

## **The Plan for Redevelopment of Slums: Case Study of Dharavi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India (Dharavi Slum Redevelopment Plan)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*One of the greatest challenges that India faces is increasing population and urbanization. Rapid urbanization is direct result of Increased population. This creates Slums in India which is one of the major problems faced by any planner or government firm. Slums are considered as illegally occupied houses and creating a problem for ecological pollution and degradation of urban living circumstances.*

*The last two decades have witnessed major shifts in the policies and plans of urban development in India. For instance, the earlier policies of slum removal, slum relocation, and slum resettlement have been renewed as redevelopment and up-gradation. This shift corresponds to similar policy changes in many other countries of Asia and in India, too. The reasons why this new approach is considered and taken upon over the existing policies is discussed in this paper also the case study of Mumbai slum redevelopment is taken into account for discussion. The different plans for Dharavi development project and reasons for their failure is also discussed. the current approaches and their status are also discussed in the paper.*

**KEYWORD:** *Slums, Sustainable, Urban Poor, Slum redevelopment, Residential Satisfaction, Mumbai*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Housing is one of the core amenity good quality of life. Globally more peoples live in urban area then rural area seeking job opportunities. It was recorded that 30% of world population lives in urban area in 1950 and it estimated that 66% of the world population will be living in urban area by the end of 2050. (World Urbanization Prospect,2014) Within this 90% of the increase will be from Asia and Africa and this just three countries India, China and Nigeria are accounted for approximate 37% population growth in urban area between 2014 to 2050. India will be projected to get 404 million urban dwellers by 2050. (UN HABITAT,2010-2011) Due to this population Increase in urban area will create more slums.

In earlier years of 2000, in India, an approach was taken to shift slums to outer periphery of the city. This decision was done by keeping in mind the aesthetics and market values for the city. This decision created the problem of manpower in growing city because there is lack of skilled and unskilled labour in city for any job. Due to this new approach is taken into consideration that instead of slum relocation, slum redevelopment will be better option. This not only solve the problem of manpower issue but also develop the city whole.

Mumbai city is one of the largest metropolitan cities in India with population of 12 million (census 2011). With this much higher of the population the population density in Mumbai is much higher than any other city. Also, the cost of property is one of the highest in India. Due to this Mumbai has the biggest slum in Asia. Dharavi is biggest slum in Asia.

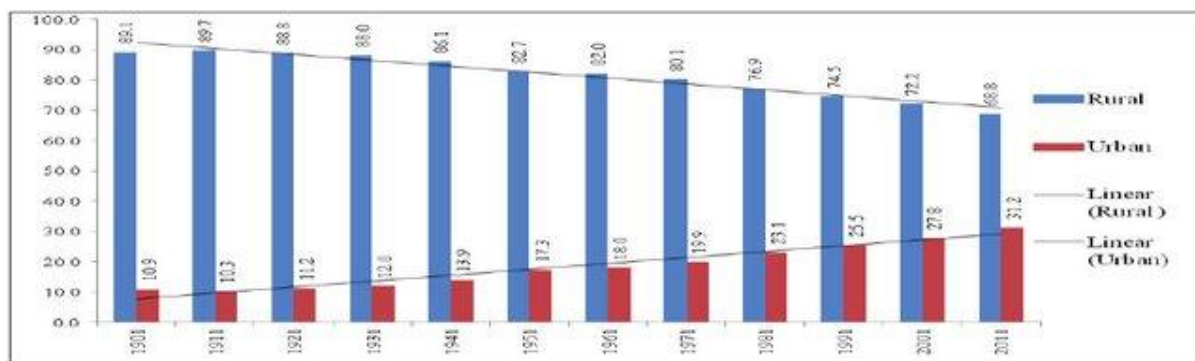
There still many ongoing redevelopment and rehabilitation plans are going on other than Dharavi (Mumbai). Some of the ongoing plans in India are Kathputli Colony Redevelopment (Delhi), Nirvana Hills Slum Rehabilitation Project (Pune), Ramtekdi - Slum Rehabilitation Project (Pune), Nagooran Thottam (Chennai).

