

Residential Security as Social Protection: Concepts and Preliminary Findings

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Research topic

- Conceptual linkages between residential security and a transformative social protection agenda
- Investigation into nature of residential insecurity and its relationship with social marginalization
- Government schemes for the marginalized, and collective action within communities
- Potential policy openings

Motivation

- Contribute to debate on transformative social protection
- Raise salience of residential insecurity as part of social protection agenda
- Important empirical window on social marginalization
- Potentially massive asset transfer programmes largely ignored in policy debate

Context

- Redistributive land reforms lost potential, but proven scope for residential security policy
- Patriarchy, caste, kinship, religion, class, faction key dimensions of marginalization
- Close parallels between residential insecurity and economic and political dependence
- Preliminary evidence of enfranchisement through residential security – collective action?

Methodology

- Predominantly qualitative methods at outset
 - Unsatisfactory prior categories: different meanings of “ownership”
 - Process versus categoric observations
 - Narratives of change versus snapshot
- Scope for compilation of secondary data
 - Incomplete, fragmented data on irregular urban settlements, and rural clusters

Fieldwork questions and instruments

- Dimensions of security and insecurity
- Community profiles and histories
 - Group formation and identity
 - Migration and displacement
- Moments of change
 - Change agents and processes – triangulation
- Patriarchy as cross-cutting vantage point

Work done to date

- Review paper written
 - Conceptual and methodological literature
 - Preliminary qualitative and quantitative data
- Networking with other researchers, community organizations, policy-makers
- Primary fieldwork initiated and data compiled

Literature review approaches and findings

- Citizenship
 - Non-citizens; legally unequal; effectively unequal
 - Social citizenship; positive freedoms
- Residential security
 - Right to adequate housing
 - Administrative requirement of fixed abode
 - Contractual security
 - Social arrangements for access

Fieldwork findings to date: urban areas

- Migration and displacement: margin origins
- Individual versus community security
- Active processes of group formation
- Role of women in asserting claims
- Transactional relations with political parties
- Margins within margins: Nala, Christians
- Ongoing contest over claims

Fieldwork findings to date: rural areas

- Prior hierarchy determines access, security
- Everyday issues of power in use/access
- External “shock” makes (in)security salient
- Disparity in agrarian class relations reduced
- Power actively contested, new hierarchies
- Patriarchy and group formation – openings
- Regularization, infrastructure, intervention
- Factional politics, but can be leveraged

Emerging implications

- Social arrangements and community formation dominate formal title, but are strongly influenced by policy interventions
- Group formation and solidarity empowers some but retains other forms of hierarchy and inequality: margin within margin, women
- External agents critical, often transactional relations, but normative pro-citizenship agenda of players can create openings

Remainder of research

- Sep 09
 - Completion of fieldwork
 - Completion of secondary data compilation
- Dec 09
 - Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data
 - Preparation of draft report
- Mar 10
 - Peer review and finalization

Policy interaction and dissemination

- Policy interaction
 - Further develop contacts with policy-makers and community organizations
 - Inputs into social protection policy design based on research findings
- Dissemination
 - Workshop
 - Publications, including articles in newsletters and press