



**THE POTENTIAL FOR SELF-ORGANIZATION IN CHENNAI SLUMS:  
A FOCUSED SYNTHESIS OF ACADEMIC AND ACTIVIST LITERATURE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Slum eviction and resettlement has been championed as the primary strategy for catalyzing urbanization by policymakers and market advocates, even though there is a growing agreement on the limitation of such policies to address problems facing slum in developing countries like India. Scholars and activist working against slum eviction have argued that the policy is counter-productive and violates many fundamental rights. These observers also find that there is little resistance from slum residents against such policies which are deemed unjust. This study uses available academic literature, reports of government and non-governmental organizations, activist and advocacy groups' reports to identify the consensus perspective on slum eviction in Chennai City of South India. Based on guidelines for synthesizing literature suggested by Coopers (1998), the study uses the analytical technique of focused synthesis to locate seven major themes to address the question of why slum residents have failed to oppose eviction, which the consensus view suggest violates human rights. The main conclusion of the study is that as a consequence of structural conditions and constraints on discourse, slum residents have been deprived of their capacity for collective action. The study identifies self-organization, derived from complexity theory, and an alternative means to achieve just urban development policies, especially in the absence of effective mass mobilization by change agents.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Self-Organization, Slums, Chennai, Activism, Advocacy, Collective Action.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Chennai, an ambitious mega-city in South India, sees itself as a tradition in transition, a schizophrenically divided between an outer surface of cosmopolitanism and an inner core of conservatism--a useful sense-making device that seeks to preserve aspects of tradition, even while seeking a global mega-city status. In this vision, slums are uncomfortable blotches. This storyline is well known by now, forming a part of the repertoire that we see in all major cities in India and as well as cities in global south-in Africa, Latin America and South/South East Asia (**UNHS Report, 2003 and 2005**).

Creating a slum-free city is one of the chief goals of urban planners and policymakers in Chennai. Urbanisation in general and slums, in particular, pose social, economic and technical challenges. Like its

rich colonial past as Madras, the present-day Chennai has inherited heritage of slums. The city risks becoming a satellite to what Mike Davies calls "a Planet of slums" (**Davis, 2007**).

As a consequence of adoption of neo-liberal policies and practices, Chennai is undergoing a structural transformation in the process of urbanization. In this context, the big urban question needs articulation in ways that take into account structural inequalities endangered by globalization and rapid urbanization (**Harvey, 2007**). Katherine Boo in her book "Behind the beautiful forever" suggests that the "more important line of inquiry is something that takes longer to discern. What is the infrastructure of opportunity in this society? Whose capabilities are given wing by the market and a government's economic and social policy? Whose capabilities are squandered? By what means might that ribby child grow up to be less poor?" (**Boo, 2013**).

The consensus is that urban poor are too weak to speak out and hence they require representational agents to instigate change that can improve their lives (**Narayan, 2000**). Many activists and non-governmental organizations and academic advocacy groups are engaged in questions over urban poor and slums residents. They are motivated by the need to act as a change agent on behalf of the urban poor, whom they feel remain voiceless. They provide voluntary services such as legal aids, capacity building, political mobilization and policy support to slum residents. Hence their perspective and vision are critical for an understanding of structural factors that contribute to conditions of slums and policy options. This paper is based on a systematic synthesis of literature that seeks to locate the consensus of advocacy groups on slum eviction in Chennai.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM

The process of spatialization of poverty has been set in motion since the early 90s when India began deregulating its economy, labor laws, privatizing its public sector, globalizing trade, and finance (**Lieberherr-Gardiol, 2006**). The urban question over slums is posed within the context of neo-liberal policies perused by the state that is "rolling back" its intervention in the social sector, while simultaneously "rolling out" new programs of decentralization, public-private partnerships. The question over the capacities of the urban poor in slums to organize against policies that contribute to growing fragmentation and inequality relates to broader concern about social change and efficacy of collective actions (**Bhan, 2011**). This is a challenging proposition since almost by definition slum residents tend to be very poor and do not have adequate resources.

