood. Every community and every woman has a story about her own induction into Mahila Milan and her journey towards empowerment.



Month	Savings	m.m. loan Re
January	16.675	47.000
February	16.679	14.500
March	20.524	12.200
April	30.466	11.600
May	32.793	21.000
June	36.428	44.650
July	39.568	71.300
August	36.857	38.700
	38.305	40.100

Mahila Milan leaders, whenever anyone talks to them will tell you:

“when mahila milan come to our street, our first instinct is to BHAGAV them or ask them to leave. So many people come to teach us things, never listen to what we want and we don’t find any value in speaking with them. Yet the women keep coming and they tell stories about their own transformation. At some point, just because we have seen them coming time and again, we agree to listen, and we are intrigued by how they get so many things done for their families and communities. The persistence to start savings seems to make no sense, until we actually begin. They have ways to teach even illiterate women how to manage accounts, how to help each other with small loans, that seem so little money, but we know that at that moment when you don’t have a paisa in your pocket it’s so important. When we are told we can also get loans. That fascinates us. What do we have to loose, we can take the loan and never come back!

So we go to the area resource centre, and there we see many other women and men from other neighbourhoods, some have even got houses after many years through their association with these people. And before long we start chatting with others, they speak of getting birth certificates for children from the municipality, getting ration cards, having a bank account, and travelling to other cities to either teach others or learn from them. They are just like us!!!! If they can do all this why can’t we? After that our BANDHAN is complete we are locked in this relationship, and very soon we are the women going to meet new women who will surely BHAGAV (SHOO US) us!!!

Total Cities /Settlements Saving Cumulative upto March 2016

States	Federated Cities	Total Slums	Federated Savings Slums	Savers
10	81	10265	694	49008
Maharashtra	13	1074	181	18164
Tamil Nadu	31	1929	118	4137
Andhra Pradesh	7	1100	67	1525
Gujarat	4	2857	15	2700
Pondicherry	1	100	5	340
Orissa	6	1018	110	7309
West Bengal	3		73	970
Uttar Pradesh	1	390	37	9623
Karnataka	14	1320	87	4040
Delhi	1	477	1	200

The data above does not represent all the savings managed by the groups, but shows what has been documented by the city federations and verified by the NSDF and Mahila Milan leadership.

Gender and Federation building

Women's participation and its centrality to the federation process

When NSDF began to explore working with SPARC, women from the pavement slums where SPARC had begun work in 1984 already called themselves Mahila Milan. At that time NSDF did not have women as their members yet they had in their reflections acknowledged that that though they were very effective in fighting against evictions, taking out rallies and undertaking campaigns, their process was not consolidating. They realized that even though women were whole heartedly involved in all their programs they were never involved in any aspect as leaders.

SPARC was very excited about exploring this partnership, but wanted Mahila Milan to be embedded in the process, and it was then that NSDF agreed to facilitate Mahila Milan collectives to be located within all their federations and championed by NSDF. Gradually, as the leadership evolved, women from Mahila Milan would become NSDF leaders, and women now had the opportunity to be part of NSDF and Mahila Milan, and as leaders of their settlements they facilitated the organizing, networking and deepening role of women in their neighborhood affairs, working with NSDF to ensure that communities and the male leaders saw this as a vital and much needed acknowledgement of the roles women already played as managers of the neighborhood.

Women managing community assets:

In the Alliance vision all neighborhoods which are informal begin to form cooperative societies even if they are not registered; the idea is that they start behaving like one. In a cooperative society there are 11 representatives and the Alliance always recommends 7

women and 4 men. All registration of houses are done jointly with the woman's name as the first owner. The strategy is that we create institutional arrangements in which women are the main managers of community assets. In all instances when any asset emerges out of advocacy - toilets, houses, tenements, they are handed over to the cooperative society and managed by a majority of women whose experience as managers of their neighborhood affairs prepares them.

Women's representation in NSDF

At the time of the formation of the Alliance, SPARC sought a commitment from NSDF that at least 30% of their leaders would be women. NSDF, to our surprise, refused but instead committed that as women develop skills and capacity, NSDF would ensure that it becomes 50%. It took 15 years to achieve this and today there are more women than men on the national steering committee of NSDF.

Three generations of Mahila Milan leaders

All social movements need to reproduce new generations of leaders. In 1984, most often Mahila Milan leaders were first generation migrants, illiterate and living on pavements. They played an amazing role in the reproduction of Mahila Milan networks across not only Indian city federations but also within SDI countries. Teaching women daily savings, designing housing training, making funicular roofing tiles (*laadies*) they hosted women from Asia, Africa and Latin America and shared their work and helped explore women's participation in slum movements while making representations to the government and managing projects.



Vision of what the alliance seeks to do

Precedent setting

The Alliance has found that making a choice to design, execute and manage projects that serve the poor and to seek Alliances with state and other resource providers might seem simple and logical to us inside the Alliance but it is extremely unusual and generally unexplored in mainstream development investment activity.

Communities of the poor, the Alliance has found, responds better to exploring what they want after they have crossed the restraining imagery of “who are we?, we don’t know anything, someone else should sort this out for us”. Initially they consider wildly improbable possibilities, but having explored these everything comes down to the ground level with costs, availability of resources, rules and dire needs become the basis of making choices.

Some amazing outcomes emerge with some being within the existing legal framework, but who does these projects, how they get funded are very different; in other instances they might evolve a strategy that really works in these conditions, but is not within the regulations of what is permissible, and in general, the expectation that they should manage this process (i.e., be given the contract) is extremely unacceptable.

The **MELAS** or exhibitions are events where the outcomes of strategy development are first showcased. All communities of the poor are invited to view what is being proposed and their feedback is

taken. It is a form of formal acceptance of the strategy by the larger constituency. It is also an informal representation made to the professionals (planners, engineers, social activists and architects) to mingle with communities and look at what is being presented and to give their opinions. Initially these *melas* themselves were precedents - things and processes never undertaken before - as a mechanism to communicate ideas developed by the poor and presented to the city and the poor.



Building relationships with government at city, state and national level

Why clarity of roles and relationships are important between the state and the poor

In large countries like India most urban poor find that their biggest challenge is to stop being invisible, being a statistic and being ignored. Paradoxically everyone is linked directly and closely to the choices made by the nation. Tenure security, basic amenities, food costs, transport, access to livelihoods are all linked to the political and economic choices made by the state. Yet the relationship between the urban poor and the state is passive at best.

Federation activities seek to change that with communities beginning to change their self perceptions - from being supplicants to being active participants, from being passive recipients to becoming drivers of change in the spheres of their own lives which in turn can impact the city as well.

Development investments in cities also demand positive actions by the state and the city and by the citizens, individually and collectively. These regimes have not been established in the case of the urban poor. The interventions of the state and city often don't work for the poor who show rejection by walking away from that activity, which action then gets interpreted as waste (which it is) but the intervention is not perceived as a badly designed solution (which it also is).

Ingredients for real, ongoing relationship building:

1. Either state or slum dwellers demonstrate the value of engagement.
2. Respect for expectations about possible solutions that work for both.
3. Precedent setting explorations to build clarity of roles, relationships and actions and investments.
4. Changing conventional procurement designs and norms to accommodate what works with all considerations taken
5. Once it works, instead of reinventing the wheel in each city, become champions of such partnerships.

From being statistics that have to be dealt with or beneficiaries that have to be provided with largesse to becoming active participants in development that works for both the poor and the city is what the alliance strives for so that the poor are no longer just passive recipients but take an active role in looking for solutions.



Designing projects that serve the needs of the poor

The first projects

The city or administrative authority gradually gave permissions to undertake a project. This showcased how finances were blended together, design was tweaked to serve the poor and construction and its supervision included the communities and its leaders. The community itself, the alliance and the administration involved with this all learnt many things, some affirmed what works while others identified challenges, mistakes and omissions. Various levels of this process produced learning opportunities and *MELAs* remained the most festive yet effective way to produce peer learning. As federations developed a relationship with administrators, politicians and professionals, these representatives accompanied the community leaders to the *melas* and other exchange visits. Seeing other administrators accept this strategy, or seeing how communities designed, managed and owned the process helped justify the exploration of this option by others as well.

Its replication in another location, city or country

India has had many good pilot projects yet they often end up in what we term a 'graveyard' of pilot projects where somehow the original strategy or demonstration was never replicated, copied or scaled. Within the Alliance the knowledge of this kind of project possibility is made available to a very large network of settlements and administrators. There is complete permission to copy, adapt, pick elements of the ideas, and produce different versions of the basic idea.

Mahila Milan who did their first house model exhibition in 1988, actually got the land in 2000, and constructed their first building in 2005 in Mumbai. However in the interim they trained thousands of communities in India

and abroad to believe that they could design houses, toilets and systems, undertake exhibitions and build their own projects. They found that their ideas got refined in so many different ways each time some other community tweaked them.

Replication at scale

The ultimate aim of the strategy is that the process gets adopted by mainstream development and becomes operational beyond the specific organizations.

In the section on projects and programs we will reflect on the level that each program is at and on the evolution of these strategies over the years.



Projects and federations

Where do projects fit in the Alliance strategy

We identified three major areas where choices have to be made about the financial and administrative architecture of the organization so as to be accountable to the communities whose organizations this system seeks to support. Notwithstanding the need to balance statutory requirements or transparency and common sense practices to ensure proper utilization and documentation necessary we have found that we need to -

- Pursue all explorations to evolve and develop projects, processes and organizational development that will scale up at all these levels, and produce new ways to make communities of the urban poor drivers in development with a range of partnerships.
- Be clear about what needs to be undertaken, what are the costs for that, who should be making that choice, identifying risks and choosing to take or not to take the risk, what hedging would offset the risk. Organizations of the urban poor can and will participate in this decision making.
- Developing proposals and budgets that increasingly demonstrate this architecture is vital for choices that leadership in the emerging organizations that serve social movements have to make.

Value of projects done by the federations for the urban poor

The urban poor join any association of organization in order to explore possibilities of change that they cannot undertake in the association levels they are presently involved in. The federation process seeks to identify issues that most of those it organizes want to explore,

and inevitably it is land, housing, amenities and identity. Since the solutions for this demand are not yet off the shelf, networks are encouraged to study what does not work and find what is possible towards making changes or exploring new possibilities.

All projects that we undertake are what we call 'precedent setting' whose scale for expanded usage and scale is what we are engaged in perusing. Building demonstrated capacity to undertake new possibilities, creating demonstrations to get internal agreement within the Alliance and then external engagement with the city is often the starting point. Then comes the strategy of actually taking up projects. By an large these stages are full of different set of challenges and risks with reputational and financial implications that stop most people from exploring these. This is also why most development interventions end as pilots that never scale up. To champion what works is a multi decadal process but the present developmental practices of three year projects and short development historical memory ensure that that does not happen.

Understanding classification of projects at 5 levels

Level 1 : The identified issue begins to be explored by the local community who volunteers to do so and they are supported in developing a strategy.

Level 2: There is a *mela* or exhibition organized by the alliance and attended by the communities and government and technical professionals who observe, study and comment on the strategy.

Level 3: The city or community or both agree on a pilot (precedent setting) project.

Level 4: Federations get a contract or permission to

execute the project at city level.

Level 5: Another community, city or country explores the solution.



Why are such scales not standardized in development investment monitoring?

Why aren't the possibilities of course correction integrated within project cycles?

Why are organized communities and their contribution to design and scale not acknowledged?

Housing

Looking at Housing interventions of the alliance

Government announcements and practice

Historically, the ambitious widespread development change announced by various governments through the last 30 years has not worked in urban India by and large. The institutional architecture to produce a design that will produce a real impact especially in the area of informal settlements, their security of tenure and basic amenities does not take in any of the hard realities that restrict any intervention to be effective in practical terms while the rhetoric of policies being transformative continues. This is a challenge not only India but all of the global south faces.

Factors such as the growth of informality, inability of political transformation of legal frameworks to produce legitimacy for those trapped in informality remain unaddressed. These are not going to change with statements and policies. Financial and construction systems follow this trajectory and as a result, loans that are announced can't be accessed by the poor, and where they are, they do not get repaid for a variety of reasons leading to stricter regulations for lending. Yet the need for improved habitat is dire and it is within this context that the various housing projects are explored by the alliance, as much to demonstrate the possibilities of engaging communities and creating space for participation as well as to explore the various complex issues of design, finance, management and delivery .

The portfolio approach

Since all activities and projects undertaken have different times lines, different approaches and different level of risks and financial flows, the alliance has always taken the portfolio approach in its overall projects approach. In this first part of the projects section we explore housing.

There are two main types of housing projects from a financial perspective

1. Subsidy based housing :

i. market subsidy: The market produces a subsidy based on state policy (SRA in Maharashtra). By and large the Alliance projects are in Mumbai and would be between 4 to 7 floor tenements of between 225 to 275 sq feet each.

ii. Government subsidy: The state and center provide cities with funds to identify neighborhoods and upgrade houses or build habitat on state and city land to relocate households. These projects are in Maharashtra and Odisha (in four cities) and houses mostly build on their footprints in situ.

2. **Community financed projects:** these are loans that the Alliance provides to communities to upgrade their homes by themselves.

i. Upgrading house where part of the money came from government or other sources and is a top up loan.

ii. Incremental housing where smaller loans help upgrade houses more gradually.

TOTAL ALLIANCE HOUSING PORTFOLIO		
	Total Housing units	Constructed so far
TOTAL	6929	6573
Subsidy	3541	3368
TDR	3388	3205

New (expected) in Mumbai	
Project Name	Total Units to be constructed
TOTAL	1580
Oshiwara 2 Phase II	1184
Bharat Janata II	63
Milan Nagar II	308
Jollyboard II	25

COMPLETED SUBSIDY PROJECTS		
PROJECTS	Total House Units	Constructed
TOTAL	1536	1536
Hadapsar Pune	713	713
Bidi workers Sholapur	501	501
Sunudugudu	75	75
Nanded, Maharashtra	213	213
Solapur Mathadi	34	34

State Subsidized Projects

JNNURM SUBSIDY- Cumulative up to March 2016

Ongoing Subsidy Projects	Total House Units	Completed/ Finishing Stage	
TOTAL	2152	297	1832
Phase 1, Yerwada, Pune, Maharashtra	697	9	688
Phase 2, Yerwada, Pune, Maharashtra	340	220	97
Bhubaneswar, Odisha	249	0	249
Puri, Odisha	53	0	53
Nanded, Maharashtra	813	68	745

JNNURM SUBSIDY PROJECTS 2015-16

Subsidy Projects	Total House Units	Completed/ Finishing Stage
TOTAL	2152	644
Phase 1, Yerwada, Pune, Maharashtra	697	8
Phase 2, Yerwada, Pune, Maharashtra	340	84
Bhubaneswar, Odisha	249	0
Puri, Odisha	53	0
Nanded, Maharashtra	813	552

The government subsidy program

There have been different subsidy allocations made for housing in the past four decades since the alliance has been formed. In each instance, there is an allocation by the central government that is available to state governments based on a list of specifications and requirement for matching funds, which are then delivered to the city through state government institutions.

In almost all such programs the actual allocation cannot even reach 3% of households in a few cities. The project is generally to upgrade in-situ or to build some new houses, and is applied without examining infrastructure access and land availability. Even this allocation is rarely fully utilized. Each new government develops different versions with different names, but the same institutional administrative set up remains the conduit for this program and the same sets of incapacities form impediments to delivery.

As preparations rarely include the poor themselves, they have to do nothing to seek a position, the selection is done by the state and city. In almost all instances the project is constructed by contractors through a procurement and tendering process which does not consider the needs or aspirations of the poor and in most instances the people involved (should the project come through) don't pay their contribution. So then, why do federations want to enter this process?

What communities believe has to change

Organizations of the urban poor realized that their own learning for change has three elements.

Firstly, they need to focus on a specific program, in this instance a subsidy housing which they all wish for but can never presume that they will get it.

Secondly, instead of a desk study, people have to actually get involved to attempt to make it happen. That way as they encounter different challenges, they begin to explore what needs to change.

Thirdly, they need to make operational the changes they need while doing the projects and then convince the city that those changes are what communities want.

This makes participation in subsidy projects seemingly messy, but it has amazing educational and advocacy potential. Yet it also makes the potential scalability of this possibility vulnerable as change is very hard to institutionalize unless some very senior administrators and politicians want to make that happen. It is also apparent to the alliance that projects have to continue happening for that knowledge to stay alive. Doing one project and finding out what needs to be changed and writing a document about that is not enough.

State subsidies must be utilized. When communities demand utilization, it produces engagement, it produces dialogue to explore change needed, and it produces utilization.

Market Subsidized Projects

SCALE
Level 4**The challenge of market subsidies and the urban poor**

The Slum redevelopment act of 1995 provided huge relief to a majority of slum dwellers who if they voted in 1995 would not be evicted and were eligible for structure for structure R&R. Though the Act provided primacy for communities to take up construction, neither the policy nor practice developed an institutional framework to allow communities or NGOs to undertake these projects that are now driven by and large by reality developers to expand their access to land and build tenements for obtaining TDR or land to build higher income houses.

Thus a scheme developed to help the state produce housing stock for slum dwellers has ended up being just the opposite. Also, due to huge delays in operationalizing this scheme, more and more households don't have documentation to get access to the scheme, and this either leads to evictions or is a non starter for the project.

The alliance represents some of the few organizations that have assisted communities to take on projects, demonstrate ways to obtain banks finance for the projects and the need for community networks to have access to start up capital to take on such projects. While doing this it has also made recommendations to the state government of Maharashtra to examine changes needed in the act that communities believe will assist the process.

What has to change**Review of what does not work:**

- SRA was made to reduce the burden on the state and to accelerate improvements. With delays greater numbers are unlikely to get benefits.
- Cut off date: while it has moved from 1995 to 2000, given the constant mobility in populations, there is a need to examine how to address this challenge. At the moment only impending elections produce demands for change.
- Ensuring that SRA is not reducing space for slum dwellers in the city. 8% of land in Mumbai is used for housing almost 50% of the population in informal settlements. It is vital that spatially more of this land is not taken away for housing options for others.
- Developing designs and financing that builds community confidence: increasingly housing for slum dwellers is badly designed and there is a need for a greater collaboration between professionals and communities to create designs that work for them.

Examining some new possibilities

Its been over several decades since SRA has been put in place yet no overall review of the scheme has been done. What communities need is a good starting point for their participation is crucial. Can there be a separate design and construction? Can more be done with communities assisted by professionals where this can be pre-financed by the state SRA cell after which the project can be tendered out and costs of design reimbursed as part of the bid?

COMPLETED TDR PROJECTS IN MUMBAI

PROJECTS	Total House Units	Constructed
TOTAL	2618	2618
Rajiv Indira-Suryodaya (In-situ)	263	263
Bharat Janata (In-situ) Phase 1	147	147
Milan Nagar (R&R-MUTP) Phase 1	88	88
Oshiwara I (In-situ and R&R – MUTP)	836	836
Kanjurmarg II- Jollyboard (R&R, MUIP)	106	106
Oshiwara 2 Phase 1	1036	1036
Dharavi Markandeya	92	92
Suryodaya (Pune)	50	50

TDR-Cumulative upto March 2016

Project Name	Total House Units	Ongoing	Completed/ Finishing Stage
TOTAL	780	0	587
*Kanjurmarg 3	780		587

Incremental Housing

Dealing with the reality that most households in informal settlements will build their own house

Subsidies for housing don't reach most people which implies that housing will essentially remain a brick by brick, incrementally constructed and financed project by the household. Yet neither the government nor the private sector or those in the technology sector are looking at this huge market from a design, material, construction or financing angle. Since the last five years the Alliance has been exploring how communities can use loans to upgrade their homes.

The value of universal access to basic amenities

In a real world, if the state were to agree to provide secure tenure of any sort and basic amenities to the poor, the poor will incrementally build their homes. It's about actually creating a strategy where the basic amenities and land security are treated as public goods that can reach universally to all, and the house is treated as a private good, for which materials, financial lending systems and design options are available through the market.

This year:

1. The focus has been to develop a deeper understanding of how the choices about upgrading and incremental upgrading are done by households and of the value of doing it collectively as a neighborhood. Federations have started developing questionnaires for

those who take loans for incremental housing to understand this in greater depth.

2. From the next year the focus will be to further develop more alliances with people examining material development that can improve choices and provide costs effective solutions for upgrading.
3. The alliance will continue to support loans for expanding this portfolio and will reach out to more cities where loans will be given.

**Cumulative Housing Upgrading Loans Upto March 2016**

State	Members	Loan Amount
TOTAL	2248	5,20,50,500
Andhra Pradesh	709	1,70,71,500
Karnataka	1277	2,38,08,000
Pondicherry	129	72,41,000
Orissa	15	7,30,000
Maharashtra	8	4,00,000
Tamil Nadu	110	28,00,000

Individual Housing Upgrading Loans- 2015--16

State	City	Members	Loan Amount
TOTAL		208	91,25,000
Karnataka	Maddur	70	21,00,000
Karnataka	Bangalore	19	9,50,000
Karnataka	Madurai	60	18,00,000
Maharashtra	Kolhapur	6	3,00,000
Pondicherry	Pondicherry	53	39,75,000

Relocation and Resettlement

The metropolitan region of Mumbai and relocation

By and large both the state, the court and society at large has justified evictions of households that “obstruct” public infrastructure. The Slum Rehabilitation Act (SRA) and the policy to relocate households as part of the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) transformed this practice by providing a structure for structure compensation to households. **In Mumbai it is now an integrated part of projects to quantify the potential for relocation and develop parallel preparation and activities to relocate households.**

Over the years where the Alliance has been involved in relocations directly it has relocated 30,000 households directly yet there are over three to four times more that have been relocated through various schemes. Many are deeply critical of the lacunae (and there are many) in the scheme, but the opportunity for households, who would otherwise never get an alternate option, is indeed a breakthrough.

Projecting how the poor get land tenure through relocation

Much has been written about relocation, often treating it like evictions. However unlike slum dwellers living on private or state land, these who lived on central government agency lands, or on pavements could never get these alternatives. Looking at households living on pavements, people living along the water pipelines, those living on railway lands along the tracks, or on the port trust land, or airport land, it was inconceivable that they would ever get housing that was safe and secure because of the type of owner of the land they lived on and where they were located. SRA and the relocation for public infrastructure projects produced alternatives. However imperfect they were, these were still major breakthroughs and we continue to work towards improving them and to change aspects of relocation with evidence through study and by demonstrating alternatives.

RELOCATION & REHABILITATION 2015-16			R&R Cumulative upto 2016	
Projects	HH To be Relocated	Relocated	HH To be Relocated	Relocated
TOTAL	58361	1347	58361	29373
MUIP (Mumbai)	30441	145	30441	10722
MUTP (Mumbai)	23734	186	23734	16727
Tata Power Phase I (Mumbai)	238	4	238	245
Tata Power Phase II (Mumbai)	275	2	275	173
Tata Power Phase III (Mumbai)	393	0	393	64
Tata Power Phase IV (Mumbai)	240	21	240	104
MbPT (Mumbai)	1700	525	1700	758
Warje Relocation (Pune)	1340	464	1340	580

Along with MMRDA, which continues to remain the main institution which manages most of the projects, The Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT) for the first time has begun to explore relocation rather than eviction. And Tata Power, a private sector electricity company has also begun to relocate rather than evict households which reside under their power transmitters.

Relocation

Post relocation Challenges

The main challenges faced by the residents of the relocated communities :

1. Livelihoods, schools and extended networks get disrupted.
2. The challenge of living in a multi story building, managing formal payment of bills, maintenance of buildings.
3. The design of the tenements and building and the layout of the buildings.

All households living in the relocated sites face this challenge, and those who are poorer face them doubly. MM and NSDF leaders who have been relocated themselves now work to identify each of these issues and work with various state institutions to explore solutions. Changes take time, and some take more time than others but this year we present some policy and project breakthrough.

A new breakthrough

In the past year students from New School, New York, US came to work with the alliance and two architects worked with MM leaders relocated in various areas. Together, they identified design challenges in the overall layouts, between open spaces of buildings and the house design itself. The Alliance team working on relocation and another intern then developed a detailed documentation of these challenges and presented it to MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority) that manages most of the relocations. As a result, now there is an audit of all

buildings before the people move in to ensure that all amenities and services are working and in place, and a more detailed explorations of estate layouts and houses is being explored.



Residents testimony: (what has been solved)

“ for many years, the water storage tank and the tank in which fecal matter accumulates before it goes to the sewer were next to each other. Often in the monsoons when water from the sewer tank over flowed, it entered the water tank and we all fell ill. Once we understood what was happening, we discussed it with the concerned agency and we got it first cleaned and then shifted so this coming monsoon we will not be affected by it.”

Residents testimony: (what has been not solved)

“ ghoskors... these are people who are not on (eligibility) lists but have informally “purchased” houses in our building. Half of these were there before we moved, and now we can’t form a society because of them. The city which relocated us will not remove them, nor compel them to pay dues or keep the place clean.”

R&R Alliance team:

“when we went to do the review of the buildings in which people were to move, the private developer who had constructed the building assumed we would see only one building. But we saw all seven of them and we had comments on each and every tenement. We submitted this and assumed it was sorted. However when we went again some days before the people were to move, we found nothing was done, and reported that.”

What we observe now is that rehabilitation is being understood much better within the state institutions and expanding on how to improve this is getting appreciated in ways that was not in place a few years ago.



**SCALE
Level 5**

Community sanitation

Swachh Bharat in urban areas

The announcement of a national campaign on universal sanitation as part of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a powerful political message and encouraging everyone to construct toilets is a valuable part of this process. However there need to be some early breakthroughs on the challenges as well. We examine these in an urban context.

1. A clarity on where individual toilets will create a health hazard rather than an asset for health (where there is no access to water and safe disposal of fecal matter).
2. Strong city and state support for infrastructure to ensure safe disposal of fecal matter regardless of whether it is an individual or a community toilet. Exploring and expanding ways to process fecal matter other than centrally operated treatment plants.
3. Slums which are “not recognized” and deemed illegal don't get access to the benefits of sanitation and water at present regardless of their land security status.

In the coming years the Alliance will explore these options and expand possibilities for decentralized treatment of fecal matter

Community sanitation and individual toilets

Given the number of community toilets in the construction of which the Alliance has been involved there is an assumption that we are against individual toilets. The reality is that we want everyone to have access to sanitation, and the approach to champion community toilets comes in locations where the infrastructure and densities can never provide for individual toilets .

What we do promote in general is that each municipality has to consider ways to engage informal settlements to produce some form of partnership to share the responsibilities. The most common one being that the state or city pays for construction and the residents association manage routine maintenance. In the case of individual toilets people access subsidies and build their toilet but the city contributes to the treatment process of fecal matter.

Community and Individual toilets and their financing

In medium and small towns the Alliance gives loans to households seeking to construct their individual toilets through the MM network,. These are designed and managed by MM and the federation leaders at city level.

Swachh Bharat Mission (SOURCE: SPARC OWN EXPERIENCE)		
PARAMETER	AHMEDNAGAR (MAHARASTRA)	BHUBANESWAR (ORISSA)
City Population (lakhs)	350859	843402
City Area (Sq Km)	39.3	135
Slum Population	52629	302400
Average Income Level (In Slums)	< 6000	>6000
Sewer Coverage	ALMOST 100 %	0.4
Subsidy Central : Individual Toilets	4000	4000
Minimum Contribution of state: Individual Toilet	1333	1333
Actual contribution of state : Individual Toilets	13000	1333

Cumulative Individual Toilet Loans- March 2016

LOANS FOR INDIVIDUAL TOILETS	SEATS	Amount
Completed	1014	70,67,000
Maharashtra -2013	21	2,65,000
Andhra Pradesh-2010	5	50,000
Karnataka - 2001-11	324	30,22,000
Pondicherry-2003-04	39	1,45,000
Tamil Nadu - 2004-07	606	35,85,000
Odisha -2004-05	19	

Sanitation

Reflections of the last three decades of work

India's challenge to provide universal sanitation is a tough one especially at a time when there is already such a huge deficit and more urbanization is anticipated. Despite the campaign, some fundamental policy on how universal sanitation can be achieved and clarity on the impediments it comes across is necessary.

- Even today most central government agencies are required to give permission to the city to provide sanitation.
- Hardly 5% of cities in India already have centralized waste treatment plants for water based sanitation and even these are not connected to slums (old and new) because these were not "supposed" to be there.
- State governments rarely examine whether the budgets allocated for sanitation get used by cities. Most remain unutilized.
- Hardly any technology innovations have been made to explore alternatives, and those that are emerging are too expensive for either city or community.
- Finally, what is not understood is that the extended open defecation undertaken by people cannot be changed just because a toilet is accessible.
- Similarly washing hands campaign must be accompanied by access to water!
- Toilet access to women that is safe and available in public areas and building always remains an additional challenge.

Examining working in small and medium towns

Having worked in larger cities, the Alliance has begun to focus on medium and small towns, with a view to exploring universal sanitation and water for all slum dwellers.

The exploration seeks to :

- Understand the creation of city wide targets based on surveys and the development of blending finances of the city, state and community to produce a range of options that will generate the scale that is needed.
- Examine the type of initiatives that need to be explored to produce a range of possibilities that allow for these strategies to be co-produced by the city and communities from informal settlements.
- To test out technologies for decentralized waste treatment that cities, especially small and medium towns can afford.



State	Served %	Un-served %	Total No of Slums Surveyed	Population access to individual toilets	Population access to community toilets	No. of Required seats for community toilets
Maharashtra	0.42	0.76	397	100140	202050	13746
Tamil Nadu	0.29	0.71	661	19645	110950	15653
Andhra Pradesh	0.49	0.51	979	780290	12250	16280
Odisha	0.58	0.42	695	149244	33766	4141
Pondicherry	0.14	0.86	66	162202	4950	2213

Cumulative Sanitation Projects Upto March 2016

State	Toilet Blocks	Seats
Total	820	15747
Maharashtra	759	14894
Andhra Pradesh	38	451
Tamil Nadu	15	266
Gujarat	1	15
Odisha	7	121

ONGOING SANITATION PROJECTS- 2015-16

Project Name	Total Toilet Blocks	Total Seats	Constructed Blocks	Seats
MSDP Lot 9, Mumbai	100	2000	27	450

Other projects and programs

Police Panchayat

The work of the Police Panchayat continues in Mumbai. There are 204 Police Panchayats of which two thirds work regularly and assist the residents of their neighborhood to address their conflicts. The police seek support of the Panchayats during public events such as Ganesh Chathurthi where for 11 days large numbers of Ganesh idols come to the sea for immersion and millions come on the street to watch them. Much of the assistance is to work alongside the police in neighborhoods to manage assistance to people who have lost children and old people in the rush, to ease fights and to make sure women are safe in this process.

The annual meeting of the Mumbai Police and the Panchayat took place as an yearly event and deepening and strengthening these activities was discussed.



SCALE
Level 3

Sadak Chhap

This year several of the older Sadaak Chhap residents got married and moved out of the night shelters and area resource centers. As many more night shelters have been set up and the older Sadak Chhaps trained by the federations have begun to get jobs and are getting married and moving out the number of Sadak Chhaps in the night shelters has begun to decrease.

In a period of formalization of all activities, the virtues of flexibility for street children remains a big challenge. When we began working with them in 1987, we promised them a safe place to stay, where no drugs were allowed, they were fed freshly cooked meals, and allowed to decide if they wanted to work or study. At that time we began with 3000 children of whom 500 stayed in night shelters and others visited occasionally for a fresh meal or when they fell sick. Now that number has shrunk and we will sustain this program until all these who choose to stay with us are able to find their space as young adults and leave us.

SCALE
Level 3

Welfare for households in needs

Over 70,000 households in Mumbai have been relocated over the last 20 years, and each month there are at least 700-1000 households who have no income coming to them; some face this chronically while others have a few months when they have no income. Mahila Milan leaders in each building identify such households and prepare a list of those who have no mechanisms to assist them and each month the federations get some donations and contribute towards providing them with food and fuel to manage to feed themselves and their family for that month. Food packets are prepared and delivered each month to various locations and households pick them from the resource center. Often the other residents contribute towards their maintenance and electricity bills. This support from the federations and Mahila Milan has been a significant reason why these households have not sold off their homes and moved back to informality.



SCALE
Level 3

Energy

Solar-Lanterns for Pavement Dwellers

One of the findings of our energy survey was that one of the groups of the urban poor who have no access to electricity are pavement dwellers and migrants who have just arrived in the city and live under plastic sheets or tarpaulin tents. The households spend between 300 and 700 rupees per month just for candles and to charge their cellphones at a shop close by or from somebody who has electricity in their home.

Based on our survey we knew that solar-systems could be an option to improve their situation and we started a small pilot-project with a small settlement in the northern suburbs of Mumbai.

As a first step we tested different solar-home-systems together with the community. After some time, as a second step we discussed their experiences with the solar systems so that they could take a decision on the model they would continue with in the project. They chose the model S300 from d.Light which cost Rs. 1000 but the households could buy it on installment. So far we have received quite good responses from the households who invested in the solar lamp.

Energy efficient appliances

About 70 percent of the slum dwellers in India have to spend more than one tenth of their income on energy services. One reason for this is that many households can only afford to buy old and second hand appliances, mainly fridges and TVs, which are very energy-inefficient, but this is

also true for ceiling fans and incandescent bulbs. On the other hand, energy efficient appliances like Led-tube-lights are still quite costly so that payback periods could become an issue if poor households invest in new technologies.

In order to explore this on a practical basis we equipped two households, one purely residential and the other running a small business at home, with led-lights and energy efficient fans. We observed the electricity bills of the two households over a period of 7 months (Sept-March) and found that while the purely residential house did not show any difference in the overall units of electricity consumed, the one with the small business had appreciable saving of electricity.



Energy Justice for the urban Poor

Energy poverty is by far and large still considered as a problem of the rural areas. And it is true that eight out of ten people without modern energy access live in rural areas, but this should not mean that the urban dwellers become side lined. Two out of ten still means that around 220 million people globally live in cities without access to electricity in spite of the fact that they are close to the grid. One also has to keep in mind that being connected to the grid does not automatically mean a secured access to electricity: in 66% of the developing world's cities, power outages are a daily problem. Around 433 million urban dwellers are dependent on polluting fuels that are major health threats to them (World Energy Outlook 2012). Focussing only on the number of people without access to modern energy services also misses out on the fact that energy poverty goes beyond that. Households that spend more than 10% of their income on energy services are typically also considered to be energy poor. Often both the issues are connected, many poor households pay more than 10% of their income for energy and are still forced to cook with wood, dung or kerosene and suffer from electricity blackouts of more than 4 hours every day. Given the worldwide megatrend of continuing urbanization the issue of a just and sustainable energy provision in cities will become an even more important topic.

