

DNA INTERVIEW IF INDONESIA CAN, SO CAN COUNTRIES LIKE CHINA AND INDIA

Upgrade slums instead of relocating slumdweller

Slumdog Millionaire is a rags-to-riches tale of a boy from the slums of Mumbai, here is a man who helped an entire community of slumdweller in Indonesia shun poverty for prosperity. Community involvement was a little-known concept till professor **Andy Siswanto** of Soejiropato University in Semarang, Indonesia created a collaborative and inclusive model for slum upgradation in the 1990s. Today, it is considered the best case practice for such projects worldwide. Instead of relocating slumdweller from Surakarta to low cost housing, Siswanto had painstakingly assisted the residents of the slum to acquire land tenure. This became the first step in transforming the area into a sought after neighbourhood in the city. **Aidita Razak** spoke to Siswanto on the sidelines of the workshop on shelter security and social protection for the urban poor and the migrants in Asia at Gandhi Labour Institute on Thursday.

How did you manage to secure the tenure for the land?
It was a long and drawn-out process as land, as

we know, is a prized commodity. First, I met the local government officials, who said that the area is a prime land and so it was impossible for them to grant the tenure. So, I drew up a cost-benefit analysis in terms of the spill-over effects that tenure can provide to the society, and approached the central government, parliament, lobbyists and politicians. Then, I invited one politician to come to the community centre for a meet-and-greet session with the people. There, the community asked him many questions regarding their rights. After sometime he let-up and said, "Yes, I will grant the tenure."

To what extent was the community actually involved in the whole upgradation project?
First, we only spoke to the members of the community and got an idea of what they thought were their problems and what they believe could be the solutions. Then, we started contacting banks to arrange for loans, architects and engineers to deal with sewerage and sanitation issues. Once the community saw that we were serious, they started responding with more feedbacks and even provided time



Andy Siswanto
Professor, Soejiropato University, Indonesia
The model is highly replicable elsewhere, provided the people are patient enough to involve the community.

and labour for the project.

Did most of the funding come from the government?
At that time the government didn't realise that any investment in the project would see returns in millions of US Dollars, so only a small fraction of the investment came from the government. Banks, professional bodies like doctors and engineers, and philanthropic organisations were the main investors. But, the core investor was the community.

How did you manage to secure credit for such a project?

Indonesia has a traditional system of co-operative savings, where groups of people get together to regularly pool money and take turns to take out money from the pool. I had taken records of this method of savings to the banks to prove that the slumdweller had sophisticated financial literacy and a proven track-record of honouring loans. With this, they agreed to provide loans without collateral. Years down the line, the banks are still working with the community and default rates have been low.

Can the project be replicated elsewhere in the world?
A model like this is highly replicable elsewhere, provided that the people are patient enough to involve the community. The project has been picked up by the World Bank as a good case practice, and today, David Westendorff from Urban China Partners in Shanghai invited me to come to China to present it to their government. My belief is that if Indonesia can make this work, so can countries like China and India.

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DNA CITY SPEAK UP

JNNURM: A BLINKERED MISSION

The JNNURM project is doing well on the macro level but on the micro level, issues of the poor are blatantly ignored, said experts at a three-day workshop organised by Cept University on Wednesday. **Speak Up** talks to participating delegates about their views.



JNNURM FUNDS MISUSED
Around 40 per cent of capital assigned for the JNNURM project was to be directed towards the development of the poor. Unfortunately, states across India, including Gujarat, have not used the fund for the same purpose.
Aksh Sharma
Dir, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi

PVT PLAYERS MUST CONTRIBUTE
Considering the growing population, India will require millions of houses for accommodating its citizens. But the government alone would not be able to meet the demand. Private players will have to intervene for providing cost-effective houses.
Prof Amitabh Kundu
JNU

WE CANNOT IGNORE THE POOR
Deli, kapda aur malakan is the favourite slogan among the masses in India. But, we are yet to graduate from roti to malakan. One can manage to find a 500 sq yd or 200 sq yd land in the city, but it is impossible for a family to get hold of a 20 sq yard land.
Ela Bhatt
Founder-member, Seva