It is within these broader constraints and enablers that we need to examine the role of self-organization in addressing the problems of slum residents? How can self-organization change this situation for the better? Political solutions can only be achieved if the poor can cooperate out of individual volition. How can slums residents be organized to challenge eviction and demand state to fulfill their obligation? There are no easy answers, but this paper will argue that communicative spaces, created by self-organization are a necessary prerequisite for the emergence of just urban slums. To that effect, we need to develop a better understanding of communication perspective on self-organization that people draw upon to identify "possibility spaces" for articulation and resisting the dominant discourse on "slum-free-city" (**Lieberherr-Gardiol, 2006**). Collective actions that aim to change political relations in social

change viz. political and policy, leadership, organization, effective programs--depends on the sustenance of self-organization.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW: SELF ORGANIZATION IN URBAN SLUMS**

The relationships between small-scale local self-organizations and the broader questions of power and domination are ever-present themes in dealing with slum development. 'Who are the urban poor in need of self-organization?', 'What conditions facilitate the formation of self-organization?'. And 'What are the consequences of access to and use of communication resources for individuals capacity to self-organize?'. What is the possibility of achieving widespread collective action to improve the quality of life in slums within the context of global capitalism? (**Fainstein, 2000**). Questions such as this pre-supposes access to spaces for self-organization.

**Mateus Rocha** (1998) defines self-organization as the "spontaneous formation of well-organized structures, patterns, or behaviors, from random initial conditions." (**Rocha, 2000, Rocha, 1998**). Self-organization is rooted in the theories of complexity (**Portugali, 2012; Portugali, 2006; Portugali, 2011;Batty, 2012**) "Complexity theory focuses on systems that are open in the sense that material and information can flow across their boundaries (e.g., a city), and complex in the sense that they are composed of very many parts. Order and stability ensue from within such systems through a process called 'self-organization' rather than being imposed by planned external actions" (**Portugali, 2012**).

Self-organization is defined regarding the emergence of order in a social system which is driven dynamics internal to the system. The assumption is that this internal dynamic can be best understood as communication processes enabled through interpersonal and mediated forms of communication. Communications perspective can throw the spotlight on some of the most pressing challenges of urban slums and contribute to our attempts to address one of the primary concern facing cities, especially in Chennai.

Slums provide a critical context for testing the efficacy of utilizing self-organization approach to address practical challenges facing slum residents. They represent extreme conditions under which the networks and the potential of local media. Self-organization approach is a useful framework for the study of slums because it connects new imperative of opposing slum eviction with a comprehensive perspective on how communication resources facilitate and reflect community cohesion. **Arabindoo** (2011) argues slums social relations 'criss-cross an intricate set of connections and flows stretching across multiple physical spaces'. Self-organizations combine material concerns with the process to illustrate how communication practices work within specific contexts to influence and construct communities and organizations which ultimately contributed to sustained community-building.

Self-organization offers promising avenues for building "an effective counter-argument" since this approach enables us to hold on to human agency and integrity while seeking social change. Further self-organization seems appropriate for "tracing a new trajectory of slum resident's everyday networks and how this reshapes their marginality, particularly when they are relocated to resettlement sites at the metropolitan peripheries(**Arabindoo, 2011**)."**Arabindoo** (2011) argues that "With the recent proclivity for large-scale slum demolitions in Indian cities, theorizing the slum at this critical juncture seems

inappropriate and even cruel, unless its refined jargon can somehow help the evictees build an effective counter-argument." Dynamics of self-organization presupposes communicative actions that are needed for effective counter-arguments.

Despite such international consensus and clarion calls to stop the eviction, the question remains as to the reasons for the continuation of the policy and unsuccessful attempts to resist it. "autonomous collective action by the urban poor to resist evictions and demand housing rights declined since the late 1980s" (Coelho and Venkat, 2009). The critical research questions are: Why aren't slum residents' opposition not effective? What factors support or inhibit self-organization of slum residents to question policies that explicitly denies their right? The self-organized informal system responded to the people's needs and buffered the gaps in the formal system." (Cooper and et al., 2003). Can self-organization or lack of it explain the inadequate response to slum eviction? In order to address this question, we need to examine the context of slum development in Chennai and the structural factors that constraint residents from engaging in meaningful actions to ameliorate their conditions.