Dealing with disasters : In Nepal after the earthquake

Based on a report prepared by the National Slum Dwellers' Federation (NSDF) and Mahila Milan team that visited Nepal and the Leaders of Nepal Basobas (federation of informal settlements in Nepal) and Mahila Ekta Samaj from 30th April to 3rd May 2015.

The team that went from India included Annapa Singhe, John Samuel, and Prakash Daikhande.

The first meeting was held at the Basobas office on 1st May 2015, with those who could travel, to take stock of what was happening, and report on the actual situation. The group did two types of visits to the city, one looking at the formal damage and the other to visit accessible informal neighborhoods. The hotels where they stayed were also seriously damaged with cracks in the walls, and seismic activity between 3-6 on the Richter scale continued.

In the first few days of the earthquake power and communication broke down and was restored gradually. All government offices were closed since the buildings were damaged and no one could enter until they were pronounced safe creating a lot of confusion and lack of communication. The earthquake also destroyed infrastructure and drains, sewerage and water became serious crisis.

Many leaders expressed that this calamity mainly affected people in the valley and many rural parts of Nepal. Strangely, the residents living in apartments and ground plus one structures and shopping malls, and old structures and buildings faced terrible destruction compared to informal settlements. All traditional buildings especially the newari construction in the city faced maximum damage.

On the basis of their communication with each other the Nepali leadership felt that 80% of informal dwellings and households were not affected by the earthquake in terms of their homes falling down but they felt it was only because their houses did not have heavy construction. However they were facing many serious challenges and support for repairs would be needed later. Though their own homes were not destroyed even the informal settlement households sleep outside. All over there were tent like structures where people cooked, slept and ate. Food was also sold in such locations.

The impact of the earthquake seriously paralyzed their lives in other ways. For instance, all shops and establishments were closed with several implications for the urban poor. With things coming to a standstill, informal workers had no work and with no wage incomes and no vending or employment their funds for survival were drying up fast. Transport was severely restricted due to bad condition of roads and food was also not easily accessible. The Indian team often had to be taken many miles on motorbikes to get tea and food as well.



Nepali leaders' message to Slum Dwellers International (SDI) :

1. There are 40 settlements in Khatmandu where they work. They work in other districts but so far they have not been able to assess the situation of those areas as they cannot communicate or travel there. However they will make that assessment later and let Jockin know.
2. The challenge all over the city is that most formal settlements have faced huge damage, and the informal workers have lost their livelihood, have scarcity of food and their neighborhoods face health challenges due to disruption of amenities.
3. They want interest free loans to restart their livelihoods, and want to seek this support from Slum Dwellers International (SDI).
4. They want to work to help the rest of the city but cannot afford to do this for free as they have no money, but they represent valuable labour that is needed.
5. The medicines, tents, batteries and torches and other stuff the team took from India was shared and distributed. All together 360 kgs of material was taken from Mumbai.
6. The setting up of community kitchens was agreed upon, and together they sourced wholesale places where rice bags were purchased and federation leaders carried them back to their settlements. 200 bags were ordered, each bag of 30 kgs at the rate of 1400 Nepal rupees per bag. The building from where this vendor operated was also half collapsed.

Dealing with disasters : in Tamil Nadu after the floods.

Climate related disasters - flooding

The 2015 the World Economic Forum Global Risks Report identified water crises - drought, floods, sea level rise and pollution as the top risk with the largest expected global impact over the coming decade.

From amongst 1000 cities, 60% identified flooding as one of the shocks they face, while 20% identified water shortage as their top stress.

Man-made and environmental disasters of the kind we saw in Chennai were devastating this year. The incessant heavy rains continued and flooded parts of Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu. Rain water accumulation was added to when water was released from the dam as incessant rain would have damaged it. As a result parts of Chennai were flooded and the resulting havoc caused unimaginable damage to the city and its residents.

It is evident to the alliance that speedy assessment and timely support goes a long way to recover from these crisis.

Response of the alliance

In their assessment of need, the Chennai federations managed to gather locally and assist neighborhoods with assistance for immediate relief and sought loans to start livelihoods afterwards.

In the district towns of Tamil Nadu, mud houses collapsed, food could not be cooked because wood got wet and help was needed for almost more than a month.

The federations and Mahila Milan supported and assisted families and communities affected by the flood and tsunami in different cities in Tamil Nadu with food, shelter, clothes, water, books, utensils etc. The first activity they undertook after the emergencies was to survey the affected area or settlement. This provides the number of people who are affected, the kind of assistance that is needed, the number of people affected, how many families need to be re-housed.

- The federations ran community kitchens where they cooked rice and fed the flood affected people,
- 400 tents were provided to several families,
- School stationary and books and clothes for children were distributed and
- they are now constructing a few houses for the dis-housed.

Apart from the assistance provided by the alliance, additional financial assistance came from SDI.



Section III: Reflections

Evaluations and Response

Misereor evaluation

This year, the Indian Alliance underwent an external evaluation of its programs and processes by Ms. Banashree Banerjee. The evaluation was funded by Misereor, though the scope was extended beyond the Misereor projects, to the processes and approach adopted by the Alliance and its relevance in the current development context.

This evaluation, and such other external evaluations in the past have been immensely helpful for the organization to reflect on the work it does as well as on the cooperation, approaches and processes of constituent organizations; in this case, the reflections of the federations, SPARC and Nirman about each other's work and cooperation.

The evaluation report reiterated why and how the approach of the Alliance towards building community capacities is a long term strategy which has yielded results, and stands out as one of the best ways of producing sustainable development models. The evaluation also highlighted the fact that the exposure of private sector companies is not yet evolved enough to enter into complex urban spaces, and therefore accessing CSR funds for organizations such as the Indian Alliance towards long term process investments cannot yet be conceived. The report

observed and articulated the difference of opinion amongst the federations and SPARC, especially on the subject of new initiatives of SPARC in the field of Energy and other areas. This also figured promptly in the response that Misereor had on the evaluation.

Some signals for the way forward

The response of the Alliance to this evaluation was:

The identification of the key issues was useful for our reflection and the management and staff agreed to the evaluators reflections on this:

- The theory of change and its relevance was further substantiated.
- While the RAY policy was vital for the interventions, and the funding was "just in time" for it to build capacity, the outcomes did not come through as the change in the government led to the process in limbo. However the communities and networks stayed focused.
- The objects of the project were reviewed and believed to have retained their validity.
- Equality amongst partners is the greatest strength, where each partner's dissent and challenges towards new initiatives is not considered as a barrier, but as a means by which the mature relationship strengthens its combined stand on such initiatives.

