

Creating A Social Space: A Case Study of Bapunagar Slum Rehabilitation in Surat City of Western India

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the writing this paper is redevelopment on slum-site and slum dwellers were moved to kosad awas, also far and near slum-sites citizen benefited after redevelopment. The up-gradation or relocation of slum residents are carried out with a view to improve the quality of life of economically backward citizens of the society. One of the most chronic and intense problem of urban life is slums. Slums exist in almost every metropolitan city of the globe. Many cities have slum population as high as 35% to 40%. This change is cultural, administrative and economic heart of the city. Moreover, slum population makes positive contribution to the city economy by active participating in productive activities. The physical and social well-being is also then paramount importance in the rise of the city.

KEYWORDS

Slum, Slum Relocation, Surat, Policies, Rehabilitation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Surat is a city located on the western part of India in the state of Gujarat. It is one of the dynamic cities of India with the fastest growth rates due to immigration from various part of Gujarat and other states of India. Surat is amongst the cleanest cities of India and is also known by several other names like "THE SILK CITY", "THE DIAMOND CITY", "THE GREEN CITY", etc. It has the most vibrant present and an equally varied heritage of the past. It is the city where the British first land in India. The Dutch and the Portuguese also established their business centres, the remnants of which are still preserved in the modern-day Surat. In past this was a glorious port with ships of more than 84 countries anchored in its harbour at any time. The city is located on the River Tapi and has about 6 km long coastal belt along the Arabian Sea. Due to these reasons, the city emerged as an important trade centre and enjoyed prosperity through sea trade in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Surat became the most important trade link between India and many other countries and was at the height of prosperity till the rise of Bombay port in the 17th and 18th centuries. Surat was also a flourishing centre for ship building activities. The whole coast of Tapi from Athwalines to Dumas was especially meant for ship builders who were usually Rases. During the post-independence period, Surat has experienced considerable growth in industrial activities (especially textiles) along with trading activities.

Still today, Surat continues the same tradition as people from all around the country flock in for business and jobs. Surat has practically zero percent unemployment rate and jobs are easier to get here due to very fast development of various industries in and around Surat city.

II. SLUM

Slum is densely populated area of substandard housing, usually in a city, characterized by unsanitary conditions and social disorganization. A "slum" is predominantly an overcrowded area which is in an advanced state of decay where dwellings are unfit for human habitation. It is the area where basic amenities like water supply, drainage for standard living are lacking, insanitary conditions prevail and diseases flourish. It is the poverty-stricken area, where there is a high rate of birth, infant mortality, illegitimacy, juvenile crime, delinquency and death, thus representing a state of hell on the surface of earth. As the world's population grows, more and more people move into the cities in search of a better life, causing more poverty and creating bigger slums in cities.

Slum is a menace to health, safety, morality and general welfare of the inhabitants. Slum and squatter settlements are too common in India. It is estimated that about twenty-five percent population of any city in India live under sub-human conditions of slums.

III. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE GROWTH OF SLUMS

Many factors have been affected to the growth of slums. This section highlights several of these factors, specifically those relating to locational choice factors, rural-to-urban migration, poor urban governance and ill-designed policies.

IV. SLUM IN BAPUNAGAR, SURAT.

4.1 THE PROBLEM

The slums on West bank of river Tapi, along Nehru Bridge and Makai Bridge has been targeted for the relocation to new sites location on the outskirts of the city. The slum dwellers of Bapunagar (5000 Houses), Nehru Nagar, Subhash Nagar and Iqbal Nagar have been said to relocate present sites. As per the people's perception they have been proposed to be allocated alternate site at Kosad, 10 kms away from the present site, and recently incorporated in the municipal corporation limits. People at these slums are divided to move to newer site. Till now, 9,688 houses of urban poor have been completed at Kosad and Bhestan. Another 9,320 and 9,500 houses will be ready for possession by the end of 2009 and May 2010. SMC is planning to complete the project for constructing 42,175 houses by the end of 2010. Plots kept reserved for EWS/SEWS housing purpose and land purchased at Bhestan and Kosad are being utilized for this purpose. Corporation conducted survey, allotted numbers to houses, taken finger prints and photographs of individual residents. Now they are asking for proof of residence to list them as beneficiaries of the project. Some people have already filled the forms for the allotment of property, but community leaders and NGO representative feel few are ready to shift to new site. To find out whether there can be alternate strategy for the in-situ development of slums, the opinion of experts was sought by the community leaders.

The Irrigation Department in association with SMC has constructed a linear embankment recently which has segregated the slums with developed society. People do not know why they have considered embankment at present location. They want an expert opinion on its correctness.

4.2 APPROACHES

Since the scope of our analysis has limited given information, we decided to conduct a quick. Field Assessment of Slums and Physical observation of Features. Make observation report based on the discussion with community, available data, maps and information from the secondary report. Suggest conceptual alternative measures to solve issues/problems, to support the community action in studied slums.

4.3 FIELD OBSERVATION

The field visit to the study areas i.e., Bapunagar slum was conducted along with the community leaders to initiate a first-hand account of the concerns raised for the study. The community majority of them Muslims and Vanzaras (About 60 families) and vagaries (A scheduled caste) and Khandesi's were residing in the areas extending from Iqbal Nagar (Near Causeway) to Subhash Nagar, and Nehru Nagar north of Nehru Bridge. Bapunagar is located between Nehru Bridge and Makai Bridge.



Fig.1 Field Observation

4.4 HOUSING

The structures in the slums were pucca, semi pucca and thatched housing units. Floors were made from mud, kota stones, tiles in majority of housing units. The housing units were closely defined with little open space surrounding the units, the community open spaces, available in Subashnagar and Bapunagar. Roads width in these areas varies from 1meter to 6-meter width in colonies.

4.5 COMMUNITY

Bapunagar, has majority Muslim population along with vanzara families which have been living since last 40 years and incremental housing units are added to the vacant space by the new dwellers mainly on the periphery. The internal roads in the colony have been improved during various slum improvement schemes in

1984-85 and 1994-95. The housing unit here has been provided electricity, water connection, underground/open drains, paved kota stone streets, street lights, community toilets, public distribution shops, health clinic, balwadi and soon. The community has also constructed five Masjids, of which four are pretty big and one school at the location was obtained after much effort going right up to Delhi for obtaining sanction. Most of the households in the Bapunagar are engaged in businesses related to household articles, auto rickshaw driving, grocery, and small merchants. **Nehru Nagar**, has Muslims, Khandesi and Vagri community (a scheduled caste), all in equal proportion, residing along the bank and above the old embankment. The community majority of them engaged in daily vending services in the city are also residing since late 1960s. The community has managed to attract slum improvement with access to good roads, balwadi, community toilets and street lights under various projects of Surat Municipal Corporation. There are some private revenue plots between embankment and river. Nehru Nagar also has a functional cinema hall on the major axis, along the Bapunagar-Subhash Nagar road market, two floor structures, and community spaces.

Subhash Nagar, has mix population residing on the east while hope bridge to rander road (which now abandoned). The community earlier used to have fishermen and sand loaders who used to make living out of fishing and sand mining from the Tapi river bed. The site earlier used to have functional boat club, (today abandoned) by some private party, fully functional Sand mining business (now not functional after Ukai dam construction). People in these areas are now working in the old city and west zone as daily wagers, house maid, vendors and small business. Most of them appeared to be from economically weaker and lower income group with semi pucca and pucca housing structure. Most of the area of north Subhash Nagar is shown as river bed in the municipal records. However, many housing units were relocated by the SMC in these areas.



Fig.2 Existing Layout of Study Area

4.6 DWELLING UNITS

As per the records of SMC website, following status is generated.

Table 1 : Estimated Dwelling Units

Estimated Units and Households in Study Area			
Locality	Units (As per SMC record 2007)	Estimated Households (Unit *1.5)	Population (HH *5.6)
Bapu Nagar	2332	3498	19589
Nehru Nagar	1295	1943	10878
Subhash Nagar	1152	1728	9677
Iqbal Nagar	263	395	2209
JP Nagar	419	629	3520
Total	5461	8192	45872

The estimated population in the study area is about 45872 persons which constitutes approximately 9 percent of the Surat slum population of 5.8 Lakhs (2009). This is considerable given the official records. However, as per the estimate more than 10-12 thousand families might be residing in study area. About 20-30% of these settlements are on the edge of the river Tapi who might have suffered damage during the floods.