## METHOD

This study relies on available academic literature on slums in Chennai that seeks to address the lack of opposition to slum eviction policies and practices by slum residents. The study journal articles, government reports, documents from non-governmental organizations and legal cases to examine factors that constraint collective action in urban slums in Chennai (Cooper, 1998). The review more broadly focuses on why is it challenging to secure better essential services and greater protection of human rights for urban poor residing in slums? The objective of this study is to identify and articulate the emerging consensus over the question of urban poor and slum eviction as a policy instrument. This study employs a thematic analysis to report the results of the qualitative data analysis of available documents. Overall, it should be noted that many academic articles on slums in Chennai are written from the activist perspective and hence the tone, and the mode of analysis reflect this political position. An in-depth interview with slums residents were employed to validate the academic-activist consensus on slum eviction in Chennai. The study employs procedures for focused synthesis of available literature as outlined by Coopers (1998).

## RESEARCH CONTEXT: SLUMS IN CHENNAI

Chennai is one of the most densely populated cities in India. With 26,903 persons per sq. Km as against Tamil Nadu's overall population density of 555 (as compared to national average of 484), Chennai city is by far the most densely populated district (and smallest district in the state). From 2001-2011 Chennai cities' density grew by some 7.7% (GOI, Census Report 2011). The demand for living spaces has grown in response to this geographic shift. Growing population, internal migration and rapid urbanization have created informal settlements in Chennai. About 28% of its slum four million population live in slums (46.81 lakhs) according to the 2011 census for Tamil Nadu.

With intensifying competition for usable land, a segment of Chennai's poor has occupied marginally habitable spaces in urban landscapes--along banks of river Cooum, beneath bridges, above reclaimed garbage landfills, along canals, behind abandoned buildings (EVIS Centre Report, 2013). The

living spaces of urban poor have distinguishable markers of slums, "insecurity of tenure; lack of basic services, especially water and sanitation; inadequate and sometimes unsafe building structures; overcrowding; and location on hazardous land" (**UNHS Report, 2003**).

Given this extreme urban housing conditions, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board was created in the early 1970s to address the problem of slums and problems facing slums. During 1980s governments approach to slums was to bring them into the mainstream through the instrument of providing tenure security. Since the 1990s and into 2000, public and policy attitude towards slums seen an ideological shift (**Raman, 2008**). Slums began to be seen 'as glitches in urbanization that need quick fixes in the form of slum eviction. The government of Tamil Nadu began a series of policy initiatives and practical actions that brought eviction and resettlement of slums as one of the key component of making Chennai, a global megacity. In Chennai, where alongside the 200,000 already displaced there are plans to evict an additional 300,000. Given the city's one million-plus slum population, this comprises 50% of city's residents. (PUCL, 2008). However, for residents of slum such policies translate into un-notified demolitions, coercion, and neglect of human rights (**PUCL, 2008**).

## **RESULTS: WHAT FACTORS HAVE CONSTRAINED OPPOSITION TO SLUM EVICTION IN CHENNAI?**

Scholars and activist studying urban planning have identified several factors that constraint collective action and undermined resolve to stop slum eviction. The 'agitation modes of collective action that marked the earlier generation of slum dwellers began to lose its potency since the mid-nineties...Non-partisan efforts to organize slum-dwellers have been largely unsuccessful' (Raman, 2008). This section identifies seven critical themes through a systematic literature review of academic publications, NGO reports, and activist documents.

### ***Theme 1 Knowledge Sharing Problem***

The first significant problem facing slums in Chennai are lack of knowledge about the very existence and conditions of slums in official records. Slums have been symbolically annihilated, becoming invisible in official statistics though they are vicariously present as a part of urban spaces. Local authorities have not recognized any new slums in the city since 1985, despite labor migrant arriving in significant numbers from other states. According to the research by Transparent Chennai, the slum-dwelling population of Chennai is at least 70 percent higher than official planning numbers. Transparent Chennai further observes that the municipality is unlikely to change its policies, because once a slum is recognized, its residents have legal rights — like financial compensation in cases of eviction, for example. It is easier to deny slums growth, rather than deliver essential services (GOI, 2008). Such denials are reflected in the poor quality of data on slums maintained by the government. Data accuracies are one means of making a complex problem manageable. The lack of data makes slum eviction a complex problem with a high degree of uncertainties.

