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ARTICLE



## Slum-free city planning versus durable slums. Insights from Delhi, India

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### ABSTRACT

We bring a challenging perspective to slum studies in Delhi, India, by contrasting the attempts at 'slum-free city planning' (referring to housing programmes for the urban poor) with the 'durability' of certain slum settlements. We examine national and local factors that temper the impact of macro-forces of neoliberalism and globalisation on slum clearance in Delhi, including institutional fragmentation, political networks, and social mobilisation. Based on two settlements selected by the Delhi Development Authority to implement its strategy of slum redevelopment under public-private partnership, we show how space-specific configurations and the interplay of actors may contribute instead to the entrenchment of slums. At the settlement level however, 'durable' does not mean permanent. Yet, at the city level, slum rehabilitation in partnership with private developers presents serious limits, questioning the emphasis put on this strategy to provide sustainable housing for the urban poor.

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### Introducing the debate

What are the challenges to achieving sustainable housing for the urban poor and inclusive cities in the global South? With the globalising city of Delhi as the backdrop, this article wrestles with these important questions by contrasting the attempts at 'slum-free city planning' in India with the durability of certain slum settlements and the overall perpetuation of slums. 'Slum-free city planning' is a direct reference to the national housing programmes for the urban poor (GOI 2010) and derived slum policies. The concept of 'durable slums' draws from Liza Weinstein's book *The durable slum. Dharavi and the right to stay put in globalizing Mumbai* (2014). Without denying the impact of macro-level forces of neoliberal globalisation on slum clearance, Weinstein contends that Harvey (2008)'s concept of accumulation by dispossession 'fails to account for the actually existing durabilities' in the contemporary urban landscape (Weinstein 2014, p. 7). She emphasises instead 'the political and institutional entrenchment of slums in the city' (p. 114): the fixed structures, local institutions, embedded

political networks, autonomous agents, and popular mobilisations that produce space-specific configurations, which mediate the forces of global capital and strive to maintain the place of slums in the city. Other studies (Arputham and Patel 2008; Bautès et al. 2014) show that resistance by slum residents and housing-rights activism defy the implementation of slum redevelopment and resettlement projects. While Weinstein duly examines their role, she further articulates it to other drivers in a coherent frame, and highlights the enduring factors that explain the policy failures in the state's slum interventions, namely bureaucratic weakness, diffuse power arrangements and institutional fragmentation.

Literature on slums in Indian metropolises, especially Delhi and Mumbai, comprises numerous works that highlight instead the impact of global capitalism on slum-free city agenda, and link it to the influence of the neoliberal paradigm and the attraction of the global-city model<sup>1</sup>. They show how the drive for global competitiveness and its associated image-building has negative consequences for the poor,

through 'cleansing' the city from slums (Dupont 2011) and giving precedence to a 'rule by aesthetic' (Ghertner 2015). Valuable lands occupied by slums are thus reclaimed for a more 'profitable' use. Regarding Mumbai, Mahadevia and Narayanan (2008) contend that the politics of slum evictions was part of the 'Shanghaing Mumbai' agenda, a model using real-estate for city transformation (p. 552). For Banerjee-Guha (2010), urban restructuring in Mumbai is a case in point of the impact of neoliberalisation and Harvey's thesis of 'accumulation by dispossession'. The findings for Delhi evidence the restructuring of a capital aspiring to the status of 'world-class city' with no place for slums (Baviskar 2007; Batra and Mehra 2008; Bhan 2009; HLRN 2011; Bhan and Shivanand 2013; Dupont 2014). A few striking figures suffice to provide an idea of the extent of slum demolition in Mumbai and Delhi. For instance, in Mumbai from November 2004 to February 2005, around 400,000 slum dwellers were forcibly evicted and rendered homeless following the bulldozing of their homes (IPTEH 2005). In Delhi, while a population of around three million lived in squatter settlements in 1998, accounting for about 27 per cent of the city population<sup>2</sup>, it was estimated that 'close to a million slum dwellers have been displaced' from 1997 to 2007 (Ghertner 2010, p. 202). Around half of the displaced families were *not* resettled (Bhan and Shivanand 2013).

We recognise the significant contribution of this literature that demonstrates the impact of market forces on slum demolition. For the thousands of families who were *not* rehabilitated, in Mumbai, Delhi, and elsewhere, slum demolition clearly meant dispossession and subsequent impoverishment (HLRN 2011; Dupont and Vaquier 2014). In this article, we propose a complementary and challenging perspective to these slum studies. We question slum durability in Delhi, using Weinstein (2014)'s stimulating analytical frame. We explore this idea at two interrelated levels. At the settlement level, the durability of a specific slum refers to its entrenchment in the city fabric and political environment, and calls for an examination of the various factors identified by Weinstein in the Dharavi case. In this regard, we examine two settlement cases in Delhi. At the city level, we extend the idea of durability, and refer it to the persistence of slums as a 'durable' policy problem. We contend that we need to look beyond the elimination of slum conditions in some specific

settlements and must examine the limitations of slum policies, including their potential adverse effect in shifting (part of) the 'slum problem' to other city spaces.

A caveat is required regarding the term 'slum' which is commonly used in policy documents in India, although it may refer to different types of sub-standard housing. We focus here on the settlements where physical precariousness of housing, informal layout and lack of adequate infrastructure and amenities are combined with precariousness of occupancy status – in juridical terms, the illegality of land occupation. Lack of tenure security is a significant feature putting the residents at risk of eviction. These settlements are designated as squatter settlements by the planning authorities and the judiciary, and known in Delhi as *jhuggi-jhopri bastis*/clusters – or JJ clusters. The word 'slum' is often associated with the stigmatisation of such settlements and of their residents. The same stigma applies to 'squatter settlements'. We only use these terms for ease of reference to the policy documents and other official records that use them.

In 2012, according to official estimates, the population of squatter settlements in Delhi was around 1.5 million<sup>3</sup> despite more than five decades of slum clearance policies. In the long view, the extent and persistence of slums in Delhi since the 1960s can be read as a failure of the urban planning and housing policies elaborated and implemented by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), in particular the non-respect of the initial obligation of reserving a significant share of residential land and housing for the economically weaker sections and low-income groups (DDA 1962). However, is it essentially a matter of failures in implementing the Plan, as asserted by town planner Dewan Verma (2003)? Bhan (2016) discussed the narrative of planning failure in Delhi in relation to the production of housing, looking at the various planners' categories of settlements, with a focus on unauthorised colonies, slum-designated areas, and *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters. Following Roy's (2005) argument that urban informality is a type of governance, 'a strategy of planning' (Roy 2009, p. 82), Bhan (2016) contends that '[t]he production and regulation of illegality is part of, and not outside, planning and planned development' (p. 88). Bhan and Roy's arguments are pertinent in discussing the durability of slums in relation to urban planning, as they state that the persistence of illegal settlements is not a failure of planning implementation, but a product of the Plan. We do not consider these

two interpretations as mutually exclusive. Questioning the lack of effectiveness (failure?) of the current DDA slum-free strategy 12 years after it launched its first pilot project (as explained below) is relevant to our discussion.