### **II. GROWTH OF DHARAVI AND MUMBAI**

Mumbai was initially comprised of seven islands and was gifted to Charles II of England as the present of Catherine de Braganza at their wedding in 1661. The city was then hired to British East India Company in 1668. During 1672–1675, British Governor Gerald Aungier provided huge initiatives towards the development of this new town. The swamps were drained and filled up to build the modern city and the harbour of Bombay.

Artisans and traders were provided motivations to migrate from neighbouring town and states. This caused a huge influx of Parisian, Jews, Bhoras, Banias and other tribes of skilled workers and traders, leading to a six times population growth, from 10,000 in 1661 to 60,000 in 1675 (Tindall, 1992). Later in 1853, creation of a 35 km long railway, first of its kind in India and the first cotton mill of India (in 1854) triggered a huge scale migration of Marathi workers from South Central India.

India became independent of British Government in 1947. At that time, only 15% of the population lived in the cities. Since then, the urban population has grown to 35%, additional 300 million. The huge income difference between urban and rural citizens lingers to bring the poor and striving migrants to this city. The fast growing urban to rural population ratio has been generating an enormous rining on the city's real estate, housing and public supply facilities. The population in Metropolitan Mumbai has grown from 9.9 million in 1981 to 20.4 million in 2020, a 117% increase over last four decades.



Trends of percentage distribution of rural and urban population in India since 1901  
(Source: Office of registrar general of India)

Dharavi followed the same migration pattern as of Mumbai over last three decades. The vast growth of population transformed Dharavi into the largest slum of Asia. However, many thriving communities of diverse cultural, linguistic and religious background are the residents of Dharavi, such as the potters' cluster by the artisans from Gujarat, leather tannery by the Muslim tanners from Tamil Nadu, garment shops by the embroidery workers from Uttar Pradesh, etc. Today, Dharavi is the home to about 900,000 people, over some 535 acres of land, owned by Government of Maharashtra (GOM). These informal settlements of drifting communities have contributed extremely to the financial growth of Mumbai over the years, in spite of the lack of appropriate housing, fresh water, sanitation and other basic services.



Location of Dharavi in Mumbai

### III. PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES IN DHARAVI

There are 57,000 structures in Dharavi, built by the residents illegally on the government owned land. The public facilities are, as such, almost non-existent. As of November 2006, there were only one toilet per 1,488 residents in Dharavi, 80% of which are unusable because of the blockage, filth and disrepair. There is no public hospital or post office. Inadequate water supply and flooding during monsoon season create severe and frequent health problem. The local river is used for toiletry purposes, which spreads the contagious diseases.

The air always smells bad from the foul odours of the polluted river/creek, dumped garbage for the recycling, the tannery and other factories in the area. The huts are built so close that the places are dark even during the mid-day. There are settlement houses that still do not have legal connections to the utility service and thus rely on illegal connection to the water and power supply which means a water and power shortage for the residents in Dharavi. Potable water is supplied by the MCGM to Dharavi and the whole of Mumbai. However, a large amount of water is lost due to water thefts, illegal connection and leakage. The community also has a number of water wells that are sources of non-potable water.

#### **IV. DHARAVI SLUM REDEVELOPMENT PLANS**

The state government of Maharashtra has long recognized the issue of overcrowded living conditions in Dharavi as well as the added complexities of high land value and deeply entrenched communities, most of whom are second generation residents in Dharavi.

##### **4.1. Slum Improvement Project (1972)**

The government's attempts at redevelopment have been ongoing since 1971. However, even after years of drafting and redrafting plans, only one small sector of five of the slums has been redeveloped, with no sign of further developments in the area. Policy failure has been a recurring theme in the story of Dharavi's decades old slum redevelopment efforts. The state government of Maharashtra first recognized the importance of redeveloping Dharavi in 1971. The Slum Improvement Programme (SIP) of 1972 was intended to provide basic amenities to the slum like water, electricity, latrines and sewage disposal, but could not implement these plans as there was no comprehensive census on the slums of Mumbai. 49 years later, no such census exists.

