

Housing and Politics in Urban India

Providing adequate housing in an increasingly urbanized world is a major challenge in current times. *Housing and Politics in Urban India* puts together a compelling story based on fine-grained analysis of housing processes, as lived by slum-dwellers and their voice-bearers. It situates the lived experience of claiming adequate housing within informal transactions and negotiations of patronage networks vis-à-vis the formal institutional opportunities and closures of Indian democracy. In doing so, it extends an innovative array of conceptual and methodological tools to grasp the context in which housing claims succeed and fail. This book contributes by responding to critical areas of social movement scholarship and by displaying community engagements and tactical strategies to bring about transformative change to claim adequate housing and resist co-opting forces for socially sustainable housing futures.

The book attempts to map India's political opportunities and closures for claim making in general and housing grievances in particular. It offers a comprehensive insight into community processes and the imbricated worlds of formal policy prescription, implementation, and informal practices of negotiation and political loyalties that affect housing provisions for the urban poor.

Swetha Rao Dhananka is Associate Professor at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland (HES-SO), School of Social Work Fribourg. Her research focuses on formal and informal institutional frameworks of urban governance and meso-level organizing of communities. Her interests articulate around communities and space, governance practices, information networks, commons and green social work.

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Opportunities and Contention

Swetha Rao Dhananka



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*To my family,
my house and my home*

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Acknowledgements

It was within the fury of honking cars and rickshaws on the jammed roads of Bangalore that I spotted a woman crouching on the first floor of a facade-less building that was to be demolished for the widening of the road it stood on. A home had to make way for cars. The look on her face was empty. Did she have a shelter over her head for the night? Where would she go? In a transforming city of multiple metro tracks, glorious malls, and world-class ambitions, where is the place for these urban dwellers that service the city? Through which means do they assure that they can make a dignified home in the city? They are so many of them, what if they all mobilized and paralysed the city – would they get heard? How would their interests manifest in the city? What are the factors possibly inhibiting such a political process? These are some of the simple questions that I asked myself during my numerous visits to Bangalore, which by now I also call home. What does it take to think, create, and enable an inclusive city in a post-colonial country as diverse as India? My theoretical reasoning and my encounters in the field described in this book attempt to give some answers to these questions.

My fieldwork took me through neat meandering alleys of slum settlements, onto ongoing construction sites and their neighbouring transit housing arrangements, into the homes of humble slum-dwellers, activists, and well-established intellectuals, but also into the offices of civil society organizations and government staff. My gratitude belongs to all them for having shared their experiences and given me so much of their time, their insights and reflections, and the opportunity to learn from them.

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Abbreviations

AVAS	Association for Voluntary Action and Service
BBMP	Greater Bangalore Municipal Corporation
BDA	Bangalore Development Authority
BSUP	Basic Services to the Urban Poor
CBO	community-based organization
CDP	city development plan
CIVIC	Citizens Voluntary Initiative for the City
CPF	community participation fund
CTAG	city-level technical advisory group
CUPP	critical urban public pedagogy
CVTC	city volunteer technical committee
DBM	Dalit Bahujan Movement
DPI	Dalit Panthers of India
DPR	detailed project report
FCRA	Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act
GOI	Government of India
IHSDP	Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme
IRMA	independent review and monitoring agency
JNNURM	Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
KHB	Karnataka Housing Board
KSDB	Karnataka Slum Development Board
KUIDFC	Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation
MHUPA	Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
MLA	member of legislative assembly
MoUD	Ministry of Urban Development
MP	member of parliament
MPLAD	Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme
NGO	non-governmental organization
OBC	Other Backward Classes

xvi Abbreviations

PEARL	Peer Experience and Reflective Learning Programme
PO	political opportunities
SC/ST	Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe
SJKV	Slum Janaara Kriya Vedike
SJSRY	Swarna Jayanati Shahari Rojgar Yojana
SMO	social movement organization
TAG	technical advisory group
UIG	Urban Infrastructure and Governance
ULB	urban local body
VAMBAY	Valminiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana