



Participatory practices and policies of slum rehabilitation in small cities : the case of Bhuj in north-west India

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Participatory practices and policies of slum rehabilitation in small cities.

The case of Bhuj in north-west India

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Paysage et Patrimoine

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Titre : Pratiques participatives et politiques de réhabilitation des bidonvilles dans les petites villes. Le cas de Bhuj au nord-ouest de l'Inde.

Résumé : Cette thèse étudie le rôle des petites villes dans la transformation des politiques de gestion des bidonvilles en Inde. Le but consiste à examiner l'émergence d'un modèle de réhabilitation des bidonvilles dit *owner-driven* à Bhuj, une petite ville indienne, capitale du district du Kacch dans l'État du Gujarat. Cette ville a été largement reconstruite après un grave tremblement de terre de 2001. La thèse analyse la mise en œuvre d'un projet pilote à Bhuj dans le cadre des politiques nationales visant à créer "des Villes sans Bidonvilles", et cherche à comprendre comment le système de planification et de gestion qui sous-tend le modèle répond aux conditions spécifiques des bidonvilles situés dans les petites villes, rarement étudiés. La recherche s'appuie sur plusieurs sources et méthodologies : d'une part, sur des entretiens semi-structurés avec les habitants, avec les ONG impliquées, les constructeurs, les responsables du gouvernement local et les acteurs politiques et économiques, d'autre part, sur l'analyse des documents de projet et des processus de développement dans la ville et ses bidonvilles. La recherche montre comment les bidonvilles de Bhuj représentent un enjeu depuis la reconstruction post-séisme. L'engagement d'une élite locale mobilisant les habitants des bidonvilles pour adapter les politiques nationales au contexte des petites villes, est lié à la récente mondialisation de la région. Toutefois, loin de faire appel à des investisseurs extérieurs, le processus mis en place est plutôt influencé par les idées d'une coproduction du bâti, d'un développement urbain durable et progressiste et du respect d'une identité régionale dans l'élaboration des politiques. Le succès du projet pilote n'est que partiel, ce qui a empêché l'extension du modèle. Des lacunes ont apparues dans le système de gestion, des intérêts divergents ont opposé les parties prenantes, qui ont entravé le rôle central des habitants dans le réaménagement des bidonvilles.

Mots clefs : réhabilitation des bidonvilles; petites villes; Villes sans Bidonvilles; RAY; approche *owner-driven*; modèles urbains; Inde; Bhuj; reconstruction post-désastre; pratiques participatives.

Title : Participatory practices and policies of slum rehabilitation in small cities. The case of Bhuj in north-west India.

Abstract : This thesis studies the role of small cities in transforming slum policies in India. The aim is to examine the emergence of an owner-driven model of slum rehabilitation in Bhuj, an Indian small city, capital of the Kacch district in the Gujarat state. This city was largely rebuilt after a severe earthquake in 2001. The thesis analyses the implementation of a pilot project in Bhuj within the framework of the national policies for “Slum-free Cities” and seeks to understand how the planning and management system underlying the model are responding to the specific conditions of slums located in small cities, which are rarely studied. The research is based on several sources and methodologies: on the one hand, semi-structured interviews with the inhabitants, NGOs, builders, local government officials and political and economic actors, on the other hand, the analysis of project documents and development processes in the city and its slums. The research shows how the slums in Bhuj have been at stake since post-earthquake reconstruction. The engagement of a local elite mobilizing slum dwellers to adapt national policies to the context of small cities is linked to the recent globalization of the region. However, far from appealing to outside investors, this policymaking process highlights the influence of the ideas of co-production, sustainable and progressive urban development and respect of the regional identity. The partial success of the pilot project prevented to scale-up the model. Shortcomings emerged in the management system and diverging interests among stakeholders have hindered the central role of the inhabitants in slum redevelopment.

Keywords : slum rehabilitation; small cities; Slum-free Cities; RAY; owner driven approach; urban models; India; Bhuj; post-disaster reconstruction; participatory practices.

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ACRONYMS

ACCA - Asian Coalition for Community Action
ACHR - Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ACT - Arid Community Technology
ADA - Area Development Authorities
ADB - Asian Development Bank
AHM - Affordable Housing Mission
AMRUT - Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
APMC - Agriculture Produce Market Committee
BC - Backward Caste
BDC - Bhuj Development Council
BHADA - Bhuj Area Development Authority
BMTPC - Building Materials & Technology Promotion Council
BPL - Below the Poverty Line
BSUP - Basic Services to the Urban Poor
CAA - Constitutional Amendment Act
CBO - Community-Based Organization
CEPT - Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology
CSLM – Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee
CSO - Civil Society Organization
CT - Census Towns
DDR - Donor Driven Reconstruction
DEWATS - Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System
DILR - District Inspector of Land Records
DP - Development Plan
DPR - Detailed Project Report
ECHO - European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EIUS - Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums
EMI - Equated Monthly Instalment
EPC - Environment Planning Collaborative

EWS – Economic Weaker Section
FAR - Floor Area Ratio
FDI - Foreign Direct Investments
FOKIA - Federation of Kutch Industries Association
FSI - Floor Space Index
GIDC - Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation
GIDR - Gujarat Institute of Development Research
GRUH – Gujarat Rural Housing
GSDMA - Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority
GSHDC - Gujarat State Handicraft Board
GUDC - Gujarat Urban Development Company
GUDM - Gujarat Urban Development Mission
HDFC - Housing Development Finance Corporation
HFAPOA - Housing For All Plan of Action
HIC - Homes in the City
HUDCO - Housing and Urban Development Corporation
IAY - Indira Awas Yojana
IDSMT - Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns
IHSDP - Integrated Housing and Slum Development Program
IIS - Institute of Science, Bangalore
IUDP - Integrated Urban Development Programme
JNNURM - Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
JSSS - Jal Strot Sneh Samvardhan Samiti
KMVS - Kacch Mahila Vikas Sangathan
KNNA - Kacch Nav Nirman Abhiyan
KPT - Kandla Port Trust
LIG - Low Income Groups
MLA - Member of Legislative Assemble
MOHUPA - Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
NEG - New Economic Geography
NGO - Non-Government Organisation
NHHP - National Housing and Habitat Policy
NHP - National Housing Policy
NRY - Nehru Rojgar Yojana
NSDP - National Slum Development Program

OBC - Other Backward Caste
ODR - Owner Driven Reconstruction
ODRC - Owner Driven Reconstruction Collaborative
PH - Physically Handicapped
PIC - People in Centre
PMA - Project Management Agencies
PMAY-HFA - Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Housing For All
PMIUPEP - Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Program
PPP – Public Private Partnership
PWJ - Peace Winds Japan
RAY - Rajiv Awas Yojana
RCC - Reinforced Cement Concrete
RWA - Resident Welfare Associations
SAP - Structural Adjustment Program
SDI - Slum Dwellers International
SEEDS - Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society
SFC - Slum Facilitation Centres
SFCPOA - Slum Free City Plan of Action
SHG - Self Help Groups
SLNA - State Level Nodal Agency
SOP - Standard Operating Procedures
SRCL - Sindhu Resettlement Corporation Limited
ST - Statutory Towns
TDR - Transfer of Development Rights
TISS - Tata Institute of Social Sciences
TP - Town Planning
UIDSSMT - Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns
UIG - Urban Infrastructure and Governance
ULB - Urban Local Bodies
ULCRA - Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act
UNCHS - United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNDP - United Nation Development Programme
UPLINK - Urban Poor Linkage Indonesia
VAMBAY - Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana
VRTI - Vivekanand Research and Training Institute

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCING SMALL CITIES IN THE CURRENT URBAN RESEARCH DEBATE

This research explores the little discussed role of Indian small cities in the politics of slums, and how local actors and histories mobilise in the formation and implementation of slum policies. Focusing on politics of slum, we mean to study processes in which civil society groups in slum settlements or related to them engage in forming and transforming state interventions. With this perspective, policy-making is understood as a result of the interaction between state intervention from above and social responses from below (Braathen et al. 2016). This process is always situated as it depends on social mobilisation framed in the settlements and city context where they arise. A starting point of the research therefore lies in the importance of studying the variety of local contexts in order to understand how politics of slums are constructed.

However, studies on the subject have side-lined small cities leading to construct the category and the images associated to slums, as well as the policies to address them as a matter of large cities. This big-city bias can be understood when we situate politics of slums in the "urban turn" in social sciences (ibid.), in which cities came in the focus for their global dominance. A central theme in urban studies have been the spatial restructuring and reordering of cities linked to the neoliberal project, where cities emerged as engines of economic growth (Jessop 2002; Brenner and Theodore 2002) and where urban management has been driven by market-oriented entrepreneurialism (Harvey 1989). The impact of neoliberal globalisation in spatial and political restructuring brought to consider big cities as privileged places for achieving economic competition and innovation, among which few "global cities" have emerged (Sassen 1991). While literature on the impact of the neoliberal paradigm has focused on the Euro-American context, post-colonial urban studies participated to broad the understanding of the city beyond the "world city" theory built in the North. Roy and Ong (2011) point at the limits of studies on neoliberal globalisation, but also of the post-colonial focus on subalterns, and explain the emergence of an Asian urbanism where other ways of being global characterise "worlding cities" in the South. Robinson (2006) invites to study "ordinary cities"

to overcome the focus of urban theory produced in western cities as capable to promote modernity and development, and to investigate the capacity of every city to innovate independently from where they are.

In India, the "urban turn" has been influenced by the erosion of the nation-state's narrative of development and modernisation that does not accommodate the 'unintended' and 'obsolete', and the re-emerging of spaces of power suppressed by the nation's historicist discourse in "new politics of urban space" (Prakash 2002). But such urban turn has obscured smaller centres from the urban scenario. The focus on large cities has characterised urban policy more generally since the beginning of the nation-state, while small towns were part of a larger preoccupation about territorial development (Batra 2009). Until the 1990s, the latter were the subject of an important field of research on topics such as urban concentration and its relationship with growth, their role in rural-urban linkages, and cultural and social specificity (Denis and Zerah 2017). Meanwhile, as India opened to the global economy, the focus on development shifted to a few large cities privileged for their potentials as "engines of growth", leading to discharge the former interest to a more dispersed model of urban development (Kundu and Bhatia 2002).

Embracing the neoliberal project, India also moved from state-led development to deregulation, subsidiarity and more entrepreneurial modalities of urban governance and urbanism (Smitha 2017). This resulted in exclusionary processes of urbanisation in which the modernisation of large cities has been privileged for the greater visibility they provide to national and international agencies, the facility to target a large proportion of the poor population concentrated, and since the seats of power located in large cities mainly define programmes for their own profit (Kundu 2003). The new management regulations were thus aimed to enhance a liberalisation that is geared towards cities rather than small towns (Mahadevia and Mukherjee 2003).

In the last decade, there has been a resurgence of interest in small towns and cities in an attempt to de-hierarchise in making urban theory (Bell and Jayne 2009). Following the agenda to bring small and medium cities in the main-stream discourses of urban studies, Brenner and Schmid (2015) introduced the concept of "planetary urbanization" to study the variety of processes shaping the worldwide urban condition beyond the categories of 'city' or distinctions like rural-urban. Similarly, the focus that Roy (2015) moves from 'city' to 'urban' aims to make urban theory by including the non-urban / rural / agrarian and 'undecidable' settlements placed beyond the city.

In India, the increase of the number of studies focusing on small towns that Denis and Zerah

(2017) defined as a "second urban turn" followed the evidence that urban growth has happened more widely than the alleged demographic polarisation in a few large centres, for which the inherent neglect of small and secondary cities by urban policies does not correspond to the real urban dynamics (Kundu 2011; Pradhan 2013). This has led to a rediscovery of small towns in India, in aspects such as the role in urbanisation process, the growth factors in relation to their economy and the embeddedness in social and political structures, and the conditions that influence governance and planning (Sharma and Sandhu 2013; Raman et al. 2015; Denis and Zerah 2017; Guin 2019). A topic of major interest was the capacity of small settlements to grow independently from larger cities as well as from external-driven planning processes. Whereas broader narratives of global cities or approaches like the New Economic Geography (NEG) explain the growth of small towns as driven by the proximity and incorporation in metropolitanisation dynamics, "subaltern urbanisation" (Denis et al. 2012) differs from big cities in that its growth is driven by local economic, social and political forces. Rather than depending on supposedly universal processes of urban convergence, this conceptualisation looks at individual trajectories of towns to redefine a "history of urbanisation from below" that is framed by survival strategies of common people in small urban centres (Denis and Zerah 2017).

DEFINING SMALL CITIES IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Urban research in India commonly refers to small towns to indicate urban centres that are smaller than and physically isolated from the metropolises. However, each author refers to small towns and cities to cover different size of population and there is no real agreement on where to situate the border with intermediate, large cities and on what distinguishes cities from towns (Bercegol 2017). In this research, we rely on the classification of the Census of India that identifies 'cities' or Statutory Towns (ST) as the urban centres or agglomerations with a population size of 100,000 or more, and distinguishes them from smaller centres referred as 'towns' or Census Towns (CT) (Jain et al. 1993). With this choice, we focus in first place on their administrative difference from smaller centres. The transition from town to city in the Indian governance introduces the application of rules and planning systems to regulate the urbanisation process. This perspective appears important when considering that the urban dynamic in India is characterised by a more diffused system of cities than the supposed domination of the largest metropolitan areas whereas small towns decline (Denis and Marius-

Gnanou 2011). On the contrary, the extent of urbanisation through reclassification of rural areas into urban ones is higher than urbanisation through migration. The recent increase of new CTs through reclassification of rural areas away from major urban centres is higher than urbanisation through migration (Sharma 2017), and might lead to the conversion into STs or to merge with existing ones. Most of new CTs near cities that are expected to come under their jurisdiction through the process of boundary expansion are in fact near small cities (Pradhan 2017).

A theme widely evoked in the literature on local governance is the difficulty in coping with a greater presence of poverty and a higher demand for services and infrastructures in small cities (Raman et al. 2015). The major challenge to improve the delivery of services and the quality of life needed to cope with the increase in population clashes with the lack of capacity, weak human resources and poor finances of small municipalities (Khan 2017). The focus of policies on big cities is responsible for insufficient technical and financial resources of small municipalities that lead to low quality of services and their inactive role in urban planning (Bercegol and Gowda 2014). On the other hand, state interventions and the application of urban policy and Master Plan tend to consider small towns in relation to the economies of large cities leading to a "metropolitanization effect" (Denis and Zerah 2017). Analysed more at the micro level of local governance, political struggles are framed in the context of decentralisation that is grounded in the myth of the village. The local political arena in small cities is strongly influenced by Gandhi's criticism to the centralised government and by the alternative of developing a democratic and non-violent India by restoring the old *panchayat* system in villages. However, forms of elite capture especially from traditional leadership have questioned decentralisation as a solution for participation and democratic power sharing (Bercegol 2017).

Another field of research has focused on the territoriality of small towns, whose economy based on commerce and trade function as provision for the rural population, thus remaining strongly connected to their hinterland and depending on the farming sector (Chandrasekhar 2017). At the same time, such connexions allow the rural population to face agricultural underemployment by migrating temporarily or as commuters, and engage in other activities mostly in the construction and transport sectors (Sharma 2017; Guérin et al. 2014). The concentration of resources, education and services leads inhabitants to live in a small town while keeping their property in the village (Samanta 2017). Denis and Zerah (2017) advance a vision of "small town urbanism" where rural and urban are interconnected and shaped by historical, cognitive, caste and social relations embedded in the sub-regional environment.

A postulate of subaltern urbanism is to understand small towns not in term of absence or presence of globalisation but to explain their growth through local transformational forces that connect them globally, independently from agglomeration-driven economies (Denis et al. 2012). This vision discredits the "small town paradigm" seeing them as stagnant and solely dependent on the regional dynamic or blocked in traditional social relations but instead highlights the presence of a globally connected local society that opens spaces of innovation (Denis and Ahmad 2017). Small cities can therefore be understood as cosmopolitan for the long distance ties, while their cosmopolitanism can be distinguished by ways of living and belonging to the territory. It is therefore interesting to distinguish the nature that characterises their globalness beyond the aspiration to enter in global capitalism and which may be embedded in old historical circulations (Denis and Zerah 2017). A better understanding can derive from considering the different ways small cities are integrated into global flows of capital, culture and people beyond the limited number of measures currently being used to categorise global cities (Bell and Jayne 2009).

We evoke these considerations to orient our exploration on how politics of slums in small cities can be subject to different conditions and forces, as well as different perceptions of slums can interact with locally constructed urban futures. How processes of city-making that differ from the dominant paradigm of development and modernisation embodied by the global city participate to enlarge and diversify politics of slums? The question embraces the "ordinary city" debate that critiques the global city model (Robinson 2006) and seeks to extend the study of knowledge production beyond the predominant metropolitan focus in southern theory discussions (Connell 2011). By focusing on process of knowledge production in small cities in the global South, we aim to extend the effort of "provincializing global urbanism" and incorporate other imaginations that enact alternative urban futures (Sheppard et al. 2013).

CONSIDERING THE RESEARCH ON POLITICS OF SLUMS IN SMALL CITIES

This research starts by questioning how categories of informal settlements and slums, and politics addressing them articulate with local actors, histories and struggles in small cities, and which forces other than the global economy and the neoliberal city participate to their construction. Our intention is to explore the construction of politics of slums beyond the domination of large cities, aiming to 'provincialize' the production of urban knowledge (ibid.)

through the prism of slum politics. The urbanisation paradigm that differentiates cities in the global South is recognised by Roy (2009) in the "urban informality" that constitutes their planning regime. The author also focuses on slums and peripheries as spaces of poverty and popular agency through the concept of "subaltern urbanism" (Roy 2011). These studies have led to review concepts of modernity and development as historically constructed and to consider urban theory with a perspective from the South.

However, studies on slums have focused only on selected large cities. In India, they have focused in particular on Mumbai and Delhi and on the influence of global capitalism and the neoliberal paradigm on slum policies (Dupont et al. 2014, 2016; Dupont and Gowda 2020; Saglio-Yatzimirsky 2013; Weinstein 2014). The norms and solutions to dealing with slums developed by a multilevel governance and adopted by national governments have failed to balance the power of market forces (Milbert 2006). Palat and Narayanan (2020) claim to include geographical considerations in addition to the global capital flow to study the construction of ideas of a typical slum and their influence on policy formulations. Since the category and image of slum are constructed under the hegemonic framework of what is to be urban, which has been elaborated within large cities, how is it mobilised in 'peripheral' contexts of small cities?

In India, official definitions of 'slums' refer mainly to the living conditions as unfit for human habitation without considering the status of tenure, whereas 'squatter settlements' refer to the illegal conditions (Braathen et al. 2016). However the term is associated with the stigmatisation of the residents as it confuses physical characteristics with the people living there (Gilbert 2007). This stigmatisation shows slums as spaces of resistance to the aspiration of cities to modernise, influenced by the making of the Asian world-class city that underlies Slum-free Cities policy strategies (Roy 2014). Other appellatives could be used to designate these settlements, like 'informal' which refer to their way of operating out of the formal urban system (Roy 2009); or 'substandard' indicating their conditions of socio-spatial segregation and as an indicator of urban inequality (Sutherland et al. 2011). However, in this research we decided to use the term 'slums' to focus on the interactions with public policies in the construction of the category, at the same time paying attention to how different actors refer to these settlements.

The metrocentricity of politics of slums takes us to question the use of the term 'slums' when we situate the subject in small cities. Focusing on the situation of 'rising' cities or their transition from town to city, we ground our research in small cities considering the transition process from town to city as a privileged situation to investigate the construction of politics of

slums. This situation of urban transition leads to focus on emerging relationships which blur distinctions between rural and urban, small and big cities, mainstream and subaltern urbanisation (Denis and Zerah 2017), and to question how the construction of these categories participates in different ways of defining slums. Considering the contextual nature of slums and the fact their official definitions can be understood in relation to local urban histories (Clerc 2018), in what ways is the category constructed in these emerging contexts?

The control of urban development among the responsibilities of local government inevitably brings the slums into discussions of city making, as a category the state uses to define what is not to be considered urban and therefore to be removed (Palat and Narayanan 2020). In this sense, slums can be considered as a product of the Plan (Roy 2009) rather than as failures in implementing it (Dewan Verma 2003). Few works have questioned the presence of informal settlements in small towns in relation to exclusionary and informal planning practiced by the state and 'from above' (Kamath and Deekshit 2014; Kundu and Sahu 2014; Coelho and Vijayabaskar 2014). Whereas these studies have focused on how the state deals with slums in small cities, little attention has been paid to whether and how their specificity influenced local claims and interactions with state policies.

PROCESSES OF SOCIAL MOBILISATION FRAMED IN SMALL CITY CONTEXT

The focus on the local city context to understand how relevant histories interact in processes of policy-making (Robinson 2015) leads us to investigate the role of civil society in the mobilisations of slum settlements in small cities. Dupont et al. (2016a) analyse the role of social movements in politics of slums as characterised by collective action as well as ideas of protests, resistance and opposition to public interventions. Social mobilisations in this sense are not understood only as reactions to state intervention but as progressive attempts of change policies and the living conditions in these settlements. How social mobilisation is starting from actors in small cities? What resources do these actors mobilise to interact with larger alliances and policy arena to influence slum policies?

Literature on social mobilisation makes a distinction between Non-Government Organisations (NGO), considered as office-based, reformist and working through negotiation, and social movements as radical, grassroots and seeking people empowerment (Jenkins 2010). Although hybrid forms exist, social movements have a political priority over NGOs in the way they can represent an emancipatory political force. Main divergences are found in "who speaks for

whom" and in the different way of operating through process or project logic (Cabannes 2013). Being professional organisations rather than groups of citizens, and for the elitism of their structure and practices, the NGOs cannot replace movements in sustaining popular mobilisation (Pithouse 2013). Analysing literature on social mobilisation, Dupont et al. (2016a) show that studies on collective action moved from considering individual logic and rationality, to the role of the actors' heterogeneity, to the influence of contextual variables to explain group behaviours. According to Ostrom (2000), the influence of institutional, cultural, and physical contexts on individuals explains the prevalence of collective interests and the control over individual interests that allow them to coordinate collective actions. Similarly, political and cultural dimensions can explain how these movements are made up of subjects framed within existing identities in the local context (Dupont et al. 2016a).

These considerations lead to a number of questions. How social movements in small cities are influenced by local specificity that frame collective claims among slum residents? Which situations and actors in these settlements are decisive for their emergence and development? Who are the local elites who influence or drive NGOs in the politic arena in small cities and how are their practices oriented by elitist visions of urban transformation? How their members' social and professional backgrounds localised in small city contexts influence their understanding of local issues and the resource they mobilise in cooperating with local authorities?

Social mobilisation is commonly associated with the idea of participation of the slum dwellers in policy implementation. Situating participation in the places where it occurs brings out the contextual variables in shaping citizens' calls and leads to consider the existence of different "spaces of participation" (Cornwall 2002). The difference between "invited" and "invented" spaces of participation and citizenship (Miraftab 2004; Holston 1995) leads to focus on the different ways in which grassroots collaborate or confront state authorities, and therefore on the ways in which the latter control citizens' participation. More than a clear distinction, this couple refers to various modalities of mobilisation that can develop in different phases (Dupont et al. 2016a). Political strategies of "co-production", where partnerships are built with the state in a way to base urban development on the knowledge and capacities of the urban poor, are considered more important than participation in challenging visions of urban development (Satterthwaite and Mitlin 2014). Co-production strategies to improve conditions in slums have been developed by worldwide networks of social movements, development finance and poverty entrepreneurship, like Slum Dwellers International (SDI) or the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR). These movements have diffused regimes of "civic

governmentality" based on political mediation, community-based knowledge production, self-ruled communities (Roy 2009), and trans-locally circulating strategies, technologies and models (McFarlane 2012).

To address these questions, we seek to understand processes of ideas construction and collective actions by privileging a long-term perspective. Rather than focusing on project outcomes and analysing programmes based on their success, this approach focuses on what forces are in place and which interactions between actors may explain the success and scaling-up of mobilisation campaigns. At the same time, project success or failure rise questions of how local conditions produced these results and to what extent we can expect for similar outcomes in other small cities. It is also important not to fall into the "local trap" (Purcell 2006) of considering the local as inherently better than other scales and to conflate it as a strategy towards more sustainable, just or culturally diverse cities. NGOs and social movements in small cities can be grounded in the local context but at the same time participate in trans-local networks of civil society organisations with which the construction of identities and local claims interact.

SLUMS IN SMALL CITIES AS AGENTS OF POLICY-MAKING PROCESSES?

The bias of policies and programmes against small cities despite their high demand for urban development led to represent the latter in a subordinate position of 'receiving' slum policies (Khan 2017). Despite the urban model underlying slum policies does not fit for the context of small cities, the latter have been seen in their constraint to comply with this model in order to benefit from state assistance. The aim of this research is to explore social mobilisation in small cities to 'receive' or contest slum policies, but also their engagement in processes of policy construction and formulation. Through which processes and 'infrastructures' do forces, actors and ideas located in small cities interact in policy-making?

To address this question we adopt the policy mobility approach that focuses on practices, representations and expertise through which policy knowledge is developed, mobilised and operationalised in different contexts (Peck and Theodore 2010; McCann and Ward 2010, 2012; McCann 2011; Baker and Temenos 2015; Temenos 2019). Research on policy mobilisation focuses on the social processes of constructing policy ideas rather than on the transfer of successful policies from one place to another, which was at the heart of former approaches to policy transfer, emulation and lesson drawing (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996).

Among the elements of mobile policy involving knowledge, people, materials and politics (Temenos et al. 2017), urban models are considered a privileged form of mobile knowledge since they are made with an explicit attention to be reproduced in different places with similar outcomes (McCann 2011).

Mobile urban policies, models and knowledge are seen not just as replicated across policy-making sites but as mutually constituted with them, so that policies mutate as they move while at the same time they remake the landscapes through which they travel (Peck and Theodore 2010). Including dualisms like global / local, fixed / mobile, territorial / relational (Temenos et al. 2017), research on policy mobilities has focused on spatial dynamics of circulation between sites, moving from studying 'sites' to studying 'fields' or the relations between sites (McCann 2011). However, rather than focusing on what is moving or the policies' trajectories, Robinson (2015) proposes to look at how they are composed locally through relevant histories and processes. A focus on local politics of policy mobility (Temenos and McCann 2012) shifts attention to the way how local actors claim urban policies as capable of achieving goals in the direction of desired urban future, which is based on perceived circumstances of their city framed in a partial and selective way. Consequently, they use model cities as examples of urban successes (Kennedy 2016). Such local focus on policy-making processes may open to consider other scales of mobility, for example between departments in the same organisation or governance context, or local historical engagements and legacies (Temenos and Baker 2015).

Policy mobility literature has been a strong geographical focus on the Atlantic and Anglophone world and on the influence of ideological norms of neoliberal globalisation. The works in the European context have studied the production and circulation of urban models that cities use in competing in a geopolitical space of reference (Peyroux and Sanjuan 2016), where the labelling of innovative experiences as 'best practices' is part of interactions between cities and the state in the production of territorial policies (Béal et al. 2013). While some scholars have examined the distinctiveness of urban policy challenges facing cities of the global South, their focus has however remained on the diffusion of the global-city model (Ong 2011; Roy 2009, 2011).

However, studies on the variety of processes other than neoliberalisation which shape cities, highlighted the fact that political and policy dynamics at the city level can contribute to a post-neoliberal theorisation of urban processes (Parnell and Robinson 2012). Bunnell et al. (2018) cite the examples of Curitiba and Vancouver where charismatic politicians and committed civil society groups mobilised non-mainstream policies. Subaltern groups, NGOs

and activists are equally able to 'inhabit' the same 'infrastructures' as policy elites, and find ways to disseminate counter-hegemonic visions of urban policy (McCann, 2011). According to Roy and Ong (2011), Asian urbanism stands out for including not only competing model and inter-referencing between cities but also associations in which neoliberalism and activism blend into complex coalitions and create new social and political configurations. McFarlane (2012) describes the role of civil society groups in producing mobile models of "slum entrepreneurialism" that both produce and may offer resources to contest and exceed the confines of entrepreneurial ideology and constitute new techniques and models of urban entrepreneurialism.

Few studies have located policy mobility in small cities to challenge both the Euro-American and the big-city centrism, for example the city of Solo in Indonesia studied as a model or best-practice city (Bunnell et al. 2018). The emergence of a small provincial city like Solo is characterised by the effort of local actors to adapt policies and practices to the local context rather than merely to copy them (Phelps et al. 2014). Looking at similar examples, we question how political and policy dynamics in small cities can lead to produce alternative and innovative slum policies. What processes are underway in small cities, besides neoliberalisation, which may frame policy making with forms of collective action and social welfare? The limited extent in which small cities became exemplary cases in policy-making processes can lead us to consider them as exceptions and to reiterate their greater difficulty to innovate. However we embrace a non-hierarchical view of "ordinary city" (Robinson 2006) that justifies the interest in studying the role of small cities in producing policy knowledge and models, and consider the difficulties they encounter in this process. According to McFarlane (2012), policy co-production is not always successful and it is equally important to examine how and why mobile models and techniques fail.

METHODOLOGY

This research mobilises works from different disciplines and a multitude of approaches and methodologies to investigate the emergence of policy knowledge related to slums, as a result of social mobilisation of local actors interacting with public policies. A bottom-up and actor-centred approach was privileged to focus on the responses of different social actors to national policies, focusing on connexions and interactions between residents in substandard settlements, civil society organisations, etc. Research on Policies and Politics to Address Substandard Settlements in the framework of the collective programme Chance2Sustain (Braathen et al. 2011; Sutherland et al. 2011; Dupont et al. 2016b) were useful to guide the methodological approach. These researches study the politics of slums as constructed and defined by a multiplicity of actors, and as a mix of a bottom-up approach focusing on agency of slum dwellers in social mobilisation with a top-down perspective on the role of different actors at the city level.

In parallel, the research is inspired by methodological approaches used in policy mobility research, which has been characterised by a certain openness and flexibility. To study situated policy-making processes, we privilege sociological and anthropological frames of analysis and a 'slow' research based on qualitative engagement (Temenos and Baker 2015). Kennedy (2016) claims for example for an argumentative approach to focus on how circumstances, goals and claims are constructed as argumentative resources. As policy-making processes depend on a range of related mobilities involving knowledge, people, materials and politics (Temenos et al. 2019), ethnography can be conducted both on individuals and material objects. The 'assemblage' approach has been privileged for its focus on emergence rather than resultant formation, and for studying power as a plurality characterised by the unexpected and nonlinear (Anderson and McFarlane 2011).

Keeping the research focused on specific sites to study policy-making processes, we concentrate on a variety of related scales of analysis. Research methods can be standard interviews that integrate notions of 'following' and 'studying through' as well as processes of interpretation and representation to understand where and from who policy actors learn (McCann and Ward 2012). Mapping policy networks and considering the character and

frequency of policy travel can help identify locations, policies and individuals that are central in policy-making processes (McCann 2011). McCann and Ward (2012) propose to think relationally when studying the spaces involved in the journey of a policy, simultaneously following the policy and paying particular attention to the territorial contexts at every step. Considering the "geographical unevenness" of policy mobility (McCann 2011) involves regarding how the structural and historical contexts in which ideas are shaped participate in explaining why certain ideas and models travel whereas others do not.

The focus on the local actors' agency is initially declined through a retrospective approach to trace initiatives and change processes which started in the past and then analyse the present time outcomes. In this sense, a situated ethnography can allow to understand the emergence of policy ideas from pre-existing production modes and assemblages of actors, processes and technologies (Temenos and Baker 2015). While maintaining one site as a 'primary perspective', McCann (2011) points at a developing approach of "global ethnography" in which we should pay attention to external forces and connections. This is crucial, according to Kennedy (2016) so as not to limit the search for relevant actors in the politics of urban policy mobility only among local elites.

THE FIELDWORK

This thesis analyses a programme of slum rehabilitation in Bhuj, a small city and the headquarter of the Kacch¹ district located in the north-western part of the state of Gujarat (see Map 1). The programme was implemented in 2015 through a pilot project in the framework of the national slum policy scheme Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY). The state government recognised innovative features of the programme, notably the centrality of the slum dwellers in slum redevelopment instead of promoters, and for favouring contextual-based processes and urban forms. Acknowledged among Best Practice models in the country (GOI 2015), the programme became subject to influence the national policies to address slum rehabilitation in small cities. The case of Bhuj is thus studied as an example to deepen the role of local actors in small cities interacting 'from below' with the state for policy change.

1 Historically, the name of the region has been transliterated in numerous ways into the Latin alphabet. During the colonial period the 'Cutch' version was preferred, while later we find the 'Kachchh', 'Kachh' or 'Kacchh' versions. The transliteration used in many official government texts is 'Kutch'. In this text, I have decided to transliterate the Hindi or Gujarati word and it is therefore rendered as 'Kacch'.



Map 1. Location of Kacch

Realized by: the author

Bhuj represents an example of a rising city whose population increased from 98,528 to 148,834 (Census of India 2011), thus changing status from town to city in the last decade. This dynamic followed the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, after which economic and industrial state policies were directed to revive the region's economy. Bhuj became the centre of the reconstruction process thanks to the exceptional worldwide resonance of the earthquake, which facilitated the mobilisation of funds and aids for reconstruction and the important policy efforts to rebuild the city. The process made it possible to reorganise the urban planning and has accelerated the pace of urbanisation of the city that in a short time extended its borders, including neighbour villages into the peri-urban territory. The presence of slums in Bhuj is therefore questioned in relation to this recent process of change of urban planning and governance system and its context of transition from town to small city. While the programme of slum rehabilitation is subsequent and independent from the reconstruction process, the research questions how the new governance, planning systems and changing urban society affect the politics of slums in Bhuj. Furthermore, the programme is studied by analysing the relations between different groups and actors, and how these relations are framed within the local context and larger on-going dynamics of change.

While the research was realised independently from the local network of NGOs Kacch Nav Nirman Abhiyan (KNNA), who promoted the programme, their centrality in the initiative and in the efforts to change slum policies as owner driven, brought to focus the research predominantly on their activities. KNNA was created to meet the needs to coordinate reconstruction activities in the rural Kacch and emerged as a main local actor of development in the post-earthquake period (Abhiyan 2005). The network was initiated by some activists involved in grassroots movements and supported by voluntary organisations. Two main groups converged in this initiative: on the one hand, personalities from communities belonging to Brahmin and merchant castes, mostly from urban centres in east Gujarat and connected to trans-national activist and research networks; on the other hand, families from merchant castes based in Kacch since generations, who developed domestic industrial activities mostly in the south of Gujarat and Mumbai, and later reinvested part of their assets to address issues of health, education and rural development. These groups converged on the creation of social initiatives based on common ideas of development framed in the Gandhian philosophy of self-sufficient village.

During the post-earthquake period, NGOs consolidated their position in Kacch as the relief operations turned into long-term rehabilitation and assumed an important role in the local political arena (Simpson 2014). The local nobility connected to the former rulers of the Princely State of Kacch had withdrawn from its role of patronage and social initiatives since the state government deleted their privileges in the Seventies, thus leaving decisions about the development of the region largely in the hands of the state. However, all governments in Gujarat have embraced the cause of urban elites that are locally represented by merchant and landowners communities like *Vaniya*² and *Patel*, and supported a vision of modernisation and industrialisation based on crony capitalism. On the contrary, KNNA participated to local nationalist claims against such paradigm of development which influence also the state interventions in the reconstruction, while at the same time took part to the logic of decentralised governance and devolution of responsibilities from the state to the private sector.

The centrality that KNNA assumed in the reconstruction brought its NGOs to pursue development activities and to specialise around emerging issues in the urban centres in Kacch. The rehabilitation of slums in Bhuj was undertaken by Hunnarshala Foundation, an NGO

2 I have transliterated the names and terms in Hindi, Gujarati and Kacchi on the basis of other documents. All of these words are italicized.

specialised in engineering and architecture which works in India and other Asian countries, financed by international NGOs and local philanthropists, and counting around 50 employees who are mostly local. Its autonomous stance and at the same time its collaboration with the state influences the way it was implicated in advocacy for policy change. The NGO pressured the government in the attempt to implement the slum rehabilitation in Bhuj as owner-driven and to extend this approach to other Indian cities. But while it took the initiative, the policy implementation remains a responsibility of the local administration that in Bhuj has long been influenced by party politics privileging urban elites and ignored the urban poor and slum residents. This divergence of vision between the NGO and the city administration influenced the progress of the slum rehabilitation project in Bhuj and the possibility to scale-up. This thesis attempts to understand relations between different groups and actors implicated in the slum rehabilitation programme and how these relations are framed within the local context and larger on-going dynamics of change. While the research was realised independently from the NGOs who carried the programme, their centrality in the initiative and in the efforts to change slum policies as owner-driven led me to focus the research on their activity among other institutional stakeholders of the programme.

ORGANISATION OF THE RESEARCH

This fieldwork was identified in 2015 in the context of a post-master research at the Paris-La-Villette School of Architecture. The research initially questioned more generally the influence of the historical and geographical context of the city in the way how the programme emerged and in the participatory process of slum rehabilitation. The choice of the city of Bhuj to carry out this research was confirmed during a pre-fieldwork realised between October and November 2015, when I came in contact with the project stakeholders and I developed the research proposal. The research was organised into major phases of information gathering and preparation of fieldwork, data collection and subsequent data processing and analysis. Although partially overlapping, these activities were realised in consecutive phases.

The first phase started in 2015 by collecting information accessible on the Internet and during the pre-fieldwork. The NGO Hunnarshala Foundation based in Bhuj supported informally the research, introducing me to other local partner NGO and to the settlements where the project was being implemented. Data collection was carried mainly in the second research phase between 2017 and 2018, during two fieldworks from June to September 2017 and from

January to September 2018, for a total duration of 11 months. Both fieldworks were realised with the financial support of the CESSMA (Center for Social Science Studies on the African, American and Asian Worlds) laboratory to cover the costs of transport, accommodation and research assistants. The opportunity to start a visiting student agreement at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai facilitated obtaining a research visa, which allowed to meet institutional actors and government officers. In 2017, I lived in the old city in a residential complex inhabited by families of a Brahmin caste and later in a residential settlement south of the centre inhabited by families of the Jain religion, where I could reside in the next research period. The immersion in Bhuj's everyday life was important to localise slums in the city's socioeconomic, political and cultural contexts. In addition, returning to the field several times allowed me to observe changes in the processes analysed.

The first phase of information gathering aimed at understanding the context of the city and the settlements, and at identifying the project stakeholders. Data were collected through interviews with the NGOs as well as secondary sources including project documents and reports and web sources related to the mobilisation process. Collecting information on the city political and administrative context, the identification and location of slums, the policies addressing improvement of conditions in slums and the institutions responsible for them allowed identifying key stakeholders. These include representatives of civil society organisations connected to the project, political actors of the city, and government officials in departments connected to the slum rehabilitation project, economic and research actors, and media.

The data collection at the settlement level focused on the three sites included in the pilot project: Ramdevnagar, Bhimraonagar and GIDC Relocation Site. The information focused on the settlement's characteristics like historical background and recent development, population, housing and planning, urban infrastructure and amenities, but also related to the project like housing and settlement design, implementation mechanism, cost estimation, list of beneficiary families and community organisation in Slum Committees. This information allowed to identify relevant actors within or connected with the settlements to be interviewed and to create a database from the preliminary list of beneficiary families that later served as a reference for conducting interviews with inhabitants.

The next phase of data collection was based on a mixed qualitative and quantitative research. An in-depth qualitative approach was preferred to better address questions related to the agency of the urban poor and to understand the meanings of social networks and mobilisations process from the perspective of residents. At the same time, quantitative

methods were used like statistical information and maps to create an integrated explanation of causes and patterns. Primary data sources were predominantly semi-structured interviews of different types basing on the interlocutors identified in the previous phase. Individual interviews were realised with residents in the settlements, including community or group leaders, members of Community-Based Organizations (CBO) and Self Help Groups (SHG), and constructors; and interviews with key project stakeholders.

Individual interviews with residents were based on a series of open-ended questions, some of which were specifically directed towards particular stakeholders, concerning personal and household information, family and residential path, economics, the mobilisation process and organisation of project implementation, and project effects (see Annex 1). If this generic interview guide aimed to cover the same issues with residents and to compare them between different groups and settlements, the semi-structured format aimed to leave the interlocutors to guide the conversation and develop certain issues according to their experience. This approach aimed to focus on the meanings that residents attribute to their houses and settlements, and their mobilisation in settlement-based and larger networks. At the same time, I collected data in a more quantitative approach through direct questions. These were privileged in cases where residents did not have enough time for semi-structured interviews.

In the settlements included in the pilot project, I interviewed in total 163 beneficiary families that correspond to more than half of the total (314), and 86 families who are not beneficiary in the project. I conducted 77 semi-structured interviews with the residents that usually took between half an hour and 2 hours (see Annex 2), while the rest were shorter interviews with direct questions. Given the small size of the pilot project, I did not set out on sampling from the start but I aimed to interview as many residents as possible, thus the final number of interviews depended on their availability. I met residents while visiting the settlements during the day and in some cases local leaders or other families introduced me to them. The main obstacle to carry interviews was the absence of residents at their home, in particular those living elsewhere while the construction was not completed. In august 2018, only 217 houses were finished and only 198 houses were occupied out of 314 houses. Only in a few cases I could interview families who lived in temporary houses near the project sites. I realised most of the interviews with housewives as their husbands were out for work during the day. Beyond these settlements, I could interview residents in other settlements involved in social mobilisation, notably in Bharwardwas near Ramdevnagar, Bhimraonagar 2 near Bhimraonagar, and the other areas of Machu Nagar, Bapadayalou Nagar, Vansfoda, and Ramnagri in Madhapar.

Interviews with key stakeholders were similarly realised through semi-structured, open-ended interview guides prepared for different types of actors that included questions about personal and professional information concerning their role in the institutions and their implication in the mobilisation. I realized in total 48 interviews with different interlocutors, out of which 9 belong to Hunnarshala Foundation and include directors, architects and social workers that I visited several times at the office's locals and that I accompanied on the project sites. In addition to Hunnarshala, I interviewed 10 key people from other local partner NGOs of Hunnarshala – Kacch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS), SETU, Arid Community Technology (ACT), Sahjeevan, K-Link, KNNa – and other Civil Society Organizations and local NGOs – Homes in the City (HIC), Sakhi Sangini, Jal Strot Sneh Samvardhan Samiti (JSSS), Bhuj Maldhari Sanghatan, Khamir, Shrujan.

Other stakeholders that I interviewed include local politicians such as the councillors of wards 1 and 3, the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) and the candidate from the opposing party, government officials in the District Collectorate, Bhuj Area Development Authority (BHADA), Bhuj Nagar Palika, and the District Inspector of Land Records (DILR). I could also interview representatives of the Kacch Association of Engineers and Architects, the Federation of Kutch Industries Association (FOKIA), the Bhuj Development Council (BDC), the local newspapers Kacch Mitra and Farooq, the heir of the royal family, as well as other inhabitants of Bhuj (see Annex 3).

The languages used in interviews were Gujarati and Kacchi with the residents and English with most of the stakeholders and other informants. The Hindi language is widely spoken in the region and its basic knowledge helped me conduct the research, however the inhabitants of Bhuj are mostly native speakers of Gujarati, the official language of the state, or Kacchi, spoken only in the district. In Bhuj, Kacchi speakers also know Gujarati but the reverse is rare. Although the attempt to learn Gujarati through private courses that at least facilitated me to follow the conversations, familiarise and create trust with the residents, the multi-linguistic context required the support of research assistants to realise the fieldwork.

Collaborators of Hunnarshala initially supported me to access the fieldwork by introducing me to local leaders. Later, research assistants helped me to negotiate with residents and organise the research. I met research assistants thanks to personal contacts with inhabitants of Bhuj, and I trained them in the contents of the research like themes and questions, as well as the skills required to carry interviews. In 2017, my research assistant was a woman of the *Goswami* community from Rawalvadi Relocation Site in Bhuj, while in 2018 my research assistant belonged to the *Ghadavi* community, from Jarpara village about an hour far from

Bhuj. Such distance required to regularly schedule the days to carry out interviews with the residents. His flexibility and frequent overnight stays in Bhuj facilitated however to reorganise the research activities every day according to the availability of the interlocutors.

Participant observation, particularly during meetings with residents also helped me to increase the understanding of practices and representations of the interlocutors. I spent most of the field research at the residents' homes to conduct the interviews, during which I could observe their daily activities in the domestic space. I often did not speak to family members alone as relatives or neighbours always surrounded them. It was important to observe this coexistence as part of different practices of living, while the informal conversations that arose during these meetings allowed the conversations to flow freely. During my visits I took photographs, in particular I asked all residents interviewed to photograph their home from outside, and in longer interviews I photographed the interiors. Photographs were also taken in the exteriors while reaching the houses and during commented walks.

In addition, I attended group meetings with residents, including Slum Committees, regular meetings organised by the NGOs to discuss project related issues, and fortuitous encounters with inhabitants in the common spaces during which I could observe their relationships. Particularly interesting were some commented walks around the settlements, during the implementation when I accompanied local leaders and social workers of Hunnarshala who described the neighbourhood and the project, allowing me to understand the transformations in progress and to meet families. I used to report observations and comments in a field journal to keep track of events and reflections.

To conduct the interviews, I demanded the consent of the residents and I clarified with them my objective to document the process of mobilisation and settlements transformation, and that the collected data would be presented in the context of my research and kept anonymous. While in this text I changed the residents' names, informants having a public role or acting as organisational leaders might be identifiable. My position as a researcher allowed me to justify my interest in the knowledge and practices of residents in the context of mobilisation and to share it with the aim of increasing awareness about the project.

Initially, the support of Hunnarshala and partner NGOs proved important to approach the communities but the importance of reducing their influence during interviews with residents brought me to develop the fieldwork independently while continuing to exchange information with Hunnarshala. On the other hand, conflicting situations between the NGO and other key stakeholders hindered the realisation of interviews when the latter were suspicious about my objectives. Similar difficulties arose while interviewing residents who suffered because of

local leaders pursuing their own interests in the project. Afraid to share information that might affect them, some residents accepted to be interviewed only after ensuring the information's confidentiality.

Despite my effort to clarify the nature of my activity, many residents expecting to be included in the project shared information with the intention of proving their eligibility. In a settlement, some residents thought that my interviews were connected to a project survey and waited for me to visit them. From the beginning, I was brought to insist with them that it was not a project survey and to ask them not to spread information that could raise expectations from other residents. During the last fieldwork, I carried a letter of reference from TISS that explained that my interviews would be used only for research purposes. During the fieldwork, there have been numerous unforeseen events, programme changes, fortuitous encounters and social constraints that constructed the time of research as discontinuous. For example, the interlocutors' unavailability after organising interviews was constant during the fieldwork and was a major obstacle to comply with the schedule, however it was often possible to carry unscheduled interviews.

I transcribed the majority of semi-structured interviews from recordings made with a portable microphone. A research assistant from Bhuj then compared the transcripts of interviews with their recordings in Gujarati and Kacchi languages and ratified or added information. The transcription of the interviews allowed me to create the ethnographic corpus that I later analysed. In parallel, I extrapolated data from the transcriptions of the semi-structured interviews and from notes and I reported them on a database. The data systematisation aimed at identifying distribution patterns of the topics covered in the interviews. In particular, it allowed recognising some relevant issues at the settlement level, like the family and community structure and its spatialisation before and after the project, the progress of the building process and its management by constructors. Analyses of the transformation process of settlements were realised mixing quantitative data extrapolated from interviews, pictures and satellite photos. Pictures of each house were crossed with orthophotos obtained from Google Maps at different times, to analyse the temporality of the construction process.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Several secondary sources contributed to enrich the ethnographic corpus. These include official documents, plans and reports realised by key stakeholders and local institutions, and a series of articles concerning projects in slums from newspaper Kacch Mitra, Divya Bhaskar, and the citizens platform Bhuj Bole Chhe, which my research assistant traduced from Gujarati to English. Some analyses were carried out on specific issues relating to regional and urban dynamics. Data extrapolated from the Census of India made it possible to visualise the dynamics of urbanisation in relation to the industrialisation process, on cartographic bases reconstructed starting from the cartography of the Survey of India.

At the city level, urbanisation dynamics were mapped by comparing satellite photos at different times and referenced on a cartographic basis realised with Google Maps and the city Development Plan. Detailed satellite photos available from 2002 onward allowed to analyse the changes that occurred after the earthquake, while the analysis was extended over a longer period by confronting with the 1976 Town Planning and less precise satellite photos from 1984 onward. The study of settlements' names and landmarks, together with photographic analyses and street views helped to understand the distribution of different populations in the city. Other quantitative data on the population of blocks and wards obtained from the District Census Handbooks of the Census of India allowed to refine this knowledge.

The access to slum profiles realised by the NGO SETU in 2011, and to household-level data collected by the NGO K-Link in 2016, allowed me to carry out a demographic and socio-economic analysis of all the slum settlements in Bhuj. This analysis includes settlements that the NGOs identified as slums basing on several parameters that include: low-income families, negligible public infrastructure, absence of land rights, lack of notification by urban local body (De et al. 2017). The socioeconomic profile of the slum settlements and their cartographic representation contributed to the understanding of the socio-spatial segregation in the city.

DISSERTATION ORGANISATION

The thesis aims to explore the role of small cities in the politics of slums, taking the city of Bhuj as a case study. How do local forces, actors and ideas interact with larger policies in the construction of alternative models of slum rehabilitation? The text is organised in three parts, each of which presents a different angle of analysis to answer this central question.

The first part grounds the research in the Indian geographic and politic context and the specific case of the small city of Bhuj. The first chapter reviews literature on politics of slums and on small cities and towns in India, to understand the implications in studying and dealing with slums in small cities. The chapter explores on the one hand how the small city dynamics and inclusion in local society and political setting distinguish slums from larger centres, and on the other retraces the role of small cities in slum policies to discuss marginalisation in neoliberal Slum Free Cities strategies and their participatory framework. The second chapter analyses the presence of slums in Bhuj starting from literature on the region and the city, in particular on the post-disaster reconstruction and growth, as well as other secondary sources. After locating the city in the larger trend of precarisation of the urban poor in regional development, the chapter analyses slums in Bhuj through a historical-geographical perspective. The analysis studies the relationship between the emergence of slums and the process of post-earthquake reconstruction and urban planning and expansion, which increased the vulnerability of illegal settlements and merged pre-existing and new conditions of precariousness.

The second part focuses on the owner-driven model of slum rehabilitation. Based on interviews with institutional stakeholders, project and policy documents, it analyses the local emergence of the model and its peculiarities with respect to the dominant strategy in national policies. The third chapter reconstructs the advocacy by local civil society groups and activists for community-based forms of reconstruction, and how the owner-driven model circulated and extended from post-disaster reconstruction in the rural Kacch to long-term poverty issues in the rising urban scenario of the region. This long-term process of policy-making explains the later interaction with the national policies making Bhuj a model of slum rehabilitation for small cities. The fourth chapter analyses in detail the model to understand

how it fits differently from the national policies strategy, and how it incorporates small city's visions of development that differ from the dominant urban model. The chapter initially focuses on the implementation and management system to show the centrality of slum dwellers in the project preparation and construction process. Next, the planning and design system is analysed to show how the model develops contextual-sensitive solutions to respond to specificity of small cities, in particular focusing on individual housing units with access to the land, traditional typologies and locally-managed infrastructures and services.

The third part focuses on the implementation of the pilot project in Bhuj and is mostly based on the results of the fieldwork and on interviews and observations with residents in the slum settlements. After introducing the settlements' context, the fifth chapter analyses the mobilisation of communities in participatory survey, enumeration and design. The focus is on how the diversity of interests and visions of leaders, sub-groups in communities and NGOs interact in the process resulting in project arrangements that reflect specific conditions of small cities. The chapter ends by analysing the changes in terms of living conditions and vulnerability, but also social status of communities and value of the settlements. The sixth chapter analyses the construction process by focusing on the role of the actors, mainly inhabitants, NGOs, builders and government agencies. In particular, the way inhabitants mobilise collectively their resources and knowledge, and how they managed the process financially in the frame of the implementation mechanism are discussed. Finally, the chapter analyses how the management of roles and responsibilities of the actors implicated respond to the diversity of their skills and interests.

PART 1

GROWTH, CRISIS, RESILIENCE
OF AN INDIAN SMALL CITY

CHAPTER 1

SLUM REHABILITATION AND SMALL TOWN DEVELOPMENT IN RISING REGIONS

Slums in India, as elsewhere, are understood as an urban issue that concerns in particular big cities. Policies for Slum Free Cities have contributed to mainstream the term 'slum' associated with the stigmatisation of informal residents. Gilbert (2007) warns about the negative images or myths on slums that Slum Free Cities restores as it confuses poor quality housing with the moral characteristics of people, inviting governments to look for instant solutions with disregard for the stereotype it conveys. According to Ramanathan (2006), such perception of slums is associated to a move from a constitutionality of right of livelihood, housing and shelter for the urban poor, to a legality that sees them as encroachers and a threat to civic existence. Ghertner (2008) questions why some areas are designated as nuisance and their residents as a secondary category of citizens, while others are protected and formalized. Such differentiation represents a fundamental axis of inequality in urban India, according to Roy (2009).

Several authors draw attention to make a careful use of the category of slum, which is heterogeneous because of their contextual nature. While slums can always be defined as outside institutional standards, official definitions are local and their development is the result of local urban histories (Clerc 2018). Depending on the context in which it is used, the term slum can include notions of informality and illegality that relate to the compliance to laws and regulations, as well as other dimensions of vulnerability, emargination, etc. Integrating aspects of class and vulnerability into the regularisation discourse, Bhan (2013) introduces the notion of legitimacy referring to *de facto* or a *de jure* security of tenure, of settlements which can either be explicitly protected by law or implicitly in actual urban development practice. Some authors use different terms, for example Braathen et al. (2016) use "substandard settlements" as a reflection of both social and power relations and an indicator of urban inequality and socio-spatial

segregation, while Deboulet (2016) refers to "precarious settlements" to underline the need for a dynamic that can consolidate them into ordinary neighbourhoods, opening-up to a dimension of the right to the city.

This chapter focuses on how slums differ in the context of small cities: what do the specificity of small cities implies in studying and dealing with slums? To answer this question, the chapter draws from recent works on the politics of slums in India, paying particular attention to the emerging literature on small cities (Sharma 2012; Raman et al. 2015; Bercegol 2017; Denis and Zérah 2017; Guin 2019, etc.) and limited accounts on the implementation of slum policies in small cities (Burte 2014; Coelho and Vijayabaskar 2014; De Geest and De Nys-Ketels 2019; Hagn 2016; Kamath and Deekshit 2014; Khan 2017; Kundu and Sahu 2014; Müller and Dame 2016; Shaw 2019). The first section of the chapter focuses on the specific context of small cities and how it reflects on the peculiarities of slum settlements. On the one hand, it considers their development in relation to the urban and regional dynamic, and their different perception influenced by the sub-regional environment and the sense of belonging to the city. On the other hand, it places slums in the political context of small cities, focusing on the role of local administrations as well as other actors in the process of decentralisation.

The second section of the chapter considers small cities in the context of the national urban and slum policies. Using a historical perspective, it retraces their changing role within the discourse and objectives of the country's development. The marginalized status of small cities in the recent Slum Free Cities policies is framed in the neoliberal paradigm that privileges big cities and the role of capital market in slum redevelopment. It results from a process of lesson drawing and is influenced by the country's opening to the global economy in the last decades. Finally, the chapter focuses on the participatory framework of the current slum policies, to understand how the expected role of the different stakeholders is met on the ground. Beyond bringing attention to the limit to effective participation of slum communities, it considers the potential implication of other stakeholders in slum redevelopment.

1.1. SLUMS AND SMALL TOWNS IN INDIA

1.1.1. THE INDIAN SLUM AS AN ISSUE OF SMALL TOWNS

Focusing on metropolises, the studies on slums in India in the last two decades participated to represent them as a phenomenon of large cities and to divert the attention from their presence in smaller urban centres. The focus on big cities echoes an academic bias, where the term city became synonymous with big cities, thus leaving no place for small towns in the discourse on cities (Khan 2017). Such conceptualisation of the urban thus conveyed and mainstreamed a particular perception and image of the slum. Numerous works have highlighted in particular the influence of global capitalism on the formulation of slum policies.

Based on the slum-free city agenda, the current national policies are framed in the neoliberal paradigm that sees cities as "engines of growth" and prioritizes big and metro cities as they are better positioned for global competitiveness. According to Roy (2014), the slum-free city policies crystallize in the term 'slum' the problems and hopes of making the Asian world-class city. Recent works attempted to decipher power dynamics between cities and have introduced other geographical considerations beyond global capital flow to explain the hegemony of certain cities (Palat and Narayanan 2020). However, small cities continue to be in the background in the formulation of slum legislation and policies and in the construction of the category of slum.

The little attention accorded to slums in small cities is also explained by the lack of updated and comprehensive information, which prevents the possibility to address and plan their development. Until 2001, the Census of India collected information on slums only from the larger cities, while the National Sample Survey have focused mostly on the class I cities¹. The development of the database about slums carries a big city bias that brought policy makers, administrators and researchers to infer that the small cities have no slums (Kundu 2013). Also the 2011 Census data underestimate the presence of slums in small cities. Only 50% of all the towns in the country were surveyed for slum population and out of them, only 63% have been reported as having slums. Most of the

1 The Census of India classifies urban areas on the basis of their population size. Class I cities are those with a population of 100,000 or more.

cities that appear as not having slums are actually small towns where the data have not been collected, as the local bodies in charge of identifying and reporting slums lack the necessary skills and resources. Consequently, not only the available information does not represent the real situation but slums in small cities generally appear more vulnerable as they are not officially recognized and included in the responsibility of the public authorities to provide basic services (Sandhu and Sekhon 2017).

Official definitions of slums appear inappropriate to describe situations of urban poverty and vulnerability, considering that more generalized conditions of poverty and scarcity of basic infrastructure and services are concentrated in small cities. The Registrar General of India, who is responsible for collecting slum statistics, admitted that many smaller towns could be considered entirely as slums. In this sense, Bhan and Jana (2013) warn against the risk, concerning small cities particularly, that targeting slums as an indicator for the urban poor could in fact limit the capacity of policies in their objective of reducing poverty and vulnerability and invite to not confuse the definitions of slums and urban poverty. While policies and studies in India use slums to analyse poverty, Arabindoo (2011) reminds us that neither all slums are poor, nor all poor reside in slums. Instead, she asks to pay attention to abandon the spatial fix and focus on "slum as theory" where urban poverty is understood as a set of social relations stretching across multiple spaces.

Studying slums in small cities leads to consider the specificity of these centres. One of the main differences between larger cities and smaller ones is the mix of urban and rural characteristics. Poorer settlements in small cities result from regional rural-urban migration rather than from the attraction of migrants from other regions. However, due to the difficulties of accessing housing in smaller cities and thanks to the shorter distances from the villages of origin, many rural residents prefer to commute rather than migrate (Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003). As a result, slums have stronger links with the villages of origin and in turn this keeps the more rural patterns of the urban poor. This reflects for example in the morphology of slum dwellings in small cities, which are generally independent units with common open spaces functioning as their extension and supporting livelihoods activities and traditions of social reproduction that continue to be significantly rural in character (Burte 2014).

According to Nijman's (2010) study in Mumbai, slums appear as a hybrid social structure, both urban and rural also in larger cities. The author focuses on the political definition of slums, considering their identification with a community and its spatial

coincidence with economic activities as a strategy of adaptation to the city, which is made possible by the survival of cultural identities and social ties with the villages. Because of such divergence from what 'urban' ideals represent, elites and policy-makers have never accepted slums as part of the city (ibid.). In postcolonial Indian cities, these 'urban' ideals that are constructed in opposition to the rural world have been channelled into housing programs and the practice of urban planning, whose poor implementation would be at the origin of the proliferation of slums. In this sense, the dominant discourse seeing slums as a 'problem' was built from a city-centric perspective (Dhanda and Dubey 2016).

However, slums in smaller cities fall less in this dominant discourse as the distinction with the rural is less marked. According to Denis and Zerah (2017), the small city blurs the dichotomy between rural and urban, and the sub-regional environment and a sense of belonging to a community are more important than the feeling of being part of the town. Furthermore, migration as a factor of urban growth is lower in small cities compared to large urban centres, while the villages' urbanisation and the extension of cities' boundaries and rural areas' reclassification prevail. Consequently, slums would be less associated with the creation of new settlements by migrants and more with the changing nature of existing settlements in an urbanizing context. After all, the growth and diffusion of small towns rather than the polarisation in big cities have prevailed more generally in India in the last decade (Denis and Marius-Gnanou 2011).

Studies on small cities highlight specific land issues, like the importance of caste and its overlap with locality in politics of controlling the use of territory (Raman et al. 2015). In small cities, the spatial concentration of a group of people of the same caste is a self-representation as a close knit moral community that identifies itself with that specific space, and where members of other castes experience differently the right to space. In such system, politics of establishing claims to space by lower-caste groups are shaped by physical and social identity. More than in big cities, caste-dominated settlements are associated to land tenure forms that differ from the private property. For example, the land is often held as common property by poor groups or communities that depend on it for fodder, subsistence agriculture or housing needs (ibid.). In many cases, their presence is linked to the decline of agricultural activities on land located on the outskirts of urban centres and to the acquisition of landholdings by the urban poor. These processes, which result from the emancipation of subordinate villagers and the decline of elite control over lands, can lead to a decrease in natural resource management

(Yanagisawa 2008).

Studies on the effects of state's intervention on land transformation have revealed speculative patterns of land development at the periphery of both large and small cities. The state's strategy of promoting real estate facilitates speculative investments in the conversion of peripheral agricultural land into plots of development, while state's investment in infrastructure affects land prices (Raman et al. 2015). Analyses of how the land markets are functioning in Indian cities have shown that low income groups are pushed out of both the state's supply systems and the market, and that the characteristics of private developers and the type of products cater largely to the higher income groups. Other works carried out in the 1980s and 1990s on the issue of improving urban poor households' access to land for housing have demonstrated that the land development have been supplied largely outside of the planning process. Kundu (1997) shows that the conversion of agricultural lands into residential plots was a common strategy for small farmers to avoid acquisition of their lands by the state, as developing their land into plots ensured them higher compensation. On the other hand, it has contributed to limit availability of land and housing accessible for urban poor.

The buying, selling and development of agricultural land is often not accompanied by its declaration as urban or residential land and homes are not built in accordance with regulations, resulting in forms of illegality and informality which prevail in small and medium cities. This process of developing residential land outside the urban plan is at the origin of different forms of informality, which recent studies have analysed beyond the category of slum. In this sense, Risbud (2009) appeals to recognize the variety of settlement typologies of slum, as each one has different and unique characteristics and problems. For example, subdivisions known as *gunthewari* differ little from slums, which in the context of small towns in Maharashtra are inhabited by *dalits* and nomadic and denotified tribes (Bhide 2014).

1.1.2. INFORMALITY AS A PLANNING ISSUE AND THE LACK OF RESOURCES OF MUNICIPALITIES

Urban planning and governance figure among the topics addressed by recent research on small cities (Kundu and Bhatia 2002; Coelho and Vijayabaskar 2014; Kamath and Deekshit 2014), along with environmental governance (Véron 2010). Urban informality

is part of the conceptualisation of land occupation in a formal / informal dual opposition resulting from the application of the Master Plan, the main legal instrument for regulating land use and development. Basing the development of cities on spatial segregation of functions in mono-use zones, its planning approach was completely inconsistent with the morphology of Indian cities where the use of mixed land was the norm. Furthermore, parts of the existing city have been defined as illegal as they do not conform to the ideal the Master Plan aimed at achieve (Batra 2009).

Consequently, Sandhu and B.S. Sekhon (2017) ascribe the perception of slum dwellers as marginal, unwanted, non-productive and trouble makers in the city, to the socio-economic and cultural background of planners and administrators who are non-poor. The state and elites in larger cities have used the Master Plan to reconfigure control of the land to the detriment of the housing and workplaces needs of the poor (Raman et al. 2015). In this sense, Roy (2009) conceptualizes urban informality as a system of deregulation, ambiguity and exception actively used by the state and by different interest groups that exert their influences, as an instrument of both accumulation and authority. Although not being synonymous with poverty, it participates in increasing inequalities in cities.

The literature on urban planning and governance in small cities shows that informality in the land development and spatial planning process is as prevalent as in large cities and made them as much spatially and socioeconomically unjust. Studying the dynamics of urbanisation in Solapur, Kamath and Deekshit (2014) shows that urban planning incites illegality from both the urban poor and indigenous bourgeoisie, which claim their legitimacy by mobilising different resources. However, the elites appear advantaged to create and exploit conjunctures that are conducive to their interests, by participating in dispersed structures of governance and sovereignty that they exercise alongside the state. Though both rich and poor attempt to manoeuvre the levels of the state to assert their public legitimacy and to negotiate exemptions, the middle classes increasingly seek the regularisation of the lands to increase their value participating in the privatisation process that reward the richer groups (Raman et al. 2015).

Exclusionary planning also leads to the emergence of illegal settlements. By analysing the Development Plan of Ratnagiri, Kundu and Sahu (2014) observe processes of regularisation by 'selective inclusion' of illegal settlements, while other are threatened with eviction or at best are given *de facto* security. In selecting which illegal developments are declared authorized and which ones are not, local authorities are

influenced by power relations that depend on communal and class hierarchies. Thus, although both rich and poor manipulate the state, the predominance of elite's interests into spatial planning produces outcomes that perpetuate the uneven city's geography. Focusing on the state's response to *gunthewaris*, Bhide (2014) observes that arbitrariness and contradictions in the practice of regularisation incentivise the emergence of new informality, thus strengthening the phenomenon it seeks to control. Regularisation in this sense is no longer aimed to respond to limitations of the planning system but is part of the new approach to citizenship of a state who in promoting privatisation has nurtured a polarized city, where every social group pursue their spatial interests, and have abdicated attempts to constitute a public sphere constituted of public housing, planning and governance.

There are not many analyses of the institutions that influence land's use and development in non-metros. However, in Census Towns (CT) rather than in Statutory Towns (ST), informal patterns of development are the result of the lack of planning instruments and building regulations and of the very low levels of taxation. Therefore, this unregulated growth cannot be defined as illegal precisely because these towns represent spaces of 'regulatory fractures' (Guin 2019). In small cities, informality is associated with more important development issues. According to Véron (2010), challenges in sustainable urban development are bigger in small cities, as municipalities face simultaneously problems related to "development", industrialisation and consumption and related to "underdevelopment", poverty and lack of infrastructure, and for their limited resources to address environmental problems related to both development and underdevelopment. Research on urban governance in India (Bercegol 2017, Sharma 2012) shows a much lower supply of basic services in small towns than in large cities, a difference that has been increasing in recent times.

Since the 1990s, the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) has envisaged decentralized and efficient urban governance and provided autonomy to the urban local bodies (ULBs), which become responsible for financing the provision of basic services with their resources and for their implementation. Among its main features, the 74th CAA has introduced the Twelfth Schedule that lists the functions of the ULBs, mandates the creation of ward committees in cities with a population of over 3 lakhs, periodic and timely elections of ULBs, and devolution of finances to ULBs (Batra 2009). While the shift of responsibility from government to local urban governance aimed for a greater decentralisation and democratisation, the offer of services has not improved in small

cities with financially weaker ULBs and unable to access funds (Guin 2019). Furthermore, small ULBs remain dominated by traditional local leadership based on patronage networks, which use the exercise of power as an income resource. Unable to increase their financial resources due to the lack of human resources and to non transparent processes of tax collection, small cities are depending more and more on government programs and subsidies to invest in infrastructure and services. As a result, small towns have a low quality of services and inactive role in urban planning (Bercegol and Gowda 2014). Analysing the status of municipal finances and the levels of facilities in small and medium towns in Gujarat, Mahadevia (2006a) shows a highly iniquitous and quite discriminatory development to the detriment of small cities. The Gujarat Government has attributed more pro-capita subsidies to large cities than to small cities, and worse yet discriminates against the weak as the market would.

Due to the lack of detailed and updated information and technical expertise of the staff, ULBs are unable to plan their towns or perform functions such as slum upgrading. These functions are therefore carried out by higher level development authorities (Coelho and Vijayabaskar 2014), parastatal agencies that operate without any relationship with the elected representatives of the ULBs and whose centrality in the jurisdiction of the ULBs is the opposite of the principle of decentralisation and participatory governance. The offer of services in small towns located in the district headquarters, places of tourists' attraction, etc., appear better than elsewhere for the greater concentration of State and central level assistance and for the presence of development authorities more than for greater performance of urban local governance (Bercegol 2017).

Another important obstacle for the local government to function is the lack of effective people's participation. The participatory framework of governance institutes resident welfare associations (RWAs) to access municipal revenues in services provision and maintenance. This has contributed to an improvement in access to basic services but exclusively in the middle classes, raising the intra-town inequalities (Sharma 2012). This is partly due to their greater ability to generate funds needed to access municipal revenues and to the discrimination against poorer groups made by the authorities. As a result, few initiatives have been implemented in slums, while middle class activism seems to discipline the urban poor rather than to support their struggles (Kundu 2011b). Experiments to extend democratic urban governance have attempted to establish RWAs in poor settlements with the support of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). However, the lack of trust and interest from local authorities, coupled with the

heterogeneity of the inhabitants and a weak implication of the NGOs hampered their implementation (Mahadevia et al. 2016). Slums in small towns are adversely affected by inefficiency, finance gaps and lack of planning in ULBs that result in higher poverty and poor services (Sharma 2012). Furthermore, inadequate urban policies and exclusive forms of citizen participation influence the marginalisation conditions.

1.2. INDIAN SLUM POLICIES AND SMALL TOWNS

1.2.1. A HISTORY OF URBAN POLICIES ORIENTED TOWARDS LARGE CITIES

Urban policies and programs in postcolonial India have focused on big cities from the beginning, whereas small cities and towns have been largely unaffected and have grown unregulated (Shaw 1996). Policies towards slum settlements turned to big and metro cities as they were influenced by an understanding of slums as a problem of overpopulation, whereas the development of small cities was aimed to attract population and reduce the overload in large cities (Batra 2009). As elsewhere, slum policies in India have evolved in relation to how slums were understood over time. Andavarapu and Edelman (2013) identify four phases of slum policies: the first phase have seen slums as a problem whose solution consisted to demolish and relocate them; the second one was based on ideas of self-help and tenure security; the third one incorporated the private sector in programs of slum redevelopment; the fourth and current phase is based on the 'Slum Free Cities' strategy promoted by the Cities Alliance and incorporated into national policies.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the growth of slums and substandard housing were seen as a common problem in major cities in India and as a manifestation of urban poverty. The first three Five-Year Plans aimed at removing slums and preventing their growth through the mass construction of low-income housing and the regulation of the urban growth through Master Plans (Batra 2009). The growth of population and slums was a consequence of the Partition between India and Pakistan, where refugees migrated to big cities, and of the concentration of job opportunities in the city produced by the state's urban-based approach of industrial development. Urban policies in this period focused on large and metro cities that were already more developed than smaller urban centres and rural areas, increasing the polarisation of development (Khan 2017).

The Second Plan (1956–1961) approved the Slums Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act, 1956, the first government initiative to deal with slums in a legislative framework. The Act "deems as slums, old, dilapidated and overcrowded housing sectors where the buildings 'are in any respect unfit for human habitation' or that: are by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, or any

combination of these factors, detrimental to safety, health or morals " (Sutherland et al. 2016:16). The Act defined slums for their precarious physical and hygienic conditions but without referring to the state of illegal tenure, whereas urban and judicial authorities refer to 'squatter settlements' or 'illegal slums' as settlements developed without authorisation. It also distinguished the slums between notified and non-notified, introducing a new parameter to exclude part of them from the provision of basic services (ibid.). The Third Plan (1961–1966) led to the development of Master Plans in different cities and to strengthen local governments, however the failure of these measures to limit the influx of migrants and the growth of slums showed the incapacity to solve the problem only through public operations.