Delhi provides a fascinating context for examining the thesis of slum entrenchment, convincingly elaborated by Weinstein for Mumbai. The weight of the central government in slum affairs is greater in the capital, especially through its key agency, the DDA, whereas social mobilisation is viewed as weaker. Reference to Weinstein's work further brings a comparative insight into the implementation of slum-free city policies in two globalising Indian metropolises, Delhi and Mumbai. This allows us to draw conclusions of broader significance for achieving sustainable housing for the urban poor and to contribute to the on-going debate on inclusive cities (Landy and Saglio-Yatzimirsky 2014; Smets and Van Lindert 2016; Williams et al. 2018 – among others).

We first set the context of 'slum-free city planning' from the national to the local level. In view of our case studies, we focus on 'curative strategies' (GOI 2013) addressing existing squatter settlements. At the settlement level, we focus on the first two projects launched by the DDA to redevelop slums in-situ following the currently favoured strategy giving primacy to a public-private partnership model. They are the Tehkhand project for V.P. Singh Camp, launched in 2006 and stopped mid-2009, and the Kathputli Colony project, initiated in 2008 and dampened by sluggish progress in implementation until late 2017. We show the relevance of these case studies in assessing slum 'durability' in the context of Delhi despite the plans aimed at transforming them and eradicating their informality. Next, we question the principles inherent to the DDA slum redevelopment schemes and their implementation: how they produce exclusion and resistance, hence factors that contribute to the persistence of slums, at either the settlement or the city level. We then examine the 'space-specific configurations' – with reference to Weinstein (2014)'s analytical frame – and the extent to which factors such as institutional arrangements, political environment, and social mobilisation contribute to the 'entrenchment of slums in the city'.

### **Methodology and source of data**

We combine different sources of data to explore these issues. At the national and city levels, we analyse policy

documents. At the settlement level, our two case studies are based on extended qualitative research and include 65 in-depth interviews and numerous informal discussions with various stakeholders: residents, local leaders, non-governmental organisations' (NGOs) representatives, activists, DDA officers, managers from the developers' firms, a private consultant, politicians, and resident welfare associations of neighbouring localities. We conducted them between February 2008 and April 2013 for the Tehkhand case, and in a more comprehensive way, since February 2009 for Kathputli Colony with regular follow-ups and field visits, participant observation in various meetings, and attending hearings of related cases in the Delhi High Court. We completed this fieldwork material with information from concerned websites, as well as from press and web articles. We refer throughout to these two settlement studies in order to provide evidence for our arguments.

### **'Slum-free city planning' at the national and city level**

#### ***National strategies for 'slum-free city planning' and 'urban housing for all'***

Though this article will not analyse in detail the recent national strategies regarding slums, a brief review is necessary to understand the larger context before addressing the situation in Delhi. The catchword 'slum-free city' was explicit in the title of the planning guidelines published as part of *Rajiv Awas Yojana* (RAY) – Rajiv housing programme<sup>4</sup>, and was in the preparatory report entitled *'Slum-free cities. A new deal for the urban poor'* (Mathur 2009). This national programme of housing for the urban poor was announced in 2010 and enforced until June 2015 (GOI 2010, 2013). Although policy documents made no outright reference to the international 'Cities without Slums' initiatives promoted by the World Bank (2000) and UN-Habitat (2003), they echoed them obliquely.

RAY's action plan combined 'curative strategy for slum redevelopment in all existing slums', and 'preventive strategy for containment of growth of future slums' (GOI 2013, p. 7). The first one prioritised upgrading and in-situ redevelopment, along with granting of legal tenure titles to slum dwellers (GOI 2010, p. 1). Displacement and resettlement were to be limited to 'untenable slums' – notably due to environmental

risks (GOI 2010), although defining tenability versus untenability remained ambiguous (Kundu 2013). The strategy gave primacy to a public-private partnership model to build affordable housing. It also emphasised community participation at each step of the slum redevelopment process, as detailed in dedicated guidelines (GOI 2012). The RAY programme was linked to the 'Basic Services to the Urban Poor' (BSUP) sub-mission of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), a major urban programme funded by the Central Government from 2006 to 2014. The BSUP sub-mission also attempted to promote housing by providing subsidised dwelling units in multi-storied complexes to the economically weaker groups.

Following the change of government in May 2014, the RAY programme and the JNNURM were discontinued. A new national housing scheme was launched in June 2015, the *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* (PMAY) – Prime Minister housing programme, with the slogan 'Urban Housing for All by 2022'. Among the four verticals of this mission, the first one, the strategy for in-situ slum redevelopment/rehabilitation 'using land as a resource with private participation' (GOI 2015, p. 2–3) reprises principles promoted under the previous scheme. In practice, only part of the land occupied by the slum is used to rehouse its dwellers in multi-storied buildings. The developer can use the rest of the cleared land to build residential or business property and sell them on the market for a profit. This 'free sale component', along with other financial incentives, makes it profitable for private developers and cross-subsidises slum redevelopment projects. The expectation is that 'vertical projects' will unlock the land stock occupied by slums. This strategy is presented as 'an important component of the "Housing for All" mission' (GOI 2015). It is *de facto* the only one addressing the issue of existing squatter settlements under PMAY, since the 'credit-linked subsidy scheme' and the 'subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction or enhancement' scheme require the beneficiaries to have proper land ownership titles. As for the last component of the mission, 'affordable housing in [public-private] partnership', it is a preventive measure, aimed at building more houses for the economically weaker sections.

### ***Lessons from the Mumbai experience ... and elsewhere***

The national strategies presented above build on the slum redevelopment schemes implemented in Mumbai since the 1990s. Indeed, the global neoliberal context

has promoted a new role for private real-estate developers in slum rehabilitation and resettlement (Nijman 2008). As this is projected in Delhi as a key factor on the road to 'slum-free cities', it is worth reflecting on the Mumbai experience. The involvement of private developers raised the hope of cross-subsidised housing for the poor, with the state playing an enabling role. In-situ redevelopment was also considered a better option than permanent displacement to distant relocation sites, allowing residents to preserve their access to employment opportunities and to maintain their social network. However, several difficulties and criticisms emerged.

One major difficulty facing the in-situ rehabilitation scheme in Mumbai was finding in the vicinity vacant public land where slum families could be transferred temporarily during the construction of new housing after the demolition of existing structures. This was also an important factor of delay in implementing the Kathputli Colony project in Delhi. A significant obstacle was the mobilisation of various residents and traders' associations against the location of the transit camp in their respective neighbourhood. Preventing the transit camps from eventually becoming permanent was an additional problem faced in Mumbai.

