6.3

POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY IN HYDERABAD

A DISCUSSION NOTE

Chandan Sengupta
V Ramaswamy
Ashvin Dayal
Roy D'Silva
Mazher Hussain

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Background

This discussion note on Poverty and Vulnerability in Hyderabad, is one of the nine city studies on urban poverty taken up from 1996 by OXFAM (India) Trust, under its Urban Poverty Research Programme (UPRP). The object of the UPRP is not merely to produce city study reports, but rather to begin a process of action-learning, within Oxfam, and among city action groups, on the issue of urban poverty.

Although Oxfam has had some experience in working in urban areas, its entry has been largely led by emergency situations such as slum fires, communal riots etc., with little strategic analysis about urban vulnerability. Only 5% of Oxfam's support has gone to urban initiatives in recent years, yet it is acutely aware of the growing importance of urban poverty in India. In order to resolve this lack of clarity Oxfam chose to engage in a significant research programme covering a number of cities across the country. The intention is to support potential intervention strategies not only for Oxfam, but also for local actors and other institutions who are committed to an urban agenda.

In order to realise these objective, Oxfam is planning to conduct studies in 9 cities in India. In each centre (with the exception of Mumbai and Calcutta) an initial vulnerability scan was taken up through review of existing materials and key informant meetings, followed by focused primary research. This will then lead into a process of programme development, where further micro-level studies may be required based on selected intervention sites.

Through such an exercise, it would be possible to have an overview of the city system, enabling an analytical understanding of the situation as it exists and especially in terms of the key deficiencies, limitations, lack of capabilities, and vacuums in the means to effectively addressing the problem of vulnerability.

Thus, the larger context of the exercise is the transformative action to be initiated and undertaken in the city by capable activists and actors. Through the participation of some of the city actors in the enquiry process, as well as a subsequent process, involving a spread of relevant actors, of studying the report of the enquiry and attempting to develop strategies for the effective addressal of the identified problems, the enquiry on vulnerability could be viewed as a means towards moving in that direction.

The research is designed to be accomplished in four phases.

- The first phase was started in October 1996, through the formation of a national advisory committee, developing the overall research framework, and selecting the cities for study.

- In the second phase, begun in December 1996, the focus was on organising the city research team and undertaking background research. This was done through secondary information collection and analysis, key informant interviews, and focused primary research on selected vulnerable groups.

- The activities in the third phase, begins after the analysis of urban poverty issues and primary research in Hyderabad, and would involve detailed participatory action

research on selected urban poor communities. Work on the first phase in the other cities will also begin at this stage.

- In the fourth phase, the research findings would be widely discussed with and disseminated among experts as well as the community and local organisations. Specific intervention strategies for addressing urban poverty in a specific city context would be developed. A final country report, integrating the work in all nine cities, will also be prepared.

For Oxfam, entering into such a significant area of research was a difficult proposition. It was clearly felt that we need to begin by starting work in just one city, to test various methodologies, understand the best way to organise such a study and appreciate the levels of input required from us to facilitate high quality research. For this purpose, Hyderabad was selected as the first site, mainly due to the fact that it has an Oxfam office which is also managing the study nationally. It is also important at this point to remind ourselves that the Hyderabad study is part of a larger national research agenda. The goals and objectives of this national study cannot be met by any single report, and as such it cannot be fully judged against those objectives.

The present note is a product of the second phase of the UPRP, and is an input towards the more detailed report on Hyderabad city. The final version of the report would be completed after incorporating the relevant suggestions and comments of the workshop participants. The object of the workshop, therefore, is not to scrutinise the discussion note, so much as to initiate a dialogue, exchange and consultative process with Hyderabad individuals, experts, activists, organisations, institutions etc.

Introduction

As we stand at the threshold of the next millennium, cities throughout the world face formidable challenges in dealing with a spate of urban pathologies and problems of survival : poverty , unemployment, environmental degradation, crime, delinquency, violence. The magnitude of these problems varies greatly across and within nations. In Europe and America and in parts of developed Asia, urban poverty and squalor are not as acute as they are in the developing regions of Asia. Although there are fluctuating trends in the growth of the major cities of Asia, the overall rapid expansion of cities and towns and the associated problems of poverty and vulnerability are likely to put the urban agenda at the top of Asian events in the 21st century. Within Asia, India has been the region of largest urban population growth. The process of urbanisation in Indian has brought in its wake the persistent problems of poverty and degraded living among a large sections of urban residents.

A large body of literature has grown on urban poverty in India and its social and economic correlates. It is well-established that the issue of poverty in general, and urban poverty in particular, cannot be appropriately addressed using the uni-dimensional income-expenditure criteria. The Human Development Report, 1997, emphasised on the "human poverty" which, unlike "income poverty" includes the denial of choices for survival, deprivation in education and knowledge, and economic

provisioning. The National Commission on Urbanisation had stressed the need for the inclusion of living conditions of urban poor in the consumption basket used to measure urban poverty in India (NCU,1988).

However, despite its importance, the multidimensional approach to urban poverty is also not analytically adequate. In fact the approach draws heavily on the additional items and indices such as health, education, housing and environmental services. To the extent that these dimensions show the visible manifestations of urban poverty, they are doubtless important. But these "manifested dimensions" do not explain the wider context and issues which actually give rise to urban poverty.

Poverty is, after all, a socio-economic and political complex and therefore, can hardly be examined in isolation from the wider socio-economic and political processes of a given region or society. If slums and squatter settlements are some of the manifestations of urban poverty, the phenomenon of urban poverty itself is certainly the symptom of a development process that creates conditions for poverty and deprivation. There is an urban context of urban poverty. There is a political economy aspect, and the issues of basic rights and livelihood. Also there is the question of differentiation among the poverty groups and hence, the need for identification of the most vulnerable among the poor. These aspects bear crucial significance in the context of an analysis of the nature and dynamics of urban poverty in a predominantly rural setting where the level of urbanisation is low and the rate of urban growth is high, and the manifestations of urban poverty are huge.

With the failure of the state and market to ameliorate the conditions of the urban poor, several voluntary groups and community organisations in Indian cities have raised the issues of rights and entitlements of the urban poor. However, these interventions are mostly sporadic and it is imperative that an overview of these interventions is also included in the research on urban poverty in India. The present report attempts to cover these aspects of urban poverty in India, with special reference to the urban poor in Hyderabad. The specific objectives of the report are:

1) To address the issue of urban poverty within the framework of basic rights.

2) To identify with greater specificity who the most vulnerable groups are in all categories of urban areas, in relation to occupation, housing and habitat category and social identity, and to identify the key barriers / constraints faced by these groups in improving their situation.

3) To identify the key trends in the external environment to understand how they affect the nature and manifestations of urban poverty and vulnerability, and specifically which groups are most likely to be affected in the coming years.

4) To fully understand the activities and strategies of other institutional actors in addressing urban poverty and vulnerability in order to inform any new interventions proposed by Oxfam and others.

5) To develop a comprehensive urban poverty and vulnerability strategy for Oxfam within external and internal parameters and constraints.

As mentioned in the Background the Hyderabad case study is one of 9 cities selected for Oxfam's Urban Poverty Research. Determining a completely representative list of cities for study on the basis of location, size, and growth would be a research exercise in itself, especially when the sample size is restricted to 9. For Oxfam, the priority is action, built upon credible research, not the development of social science theory. Therefore, a limited set of objective criteria were used to shortlist about 32 cities, from which 8 centres were chosen on the basis of intense discussion among a group of experts.

The objective criteria applied was population growth (1981-91), further defined by regional variation and size. Thus, the fastest growing city from each state was chosen among cities with populations of 0.5 - 1 million, 1 million - 5 million, and above 5 million. From this shortlist of 32, the cities were judged according to criteria such as learning value, historical relevance, regional location, primacy in the state, ethnic diversity, availability of research material, and "manageability" for Oxfam.

The final list was:

Mumbai (for qualitative review only)	Indore
Calcutta (,,)	Ahmedabad
Hyderabad	Coimbatore
Lucknow	Ranchi
Guwahati	

The list has changed on a number of occasions, and may develop further. However, the principles and objectives of the research remain common to each location, despite variations in the process and methodology adopted locally.

The Hyderabad case study is based on the review of secondary materials on the background information, an opinion survey and primary research on selected low income and vulnerable communities in the city. The opinion survey was conducted among individuals selected from the cross-section of the city's population. The primary research was based on the survey of three vulnerable groups :

1. **Slums and Squatters**
2. **Street Children**
3. **'Nowhere group'**

All these groups were identified in consultation with several local civic organisations. The first group was identified on the basis of occupational- residential characteristics. The second group was a specific vulnerable group namely, street children. The last vulnerable group was the "no where" group. The no where group comprise that huge section of urban population who can be classified as being in the category of upper poor and lower middle class; they are not engaged in manual work; they are educated , but without much access to technical and higher education. With limited opportunities

for livelihood and incomes, this group is likely to emerge as one of the most vulnerable group in the urban context. According to the local organisations working with these groups in Hyderabad, the no where group are neither the beneficiaries of any anti-poverty programmes, nor are they organised enough to influence decisions on matters of city planning and developmental activities.