The second phase of urban policies in the 1970s and 1980s moved from a strategy of modernisation of major cities to a more balanced regional development. Since the Fourth Plan (1969–1974), urban policies attempted to limit the growth of metro cities through the development of small and medium towns. The strategy towards slums was split in two: stimulating the increase of economic activities in small cities in order to limit the attraction of migrants by larger cities, and encouraging the offer of housing through cheap loans from HUDCO² to prevent the growth of slums; and improving the conditions of slum dwellers in larger cities where slum population is higher, through the offer of basic services and slum 'reconditioning' (Batra 2009). The Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS) was based on this strategy that recognizes slums as habitat of the urban poor, thus changing from the former strategy of removing slums to remove poverty³.

The shift towards the alleviation of poverty in national policies became explicit since the Fifth Plan (1974–79), when urban poverty schemes turned to target specifically the access to basic needs, physical environment and related services, and shelter (Mohanty and Mohanty 2005). Beyond the EIUS, the Integrated Urban Development Programme (IUDP) was launched for infrastructural development in cities with population over 300,000 and of national importance but was discontinued in 1979, and the Sites and Services Scheme was introduced for making serviced land available to the poor. Furthermore, the Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act (ULCRA), 1976, aimed at 'socializing' urban land by

2 The Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) was created in 1970 as the Indian government's agent in public housing, with roles in reviewing, approving and financing projects initiated by the states (Pugh 1991).

3 EIUS was introduced in 1972 and adopted in 1974 by individual states in 11 cities with a population higher than 800.000 and was later extended to 9 more cities.

limiting its concentration in the hands of urban elites and redistributing it to the different classes (Batra 2009). However this law was distorted in favour of the elites, for example in Gujarat where the tillers who were supposed to benefit from the Act were not small and landless peasants or agricultural labourers but mostly big land owners (Sud 2007). Among urban policies focused on the development of small and medium towns during the Sixth Plan (1980–85), the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT), 1979, extended slum improvement through the provision of infrastructures and basic services to 231 towns with less than 100,000. The scheme continued up the Tenth Plan and covered 1.854 cities and towns with a population of up to 0.5 million.

Despite the policy orientation of the second phase towards a balanced regional development, the effects were limited by more general conditions of stagnation in agriculture and economies of agglomeration (Batra 2009). However, they gave way to the next phase of urban and slums policies whose orientation reflects the liberalisation of the economy in the 1990s. This trend was already present in the Seventh Plan (1985–90) as urban policies promoted the participation of the private sector in urban development and limited the previous centrality of the government in the execution of housing projects to a role of mobilisation of resources for housing, provision for subsidized housing for the poor and acquisition and development of land (ibid.).

The National Housing Policy (NHP), 1988, has generalized approaches of *in situ* slum upgrading and sites-and-services. Slum upgrading is generally referred to a strategy of extending basic services in existing settlements even if the housing and infrastructure do not meet official standards and the tenure or use of the land is illegal. In India, *in-situ* upgrading spans different strategies from minimal improvement to the full reconstruction of the settlement. Differently, sites-and-services programmes introduced by policies of relocation and resettlement provide the urban poor with plots of land connected to infrastructure and services upon which they are supposed to ‘self-build’ their houses (Sutherland et al. 2016). The policy also promoted the implication of NGOs and slum dwellers organized into Self Help Groups (SHGs), with a particular focus of providing access to credit and land titles to women. It was heavily influenced by the World Bank, which from the early 1970s has supported upgrading schemes in many nations including India (Patel 2013). Its approach was based on opening up housing finance in a macroeconomic perspective: housing for low-income households was to be made ‘affordable’, the project’s beneficiaries would recover the costs of development and operation and projects would be replicated and expand into larger programs (Pugh 1991).

The author highlights the process of classifying or normalizing people as the housing capital market interacts with household budget and their aspirations and limitations on how to pursue life, with the consequence of changing the consumption, saving, and way-of-life plans for millions of households.

Since the Eighth Plan (1992–97), urban policies were strongly influenced by the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) and the intent to link urban growth with economic development. In the same year, the promulgation of the 74th CAA has marked a landmark step towards the decentralisation of decision-making in cities and towns and included Slum Improvement and Upgradation and Urban Poverty Alleviation among the various functions entrusted to the newly elected urban local bodies (ULBs) (Batra 2009). The Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Program (PMIUPEP), 1995, aimed to improve quality of life of urban poor in small towns through the active participation of ULBs and local communities. In line with the 74th CAA, it sought to produce a change in attitude for ULBs and communities through training, seminars, etc., while NGOs were expected to prepare Town Action Plan projects. However, the results were limited by the government's inability to provide funds (Mohanty and Mohanty 2005). One year later, the PMIUPEP and the shelter upgradation component of NRY⁴ were merged into the National Slum Development Program (NSDP) to provide physical and social amenities, community infrastructures, shelter, etc., and subsuming the responsibilities of ULBs and NGOs/Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in the programme implementation (ibid.).

The India Infrastructure Report (IIR), 1996, focused on replacing the state with the market by augmenting the provision of infrastructures, has led to a further change in urban policies since the Ninth Plan (1997–2002). Recognizing the difficulties of smaller ULBs, an Urban Development Fund working on the principle of pooled finance was created to strengthen the accountability and financial viability of ULBs and parastatal agencies (Batra 2009). On the same lines, the National Housing and Habitat Policy (NHHP), 1998, has entrusted housing construction to the private sector where the government assumed a role of facilitator, except for low-income groups through the Two Million Housing Program launched in 1999. Whereas until then the government had promulgated *ad hoc* strategies covering only part of the slums, in the same year a Draft National Slum Policy

4 The Nehru Rojgar Yojana (NRY) programme was introduced in 1989-90 with the aim to support low-income families in urban areas through five component plans including Housing and Shelter upgradation (Mohanty and Mohanty 2005).

was proposed to integrate slums in all urban centres, both in large cities and small towns. The Policy proposed a progressive approach to slum upgrading by providing land tenure to slum dwellers over government land, but it was not accepted by government departments whose land was mostly occupied by slums (Dupont 2011). In its place, the Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) was started in 2001, for a duration of ten years, to provide or upgrade 16.7 million slum dwellers and urban poor in all cities and towns (Batra 2009).

In the 2000s, the focus on development and modernisation shifted for the first time from rural areas to urban centres, as market-friendly reforms aimed to modernise the functioning of cities. The post-liberal orientation of economic policies, associating urban growth to economic development and transforming cities into "engines of growth", has emphasised big and metro cities for the economic development of the country. Urban policies in this period thus realigned with the focus on major urban centres of the first period, moving away from the attempts of balanced regional development of the former phase. However, many continued advocating against such policies' neglect of small cities (Sahasranaman 2012, Dhanda and Dubey 2016). This orientation underlies the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) issued in 2005 to cover all urban centres, and since then the largest source of central funding in the urban sector (Khan 2017). The JNNURM introduces economic reforms to improve urban infrastructure with the expectation of improving quality of life, increasing housing stock and job opportunities. However, this model has been criticised for not recognizing the importance of urban informality which on the contrary attempted to be integrated in the formal economy, leading in certain cases to slum eviction (Zérah et al. 2011).

Furthermore, its big city bias and a move towards polarized development emerge from the distribution of funds under different schemes. JNNURM provides assistance to states and ULBs in 63 mission cities – mainly large cities – through two sub-missions: Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) and Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP), which together account for 70% of the total central share. The JNNURM also includes 5,098 small and medium towns under the Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) that subsumed the IDSMT programme⁵, and the

5 The IDSMT programme aimed to develop STs as growth centres which would absorb migrants from rural areas. When it was merged with the UIDSSMT, not only it was made more open to large cities by making eligible all the ULBs which are not recognized as mission cities, but its scope was also reduced to water supply and sanitation. The majority of projects were implemented in a limited numbers of relatively larger cities (Guin 2019).

Integrated Housing and Slum Development Program (IHSDP) that subsumed the VAMBAY and NSDP programs. Although the important investments in small towns' infrastructures, the share of UIDSSMT and IHSDP account for only 18% and 12% respectively (Khan 2017).

This disparity in the distribution of central assistance has resulted in inadequacies of the smaller ULBs in the creation of infrastructure and in the development of slum areas. Making central assistance conditional on the implementation of sectorial reforms by states and ULBs, the JNNURM expects that ULBs strengthen financially to weigh less on state funds. However, the large underutilisation of funds by the smaller ULBs confirms their inability to prepare Development Plans (DP) and Detailed Project Reports (DPR), necessary to access state funds and generate matching resources. Furthermore, their preparation has become a mere prerequisite in a short-term investment perspective and only in central areas, without translating into a vision of urban development and leaving out peri-urban settlements (Kundu 2014). JNNURM ignores the administrative constraints faced by the smaller ULBs, which are caught in a vicious cycle of low capability resulting in low collection of revenue and leading to poor performance in the delivery of basic services, while their poor financial health contributes to the increase in the incidence of urban poverty (Khan 2017). Ultimately, the mission appears influenced by the goal of creating global cities by disciplining them to adhere to the credit rating agencies and of improving the efficiency at the macro-level rather than addressing distributional inadequacy (Kundu and Dibyendu 2011). This neglect of small towns from urban policies continued as the JNNURM was replaced by the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) in 2015, which excluded all cities with a population of less than 100,000 (Guin 2019).

1.2.2. THE *DE-FACTO* EXCLUSION OF SMALL TOWNS FROM THE SLUM-FREE CITIES POLICIES

In 2010, the programme Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) for Slum-free Cities Planning was started as part of the national urban poverty reduction strategy (2010-2020) and the BSUP policy scheme (Mathur 2009). RAY was considered visionary and innovative as it extended the former government's commitment to slum upgrading to the scale of the city and the country, and for the legislative approach of property titling (Andavarapu and

Edelman 2013). The programme included a double strategy of bringing the existing slums within the formal system by assigning property rights and slum upgrading/redevelopment or relocation of untenable slums; and preventing the development of new slums by reserving land and housing for the urban poor (GOI 2010). The strategy of slum redevelopment refers to an *in situ* rehabilitation approach with a main role for the private sector as a developer and builder and consists in the slum demolition before constructing multi-storeyed buildings to re-house families (Sutherland et al. 2016).

In order to develop context-specific slum improvement projects, the programme adopts a comprehensive statutory framework embedded in state-level legislation, to enable public agencies to tackle problems related to revenue and planning regulations and provides a well-structured step-by-step process allowing agencies and slum communities to choose between different approaches (Patel et al. 2011). To enable the assignment of property rights to slum dwellers, the central Government introduced a draft model Property Rights to Slum Dwellers Act, 2011, which was the first federal initiative dealing with slums in a legislative framework since the Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act, 1956 (Mathur 2012).

The Slum-free Cities strategy embraces a project of 'inclusive growth' based on rights approach and formalisation, following Hernando De Soto's idea to unlock the "dead capital" held by the poor in the form of land and housing (ibid.). Observing that property rights can reduce uncertainty for people who want to invest their labour or capital in the development of existing resources, De Soto insists that providing property rights would enable poor households to mobilize their assets and create capital. Otherwise saying, the strategy aims to bring the poor into the formal market turning them into consumers and converting slums into assets through slum redevelopment. Several studies have criticized De Soto's claims of land titles as a tool for increasing poor households' access to finance and for strengthening their land tenure security. Besides the reluctance of finance institutions to lend to people in squatter settlements and *vice versa*, and the adverse affect of land titling on the tenure security of renters, bringing squatter land into the market process might lead to a further commodification of urban land and result in escalating land prices and displacing squatters from their settlements (Raman 2015).

The 'inclusive growth' rationale is based on a strategy of identification that is mandatory to obtain entitlements and of governance and accountability through participation and empowerment of the poor (Roy 2014). While the policy scheme mandates for the production of official 'objective' knowledge through property mapping and slum listing

and maintaining them in GIS databases, the "amorphous state" bears influence on these practices (Richter and Georgiadou 2016). At the same time, they allow different interest groups to lobby and exchange information and serve as front-stage activities around which more informal, ambiguous and contested modes of interaction take place. According to Raman (2015), the mobilisation of property rights and participatory planning by NGOs and experts in strategies that drive accumulation and are implemented by the state, transforms land held by squatters into upmarket residential and commercial real estate development projects. RAY generalizes the approach of slum redevelopment that the State Government of Maharashtra introduced in Mumbai in the 1990s with the implementation of Slum Rehabilitation Schemes. Slum redevelopment differs from the previously more popular approach of slum upgrading, as it involves private promoters using land as a resource on a cost-recovery principle. The approach consists in demolishing the entire slum and building high-density housing to re-house the slum dwellers on a portion of the land (social housing component) and to develop the most attractive portion of the land (commercial component) whose sale allows to cross-subsidise the former (Patel et al. 2011).

Promoting slum redevelopment, RAY iterates some of the problems already observed in the implementation of the Slum Rehabilitation Schemes in Mumbai. Kundu and Samanta (2011) criticise the shift from the provision of basic services for the poor to integrated multi-storied housing projects that brings in real estate developers. Their success requires that property values are high and that the local government modify land development regulations to allow an increased intensity of development and create additional land values in the slums. For these reasons, developers are only interested in certain profitable positions with high land prices that are limited to the metro cities and susceptible to market fluctuations, while the search for higher profit margins bring them to build "vertical slums" with poor quality and congestion of buildings (Dupont 2014). The poor also risk to be affected by other problems, like the lack of land needed for transit camps and the exclusion of a percentage of slum dwellers by beneficiary contribution and eligibility criteria (ibid.).

A key issue of Slum-free-Cities and recent urban policies is to respond through the provision of housing but without making land available for the urban poor. As well as BSUP, the RAY policy scheme provides subsidized dwelling units whereas the cost of land is to be borne by the respective state or local government. Having to raise finance, cities prefer to use their land for infrastructural and real estate projects rather than for

housing the poor, and are facilitated by market friendly measures like Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), deregulation and land use conversion, Floor Space Index (FSI) / Floor Area Ratio (FAR) changes, and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)⁶ (Mahadevia 2009). Furthermore, whereas slum redevelopment projects and Slum Rehabilitation Schemes enable real estate developers to corner a large part of the slum land for commercial purposes, re-housing slum dwellers in multi-storey buildings ends up not resolving the key issue of land tenure for housing the poor, the need of space for carrying on livelihood activities, their capacity to meet the maintenance costs of high-rise, etc. (Kundu and Dibyendu 2011). In this sense, Kamath (2012) criticises slum housing policies for providing housing that is not vested with right to land and a security of tenure which is divorced from incremental investments by the slum dwellers.

The government's inflexibility in its conceptualisation of redevelopment as a housing improvement strategy translates into the little control of slum dwellers over the redevelopment process. However, Slum Rehabilitation Schemes implemented in Mumbai were accepted by all the stakeholders and included the slum dwellers as it aimed to enhance the property values and structures instead of focusing only on the private land property rights, against the common view of slum upgrading as preferred by slum dwellers (Mukhjia 2003). For these reasons, the approach overcomes one of the main criticisms addressed to the slum upgrading of making slums a permanent feature of the city and obliterating the distinction between problem and solution (Dupont 2011).

These problems observed in the implementation of recent slum policies concern in particular small cities, where the strategy based on the market that integrates slums clashes with local specific conditions. For example, the implementation of the IHSDP policy in small towns in Maharashtra had low performance for the lack of viable land with state agencies, beneficiary resistance to relocation and to multi-storey housing with low dwelling surface, unaffordable beneficiary contribution, and rise in construction costs (Burte 2014). According to the author, the specificity of the small cities appear in the contradiction between centralised power to conceive policies and decentralised responsibility to copy with decisions. However, the need of both decentralisation and centralisation from the state appeared important also in Mumbai, to allow fast approval-

6 FDI has created a demand for land for high-end township development. FSI or FAR, referring to the allowed Built up Area in relation to the area of the plot, has been changed in many metro cities to re-densify existing development and increasing housing supply. TDRs are issued to owners of land parcels acquired for development, to compensate them for the loss of the right to develop and transfer the right to another 'receiving plot' (Mahadevia 2009).

procedures but also more certainty, both demand-driven and supply-driven development, both private and public investment as developers find it hard to participate, both deregulation and new regulation to redress the amount of area built (Mukhia 2000).

The specificity of the small cities participated to their *de facto* exclusion from RAY, which betrays the big-city bias of former urban policy schemes (Kundu 2013). The programme includes the mission cities covered by JNNURM and leaves the decision to the states to include other cities, while all the others continue under the IHSDP program, pursuing the previous disparity of subsidies allocation for large cities. The allocation system made on a "first come first served" basis augmented the competition between local governments to participate to the program, and ruled out the cities and states unable to send proposals for the first window, which are in the first place the smallest ULBs and the poorest states (ibid.). The most recent national urban housing programme, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Housing For All (PMAY-HFA) replaced the RAY scheme in 2015 after the changes at the central government. While no longer targeting only the slums but including them among other housing components, the programme concerning slums maintains the same principles of the previous one as it supports *in situ* Slum Redevelopment using land as a resource with private participation. However, Dupont (2017) points at the common drawback of the programmes' discontinuity and the launch of new ones without assessing past interventions in order to draw lessons.

1.2.3. THE VARIETY AND CHANGING ROLE OF ACTORS IN SLUM POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The recent national policies for Slum-Free Cities envisage a changing role of the state, private and NGOs in accordance with the underlying model of "neoliberalised" city. The state's withdrawal from its role of provision of housing and land for poor makes the way for other actors to play a major role in slum improvement in more 'entrepreneurial' ways (Smitha 2017). Beyond widening the implication of the private sector, slum policies framed in the neoliberal paradigm appeal for the market inclusion of slum residents demanding their participation to finance the slum redevelopment. While some criticise such neo-liberal emphasis on market and the changing role of the state from provider to enabler, others recommend to review the role of the state and to facilitate the efficient functioning of markets (Annez et al. 2010).

Some activists and civil society organisations have supported the inclusion of slum dwellers in government-supported initiatives, recognizing that free or highly subsidized housing can create perverse incentives (Dupont 2011). Housing right movements like the Asian Coalition for Housing Right (ACHR) and the Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) played an important role in developing a network to share experiences and knowledge on building CBOs, forming saving groups, community-driven enumeration, survey and mapping of slums, model houses and negotiating with local governments (ibid.). The ACHR supported NGOs to foster entrepreneurial and social skills among urban poor communities and develop sustainable housing solution. The movement has recently achieved success in upgrading slums into sustainable neighbourhoods across 19 countries in Asia, using flexible community-based finance and building community architect networks (ACHR 2015). According to McFarlane (2012), such movements promote a kind of city and urban poor that work towards market inclusion and financial discipline, but also exceed the confines of entrepreneurialism and produce other possibilities for collective action and social welfare.

Community participation is a key component of Indian slum policies in the post-reform period. Central to the participatory approach of Slum Rehabilitation Schemes was its clause requiring the prior consent of at least 70% of the eligible slum dwellers, acting as a "democratic check" on the state agency (Dupont 2016). BSUP gave particular attention to the scope of community participation and sought to support slum upgrading at the national scale, that RAY pursued in larger city level programmes (Patel 2013). However, while recent policies mandate community participation in the decision-making process regarding the slum redevelopment, they do not mention the residents consent clause and they do not indicate how to implement participation but leave its management to lead NGOs/CBOs. Despite these recommendations, several authors describe the lack of effective participation on ground. Kamath (2012) points at the inconsistencies between the BSUP's prescriptions and the characteristics of the local government, as policies envisage their changing role without building on their capacities. While contracting out to consultants decreases the coordination and turn municipalities into mere implementators without decision power, consultants speak for them leaving no space for elected representatives, but beneficiaries continue to see them as responsible. The lack of capacity of municipalities to dialogue with slum communities has meant to view participation simply as providing information about the projects, whereas their involvement ended up to be expressed in protests and in resistance to moving or paying their contribution.

Consequently, the policy implementation resulted mostly in the creation of government funded, constructor-built, poor quality, public housing style projects as it depended largely on the capacities of municipalities and contractors and consultants they commissioned (Patel 2013).

The national policies' neo-liberal foundations also seem to limit their capacity to help the urban poor, as they are politically and economically motivated to turn Indian cities into "engines of growth". Community participation has become co-opted and inconsistently implemented since many stakeholders are private and profit-oriented, according to De Geest and De Nys-Ketels (2019). As local social complexities go unheard in standard large-scale slum projects, the ways for slum-dwellers to voice their needs or demands are limited to respond and contest participatory housing projects. Confronting RAY with another national level programme supported by the Cities Alliance, the Baan Makong Program of Thailand, Andavarapu and Edelman (2013) relate the shortcoming of Indian policies in not achieving participation to their failure to strengthen a collective culture in poor communities, as they focus on physical upgrading without achieving a sense of social upgrading.

Providing detailed and comprehensive information to the slum dwellers and ensuring two-way communication to include community-based knowledge are recognised as prerequisites for effective participation (Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016). However, studying slum upgrading projects with a participatory approach in Delhi and Chennai, Dupont (2016) cautions that the conflicting nature of the relationships between the actors may influence the way how information is used. In particular, retention of information can be used by different actors to serve their interests, belated communication given at an advanced stage in project implementation turns consultation symbolic, and the partiality of NGOs and local leaders acting as intermediaries may harm the interests of the residents. While the policy documents recommend NGOs as best placed to support communication and participation, intermediaries are not impartial as they pursue their interests and hold power over the residents (ibid.).

Governments and NGOs have encouraged practices of participatory mapping and community-led enumeration in projects that involve granting land titles to residents, as they bring the community to share their knowledge about their settlement and acquire new skills (Patel et al. 2012). Supported by NGOs as mediator and knowledge partner to mobilize communities and impart skills to them, participatory mapping involves squatters in knowledge production and prompts them to negotiate with government institutions and

influence their decisions (Appadurai 2001, Boonyabancha 2001). Moreover, these practices are supposed to render the titling process transparent and create the conditions for the inclusion of weaker groups, whose interests are often sidelined in a process controlled by community leaders. However, examples of squatters securing titles under participatory projects appear to be limited as they may turn into an injunction when imposed from above. Raman (2015) highlights the need to re-examine the assumed benign role of NGOs and the virtues of participatory enumeration and mapping. Basing his study on the residents' experience in Kathputli Colony in Delhi, the author demonstrates how these practices supported by NGOs, researchers and activists reinforced the accumulation strategies of state agencies as well as private developers for alienating the land from squatters through new institutional mechanisms and laws.

This resulted from the conflicting role of squatters and the private sector concerning the land property, as the way RAY envisions property rights shifts between land rights for the developers and access to housing for squatters (Raman 2015). The author appeals elsewhere for moving the focus from "organized participatory rituals" where NGOs tend to standardize the participatory process to "resident-induced practices" of mobilising state institutions and schemes where knowledge co-production depend on their ability to work with the political parties and institutions (Raman et al. 2016). The author also suggests the need to reconsider concepts of community and community interests, which are far from homogeneous (ibid.). The national policies conceptualize participation around the notion to organize slum dwellers into a community, which can be represented by NGOs and/or CBOs and federated through a residents' association (Dupont 2016). However, this concept of community hides the heterogeneity of groups of people living together on a given land, for which collective action occurs within subgroups more often than at the level of the 'community' (De Wit and Berner 2009). When not taken into account, local social complexities related to education, culture, slum history, caste, religion and gender relations, emerge in the different ways of experiencing, responding to and contesting housing projects with inadequate implementation of community participation (De Geest and De Nys-Ketels 2019).

While NGOs and governments sustain bottom-up CBOs as instrument of collective action in participatory programmes, they may remain under the control of established elites who do not represent all the groups and can influence the poor by focusing on individual rather than collective interests. De Wit and Berner (2009) contend that collective action and community organisations reflect local divisions and tend to be controlled by local elites in

a logic of patronage, where poor people prefer to rely on intermediaries who are perceived as increasing their individual chance of obtaining a service or gaining protection against a threat. Such system benefits elites who can influence the poor with a view to obtain their votes, while the poor are constrained from organizing as a group or movement as they focus on individualized strategies. In this sense, participation is not so meaningful in a culture of patronage (Van der Linden 1997). CBOs supported by government or NGOs' initiatives can be a direct invitation to patronage unless people feel they have access independently to their leaders, and discussions between public officers and leaders happen in open meetings.

Patron's clientelism in local government has been debated in the literature on urban land and housing for low-income groups, with a dominant view that poor are exploited. According to Harriss-White (2005), the local state in small towns is captured by economic agents from the upper business castes who perpetuate feudalistic, hierarchical relationship. Projects of slum redevelopment in small cities fall in this logic, for example in the city of Puri where local politicians used the programme to strengthen their role of patronage, more than developers as the low land value did not attract speculation (Hagn 2016). De Wit and Berner (2009) argue that the councillors play an important role as regards the poor but they have limited power in influencing structural issues of poverty such as securing land tenure. While not included in the program, local politicians have demonstrated to be crucial for policy implementation by subverting the scheme, as observed in small towns in Maharashtra (Burte 2014).

