

**A STUDY OF  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECT  
OF  
URBAN SLUMS**

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*In Memory of the Indomitable Spirit*

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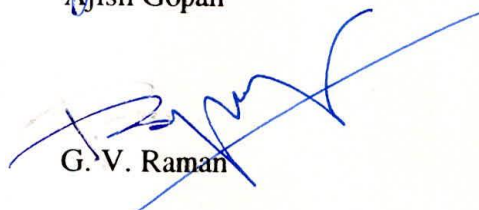
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Ajish Gopan



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Rohit S Kumar

"Sunday: 5:00 am: Jayanagar Market. Vendors are setting up their shops. Only an occasional truck roaring past breaks the silence. Toll of the church bells and chanting of prayers at the local temple diffuses through the thin layer of mist. Lights turn up at one or two windows of the nearby flats. A bunch of fitness enthusiasts run past the market. In the Rajeswari Nagar Slum, just behind the market, life is picking up pace. The place is buzzing with activity. Children defecate in the open air. Smoke comes out from the small huts. People are already on the run for their daily bread. Amritha feeds her 6months old with a spoon; attempting to pacify the crying child. Her husband died last month and she is a widow.

6 a.m.: In the nearby apartments people pull the blankets over their heads to grab the last wink of sleep. The slum is already active."

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## OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.1 Objective of the project:

The objective of the project is to study the socio-economic aspects of urban slums to gain some insight into the lives of the inhabitants and to gain some first hand information about the problems that they face.

### 1.2 Relevance:

Urban slums are the offshoots of rapid urbanization. India is moving towards urbanization at a high pace, which will automatically spur the growth of slums. With the evolution of slums, a new class gets added to the existing societal set up, which creates strife in the society. The poverty, unemployment, and various other problems faced by the slum dwellers sometimes also contributes to other social problems like - child labor, illiteracy, spread of contagious diseases, and anti- social activities.

As managers we will be dealing with the people from various sections of the society. Having exposure to their problems will equip us better to understand them and tackle the inter-personal problems. Since we will be joining the organizations, which have a social obligation towards the improvement of society slums, we ought to know about the life style of these people and the problems that they face.

### 1.3 Scope:

For the purpose of this study we have selected '**Rajeshwari Nagar**' slum, located in **Jayanagar**, in the southern part of Bangalore, which originated and evolved due to stone quarrying work in and around Jayanagar. The inhabitants by and large are workers from rural parts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh , and Karnataka . There are about 350-400 families with an average size of five members. They usually earn their livelihood by driving auto- rickshaws, rag picking, working as labors at building sites or any other job that they get.

### 1.4 Methodology:

1. Collection of base-line data (socio-economic qualitative data) through open ended informal discussions with the inhabitants of the slum and observation of the conditions prevailing there. The subjects are selected randomly across various sections reflecting various income levels and various domicile.
2. Discussions with community leaders, volunteers, and agencies interested in welfare of the area that could give reliable information. (Namely, The Community Health Cell and St. Martha's Hospital)

3. Gathering information at first hand about the problems faced by the community at all levels.
4. Evaluation of the findings

We did not take a prepared questionnaire as it may restrict the scope of discussion and the people may find it difficult in opening up and telling the truth. But we had prepared a rough questionnaire to have a framework as to how to go about with the study, which will lead us to our objective.

## INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Introduction:

The term '**slums**' came into vogue since the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The word 'slum' itself is derived from "**slumber**" meaning "**unknown**", and is said to describe the people living in black streets or alleys. Of course these people are wrongly presumed to be "sleeping and quiet". However, it appears the etymological explanation of the word "slum", was made in 1953, when it was described as a thickly populated street or alley marked with squalor or wretched living conditions. Some of the Social scientists have substituted the word "slums" by "blighted areas", while others have preferred "deteriorated neighbourhood", "gray area", "low-income area", etc. [1].

United Nations specifies that slums are uncontrolled settlements whose inhabitants are not fully integrated socially and economically into the development process. The UNESCO defines slums as a building, a group of building or area characterized by overcrowding, deterioration, insanitary conditions, or absence of facilities or amenities endangering the health and safety of the individuals. [2].

The Government of India passed an Act called Acquisition of Land Act, 1956 under which the Government can declare any area as slum which a source of danger to public health, safety of convenience of its neighbourhood, by reason of the area being low lying, insanitary and squalid. [1]

The slums are known by different terms in different towns of India. The terms used in Delhi are '**Katras**', '**Gullies**', '**Juggi**', '**Jhompri**'. These are single room tenements, normally constructed in rows within an enclosure with a single entrance. In Bombay, '**Chawls**', '**Zopped patties**' have multi-storied buildings housing many families with common civic amenities. The '**Basties**' in Calcutta, are located in the open areas of the city or slightly away from the city, usually on urbanised sides. They are generally thick clusters of small, dilapidated huts often with roofs made of scraps of woods, gunny bags or tin sheets. The word used in Bangalore is "**Keris**". [1] In comparison, the slums in Bangalore are slightly better because the pressure on land is significantly lower than what is felt in the above metros.

The growth of slums is no more restricted to the metros and is fast spreading to smaller or upcoming cities. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, the pressure of land is increasing in the metros at a rapid pace. Secondly, rapid urbanisation of smaller towns like Bangalore, has triggered the growth of new slums and rapid expansion of existing slums. This report attempts to understand some of the socio economic aspects of a typical slum based in Bangalore.

## DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 Description Of The Area, People, And Some Observations:

The study was focused on Rajeshwari Nagar, a typical urban slum, located in Jayanagar in the southern part of Bangalore. There are some 300 families living in the small area. Within the slums, the houses form clusters or lines, attached to each other, sometimes on all three sides of the households except the approach itself where small doors allow entrance to the family members to their homes. Though stone built, these are not roads but footpaths through which one has to walk through. The houses, if you can call them so, are sheltered very small mostly without windows. Doors are the only means of ventilation and light. The walls can be of anything from mud structure to even a plastic sheet or cloth. The roofs are mostly flattened tin sheets or thatched roof with palm leaves, plastic sheets etc. While the majority of the shelters present such an appearance, there are *pucca* houses also with wall built out of bricks and plastered, with impervious flooring and roofing formed out of tiles or asbestos cement sheets. These shelters and houses are sometimes owned, rented, or leased. There are electric lines and piped water supply. All have to bear a minimum of electrical charges (one time charge) for there lighting which is nominal and the Karnataka Electric Board authorities collect them.

As one walks along the streets and paths, one can observe buzzing activities most of the time. Number of urchins between 3 to 12 years can be found playing about. Some of these children go to school, either the '*Balwadi*' or some nearby school, while others go for rag picking. Some of them wearing clean cloths, some a little dirty, a few are found running about naked or wearing scanty or tattered clothes. Most of these children are not mal-nourished clinically.

The adult women are seen at the washing platforms and taps washing cloths, utensils etc., and fulfilling their social obligations of gossips and various other types of avocations. Sometimes quarrels and hot words can also be seen. These women also do not give an appearance of being poor or mal-nourished.

Adult males are usually found in-groups, here and there talking and some are on the roads with hangovers of the previous day. These adults earn money and most of them utilize their earnings on themselves, mostly for drinks. In some of the families the lady of the family has to earn and support the others including the husband.

There are mainly two shops dealing with eatables, grocery, etc. required for day to day living. One of the shops, which is owned by an old inhabitant of the slum, also sells tea and snacks. The other shop is owned by an outsider who comes every day and usually does not sell on credit.

Apart from human beings, stray dogs, cows, other animals, flies cockroaches etc., are invaders and there is no area where one cannot find them.

Just behind the slum there is an abandoned quarry, which is filled with water and various types of plants grow there. This is a potential site for breeding of culex mosquitoes. A couple of accidents have also occurred, since the depth of the quarry can not be estimated due to the growth of the plants, which have covered the whole area. Another danger associated to this quarry is that of landslides. Since the rainwater drains into the quarry, the walls of the quarry are getting washed away, thus affecting the houses on the edge. One of the houses collapsed a few months ago, the ruins of which can be seen even today.

The major source of water is the community taps. Though they are two in number, often, long queues for water can be seen. There are no private toilets in the slum shelter. There are a few community latrines build up in the block but even the slum dwellers find it unhygienic to use. People prefer to go to the open area for toilet rather than those filthy seats, which are defunct due to blockade. Bathrooms are also provided but none of them are being used, instead they are used as dust bins by the slum dwellers.

There is a small school building with two rooms and a temple, located in the area. Volunteers from St. Martha's Hospital visit every Thursday to provide basic medical help, which the people require.

Unemployment is one of the major problems of the youth. They fail to get jobs for more than 2-3 days in a week. One of the reasons may be that they do not put enough effort to get a job, another reason is that they do not have enough education or skill to get a permanent job.

The source of entertainment for the people is feature films, preferably in their own spoken language, either on the televisions (a couple of them have) or in theaters. The slum dwellers have their own political affinities and loyalties. The godfathers of the slum put or bring about pressure when elections are round the corner.

Findings of the study follow in the next few pages. The study was conducted by gathering qualitative data through open-ended informal interviews with few of the slum dwellers selected randomly and through discussions with the people at The Community Health Center and St. Martha's Hospital.

## FINDINGS

### 4.1 GENERAL

#### 4.1.1 Density of population and average persons per household:

One of the important indices of population concentration and pressure on land is Density of Population. According to 1991 census the density of population India is 267 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. [3] Rajeshwari Nagar consists of approx. 300 families and the average size of the family is found to be 5.

#### 4.1.2 Profile of the population:

Majority of the residents is predominantly Hindus. There are only 14 non-Hindu families (10 Christian and 4 Muslims). As for the spoken language in the households, 50% speak Kannada with Tamil and Telugu coming next, each with 23%. Malayalam speaking households are only 4%.

As per 1991 census sex ratio for the country is 929 females for every 1000 males. [3] In the slum the sex ratio was observed to be much lower than the national status. This can be explained by the fact that about 20% of the male population were unmarried and many of the male inhabitants left their families in their hometown.