Relying on the private sector entails other drawbacks. Developers are only interested in certain lucrative locations, and many in-situ rehabilitation projects did not take off because of the slums' poor location (Burra 2005; Nijman 2008). The builders' pursuit of increased profit margins is also conducive to poor quality construction and high-rise buildings; the scheme was criticised for creating 'vertical slums' instead of horizontal ones (Sharma 2006). Maintenance charges are more expensive in high-rise buildings and often become unaffordable for former slum dwellers, who might sell and return to informal settlements (Burra 2005). Thus, cross-subsidised housing for the poor are sometimes occupied by higher-income people, for whom they were not intended (Nijman 2008). The success of rehabilitation schemes in partnership with the private sector also relies on very high land prices. When the real-estate market stagnates or goes down, this type of investment ceases to attract private builders (Burra 2005). In sum, lessons from Mumbai suggest that the involvement of private developers in slum redevelopment projects is unlikely to provide a comprehensive, large-scale,

and sustainable solution to the problem of the urban poor's lack of adequate housing, and to contribute significantly to the 'slum-free city' agenda of India's national and state governments.

Slum redevelopment projects using similar techniques of land sharing were applied in Thailand since the late 1970s and in Cambodia in the years 2000s. Drawing lessons from the Bangkok and Phnom Penh experiences, Rabé (2010) identified six preconditions for the success of this model: a booming property market; well-established slum communities; strong community organisation and consensus<sup>5</sup>; impartial third party intermediation between the slum dwellers and private developers; physical/technical feasibility; and financial feasibility. These factors proved to be equally critical in Mumbai (Mukhija 2001, 2003; Burra 2005; Nijman 2008). Earlier experiences of land sharing thus draw our attention to important considerations for analysing the DDA new policy in Delhi, where the strategy of slum redevelopment under public-private partnership constitutes a game changer.

### ***Current strategy of the Delhi Development Authority***

Land development in Delhi is under the control of the DDA, the central government agency in charge of preparing and implementing the Master Plans for Delhi. To understand the significant role of this agency in slum treatment, it is important to bear in mind that in Delhi, *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters are essentially located on public land, and the DDA is the largest single land-owning agency. In 2014, 48 per cent of the land occupied by the 701 identified *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters across the capital belonged to the DDA<sup>6</sup>.

The Master Plan for Delhi 2021 (notified in 2007) acknowledges the limitations of the site-and-service approach that had prevailed until then in the capital in tackling the 'problem' of squatter settlements. Slum dwellers were relocated to peripheral resettlement colonies and allotted plots with (theoretically) basic civic amenities but without housing. The Plan considers a new approach (DDA 2007) in line with the national strategy. It is based on the provision of built-up accommodations in multi-storied apartment blocks for the slum dwellers, under public-private partnership, using the land owned by the public agency as a resource. In January 2019, the DDA

released its final 'policy for in-situ slum redevelopment/rehabilitation' (DDA 2019), aiming 'to make Delhi slum free' (p. 2), following the PMAY's model described above.

By 2008, the DDA had already identified 21 *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters for in-situ rehabilitation according to this model, and projected the construction of about 37,000 dwelling units. Ten years later, not a single slum family had been rehabilitated under this model. Although a DDA re-housing complex for slum dwellers is under construction in south Delhi (in Kalkaji), it does not follow the public-private partnership model described above<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore this re-housing complex is not meant for the first two settlements identified for the launch of pilot slum redevelopment projects, namely V.P. Singh Camp near Tehkhand village, and Kathputli Colony. We examine these two settlement cases where the first steps of the project were taken but the project was either stopped or has been suffering from recurrent delays in implementation.

### **Introducing the two settlement cases in Delhi**

#### ***The stalled Tehkhand project for V.P. Singh Camp***

The Tehkhand project, named after a nearby village in the southern periphery of Delhi, was promoted at the time of its launching as a model for further housing projects for the urban poor. The DDA owned the land, which was partly occupied by a squatter settlement, the V.P. Singh Camp that had resisted an earlier eviction plan in 1989–91. In 2006, the DDA invited bids from private developers to construct 3,500 tenements for re-housing slum dwellers in five-storied apartment blocks. The developer had to provide the physical infrastructure and basic social facilities, and was allowed, as an incentive, to construct 750 high-income-group apartments and sell them on the open market (DDA 2006). Since the slum occupied only a minor part of the 14.3-hectare plot, there was no need to transfer its residents to a transit camp before starting construction work. The DDA (as the land-owning agency), the Delhi Government, and the Central Government (under the JNNURM) were to subsidise housing for the slum dwellers; the rehabilitated slum families were expected to contribute



their share amounting to about INR 100,000 (US\$ 2,222 at that time) through loan facilities<sup>8</sup>. In 2008, the developer who won the auction<sup>9</sup> started land-levelling and excavation operations on the site adjoining the slum, in order to build a complex of luxury apartments. The entire project was stopped mid-2009 after failing to get clearance from the Department of Environment and Forest.

### ***The delayed Kathputli Colony project***

The second pilot rehabilitation project undertaken by the DDA was again presented as 'a benchmark for many such projects to follow to make Delhi a slum-free state'<sup>10</sup>. It targeted Kathputli Colony, a 50-year-old settlement spread over 5.22 hectares of valuable land in central Delhi, well connected to the rest of the city (near the Shadipur bus depot and the eponymous metro station). When the project was announced in 2009, the Colony housed around 15,000 people, amongst them a large group of folk artists and artisans from Rajasthan who settled in this locality in the late 1960s. Kathputli Colony was named for the many puppeteers who lived in the settlement. Other groups of migrants from various regions had since settled there. It had become a heterogeneous settlement where varying housing conditions reflected socio-economic disparities (Dupont et al. 2014).

The current redevelopment project follows a series of unsuccessful earlier attempts by the DDA and other organisations to rehabilitate or relocate the settlement since the late 1970s. The media advertised it in February 2009, when the Union Ministry of State for Urban Development laid the foundation stone for a 14-storied housing complex of 2,800 two-room flats of 25 m<sup>2</sup> for the slum dwellers. The private firm, who won the development contract in October 2009, was allotted the land for a much lower amount than the actual market rate. It would use only 60 per cent of the land occupied by the slum to build and deliver the blocks of flats along with the mandatory amenities (community centre, school, health centre, convenient shopping, and playing ground) to the DDA, free of cost. To make his investment profitable, the developer had an ambitious plan for the rest of the land, a high-end 54-storied residential tower that would be the tallest building in Delhi, as well as a commercial complex, in a joint venture with the Dubai-based construction company that built the world's highest tower.

Unlike the Tehkhand project where the availability of vacant land was not an issue, the size of the densely populated Kathputli Colony plot required transferring the families to a transit camp to be built by the developer before construction work could start. The camp was finally constructed on a site located around 3 km from the present settlement. Eligible slum dwellers were accommodated in rows of prefabricated one-room tenements of 12 m<sup>2</sup> per family, with shared bathing and toilet facilities. The construction of the camp was completed in March 2013, but it was not until February 2014 that the first transfers of families started amid a specific political and institutional context that we present later on. Out of around 3,600 households (as estimated at that time), only 500 resettled in the transit camp within the next six months. The redevelopment project then remained in stand-by for more than two years. The DDA launched a second evacuation drive in December 2016, whereupon around 800 additional families moved to the transit camp. Nevertheless, the large majority of the residents resisted their evacuation for nearly four years, until their forced eviction in October 2017, followed by the total demolition of the settlement.