Facing the lack of capable institutions in small cities, some authors also question the role of a growing educated middle class in organizing citizen's groups for civic and welfare issues (Shaw 2019). In Delhi, Ghertner (2012) analyses the role of the middle class in advocating a form of propertied citizenship and a representation of slums as polluting and illegal, whose removal is legitimated as a social cause for a cleaner, greener city. Gaining legitimacy in popular and state visions, this discourse in turn embodies visual dispositions in communities who claim middle class status through an aesthetic engagement. However, middle class groups in small cities are influenced by processes of beautification and tourism expectations instead of the world-class imagination, taking different meanings of slum upgrading as slums are perceived differently than in big cities. For example, projects of slum redevelopment under RAY in the city of Leh came in conflict with the efforts of a citizen's initiative focusing on preserving vernacular architecture in the old town (Müller and Dame 2016).

CONCLUSION

The slum in small towns in India differs from its dominant representation as a problem affecting big and metro cities, which was influenced by studies of the effects of global capitalism on slum policies coupled with a conceptualisation of the urban associated with the world-class city. The little attention for slums in small towns is also a consequence of the lack of information and the inadequacy of official definitions of slum. By focusing on the specificity of slums in small cities, two main dimensions – geographical and political – emerge. On the one hand, they differ from slums in large cities as they develop within different urban dynamics. More than new settlements created by migrants, they are often existing ones with strong links with nearby villages and are more rural in nature despite their inclusion in processes of urbanisation. Their being part of the sub-regional environment is strong, as well as the sense of belonging to a community that overlaps with locality in the form of caste-dominated settlements. Different forms of land tenure, such as common ownership associated with the decline of agriculture, produce other forms of informality in small towns. Because of these reasons, they fall less into the dominant image of the slums as diverging from urban ideals.

On the other hand, their peculiarities relate to specific conditions to which planning and governing are subject in small cities. In India, planning has contributed to frame urban informality as not conforming to particular ideals of city carried by planners and administrators. Planning instruments thus participated to perpetuating the uneven city's geography as the elites succeed to use them to reconfigure their control on the land to the detriment of the poor. However, urban informality in small towns also results from the inactive role of administrations in urban planning and services provision, as they are financially weaker, unable to access funds and dominated by traditional local leaders who use the exercise of power as an income resource. Whereas municipalities are responsible for slum upgrading in the decentralized governance system, decisions continue to be centralized and functions are locally carried out by state authorities and parastatal agencies that operate without any relationship with the elected representatives. Community participation in local governance is limited in slums and is depending on initiatives of the middle class who seems to discipline the urban poor rather than to support their struggles.

Beyond differing for the geographical and administrative specificity of small cities, the role of the latter in Indian urban and slum policies influenced the way slums are considered. Historically, national slum policies have focused on big cities and with different approaches that depended on the changing understanding of the problem over time. After a first phase of policies committed to eradicate slums in large cities and prevent their growth through the construction of low income housing, the second phase has aimed to improving the conditions of slums rather than removing them, and developing smaller cities to balance the attraction of migrants in big cities. Influenced by the liberalisation of the economy in the 1990s, the third phase has focused on replacing the state with the market and has promoted the participation of the private sector, NGOs and slum dwellers in urban development. Urban policies in the 2000s further aimed to reform and modernise the functioning of cities, especially big and metro cities considered more important for the economic development of the country, thus moving away from former attempts of balanced regional development. Ignoring administrative constraints and low capacities of small cities and influenced by the goal of creating global cities, urban and slum policies carry a big city bias confirmed by the disparity in the distribution of central assistance.

Such big city bias underlies the Slum-free Cities national strategy and its flagship policy scheme Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY), based on a project of inclusive growth to increase poor households' access to finance. This strategy was criticised as it transforms land held by squatters into real estate development projects, which can result in escalating land prices and displacing slum dwellers. RAY generalises an approach of slum redevelopment that involves private promoters using land as a resource. Since its success is based on high land prices, developers are only interested to work in metro cities and their search for high profit margins favours the creation of 'vertical slums'. Furthermore, the strategy only focuses on housing for slum dwellers while the cost of land is to be borne by local governments, but municipalities prefer to use their land to develop real estate projects more than to house the poor. In slum redevelopment, the security of tenure is divorced from incremental investments by the slum dwellers, who have little control over the redevelopment process, while other problems include the need of land for transit camp and the risk that eligibility criteria and beneficiary contribution might exclude part of the slum dwellers.

Slum-free Cities and the RAY policy scheme envisage a changing role for the state, private and NGOs and appeal for the inclusion of slum residents in the slum

redevelopment. However, the conflicting nature of the relationships between these actors reduces the effective community participation on ground, resulting in projects resembling public housing. On the one hand, the national policies do not build on the capacities of municipalities to dialogue with local stakeholders. Community participation is co-opted and inconsistently implemented as stakeholders are private and profit-oriented, while NGOs and local leaders acting as intermediaries are not impartial as they pursue their interests. Participatory practices of slum mapping and enumeration imposed from above can be perceived as an injunction and risk to be standardized by NGOs. Secondly, communities are far from homogeneous, and CBOs may remain under the control of elites who do not represent all groups and can focus on individual interests. Participation can thus be limited by a logic of patronage where poor people depend on their leaders and are moved by individual rather than collective interests. Especially in small cities, local politicians also have a role despite being not included in the policy, which instead is crucial to implement slum policies or mobilize them to strengthen their role in patron's clientelism in the absence of private developers. The middle class could also assume a potential role in organizing citizen's groups in small cities, taking up projects of slum upgrading influenced by processes of city beautification and different perceptions of slums than the ones in big cities.

CHAPTER 2

SLUM IN BHUJ: AN EXEMPLARY CASE OF SMALL CITY DEVELOPMENT

Bhuj represents an exemplary case of rising city that changed from a provincial town in a peripheral region to an example of resilient development with international visibility. Following the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, state agencies and international and local organisations concentrated an exceptional effort for reconstruction, making Bhuj the symbolic centre of the region's recovery. The process of reconstruction became an opportunity to rethink its governance and planning system, turning Bhuj into an exception of small city with a planning authority and a Town Plan that later drove its development. External-led policies engendered the recent development of Bhuj. At the same time, the articulation between external influences and local forces influenced its reconstruction and development and the emergence of new questions about possible urban futures. A further peculiarity of Bhuj is the large amount of studies focused on the post-earthquake changes, which also represent an exception to the researchers' lack of attention to small cities.

This chapter studies the slums of Bhuj in relation to the dynamic of a rising small city, questioning how the role of informal settlements has evolved in the context of post-disaster reconstruction and growth. The chapter explores their development from a historical perspective and the implication in the process of reconstruction and planning and how this process transformed informal settlements into slums. Largely based on the literature on the city transformation, the chapter is organized in four sections. The first section locates Bhuj in the broader context of the rising region of Kacch where growing dynamics of industrialisation and urbanisation increased the precariousness of the urban poor. The next sections focus on the slums of Bhuj by studying their historical evolution in the city. The second section retraces the origins and development of informal settlements until the 2001 earthquake, whose legitimacy in the political and cultural context of the capital of the princely state was lost by becoming illegal settlements in

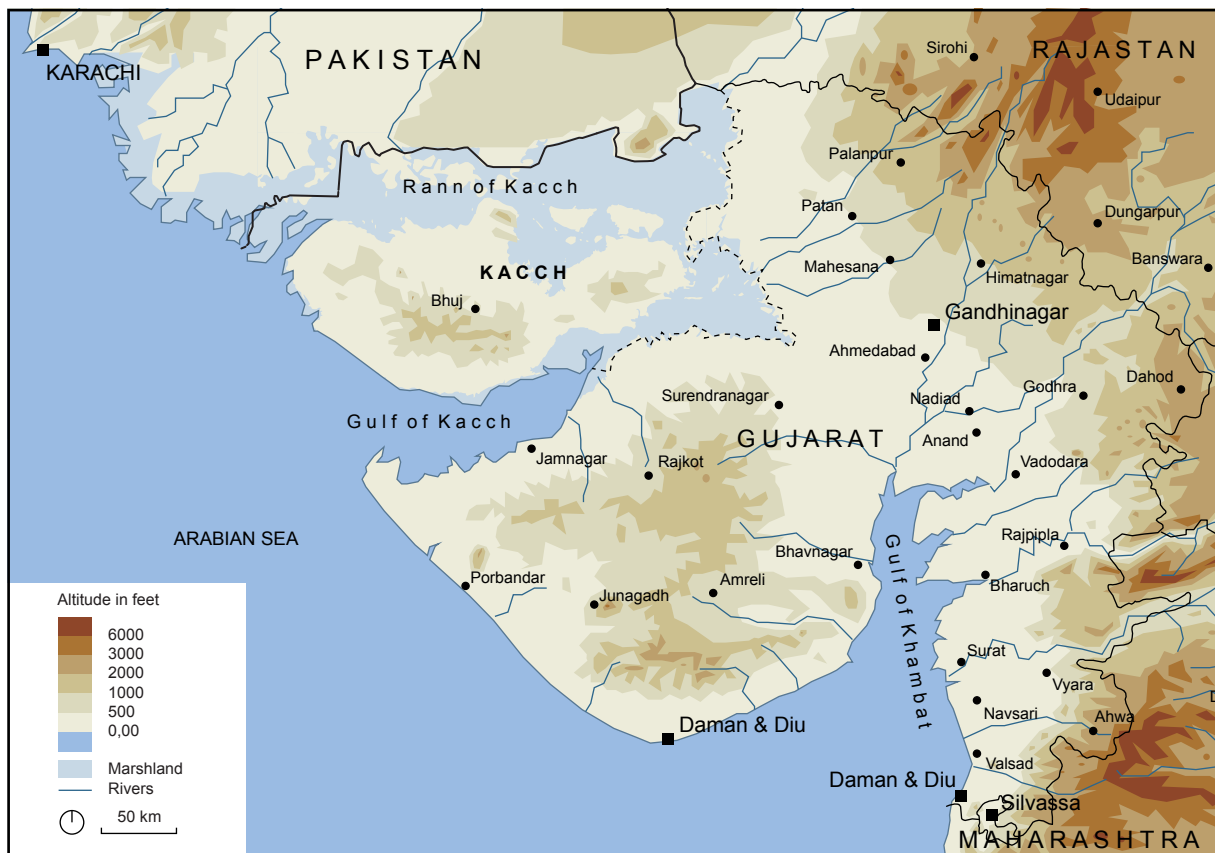
the post-colonial period. The third section focuses on their exclusion from the process of post-earthquake reconstruction and urban planning and the increased stigmatisation and vulnerability produced by their non-compliance with the new planning and regulatory framework.

The fourth section analyses the role of slums after the reconstruction process was over. The urban expansion increased their visibility and turned their perception from peripheral informal settlements into centrally located slums. Their presence in the city appears mainly a problem of legitimacy in a rising small city and for the increasing distance between the rural and urban worlds. The growth and creation of new slums due to migration and the absorption of populations expelled from the formal land and housing market were further consequences of the urban development. These dynamics participate to increase the diversity and complexity of relationships and identity claims, as slums concentrate pre-existing and new conditions of precariousness produced by the dynamics of rising city.

2.1. KACCH: RISING REGION

2.1.1. A HISTORIC BACKGROUND OF ISOLATION AND VULNERABILITY

The district of Kacch occupies the westernmost part of the peninsular regions of the State of Gujarat, on the border with Pakistan. Because of its position and morphology, the Kacch appears virtually like an island (Simpson 2010): it is surrounded by the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Kacch to the west and south, and by the seasonal marshland of the Rann of Kacch which separates it from Sindh to the north, and north Gujarat (districts of Radhanpur and Banaskantha) and Saurashtra to the east (see Map 2). Before the Independence it was a kingdom from 1147 to 1819 and later a semi-independent kingdom, tributary of the colonial government from 1819 to 1947. The seat of the kingdom was Bhuj, which later became the administrative capital.



Map 2. Physical map of Gujarat

Source: Google Earth, Survey of India 2011. Realized by: the author

With a surface of 45,674 sq.km, the Kacch is the largest district in Gujarat, but at the same time the less inhabited in the state and one of the lowest in India, with a population of 2,092,371 - 3.5% of the State (Census of India 2011). About half of the district is in fact occupied by the Rann of Kacch that is uninhabited. The district is divided into 10 *talukas*¹: Bhuj and Nakhatrana - relatively the most and the less populated - to the north, Lakhpat and Abdasa to the west, Mandvi, Mundra, Anjar and Gandhidham to the south, Bhachau and Rapar to the east. Two-thirds of the population lives in rural areas and 877 villages, the rest is concentrated in 14 towns. The Kacch has a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious population which includes hundreds of communities belonging to different sectarians, caste and regional interest groups, testifying of an extremely dense network of travel, trade and pilgrimage routes in the region (Ibrahim 2011). Most of them are Hindus (79.6%) while the rest is mainly Muslim (21.1%, higher than the state average of 9.67%) with a minimal part of other religions (2%) (Census of India 2011). The presence of tribal groups is lower than the State's average. The mother tongue of 36% of the population, and the most commonly spoken is Kacchi, more similar to Sindhi than Gujarati, but the latter is the most widely used written language since Kacchi has no written form.

A strong division between north and south characterizes the socio-economy of Kacch. The areas between the coastal strip to the south and Bhuj are the most urbanized and have always been in contact with the outside by sea trade activities, they have a flourishing agriculture and the highest industrialisation: this is the richest part, where the greatest disparities are also found. The rest of the region, extended to the north and to the west, has uncultivated lands where pastoralism still prevails: this part is poorer although more egalitarian (Mehta 2005). While these two parts have historically structured the economy and society of the region, the disparity between them has increased in the second half of the 20th century.

Located centrally in the region as a point of contact between the north and the south, Bhuj has always been the administrative, cultural and symbolic centre of Kacch. It is also the city that most represents the rise of the region in the 2000s – when it has experienced the fastest growth in the country and one of the fastest in the world (FOKIA 2015) – a dynamic that is intrinsically bound to the 2001 earthquake and the subsequent process of reconstruction and development. Also known as the Bhuj earthquake for the

1 The term *taluka* designates an administrative subdivision within a district.

epicentre being not far from the city², it was recorded as one of the most devastating disasters in India in recent years, having killed between 13,000 and 20,000 people, injured 167,000 and destroyed nearly 400,000 homes. The reconstruction became an opportunity to rejuvenate the region, in first place through state policies of industrial and infrastructural development aiming to attract investments. The boom economy that followed marked the entry of Kacch into the economic geography of globalisation. The region was promoted as the 'Singapore of Gujarat', 'major hub for global industry and tourism', 'investment paradise', etc. (ibid.) and portrayed as an example of a resilient region associated to the notion of 'build back better' (Balachandran 2003).

What is exalted as a 'success story' and promoted as a model for other regions in India, is above all the speed and the extent of the change and the radical departure from the negative image of economically backward and peripheral district. For a long time, Kacch appeared as remote and vulnerable because of its geographical and environmental conditions: isolated localisation, scarcity of water, and high seismic activity with recurrence of devastating earthquakes. The 'natural' boundaries of the Rann and the Gulf of Kacch would have influenced its political, social and economic history, developing an identity of 'island culture'³ (Mehta 2005). Such conditions of vulnerability and backwardness would have resulted from a dynamic landscape where geological and anthropic processes produced tremendous changes in a relatively short time. This process seems to have characterized the last two centuries, in particular after the diversion of the Indus River and the formation of the Rann of Kacch following the earthquake of 1819. If the princely state of the early Nineteenth century was still prosperous in several parts, the region becomes later more arid, leading to a gradual decline and a constant depopulation (ibid.).

The peripheral condition of Kacch continues after the Independence in 1947 and the following inclusion in the unified state of Gujarat in 1960⁴. With the Partition between India and Pakistan, the Kacch draws attention from the perspective of national security for its strategic location on the international border. The national imaginary as a frontier territory vulnerable to external aggression has increased with the border dispute with

2 Despite Bhuj was situated only 20 km away from the epicentre, other towns in Kacch were more severely damaged. However, the devastation in Bhuj was given more importance for its centrality (Simpson 2014).

3 Kacch continues to be referred to as 'industrial island' still in today's global conjuncture (CCIK 2015).

4 In June 1948, the Kacch became part of the Indian Union, and the 400 years old Jadeja king's rule over Bhuj has ended. After the integration with India, during 1948-1956 it was placed directly under the Central Government, as a Part C state. Despite public opposition, the Kacch was integrated with the bilingual Bombay state on November 1, 1956. With the bifurcation of Bombay state on May 1, 1960 into Maharashtra and Gujarat, the Kacch became a district in the newly formed Gujarat state (Theckethil 2012).

Pakistan in 1965, resulting in its extensive militarization (Theckethil 2012). In the same period, the government of India focused on the development of the region: by creating the port of Kandla at the bottom of the Gulf of Kacch to replace the role of Karachi of serving the northern and central hinterland of India, since the latter became part of Pakistan after the Partition (Charlier 2017); and founding a township near the port of Kandla to host a large group of people displaced from the Sindh region in Pakistan⁵. In the next four decades, the main organisations that undertook development activities were the Sindhu Resettlement Corporation Limited (SRCL), the Kandla Port Trust (KPT), the Indian Railways, the Department of Telecommunications and the Military Engineering Service. Since then, the centre of the economic development has moved to the east and construction in other parts of the region is a consequence of the development in the Gandhidham-Adipur areas.

In 1960, the transition from being an independent state under the Indian Union to a district of the new state of Gujarat has brought Kacch into the political project of construction of the state of Gujarat. The Gujarati political arena has always been polarised on a centre-periphery axis dominated by the urban society of Brahmins and mercantile castes concentrated on the 'mainland' plains to the east, over a different caste culture and government system ruled by Kshatriya in the western peninsular regions (Tambs-Lyche and Sud 2016). The cultural project of a modern Gujarat is based on this polarisation: driven by the bourgeoisie of the 'mainland Gujarat', it aims to reform the 'periphery' along liberal and mercantile values and religious state identity and on a selective interpretation of history based on imagined communities (ibid).

By reducing prior elites to a subordinate role, this process introduced important changes in Kacch that led to a departure from a historically evolved socioeconomic set-up. Land reforms embedded in a capitalist paradigm of growth and efficiency, favoured large middle and upper caste farmers and facilitated easy sale and purchase (Sud 2007). This strategy replaced traditional low water-consuming occupations like pastoralism and handicrafts with water-intensive modern agriculture, turning the regional economy over-dependent on external resources (Bharwada and Mahajan 2002). Excluding these reforms, Kacch did not represent a priority of development in the first decades of post-colonial period, since its main lever of development – the process of industrialisation – focuses on the mainland.

5 The development of Gandhidam and nearby Adipur undertook by the central Government through the SRCL has continued until the 1970s (Theckethil 2012).

2.1.2. A SUCCESS STORY OF RAPID GROWTH WITH CONCERN

Against this historical condition of remoteness and vulnerability, the rise of Kacch is a recent phenomenon that extends over the last three decades. While this dynamic is acknowledged in the period of post-earthquake reconstruction, the process of regional growth can be traced back one decade earlier as a conjuncture of state interventions. It is firstly understood within the larger economic policy context of the Nineties, where structural reforms aim to open the country to the global economy by privileging urban centres as 'engines of growth'. The strategy is based on the assumption that cities would attract capitals resulting in the development of infrastructures and industries and therefore of employment. Reforms therefore aim to favour the urbanisation process since industrial growth would concentrate around urban centres. Conversely, industries that develop in rural areas are expected to induce their progressive urbanisation: in this strategy, urbanisation and industrialisation are in a relationship of mutual influence (Kundu 2002). Gujarat assumed a role of leadership as one of the highly industrialised and fastest growing states in India (GOI 2010). Its rapid growth was favoured by higher advantage in agriculture and manufacturing as compared to other states, and supported by the State's political ideology to attract the big industry through incentives and subsidies (Kundu 2002).

A longer process of territorial integration of peripheral regions reflects the inclusion of Kacch in this strategy of urban and industrial development. The state of Gujarat participates to the affirmation of a vast economic region that has started with the rapid growth of Delhi and Mumbai in the Eighties and proceeded with the development of corridors of activity gradually connecting territories and secondary cities (Cadène 2017). In Gujarat, this process was supported by industrial policies in the Nineties that shifted the focus from the eastern part of state – industrialized but progressively saturated – known as 'colonial corridor' or 'golden corridor', towards the coastal and peninsular regions seeking to develop a new 'silver corridor' of port activities and export on international markets (Tambs-Lyche and Sud 2016).

In this strategy, institutions and privates converged to lead Gujarat into a real "port revolution" by achieving the primacy of maritime activities in India (Charlier 2017). This development is primarily due to its strategic position for opening up to key markets in the Middle Eastern and European countries, and for the capacity to supply the central regions of India, but also to the favourable morphological and environmental conditions. The ports in the Gulf of Kacch experienced a spectacular growth turning the region famous as a new

"global gateway to India": in particular Sikka in Jamnagar district and Mundra in Kacch, the most important of the country despite being considered as minor ports, and the major port of Kandla, third in the country (ibid.). With the state dedicating important resources to the strengthening of the coastal strip, Kacch started emerging in the country's economy in the Nineties.

The following phase of development is subsequent to the 2001 Gujarat earthquake. While the epicentre and most damages were concentrated in Kacch⁶, the State Government relied on the impact of the earthquake on a larger scale to have greater access to international funds. The need to rebuild became an opportunity to accelerate reforms and 'restructure' its institutions and functioning. Reforms in the major sectors of land management, infrastructure development, urban governance, town planning and finance, are part of a neoliberal logic of transferring responsibilities of risk management from the state to the private sector (Simpson 2014). For example, land reforms aimed both to remove protectionist measures that work against market forces and to facilitate their participation by improving procedures for tenure regularisation and land registration. The reform of urban governance aimed to develop projects capable of accessing the funds of international banks. Main structures introduced at the state and local level in post-earthquake governance operate on private sector lines (ibid.). While on the one hand these reforms resulted in a dramatic shift in relations between state and citizens, on the other they threw the conditions for the spread of industry in the region. With the intention of revitalising its economy, the state invested to develop infrastructures and offered excise and sales tax concessions for five years to new industries. The results were slow at the beginning but industrialisation took a surprising pace until Kacch became a major industrial hub from the mid-2000s.

The rise of Kacch has been optimistically celebrated by many scholars and experts as a 'success story', in line with the larger success of the Gujarat model. Despite that, such model has also attracted criticisms, as "a case of poverty amid prosperity, and that growth is not really inclusive, with little impact on the areas of employment, wages, health, or education for the masses" (Sud 2012, in Hirway et al. 2014). The state's priority in becoming the fastest growing economy and most attractive investment destination in India and in the world seems to have led to compromise its developmental goals, exacerbate inequalities and weaken the links between growth and inclusion. In its approach to invite premier and big-scale industrial units through incentives and subsidies, the State Government seems to have

6 Out of 5 districts hit in Gujarat, 90% all deaths and 85% of lost assets concentrated in Kacch (Balachandran 2010).

neglected the promotion of productive employment for all, promoted crony capitalism and market distortion by favouring corporate investments and posing serious problems for the life and livelihood of people, and reduced the allocation of funds for social sector (Hirway et al. 2014).