#### 4.1.3 Type of houses:

The houses in the slum were built by this by the dwellers themselves. They use cheap materials for construction. Walls were built by mud and the roofs were thatched or covered with tin sheets or old tiles. A number of huts were *kutcha* structures and a very few houses were built with *pakka* material like cement, steel, stones and brick. And these houses are constructed in an unplanned manner. Most of the houses do not have proper ventilation and drainage connections. The houses lacked bathrooms and not a single house has a latrine. So dwellers resorts to open defecation. The sewerage from the houses is discharged in to the open sump, which serves as breeding site of mosquitoes causing a potential threat to public health.

#### 4.1.4 Ownership of houses:

Most of the occupants own the houses themselves. There are a few cases of these being rented out.

#### **4.1.5 Food habits:**

Majority of the households is habituated to both non-vegetarian and vegetarian diets. People consume low cost food, like dosa, idli, curd rice etc. People generally maintain their regional food habits even after staying away from their hometown for long periods of time

#### **4.1.6 Fuel for cooking:**

Firewood and kerosene in one or the other combinations form the fuel for cooking in almost the entire slum. None of the residents use electricity or LPG.

#### **4.1.7 Common illness and medical aids:**

The common illnesses reported are fever, cold, and cough, followed by diarrhea. Skin diseases like scabies and ringworm are not considered as illness.

Volunteers from St. Martha's Hospital Come every Thursday afternoon and provide primary health care. A couple of residents help these volunteers in their work. For major health problems they either go to St. Martha's Hospital or a nearby private hospital.

### **4.2 SOCIAL**

#### **4.2.1 Health Hygiene and Civic Amenities:**

Hygiene forms an important part in the lives of the residents. Unfortunately residents of the village were found wanting on the aspect of hygiene. There are the factors that lead to such state of affairs. The factors are enumerated as under.

There are only two open-air bathrooms for the slum strength of 300 families. Since there is enough pressure on the land they are not in a position to provide for the amenities. This also corroborates the fact that the residents bath infrequently. For children, clothing is not of much importance while moving within the slum. When going out they are dressed properly. The work done by the adults (male & female) are physical in nature, hence they are usually in their work clothes. Very few people wear footwear when staying in the slum since it is not considered important by them. There's no waste disposal system. It lies decaying at three corners of the slum, which could be a breeding ground for the germs. There are no drainage facilities to dispose off the dirty water. This leads to water logging in some of the places. Improving any of these facilities would require huge amounts of money, which the residents were not in a position to shell out.

There are positive factors that were observed in the slum. St. Martha's hospital plays an important role in the lives of the slum dwellers. They visit the slum every Thursday to treat the sick. The sick at their hospital are treated free of charge. There are two

community taps that supplies them with water on a regular basis. The slum is also electrified. There's an initial fee for providing individual connection but the use is free. The Bangalore Municipal Corporation has provided water connection. The Karnataka Electricity Board has supplied the electricity. The main path in the slum is laid of stone. The path is 2 stone blocks wide. The remaining paths are mud paths. The residents clean the paths in front of the houses regularly. The residents are very much aware of the need for proper health and hygiene. The health of most of the residents was moderate. Never has an epidemic occurred in the slum as far back as the residents can remember.

#### **4.2.2 Education and Literacy:**

The adults are aware of the importance of education. More than 80% of the male population and nearly entire female population are illiterates. Most of them want their children to be properly educated. The biggest constraint to better education is finance. Some of the parent's (3 nos.), who can afford, send their children to a private school (Rs.60/- per month). Some of them have left their children (and wife) in the hometown/villages so that their children would not be brought up under such difficult conditions. There was one Balwadi in the slum for small children. The Balwadi provided the children with a mid-day meal, which acted like an incentive. The earlier teacher, (appointed by the Bangalore Municipal Corporation) though being a Brahmin took active interest in the education of the children. The new teacher according to the slumdwellers did not take a keen interest in the education of the children and is frequently absent. Most of the adults are illiterate though some of them have studied till 7th class. Some of the girls' (4 nos.) had passed 10th class but couldn't continue studies because of lack of financial aid. Most of the youth had discontinued studies after 7th class in pursuit of some job or due to lack of financial support. Such short education did not help them much in terms of improved job prospects or better understanding of the world.

#### **4.2.3 Social Security:**

Social security was one very important aspect to which all were vulnerable. Almost all of them were on daily wages. They were usually employed only 2/3 times a week. They were not aware of any worker rights and depended on the benevolence of the employer. The rough earnings ranged from Rs.50/- to Rs.150/-. Though they were cheap labour the sectors available to them were limited. This was because they were treated with suspicion. Some of them were self-employed. They earned their living by selling vegetables, picking rags. There were 2 shops to supply the slums with grocery items. One of the shops was owned by an outsider (a malayalee) and the other (rather small) were owned by a local. There was a shop for collecting papers and plastics from the ragpickers.