### ***Theme 2: Transition to Legality***

Non-availability of data also leads to denial of rights. Many slum residents do not have proper records of their land documents. Inheritance also possesses problems as successive generations break up the already meagre family land holdings. The dilemma posed by slum residents is this" By registering their society as a slum, they risk exposing themselves to a dicey redevelopment process at the mercy of the state and real-estate development sharks. If they choose to remain as 'illegal squatters,' they still have to face the state's bulldozers. Thus, even though academics have cautioned against viewing slums as repositories of the urban poor, slums have ironically become a vital entity through which the latter negotiate their presence in the city." (Coelho, 2012; Coelho, 2010). This point is also echoed by Bhan, (2013). For example, in Chennai slum dwellers have been relocated to sites such as Kannagi Nagar and Semmanchery (in the south) and All India Radio Nagar (in the north), at least 20 – 30 km away from the city and as a result faced multiple levels of distress. They are relegated to the fringe; lose social cohesions and means of livelihood, cultural connections and kinship ties (Coelho, 2012). Coelho (2010) illustrate this with the following observation:"...although they relocate hoping to bring some semblance of formality and legitimacy to their lives through the security of tenure promised by the state, it is clear that neither do they upgrade from population to citizen nor are they able to invoke the rights of urban citizenship in any conceivable manner." Similar situations can be found elsewhere (Arabindoo, 2011; Adaikalam, 201, Grainger, 2007).

### ***Theme 3: Erosion of Political Base***

As observed earlier, the political party control of slums changed rapidly since the 1970s, when slums were viewed favourably. Support to slum dwellers was seen as a practical and politically beneficial strategy for slum clearance in Chennai. Since the 1990s this attitude changed. Slums now became a menace that needs removal (Coelho and Venkat 2009). As Raman (2008) notes "Gradual changes in the occupancy of slums, a strengthening grip of divisive party politics in slum communities, and the gentrification of TNSCB tenements, combined with the state's persuasive tactics, weakened the cohesion needed to stand up to eviction drives." She observes that whereas 1970s and 80s political involvement in slum clearance and electoral calculations were supportive of "in situ" development or upgradation policies, the situation changed drastically in the 1990s.

Another critical shift happened as a consequence of political disengagement in slums. The "old preventive methods of public protest and backroom political wrangling were simply not working as well as they used to" (Raman, 2011; Coelho, 2010). Protest over slum eviction eroded as political patronage weakened. The political parties that once supported the slum residents as a vote bank now yielded to the pressures of influential stakeholders in urbanization projects. New variables have been added to the already complex system of slum evolution.

### ***Theme 4: Conflict over Judicial interventions***

As the conflict over slum eviction emerged, judicial intervention tipped the scale against the slum residents. Implementation of the urban plan requires modification in legal and regulatory guidelines. For

example, Tamil Nadu Protection of Tanks and Eviction of Encroachment Act, 2007 was legislated and came into force in 2007. The act enabled the government to "start boundary delineation, evict encroachments and create fences along the tank boundaries." (**Seenivasan, 2013; Karthikeyan, 2010**). In its policy note 2010-2011, the Public Works Department of Tamil Nadu claimed that "out of the 13710 tanks maintained by Water Resources Department, 2805 tanks have been fully restored". It also claimed that "the evictions are in various stages in respect of the remaining tank." While the process fetched revenue through the regularisation, the Act gave scope for the city officials to push for eviction" (**Dupont, 2007**) aggressively. This act became instrumental in supporting evictions of encroachments in water bodies in Tamil Nadu. Judicial intervention thus furthered the complex dynamics of slum redevelopment.

#### ***Theme 5: Urban Development Programs Works against the Slum Residents***

Availability of massive funds from the central government also played a critical role in accelerating slum eviction as the financial requirements for resettlements can be made. Many activists have argued that the funds available for urban development through such programs as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) have been redirected to slum eviction and resettlement. Tamil Nadu, Slum Clearance Board, played a critical role in channelling funds in ways that disadvantaged the slum residents.

Another source of funding for slum eviction comes from disaster management policies. For example, 'the Tsunami of 2004, provided a rationale for evicting a segment of slums-mostly fishermen communities along the Marina Beach-Srinivasapuram, Foreshore Estate, Nochikuppam. Two resettlement colonies that came up at Kannagi Nagar and Semencheri hosted not only Tsunami survivors, but also people from other slums unaffected by the disaster' (**Kumaran et al., 2006; Chatterjee, 2010; Gupta, 2011**). From this, we learn that urban development policies and disaster management policies can be used as a tool for slum eviction. Such policies provide access to resources from central government which can be redeployed for slum clearance. The interconnection between urbanization and developments of slums can paradoxically be used to catalyze eviction. Thus slums are experiencing a high degree of turbulence, from a complexity perspective (**Kumaran and et al., 2006**).