- The Alliance plans to take this forward collectively by shaping the initiative to align with its priorities, especially in terms of access to transportation and vulnerability issues of the urban poor

The way forward

- Creating new and enriching ways to have SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan work together.
- Focussing on incremental housing to improve what households can do for themselves.
- Developing project funding which covers more costs and to use TDR and construction funds to gradually develop a corpus to decrease dependency on donors.
- Deepen working with smaller towns.



Leverage and scale

How we look at leverage

The grant investment received sets the gears in motion. The funds are directly used to conduct the sanctioned, agreed upon activities which is our legal obligation

Level 1 : Funds invested produce innovative processes that produce solutions (housing/sanitation/livelihood etc usually at the local level) that are acceptable to the community and state. This results in opportunities to bring about a policy or programmatic change - at local, city, state, national or international levels since existing traditional/existing procurement systems are challenged by NGOs and CBOs - even if informally at first.

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

Level 3 : Traditional state roles of delivering (housing/sanitation for instance) are transferred to community/federations also leveraging subsidies and/or investment by the private sector.

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

Level 5 : Local and national federation strategies and practices are picked up by other organizations and other networks within or outside SDI.

This annual report seeks to focus on a combination of who we are and what we do.

Investments to measure levels to develop a constituency

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

Levels to leverage resources

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

Measurement for scale for precedents

“INDIA IS THE GRAVEYARD OF PILOT PROJECTS” is often a comment that is heard in many discussions in development explorations. The Alliance believes that while it is essential to explore solutions within a scale that is realistic for those who explore it, taking the precedent setting approach is useful to explore ways to ensure that the solutions created to make development investment work for the poor first get explored and then scaled.

The Alliance believes that flexibility in accommodating a large number of variables, some not even conceived by the originators, is critical for the process to replicate, reproduce, adapt or even morph. The strategy seeks to ensure that negotiations and consensus building are two parallel ongoing spirals along which the process moves. Beginning with experimentation and an early crafting of a strategy or solution which is then examined by the process as a strategy output :

- First reviewed by the constituency it represents and then by the government and technical and financial opinion makers it produces the first output tested for examining its potential.
- Second, it is taken by others in the city or elsewhere and explored either to replicate or adapt in ways such that the originators also benefit.
- Third is when it moves outside the network sphere and becomes one of the mainstream options explored by the sector.

Refining Practice, Advocacy and Learning

The Alliance believes that no solution can be workable by the poor alone if it has to be sustainable, scalable and accessible to the poor across the urban landscape. The Alliance works with almost all sections that are willing to explore this with it.

Government

The three tiers of government are the most important and are also the most accountable institutions who have to make development accessible to the poor. The Alliance has always sought to demonstrate how the urban poor can become viable partners in development. All programs are designed and executed to seek projects in collaboration with the state. Exploring more ways to build on that are leading to better information gathering, its analysis and better representations in government programs.

Technical professionals

The solutions to many challenges that the poor face have technology linked applications which are often elusive to the Alliance. Seeking engagement or exploring possibilities with technical professionals requires a lot of effort to locate them, to engage them and to get them to agree that their solutions may need to change or be tweaked to suit the urban poor and be affordable.

Peers

The federation model remains a new form of organizing in urban areas where NGOs still prefer to work in one or a few communities on projects for which they have funding. This is as much a challenge for the funding process as it is for the older conceptual frameworks. Global and regional networks have explored this more easily than specific organizations.

Academia

The Alliance believes that all the innovative processes developed by us need to enter the mainstream, and education in various spheres is an important vehicle for this possibility. To date development studies, architecture, engineering planning and adult education are some of the fields in which we have emerging Alliances where work is done jointly, or where students come to intern and take back material, or where documentation done by the Alliance is used in class rooms. Increasingly courses include seminars or lectures by Alliance leaders.

Market

Whether we wish it to be present or not the fact remains that the market contributes a great deal to what the poor can do, and creating conditions that demonstrate that finance, materials and alliances to explore options with market driven organizations is emerging as a arena for the Alliance. However there are many issues that have to be addressed by both sides and these are presently being explored.

Events and Activities

City-based NGO wins Curry Stone Design Prize Vision Award

POOJA PILLAI
MUMBAI, MARCH 17

A CITY-BASED NGO, Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers (SPARC), has been honoured with the prestigious Curry Stone Design Prize Vision Award for 2016. SPARC, which was founded by Sheela Patel in 1984 to fight for the housing rights of pavement dwellers, was presented with the US \$50,000 prize at a ceremony held on Thursday at the National Gallery of Modern Art.

Since its establishment, SPARC has worked towards creating processes — including a successful savings scheme driven by women living on pavements — to enable the urban poor to be recognised as empowered citizens.

"The award we have won is for our organisational architecture. It gives recognition to processes within institutions that build confidence of women and men living in slums, to create their priorities and voice them with commitments to work with the government to bring in changes," Patel said.

The Curry Stone Design Prize was founded in 2008 by Clifford Curry and Delight Stone of the Curry Stone Foundation, an Oregon-based charitable body that funds innovative projects that work towards increasing access to shelter, health care, clean air and water, nutrition, education and social justice.

According to Emiliano Gandolfi, the Prize Director, the award given to SPARC recognises the organisation's work in designing the social framework with which underrepresented populations could have a voice in the decision-making processes that impact their lives.

"Through this prize, we want to encourage people to stop thinking of design in a limited way and to view it as something that can be used to create sustainable solutions for social problems. This is exactly what SPARC has done," he said.

One of SPARC's important achievements was in helping slum and pavement dwellers "produce identity" through self-organised census, thus allowing them to acquire identity proofs such as ration cards that would enable them to open bank accounts, enroll their children in schools and receive medical care. The organisation has also worked to involve the communities of the urban poor as proactive stakeholders in the construction of housing meant for them.

SPARC is the second Indian organisation to have won the prize. In 2013, a Bhuj-based collective of professional architects, engineers and environmental advocates called Hunnarshala won the Curry Stone Design Prize for facilitating community-driven, artisan-led reconstruction in Bhuj after the 2001 earthquake.

pooja.pillai@expressindia.com



Some highlights of the year:

- WPOWER global partnership forum, Delhi 16th and 17th April 2015
- HUPA workshop on research outcomes of BSUP study, Delhi 25th May 2015
- DPU Land value capture, London, 1-2nd June, 2015
- EDD and Cities Alliance , 3-4th June, 2015
- Exhibition by New School Interns, Dharavi and Mankhurd, June and July 2015
- SDTT workshop, Odisha, July 2015
- Workshop on community engagement in urban regeneration, Tehran, Iran, 25-27th August, 2015
- Slum profiling workshop, Nepal, September 2015
- Urban thinkers campus, Delhi, 5-8th October, 2015
- Third Annual Citylab, London, 18-20th October, 2015. (Watch "India's Urban Transformation/ CityLab 2015" on YouTube <https://youtu.be/wb0k720koX4>)
- Global perspective conference, Bangkok 4-6 November, 2015
- Urban Governance and its Discontents, February 2016
- Studio at KRVI - Urban Habitat Odisha, Mumbai 6th March, 2016

Looking Forward

The alliance has initiated dialogue with two leading Indian Foundations to seek funds to work in medium and small towns in India. This relationship has been educational for all of us. To see communities of the urban poor as drivers of change is a new space for most Indian grant makers especially when outcomes do not come quickly.