The going rate was Rs.4/- per k.g. These were sold to a collector who paid them at Rs.5/- per k.g. If there's any self employed activity the police are not far away. They have to be paid a weekly "*HAFTA*" to keep the business going. Even the local goons have a stake in every economic or cultural activity. The money they save is not put in a bank. Almost none of them had a bank account. The reasons were twofold. Firstly, no one was willing to introduce to the bank authorities. Secondly, they considered the process complicated. The Slum Clearance Board has asked them to vacate the place though it's a registered slum. They also have a ration card, which enables them to buy basic commodities but more often they don't get what they are looking for because, the ration shops, in the black market sell those items.

#### **4.2.4 Religion and Caste:**

Majority of the population consist of Hindus, with around 10-12 Christian and 4-5 Muslim families all living in harmony. The place is not divided according to the religion but among the Hindus there is stratification based on caste. Most of them are from the lower caste but as mentioned there is stratification based on jatis. The higher jatis are basically skilled labours like carpenters & masons. The lower jatis are generally unskilled labourers. Interestingly the higher jati people do not go to the residence of the lower jati on normal occasions. In the event of a marriage they do come. Interestingly the lower jati people have no resentment against these people. On the other hand, they poke fun of them saying what benefit did they get of belonging to a higher jati when we all are in the same boat.

#### **4.2.5 Culture:**

Most of them were conservative about their tradition though it was not difficult for them to accommodate the culture of other places. They believed in god. Majority of them followed the traditions of their hometown. They have a concrete temple of Maryamen & Sister (a Kannada Goddess) and have an annual celebration in honour of the God. They celebrate festivals like Holi, Dipawali, and others depending on the places they come from. There is a good mix of culture, and the residents have accepted each other's traditions and happily celebrate each other's festivals. Marriages are pompous and are held at the local temple. Though the people are a bit conservative and have arranged marriages caste and region are not very important while looking for a match. Every one in the slum and a few outsiders are invited for the feast and to bless the couple. The family has to take loans (from **chit funds**) for the marriage. The slum people help the family by giving rice or other food stuffs that they themselves would have consumed that day.

#### **4.2.6 Entertainment:**

The people of Rajeshwari Nagar usually have a lot of free time because its difficult to get a job every day .Due to the economic constraint and other factors there are very few sources of entertainment available. In the free time especially on Sundays they play cards, marbles with/without a bet of Rs.10 - 20 per game. They say, "playing for money is more interesting". Occasionally they go for movies and to the gardens to refresh themselves. Most of them have radios and some of them have television sets with cable connections. There is no prejudice among the T.V. owners and anyone can watch at anytime of the day.

#### **4.2.7 Various Vices:**

As with any other class of citizens various kinds of vices coexist with the strengths in the slum. The only difference being the extent and the field of activity. The activities of the slum are more visible and lack of patronage also makes it very prominent. One of the biggest problem facing the slum is intoxicating drinks. The drink is usually country liquor. The easy availability of the drink makes it quite popular. The men and the women drink liquor with the men in majority. The men drink almost everyday depending on his earnings. Some of the men have drinks after a hard day, come back home and go off to sleep. Others come back and create a ruckus in the house or in the slums itself. Yet others do not return home for the night. Usually the events of the previous night are forgotten the next day. The major reason for drinking is the pressures of life and the perceived inability to improve their lot. Drinking allows us to forget our troubles for sometime. One important revelation was the financing of drinks. They ensured that they did not borrow money to drink, which helped them to stay away from indebtedness on this score. The women of the house did not create a ruckus so long as the man behaved properly. They had reconciled to loss of income.

The women of the slum also took to drinking occasionally. They had picked the habit usually from their husbands. Hence they did not view drinking as an evil. Gambling and cards was another activity they resorted to. On being asked why they involved money while playing the reply was, "There is no fun if money is not involved". The slum dwellers were inundated with alcoholic drinks during elections. Usually all the contesting parties made it a point to supply them with all their needs.

### 4.3 ECONOMIC

#### 4.3.1 Income:

Regular income is a scarcity in almost all the households. Almost all the breadwinners were daily wage earners. The reasons are not far to seek. Most of them are unskilled labourers. They are capable of doing manual jobs. The kinds of work they get are as follows: - a) contract workers b) vegetable seller's c) rag pickers d) loaders. Some of them after coming over to the city have learnt to drive three wheelers. Some of them work as masons. Whenever they are asked to work in houses they are viewed with suspicion. Average earning range from Rs.50/- to Rs.150/- per day. 70% of their income is spent on drinking.

#### 4.3.2 Unemployment:

Lack of employment opportunities takes a heavy toll on the slum dwellers. Idleness leads to gambling and drinking. Over a period of time they have become immune to unemployment. It's a fact of life. There's no initiative on the part of the government to enhance the skills of the slum dwellers.

#### 4.3.3 Financial aid:

There is no any financial aid available for the slum dwellers. The slum dwellers have to approach the money-lender for cash. The money lender charges an exorbitant price. The usual rates range between Rs.10/- to Rs 15/-per 100 rupees. The state government has provided the slum dwellers with ration cards.

## ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

### 5.1 Analysis

In the previous chapter we mentioned the findings of the survey done in the slum. A chapter has also been devoted to the general profile of the slum. Here we try to analyse the findings from the viewpoint of an outsider.

There are various socio-economic factors that affect the general condition of the slum. Almost all the problems have their genesis on the lack of education and lack of opportunities to make a decent living.

Illiteracy has an adverse effect on their lives. Illiteracy not only imply that the residents do not get a job, but also the other benefits that come through education like; importance of cleanliness, of various opportunities to be tapped and protecting themselves from being exploited, are obviously denied to them. Their status of being uneducated constantly put hurdles in their path to development and it's the economic condition that has driven them to the city. Despite their best of efforts they are not able to improve their lot. This has made them feel more laid back about their life. For example, not having a job for 2-3 days does not seem to have any impact on them. They seem to have a fatalistic attitude towards life. This does not imply that they are exposed to the uncertainties without any adequate preparation. They feel powerless against external forces. For example, when the police took one of their residents on suspicion of a crime they felt powerless against the police. The mother of the adult, who was in the police lock up, regularly visited his son. She used to ask the police on the status of the case. She was asked by the police to pay a sum of money for his release.

Of late residents seem to have realised the importance of education as a key to the betterment of their living conditions. This is very much in evidence in our finding of better off residents sending their children to private English medium schools, even at the expense of their hard earned money, instead of to Government schools where instruction is merely a ritual these days. But the fact remains that sending the children to school alone will not help improve their conditions. The learning atmosphere within the slum does not encourage them to pursue education seriously. Absence of any financial aid discourage further education.

Neither the Administration nor the Society cares much about the conditions of the slum dwellers. On the one hand they are on the lookout to take the maximum advantage of the slum dwellers as cheap labour and on the other despise their presence. Politicians use them as a vote bank and once the elections are over forget about them. The business community uses them as cheap labour for their needs. Many feel that providing a

job is a favour done on the slum dwellers but the fact remains that they are getting cheap labour. Since the slum dwellers have no other sources of income and due to lack of skills, they are compelled to take up odd jobs. The businessmen never think twice before employing casual labour at a salary below the stipulated minimum.

Their food habits are generally good. The adults and the children were usually healthy. They cooked their food in the house, which was poorly ventilated. The fuel used for cooking was dried wood and an open flame in the house is a cause for concern. There is sense of rootedness among the residents of the slum as is evident from our finding that they have not lost touch with their individual cultures. This has prevented the growth of any nefarious activities. They still preserve their ties with their homelands. Most of the slum dwellers visit their near and dear ones at least once a year. They are generally very nostalgic when it comes to their homelands.

It is observed that, contrary to the popular belief, the youth in the slum were very good at heart and they had very high moral values. They considered themselves inferior to none. They were happy about all that they had. Younger parents were found a lot more enthusiastic about sending their children to school. They had the determination to provide their children all that was denied to them in their childhood. Residents permitted no illegal activities inside the slum.

The residents though having come from different places have learnt to be tolerant towards each other. In the slum there are people with different characteristics but they have friendly relations with all. They wouldn't mind helping them in their times of need. Camaraderie has developed amongst the residents.

The habit of drinking seems to have wrecked havoc with the lives of the residents. They seem to have to have accepted it as a part of their lifestyle. There seems to be no qualms in fighting after a heavy drink. The women having borne it for a long time have also taken to drinking in a big way, which has further vitiated the atmosphere. It's the children who are losing out, being neglected due to various squabbles.

## 5.2 GOVERNMENT POLICIES<sup>\*</sup>

The Government too seems to have done very little with respect to the slums. During independence the Government of India wanted to remove the slums from the cities after having understood the problems faced by the slum dwellers. But the implementation and the resources allocated were insufficient to meet the needs of relocating. It was a miserable failure. Over the years the government has recognised the existence of slums and also accepted the fact that it cannot be wished away. They also realised that providing alternate housing was not feasible. Hence they went in for Environment Improvement Plan<sup>\*\*</sup> (EIS). In EIS they attempted to improve the amenities in the slums rather than trying to eliminate the slums themselves. Still the Government is lagging behind in the upliftment of the conditions of the slum.

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<sup>\*</sup> Government Policies are discussed in detail in Appendix - A

<sup>\*\*</sup> Detailed analysis and discussion in Appendix - B

## SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

### 6.1 SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

As enumerated in various chapters there are various aspects to be studied, which remains undone. Government is unable to provide adequate funds or support due to insufficient funds. There has also been a rollback in Government spending from all welfare activities. The information available on the slums has not been taken seriously by the Government. The inability of the Government to alleviate the problem of the slum has led to the growth of the N G O s. In spite of the attempts of various N G O's to highlight the problems faced by the Slum Dwellers there have been no concrete steps.

This report has done a qualitative analysis on the **Socio-economic** aspect of Slum Life. A quantitative analysis encompassing many slums would be more appropriate for an in-depth study of the slums. Establishing the correlation between various factors will also help to understand to root cause of the current situation. Any Government or N G O intervention will require statistical data to back up the claims for funding. Though the work done by the N G O s is commendable the number of such organisations involved in the upliftment of the slums is very small. Therefore, Government must make sincere efforts to attract volunteers to bring about an upheaval in the current scenario.