### **Questioning the DDA slum-redevelopment strategy: a structurally inadequate scheme?**

Are there inherent characteristics of the DDA slum-redevelopment scheme that may explain its implementation difficulties and thus its poor success? This is the main question addressed in this section. The issues examined include the eligibility criteria, the inadequacy of the design in relation to people's needs, and the lack of participation in the planning process. We argue that policy flaws contribute towards the production of a 'durable' slum problem.

#### ***Excluding eligibility criteria***

In slum resettlement and/or rehabilitation schemes implemented in Delhi as in other Indian cities, several criteria determine eligibility. The main one is the 'cut-off date': residents have to prove their arrival in the settlement before a given date, based on a list of recognised documents, including registration on the voter list. In addition, a financial contribution, which may be unaffordable for the poorest, is required from the beneficiary families. These eligibility conditions

necessarily produce exclusion. In turn, these exclusion processes generate two types of effects: the perpetuation of slums in the city in general and the entrenchment of settlements targeted by specific redevelopment projects.

The implementation of slum redevelopment projects will exclude, with no alternative option, a large number of families. This will either lead to fresh illegal occupation of land, or to the expansion or densification of existing slums, or to homelessness. In the end, though one slum settlement may be cleared and redeveloped, the issue of housing poverty and precariousness is not solved at the city level but only relegated farther. Moreover, this entails the impoverishment of the excluded families, as shown in the Delhi and Mumbai resettlement schemes (Dupont and Vaquier 2014).

At the settlement level, the fear of exclusion from the rehabilitation scheme is likely to provoke resistance to the project and protest movements that will hamper its implementation. In Kathputli Colony, the identification survey conducted in 2010 by the DDA to establish the list of eligible households led to contested lists and numbers, and became a major issue for mobilisation. Three years after this survey, the residents still had no access to the results despite repeated attempts by their leaders, including recourse to legal action, namely 'Right to information' applications<sup>11</sup>. In February 2014, the DDA finally released a list, subject to final verification, identifying 2,641 eligible households. After scrutiny of this list, the residents pointed out many omissions. The local leaders and residents, realising that they had had little control over the way the eligibility survey had been conducted, initiated together with an NGO a fresh survey to challenge the DDA survey and include the omitted households. The DDA rejected its results which showed a considerably higher number of households (around 3,600) in the settlement, and conducted another supplementary identification survey in July–August 2014, again subject to further verification. Lastly, at the time of the definitive evacuation in October 2017, the DDA released new lists of eligible and non-eligible applicants, including 771 names of applicants 'not considered for alternative allotment' out of a total of 4063, thus excluding almost 20% of the applicants from the rehabilitation scheme<sup>12</sup>.

Exclusion processes have been an enduring shortcoming of the slum resettlement and rehabilitation programmes implemented in Delhi. We mentioned in the introduction that in the previous slum

resettlement scheme, at least half of the total numbers of families evicted from 1990 to 2007 were excluded from the site-and-service programme (Bhan and Shivanand 2013). Under the modified relocation and rehabilitation scheme for *jhuggi-jhopri* dwellers approved in 2010 by the Government of Delhi, allotment of flats should replace the allotment of plots in resettlement colonies. However, the list of eligibility conditions was again likely to exclude a significant proportion of slum families. The Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) estimated that, in the list of 16 *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters identified in 2011 for priority relocation, only 40 per cent of the families would be eligible for allotment of flats, leaving the large majority of slum dwellers without a resettlement option<sup>13</sup>. This, as well as pressure from some slum dwellers' organisations, led the Government to amend its policy and relax some of the eligibility conditions in 2013<sup>14</sup>, and again in 2015 under the new Aam Admi Party-led government<sup>15</sup>.

### *Inadequate design for people's needs*

Another factor contributing to the inadequacy of the slum rehabilitation projects stems from the planners' lack of proper understanding of the people's local socio-economic conditions and needs. Admittedly, in the Kathputli Colony project the first task of the DDA-selected consultant was to conduct a 'physical and socio-economic survey' to prepare a feasibility study and a detailed project report for the rehabilitation of the colony. However, interviews at the consultant's office<sup>16</sup> and the examination of the report revealed shoddy work.

A crucial issue in slum rehabilitation schemes is that of livelihoods: mixed land-use is common in informal settlements, with economic activities carried out at the place of residence or in other dedicated places in the settlements. Dharavi in Mumbai is a striking example of an industrial cluster in the midst of residential places. However, the design of slum rehabilitation or resettlement projects usually overlooks this economic dimension. (Sivaramakrishnan 2011). Furthermore, as housing activists in Mumbai warned, high-rise buildings, promoted de facto by in-situ rehabilitation schemes, may be 'ill-suited to the lifestyle of the urban poor who are engaged in the informal economy' (Burra 2005, p. 77).

Unsurprisingly, in Kathputli Colony the stronger resistance to the redevelopment project came from the performing artists and artisans, a prominent



group in this settlement. They complained that living in multi-storied building flats would hurt their professional activity. In fact, the residents were not involved in the conception and design of the redevelopment project. No attempt was made to consider their views and they were only informed afterwards.

### ***Issue of participation and consent***

The inadequacy between people's needs and the project design raises the issue of the residents' consultation and participation in the planning process – a principle stated in policy documents. Undoubtedly, this principle is not easy to implement in slum redevelopment programmes even in states where it is taken seriously (such as Kerala, see Williams et al. 2018). Identified hurdles include the 'inevitable administrative complexity of housing delivery', local conflicts and 'resistance from local power brokers' (p. 150). These factors are pertinent in Delhi settlement cases, as elsewhere in the global South (Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016).

Meaningful participation should also imply seeking the residents' informed consent. Fieldwork and interviews conducted in Kathputli Colony highlight on the contrary the lack of accurate knowledge provided by the DDA about the project, and the belated release of information. Furthermore, the DDA deemed it sufficient to seek the consent of certain local leaders through selective meetings. In contrast, the slum rehabilitation scheme in Mumbai required the prior consent of at least 70 per cent of the slum dwellers affected by the project<sup>17</sup>. Of course, a consent requirement alone may not be sufficient and can lead to other coercive practices (Weinstein 2008). Nevertheless, according to residents and housing-rights advocates, the experience in Mumbai shows that such a consent clause acts as a 'democratic check' on the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (Weinstein 2009, p. 411).

Conversely, the lack of a proper and fair consultation procedure, including the residents' prior consent to the redevelopment plan, may become another factor of resistance to the project, and a motive for mobilisation. The DDA belatedly realised this when facing difficulties to implement its rehabilitation project in Kathputli Colony: 'On analysis, it was found that prior consent from the slum dwellers was one of the key elements that was missing in this project.' (DDA 2015, p. 2). Accordingly, a 'Draft slum rehabilitation policy based on Mumbai's slum rehabilitation

policy' proposed including a prior consent clause as a requirement for implementing a slum rehabilitation project (DDA 2015, p. 4–5). This proposal disappeared in the final policy (DDA 2019), which indicates contrariwise: 'Obtaining of prior consent of eligible slum beneficiaries will *not* be required for in-situ Slum Redevelopment/Rehabilitation in view of Section 10 of DUSIB Act' (p. 3 – emphasis added). This precludes any fair consultation for slum dwellers in Delhi. Combined with exclusion processes and disregard for people's needs, it augurs future hurdles in implementing the slum-free city strategy.