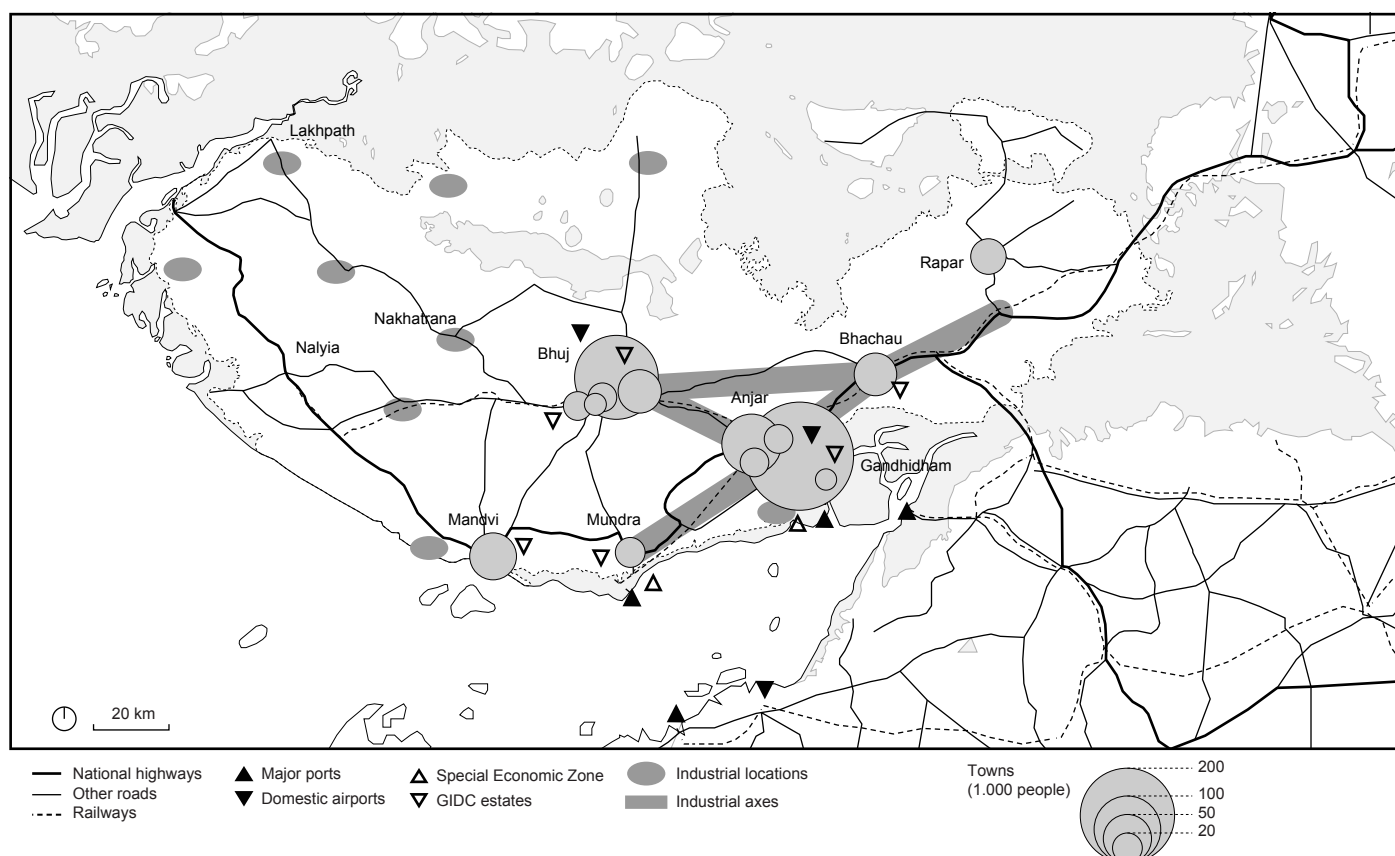
This model of development appears as not inclusive and non-sustainable. The industrial growth led to an important migration of workers from outside as well as intra-state in a capitalist mode of production where they don't receive appropriate reward or recognition. Industries have not created much employment in the formal sector and have therefore increased the casualization of workers. Mahadevia (2014) points how this model has resulted into an urban development paradigm that is regressive for the poor. She highlights the anomaly that industrialisation has not translated into urbanisation because of the very nature of an economic growth that is not generating employment.

While the state has concentrated its efforts of urban development in metro cities, a dispersed industrialisation has resulted in a high growth and low human welfare, in particular of those employed in the informal sector: "Though urban Gujarat has been projected as a success story, of high growth and city transformation, within urban Gujarat, there is a situation of 'tale of two cities'. There is a schism—of high growth and poor employment for a very large section of population, high growth and low food consumption of a section of the population, and high investments in urban infrastructure and inadequate attention to housing the urban poor" (ibid.:364). These condition are exacerbated in rapidly changing areas like Kacch, where the change towards a more competitive, aggressive and profit-oriented society is mirrored by a rising deterioration of the conditions of the urban poor and the increasing of informality (Simpson 2014).

2.1.3. POLARISED DEVELOPMENT AND GROWING URBAN DISPARITIES

The territorial dynamics reveals the central role of cities and industries and their nexus in the regional development (see Map 3). The region is an example of the dichotomy in the reforms period between concentrated urbanisation and widespread industrialisation, where growth is shifted from the metropolis to small and medium-sized cities in peripheral and low urbanized districts which benefit from the coastal location (Mahadevia 2014). In Kacch, the influence of the ports of Kandla and Mundra on the industrialization of the district is notable, considering the distance from important cities, and for having facilitated the

development of Special Economic Zones and large multi-product logistics platforms, while in parallel port activities paved the way to exploit mineral resources (Charlier 2017). The attraction of industries and employment by the major ports along the coast has led to an increasingly polarized development, thus widening the historic disparities between south and north (Metha 2005).



Map 3. Territorial dynamics

Sources: GIDB 2005, Census of India 2011. Realized by: the author

The Kacch registers a high population growth between 2001 and 2011, well above the state average: the district has witnessed a rise in population from around 1½ to 2 millions, with a growth rate of 32.03% in comparison to state average of 19.17%. Half of this population growth concentrates in urban areas, which increase of more than 50% (Census of India 2011). This urban growth largely results from migrant population from rural areas, nearby districts and other states, attracted in Kacch by its growing economy. In fact, such growth concentrates in the most industrialized *talukas*, it is mostly male⁷ and belongs to Scheduled

⁷ Traditionally, sex ratio in the region has been higher than the same for Gujarat. From 1911 to 1971 sex ratio of the district was above 1,000 females for 1,000 males, but since then ratio has changed and in 2011 it became 908, which is still slightly less than the state's average of 919. This may be attributable to increase in

Castes (GSIDS 2016) (see Table 1).

Between 2001 and 2011, the highest growth is concentrated in the two main centres of Gandhidam and Bhuj, the only 'class I cities' – with a population of more than 100.000 – representing half of the urban population of the district (which amounts to 730,000 in 2011) (see Table 2). Gandhidam was founded after the Partition to welcome displaced people from Pakistan, it is the economic capital and the largest city of Kacch since 1991, and the fastest growing city thanks to a constant decadal growth of over 50%. Its expansion is influenced by the attraction of the nearby port of Kandla. Nowadays Gandhidam forms a continuum with the nearby centres of Anjar, the third largest town in the district, Kandla and two new census towns of Galpadar and Antarjal: altogether they constitute more than half of the district's urban population.

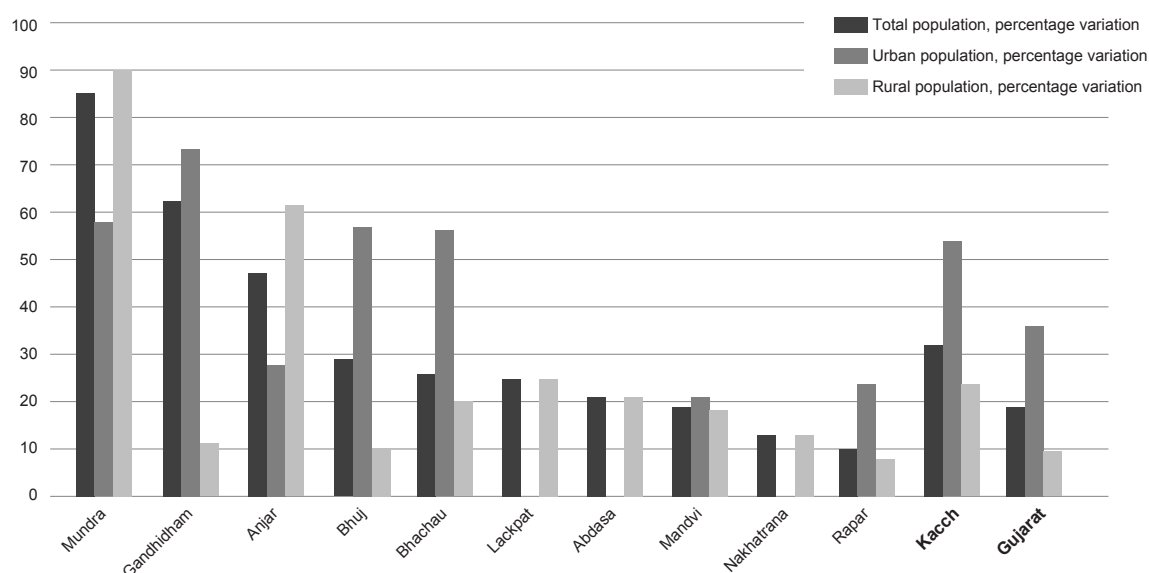


Table 1. Population growth 2001-2011 per Taluka

Source: Census of India 2011. Realized by: the author

Bhuj is the administrative capital and second city of Kacch. Its centrality as administrative and trade centre has not disappeared, with a decadal growth increasing from 30% between 1951 and 1981, to 50% in 1981-1991 and 2001-2011. Bhuj represents an example and at the same time a peculiarity in the recent process of development. More than for the increase of industries, being far from major ports and industrial clusters, its growth in the post-

migration of male workers to the region for port and road transportation related activities and extensive out migration of households to Mumbai and other places in India. The increase of urban population in the period 2001-2011 was 54.72% male and 51.98% female. The proportion rises up to a male growth of 112.4% against female growth of 55.7% in Mundra *taluka*, one of the most industrialized (Census of India 2011).

earthquake period (from 98,528 inhabitants in 2001 to 148,834 inhabitants in 2011) is due to other factors: its importance as political-administrative centre, its central localisation in the region hence its role as major hub, and above all the important reconstruction effort. Bhuj has expanded to reach 4 new census towns – Madhapar, Mirjhapar, Sukhpar, Mankuva – with which it represents almost a third of the district's urban population. The localisation of the new census towns near the two main urban centres demonstrates their expansion and attraction of population and activities. The common development of two neighbour agglomerations of Bhuj and Gandhidham lead the urbanization of their two *talukas* as well as the *taluka* of Anjar, which is linked to them.

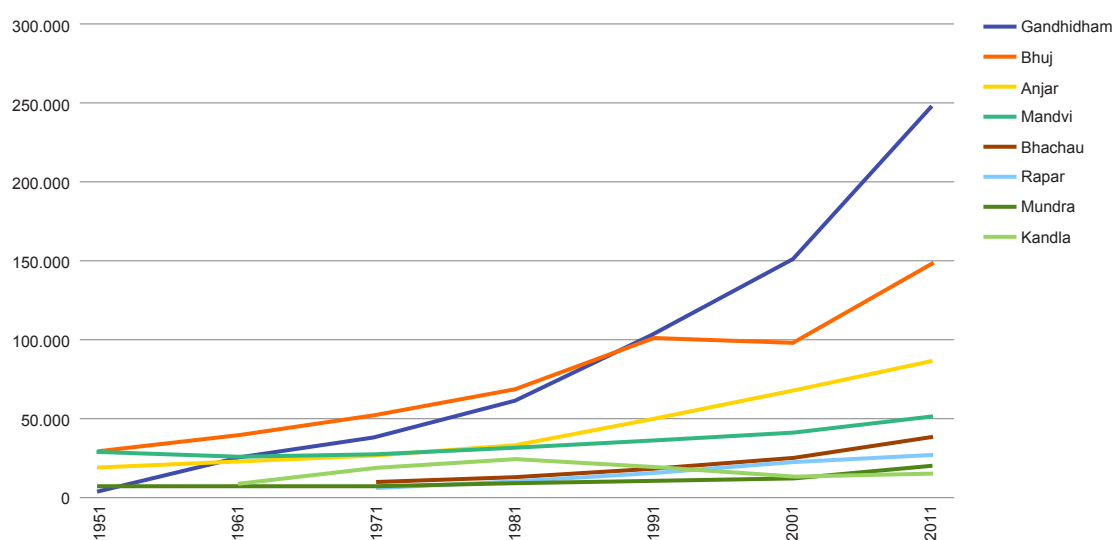


Table 2. Population growth 1951-2011 per town

Source: Census of India 2011. Realized by: the author

The *talukas* of Mandvi, Bhachau, Mundra and Rapar are less urbanized, whose population concentrated in the district capitals do not exceed 50,000. Despite that, the urban growth in the 2001-2011 decade is concentrated not only in Gandhidham and Bhuj, but also in Bhachau and Mundra (while Mandvi and Anjar show a lower growth). These are the *talukas* with the highest concentration of industrial projects in the post-reform period (MacDonald 2005), attracted first and foremost by the development of the ports of Kandla and Mundra – the second port of the state and largest private port of India⁸ – and thanks to their connection

⁸ The traffic in the port of Mundra increased exponentially since its operationalisation by the private group Adani and following infrastructural expansion. To this must be added the extension of the National Highway-8A to Mandvi and Gandhidam and the railway connection to Gandhidam.

to the mainland via Bhachau. Bhachau is localized on the main axis of development from Gandhidam to east in direction of Ahmedabad: it plays a role of 'gate' to the district, being placed at the crossing point between the coastal route and the route to Bhuj. Industries have been growing around urban centres and along the axes between Gandhidam, Bhachau and Mundra, and those connecting Bhuj with Bhachau and with Gandhidam. The industrialisation of the Bhuj *taluka* is not concentrated around the city but along the axes with Bhachau and Gandhidam. In parallel, the rapid growth of industrialisation in these *talukas* has led to the creation of ancillary small and medium enterprises, whose activities are largely linked to the chain of large industries (GSIDS 2016).

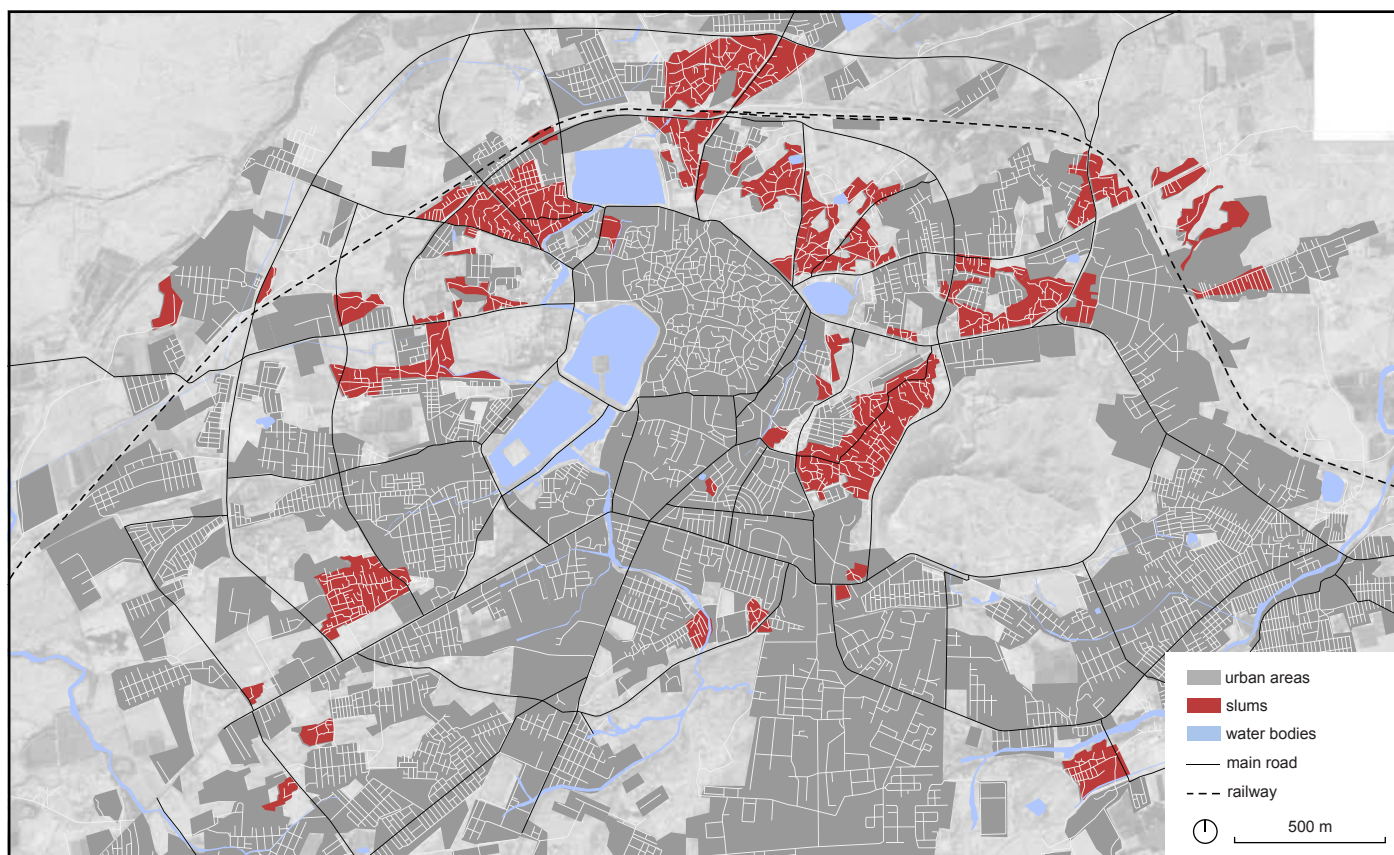
The urbanisation and industrialisation process have developed in close relationship in the south-east of Kacch, along the coast and towards the centre of the district. However, whereas industrialisation has spread more widely in the district, the same has not happened for the urban growth. In Lakpat, Nakhatrana and Abdasa *talukas* there are currently no urban centres. These areas have remained isolated until recently, the road from Nakhatrana to Lakpat was given priority in the Eighties for strategic reasons, opening up the area for commercial exploitation of deposits of lignite, gypsum, and rock-salt. The new highways constructed during the 1970s and the Broad Gauge Railway line in the 1980s, served the south coast and did not extend beyond Bhuj, thus limiting the influx of people on the westernmost areas.

The industrialisation of northern and western *talukas* took shape in the spread of big industries in mineral and salt production, whose activity requires an isolated location and large surfaces, and whose capacity to invest in their own infrastructures unties them from the proximity to existing infrastructure. These industrial units are therefore not concentrated near to urban centres and did not involve the development of ancillary enterprises, nor a considerable urban growth. Due to the distance from cities, they have attracted labour force from neighbouring villages without translating into phenomena of migration. The spatial distribution of development in post-2000 Kacch appears thus unbalanced. The southeast agglomeration of Gandhidam-Anjar – which was already the most urbanized – and nearby coastal towns of Bhachau and Mundra further expanded in relation to the industrial growth. Conversely, the industrialisation in the north and west parts of Kacch did not follow a substantial urban growth. Therefore, both high growth and urbanisation, and both increasing informalisation of employment and urban poverty associated with the influx of migrants (Mahadevia 2014), did concentrate in the former, participating to increase the socio-economic division of Kacch between north and south.

2.2. BHUJ AND ITS SLUMS BEFORE THE 2001 GUJARAT EARTHQUAKE

2.2.1. SLUMS IN BHUJ, A CATEGORY INTRODUCED BY URBAN POLICIES

According to the 2011 Census, Bhuj has a population of 148,834 spread over 41.1 sq.km. While the government surveys report the city as almost having no slums⁹, around 30% of the urban population (45,000 inhabitants or 13,978 households) live in 77 slum settlements as per the most recent Slum Survey realized by local NGOs (Hunnarshala 2018) (see Map 4). This survey describes a varied and heterogeneous socioeconomic situation. The religious identities are equally shared between Hindus (56%) and Muslims (44%), while the caste identities are more diversified and include *Vaghri*, *Kumbhar*, *Rabari*, *Jogi*, *Patani*, *Lohar*, as prominent castes.



Map 4. Slum settlements in Bhuj

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

⁹ The 2001 Census of India does not count slum population, and the Census 2011 slum data only listed 258 households (Census of India 2011).

The majority (65%) belong to other backward classes (OBCs), while Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes population constitute 29%, attesting a significant proportion of vulnerable households, and only 6% belong to general (upper) caste group. The slum population is young, with an average age around 25 years and not differing significantly between sexes, and one third is illiterate, especially working women (De et al. 2017). The age of these settlements range between 10 and 150 years, but a growing dynamics emerges in the last two decades as almost half of their population is staying for less than 20 years, while only 20% since more than 40 years. This recent growth is largely due to the migrations of labour workers attracted by the post-earthquake boom, also attested by the fact that the population that belongs to Scheduled Caste and OBC prevail in the last 20 years, and 70% of the settlements occupy encroached public land as the majority of the population is new to the place (ibid.). The dominant primary occupations of both adult and youth are as non-agricultural labour, artisan workers in household and cottage industries, and labour workers in constructions. Adult males are mostly employed as non-agricultural labour and construction workers, while females as small artisan and domestic helpers or in tie and dye work relating to *bandhni*, an important local artisan product. The average monthly income of households is Rs. 18,576, which is quite high given that 50% are below the poverty line (BPL). The average income of male is almost the double of that of female despite one-third of women contribute more than 50% of the total family income, and 19% contribute more than 90% (ibid.).

Whereas the majority of settlements identified as slums already existed before the earthquake, their changing role in the context of the post-earthquake reconstruction and development brings to consider them from a critical perspective by questioning how the category was produced. The first slum survey in Bhuj was realized in 2001 with the aim of providing specific guidelines for the integration of these settlements in the urban plan. Despite its preliminary character, the survey allowed to size and integrate slums in Bhuj within the newly introduced urban planning instruments¹⁰ (BHADA 2001). Further studies were carried by several NGOs in the context of development activities in Bhuj (DMI 2004; Verhagen and Bhatt 2006; Schneider-Sliwa and Bhatt 2008; Wieland 2008; Prajapati et al. 2011; TISS 2014; De et al. 2019), and they were thus influenced by the organisations' objectives. In 2011, the NGO SETU realized a household level survey

10 The survey was realized as a part of the Draft Development Plan, 2001. It was conceived as a preliminary study in a situation of urgency, referring to the need to carry out more detailed studies, in particular the mapping of each area and database of each inhabitant and to adopt a broad definition including issues of shelter, infrastructure, environment and socioeconomic (BHADA 2001a).

covering the city as part of the Homes in the City (HIC) program.

The survey was updated in 2016 by the NGO Hunnarshala as part of a programme of slum redevelopment in Bhuj under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Housing for All (PMAY-HFA) central policy scheme (Hunnarshala 2018). To identify slums, the survey used the definition provided by the national policy as "A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities" (GOI 2016:iii). However, it also included settlements with a smaller number of households¹¹, as well as low-income areas, areas with negligible public infrastructure, areas where there are no land rights, and areas that were not notified by the municipality (De et al. 2017).

Before 2001, there were no studies or surveys mentioning the presence of slums in Bhuj, nor they appeared in official documents. The former Development Plan prepared in 1976 by the Town Planning and Valuation Department consisted of a land use and zoning map that demarcated areas according to specific land use categories without specifying the presence of slums, informal or squatter areas (Balachandran 2002). The 'problem' of slums thus emerged only recently in Bhuj and highlights the role of urban policies in the local construction of the category. Disaster management authorities and urban planners as well as NGO's staff members implicated in the process of post-earthquake reconstruction and development have introduced the English term 'slum'. The terminology and category of slums is thus part of the changing governance structure and planning system that new institutions and professionals 'from outside' brought in the city and region (Simpson 2005). The notion, influenced by their understanding of slum as highly dense settlements with striking visibility and high vulnerability, differs from informal settlements in Bhuj so that "the typical notion of slum is not directly applicable to them" (Hunnarshala 2014a:23). One of the directors of the organisation describe slums in Bhuj in these terms:

"In small cities, density is low, so there is not the problem of lack of space of metro cities. And because of availability of land, there is no speculation on land so land values remains low and developers have no interest to work here. Cities in Kacch are a perfect example [...]. One more issue is in the

¹¹ The survey included isolated and compact settlements with 20-40 households like Sant Kabir Nagar, Madina Nagar, Hangami Awas, Vadhiyara Vas, Rajiv Nagar, Pithorapir Fadiyu.

nature of slums. In metro cities, slums are created by migrants who look for job opportunities, often they come from very far, so in slums they live disconnected from their origins. In Bhuj, slums are composed only by Kacchi people and they have still strong connections with villages because they have frequent exchanges, they are in contact. So a difference is in the number of migrants: due to their stability, people are often not in rent but they live in the same house since long time, they say they are owners. So the renters incidence is different from metro cities"¹².