The alliance has always maintained that work in the areas of Urban Habitat in the areas of housing and water and sanitation are a decadal process. However since grant makers need to work in cycles of two or three years early lack of impact makes many organisations fearful of entering this space.

Both grant makers have respected our perspective while helping us understand their concerns about managing their risks and have given us an insight into how lengthy the journey to produce adequate philanthropic support is, if we seek Indian funds to work on issues of habitat with the urban poor seeking partnership with their town or city.

Arghyam

Arghyam is an organization working in the areas of water and sanitation predominantly in the rural areas. It has now been trying to work in the urban areas, and has approached SPARC to look at ways by which we can collaboratively work on urban sanitation challenges. After rounds of discussion with Jayamala Subramaniam, the CEO of Arghyam and her team visited Mumbai. Having understood the context, challenges and the learning of the Alliance, Arghyam has come forward to take the relationship further. Currently, together with SPARC, and other technology and NGO partners, it plans to undertake sanitation solution explorations in cities and towns Maharashtra. The focus of this exploration is to look at onsite management of fecal matter especially in towns and cities where methods of safe disposal of wastes, such as sewerage or septic tanks that can be serviced by pumping vehicles do not exist.

Tata Trust

With a deepening of the understanding of the situation of housing, basic services and the levels of poverty in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, SPARC jointly with UDRC and KRVI has submitted a proposal to the TATA trusts and the Government of Odisha to work on two specific proposals.

1. To demonstrate WATSAN improvement in the slums of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack through piloting alternative technologies and community led intervention strategies.

2. To undertake demonstration projects in the areas of house design, community organization and financing, and to demonstrate scalable strategies towards habitat improvement for slum dwellers, through taking up a greenfield area for designing resettlement colonies, and taking up in-situ upgradation designs for slum communities with access to land tenure. These specific programs aim to work with the state to demonstrate how habitat improvement strategies can be taken up at scale through community participation.



New Explorations

The strategy is to work at the city level. Starting with citywide slum profiles, build a city federation, dialogue with the city to explore priorities, explore demonstration projects and establish a five year plan using the base data from profiles to establish a monitoring system.

A crucial part is to examine how technology, finances and community participation can help develop a comprehensive plan to upgrade and improve habitat for today and tomorrow.

Working in medium and small towns

The major breakthroughs for the alliance towards scale in creating policy and accessing state funds have been in large cities. There have been several reasons for that. Firstly, city federations in large cities are older, have faced many terrible evictions and demolitions and have had to work hard to explore solutions for change because of which they built skills and capacities. Secondly, these cities had senior administrators and technical professionals who were ready and willing to work with community networks to explore new possibilities. Thirdly, the city development requires community involvement to produce the infrastructure needed by the city.

However, in the projections for urbanization, medium and small towns will be where growth will be concentrated, but the towns don't have either the capacity or adequate money or any history of engagement with communities. As a result, using their experience in large cities, NSDF and Mahila Milan now seek to create demonstrations of how communities of the poor can make a contribution towards improved habitat in medium and small towns.

Profiles now include issues of energy, vulnerability to climate change and transport

In the last few years, issues of energy access for the informal settlements, assessments of vulnerability to flooding, heat strokes, and mud slides and similar indicators as well as the impact

of a lack of access to affordable transport are included in the survey of slums. Initially slum profiles sought to ensure that all slums were included, and that the communities knew who owned the land to be able to negotiate for security of tenure.

Exploring technology options

As we move into the SDGs and a world in which Carbon dioxide emissions will start becoming critical to development assessments, new strategies to explore materials for construction, new technologies for clean water, or for processing fecal matter are urgently needed. The poor cannot be expected to develop and test these and cities need to get recommendations for accessing them for the whole city as well as for the informal residents of the city. NSDF and Mahila Milan themselves have to explore these in much the same way as they have looked at other materials and other solutions to their problems.



SDI and the Indian Alliance

Global disruptions that impact the urban poor locally

SDI now has well developed strategies for communities to link to what is happening in their countries and how it affects them. It has been 20 years since SDI was formed, and community leaders from 33 countries now assist and support each other at the city and national levels.

On the other hand, increasingly, global events and crises and challenges have begun to impact city and national politics and their impacts disrupt the lives of local residents.

- The plans for EU to take in Migrants has meant that funding coming to southern countries and to SDI will be considerably reduced.
- Global violence in the cities of the north and south are beginning to produce travel restrictions and more police interventions in the name of terror.
- Globally the enhanced demands for scrutiny of civil society organizations has begun to restrict and restrain freedoms to challenge or explore government strategies.
- Climate change, weather conditions have begun to impact local food productions and costs of the food basket have increased which the poor cannot afford.
- Global financial activity has indirectly depleted the value of whatever the poor earn as their currencies are getting devalued.

SDI explores global alliances with organizations of city mayors

Globally many leaders of the associations of local authorities have begun to recognize the value and contribution of the poor living and working in informal settlements. They have begun to see value in encouraging the poor to design and undertake city wide slum profiling and engaging the cities in development solutions.

In the coming year SDI will partner with these organizations to make presentations at many international events to highlight the primacy of local partnerships that the global and national stakeholders in government and other institutions have to support to transform cities.

Plans to participate in SDG indicators, in Habitat III and to access funding for climate change adaptation

SDI and its leadership face a huge challenge in exploring and learning many new subjects in order to make their representations. Their strength comes from the fact that federations never accept what others say as a given but explore these issues for themselves. It is not because they don't believe what others say, but until they collectively examine how it impacts them, their contribution is superficial and does not produce impact through action for their membership.



What should the response of organizations of the poor be? What can help them make choices?

Board of Directors

Rajesh Tandon
Kalpana Sharma
Vijay Agarwal,
Celine D'Cruz
Sheela Patel, Director

Advisors

Sundar Burra
A Jockin

General Manager

Aseena Viccajee

Administration

Kaliyanarayan Murthy
Sutapa Bhattacharya
Mahendra Jagdale
Prashant Bhosale
Kaushik Bhattacharya
Rizwan Kalwal

Housing & Micro Credit management

Sunita Badekar
Azhar Mohammad
Ganesh Muknak
Sanika Rewade

Data management

Paulash Patra
Sanjay Inchnalkar
Supriya Bhattacharya

Consultants and Social Workers

Maria Lobo
Sharmila Gimonkar
Vinodkumar Rao
Monali Waghmare
Smruti jukur
Praveen Yadav

Design Layout & Editing

Indu Agarwal

Internal Auditors

ANK Financial Advisors Private Ltd., Mumbai

External Auditors:

Krishnaan and Co. Chartered Accountants, Chennai



© Copyright 2016

The Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers,
2nd Floor, Boman Lodge, Dr BR Ambedkar Raod,
Dadar East, Mumbai 400014

Email: sparcnsdfmm@gmail.com

Web: www.sparcindia.org

Blog: sparccitywatch.blogspot.in

Youtube: SPARC India