We discussed the shortcomings inherent to the design of the slum-redevelopment policy that in place of slum clearance may instead perpetuate the slum challenge. We now examine the space-specific configurations that allow us to highlight other factors hampering the programme's implementation.

### **Factors related to institutional arrangements and political environment**

We return to Weinstein (2014)'s analytical frame to explore the enduring factors that she identified as fostering the entrenchment of slums in the city, namely institutional fragmentation – 'fragmented sovereignties' (p. 55) or the 'fractured nature of public authority' (p. 57)–, diffuse power arrangements, and embedded political networks.

#### ***Institutional fragmentation***

Institutional fragmentation is a feature that we find first at the national level, and it affects subsequent levels of public administration. In his commendable analysis of the JNNURM, Sivaramakrishnan (2011) denounced the 'artificial splitting' (p. 60) of the mission into two sub-missions administered by two different ministries and the lack of interactions between the two. While the 'Urban Infrastructure Development' component answered to the Ministry of Urban Development, the 'Basic Services to the Urban Poor' component, including housing and the RAY programme, answered to the Ministry of Urban Housing and Poverty Alleviation<sup>18</sup>. He further highlighted the contradictions engendered by the diverging agenda of the two sub-missions: 'The currently favoured approach of monetisation of urban land as a feasible measure to mobilise the funds needed for urban infrastructure also runs counter to the proposal that in city

planning, land should be earmarked for housing the urban poor and that in-situ development is preferable' (Sivaramakrishnan 2011, p. 59). In the implementation of RAY, there was another contradiction between the mandate of the Municipalities to deal with urban poverty, and the real powers and responsibilities vested with housing boards or slum development authorities at the state level (p. 187). Williams et al. (2019, p. 256) highlighted further scalar 'contradictions between empowering cities and retaining centralised control embedded within [JNNURM]' as well as RAY.

The specific status of Delhi, as the national capital and a Union Territory, makes the issue of fragmented sovereignties particularly acute. Even after the National Capital Territory acquired the status of a quasi-state in 1991 (with its own elected assembly and government), the central government retained land control through the DDA, established in 1957 under the purview of the Union Ministry of Urban Development, whereas in other states land development is a state subject. The designation of the DDA as the housing agency for Delhi in 1967, including for social housing, strengthened its control over slum affairs. A Slum Wing in charge of the implementation of programmes for slums and squatter settlements was alternately under the purview of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) from 1956 to 1967, of the DDA from 1967 to 1991 (with some intermediary transfers back and forth from the DDA to the MCD), and back to the MCD, where it was known as the Slum and Jhuggi-Jhopri Department. In 2010, the DUSIB, under the purview of the government of Delhi, replaced this Department. Such institutional discontinuity in the administration of slums affected the implementation of the successive programmes. The Tehkhand and Kathputli Colony redevelopment projects provide concrete illustrations of the effects of fragmented institutional arrangements that stalled or compounded their execution.

The Tehkhand project was stopped because it did not get clearance from the Department of Environment and Forests, which answers to the Government of Delhi. The site, or at least part of it (another disputed point), falls in the protected Aravalli Ridge (the green belt), where construction is prohibited. The developer, who was not properly informed at the time of purchase, filed a litigation in the Delhi High Court. In other words, the DDA, a Central Government agency, had auctioned land for residential purpose in disregard of its usability and of the mandatory authorisations from the concerned

department in the state government. Furthermore, the DDA is part of the Ridge Management Board whose mandate is to protect this forest; it therefore violated its own rule – and its own 'green agenda'. This case exemplifies the lack of coordination among public agencies, the competing sovereignties (at the central and state level), the conflicting agendas between the DDA and the Department of Environment, and the conflicting agendas within the same agency (housing for the urban poor versus environment protection).

The Kathputli Colony project illustrates the discrepancies between the DDA and the DUSIB guidelines for implementing slum rehabilitation schemes, resulting in confusion, contention, residents' mistrust of the DDA, resistance to the project, and further delays in implementation. The two agencies did not coordinate to set the cut-off date that determines the eligibility of slum families. In the Colony, there was confusion regarding the applicable cut-off date of settlement. This cut-off date was extended several times since the launching of the project, from 2002 to 2007, then to 2009, 2011, and finally to January 2015<sup>19</sup>. These revisions were not automatically synchronised with the revisions in the DUSIB guidelines, but generally lagged behind. Rather, the last revisions resulted from the residents' mobilisation and demands. These changes in policy, entailing a difference of two years or more for the required length of residence are certainly not minor details, as they lead to the exclusion or inclusion of a number of families in the re-housing scheme. Similarly, while the DUSIB 2013 guidelines had clarified that tenants had to be incorporated during the identification surveys of *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters, the treatment of tenants in the Kathputli Colony project remained ambiguous, and de facto they were not considered during the identification surveys.

For a long time, another major uncertainty and source of confusion concerned the financial contribution required from the beneficiary families to access a flat in the re-housing complex. Although free-of-cost allotment of flats to the slum dwellers was not in the DUSIB guidelines, this was the recurrent promise made by the politicians to the Kathputli Colony residents. DDA officials never rectified this statement during their many interactions with the residents and leaders over the seven years following the announcement of the project in the colony. Finally, the DDA vice-chairman disclosed the financial conditionality in person, during a meeting held in

Kathputli Colony on 15 April 2016. Residents were informed that all eligible households would have to make a one-time payment of INR 112,000 (US\$ 1,650) and another of INR 30,000 (US\$ 442) covering five years of maintenance charges. Although loan facilities should be made available to the slum dwellers, this financial requirement will have a crucial impact in excluding the poorest households, who will be confined once again to informal housing.

### ***Political environment and changing power equations***

Change of central government often results in a lack of continuity and hence inefficiency in national housing programmes (Mathur 2009). RAY's withdrawal in 2015 before it could achieve significant breakthrough on the road to slum-free city is a case in point. Repeated change in national policies jeopardises 'the real chances of a coherent and consistent city-level plan for slum improvement' as was the case in Trivandrum (Williams et al. 2019, p. 269). The status of the National Capital Territory compounds again the situation. Divergence of views between the DDA and the government of Delhi, including potential conflicts regarding slum-clearance policies, are exacerbated when different political parties or coalitions lead the government of the Union and the state government. This has been the case since February 2015, with a political configuration combining the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) – Indian People's Party, ruling at the Centre, and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) – Common Man's Party, originating from an anti-corruption movement, in Delhi.