##### **4.2. Slum Improvement Project (contd.) (1976)**

In 1976, the government attempted to give slum dwellers "legitimate status". Residents received photo identities and were required to pay a small sum of money, of which a fraction was paid to the government as land rent. This scheme allowed some of the dilapidated housing to be reconstructed, and tenants were allowed to build lofts over the existing housing structures. Water and electricity were also provided. However, the scheme ended by 1991 due to administrative difficulties that arose from a lack of accurate records of the number of residents and houses. Further augmenting these complexities was the fact that the part of the slum that was not owned by the government was under the de facto control of slum lords, who did not want to cede control by allowing redevelopment. This allowed the government control over only the land that they owned.

##### **4.3. Slum Upgradation Project (1985)**

The World Bank funded the Slum Upgradation Programme (SUP) of 1985. Under this programme, existing slum land was leased out to cooperative groups of slum dwellers at affordable rates, and loans were granted for environmental and housing improvements. However, the conflicts over land value remained as asset distribution to families was unequal, leading to discontent among certain populations in the slum who did not receive the programme's benefits. This program was also unable to overcome a key hurdle in slum redevelopment, which was that a large portion of the slum was situated on private land that had been encroached and thus the land could not be easily acquired for slum redevelopment. Slum dwellers and private land owners worked on a "don't ask don't tell" basis with each other and the municipal government.

The same year saw the rollout of the Prime Minister Grant Project, under which Rs. 30 crores were sanctioned for the redevelopment of Dharavi. Under this scheme, housing societies were granted autonomy in choosing their own architects, while the government would hire building contractors. Plans were made to widen roads in the slum to make it more accessible for vehicles. However, this project could not be successfully implemented as the planners had not accounted for the tremendous population density of the slum, which made it difficult to relocate residents to allow for development work.

##### **4.4. Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (1995)**

In 1995, the government set up the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) under the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to address the issue of slums in the state through a Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS). This scheme appeared to have ironed out many of the previous schemes' shortcomings. Under the SRS, every slum dweller accounted for in the 1995 electoral vote was eligible for benefits. To attract private developers, the scheme introduced the concept of Transferable Development Rights (TDR), which would enable developers to transfer part of the surplus rights generated under SRS to other parts of the city. A central monitoring and clearing agency were also set up.

The plan was not successfully implemented, however. It required, but could not obtain, the consent of three quarters of the slum, and by 2000, only 3,486 units of approximately 100,000 were redeveloped. Several residents who received these redeveloped units simply rented them out for an additional source of income and

continued to stay in their makeshift shanties. The scheme was also viewed as being geared towards benefiting private developers instead of focusing on redevelopment, as it authorised the transfer of freed up land to private developers despite there already being a high population density in Dharavi.

#### **4.5. Dharavi Redevelopment Project (2004)**

In 2004, the government proposed a Dharavi Redevelopment Project in which developers would rehouse Dharavi's residents in 300 square feet apartments built-in high-rise tower blocks, thus freeing up space for their own development projects. While the tower blocks resolve the issue of hygiene and sanitation that previously plagued the slum, it has encountered major resistance from its residents. Residents feel that a tower structure destroys the community sentiment that has allowed Dharavi's micro industries to thrive for so many years, and drastically increases the already alarming population density of the area.

The state government also commissioned architects to develop plans for the redevelopment, but the ever- growing population and close proximity of the slum to the business district in the heart of the city, always meant that plans would be formulated and then eventually fall through due to implementation challenges.