In Bhuj, informal settlements have a low density with an average of 100 households per hectare, even though they cover only 6% of the whole municipality (Hunnarshala 2018), and *pucca* or 'permanent' as well as 'semi-permanent' houses account together for more than 90% of the total¹³ (De et al. 2017). The term used locally is *jopad-patti* that refers to their physical conditions, and the association with their rural origins, of villages rather than urban settlements, still dominates and influences their physical, cultural and moral representation among the population. However, the same term is used elsewhere to indicate more temporary 'homes' built along streets, as for example in Mumbai (Nijman 2010).

Considering slums in relation to the urban morphology, their concentration in the north of Bhuj participates to the city's polarized development between a growing south which is bourgeois, Hindu, rich and clean and a poor, congested and predominantly Muslim north. Beyond socioeconomic, religious and caste-belonging lines, the opposition also appears in terms of formality and legality. Such city's polarisation increased with the reconfiguration and re-population of different parts of the city and the new patterns of socio-spatial segregation created by the reconstruction (Simpson and Corbridge 2006a). However, a more complex and larger process underlies this duality, which emerges as a general trend of development without clear boundaries and is inscribed in a much longer

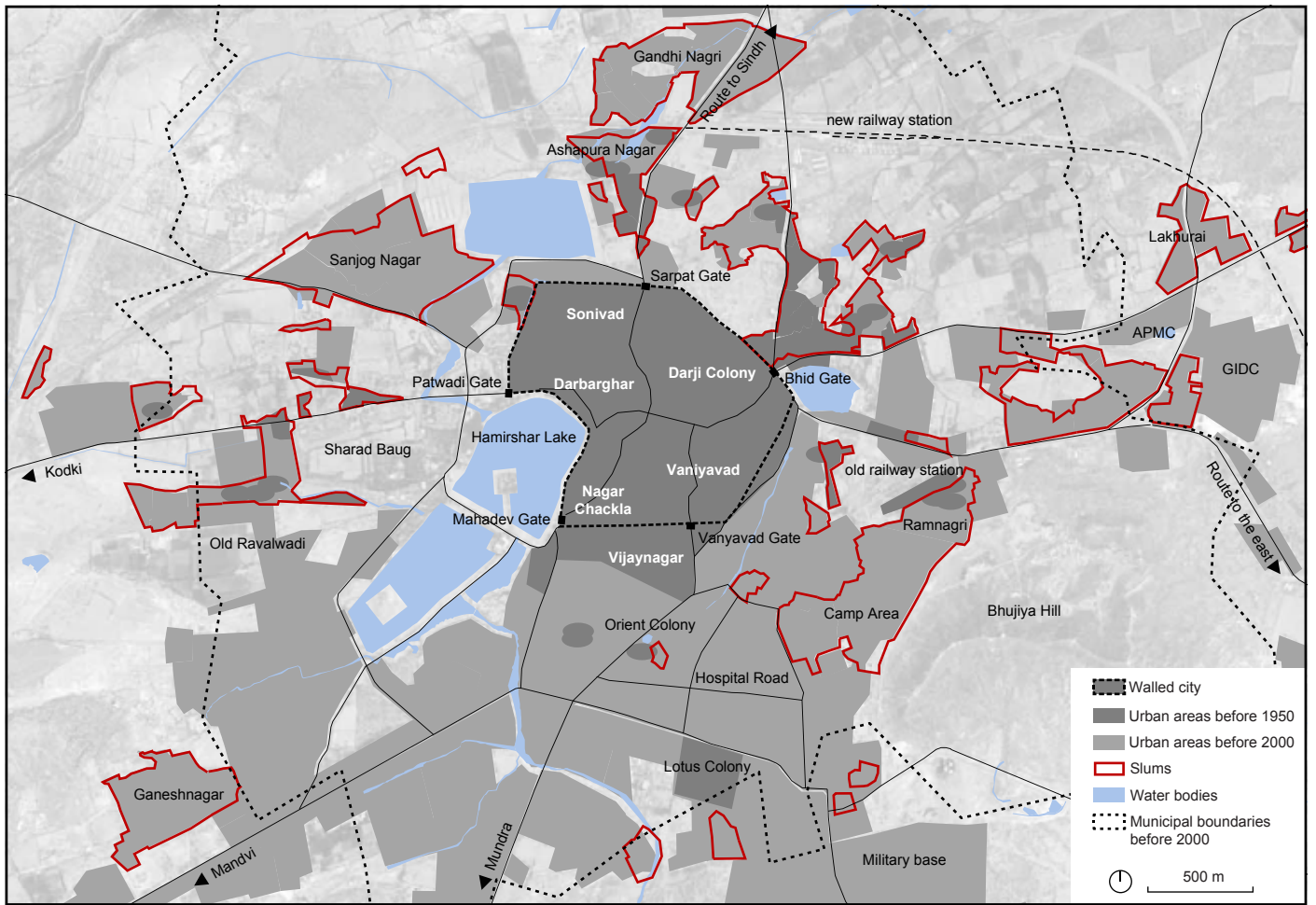
¹² Interview with S. Virmani, Hunnarshala, 19-08-2017.

¹³ *Pucca* comes from the Hindi term *paqqa* that means 'solid' and 'permanent', in contrast with the Hindi term *kačcā* meaning 'raw, inexperienced'. *Pucca* houses refer to dwellings designed to be solid and permanent, using materials such as stone, brick, cement, concrete or timber, in contrast to older homes made of mud and organic material. Since the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) programme of 1985, the Government of India makes the same distinction between *pucca* and *kaccha* to differentiate between houses built with industrially produced construction materials on the one hand, and vernacular houses built with locally available construction materials on the other. The terms are far from neutral, since the word *pucca* assumed a positive connotation as it became associated with progress and modernity, inversely to the word *kachcha* associated with poverty and backwardness (Barenstein and Iyengar 2010).

temporality since its diversification along caste, community and religious lines as well as formality and legal status exist long before the earthquake. Furthermore, other parts that are socially and morphologically diversified can be identified beyond this duality. The pre-earthquake Bhuj appears as constituted of three parts: the walled city; a sparse urbanisation alternating with agricultural and wastelands to the north, east and west of the walled city, which is predominantly unplanned and occupied by slums; and the planned settlements to the south and south-west of the walled city. In the last decades, a sprawling urbanisation emerged further south and southwest, consisting of dispersed colonies for exclusive residential use and commercial activities along main road axes. Finally, a large military base extends south of the centre outside the municipal boundaries, which however represents an important part of the urban population: together with the Air Force and border bases, the military base hosts a population of 40,000 to 50,000 people working for the defence service periodically (Theckethil 2012).

2.2.2. THE OLD BHUJ: INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Bhuj has developed since the beginning as an important commercial node: its central position at the intersection of the main routes that cross the region is crucial for its role of relay and in terms of territorial control. To this must be added the presence of the Bhujiya Hill, fortified in the 18th Century to defend the city, and the concentration of underground water due to the area's unique morphology in the region (CEPT 2016). The Hamirshar Lake, developed from a pre-existing lake together with an elaborated catchment system is "central to the city foundation and the popular explanations of development" (Tyabji 2006:20). The first phase of development has started in 1510 when the *Rao* (king) Hamir founded Bhuj and the *Rao* Khengarji made it the capital of the unified domain of Kacch in 1549. This phase corresponds to the growth of the walled city between the Hamirshar Lake and the Bhujiya Hill, until the erection of a defensive system that consolidated its actual configuration by the mid-18th century (see Map 5). The walled city, the oldest part and the symbolic centre of Bhuj, and still the densest area with almost 40,000 people living in 1 sq.km. (Theckethil 2012), was shaped by different groups concerned with building an occupational relationship with the monarchy (Tyabji 2006).



Map 5. Urban development before 2000

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a, Tyabji 2006. Realized by: the author

The Darbargarh or royal quarter was first developed, and later groups belonging to the *Nagar* Brahmin caste community settled to the south along the Hamirshar Lake. Saraf Bazaar was then developed to the east of the Darbargarh and merchant caste communities like *Vanya* and *Lohana* settled to the south of it, while artisan communities like *Soni* and *Darji* settled later to the north. In the walled city, people lived in *falyas* or enclaves differentiated by caste and religious identities, where the social, economic and political life worked in certain ways independently (ibid.). Such configuration based on caste-dominated neighbourhoods characterizes from the beginning the socio-spatial structure of the city, with high castes living in neighbourhoods toward the south and lower castes to the north.

The next two centuries, from the mid-18th to the mid-20th century, indicate a gradual slowdown of the urban development. As the walled city got congested, new settlements emerged along commercial routes to the east out of Bhid Gate and to the north out of Sarpat Gate, which developed as extensions of the market areas of Bhid Bazaar and

Sonivad/Sarpat Gate. These routes connected the 'mainland' regions to the east with the Sindh region of Pakistan to the north. The settlements were created by groups coming frequently from nearby villages, and grew in connection to market activities emerged out of Bhid Gate that was the main entrance to the city¹⁴, like Dantanya Vas, Sitara Chowk, Chand Chowk, Sonapuri, etc. Other settlements emerged out of Sarpat Gate, like Mamai Dev Nagar, Bhil Vas and Khumbarvas¹⁵, and in a lesser amount along Kodki Road to the west of Patwadi Gate, by groups serving the royal residence in Sharad Baug like Bakali Was, Sikari Falyiu and Natvas¹⁶. Along with the presence of trade routes, the presence of large lakes and ponds facilitated the settlement of groups to the north of Bhuj, explaining why people were reluctant to settle south until the second half of the 20th century. However, later urbanisation may have replaced older settlements out of the Mahadev Gate and Vanyavad Gate to the south¹⁷.

These settlements grew over time as more and more relatives joined from the villages attracted by the city's economy, and were identified and named after their caste and their traditional activity. Examples of settlements created by communities named for their activity include Bharwadvas, Khumbarvas, Shikari Faliyu, Bakhali Colony, Natvas, Dantanya Vas¹⁸ (Singh 1998). This dynamic of development shaped their urban form of grouped settlements configured as clusters of houses built by relative families, among which they practiced social and economic activities. Likewise the socio-spatial configuration of the old town, the clustering of people on the principle of belonging to the same caste or kinship is a common feature of traditional settlements in Kacch. Clustering takes different configurations depending on the community: nomadic and semi-nomadic communities like *Koli* and *Marwada*, as well as other communities like *Rabari* and *Ahir* that moved from nomadic to sedentary lifestyle, tend to live in *was* or *wadi*, co-operative kin clusters or loose joint family structure where nuclear family units live around a common courtyard and may share kitchen, living space, etc. Differently, communities like *Maheshwari*, *Harijan* or *Meghwal* tend to make larger settlements where the whole community lives along the streets radiating from a square or *chowk*,

14 The identity of Bhid as main market area remains in the toponomy as Bhid means people.

15 Settlements in Bapadayalu area north of Bhid Gate were created by pastoral groups that settled near existing cattle sheds (TISS 2014). These may be the royal stables that existed in proximity of the gate, to which its toponomy refers.

16 The Sharad Baug was started at the time of the city fortification as leisure area of the royal court, and later became a secondary residence.

17 Few pre-existences enclosed in later planned settlements survive south of the walled city, like Hinglaj Vadi.

18 *Bharwad* means shepherds, *Khumbar* means potter makers, *Shikari* means hunters, *Bakhali* means vegetables producers, *Nat* means dancers, *Dantan* means tooth cleaner producers (Singh 1998).

which is central to the social and religious life of the community (see Image 1) (Hunnarshala 2018).

Because of their links with the villages, these settlements relayed the city with rural areas and had a role of production and supply to the city as they functioned as spaces for gathering, processing and selling agricultural and handcrafted products. Such primary importance for the city's economy legitimated them as an integral part in a complex socioeconomic and cultural system of interdependence between different specialized groups. The possibility to settle down was granted by the King, who owned all the lands and had the absolute authority to decide who could occupy them (Tyabji 2006).



Image 1. Family clusters in Ramdevnagar (left) and Machhu Nagar (right)

For this reason they were part of the socio-spatial and symbolic hierarchy that had the King as the centre of the city and the region, and of caste-specific histories and origin myths which inscribed the place and the role of each group in relation to the central myth of the kingdom: "The town of Bhuj was 'read' by many Kachhis as a series of mutually resembling and interconnected, but also hierarchically distinguished and ranked, components in which architectural features are associated with particular moral populations" (Simpson 2006:575). Considering the variety of communities in Kacch due to its morphological and socioeconomic nature of 'island' (Mehta 2005), these settlements originated from groups coming from rural areas occupy an important part of the cultural identity of Bhuj as they are associated to the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious population of the region.

Such socio-spatial and moral order has survived the dissolution of the royal power in the post-colonial period (Simpson 2006). In fact, many communities identified as slums

assert their legitimacy as the King grant their occupation before the Independence despite the land tenure is attested very rarely by original documents. Nowadays, older settlements near the city gates and the royal compounds are denser and had have lost their initial caste homogeneity, as their population became mixed and many houses are rented out. However, some slums on the city edges continue to be predominately homogeneous caste-based settlements with socio-spatial relations based on family networks and caste-specific livelihood activities. This difference also appears in the housing type and the building materials: initially, shelters are *bhunghis* or huts made with grass, tin or mud, and later consolidate as *bhungas* or stronger dwellings with stone or brick walls which are typical of rural areas (see Image 2). Many *bhungas* continue to characterize these settlements nowadays¹⁹.



Image 2. Exterior (left) and interior (right) of a *bhungi* in Ramdevnagar.

2.2.3. POST-COLONIAL MODERNISATION AND LOSS OF LEGITIMACY OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Unlike large Indian cities where colonial rulers aimed in transform the 'traditional structure' in the name of urban planning and modernisation, in Bhuj little had changed until the Independence. A new phase of growth already started in the 1940s as a consequence of the modernisation of infrastructures that increased the connection with

¹⁹ The *bhungas* are traditional houses in the rural Kacch, constituted of a single room enclosed by a circular wall and a thatched roof, built using local materials such as clay, bamboo and wood. They are known for their structural stability in case of earthquakes and their resistance to sandstorms and cyclones. The term is also used to designate individual houses in urban areas.

other parts of Kacch and other regions²⁰. The city's population registered an important growth because of migration, in line with the urban dynamic of post-Independence India. Whereas the urban population remained more or less stagnant oscillating around 20,000 since the beginning of the Nineteenth century, it grew up to 30,000 in the first half of the Twentieth century and from 30,000 to 100,000 in the second half. Since 1951, it registers a constant decadal growth of around 30% and up to 46% in 1991 (Census of India 2011). New settlements grew out of the walled town in this period. Migrant groups settled in proximity of the old railway station between the walled city and the Bhujio Hill²¹, or occupied lands beyond pre-existing settlements out of the city gates. Later, these communities expanded becoming prominent in the city. For example, *Vaghri* created the settlements of Madhavrao Nagar, Ramdev Nagar, Devipujak Vas, Bhuteshwar and Ramnagri before Independence and today represent 8% of the slum population (De et al. 2017); *Maheshwari* or *Marwari* developed Maheshvari Vas, Bhim Rao Nagar and Ambedkar Vas; *Jogi* developed Jogi Vas, Jay Prakash Nagar, and Ashapura Nagar; etc. All them continue today as caste-dominated settlements.

Beyond the emergence of new settlements created by migrant groups near the main city gates and the railway station north of the walled city, the city started expanding simultaneously to the south. This process of development was led by wealthy families from the walled city after decades of restrictions by the kings to acquire agricultural lands for development. Because of the city congestion, they built new settlements to the south of the walled town bringing to the progressive demolition of the south and south-east city walls. In the 1930s, first attempts were made to accommodate families from Vaniyavad leading to the foundation of Vijaynagar and Lutus Colony. The dynamic of urbanisation takes pace in the 1960s with the creation of Orient Colony - a milestone for the city modernisation created to host migrants from Pakistan - and the progressive affirmation of Hospital Road as high-end residential and commercial area, while main city and district-level institutions established in the south of Mahadev Gate²² (Tyabji 2006). The caste-based logic regulating the socio-spatial form of the city continue to influence this expansion: groups moving out of the walled city recreated the exclusive

20 In the 1940s, the construction of the old railway station has marked the completion of the railway connection with Gandhidam. Meanwhile, new roads facilitated the connection between main cities in Kacch and a bridge connected the region to the east Gujarat (Williams 1958).

21 Bhadeshwar, Ramnagri, Madhavrao Nagar started to develop in the 1940s. Bhadeshwar was first inhabited by staff members of the railways, later replaced by families in search of employment (Hunnarshala 2014b).

22 In the development plan of 1976 the south urbanisation up to Madhapar Road appears already consolidated, in stark contrast with the north of the walled city (GOG 1976).

and traditional *falya* culture into new cooperative housing, with socio-spatial proximity driving the urbanisation along road axes from Vaniavad Gate and Mahadev Gate to the south and south-west.

This urban dynamics reflects larger changes in the post-independence Kacch, where the south coast became more important than the north of the region. As the commercial route connecting with the Sindh region lost importance after the Indian partition, and the newly formed Gujarat state focused on the development of the south coast with the foundation of Gandhidham and the port of Kandla, the regional dynamics of growth moved to the south and south east. Whereas Bhuj maintained its role of administrative capital and relay for its central position in the region, commercial and transport-related activities emerged along the routes connecting with the ports of Mandvi and Mundra while the market areas to the north of the walled city lost gradually their importance for the abandonment of the way to the Sindh (see Image 3).



Image 3. Market streets in the walled city (left) and south of Vaniavad gate (right).

Simultaneously, new forms of identity appeared from the emergence of a heterogeneous working class and new urban elites. The post-independence expansion is produced by and for most affluent communities like *Vanya* and *Patel* that consolidate as urban elites, privileged by the introduction of privatisation in the competition for the access to the land. In Kacch, these groups were particularly supported by larger financial resources thanks to the high incomes produced by expatriates who invest on housing in the city and nearby villages²³. The social homogeneity of new planned residential colonies strays

23 The Kacchi diaspora, basing on an already extended network of migration (Vassanji 2005), has enlarged since the Nineteenth century because of the worsening conditions in the region. Bhuj have suffered an

from the multi-caste composition of the walled town, although the latter was also structured around the separation of the different community groups. They differed in terms of urban forms and aesthetics that represent the vision of elites to break from a past identified with the Old Bhuj and with the monarchy, and introduced modern and individualists lifestyles leading to a disaggregation of the intra-community social organisation (Tyabji 2006). Meanwhile, this "slow, unscrupulous, haphazard real estate development" (ibid:63) associated with absentee landlordism and remittance economy led to the increase in land and housing prices. Apartment buildings started to appear in the 1970s out of walled city due to the demand for houses for rent by commuters (see Image 4).



Image 4. Apartment buildings in Hospital Road (left) and the high-end Revenue Colony (right).

The increase of real estate prices locked most poor migrants out of the housing and rental market, leading to the growth of squatter settlements on public revenue land to the north, west and east of the walled city (Mukherji 2008). Meanwhile, the decline of agricultural and traditional activities on which many lower castes communities depended, led to their conversion to other activities that became increasingly informal and precarious. Farmlands whose occupation for residence was previously granted to them, were subdivided into plots and purchased for housing at affordable rates, but were rent irregular as their occupation was not recognized and their agricultural use was not converted into a residential one (Theckethil 2012). This changing landscape is reflected

increase in drought since the main source of water supply, the Indus River, changed its course in the earthquake of 1819. Furthermore, the restriction imposed by the kings to acquire agricultural lands for development around the walled city would have been another important factor having pushed rich communities to look elsewhere for business opportunities (Tyabji 2006).

by the social composition of slum settlements: until the 1970s, 29% Scheduled Tribe households were living in Bhuj for more than 40 years, but only 10% general (upper) caste household were staying for that long; the situation inverted after the 1970s when the general (upper) caste population became the larger one in slums (De et al. 2017).

This dynamic accelerated in the 1980s concurrently with the creation of the new railway station and the airport, the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) industrial cluster and the Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) and wholesale markets. In this period, the Muslim-dominated settlement of Gandhi Nagri was created by migrants' groups to the north of the new Railway Station, while new migrant communities settled nearby in pre-existing neighborhoods, like the *Rajgor* community in Jay Prakash Nagar and *Kolis* in Ashapura Nagar. The attraction of industries and wholesale activities to the east led to the development of Sanjay Nagar with a mixed population and an important presence of migrants from Pakistan, and the settlements of Lakhurai and Sural Bhit dominated by *Maldhari* and *Khumbar* communities. Ganeshnagar was created in the 1980s by the *Rabari* community from Kacch, that was lacking of stable livelihoods during the drought since it was largely based on animal husbandry, and gradually moved to milk distribution as they settled in Bhuj (TISS 2014). Sanjog Nagar has a different origin, being a large and exclusively Muslim settlement that was started in the Eighties by groups moving out of walled city as a consequence of the saturation of its northern parts, Muslim-dominated. Sanjog Nagar and nearby slums like Kajali Nagar, Mustafa Nagar, Rahim Nagar, Aman Nagar mostly resulted from the planned conversion of agricultural areas, but in most cases without legalising the new residential use. Today, the ownership status is quite low compared to other areas, with many houses in rent.

2.3. THE POST-EARTHQUAKE RECONSTRUCTION (2001-2005)

2.3.1. BHUJ: AN EXAMPLE OF RESILIENCE AND BUILDING BACK BETTER

A radical change followed the extraordinary devastation in 2001 and the subsequent reconstruction of Bhuj, which was largely depicted as a "success story" of fast recovery, improved planning and participation. Following the earthquake, an unprecedented influx of people and resources concentrated in Kacch with the aim of providing immediate relief. The Government of Gujarat soon assumed a central role by setting up a recovery programme with the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank, which dealt with rural and urban areas separately. Anjar and Bhacchau in Kacch suffered greater losses than Bhuj, which alone counts around 7,000 deaths concentrated in the old city and 50% of the buildings destroyed. Even though it was not the worst affected city, the disbursement of urban reconstruction funds was exceptionally concentrated in Bhuj, reflecting its importance in terms of size and administrative role but also its centrality in the regional cultural identity (Simpson 2014). At the same time, this responded to a clear desire to make Bhuj the symbol of reconstruction in Gujarat, turning it into "one of the landmarks post-disaster projects in the world [and] a model for other cities to follow" (Balachandran 2011). The programme was slow to come out but led to even bigger changes than the earthquake itself (Simpson 2014).

The focus and concentration of resources in Bhuj set the conditions to extend the reconstruction into a broader process of modernisation. In order to secure control over the reconstruction process, the State Government reformed its governance system through dedicate bodies: the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) was established to lead the entire reconstruction process at the state level, the Gujarat Urban Development Company (GUDC) was designated as implementing agency for urban rebuilding, and four Area Development Authorities (ADA) were created in the cities of Bhuj, Bhachau, Anjar and Rapar for implementing town planning proposals and ensuring adherence to the new regulations²⁴ (Balachandran 2010). ADAs are usually created in

²⁴ The Gujarat Urban Development Company (GUDC), already existing before the earthquake, is a government body of the State of Gujarat dedicated to develop urban projects. ADAs are created under the provisions of

large cities to compensate the limited capacities of Urban Local Bodies in the development of urban plans, whereas small municipalities lack capacities for planning. The establishment of planning authorities in the small towns of Kacch represents in this sense an exception. The strategy also opened up urban and infrastructural planning to the private sector by outsourcing the development of Town Plans. In Bhuj the task was entrusted to Environment Planning Collaborative (EPC), an urban planning private agency based at Ahmedabad (ibid.).