BETTER LIVING STANDARDS
Projects like JNNURM are a progressive step not only for the development of the city, but also for the state. However, what lacks is micro-level development for providing a better standard of living to the poor.
C Upendranath
Regional coordinator, SPA

WE NEED SOCIAL PROTECTION
What migrants need is more than just shelter. Providing the poor with social protection is just as important as giving them a healthy life. Presently, we are focusing on providing housing to the thousands of poor in India & China.
Sarah Cook
Director, Social Protection Asia, Sussex

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briefcase



REMEMBERING THE FATHER OF EVOLUTION: Visitors at an exhibition organised outside Gujarat University to mark the 200th birth anniversary of English naturalist Sir Charles Darwin

Crime

1 CHEATING CASE AGAINST JEWELLERS
A complaint of cheating has been filed at the Shahibaug police station against a father and his son. Complainant Kanu Patel, a resident of Manbar Society at Shahibaug, said he had purchased gold jewellery worth Rs1.11 lakh from Sunil and Nandchand Shah's shop at Prabhunagar Society at Asava. He later mortgaged the jewellery at the same shop, which Shah denied. Patel said. The Shahibaug police are investigating the case.

Felicitation

2 CITY GIRL ADJUDGED BEST NCC CADET
Forum Ibrahimhatti, a first-year BA student in HK Arts College, has been selected the best cadet on the national level.

She was felicitated by Governor Naval Kishore Sharma at Rajbhawan for her achievement. NCC director general Brigadier Gajendra Nath Nigam was also present at the event.

Forensic science

3 IVYAS TO HEAD FORENSIC SCIENCE UNIVERSITY
JM Vyasa, director of the Forensic Science Laboratory, has been made the first director-general of the Forensic Science University. Gujarat will be the first state in the country to have such a university. The university will offer two courses.

SAY EXPERTS ON THE FIRST DAY OF A WORKSHOP ORGANISED BY CEPT

JNNURM has failed urban poor

KULDEEP TIWARI

The Jawaharalal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), the central government's project to fully develop every city in the country where the poor must also find space for themselves, is unfortunately failing to serve its purpose.

At a three-day workshop on 'Shelter, security and social protection for the urban poor and migrants in Asia' organised by the Cept University at the Gandhi Labour Institute on Wednesday, experts said that the JNNURM project was doing well on the macro level. However, on the micro level, issues of the poor were completely ignored.

Agreeing with this fact, director of the Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, Alakh Sharma said, "Around 40 per cent of capital assigned to the JNNURM project was to be directed towards the development of the poor. Unfortunately, states across India, including Gujarat, have not used this fund for the same purpose." The amount sanctioned was instead used for development purposes, for which, a substantial amount was already sanctioned, he said.

On the issue of rehabilitation of the poor, experts said that the new residences given to them were far from their present locations and created problems of employment, schooling, and most importantly, social security.

Commenting on the same, Renu Khosla, director of the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence, said, "Projects like JNNURM are a progressive step not only for the development of the city but also for the state. However, what lacks is micro-level development for providing a better standard of living for the poor."

When these people are rehabilitated at peripheral areas of the city, they are provided with homes, but not with related infrastructure like schools and hospitals, among others, Khosla said.

Citing examples of slum dwellers in Mumbai and Delhi who were rehabilitated, Khosla said poor families here were shifted to a distant place where there were no schools. The only alternative their children had was to either travel a distance to study or discontinue schooling for a year or two till schools come up in the area.