	<b>Project</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Salient Feature</b>	<b>Reasons for failure</b>
<b>1</b>	Slum Improvement Project	1972	Provision of basic amenities to the slum like water, electricity, latrines and sewage disposal.	No comprehensive census on number of households and residents obtained.
<b>2</b>	Slum Improvement Project (contd.)	1976	Granting the residents "legitimate status", Photo identities were issued to establish legitimacy of residents.	Administrative issues due to lack of census; factual control of slumlords over parts of the slum in which no redevelopment could take place.
<b>3</b>	Slum Upgradation Project	1985	Leasing out existing slum land to cooperative groups of slum dwellers at affordable rates; granting loans for environmental and housing improvements.	A large portion of the area to be redeveloped was held by private developers and could not simply be redeveloped without adequately compensating them.
<b>4</b>	Slum Rehabilitation Scheme	1995	Transferable Development Rights introduced to attract private developers; central monitoring and clearing agency developed; redevelopment efforts more decentralised than before.	The scheme required consent from 75% of the slum dwellers, which was not obtained due to fragmentation of slum communities.
<b>5</b>	Dharavi Redevelopment Project	2004	Rehousing Dharavi's residents into tower block apartments; freed up slum land would be sold for private development.	Unacceptable to Dharavi residents since livelihood depended on Dharavi's sprawling layout.

### **V. CURRENT SCENARIO OF DHARAVI REDEVELOPMENT**

Over the past four years, proposals have been called for new redevelopment plans for Dharavi, with an emphasis on those that account for community views. One such proposal calls for the government to purchase the land in Dharavi from private developers and place it in a community trust governed by former landowners, community members and neighbourhood associations. In this plan, the land will not be owned by private developers or the government, but by the people who are most vested in the redevelopment's success. These proposals call for the government and community leaders to create a plan for redevelopment that is conducive to the slum's thriving business, accounting for the provision of clean water and sanitation services and secure land tenure. Funding for redevelopment from the central government could be utilized to this end. There are also suggestions that the government should enable access to finance for Dharavi residents to support the thriving businesses. The government would thus formalise and regulate Dharavi's massive informal economy, provide public goods and grant of property rights to its citizens.

There are numerous hurdles to tackle in implementing these ideas, however. Many private companies and real estate developers may be opposed to the idea of prime real estate land being legally occupied by slum dwellers through the establishment of a communal trust. They may threaten to withdraw support for the local government. Further, the plans assume that the Dharavi community will be able to be proactive in its participation in redevelopment plans. Many residents, understandably, consider "redevelopment" to mean a loss of their livelihoods and homes. As such, the residents' designated community leaders will have to rally the whole community behind a common redevelopment plan. Further, any suggestion to bring Dharavi's large and thriving informal economy into the formal fold may also be met with a lot of resistance by the slum dwellers, since these businesses do not follow any regulations and are thus able to significantly drive down their production costs. And finally, land issues in Mumbai are always mired by systemic corruption, which creeps in at every stage of policy planning and requires careful navigation.

In November 2018, then BJP-Shiv Sena government had declared redevelopment of Dharavi as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) project. While global tenders were invited February,2019 for the SPV, with Dubai-based infrastructure firm SECLINK Technologies Corporation (STC) emerging as the lowest bidder. On

March 8, 2019, the Dharavi Redevelopment Project Authority (DRAP) had even issued a Letter of Intimation recognising STC as the topmost bidder and declared the government's intention of awarding the contract to the firm. But then, the project saw little progress with the government seeking legal opinion on whether the tendering process itself had been vitiated due to the Railways handing over a 45-acre plot for the project. With the AG now recommending inviting fresh bids for the project, a scrutiny committee in September, 2019 had decided to go for re-tendering.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

Dharavi, in Mumbai, is the home for diverse, hardworking illegal settlers and entrepreneurs, who have proven their resilience to survive until now. The locals from Dharavi have been contributing to Mumbai's growth by providing cheap labour and goods. However, the construction workers, domestic servants, rag pickers, fruit and grocery sellers and workers of many more occupations remain unacknowledged in the city of Mumbai. The redevelopment plan is mostly financed by private developers and financial institutions and will potentially generate big revenues for all stakeholders. According to a recent UN-HABITAT report, rural to urban migration will continue to spiral in the next few decades, thus creating larger urban slum populations throughout the developing world. If successful, the Dharavi project has a wide potential of being replicated in reengineering other urban slums in India and elsewhere.

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