For the first vulnerable group, a metropolitan area-wide mapping of 959 low-income settlements was undertaken with the help of a team of 20 volunteers provided by a local organisation, COVA, who are experienced in working with the poor in Hyderabad. Of these locations, 708, lying within the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad, and divided across five settlement types (by tenure), were chosen for preparation of settlement profiles. The five types are :

- developed and de-recognised slums
- developed but not yet de-recognised
- notified, but yet to be developed
- blighted areas not in the official list of recognised slums
- squatter settlements or sub-slums

A sample of 106 settlements was selected, covering all five types, and 967 households from among these settlements were selected for detailed survey. Survey data is currently being processed.

For the street children category, detailed interviews were carried out with 13 street children were selected from public parks and railway platforms and through voluntary organisations working with them.

For the selection of the no where groups , about 20-24 localities resided in by these groups were identified with the help of the local organisation , COVA. Of these, 12 localities were selected after necessary field verification from these 12 localities, 24 households were surveyed taking 2 from each of the 12 localities.

The Urban Context

Does urbanisation induce poverty? Although the trends based on the estimated figures on urban poor suggests that urban poverty in India had declined over the last decades (recorded during 1977-78 and 1987-88), the poverty ratio stood higher in urban (40 per cent) than in rural (38 per cent) areas of India during 1987-88. Another aspect of the trends in urban poverty in India relates to the incidence of higher population of urban poor in many of the relatively less urbanised states of India. Of the six states where the proportion of urban population to total population in 1991 has been less than the national average of 25.72 per cent, Bihar has the lowest proportion of its population as urban (13.17 per cent). But, of all the states, Bihar had the largest proportion of urban poor (57.9 per cent) during 1987-88. Bihar also registered a decadal growth rate of urban population that was less (30.37 per cent) than the national urban population growth rate (36.19 per cent) during 1981-91.

Orissa's urban poverty rate is relatively low compared to its rural poverty. Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh are the other states where the proportion of urban population has been lower than that of the national average. In Madhya and Uttar Pradesh, urban poverty has shot up to more than 45 per cent. However, in both these states rural poverty has also remained high. As Table 1 shows, Haryana had registered a lower rate of urban poverty but the rate is higher than its rural poverty. In Rajasthan the urban poverty rate has been higher than both the national urban poverty rate as well as rural poverty of the state. The figures on decadal urban poverty in Table 1 indicates that despite a lower proportion of urban in their total population, the states of Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have all registered urban growth rate that was higher than the national urban growth rate during 1981-91.

Table 1. The Level and Rate of Urbanisation and Urban Poverty in Selected Indian States

States	Percentage of poor (1987-88)		Decadal Growth Rate of Urban Population (1981-91)	Percentage of Urban to Total Population (1991)
	Rural	Urban		
Haryana	15.6	22.5	43.07	24.79
Madhya Pradesh	46.6	46.6	44.98	23.21
Rajasthan	29.2	40.9	39.24	22.88
Uttar Pradesh	47.6	47.5	38.97	19.89
Orissa	61.5	37.4	36.08	13.43
Bihar	52.2	57.9	30.39	13.17
India	**37.6**	**38.9**	**36.19**	**25.72**

Source: Planning Commission, 1993; Census of India, 1991.

All these suggest that in both less urbanised (in terms of proportion of urban to total population) and more urbanising states (in terms of decadal urban growth) poverty remains high. In the most urbanised states like Maharashtra and Gujarat, urban poverty is relatively low. If more urbanised states are considered developed, the poverty is low because of available income earnings opportunities in these developed states and urbanisation, defined demographically as the rate of growth of population, is not the only explanatory factor for poverty as defined by income criteria. In some of the less urbanised states, rural poverty is equally high. These will further suggest that an income-based urban poverty phenomenon needs to be examined in the context of *development* and not merely in the context of *urbanisation* per se.

Andhra Pradesh, the Indian state of which Hyderabad is the capital, is not the most urbanised state in India. Both in 1981 and 1991 it held the seventh rank among the states in so far as the level of urbanisation is concerned. While the most urbanised state of Maharashtra had 38.73 per cent of its population as urban in 1991, the proportion of urban population to the total population in Andhra Pradesh during the same census period was 26.84 per cent, little above the national urban population proportion. As in many other states, in Andhra Pradesh also the decadal growth rate for 1981-91 was less than that for 1971-81.

However, macro averages hide many micro realities. During 1981-1991 Hyderabad Urban Agglomeration(UA) has surpassed all the 23 million plus cities of India in the area of population growth : from 42.65 per cent in 1971-81 to 67.04 per cent in 1981-91. Hyderabad UA is also the fifth largest of all the 30 UAs in the country with population 0f 1 lakh and above. Moreover, while the UA population in major Indian metropolises has declined during 1981-1991, Hyderabad UA registered phenomenal growth (Table 2).

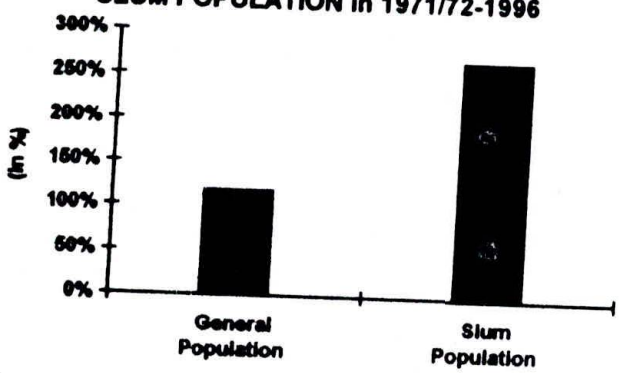
Table 2. Population Growth Rate of Urban Agglomerations and Cities in India with Population of 100,000 and above during 1971-81 and 1981-91

Urban Agglomeration (UA)	1971-81(%)	1981-91(%)
Bombay UA	42.94	33.43
Calcutta UA	23.90	18.73
Delhi UA	57.09	46.18
Madras UA	35.31	24.99
Bangalore UA	75.56	39.87
Hyderabad UA	42.65	67.04

Source : Census of India , Series 1, Paper 2 of 1991, Rural-Urban Distribution

In most Asian cities, increase in urban population is paralleled by the growth of poorer and vulnerable sections of population. In 1972 about 3 lakh or 19 % of Hyderabad's population lived in slums. In 1981, slum population in Hyderabad was around 5 lakhs or 23% of the total population (Alam *et al*, 1987). By 1996, Hyderabad had 1.1 million people living in slums (MCH, 1996). Assuming that in 1996 Hyderabad' s population within the Corporation area was around 3.5 million, the proportion of people living in Hyderabad's slums in 1996 would be around 31%. Thus , during the last 25 years, when the general population of Hyderabad increased by 118%, the slum population in the city grew by 267% (Figure 1).

Figure 1 GROWTH OF GENERAL AND SLUM POPULATION in 1971/72-1996



We can see that the number of slums, as well as slum population has been systematically increasing, and the MCH has also been compelled to recognise such growth through inclusion of new areas within officially recognised slums, targeted for civic improvements. However, Hyderabad also presents the interesting phenomenon of

de-recognition of slums, which perhaps has no parallel in any other city in India. Most recently, a number of slums 'developed' under the ODA programme, have been recommended for such de-recognition.

Table 3

'Slums' in Hyderabad

Year	Number
1979	455 (pop. 4.2 lakhs)
1986	+207
1994	+149
TOTAL in 1996	**811 (pop. 12.6 lakhs)**
'Developed' & recommended for de-listing	(387)
Official Slums, 1997	**424 (pop. 11 lakhs)**

Political Economy of Urban Poverty

In a typical agrarian economy, the rural-urban dichotomy and its inevitable consequence of large scale migration to cities are usually considered to be the cause of urban poverty. In this perspective urban poverty is seen as an overflow and extension of rural poverty, wherein unfavourable terms of trade in the rural sector has led to large scale migration to cities at least in the initial period of their growth. This explanation of urban poverty as a function of rural push migration has long been questioned. An alternative approach, better known as the political economy approach, would have a stronger explanatory power to view urbanisation and urban poverty from a broader perspective. The political economy approach has generally focused on : (1) the dependence of country's internal capitalist order on global economic forces; (2) on the process of development of capitalism in specific contexts; (3) on the formal-informal sector equation in a labour market where the poor subsidise the organised modern sector; and (4) on the manner in which the state facilitates the development of capitalism (Safa, 1982). To draw a comprehensive political economy profile of the urban poor in India, covering all these aspects with specific details is a task in itself. In this section, an attempt has been made to raise some aspects related to the process of development, specifically in the urban context, that would broadly highlight the political economy issues involved in poverty in Hyderabad.

In India, the cities themselves have been viewed as performing the role of absorbing and exploiting the large working class, leading to the rapid growth of traditional industrial centres such as West Bengal and Maharashtra after independence, and states such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat more recently. Where and how these workers live, and form communities in the cities, have rarely been a concern for policy-makers whose only interest was in providing support to the growth of centres for industrial capital. After all, urban India's share of GDP has grown phenomenally from 27% in 1950 to almost 60% today (Kapadia, 1997).

Thus urban growth and poverty cannot be fully analysed in terms of migration alone. The NIUA in 1998 calculated that natural increase accounted for 41% of urban growth, reclassification for 21% and migration for 38% (NIUA, 1988). There is a significant generation of poverty through processes which occur within cities, resulting form the very

character and way in which cities allocate resources and rights to people. This vital fact has been neglected in the urban planning process in the country.