We conclude by saying there is sufficient scope for studying the upliftment of the slums.

## CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Conclusion:

The problems of urbanisation and urban poor result from factors affecting both at the macro level namely national level and at micro level namely at the level of city or town. At the macro level, the socio-economic development plans adapted by our country has led to increasing pauperisation of the rural poor and their displacement by various forces. The concentration of capital and resources in the urban areas in the form of industries, development of service sector and the large scale housing construction has increased unskilled low-paid job opportunities for the poor. Coupled with this process, there has been inadequate recognition, planning for and allocation of resources for the urban poor by the Government, nor a balanced development of urban agglomerations of regions.

At the micro level also several factors play a vital role in the crisis of urban planning and slumming process and the miserable living situations of the poor. There is greater migration to metropolitan cities, which have three types of activities namely, industrial, commercial and service. The high cost of urban land has taken it beyond the purchasing capacities of the poor, while local Governments have not implemented protection of urban land policies. Local Governments have followed a national pattern of ignoring the needs of the urban poor. There has been neglectful and inadequate planning and allocation for meeting the needs of the urban poor of basic civic amenities of social services and of minimum wages. The Politicians have exploited the captive population of urban poor and promoted destructive and violent dynamics.

Karnataka and Bangalore have been examples of the above factors. Hence problems of the inhabitants of Rajeshwari Nagar slum are no different. In the succeeding paragraphs, we would like to summarise our ideas arising out of our limited experiences with the slum dwellers of Rajeshwari Nagar.

It is apparent that problem of numbers of slum dwellers in Bangalore is smaller as compared to comparable metropolises in India. Hence the problem to be addressed is a shade easier, if determined effort and political will is present. The Government establishments concerned with slums appear to view the problems of slum dwellers in a narrow and rigid way. Hence the planning for slum dwellers reflects compartmentalised, inadequate and unimaginative approach and could benefit from more interest and involvement. They also need to develop a holistic understanding and attitude.

There is no provision for regular government contact with slum communities or for facilitating development of communities. Hence maintenance of infrastructural facilities and liaison and feedback from the communities are adversely affected and at the moment very negative. It is a recognised slum.

The provision of social services health education cultural are scanty are not coordinated and hence a large number of slum dwellers find themselves without having access to even essential health services. Making the matters worse is the callous or sometimes hostile attitude of health officials especially in the specialized referral institutions. It is also a known fact that a certain amount of understanding exists among the health officials

The major disease pattern of the slum dwellers suggests that most of the problems are resulting from unhygienic environments, mal nutrition and low status of health awareness.

Though the work of NGOs in the city Bangalore id highly laudable the number such voluntary transitions are abysmally low. The greatest problem faced by NGOs is attracting professionals and getting them interested and committed in their ongoing activities.

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## APPENDIX - A

### GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Policy means a statement or a general scheme of understanding towards a particular aspect of issue, which provides guidance in decision making to members of an organisation in respect of any course of action. A policy may be formulated in the context of organisations, objectives or in the form of an explicit declaration.

Discussion on public policy on slums can take place generally from two major angles. One angle is that there are many problems relating to slums in India and these problems can be tackled by Schemes and programmes, which are designed specifically for a particular situation and the general policies in this direction, mainly cover individual aspects falling under the purview of slums. The other angle raises larger social policy issues involved in the area, where individual or specific problems are to be tackled by evolving an integrated urban policy, which is more generic in nature. In India both these approaches have been adopted from time to time and the Five-Year plans in India reflect the emerging public policy options.

Problems relating to urbanisation were noticed only after the independence and this led to the establishment of Planning Commission and formulation of Five-Year plans. There were no national policies in this area in the pre-independence period.

The First Plan recognised that the cities and towns were growing haphazardly causing deterioration in the living conditions of the people them. The ideas behind today's integrated urban development policies are actually contemporary forms of it's original recommendations.

The Second Plan emphasised industrial growth, particularly basic industries. This was also the first plan to recognise the problems of slums as such and subsequently provided a provision for slum clearance and rehabilitation of slum dwellers. The scheme was initiated in 1956, which later became a centrally sponsored programme carried out by respective State Governments. Even today the State Governments carry on the policy to keep the spread of urban slums under control, even though not financially supported by the Government.

The Third Five-Year plan specifically provided for the preparation of comprehensive development schemes for all the major cities and their surrounding areas. These plans and policies were essential not only for regulating the growth of unguided,

unplanned inhabitation in the urban areas but also to restrain unauthorised construction, which could possibly emerge as slums.

The fourth plan recognised the weaknesses of the earlier plans. It recognised the fact that industrialisation and dispersal of activities. The emphasis during this plan was shifted from '**wipe slums**' to '**clean slums**'. The concrete programmes emerged during the fourth plan include slum clearance, environmental improvements of slum areas, social housing, urban water supply and sanitation, land acquisition and land development and preparation of Master plans for urban regions.