#### ***Theme 6: Co-optation of NGOs through PPP***

Co-optation of NGOs through Public-Private Partnership Programs (PPP), under which non-governmental organizations (NGOs), become a preferred partner further undermined the possibilities for community solidarity against eviction. "The culture of cooperation rather than of challenge or confrontation established as a norm among NGO partners. The social work-oriented approaches of NGOs and slum clearance officials facilitate processes of slum relocation and rehabilitation" (De\_Wit 2009-on). **Harriss** (2005) identifies the emergence of micro-credit based self-help groups (SHGs) and Residential Welfare Associations (RWA) as being critical to the weakening of collective action by slum residents. "The space left by the collapse of struggle-oriented collective action among the urban poor was filled over time by a range of collectivises of varying types." The basis for these association can be found in microfinance

movement in India (**Kamath, 2014;Devi,2012; De Wit, 2009**). Further **Coelho and Venkat** (2009) note that “The growth of the state-sponsored self-help group movement in slums, mediated NGOs, fostered relations of patronage and co-optation between the state and NGOs and between NGOs and slum associations”(Coelho and Venkat 2009).

Similarly, Residential Welfare Associations representing Apartments owners and Flat Promoters wanted slums in their localities to be removed as a way to boost their real estate valuations. In this context, **Harriss** (2005) notes "While low-income RWAs focus on issues of tenure-security, titles, allotments and land acquisitions, middle-class RWAs are concerned with land use, zoning, regularisation and the protection of real estate value." This "new politics", as **Harriss** (2005) points out, “breaks with the old politics in several ways – rooted in small-scale voluntary associations rather than in the infrastructure of parties and electoral democracy, located in residential and recreational domains rather than in workplaces, and, “employing “civilised” modes of engagement such as memos, media coverage and courts rather than mass campaigns, rallies, or demonstrations (**Harriss, 2007; Coelho, 2011; De\_Wit,2009**). Further, the rise in real estate prices, especially after 2006, increased the demand for land in Chennai. Vacant and unattended lands were more closely monitored thwarting further encroachment (**Arabindoo,2009;Chadchan, 2012;Olsen, 2010**). This phenomenon suggests that there are multiple oppositional counter-currents to slum residents’ capacity to organize themselves.

### ***Theme 7: Lack of Individual Motivation***

As a consequence of the structural conditions mentioned above, individual motivation was drained, and the mass support needed for collective action failed to materialize. At an individual level slum residents at risk of eviction also face problems such as insecurity, lack of motivation, co-operation, personal conflicts, pessimism (Kumar et al. 2006.). Political rifts in the slum communities weakened the cohesion needed to stand up to eviction drives. Successive cycles of small incremental eviction had fragmented large settlements of slum communities and weakened the resolve to take to collective actions (Das, 2009). The state through its TNSCB also employed persuasive strategies for convincing the slum residents from vacating their land and moving to the proposed resettlement zones. Disruption of life instigated by slum eviction has a socio-psychological impact on urban poor, reducing their self-confidence. A process of internal turmoil has been set, creating further uncertainties and lower quality of life.

### **VALIDATING SCHOLARLY CONSENSUS**

The conclusion of scholarly studies were validated through depth interviews with slum residents. Residents question the rationale and legitimize or slum eviction as a strategy for city planning as they are often implemented without sensitivity to the social and economic conditions of the poor residents and their interconnections with the rest of the urban communities. Residents claim that they cannot be pushed out but only pushed around and that slums would remerge in an expanding city, where current periphery is suburbanized and then urbanized. Slums residents feel that slums are not marginal anymore, but the chief problem is that they are not being formalized, regularized or integrated with other urban infrastructure. The urban development model that is being an adopted in Chennai can be characterized as



'evict and resettle' as opposed to 'stay and reconstruct.' Many slum residents observe that there are political groups that are actively engaged in eliminating or marginalizing them. Urban planners are instigated to devise plans that do not acknowledge slums and are marked for eviction without adequate analysis of their condition. This view echoes the observation made by **Throgmorton** (2003) who argued that city master plans are designated to "persuade only the audiences that most matter to them."