Conversely, the President's rule imposed in Delhi on 17 February 2014 following the resignation of the Delhi state government, placed Delhi under the direct control of the central government for a year (until new elections were held in February 2015). This created a new context for the DDA, a central government agency, which took new initiatives to expedite its rehabilitation project in Kathputli Colony. An order was issued on 22 February 2014 for residents to begin 'registration' and move to the transit camp, and bulldozers were sent near the colony. Subsequently, several families moved to the transit camp after signing a sketchy tripartite agreement with the DDA and the developer, and by August 2014, about 500 families had resettled there. However, most residents resisted the proposed evacuation. Their mobilisation supported by housing-rights activists stopped this first eviction attempt.

### ***Political networks***

In Delhi as in Mumbai, political networks, 'embedded politics' (Weinstein 2014, p. 167) played a significant part in deciding a slum settlement's fate. In V.P. Singh Camp, the residents successfully resisted a demolition attempt by the DDA in 1989–90 by gaining the support of then-Prime Minister of India, V.P. Singh who stalled the demolition, hence the present name of this settlement (Saharan 2012). This occurred in the context of unprecedented initiatives launched by V.P. Singh at the city level towards the recognition of slum dwellers through their enumeration and by issuing them with identity and ration cards (Sriraman 2013).

In Kathputli Colony, the main two NGOs patronising the artists' community in the settlement had connections at the highest level of the establishment. This might explain how this squatter settlement could avail itself of some protection in the past and why it was the site of pioneer experiences of in-situ rehabilitation, including the present project. Here, the residents who were initially not invited to negotiate with the competent authorities have actively sought to establish relationships with influential politicians in order to participate – evoking other studies of the urban poor's modes of engagement (Chatterjee 2004; Harriss 2007).

The residents are however aware of the politicians' limited powers and they are not duped by their promises. The election results for the Delhi State Legislative Assembly show a significant setback for the serving Member from Congress, the then-ruling party later defeated: in the 2008 elections 60 per cent of the votes from Kathputli Colony went to this party candidate; in December 2013 this percentage fell to 26 per cent and in February 2015 to 18 per cent<sup>20</sup>. This shifting political loyalty is a clear form of protest against the former deputy's inability to defend the residents' interests, and points to the search for alternate political mediation.

### ***Mobilisation of residents and housing rights activists***

A last important factor to examine, in order to understand the durability of certain slums, is popular mobilisation. Compared to Mumbai, the cradle of the National Slum Dweller Federation, social mobilisation in Delhi for slum-related issues is generally considered weak. It has had little impact on the implementation of slum

clearance, despite the outcries of civil society organisations denouncing large-scale slum demolitions and their brutality (Bautès et al. 2014). Attempts initiated by various NGOs, workers' unions and popular organisations in Delhi have been sporadic and fragmented (Kumar 2008). Coalitions and forums are not organised into a unified social movement. There is also a lack of efficient grass-roots organisations among slum dwellers in Delhi, as local leadership remains split along political, regional, social, and religious lines – Kathputli Colony being a micro-scale case in point. A few local successes in preventing evictions are noteworthy, although in some cases the relief was only temporary. At the policy level, we mentioned above the advocacy role of some civil society organisations that pushed the Delhi government to amend its slum rehabilitation policy and to make it more inclusive.

### ***Mobilisation against eviction***

In Kathputli Colony, the protest movement gained significance at a very specific time, when the imposition of the president's rule prompted the DDA to start evacuating the settlement in February 2014. Until then, the local leaders clearly preferred to engage with the urban authorities and politicians. The DDA's attempt at eviction triggered a moment of convergence with a mass-protest rally in front of the colony opposing the evacuation. A prominent NGO in land and housing rights had gotten involved recently and supported this protest. With its assistance and other legal aid activists, the residents' mobilisation further entered into a judicialisation phase.

The threat of an impending transfer to the transit camp and the contested DDA household survey compelled the artists and artisans' cooperative, and a group of residents including several leaders, to file a writ petition in the Delhi High Court to stall the project and to request the consideration of their alternative plan. The Court dismissed the case; nevertheless, it directed that a committee of residents be allowed to visit the transit camp and report any problem to the DDA and to the developer. It also required the latter to consider the residents' suggestions regarding facilities to be provided and deficiencies pointed out<sup>21</sup>. The DDA assured the Court that genuine households omitted from the survey might submit the requisite documents to the DDA for consideration.

The judicialisation of the mobilisation changed the dynamics of interactions between the residents, the DDA, and the developer. Consultation between the three parties involved was improved following the Court's directives, and efforts towards transparency on the DDA's part were noticeable. DDA officials and residents' representatives then held several meetings from May to July 2016 to discuss the agreement to be signed by the three parties in relation to the rehabilitation project, taking into account some of the residents' demands until they reached a consensus.

The presence of an artist community in the settlement, who performed in international festivals abroad, endorsing the role of 'Cultural ambassadors of India'<sup>22</sup>, had long attracted the media's attention. Following the launch of the redevelopment project and the 2014 eviction attempt, the media, including on-line platforms,<sup>23</sup> publicised their case. Two feature documentaries, 'Tomorrow we disappear'<sup>24</sup> and 'My Gypsy Colony'<sup>25</sup>, were made by foreign film-makers, bringing Kathputli Colony and their artists' lives to the international stage. The colony's puppeteers further mobilised their own skills to raise the public's awareness and force the government's attention with the media's relay<sup>26</sup>. With external support, they created a play entitled '*Zameen Hamari Jaan Hai*' – This Land is our Life – to highlight their situation and threat of eviction, a couple of months following the DDA's first attempt to evacuate the colony. According to the main artist involved in this initiative, this helped the DDA and the builder realise that they could not do anything forcefully and that talking to the residents peacefully was the only option<sup>27</sup>. This analysis is corroborated by the DDA's 'Draft slum rehabilitation policy' (2015), commented above. However, the concern expressed by the DDA at that time for the residents' consent vanished a couple of years later, and its final response was to resort to force.

The second attempt to evacuate the Colony boosted mobilisation against the project again. Opponents organised daily protest meetings and several processions in the settlement for several months in 2017 until the final demolition. They received support from NGOs, political movements and prominent activists who joined their protest, and helped them bring it to the public space on the occasion of broader demonstrations in the city<sup>28</sup>. Altogether, mobilisation under various modalities delayed the ultimate evacuation for almost four years, thus contributing to the (relative) durability of this settlement.

### ***Mobilisation for rehabilitation***

The Kathputli Colony case further shows how fragmentation may also be at work in the mobilisation movement, creating shifts in positions and alliances. In 2016, the residents who moved to the transit camp started protesting, asking for the speedy implementation of the rehabilitation project. Among those still living in the colony, a pro-project group gained importance, and included up-and-coming leaders who became very critical of the intervention of NGOs in the settlement's affairs. They reproached NGOs for speaking and acting in the residents' name without consulting them beforehand, thus following their own agendas at the expense of the residents' interests. This group eventually accepted the DDA rehabilitation project, considering it the only option for improving their housing conditions and securing their tenure. In Dewan Verma's (2002) words, they realised that the 'right to stay' in their present sub-standard environment was 'no great privilege' (p. 67); and that their resistance amounted to 'confinement' (Weinstein 2017) in that precarious environment. With the initial facilitation of politicians, they engaged in active negotiations with the DDA, and focused their demands on two points: obtaining formal guarantees through a written agreement before shifting to the transit camp, and including in the scheme the eligible households that were omitted during the DDA identification survey.