During this period the responsibility of executing the projects were solely vested on the states. The states were given the freedom to set their priorities and utilise the central financial assistance. Governments have run into serious difficulties during the execution of slum clearance policies. The costs involved were highly prohibitive and hence 'old slums' became gradually more acceptable. After the literal failure of slum clearance schemes, the government introduced Environmental Improvement Scheme (EIS) in eleven Metropolitan cities in 1972. Through this, the Governments tried to provide basic civic amenities to all. The cost of the project again proved to be prohibitive. Under the broad objective of 'Urban Development', the Fifth plan has undertaken several steps.

1. To augment civic services in urban centers as far as possible and to make them fit for a reasonable level of living;
2. To make efforts to tackle the problems of urban overcrowding on a regional and on a more comprehensive basis;
3. To promote the development of smaller towns and new urban centers to relocate the persons of increasing urbanisation.; and
4. To provide more and more services to slum areas in order to regulate the growth of slums.

Although the Fifth plan has provided a large package of welfare programmes for the entire urban community in general and slum population in particular, the urban problems continue to be uneven and enormous. The main reason why the Fifth five year-plan failed to meet its targets was because of the rapid pace of urbanisation India had witnessed during this period and lack of adequate infrastructure to support this high rate of growth.

The Sixth Five Year Plan gave greater emphasis to environmental improvement of slums in general. Center allocated more funds towards providing basic

civic amenities and services. The integrated development package was developed for small and medium towns and it was introduced in 1979. This was done to maintain a balance between distribution of urban population and the pace at which the metropolises were growing. The sixth plan was relatively more successful than its predecessors for it could change the environmental conditions of a typical Indian slum significantly.

The Seventh Plan lays special emphasis on strengthening the infrastructure facilities of municipalities with a view to equip them in a better way to ensure efficient management of cities and slums. Environmental Improvement of Slums (EIS) continued with greater vigour as Government began appreciating the work of Voluntary Organisations in this field.

## APPENDIX - B

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT OF SLUMS (EIS) AS ENVISAGED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Ever since the independence, the Government of India has concentrated its attention on the problem of Slums and their clearance. During the pre-independence period, no policies or strategies were made to curb the growth of slums in the urban areas. The problems of unguided urbanisation were recognised only after the independence.

Analysing the progress and focus of the Five Year Plans, one can observe that, the focus has slowly drifted from 'wipe off slums' to 'cleaner slums'. The First plan tried to bring about policies to clear the slums, without giving thoughts to associated societal macro factors. As a result, it failed miserably. The Second and the Third plans also failed to achieve what they were supposed to achieve. The second plan lacked focus and it carried no provision for EIS. It was designed to enhance the growth of basic industries in India but it managed to recognise the problems of Indian slums and this insight actually helped Planning Commission to work out a more comprehensive Third five-year Plan. The criterion for evacuating the inhabitants was very unrealistic in the Second Plan and it was dropped in the Third Plan.

In the earlier Five-year plans the emphasis was mainly on executing the slum clearance programmes as per the provisions of the Act 1956. The procedures adopted were lengthy and time-consuming especially with regards to the high costs of acquisition of land, non-availability of alternative sites near existing places of work for the purpose of rehabilitation of slum dwellers. The Third Plan failed because of the flaw in the policy adopted. The construction of houses could not keep pace with the ever-increasing growth of population inflow to the urban areas. This matter was taken care of in the subsequent plans, by focussing on EIS rather than on Clearance Policies. The new emphasis on slum improvement was oriented towards accepting the existing slum structures as a constituent of the urban housing blocks. The idea was to raise the standards by providing a minimum of necessary civic facilities instead of concentrating on totally eliminating them.

The Government of India, in 1972 after witnessing the literal failure of slum Clearance Schemes launched the EIS. EIS was meant to provide basic civic amenities such

as water supply, sewerage, community baths, latrines, streetlights, paving of lanes in the slum areas. The basic underlying structure remained the same for all the Five-year plans that followed. As the country was getting more and more industrialised, the responsibility of executing the EIS were transferred down to State Governments. Nevertheless all EIS are financially supported by the Central Government. With the upcoming of a large number of voluntary organisations, the Governments launched tailor made EIS's to suit the requirements of a particular slum.

The span of EIS was mentioned initially as at least 10 years. Under this scheme, the environment improvement proposed essentially relate to the provision of water supply including water taps, sewers, storm water rains, community latrines and street lighting, widening and paving of lanes.

The standards laid down under EIS are follows:

Latrines	One seat for 20-25 persons
Water Tap	One Tap for 50 persons
Street Lighting	One Pole at 30 meters apart.

The expenditures in setting up the aforementioned facilities were met by the Central Government. The success of EIS's has resulted in Governments extending it to all the cities in India with population of over Three lakhs. The Municipalities were made responsible for the implementation of the programme and they were also in-charge of the scheme. Due to this policy, proper responsibility could be fixed and wastage of funds was minimised.