The observation made through the focused synthesis of literature appears to be confirmed by slums internal representation of their problems. The structural factors identified in the thematic analysis reveals that slums are a complex sub-system within the overall urban ecosystem.

## DISCUSSION

The socio, political, economic and individual level factors interact in complex and indeterminate ways to create structural conditions under which slums residents of mega-cities negotiate their everyday lives. The trajectory of slum development is marked by a high degree of uncertainty and intervention programs are often ambiguous. Despite significant interventions through central funding and public policies, slum improvements have not met with the expected success. Calling slums "policy nightmare," **Milbert** (2006) observes that "the slum as a type of habitat and a modality of urban development has resisted all political and administrative change. In the big cities of the South, even during periods of economic growth, slums continue to develop despite international and national projects designed to halt their spread." Slum eviction at best might represent reconfiguration of urban space paralleling the conditions of metastasis.

This reconfiguration of urban spaces is effected through self-organization of slum residents. There is a convergence of views on social activist and scholars regarding the causes and consequences of slum eviction policies on urban poor. What is lacking is an understanding of the innovative modes of opposition that reconfigure discourse drivers into grassroots actions. **Cooper, Crutcher, Musso & Ozta** (2003) observe that "adaptive evolutionary change appears to be occurring at the local level, in part due to a failure of effective implementation of housing policy. The informal solutions to the housing shortage in many different countries point to the conclusion that humans can self-organize and they can produce practical solutions to their problems if they are given the opportunity. The closer the solutions are to the local realities and the more participative the decision making and implementation of the policies are, the more chance they will produce positive results." Observations made by **Magutu** (1994) in the context of Nairobi are relevant to Chennai slums: "squatter settlements have built a self-sufficient, self-reflective future for residents. At a larger level, residents have adapted to the contingencies of modern political, economic and social life through processes of socialization promoted by relations within the squatter settlement. Thus, "self-help, for self-reliance, has become the natural traditional way of life in the settlements" (**Magutu, 1994**).

## CONCLUSION

From the above analysis, we can find that there are critical structural forces that created an environment in which protest against slum eviction became untenable. Chennai slums are yet to witness

what **Arjun Appadurai** refers to as "internally generated forms of activism incubated by the poorest population" (**Rao, 2006; Appadurai, 2011; Appadurai, 2000**). Attempts by social activist and human rights groups to mobilize the slum residents failed to yield results.

The principal conclusion from this review is that outside intervention by the state, market, and civil society organizations do not translate into collective bargaining power for the urban poor residing in slums. This is because of the complex nature of the underlying phenomenon. In order for slum residents to improve their conditions, it is significant to consider the potential and scope for self-organization mechanism for action. The assumption behind this conclusion is that "if slums are given basic services and tenure security - that is, the slum will not be destroyed, and slum residents will not be evicted, then the residents will rebuild their housing, engage their slum community to live better, and over time attract investment from government organizations and businesses" (**Jindrich, 2010**).

Despite public policy to the contrary, and lack of protest against slum eviction, slums continue to develop, and evidence suggests to increasing number of slums with urbanization or only a marginal reduction in prevalence. Public policies designed to combat slums have not been effective (**Milbert, 2006**). Social and political mobilization activities against slum eviction pre-supposes access to channels of communication to give voice to the affected. As **Colin Sparks** (2007) notes: "Effective communication, and effective social changes, thus require judgment about which groups to give voice to, and which objectives to attempt to achieve: in other words, it is irreducibly political." The capacity to speak out, to have voices heard, holds the key to empowerment, agency, and resistance. Academics and activists involved in mobilizing slum residents will have limited effect in the absence of self-organization.

Without these communicative resources, the scope for mobilization breaks. In his review of status of international efforts to slum clearance, (**Milbert, 2006**) observes that "Unless the fight for full citizenship is won, the coalition of stakeholders supporting slum dwellers' right to shelter will not be strong enough to withstand market forces aimed at getting back the land on which slums are built." Integration of slums into urbanization requires access to communicative spaces for articulating full citizenship. The critical tasks ahead are to find ways to map existing self-organizations available to those seeking change in policies towards slum residents. Ultimately the agency of collective action should rest with the people themselves in their self-organizational capabilities.

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