According to a survey, nearly 30 per cent of these poor children drop out of schools and become engaged in work to support their

The Bangkok Way

Instead of building low-cost houses to improve the living conditions of slum dwellers, the public organisation, the Community Organisations Development Institute (Codi), provides a packaged service to slum dwellers, which include an architect, planning consultancy services, subsidies and low-interest loans for renovations. Slum communities then develop their own plans and build better houses, which stay within their means - a criteria that state-driven low-cost housing plans in India struggle to meet, with many such plans ending up too expensive for the urban poor. In the past five years, thousands of communities in Bangkok slums, consisting of 20 to more than 200 hundred families, have stepped up to the challenge and built better lives for themselves.

Paradox of homelessness

According to researchers, the majority of men who live on the streets in Delhi do so to save the money on rent, for their families in rural areas. But, living rent-free means having to pay for even the most basic amenities.

Pay and use toilet/shower - Rs2 to Rs5 per usage

Rental of blankets and quilts (for lack of storage space) - Rs15 per night

Packed food (for lack of a kitchen) - Rs30 to Rs50 per meal

Cinema ticket (for shelter when it rains) - Rs50 per ticket

families. Founder-member of Self Employed Women's Association (Sewa), Ela Bhatt said, "Rot, kapla aur makaan is the favourite slogan among the masses in India. But, we are yet to graduate from roti to makaan."

One can manage to live on 500 sq yd or 200 sq yd land in the city, but it is impossible for a family to live on 20 sq yard land, Bhatt added.

The first day of the workshop concluded with experts expressing the need for the government to aggressively promote the public-private partnership (PPP) model to fulfil the requirement of cost-effective houses.



(L-R) Alakh Sharma (IHD), Amitabh Kundu (NU), Ela Bhatt (Sewa), Upendra Nath (IHD), Sarah Cook (University of Sussex) and Darshini Mahadevi (Cept University) on the first day of the workshop on 'Shelter, security and social protection for the urban poor'.

'Outline basic living conditions'

AIDILA RAZAK

The provision and distribution of housing for the urban poor should be modelled on the implementation of the right to food as recognised by the Supreme Court, said experts on urban planning and urban poverty in Asia at a workshop on Security and social protection for the urban poor and migrants in Asia, a three-day event hosted by Cept University and Social Protection in Asia, which began on Wednesday.

Speaking to an international audience consisting of experts from as far as South Africa and Brazil, professor Amitabh Kundu of Jawaharlal Nehru University said that the right to housing as a basic human right. "By doing so, we will be able to unpack the right to housing to create a baseline level of living conditions for all," he said.

"The right to food was broken down and the minimum number of calories and level of nutrition that each person needs to consume have been quantified. With this clarified, distribution channels have been im-

plemented and basic provision of food could be made. This is something we can do for housing, too," he said, giving approval to programmes like midday meal scheme and food-for-work programmes implemented to a certain degree of success in India.

The sentiment was echoed by special commissioner of the Supreme Court on the right to food, Harsh Mander, who noted that meeting the basic right to housing did not mean the government needed to build low-cost housing for the poor. Rather, the right to housing should be measured in terms of accessibility of basic amenities, he said.

"Those living on the streets have no access to a kitchen, so they spend their meagre income on buying food. They need to pay to have showers or use toilets. So, they ration the number of times they can clean themselves in a week. If it rains, they pay for cinema ticket after cinema ticket and hope the rain ends before the last show does. Breaking down the right to housing should include outlining basic living conditions, which people should have to live a life of dignity," said Mander.

'Guilt apart towards workers to blame for growth of slums'

Experts say migrant labourers form an invisible portion of those struggling for shelter

Aidila Razak

The bulk of India's urban poor is made of migrant labourers who end up setting up home in slum areas, without any legal claim on the land they live on, say experts at a workshop for 'shelter security and social protection for the urban poor and the migrants in Asia', organised by Cept University in collaboration with Mahila Housing Trust (MHT) at Mahatma Gandhi Labour Institute on Thursday.

The lack of land tenure is not only a disincentive for the slum-dwellers from building better homes and improve sanitation conditions, but it also exposes them to threats of eviction. This is due to the nexus between the state and the real estate industry who have vested interests in the land occupied by these slumdwellers.

According to the former Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing for the United Nations Human Rights Council, Miloon Kothari, in March to December last year, 3,500 families were evicted from slums in Mumbai, adding to more than 3.6 million people evicted from slums across Asia since 2003. In Delhi, 70% of people evicted were not resettled, only adding to the problem of homelessness.

One notable account of eviction was the case of the Mandala slums in Mumbai in 2005, which was presented by Amita Bhide of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. The slums were razed as part of the intense demolition drive by the state government. The struggle for tenure by the Mandala residents, which ended up in bloodshed, emphasises the importance of tenure in providing poor the right to be in a city, which includes access to education, health, food, water and shelter.

The misconception of slumdwellers as unlawful tenants was squashed by Bjal

3,500 families were evicted from Mumbai slums in 2008

3.6 mn people evicted from slums across Asia since 2003

Bhatt of the Mahila Housing Trust, whose experience with providing assistance with water and sanitation to the urban poor led to a struggle for tenure.

"Seventy five per cent of slums in Ahmedabad sit on private land. The slumdwellers pay a fee to the private landowners, but when the state comes to claim the land, they get no say and have to evacuate the land immediately," she said, explaining that these lands belong to private owners with provision that the state can reclaim the land if required.

"We found that even when slumdwellers were willing to invest for sanitation and water, some private land owners did not allow these constructions to take place," Bhatt noted.

The issue of shelter is also tied to policies such as the Special Economic Zones and Foreign Direct Investment Policies. "Mega projects attract many construction workers who don't get a place to live. This is something the policy-makers fail to consider," said Rao. This, however, may be alleviated with the green building revolution, which resal of the living conditions of construction workers are accounted for.

"In a rare case, a green building contractor in Bangalore paid out of his own pocket for his workers to live in a secure colony equipped with medical and childcare services. This is something positive to look forward to," he said.

NOT JUST IN INDIA

SOUTH AFRICA



workers in the 1940s due to a high demand for labour in the mines. To discourage permanent migration of those termed 'temporary sojourners', the state housed these men in basic dormitories without rights to land, health or security. In response, shantytowns grew with a vengeance.

THAILAND



right to the land they live in, and have been regularly evicted out of their homes in the past three decades.

BRAZIL



lected or threatened with eviction. Today, conditions have improved with favelas integrated into the urban fabric through provision of legal rights. "Now the greatest problem with favelas is that they are an eyesore for the super rich of Brazil who don't like to look out their windows to see poor people," said Mander.

With the 2010 World Cup fast approaching, the city of Cape Town is trying to pep up its image by driving the urban poor into the far peripheries of the city. According to a Capetown-based urban planner, Fabio Todeschini, the poor who live in shantytowns in the city, are driven out by the masses and relocated to areas far away from employment and services. This is not a new phenomenon for the diamond city, which saw an influx of migrant

workers in the 1940s due to a high demand for labour in the mines. To discourage permanent migration of those termed 'temporary sojourners', the state housed these men in basic dormitories without rights to land, health or security. In response, shantytowns grew with a vengeance.

"We are fortunate with only a handful grappling with homelessness, and usually only in lean agricultural times," said Thipparat Noppuladornom of Community Organisation Development Institute (Codi), which works with the urban poor in Bangkok and other areas in Thailand. That said, over a million of the population of Bangkok live in bad conditions. Forty per cent of these slum-dwellers are migrants from rural areas, with no

right to the land they live in, and have been regularly evicted out of their homes in the past three decades.

"If you are poor and you live in the rural areas of Brazil, then the most logical thing for you to do is to move to the city," said Brazilian researcher in inequality issues, Marcelo Medeiros. At least in the city you have access to free education and health services. Living in favelas (shantytowns), however, means terrible health conditions, frequent natural disasters such as mudslides and floods, and crime. Before the 1970s, residents were grossly neglected into the urban fabric through provision of legal rights. "Now the greatest problem with favelas is that they are an eyesore for the super rich of Brazil who don't like to look out their windows to see poor people," said Mander.