A cursory review of major urban policy developments reveals that it was not until the Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) that any serious reference to the need for attention to cities, and even then it was to support orderly infrastructure development through regulation of the land market, master plan preparation, setting housing construction standards, and strengthening of municipal authorities. The objective being pursued was to create a visually attractive city rather than one which meets the employment and residential needs of the majority. In the Fourth Plan period the government established the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) to help develop newly formed state capitals and provide funds to house the industrial working class in the large cities. The state was now convinced that only through high levels of regulation in the land use and provision of services could cities become surplus providers to the exchequer, and enable gradual urban dispersal. But it was only in 1979 that the state actually acted on the latter goal with the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) programme. The other major step in the 1970s was the enactment of the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act which ironically served to increase land scarcity and prices rather than free up more land into the market (Kapadia, 1997).

Like all other cities in the world Hyderabad too is a divided city. As an Asian city of developing capitalist economy located in a predominantly agrarian structure, socio-economic divisions are, however, more conspicuous in Hyderabad than in other cities of developed nations. The pattern of urbanisation in Hyderabad is the same as elsewhere in the Third World, the essential characteristics of which are : lop-sided growth with the dominance of the centre, uneven regional spread, increasing informalisation of urban economy, shrinking livelihood chances of the poor who constitute half or more than half of the city's population, the failure of the state and the market to ameliorate the conditions of these disadvantaged groups. However, the magnitude of the problems greatly vary within and across different parts of the Third World. Hyderabad also had its specific trajectory of development

Compared to other Indian metropolitan cities, Hyderabad was relatively a late comer in the field of modern manufacturing industries . Even as the process of industrialisation in Hyderabad was hastened from 1961 onwards, the important industrial activities lacked appropriate resource base and the regional links between metropolitan industries and Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema remained weak. This led to the dependence of industries on outside state influences for specialised labour and marketing of products. Planning and development of the city got further distorted with the shifting of economic core and the decay of the historic core. Systemic planning and regulatory framework for an even development of Hyderabad had to face tremendous problems resulting from the presence of contrasting social areas (Alam, 1972).

In socio-spatial term , Hyderabad provides the best example of a city of haphazard settlement. This was the nucleus of the Hyderabad city that was built by the fifth descendant of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, in the latter part of the 16th century. The old walled city, as it is named, represents the historic core of Hyderabad. It is this most

blighted and dilapidated part of Hyderabad where poverty and vulnerability seem to have taken deep roots. Lack of economic opportunities and political manipulation of communal issues have been the major contributory factors for the conditions of vulnerability among the residents of this old part of Hyderabad :

" Deprived of economic opportunities with the dismantling of the feudal structure, and deprived of its elite, who are usually the powerful spokesmen for the enhancement of the civic amenities, the walled city as an area languishes in multiple deprivation. To the economic and civic deprivations must be added deprivation which accrues from the alienation of communities from each other, resulting in frequent communal riots. (Naidu, 1990).

The delimitation of constituency boundaries in the name of "separate electorates" played into the hands of communal political leaders and communal arithmetic rather than the secular issue of civic amenities and other development programmes became the main instrument of mobilisation (Naidu,1990).

It was not until the 1980s that poverty began to feature within the urban development agenda. The realisation began to dawn that the huge growth of cities had created vast numbers of poor who till now had been neglected. The strain on local authorities was acknowledged, with the 7th and 8th Plans attempting to put greater emphasis on community participation through local governance, and private sector involvement in service provision. But many of the old regulations remain in terms of control over urban space, and where the government has withdrawn the private sector has stepped in, with the poor still left at the sidelines. The Nehru Rozgar Yojana, launched in 1989, was the first urban employment scheme to be specifically targeted at the poor. However, its performance has been far from satisfactory, with the rigid formal sector financial institutions who are the conduits for the programme unable to provide the specialised banking services needed by the poor.

With this backdrop of urban neglect, the rapid economic and social changes which have occurred in the 1990s are likely to have a substantial impact upon the poor. The process of economic liberalisation, which has included fiscal reform as well as policy changes to encourage private sector growth, is likely to hold a number of threats and opportunities for the urban poor. It is assumed that a number of change processes taking place within the economy and society will impact the livelihoods and basic rights of the most vulnerable groups. The major aspects are highlighted below.

The changing labour market in urban areas: One of the real fears of liberalisation has been that the formal sector will cease to be a dynamic source of employment growth as a result of industrial deregulation, trade competition, and contractionary fiscal policy. With a tendency for industry to subcontract production to informal units is feared (though not well documented) that real wages have been stagnant for falling for the urban poor in the past 5 years.

In Ahmedabad, a survey by UNNATI in 1994 showed that 21% of industrial labour in the textile industry was employed on a casual basis, where no union representation is present. A study by Friedrich Eibert Stiftung (FES) in Delhi revealed that in one area, Govindpuri, of the 1,500 businesses surveyed over 80% could be classified as being in the informal sector

with no regulations regarding wages and conditions. These sporadic examples point to a growing trend, often referred to as the "casualisation" of labour. Studies by SPARC in Bombay have shown that it is precisely from among these casual sources of employment that the most chronic sufferers of poverty emerge.

However, while the threat of flexible labour markets on real wages is important, so to is the acknowledgment that the informal sector has been the predominant economic reality for the urban poor for some decades now. For many migrants it is an entry point into the labour market, providing a core survival strategy. For women too, the informal sector is often the only viable source of income, however small the amount. The informal sector provides income for food to millions of India's urban population, and cannot simply be wished away. But, unless some attention is paid to differentiating within the sector between those activities which offer opportunity for the future and those which perpetuate poverty, and to finding ways to strengthen and protect workers within the sector, this potential engine for economic advancement could become a vast and permanent reservoir of highly exploited labour. The sector is currently the *de facto* poverty alleviation mechanism for the cities, providing a safety net to those unable to access higher quality jobs. If no efforts are made to account for labour protection and creation of sustainable self-employment, the implications for poverty in the long term are immense.

Market pricing and privatisation of essential goods and services: The lack of access to education, health, and nutrition among the urban poor has been a significant failure of the past 50 years. Unfortunately, this failure has been converted into a belief that the state is simply incapable of doing so, leading to a regime in which subsidies are falling and the provision of services is being led by the private sector. The public distribution system (PDS), for example, has always been acknowledged as inefficient and biased towards the rich. But in the effort to resolve this through targeting there is a very real danger of over-correction wherein sections of the poor will be excluded. The removal of price controls on essential goods has put extreme pressures on poor households who are seeking a better life for themselves. The UNNATI study in Ahmedabad revealed that 50% of informal credit being taken by the poor is being used for meeting health expenses. Unless the state recommits itself to providing basic needs to the poor at a reasonable price, the cycle of indebtedness and poverty will undermine the possibility for them to overcome their vulnerability through sustainable livelihood activities.

New Threats to Land and Housing Rights and Rising Displacement: Various controls over urban land have been implemented over the years, few of which have been aimed at providing secure housing rights for the poor. With rapid growth and the participation of the private sector, new pressures for land are building up, with prices sky-rocketing. The emphasis on infrastructure development, demands for middle-class housing, and elitist "clean city" campaigns all threaten the future of the urban poor. Urban displacement has mostly been overlooked in the national debate on land rights, even though some crude estimates suggest that 50% of those displaced in India today live in cities. The issue of land and housing security cannot be stressed enough as an issue of prime importance in determining the relative vulnerability of the poor. From it stems questions of health and sanitation, community action, livelihood security and more. Unless the contribution of the poor in city economies is recognised, and their right to physical space is acknowledged as

an integral part of urban planning, the future of not only the poor, but urban India as a whole, will be in great jeopardy.

Changing Scope for Participation Within New Institutional Formations: The institutional context in which economic change is being carried out is not static, providing some tentative elements of hope for establishing a stronger people perspective in urban development. The passage of the 74th Amendment to the constitution has increased the scope for local urban governance, wherein local communities have elected and empowered representation in urban affairs. This institutional capacity open up opportunities for genuine participation at an important time in terms of the increasing attention being paid to urban development by large bilateral and multilateral donors. Community organisation will strengthen the emergence of local leadership which is able to negotiate space for the community in determining the plans of outside interventions. Of course in reality this space is often co-opted by local power centres who are primarily concerned with personal enrichment, but at the very least there is some scope for positive change.

The scope for NGOs is perhaps less clear. While in Calcutta they are being increasingly accepted by the communist government, in Mumbai a reverse trend is feared as chauvinistic political actors are increasingly skeptical about the NGO agenda. Perhaps the most realistic, and also desirable, institutional formation for the future will be the growth of genuine community based organisations (CBOs) with the capacity to negotiate with donors, the government, as well as political parties.