The drive launched in December 2016 by the DDA to evacuate the settlement showed however that the intense phase of discussions between the government agency and the residents had not dispelled mutual mistrust. While the DDA's officers were trying to persuade the residents to sign slips, agreeing to evacuate their house and to register for the rehabilitation scheme, around 300 to 500 police and paramilitary forces patrolled in the colony for a few days, which created a sense of confusion and fear. In parallel with the public authorities' intimidation manoeuvres, the developer pursued his own strategy to strengthen the pro-project group, allegedly by paying influential local leaders substantial sums of money to convince them and to prompt their followers to move. By August 2017, as per DDA figures, 1,355 households had resettled in the transit camp. The acceptance of the rehabilitation project by these residents may be partly genuine, but was also largely induced by the DDA and developer's combination of various tactics.

### ***The end of a durable slum ... and the creation of another one?***

Ultimately, the use of sheer force by the state spelled the end of this durable slum. In late October 2017, almost all the residents still living in Kathputli Colony, counting for 2,600 to 2,700 households, were forcibly evicted in three days by about 350 police forces. The inhabitants' protests in front of the bulldozers were repressed by canings and tear-gas grenades. How to explain such a violent epilogue? The four-year resistance of the majority of the residents, combined with the refusal of the anti-project main leader to participate in any negotiation with the DDA, on one hand, and the pressure of the developer and the pro-project group on the other, must have eventually eroded the public agency's patience. In addition, the residents suffered from a lack of external support at the time of demolition. While the final evacuation was announced five days in advance, those organisations and political movements that advocated resistance to the project did not mobilise their militants to defend the people facing the police and bulldozers. An alliance of NGOs did file a petition in the Delhi High Court in the name of the residents found ineligible for rehabilitation<sup>29</sup>. The case is still underway, but court orders did not alter the fate of the settlement. As noted above, 'strong community organisation and consensus' (Rabé 2010) was recognised as a precondition of successful land-sharing rehabilitation projects. This prerequisite was certainly lacking in the divided Kathputli Colony. There was also no 'impartial intermediary' (Rabé 2010) to help the residents, as the role of NGOs was contested, while the politicians' mediation has been partisan-oriented and mutable. These two missing preconditions partly explain implementation delays and forced eviction. One slum has been cleared for now, but the overcrowding and substandard sanitation condition in the transit camp<sup>30</sup> may eventually result in the creation of another slum settlement, though a planned and authorised one this time.

### **Conclusion**

This discussion on 'durable slums' in Delhi, referring to Weinstein (2014)'s concept in her compelling analysis of Dharavi in Mumbai, tends to show how space-specific configurations in Delhi are also likely to temper the impact of macro-forces of



neoliberalism and globalisation on slum clearance and contribute instead to the entrenchment of slums in this city. The discussion underlines the complexity of each settlement case, and the need for a multi-scalar approach, from the global and national scales down to the local level, and for considering the related interplay of various actors.

We focused on the first two slum-settlements selected by the DDA to implement in-situ rehabilitation projects under public-private partnership. These pioneer projects have been either stopped or hampered by recurring delays in their implementation. Whereas this strategy of land sharing has been implemented in Mumbai since the 1990s – with however limited success, it represents a game changer in Delhi as compared to the previous pattern of eviction and relocation. Undeniably, in-situ rehabilitation would secure the right of slum dwellers to live in more central places of the city, and preserve their access to economic and social resources. We evidenced however important limitations of the DDA scheme. Whereas fair consultation and community participation in the planning process could ensure better adequacy to the people's needs, these elements are missing on the ground. Eligibility criteria and financial conditionality will also continue to produce sizeable exclusion, as observed in previous slum policies implemented in Delhi and in other cities. For the excluded families, the involvement of private developers in slum redevelopment signifies indeed 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2008). Another recurring motif in slum policy studies in India also contributed to the poor success of the DDA's new strategy: slum dwellers no longer trust the government to honour its pledge to rehabilitate them so they resort to resistance.

Compared with Mumbai, Delhi is characterised by the direct intervention of the central government in slum affairs through the DDA, and by weaker slum dwellers organisations. Despite this specific context, we found that the factors identified by Weinstein to explain the durability of the Mumbai mega-slum, namely institutional fragmentation, bureaucratic ineffectiveness, political arrangements and networks, as well as popular mobilisation, were also relevant in analysing the entrenchment of some slum settlements in Delhi. Institutional arrangement in the National Capital Territory of Delhi has resulted in greater complexity for managing urban affairs, with 'issues of multiple

authorities, overlapping jurisdictions, and diffused accountability' (GNCTD 2006, p. vii), all of which also impact policies towards slums. Such institutional fragmentation and complexity, which may hinder policy implementation, could be beneficial to slum dwellers. It introduces more flexibility into the process, and provides space to the slum dwellers for negotiating with the authorities, as other studies also show (Benjamin 2008).

The Kathputli Colony project further allowed us to decipher the role of civil society mobilisation in the slum rehabilitation process and to show its multifaceted impact. Different groups of people, outside and inside the settlement, with different interests and perspectives, mobilised to oppose the project or, on the contrary to push for its speedy implementation. The rehabilitation project helped structure the slum settlement, viewed by the urban planners as a physical space whose informality had to be stamped out, into a social and political space, with its own internal politics. The complex arrangement of local actors interplays with market forces and with the urban authorities' agenda. Here, 'the land transfer for upmarket real-estate development' (Raman 2015, p. 390) that eventually overcame the forces of resistance, was backed by the DDA's new slum policy and by an active pro-project group of residents, who found it in their interests.

'Durable' slums do not mean permanent slums, as shown by the final demolition of Kathputli Colony. Inevitably, at the settlement level, the temporal scale of analysis affects the outcome at a given point in time. Whether the Kathputli Colony redevelopment project will become the 'benchmark' on the road to a 'slum-free Delhi' remains nonetheless doubtful. At the city level, the DDA slum-redevelopment strategy under public-private partnership presents serious limits, as recalled above. Furthermore, the preconditions identified for the success of this land-sharing model (Rabé 2010), notably very high land value, physical/technical and financial feasibility, strong community organisation, and impartial intermediary, are unlikely to be met in many city slums – in Delhi or elsewhere. Therefore, the emphasis put on this model as a curative strategy to address the problem of existing squatter slums, whether by the DDA (2019) or the current national policy (GOI 2015), seems misplaced. In addition, exclusion generated by the conditionalities attached to the slum rehabilitation schemes conflicts with preventive strategies



against the creation of new slums. Achieving sustainable housing for the urban poor and inclusive cities would require paying more attention to exclusionary processes at different levels of 'slum-free city planning': the slum settlements unlikely to be covered by the promoted schemes, and the slum families who are ineligible for the scheme or cannot afford it. This is relevant for policy agenda as well as future research agenda. The 'durability' of slums at the settlement level and at the city level could also be more systematically analysed to evaluate the gap between policy objectives and ground realities, between stated principles and practices.