4.7 LOCATION OF HOUSING UNITS

The location of the Bapunagar, Subhash Nagar, Nehru Nagar and Iqbal Nagar closer to the city centre and new developed areas of West and Central zone allows them to work and earn livelihood in the area with access to market, bus station and railway station. The interweaving of the social groups in the locality is strong and activities in the space are quite changing during the various hours of day. As an important landmark the locality developed before west zone could possibly attract the housing societies and apartments. People residing in the colonies under the study are from financial low section of society with strong bonding with the Surat's socio-cultural life..

V. CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The study area can be proposed to have redevelopment plan which is explained as under redevelopment plan describes the purposes, goals, and objectives aimed at eliminating existing physical, social, and economic blight. The redevelopment plan must be in harmony with the existing Surat City Development plan. Moreover, plan generally contains the following components, A description of the proposed actions to be taken to carry of redevelopment, covering the duties, powers, and authorities of the redevelopment agency as well as describing the rights of owners and tenants. Along with these details of the authority and limitations for financing the activities necessary to implement the plan.

VI. DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Embankment on the River

The existing embankment constructed (50 x 25 feet approx. dimension) recently disregards the general topography and land use features along the river Tapi. We propose for a project to realign embankment along the main Tapi River course. This would save enormous land from getting eroded from subsequent floods. A technical feasibility for such exercise can be initiated by Irrigation Department and Municipal Corporation.

6.2 Road

Construct road on the present embankment alignments after reduction in height from 20 feet to 10 feet. Strengthened edges of embankment and protect citizen from either side from structural failures.

6.3 River Front Project

As it has done in Ahmadabad's Sabarmati river front project, the slum redevelopment had been initiated. Similarly, SMC that time can initiate project to safeguard river against possible erosion due to future floods and reinstate the housing/residential areas.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Housing Strategy for The Study Area

Following are the major points to be observed by SMC and Community:

It's always recommended that the willingness of community should be taken in care like weather they improve or shift or any betterment. SMC should not ask locality to vacant the place without any ultimate place. Even SMC employee should take advice which kind of houses are to be built. Moreover, its residents find or government find any danger then it shouldn't be built. As per my read and research to build houses near Tapi can be avoided if government works better on it.

After careful study of the issues concerning people, it is not advisable for SMC to relocate the residents from present site (unless there is grave danger to their life and property) given the socio-economic linkages of the residents of Bapunagar, Nehru Nagar and Subhash Nagar. The close-knit community structure and residential calls for the community participation in the decision for their shifting from the present site. If the consent for relocation to new site is not given to SMC then there is scope for looking at the alternative including redevelopment of existing residential areas of low-income groups and economically weaker section of people.

VIII. SLUM RELOCATION

In majority cases of the relocation of slum dwellers, they are shifted from the original site and to another site. The site is located at KOSAD for slum dwellers.

Details of the dwelling unit at Kosad Awas is as below:

The housing plan consists of 2BHK which's built up area is 25.50 m² to 25.64m². Well, the cost for this is INR 1,34,653 to INR 1,60,153 in actual hid will cost them. The loan can be sectioned by 32,500 which's installment is 400 per month and D.P is 3,500. Interest rate is 9% and loan can be paid up in 10 years.

Housing details of Kosad Awas project is as below:

Table 2 : Housing Details of Kosad Awas

Sr. No.	Cluster	No. of Apt.	Total Floors on All Apt.	Total Dwelling units (Nos)
01.	H1	110	440	5280
02.	H2	88	352	4224
03.	H3	53	212	2544
04.	H4	53	212	2544
05.	H5	61	244	2928
Total		365		17520



Fig.3 Kosad Awas

IX. CONCLUSION

To sum up, it can be concluded that the relocation of slum dwellers is very challenging task and requires considering on involving social aspects for it to be successful. Hence, it is imperative to understand the need of space considering the family size. For instance, if the family size is more than 5 members and married couple are two or more, a 1BHK flat is not sufficient as principle of equality shall be applied while allocating du considering a base of HH size also. Therefore, before relocating any site, an exploration survey on the present involvement in economic activities of the people is necessary as for the new site should be proposed, keeping in view of transportation costs after relocation without disturbing economic activity involvement. Furthermore, integrated planning and its implementation shall be assured to reduce additional costs of all kinds. The relocation associates with additional financial burden in terms of facilities like electricity, cooking fuel and taxes or charges whereas, scope for additional income to match these expenses needs to be explored as it may lead to create opportunities in terms of skill development programs and capacity building towards poverty alleviation measures.

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