Foreign funding in city development projects : One of the crucial aspects of political economy of development is dependent capitalism through foreign funding. In Andhra Pradesh foreign funding has increased sharply in 1990s. Examining the implications of foreign funding in major development projects in Hyderabad namely, The Hyderabad Water Supply and Sanitation Project, The Hyderabad Slum Improvement Project and the India Population Project VIII, Ramachandra has raised the issue of political autonomy and the larger issue of development. The selection of the project is *ad hoc* without any consideration of the local need, justifications and the sustainability of the projects after the withdrawal of the funding agencies following completion of the projects. " It is politically convenient to be passive receivers of development aid in the short-run in order to avoid "unpopular" ways of raising resources or changing the ways they are allocated. Tackling the question of how institutions can be run even after foreign funding is over is deferred. And on the other hand, the easy availability of foreign fund flows induces a sense of complacency on policy makers and politicians, thus postponing any drastic restructuring" (Ramachandra, 1997, pp. 160-61).

Basic Rights and Livelihood Issues

The basic right framework that helps understand the magnitude of vulnerability among the poor, is based on the analysis of a number of failures that prevent poor from securing these rights. Failures in **endowment, exchange entitlement, production, and consumption** largely captures the range of conditions which can leave to poverty. These are in turn mediated by institutions of the state, market, community, and household in such a manner that there is a differential impact along caste, class, and gender lines.

Endowment refers to the endowments that individuals enjoy by virtue of their birth such as land / asset inheritance, citizenship, membership in a family, and physical well-being. An example of its failure could things such as the girl child not gaining inheritance to family assets, a child born an orphan, or with a disability, or Bangladeshi migrants lacking rights over certain resources by virtue of their citizenship.

Exchange entitlements include to the ability to convert endowments into income, through employment, access to markets, and access to government entitlements. An example of failure could include dalits, or women, who due to their inability to access education due to community and / or household discrimination are unable to convert their physical labour into employment. More directly, the same failure could occur due to discrimination in the labour market itself.

Production is determined by access to inputs, skills, training, credit, as well as by natural factors (e.g. drought). An example of a failure could be the lack of credit for communities to take up new venture, and it could be mediated in a bias against women due to discrimination in the institutions of state, market, household, or community.

Consumption refers to the intra-household distribution of resources. For example, a household as a whole may be above the poverty line, endowed with good land, enjoying high production, and availing a fair price. But individuals within the household may not be able to access their fair share, placing them at a disadvantage. Common examples include daughters being denied education, or adequate nutrition.

This framework is intended not to impose a rigidity in analysis, but to extract a level of consistency in understanding the root causes of poverty experienced by diverse communities. It is context-neutral, and as such can be applied to urban areas.

For Oxfam, however, a strong theoretical framework derived from its development experience was never the barrier or perceived as the priority for addressing urban issues. The real question is one of understanding the details with which to apply any framework. What are the specific types of failure which occur in urban areas? How do the institutions mediate impact differentially? How to social relations along caste, class, and gender lines manifest themselves in the urban context? These are the central questions which need to be understood in urban areas in order to develop a clear profile of vulnerability, and to identify appropriate intervention strategies.

The key basic rights issues for the poor in urban areas are:

- lack of secure housing rights
- inadequate provision and access to civic amenities, a clean, safe, and healthy living environment
- inadequate provision and access to public health facilities, basic education, safe drinking water and food security
- lack of freedom from violence and intimidation on the basis of social identity
- inadequate bargaining power to ensure fair treatment in employment, and

- inadequate provision and access to government safety net programmes (e.g. PDS, EGS)

The key livelihood issues for the poor in urban areas are

- lack of regular employment in the urban formal sector
- lack of fair wages, reasonable working hours in the unregulated sector
- inadequate provision and access to training opportunities for employment / self-employment
- inadequate provisions and access to credit on reasonable terms to escape cyclical and exploitative indebtedness
- lack of self-employment opportunities which provide gainful, productive, and sustainable economic activity
- lack of adequate income to facilitate food security, health (prevention of morbidity and access to treatment), education, and shelter, in such a manner that meeting any one of these needs does not compromise the ability to also meet the others (e.g. illness should not be treated at the expense of education etc.)

Basic rights in urban areas are particularly important because of the prevalence of non-income poverty in certain cases, wherein physical deprivation due to harsh living environments is a greater concern that actual household income levels. This can often constitute a more oppressive form of poverty, which is why questions of housing, sanitation, and drinking water have to be addressed as basic rights in the urban context if one is to address the core problems of urban poverty. Between 30-40% of India's urban population live in slums (75 -100 million people), and 70% of urban dwellers have no access to sanitation, with 27% lacking access to safe drinking water (NIUA, 1993).

At the same time **patterns of accumulation and livelihoods** also need to be understood and addressed. As the numbers of urban poor grow, it is critical to overcome the barriers to wealth accumulation among the poor in order to increase access to sustainable livelihoods. Indeed, it is argued that without labour-intensive growth the recognition of basic rights by the state will be ineffective as the resources to implement these rights will be absent.

Table 4.

Index of Under-employment (%)* by Sex in Hyderabad, 1983, 1987-88

NSS Round	Male	Female
38th, 1983	4.1	9.9
43rd, 1988	3.2	5.0

Source : Sarvekshana, *No. 57, NSSO, 1993.*

* : The index of under-employment has been calculated following the approach used in Deshpande and Deshpande (1991).

The table shows that while under-employment is declining, both among men and women, this is much more so in the case of women.

Table . 5 .

Percentage of Unemployed in the Labour Force (according to Usual Status) by Sex in Hyderabad

NSS Round	Male	Female
38th, 1983	4.3	7.1
43rd, 1988	4.5	6.0

Source : Sarvekshana, *No. 57, NSSO, 1993*

While unemployment among males has increased very marginally, it has come down slightly for women.

In addition to understanding the rights and livelihoods issues faced by the poor, it is also important to understand **specific coping mechanisms** employed by vulnerable groups. These will shed more light on micro-level manifestations of poverty. Coping mechanisms could be sought through alternative sources of funding (e.g. sale of jewelry, moneylenders), support from outside (NGOs, religious institutions), alternative income sources (child labour, smuggling, criminal activity, begging), and finally through adjustments in the household economy (selection of poorer quality food, reduced portions of food, removal of a child from school). It is imperative in the research process to understand the range of strategies already being adopted by the poor in order to construct appropriate interventions in the future.

The Issue of Differentiation

The urban "poor" are often referred to as a homogenous group. But having identified the range of rights and livelihood issues which define people's vulnerability, it is clear that there is great diversity within cities. Phrases such as "slum dwellers" or "informal workers" are often used to signify all poor people in cities. Clearly this is not only an oversimplification, but also very misleading in terms of formulating strategies.

Keeping in mind the above analysis of rights and livelihoods, we assume that the majority of the urban poor tend to fall within the following generic **occupational categories:**

- casual workers, unskilled, non-unionised wage workers (men, women, children)
- unskilled, non-unionised service industry workers e.g. restaurants, dhabas (men, boys mostly)
- street vendors (men, women)
- construction workers (men, women, some children)
- rickshaw pullers (men)
- sweepers (mostly women)
- domestic workers (men, women, children)
- rag pickers (children)
- sex workers (women, girls, some boys)
- beggars (men, women, children)

An alternative classification to be employed is that of **housing status**, important in urban areas in as much as where you live is often a critical determinant of access to services and a healthy environment. In addition it can determine access to political rights and government programmes which are often linked to having a formal tenure / ownership status.

Housing categories include:

- pavement dwellers
- nomadic pavement dwellers
- recognised slum dwellers
- unrecognised slum dwellers
- squatters on other private and public lands (e.g. canal / river banks, under bridges, parks)

This uniquely urban phenomenon is critical in establishing an urban policy which genuinely supports the needs of the most vulnerable groups. The complexity of urban land markets, whether slums are declared or not, ownership and rental patterns, legal status etc. is central to understanding the threats and opportunities for the development of the poor.

Housing and occupational categories alone will not necessarily provide enough specificity in identifying the most vulnerable groups and the chronically poor. **Social groups, specifically women, dalits, and religious minorities** often face the most barriers in securing their livelihoods and rights. For women, the informal labour market often places them at the bottom of the sub-contracting chain in low paid jobs in harsh conditions. Additionally, women in urban areas are exposed to many social problems such as violence, rape, and harassment. In conditions of worsening deprivation women are usually the victims of bias from within the household, community, and municipal authorities. The health status of women and children is particularly worse than for men. In Mumbai certain low income areas have an infant mortality rate of over 100 per 1000 live births, several times higher than the city average.

Dalits and Muslims are often victims of violence and discrimination in urban settings. Social identity, contrary to popular belief, does not break down in urban areas as groups tend to reside in common areas of slums, exposing themselves to organised intimidation by other communities and authorities. It is no surprise that the majority of sweepers in Delhi are Dalit women, or that Sikh residences were systematically marked for attack in the 1984 riots. As a result, these groups are often the least powerful among the poor, facing even greater limitations in accessing the few entitlements they have in terms of services and welfare programmes.

The complexity of identifying the most vulnerable groups is further highlighted by the fact that other groups among the chronically poor, such as **children, the elderly, physically and mentally disabled, and substance abusers** may not be given due notice if one restricts oneself to any single category. The real challenge, therefore, is to overlay each of these different categories within a specific urban location in order to develop an accurate picture of who the poorest of the poor are.