Our study stressed the importance of space-specific examination for a better understanding of the range of factors at play in slum redevelopment and the related difficulties in implementation. Nonetheless, the significance of the questions addressed in this process extends beyond the context of Delhi and Indian cities. We highlight below a few of those issues, which are relevant for a discussion on slum rehabilitation policies in globalising cities around the world (Deboulet 2016; Dupont et al. 2016). We already underlined how the difficulties encountered in implementing a land-sharing model for slum rehabilitation in India resonate with other experiences in South East Asia. In a broader context, against the backdrop of gentrification (Lee 2014) and increasing competition for urban space in aspiring competitive cities, our settlement cases reflect conflicts over sharing space between stakeholders with diverging interests and agendas (Huchzermeyer 2014). Everywhere, whatever state intervention in slums is applied – upgrading, redevelopment or resettlement – meaningful consultation and community participation in the planning process remain a critical point. Although this principle has been enshrined in the international conventions on the right to adequate housing<sup>31</sup>, on the ground many signatory states fail – by either overlooking it or facing hurdles – to apply it consistently at the local level (Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016; Perlman 2016, p. 50–51). This is an illustration, among others, of 'the large gaps between declared principles – often relaying the international doxa – and the actual practice of interventions' (Deboulet 2016, p. 26; Sutherland et al. 2016). The lack of a proper consultation of the affected population in slum interventions

and of a participatory process fuels resistance to the intervention. It also entails a deficient knowledge of the residents' needs and priorities, and hence leads to inadequate rehabilitation programmes. Another crucial factor that limits the outcomes of housing-poverty alleviation programmes is their exclusionary effects. Recurrent in India, the discrepancy between the (larger) numbers of families evicted and the (smaller) numbers of those rehabilitated or resettled is also a matter of concern elsewhere (Westendorff 2008; Sutherland et al. 2016). Lastly, the disjuncture between urban development agendas, housing policy for the urban poor, and other poverty-alleviation programmes is not confined to India. Wherever observed, such disconnect impacts adversely the inclusion of the urban poor in the city (Deboulet 2016; Sutherland et al. 2016). This calls for a better coordination between the various institutional actors and other stakeholders, in order to develop more integrated approaches of human settlements, that would be more compatible with the objective of adequate housing for all.

## Notes

1. A comprehensive literature review on this topic would go beyond the scope of this article. We deliberately focused our references to the most relevant cases for our argument, Delhi and Mumbai.
2. Source of data: Slum & Jhuggi-Jhopri Department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi.
3. Source: Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD).
4. Referring to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
5. Angel and Boonyabancha (1988) also underlined community organisation as a prerequisite in their analysis of the Bangkok experience.
6. Source of data: DUSIB, 'JJ Clusters in Delhi as on 25–03–2014', [http://www.delhishelterboard.in/main/?page\\_id=3644](http://www.delhishelterboard.in/main/?page_id=3644) [accessed 23 April 2014].
7. Interview with an architect at the DDA (4 November 2011).
8. At the time of our interview with the concerned DDA officer (27 February 2008) the modalities for the eligible families' financial contribution were still under discussion with the Housing Development Finance Corporation.
9. The Delhi Land and Finance Ltd in joint venture with the real-estate firm Indiabulls, which eventually took over the entire project.
10. Source: 'Raheja bags Delhi first slum redevelopment project', *Impression* – Quarterly Newsletter, IV(1), New

- Delhi, January 2010, <http://www.raheja.com/md-newsletters.asp> [accessed 17 April 2019].
11. The 2005 Right to Information Act gives Indian citizens the right to file requests for information with public administrations.
  12. Here an applicant does not correspond to an individual, he/she should represent a distinct household.
  13. Source: Minutes of the fifth Board Meeting of the DUSIB, 19 December 2011, DUSIB website: <http://delhishelterboard.in> [accessed 31 December 2016].
  14. Source: Government of NCTD, Department of Urban Development, Order dated 25 February 2013: 'Guidelines for implementation of the scheme for relocation/rehabilitation and allotment of flats to the Jhuggi-Jhopri dwellers under JNNURM-2013' [http://delhishelterboard.in/main/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/relocation\\_and\\_rehabilitation\\_policy\\_25\\_02\\_2013.pdf](http://delhishelterboard.in/main/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/relocation_and_rehabilitation_policy_25_02_2013.pdf) [accessed 17 April 2019].
  15. DUSIB, Government of NCTD, Decision dated 14 June 2016: 'Delhi slum & JJ rehabilitation policy, 2015 (Part-A)', <http://delhishelterboard.in/main/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Policy-2015.pdf> [accessed 17 April 2018].
  16. Interviews with the consultancy firm director, 17 and 23 November 2011.
  17. Slum Rehabilitation Authority website: <http://www.sra.gov.in/pgeSalientFeatures.aspx> [accessed 23 October 2016].
  18. In July 2017 these two ministries were merged into the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.
  19. The ultimate alignment of the cut-off date for the Kathputli Colony project with that of the DUSIB, namely 1 January 2015, introduced a difference of treatment among the residents: those households with proofs of residence between 2011 and 2015 will not be rehabilitated in the in-situ rehousing complex, but in other DDA housing schemes on the outskirts of the city.
  20. Source: Official Website of Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi, <http://ceodelhi.gov.in>.
  21. Bhule Bisre Kalakar Co-operative vs Union of India, Writ Petition (Civil) 1290/2014, High Court of Delhi.
  22. See: H.G. Gera, 'Cultural ambassadors of India', *The Tribune*, 18 May 2002.
  23. See the Facebook page of Friends of Kathputli Colony, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Kathputli-Colony-Delhi/604606192938523> [accessed 17 April 2019].
  24. Film by Jim Goldblum, Adam Weber and Joshua Cogan, 2014, <http://www.twdfilm.com/> [accessed 17 April 2019].
  25. Film directed by Stéphane Subiela and written by Martine Palmer, 2015, <http://www.casteliers.ca/spectacle/documentaire-my-gypsy-colony/> [accessed 17 April 2019].
  26. Swati Daftuar, 'A Delhi colony hanging on a string', *The Hindu*, 11 May 2014, <http://www.thehindu.com/features/metropolis/events/a-delhi-colony-hanging-on-a-string/article5996145.ece> [accessed 17 April 2019].
  27. Interview in Kathputli Colony, 28 August 2016.
  28. One such protest took place on 19 February 2017 at Jantar Mantar, the site for public protests in Delhi, as part of a demonstration against the economic and social policy of the Central Government, organised notably by communist parties along with various trade unions and civil society organisations.
  29. Centre for Holistic Development and Others vs DDA and Others, Writ Petition (Civil) 9663/2017, High Court of Delhi.
  30. These problems entailed another court case: Saleem and Others vs DDA and Others, Writ Petition (Civil) 10148/2017, High Court of Delhi.
  31. United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comments No.4: the Right to Adequate Housing (1991) & General Comments No.7: the Right to Adequate Housing (1997).

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