*"We carry the burden of development on our back"*



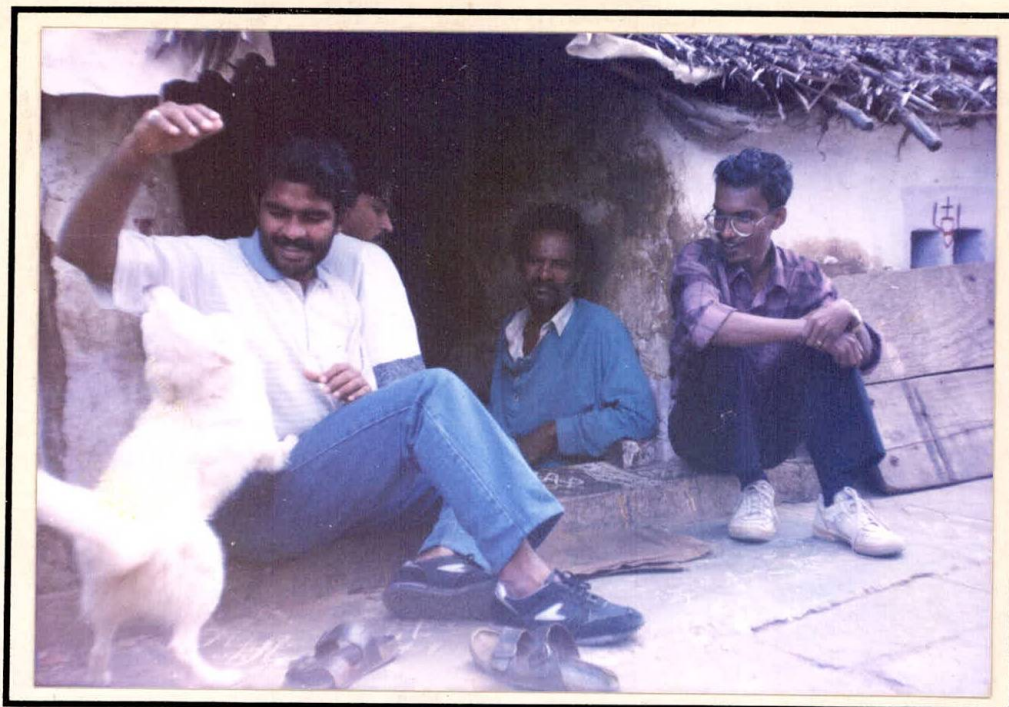
*"The courtyard, the playground, the roads – we have them all"*



*"We know very well how to show affection"*



*"We too are the part of the future"*



*"We enjoy the company of our guests"*



*"Like a Berlin wall – divides the haves from the have  
nots"*



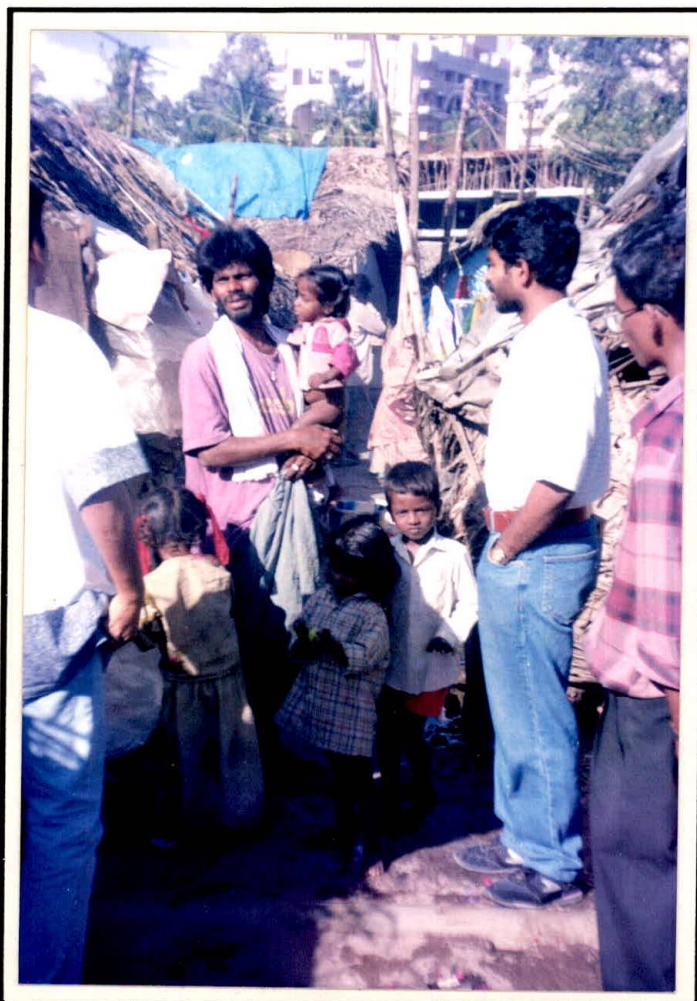
*“Closed avenues to the future- whom to blame”*



*“Results of Environment Improvement of Slums”*



*“Meeting place of our community”*



*“We clean the  
society of its  
refuse”*