In the present study, seven occupational categories were deemed to be vulnerable :

- Rickshaw pullers
- Hawkers, petty vendors
- Casual labourers
- Construction workers
- Petty trade and business
- Ragpickers
- Beggars

As all these vulnerable groups are located in various low-income settlements in Hyderabad, the degraded living conditions of these locations, i.e. residential vulnerability coincides with occupational vulnerability.

The table below shows that the proportion of slums located on private lands has come down significantly, over the past two decades, while that of slums on government lands has significantly gone up. The urban poor have been settling on vacant public lands over the past two decades. Here, it is also relevant to remember that from the early 1980s Hyderabad has witnessed the process of selective legitimisation of hitherto unrecognised settlements, through the granting of pattas for occupation of the land. (As the table shows, this category was entirely absent in 1979.) This may have been a factor influencing the increase of settlements on public lands.

Table.6 .

Pattern of Land Ownership in Low Income Settlements in Hyderabad

Land Ownership	1979 %♣	1997 % ♠
Government	11	35
Housing Board	3	
Endowment Department	2	
Corporation	5	
Waqf	2	
Abadi	2	
Lawaris	1	
Railways	1	2
Private	61	47
Not known	13	
Patta to slumdwellers		16
TOTAL	100	100

source: ♣: MCH, 1991; ♠: Oxfam survey, 1997

Criteria for declaration as slum

* Area lacking in civic infrastructure facilities
* Living conditions are insanitary
* Settlement in existence for over 10 years
* More than 75 % of the houses are *katcha*
* The area is or may be a source of danger to public health

The table below summarises the low-income settlements in the city identified through survey.

Table 7.

Classification of Low Income Settlements

Description	Nos.	%
Oxfam survey, 1997	959	100
Official slums	571	60
Developed and de-notified	125	13
Developed (through ODA), but not yet de-notified	155	16
Settlements in 'Blighted Areas'⊗	78	8
Squatter settlements	30	3

⊗ : "A 'blighted area' is a built-up area comprising of privately owned authorised structures with a settled population that has become down-wardly mobile owing to the play of historical forces. Once this blighted area had adequate infrastructural facilities. But the overload on them due to increased population density makes them dysfunctional. The increased population is accommodated by sub-dividing the houses which are often very old, and this leads to increased housing density." (Naidu, 1990, p. 104).

More than half of the slum-like settlements identified through the Oxfam survey have been in existence for over 15 years, with as much as 43 % having been in existence for over 20 years. Slumdwellers are thus clearly long-term residents of the city, and not a floating group.

Table 8.

Age of Low-Income Settlements in Hyderabad

Age of Settlement	%
over 20 years	43
10 - 20 years	30
5 - 10 years	12
1 - 5 years	13
Less than 1 year	2

Source : Oxfam Survey, 1997, N = 708 settlements

For slumdwellers within the category of 'blighted areas', this categorisation is a means on the part of urban authorities to grant some kind of selective patronage to slumdwellers, but where this does not bring with it any actual tangible benefits or

improvements in civic services - as is the case when it is declared a slum. But this categorisation does bring with it a modicum of security in the perception of the dwellers in the settlements. However, as the table shows, even this category of settlements comprises predominantly of those over 20 years old.

Table 9

Settlements in Blighted Areas

Age	%
more than 20 years	42
10 - 20 years	24
5 - 10 years	19
1 - 5 years	15

Source : Oxfam Survey, 1997, N = 78 settlements

Squatter settlements are entirely unrecognised, and face the threat of eviction. Interestingly, while 71 % of the settlements are over 20 years old - and thus clearly call for regularisation - a significant proportion (23%) have come up over the last two decades, a period that has also been marked by the distribution of land titles to city squatters.

Table 10.

Squatter Settlements in Hyderabad

Age	%
more than 20 years	71
10 - 20 years	23
5 - 10 years	-
1 - 5 years	6

Source : Oxfam Survey, 1997, N = 30 settlements

State-run primary schools, which would be most availed of by the poorer sections of the city, are to be found within only 23 % of the identified settlements. Expectedly, with the state lagging behind in this respect, the private sector is quick to seize the opportunity of the absence of free, compulsory primary education.

Table 11.

Proximity to Primary School

Nearest Govt Primary school	%
within the settlement	23*
within 1 km	27
within 1-2 km	18
within 2-5 km	25
more than 5 km away	7
TOTAL	100

Source : Oxfam Survey, 1997, N = 708 settlements

* : Interestingly, about 50 % of the surveyed settlements had a private primary school located within the settlement.

Government hospital facilities are available in proximity to a sizeable number of settlements. However, dwellers tend not to avail of these unless they have no other option because of the quality of service available to them here, and the incapability of these centres to address the principal health problems of the poor

Table 12.

Public Health-care

Distance to Govt Hospital	%
Within 1 km	32
1-2 kms	32
2-5 kms	23
more than 5 kms	13
TOTAL	100

As in education, we can see that the failure of the state to provide adequate and satisfactory health-care facilities to the poor becomes an opportunity to be seized by private practitioners. 70 % of the settlements had a private hospital facility located within a km.

Table 13.

Private Health-care

Distance to Pvt Hospital	%
Within 1 km	70
1-2 kms	22
2-5 kms	6
more than 5 kms	2
TOTAL	100

Most slum-based formations are politically oriented and motivated, with control resting in the hands of external leaders rather than the slumdwellers themselves. In such a context, localised initiative

Table 14.

Community Organisation

Nature of Initiative	%
Slum improvement	17
Political	35
Cultural	5
Mixed	14
No information	30
TOTAL	100

Well over half of the low-income settlements lack household electricity connections

Table 15,

Availability of Electricity

Nature of Facility	%
No connections	38
Only street lights	20
Fully connected	37
No information	5
TOTAL	100

The five tables below outline the nature of environmental degradation in low-income settlements in Hyderabad, which is paralleled in other urban areas in the country. Poverty and environmental degradation closely reinforce one another. With lack of adequate drinking water facilities, and serious sanitation deficiencies also present, and drainage and solid waste disposal also being highly inadequate, environmental health risks confronting the urban poor - both in terms of immediate impact, and the numbers involved - are more severe than for any other groups. Water-sanitation emerges as the key environmental issue in the city.

Table 16.

Drinking Water

Nature of Availability	%
Private taps	30
Public taps	55
Bore wells	6
Tanks / open wells	3
Other sources	1
No information	5
TOTAL	100

Table 17

Sanitation

Nature of Facility	%
No latrine	30
Public service latrines	24
Public flush latrine	9
Private latrines	34
No information	3
TOTAL	100

Table 18.

Drainage

Arrangement	%
No drainage	17
Open drains	38
Covered drains	24
Underground	17
No information	4
TOTAL	100

Urban Health Library and Information Centre
CPHE - SOCHARA
Koramangala
Bangalore - 34
(CLIC)

16597
DEV-100
N97

Table 19.

Solid Waste Disposal

Arrangement	%
No arrangement	44
Individuals arrange	22
Municipal service	31
No information	3
TOTAL	100

Table 20.

Access Roads

Type of Road	%
Pukka road	54
All weather road	9
Katcha road	30
Not usable by cars	6
No information	1
TOTAL	100

Socio-economic profile of Households in Low income settlements

The sample survey of 967 low income households residing in 106 low income settlements (out of the total of 708) in the MCH area shows that a large proportion of households are in insecure, irregular, unprotected job conditions. This provides a convenient means to gain a quick idea about the whole social and cultural milieu within which they lead their lives and eke out their livelihood, the kind of stake or foothold they might have, which affects their whole life experience in the city.

Table 21.

Sample Respondents by Occupation

Occupation of Respondent	%
Casual labourer	12
Rickshaw pullers	11
Construction worker	11
Vegetable & fruit vendors	10
Petty trade & business	11
Unskilled unorganised sector	5
Skilled unorganised sector	16
Sweepers, servants, maids	5
Rag pickers, beggars	4
Workers in other service	7
Sex workers, cleaners in transport, cobblers	5
Formal sector service	0.2
Others	2
TOTAL	100

Source : Oxfam Survey, 1997, N = 967 households

PCME is a better measure of household economic condition than income. Poverty alleviation programmes currently specify household income of Rs 11,850 pa as the criterion to identify poor households. This works out to roughly Rs 200 per capita per month (assuming an average household size of five). As the table shows, just over a quarter of households can thus be considered poor economically.

Table 22.

Households by Per Capita Monthly Expenditure

PCME (Rs)	%
upto 200	27
201- 300	35
301- 400	18
401- 600	14
601- 800	3
801 & above	3
TOTAL	100

The majority of households are migrants to the city from rural areas. Most of them have come from districts within Andhra Pradesh, but have been in residence in the city for over 10 years. For the general population of Hyderabad city, in 1981, 18 % of the population were migrants. In 1991, 26 % of the city population were migrants.

65 % of households were Hindus, and 35 % were Muslims. About 40 % belonged to Scheduled Castes, 24 % to Backward Castes, and 6 % to Scheduled Tribes. 17 % live in pakka houses, and the rest are in semi-pakka, or katcha houses. 51 % of dwellers own the structures, 41 % are in rented premises. While 92 % of households reported inclusion in the voters' list, as many as 27 % did not have ration cards.

About 30 % of the men, and 34 % of the women are illiterate. 60 % of school-goers attended government schools, while 15 % went to private schools. Among men, 22 % are educated upto secondary level and 33 % are college educated. Among women, 28 % are educated upto secondary level, and 30 % upto college level.

As mentioned earlier, the primary data on vulnerability across low-income settlements in the city of Hyderabad is currently being processed. A rapid survey of all low-income settlements in the metropolitan area of Hyderabad was first undertaken, and this was crudely plotted on a city map distinguishing the five settlement types, *viz*

Squatters

The most vulnerable section within the city are the dwellers in squatter settlements (also called sub-slums). Compared to dwellers in slums, the squatters are worse off in terms of :

- environmental degradation of locality
- living on the margins
- security of tenure

- secure livelihood
- access to and availability of basic services and amenities
- entitlement to rights
- social awareness, organisation, networks and power
- absence of state programmes

The crucial distinction between slums and squatter settlements is that while slum dwellers have official recognition, cannot be evicted without proper rehabilitation, and are also entitled to receive basic environmental services, the squatters are merely tolerated. While squatter settlements have grown rapidly, especially in fringe areas, and evictions and demolition of such settlements has largely been very limited, the squatters plight may nonetheless be viewed as one of living on borrowed time, and hence subject to the mercy of political and other vested interests.

When eviction does take place, that in itself may be viewed as a violation of the basic right to a place to live in the city, bringing with it a high cost to the households in question in human and material terms. While detailed documentation of the cases of eviction / demolition in Hyderabad was not readily available to the research team, reports from other cities have emphasised the 'cost' of such actions in terms of the severe psychological stress and trauma, especially on women and children. Equally, the futility of such actions has been emphasised, given that most oustees tend to return to the location soon after the initial eviction.

The Cost of Eviction

The human and material costs of eviction of slumdwellers have never been analysed. The cost in state machinery required to carry out the operation is often nullified. As shown by a study of pavement dwellers, the majority return within a short period of time, because it is impossible to 'police' such areas and economic imperatives push them back to their old locations. The cost to the families of the slumdwellers is not only physical but in all areas of their lives. The psychological costs are never measured. A method adopted is to evict during mid-day, when men are not likely to be around. hence the women and children bear the full brunt. In one case, a woman who was due to deliver was so shocked by the mowing down of the huts by bulldozers that she delivered her baby in the midst of the mayhem. Children who were in the midst of their school examinations, came back to find their homes in ruins. Even the movement of a slum community is not timed with children's school year. Yet a government officer arranges his transfer to coincide with his children's academic year. No one has studied the consequences upon children of such periodic upheavals and their views on the violence they must deal with so early in their lives (Sengupta, 1988 : 61).

A vital factor in the reluctance of government to even acknowledge the existence of the squatters is the increasing commodification of urban land, spiralling of land values and the growth of speculative real estate forces in the city. Rather than function as a force

of order or an agent protecting the interests of disprivileged sections, the state itself in such a context becomes a major actor in the real estate market. Making concessions to squatters is seen as a loss of what could otherwise yield substantial profits to public or private land-dealers.

Given the predominantly marginalised character of such settlements and their dwellers - small settlements, isolated, scattered across the city fringes and margins of infrastructure - the potential positive electoral consequences of support to squatters is likely to be limited. However, over the last decade and a half, selective recognition and political clientelism - of one form or another, from distribution of title to mere notification without any provision of services - was a conspicuous aspect of state policy. Notwithstanding the populist orientation of such actions, they must be seen clearly within the larger role of the state in terms of land and urban development, making public land available to private real estate promoters.

Squatter Citizen

- predominantly daily wage earners
- engaged in low paid, insecure jobs in the urban 'informal' sector ; since social status considerations are low and they are prepared to bear risk and hardship, a small number may even be successful in earning 'good' amounts
- range of occupations includes rickshaw pulling, petty street vending and hawking, house-work, scavenging
- average family size is six
- women and children mostly working
- educational levels generally very low
- prevalence of petty crime
- marginal to social formations and action

Nowhere Group

An interesting aspect of the enquiry into vulnerability in Hyderabad was a departure from the conventional approach of focusing on specific occupational groups and residential settlement types only.

Through the involvement of Deccan Development Society (DDS) - Confederation of Voluntary Agencies (COVA) in the exercise, this organisation's own experience, concerns, insights and perspectives formed an important basis of the enquiry. Their work with poor Muslim communities living in the city core, organisation building efforts involving small Muslim CBOs, and perhaps most importantly, consistent civic efforts for communal harmony, sensitised them to some of the emerging and hitherto unattended issues. Thus, for them the concern about the generally disempowered status of, and dismal prospects confronting, sections of the lower middle class, who are also socio-culturally inhibited from taking up some of the livelihood means and survival strategies

freely adopted by the labouring poor. Nowhere people's values continue to be of a 'middle-class' kind, while their resources and earnings do not really permit them to sustain such values. However, abandoning these values - such as in regard to expenditures, education, social obligations, nature of livelihood and shelter taken up - is not an easy or immediate option open to them. Hence they are caught in a kind of scissors-like bind, and be mute witness to a relentless degradation in living standards and opportunities.

There may be theoretical weaknesses involved in defining such a 'nowhere' group as vulnerable, and also methodological and operational difficulties in exactly identifying such households. However, it is important to remember that the whole exercise of enquiring into vulnerability in Hyderabad is being undertaken only in order to subsequently move towards developing intervention strategies and action plans, in collaboration with city activists and organisations, which can then be actually initiated on the ground, by some local stakeholders. This necessitates the involvement of local organisations from the very enquiry stage itself. Consequently there will be the possibility of differing perspectives, between the local groups, and external 'experts' involved in the exercise. But this can well be translated as an occasion for clarification and learning, on both sides.

Thus, DDS - COVA can become sensitised to viewing the plight of these 'nowhere' groups within a larger framework of urban poverty and vulnerability; equally, professional social researchers can become aware of some of the subtle and emerging dimensions of city dynamics. The relationship between the economic changes initiated in the name of liberalisation from the early 1990s (and more generally through the 1980s), the differential spread and distribution of its impacts, and the declining stakes of the 'nowhere' group - is a theme meriting more rigorous research by social scientists.

For now, the nowhere group may be defined as a category of non-labouring city dwellers, who belong to the lower echelons of the middle class, with some education but rapidly shrinking stakes in a transforming environment, involving changing markets for skills and occupations. Most individuals in this group do not belong to any unions or to any social, political or cultural organisations. As a result, they are unable to systematically advance their interests, and remain confined to merely passively joining demonstrations and rallies. However, it is this group that may be susceptible to extremist ideologies and be active during violent demonstrations and riots.

The Nowhere Group - Key Indicators

The table below gives PCME for nowhere households. Remembering the PCME situation for slum households looked at earlier (where 27 % spent less than Rs 200 pm and 35 % were in the Rs 200 - 300 range) we can see that nowhere groups are just slightly better off than slum dwellers. They are literally on the border of poverty.

Table 23.

PC Monthly Expenditure	% Survey Households
Rs 200 - 300	38
Rs 301 - 400	21
Rs 401 - 600	29
Rs 600 - 800	8
Rs 800 - 1000	4

Source : OXFAM Field Survey

A significant finding is that while only 6 % of the members of sample households were illiterate, such illiteracy was predominantly confined to the women in the family. Similarly, the women tended to be consistently less educated in comparison to males in the family. However, several women did have high educational attainments, such as graduate, post-graduate.

Table 24

Education	% Household Members
Illiterate	6
Primary	23
Secondary	23
Higher Secondary	20
Graduate	23
Post Graduate	5

Source : OXFAM Field Survey

Occupational profile of surveyed households shows that the overwhelming majority of them are in white collar, clerical and service sector jobs - typists, office assistants, clerks, and salespersons, mainly in the private informal sector. Some of the individuals were also in more specialised employment, e.g. part-time lecturers in private colleges.

Distribution of surveyed households by family size is given below. 5-7 members would appear to be the norm.

Table 25

Family Size	% Survey Households
5 members	21
6 members	25
7 members	33
8 members	17
9 members	4

Source : OXFAM Field Survey

More than half of households own assets worth under Rs 15,000, indicating the predominantly humble situation of the nowhere group

Table 26.

Value of Household Assets (Rs)	% Households
Less than 1,000	4
1,000 - 3,000	33
7,000 - 10,000	4
10,000 - 15,000	12
20,000 - 25,000	4
25,000 - 50,000	25
50,000 & above	17

Information was also obtained on the extent of indebtedness of sample households. It was found that more than 30 % of the households had an outstanding debt of Rs 15,000 - 20,000. More than 70 % of the households reported frequent borrowing, particularly from relatives and friends, and largely for marriage and educational purposes.

Table 27.

Social Awareness	% Household Members
Read Newspaper	88
Join Cultural Activities	9
Join Political Activities	17
Join Community Initiatives	17

Street Children

The third category of vulnerable groups considered in this exercise is street children. The phenomenon of street children is not new in the context of Hyderabad. Street-children related programmes are also now common among many city NGOs.

Children are the most powerless group in society. Children bear the heaviest burden of poverty. Through studies such as the Calcutta Environmental Management Strategy and Action Plan, in metropolitan Calcutta, deaths from several major causes - gastroenteric , infectious and respiratory diseases - were found to be more common in children from the lowest social classes.

Child poverty is increasing faster than adult poverty in countries at all stages of economic development. Childhood is a once and for all window of opportunity for biological and social development. Children are active social actors as much as adults. Children's experience of their treatment by adult society will mould their own approach to social development. Failure to support development in childhood has permanent and irreversible effects for individual children and has a massive negative impact on society's capability to develop.

What happens to children is a fundamental determinant of what happens to society.

Thus, a need to place the needs, interests and perspectives of children at the centre of social and economic policy. This is not simply a moral imperative, but is essential to the success of any economic or social policy, whether or not it is explicitly directed towards children's needs. Such a move would bring with it in due course a major shift in understanding of children and society, which is a prerequisite to positive and sustainable change.

Children who live in poverty face considerable threats to their physical and mental development due to ill health, poor nutrition and poor environmental conditions. These arise fundamentally from the failure of current policies to appreciate the implications of poverty for children and hence for society as a whole, and deriving from this, a failure to look after the needs, interests and rights of children.

Similarly, a focus on the future helps to indicate the importance of girl child related issues. Studies have established that investments in female primary education is associated with higher economic productivity, and improved social welfare (for example lower infant and maternal mortality, longer life expectancy for both men and women and lower fertility rates). Such investments are therefore akin to 'infrastructural investments', which enable future positive conditions.

Early childhood is a time of opportunity in which even small positive changes can generate long-term benefits. Children are the future. Childhood cannot be entirely privatised. It is a concern that resides in the public domain as well. The starting point of any child-centred agenda must be a vision of a an economic environment that enables everyone to secure access to sustainable livelihoods and to participate fully in the development process and share in its economic and social benefits.

A survey of street children in Hyderabad was undertaken through the Oxfam study, taking the help of two local NGOs (Forum for Street Child and Mount Fort Nilayam). The principal findings may be summarised below.

- Socio-economic background of poverty
- Most are boys
- Most are illiterate or have low educational levels
- Are working due to conflicts with parents, though many still maintain family links
- While many have come from rural areas, many have been born and grown up in the city
- Have left home at the age of 7-9 years
- Like in other cities, many are found on railway platforms
- Work includes rag-picking, and as casual hands in hotels & restaurants
- Street children earnings yield below poverty line incomes

The Public Domain and Civic Action for Social Justice in Hyderabad

The underlying concern with catalysing, facilitating and supporting the initiation of long-term, transformative action in Hyderabad city in favour of its vulnerable sections raises the million dollar question of 'who'. It brings to centre stage the question of committed, empowered ownership, within the citizen body, of such an agenda. This 'who' cannot be an incidental matter. Such ownership presumes that a sensibility, a stream of practice and experience, learning, development of awareness and consciousness through this - all have deep roots in the city space. It leads us to reflecting upon the social ecology of the city, and searching here for clues about the stream of social or civic action in the city.

The critical task, within such an effort, is identification of key city-based activist-informants, whose information, comments, analysis and envisioning all flow from their own rich action experience; who would be enabled through such an exercise to develop an overview of urban vulnerability, see this in the appropriate analytical perspective, arrive at the requisite intervention strategy, and move towards taking it up through specific activities. If such activist-informants have been closely associated with the city's civil society and public domain, then their thinking would also implicitly bear in mind the traditions, discourses, alliances, approaches, strategies and activities that have existed in the city-space. This whole effort analysis cannot be divorced from other larger forces impinging upon the city today - such as economic changes and attendant accentuation of disparities, or communalism and inter-community relations.

This is not something an external researcher can ever 'know'. Such awareness would go together with 'ownership' of the concerns of social justice and development, ecological sustainability and human development. Genuine ownership would mean that in parallel with action initiatives, over the years the activists have also been continuously questioning, analysing, reflecting discussing and studying various aspects of the problem, and the meaningful action imperatives arising therefrom. Such activists would, consciously or otherwise be looking toward being involved in some critical new initiatives. These are rare individuals, but they exist in every city. Such activists may be found within government, local bodies, development authorities, political parties, trade unions, academic and research institutions, civil liberties groups, citizen's associations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs). They are likely to have been associated with various public initiatives and groupings and yet continued searching, and therefore remained open to going beyond the limits of the, limited and hence inadequate typical worldviews and approaches of the various stakeholders in the city. On the basis of their own experience, such activists could also help to possibly define the spheres or sites wherein similar people could be found in other cities.

Therefore, in addition to the report on vulnerability, there needs to be a city-based 'scan' of the public domain, within such terms. Taken together, they would enable the preparation of a 'process recommendation', for the specific city - for the taking up of an intensive, consultative, participatory exercise of strategy formulation and action planning. Through undertaking this, not only could one hope to arrive at an 'Action

Programme' for that city, but through the involvement of key activists in this, the exercise itself could be seen as a critical preliminary stage of the 'Action' itself.

Just as action by citizens to advance a particular public concern can lead to changes in the social and physical environment of the city, equally, it is the city that draws its citizens into spheres and moulds them in specific ways. The social life of a city is a historical continuum, an entity that is invisible but ever alive and ever transmitting. It is in this realm, of the city's civic stream, that one might find the seeds of transformative action. And this civic stream is something much larger than all the actions taken together, of all possible actors at any point of time; rather this is the aggregate of everything that may have ever happened in the city, something that seeps in into the deep consciousness of individual citizens. *The city, the most precious collective invention of civilisation, is second only to language itself in the transmission of culture.*

That the dynamism and vitality of the intellectual and cultural milieu of Hyderabad in the early part of this century is something that is even today remembered by non-Hyderabadis - only corroborates the point being made. In Hyderabad the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Independence prompted much writing in the city newspapers about the 'forgotten' legacy, and legendary figures, of the past. In any large, important, historical city, this is not something that dies out very quickly.

The present endeavour may also be seen as a kind of groping, within the context of the utter failure of the state, the market, as well as so called non-governmental organisations to effectively address the issue of basic survival - let alone social development - of the labouring, poor and vulnerable sections. And thus one arrives at the critical significance of the role of civil society and the building of civil society institutions and initiatives in this vacuum. But civil society can only be built by the citizens themselves. Today's city, a city of injustice, forms citizens in its image. And toady's citizens, socialised in an environment of looking out for and doing the best for themselves and the devil take the hindmost, seek to build the city in their image.

Thinking in this light, one arrives at an understanding of the need to get to the heart of the city's civic sensibility, its values, its traditions and idioms, channels of communication, networks of association. Forward, towards the future, with the past.

One needs to uncover the specific story of the 'public domain' of the city : the pursuit and advancement of non-partisanal concerns; the actors and actions; the ideological, intellectual or spiritual underpinnings; the social strata and groups involved; the particular sensibilities, typical to this city, at play in all this; sacred values, notions of right and wrong, good and bad, what is important and what is not; modes of transmission; institutions, inter-generational transfer of consciousness, and renewal of tradition ... In short, one may see the transformative agenda as being based in a process of (re-)discovery of roots, identification, empowerment, envisioning, and mission.

Each city makes its own history. But urban and metropolitan culture is distinguished by it characteristic of being un-bounded. The story of any city is also part of the story of

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every other city. While no outsider can know a city and relate to it in the existential manner that a long-standing, aware, committed resident does, someone who knows a city in this fashion can imagine that others, in other cities, are also in a similar situation in their own city. His remembrance of the ways and means through which his consciousness and experience was formed in his city could help those in other cities to understand their's, and their own standing within this. He could be a catalyst to a process of genuine civic renewal, if he represents renewal in his own city.

This then is a proposal for such a perspective to guide the work in Hyderabad.

In the brief period since the work in Hyderabad was started, an effort has been made to begin understanding this city in such terms. A number of books, reports and articles (both scholarly as well as of a 'popular' kind) are being gathered and studied. People from various walks of life are being met and their views are solicited on different subjects. Insights and experiences of key informants are being probed. One tries to discern what is trite and old hat for locals but distinctive for an outsider. Memories are explored, of people, endeavours, events, organisations, institutions, movements.

All this is something that is qualitative, normative, subjective, takes its own time, and is dependent upon fortuitous circumstances (which have a habit of coming up whenever someone makes sincere efforts). So by no means is this 'analysis', or 'process' complete. Questions, and possible directions to look into, are emerging.

- Can one speak at all about Hyderabad, as a collective human entity, a community ? Who is this Hyderabadi ? What public values does s/he stand for, most fundamentally; what distinguishes him / her ? How widespread, how rooted is this sense of being Hyderabadi ? How is it internalised or inculcated ? What is today understood by cultural heritage of Hyderabad ? Who are the people who represent this, uphold this, communicate this to others and across generations ? Which are the institutions that may be seen as having played major roles in the life and history of the city, its fortunes ?

- Can it be held that Hyderabad had and still has a unique history of religious harmony between Hindus and Muslims - notwithstanding the surface tensions of communal riots ? That Hindu and Muslim have worked closely together, on both secular or public causes as well as religious matters ? Can Hyderabad claim to be the model as far as national integration goes ?

- Hyderabad has played an immense and historical role, over many centuries, in the development of Urdu language, literature and poetry. The tradition of courteous speech and behaviour may also be seen in this light. What has this refinement meant, in terms of development of sensibility, values, enlightenment ? What has enlightenment meant in Hyderabad ? What have been the concerns, the actions ? Who have been the leaders and strugglers for social reform and change at various junctures ? Who has spoken for the voiceless ? And what has been the fate of this stream of sensibility, concern, action over the years ? Who have attempted to

integrate various otherwise isolated strands of concern; in what spheres, today, are such efforts to be found ?

- What has become of Hyderabad's supposed heritage of learning and higher education, openness to worldwide currents ? Did / Does this translate into public action on behalf of the less privileged ?

- Besides the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence, August 1997 also witnessed the centenary of Ronald Ross's discovery of the malaria parasite in the mosquito (20 August), in Secunderabad. This was indeed a very significant event, not only for India, but for all of mankind. How have the twin cities, of Hyderabad and Secunderabad lived up to this measure in the last one hundred years ?

- Islam, and Islamic civilisational values have in many ways been driving forces behind the development of Hyderabad. With the growth of communalism in this century, and the madness unleashed around Partition, the city's Muslim community had to suffer a form of orphaning, following the migration of the city's Muslim elite to Pakistan, America, Europe, Bombay etc. In the post-Independence era, and most notably through the 1980s, Hyderabad witnessed the purposeful escalation of communal politics and engineered riots. So that it seems almost black humour to be talking about the 'unique heritage of communal harmony in Hyderabad'.

- The administrative centre of a 'sovereign' Urdu-speaking Muslim ruler has become the capital of the Telugu-speaking state of Andhra Pradesh. The city has grown physically in a manner that has marginalised the historical core, a new set of winners have taken over, and built their city around the former one. Earlier privileges were lost, and new keys to success were also emerging. Surely, this does something to a people ? What have been some of the non-typical ways in which people have responded to this situation ? And surely, after a new set of people come in and start building the city around them, a 'culture' of their's too starts growing, and drawing others into its fold ? Some among them may be sensitive to the peculiar situation here and this sensibility impells them to do some slightly different kinds of things ? Again all such concerns have also been somewhat marginal to the lives of many who have remained throughout within the marginal orders.

- City development over the past two decades may also be seen in the light of the emergence of a non-Congress, regional political formation in the state. A new effort at mobilising constituencies, the development of a political cadre as well as network at the city-level around urban concerns and demands of different interest groups. A new brand of politics and policies, involving e.g., selective granting of recognition to distribution of land title to dwellers in squatter settlements. This is paralleled by the building of mutual gratification links with real estate promoters and builders, infrastructural contractors, all of which makes living in the city increasingly difficult for the low income. In turn, such developments also have the consequence of making the city's better -off sections more and more hostile towards the poorer sections, who they see as gaining everything, while they themselves are helpless.

Equally, growing disparities and rising costs of living also increases hostility among the poor. But can one talk in this context of integration, common cause, common interest ? Is there something in Hyderabad that also necessarily limits conflict, enhances harmony ?

- Hyderabad is also distinguished for its legacy of the Urban Community Development programme in slums - something from which has grown an impressive public programme (within the Government of India) for poverty alleviation and community empowerment. There is a need to reflect on the UCD as an organic 'institution' in the city. What were the strengths and limitations of this ? To what extent was this 'enlightenment' vertically transmitted, within the government, and horizontally, across other sections of society ? There is today, in Hyderabad, quite an elaborate public apparatus, on paper, for urban welfare. But has this translated into a superior performance by the HUDA, or MCH, in urban planning and governance ? And what can one say today, about what really has been achieved at the grassroot level, in Hyderabad, in communities, among community organisations ? What capabilities and confidence ? What experience ? And whom can this now be carried to ?

- What about the ODA-supported Slum Improvement programme in Hyderabad - especially in terms of the UCD background ? Did this programme build upon the UCD legacy ? Or would one say that this programme has been severely damaging in the sense of initiating unsustainable works and programmes ?

- The 1980s spate of communal politics and riots in Hyderabad also saw the efforts through Hyderabad Ekta, to restore sanity. In retrospect, it may be possible to see this civic effort as a very positive process, something behind the fact that in 1992, after the Ayodhya destruction, there were no riots in Hyderabad ? But then, again, another brand of communal riots has been trying to settle in Hyderabad in recent years - that which is directly linked to land-grabbing from minority households.

- Deccan Development Society, as a voluntary organisation, was also involved in the work of Ekta. Apart from the civic dimension of this role, this may also be seen as growing out of their work with poor Muslim communities living in slums in the old city. And in turn leading to a deepening of the work itself.

- COVA as an outcome of this, and the formation of an empowering platform for a large number of small Muslim community-based organisations, undertaking development work.

- The concern about the 'nowhere group' may also be seen in this light, and in itself surely indicates a sensibility for 'ownership' of the future of the city.

- The Festival of the Subcontinent, organised principally by DDS-COVA, was held in Hyderabad in August 1997. The spirit of celebration, goodwill and harmony witnessed was unique, and will surely rank as a major event in the long life of this city.

- Hyderabad is also very much in the forefront of the process that is coming alive, and has only gained strength since the Babri Masjid demolition, of the coming out of the shadows and the finding of voice by the common, honest, peace-loving Muslim. Surely, this is a very important social phenomenon in the city, one that will affect not just Muslims, but Hindus as well.

- The Andhra Pradesh - Vision 2025 : could this have a Hyderabad-level ramification ? Whose vision ? What vision ? Would citizens, or activists of Hyderabad think of beginning their own Vision 2025 movement ?

- Planners, professionals and the people : can there be common interests, common cause ? Or are they necessarily at loggerheads ? Do professionals (architects, engineers, city planners, builders) have a responsibility for basic human dignity in the city ? Are they ever in league with social activists, within a collaborative, mutually empowering relationship ? Can the current Master Plan finalisation process be seen as an opportunity for a public campaign for sustainable, just development for Hyderabad ? Who would be the 'natural' leaders and members of such a campaign - or is something like this inconceivable for Hyderabad ?

- When people talk of 'polluted Hyderabad', what is the notion that they have in mind, about 'environment' and 'pollution' ? Who really are the worst victims of environmental degradation in the city ? What therefore are the key environmental issues facing the city ? Air and sound pollution, or availability of water and sanitation ?

- Keeping in view urban vulnerability, city development process and political economy, what, can we really say, today, about the many NGO groups and projects in Hyderabad ? What does all this add up to ? What is the net gain, in whichever terms; or could one argue that they are completely insignificant to the overall reality and dynamics, and are confined to limited, isolated actions in a few spots ? What is the culture, and work culture in the NGOs, the leadership, ideologies, visions - or are all these not very relevant questions, with work expanding to fill the funds available for disbursement ?

- Hyderabad also has the valuable experience, in organisations like Samakhya, who have been connected with the co-operatives movement in the state. Is this seen as a public or system resource ? Do activists think in terms of building their own network of functional specialists and resource groups, as a public forum, working for the public cause ? What meaning do the terms networking, collaboration have ? Are people co-conspiring for change ?

- The window of opportunity brought by the 74th Amendment; the urban poverty alleviation programmes taken up since the early 1990s; the recent Andhra Pradesh Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme; and the latest declaration of intent by the central government to scrap the needless multiplicity of programmes and replace

these with a single, integrated one. Can one envision a Hyderabad that is distinctive for having a large number of community organisations who are the primary functionaries responsible for environmental management in low-income settlements and where this is undertaken by them in partnership with the Corporation ? Can one see these organisations then going on to become social promoters of redevelopment in the slums, using surpluses from this as a major means of support for community development ?

Conclusion

We hope this note has served to highlight some of the key issues and concerns on urban poverty and vulnerability in Hyderabad, bearing in mind wider issues of urbanisation, political economy of city development, basic rights and public domain. The note has also attempted to raise some hitherto unattended questions, such as that pertaining to the so called 'nowhere groups'.

Who are the vulnerable ? Surely the most vulnerable are those whose very survival in the city space is threatened; and survival necessitates livelihood. Therefore, certain occupational categories may be considered vulnerable. But life definitely should involve much more than mere survival - and this is what social development essentially boils down to, i.e. building opportunities, for the future, for the disprivileged. Hence, the need to also look at shelter, habitat, health, education etc.

All the vulnerable are not 'poor', though all the poor may be considered very vulnerable. But perhaps most fundamentally, there is a need to recognise that the poor or vulnerable are full citizens, with basic human and civic rights. Violation of these rights renders them vulnerable. And it is a specific politico-economic complex that generates and sustains the conditions resulting in vulnerability. Hence, that needs to be broadly understood, in terms of forces, actors, dynamics, policy, plans, trends. Finally, the question of change, a public domain concern, raises questions about actors, capabilities, institutions, and the civil society. This realm has also to be understood and more than that related to, towards possibly building a city strategic action team.

Methodologically, the study has attempted to steer clear of an overly formalistic, purely academic enquiry, choosing instead to go for a more consultative, collaborative and participatory approach, which would bring with it rewards of mutual learning and exposure to different levels of reality. Keeping in view the fundamental ethical question that inevitably arises in social research - about the appropriation of information and knowledge for the convenience and gratification of researchers - the study team has explicitly seen itself as providing early quality inputs towards the delivery of effective interventions on the ground. And all the work done so far in Hyderabad, including development of the methodology itself, was undertaken consultatively and collaboratively with local organisations and activists.

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