In April 2001, the Government formulated a reconstruction package for the affected urban areas of Gujarat with separate sections for Bhuj, Bhachau, Anjar and Rapar. The package advanced a vision of modernisation and improvement underlying the reconstruction strategy, with the intention of overcoming 'vulnerabilities' that seemed to have contributed to the disaster: the congestion and lack of accessibility in the Old Town, the absence of key institutions for disaster preparedness, the poor quality of construction, and the town planning not updated since 1976 and not respected (Balachandran 2010). The desire to "build back better" was not limited to the recovery of pre-disaster conditions but was envisaged as an "opportunity to completely rethink the application of existing planning, regulatory and development mechanisms" (ibid.: 99). With the aim of making the city safer, it was decided to reduce the development intensity by limiting the height and the Floor Space Index (FSI) of new constructions, thus implying a horizontal expansion of the city. The maximum height of new buildings was fixed at G+1 (ground floor plus one) or 7.5m, and the FSI was fixed at 1.2 (BHADA 2001b). A new Development Plan (DP) scheme for the entire city of Bhuj that extended the urban area from 20 to 56 sq.km. was sanctioned after seven months, and a Town Planning (TP) scheme was established specifically to redevelop the walled city but was ready only by early 2003.

Beyond integrating several aspects in addition to the typical contents of land-use planning, development controls and public infrastructure, the DP adopted the strategy of partial relocation and partial *in-situ* reconstruction dictated by the reconstruction package. In this strategy, those whose houses were badly damaged or completely destroyed in the walled city were eligible for recovery assistance and could opt to stay and repair or rebuild their home, or receive land plots in relocation sites where they could build a new home. This process was proposed through a strategy of Owner Driven Reconstruction (ODR), where beneficiaries were given conditional financial assistance to undertake themselves the

the Gujarat Town Planning and Urban Development Act, 1976 in large urban centres to compensate the limited capacities of Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in the development of urban plans.

reconstruction of their houses, accompanied by regulations and technical support aimed at ensuring that the houses are built better (Taheri Tafti and Tomlinson 2015). In mid-2003 the implementation of the DP was in progress with the construction of infrastructures and relocation sites. Between 2003 and 2005 the walled town was rebuilt and the new houses of beneficiaries moving out of the walled city were built in the relocation sites (Balachandran 2011).

However, against the optimistic portrait shared by operators of the process of reconstruction, scholars have focused on the structural inequality of the recovery program²⁵. According to Jauhola (2019), these works highlight "the price, or the shadows, of claimed post-disaster urban planning and industrialization success story [...] and whether such reconstruction interventions in fact normalize (urban) inequalities, and dispossession, rather than aim to solve them" (ibid.: 7). The resurgence of urban poverty and informality figure among the subjects 'shadowed' by the 'success story' of reconstruction.

2.3.2. THE EXCLUSION OF SLUMS FROM THE TOWN PLANNING PROCESS

The assistance allocation policy was based on the ODR model where beneficiaries were given individual assistance to repair or rebuild their houses. As the policy attributed financial compensation based on household pre-disaster housing status, homeowners were more likely to receive adequate support based on their property titles, unlike other groups such as renters and squatters that could not produce such documents (Mukherji 2008). The state's policy targeting only homeowners was therefore one of the main reasons for the exclusion of slums, indicating a misinterpretation of the approach that could be used instead to transform renters and squatters into homeowners (Taheri Tafti and Tomlinson 2015). After the earthquake, community initiatives were another main way of recovery, but they largely depended on pre-earthquake economic strength and internal organisation (Mukherji 2008). Among slum communities, these initiatives were non-existent since social and economic capacities limited their ability to come together and generate

25 Jauhola (2019) divides the research on the recovery of the city of Bhuj into two broader types: researches by urban planners and disaster management authorities involved in the town planning or in the aid intervention, and analysis that focuses on political economy and structural inequality of the recovery program. The latter include research on the specific challenges of the urban poor, renters and the growing politics of urban informality and long-term socio-spatial urban transformation and social capital of the city, and urban slum redevelopment, and post-disaster urban ethnography/anthropology.

resources for housing recovery (ibid.) and to cope with the changing institutional/regulatory scenario (Taheri Tafti 2017). In contrast, communities with a high homeownership status made available important resources to aid in recovery by providing building materials or financing housing. Another limitation of the policy approach was therefore the inability to recognize the needs and capacity for recovery of different groups, adopting a universal approach instead of specific measures for each group. The problem is due to the fact that the policy focuses on housing recovery rather than the recovery of people (Mukherji 2008).

The difficulty of slums to access public assistance was soon associated to the lack of property ownership and the need to revise policies was noticed (Abhiyan, GSDMA, UNDP 2002). The policy specified some compensation to those squatters whose houses were completely destroyed but did not address assistance for houses that were damaged in the earthquake. Despite having suffered major damage, in the slums the damages were smaller thanks to the low density and the horizontal development of these settlements. The earthquake hit both non-engineered building, concentrated in walled city and squatter settlements, and high-rise building in the walled city and south development. Non-engineered buildings were severely damaged but few collapsed for being in large part one-storey structures, differently from high-rise buildings. Furthermore, unlike the loss of lives caused by the congestion and high density in the walled city, the victims in slums were reduced to almost zero and their low density allowed to quickly freeing from debris, thus facilitating to set here temporary camps and accommodations for the hit families of the walled city.

As the state-led damage assessment considered the houses located in slums as damaged and not collapsed, the state government ignored large segment of the squatter population in its housing recovery policy (Mukherji 2008). Furthermore, the lack of clear indications on the methods of assistance allocation to squatters created even more confusion, hindering the policy implementation. On the other hand, the construction of infrastructures for the extension of the road network caused the demolition of houses and the resettlement of people from different slums (Abhiyan, GSDMA, UNDP 2002). Out of them, only 25 families received a plot and housing assistance in GIDC Relocation Site (Taheri Tafti 2017).

The other main form of exclusion of slums from the reconstruction process was linked to the urban planning system. The Draft Development Plan focused on the reconstruction of the walled city, the central and the most affected part of Bhuj, through a dedicated TP

scheme. However, slums were not affected by the TP scheme but by the city-level comprehensive plan strategy of the DP scheme, as almost all them are located outside the walled city. The DP guides urban development through a zoning approach that defines areas for their main function, and through standards and layout for the development of the new road network and regulations to control the development of new urbanisation. Therefore, the Development Plan did not provide indications for rehabilitating these settlements that were solely affected by the proposed road network and zoning. Furthermore, while the Town Plan for the walled city and the process of resettlement to the relocation sites were based on public consultation, there was no participatory approach at all involving the slum dwellers (Verhagen and Bhatt 2006).

Indeed, the Development Plan was considered progressive as it incorporated additional aspects to its standard contents of land-use planning, development regulations and road network, among which a dedicated chapter outlined specific measures for the informal sector (BHADA 2001a). According to the preliminary slum survey carried within the DP, 66,700 people that correspond to the 42% of the city population lived in 25 slum areas. The Plan defined slums on the basis of physical conditions – like building materials, size and temporary character of buildings, and the absence of municipal infrastructures and services – as well as socio-economic characteristics, but it left land tenure status in the background. It also highlighted the advantageous conditions such as the availability of land and the low density that facilitate to lay infrastructures. As all slums were included in the DP, they could be under the responsibility of the Bhuj Area Development Authority (BHADA) and thus overcoming the inefficiency of the municipality. Consequently, it prescribed the creation of a database and mapping of all slums, the extension and access to basic physical and social infrastructure and their inclusion in the urban governance system, without mentioning their regularisation. Conversely, slums were considered not eligible for reconstruction because of the illegal occupation of the land (Verhagen and Bhatt 2006).

The Development Plan proposed to design and implement slum redevelopment schemes and to allocate land for government schools and hospitals but delegated them to further special projects that subsequently were not carried out. The focus of the urban planning on the walled city reflects the city's morphology at the time of the earthquake, little extended beyond the walled city and where periurban informal settlements were considered 'far' from the urban core, with morphological, architectural and socio-economic features associated with villages in rural areas more than urban settlements. Their perception as not

being part of the city is still rooted in the collective imagination and influenced their exclusion from the city reconstruction as well as from development projects in the next years²⁶.

Whereas the inclusion of slums in the Development Plan did not bring to an improvement of their conditions, planning was one of the driving forces of displacement and dispossession for slums in the walled city (Taheri Tafti 2017). The slum survey carried within the DP identified two slums inside the walled city: Bhangi Colony that was destroyed by the earthquake, and Harijan Vaas (BHADA 2001a). Despite most of the houses in these slums were severely damaged, their occupants did not receive assistance as these houses were considered damaged and not collapsed. In addition to ignoring the pre-existence of informal settlements within the walled city, initiatives to secure land or supply affordable housing for marginalized groups were not considered.

The Plan suggested to use the provision of the Town Planning Scheme of the Government of Gujarat to allocating land for low-income groups but this regulatory capacity was not used since no other Town Plan scheme was developed outside the old town²⁷ (ibid.). In this way, squatters were left at the mercy of market forces that expelled them out of the walled city recreating new landscape of informality in peripheral areas. On the other hand, the participatory planning in the walled city favoured more powerful groups. The new planning and building regulations reduced considerably the residential spaces in the walled city, encouraging people to move to the relocation sites. This brought to empty the walled city, where the owners remained primarily the government, land speculators and high caste communities (ibid.).

2.3.3. NEW LANDSCAPES OF INFORMALITY AT THE PERIPHERY OF THE CITY

New or perpetuated landscapes of informality were recreated by the dispossession and displacement of marginalized groups from well-located areas, as well as by migrants attracted by construction activities, which had no housing options in the formal market

26 During my interviews, residents in informal settlements close to the walled city considered themselves as living "out of Bhuj". At the same time, even officers in local government authorities minimized the need to improve conditions of slum settlements, affirming that "there are no slums in Bhuj".

27 As per the Town Planning Act, 1976, every new Town Plan should reserve 10% of the total surface for Economic Weaker Section (EWS) housing.

(Taheri Tafti 2017). While vacant plots in inner urban areas were occupied with temporary huts becoming gradually permanent houses, informality has grown mostly on urban periphery where slums and wastelands prevail. Even temporary sites for earthquake victims became spaces for new landscape of informality. Although not being the only case²⁸, the example of GIDC Relocation Site is emblematic for the attention it produced (Jauhola 2019). Announced 3 months after the earthquake, GIDC was the first of the relocation sites to be developed, with the aim of offering a temporary housing solution during the reconstruction of the centre and the development of the other sites (ibid). Selected by district administration, the site was located on the north-eastern urban fringe on government-owned land for industrial use²⁹; the land beyond the industrial zone and the railway were uninhabited before earthquake. The site was chosen because it was one of the debris removal sites from the centre, so the landfilling and levelling work necessary for its development was already done, but this created damages to natural rainwater stream and harvesting that later produced frequent floods.

Since the beneficiaries wanted to move closer to other people belonging to the same community, the local authorities divided the site into 18 housing sectors and tried to allot each community with shelter plots in a single sector. The community who built and occupied the shelters in a sector, financed part of the construction cost and individual beneficiaries participated individually. Out of 15-20 caste or religion-based communities that occupied the site, those who could negotiate quotas and start building before others in better areas were stronger communities like *Lohana* and groups followers of Swaminarayan, while there were no initiatives of communities with low or zero ownership status such as *Vaghri*, *Koli* and Muslim. The way in which GIDC Relocation Site was initially occupied shows that community initiatives depended on financial, social and political resources and that only those with higher pre-earthquake economic strength and internal organisation were successful (Mukherji 2008).

The initial plan of the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), one of the partner agencies in the development of the site, was to develop 5,250 shelters to be destined mainly to most vulnerable and poor groups and to avoid community preferences. However, the early appropriation of entire sectors by some communities and the refusal to

28 Dindayal Nagar, located near the GIDC industrial estate, was also created as a temporary relocation site for the victims of 2001 earthquake. Out of about 100 shelters that were built initially, 58 still exist today and are occupied by migrants that replaced the original beneficiaries, as the latter left the shelters and moved to permanent homes in the city (Hunnarshala 2014c).

29 The name GIDC refers to the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation industrial estate.

build for other hindered the implementation of the initial plan forcing UNDP to resize and limit the intervention only to few sectors. Out of 4,500 houses finished in December 2001, only 1,950 were built by UNDP and the rest by communities (Jauhola 2019). One of the most controversial issues was linked to the temporary nature of the site, discussed at different levels of planning and financing. On the one hand, the implementation delay led to exceeding the expected duration of six months, bringing the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) to criticise the outcome (ibid.). On the other hand, the evidence that housing needs were longer than expectations due to the global delay in the reconstruction process of the city prompted to propose semi-temporary houses for a duration of 3-4 years, in contrast with the idea of providing temporary shelter in order to avoid their permanent occupation³⁰. It soon appeared that the temporariness of the site was going to become a long-term condition. While some communities managed to stay temporarily until relocation sites in other parts of the city were ready, or shifted to the city because of the reconstruction boom, after their departure the houses continued to be occupied by people without housing recovery options like low income renters and squatters³¹. Furthermore, the proximity of industries and the wholesale market represented a source of income for labour workers, and forms of attachment to the place soon emerged (Abhiyan, GSDMA, UNDP 2002).

In 2004 a new policy was introduced to create housing for renters and poor tenants who could afford market price or participate in relocation sites (ibid.). Following pressures from local civil society groups, the government agreed to regularise 22 acres in GIDC as permanent relocation site. The organization Kacch Nav Nirman Abhiyan identified 800 beneficiaries who could apply to receive a house on 65 sq.mt. plots, developed a Master Plan and managed the construction of the project (HIC 2011). Although BHADA initially participated in the project, it later did not allocate the land that remained owned by the government. Awaiting regularisation of the land, the organization managed to build only 450 of the 800 planned houses, so the problem of illegality remained: while the housing programme could partially solve the problem for the poorest renters at GIDC Relocation Site, it remained unfinished and pending on future development (Mukherji 2015).

30 However, if the idea of UNDP was to build in the Owner Driven Reconstruction model like in the other relocation sites, the construction was completed by UNDP by employing migrant labours.

31 In few cases, it seems that some sold out or rented house as soon as the house was complete.

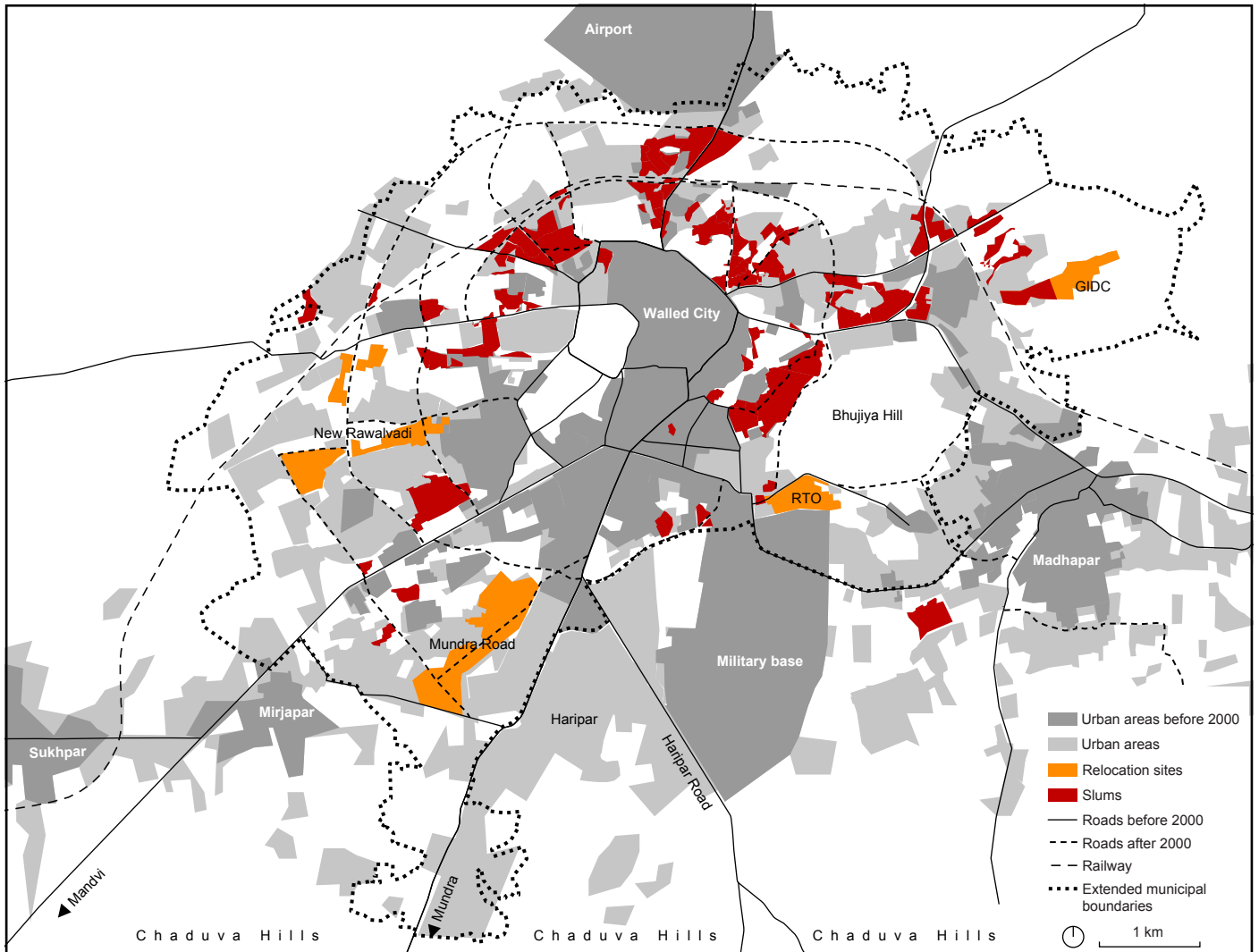
2.4. THE PROCESS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AFTER THE RECONSTRUCTION

2.4.1. A RISING SMALL CITY: FAST URBANISATION AND INCREASING DISPARITIES

One of the main effects of the post-earthquake reconstruction in Bhuj was its growth. From 2001 to 2011 the urban population increased from 98,528 to 148,834, or 213,514 if including nearby villages of Madhapar, Mirjhapar, Sukhpar, and Mankuva that were subsumed as new Census Towns within the agglomeration (Census of India 2011). This growth was firstly due the visibility of the disaster at the scale of the country, and the construction boom that attracted contractors and labour workers from the rural Kacch and other regions. This dynamic increased for the real estate investments after the reconstruction process was over in 2005 but then decelerated because of the stagnation of constructions after the global crisis in 2008-2009. This population growth came along with the extension of urban areas facilitated by the policy of reconstruction and planning that produced a global reconfiguration of the city's structure and population. The Development Plan reinforced the former polarised development as it facilitated the urban expansion to the south where the urbanisation dynamic was already on-going. Whereas the urban area extended over 13.58 sq.km. as per the last Town Plan (1976) did not exceed a 3 km circle centred in Hamirshar Lake, the 2001 Development Plan extended it to 56 sq.km. by including Bhuj Municipality, the city outgrowths out of its limits, as well as Mirjapar and Madhapar to the south-west (see Map 6).

In the next years, Bhuj developed along two main commercial corridors. The main one stretching between Mandvi Road and Mundra Road in the south-west direction, expanded of 5 km in fifteen years as new urbanisations emerged to the south along Mundra Road and Haripar Road until the Chaduva Hills, forming an urban continuum with Mirjapar and Sukhpar along Mandvi Road. The other corridor extended around 3 km to the south-east of Bhuj overcoming the Bhujio Hill and merging with Madhapar. One third of the total city population lives in this recent urbanisation occupying more than half of the municipality. These new urbanizing areas are largely included in the wards 13 and 14 to the south-west and south-east of the former Bhuj municipality,

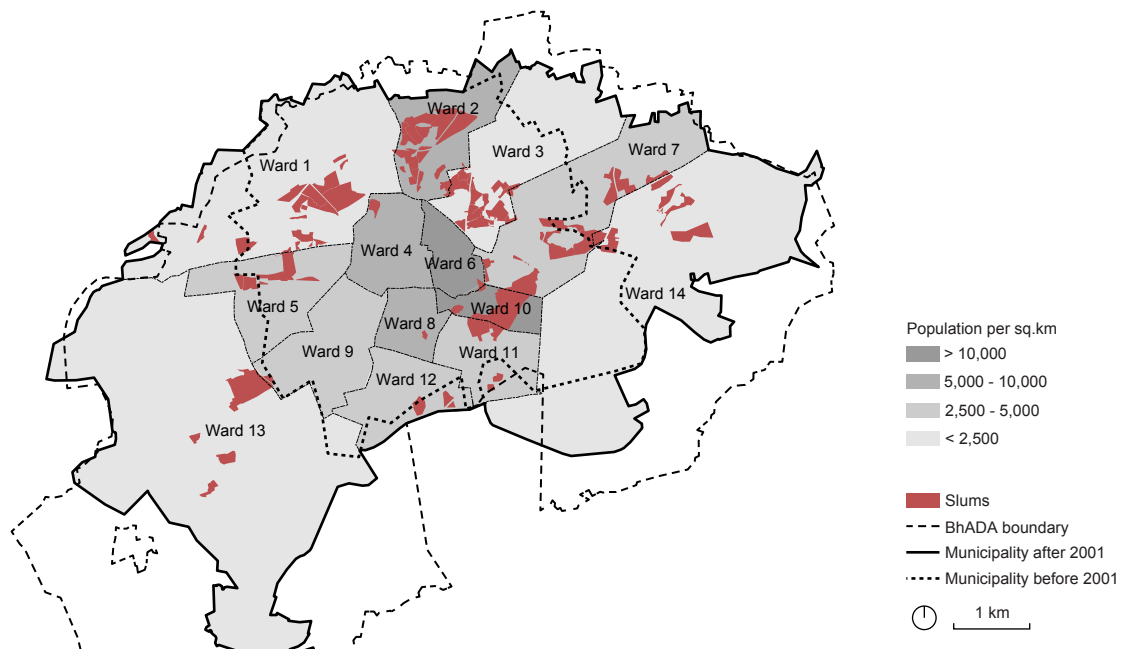
which together host around 50,000 people. These wards have the lower density in the city, as well as the peripheral wards 1, 3 and 7 to north-east and north-west of the walled city that are largely occupied by slums (see Map 7).



Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a, BHADA 2001a. Realized by: the author

Map 6. Urban development after 2000

The important flows of migration contributed to diversify the population so that "it is now common to hear Hindi spoken on the streets of Bhuj (it was not before), and new hotels, restaurants and cybercafés compete to win the business of the immigrants" (Simpson 2005:231). Bhuj has also attracted population from rural areas for the improvement of life quality, including better employments, services, education, leisure, etc., who are not only poor and labour workers. However, the reconstruction participated to increase the disparities among different groups for the access to land and housing, as the redistributions of groups in the different areas and neighbourhoods of the city was uneven (Taheri Tafti and Tomlinson 2016).



Map 7. Population density

Sources: Google Earth, Census of India 2011. Realized by: the author

Such dynamics concentrated around the relocation sites in New Ravalwadi, Mundra Road and RTO, beyond the city's post-colonial economic niche to the south of the walled city and the residential enclaves developed before the earthquake. Initially, the inhabitants of the walled city rejected the proposal to move to relocation sites considered 'too far' (Simpson 2014). But middle-class Hindu residents from high castes, as well as high-income renters that turned into owners were later attracted by the better conditions compared to the congested neighbourhoods in the walled city, and the opportunity to follow lifestyles of the wealthy householders who had previously moved outside the walled city. Differently, the dominant castes preferred to purchase vast plots of suburban land where they could construct exclusive caste settlements for themselves (Simpson and Corbridge 2006a).

The interest of middle and high-income Hindu households in suburban life coincides with their aspiration for emancipation and modernity, whose symbols like shopping malls, four-lanes highways, exclusive societies and leisure parks aimed to replace the congestion and proximity of the Old Bhuj (see image 5). Whereas the relocation of middle and higher-income households to new suburbs accentuated pre-earthquake trends, what was new was the loss of centrality of the walled city that in 2001 was still preferred to suburbs. Suburban life in post-earthquake Bhuj appeared as an escape from the oppressive forms of tradition represented by the old town. However, the struggle for policy compensation and the migration to suburbs fragmented personal networks and

reduced the interest for collective action according to Simpson (2005): "self-interest triumphed over collective endeavours as elementary needs such as housing and dreams of the future took precedence; bonds of solidarity were broken as people were literally scattered across the town by a government unsure of how to proceed" (ibid.:239).



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 08-2017



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 08-2017



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 08-2017

Image 5. Symbols of modern suburban life: commercial buildings on Mandvi Road (top), the exclusive Swaminarayan Nagar (bottom left), the Seven Sky mall (bottom right).

Lower-income groups were instead excluded by the more expensive suburban lifestyles and the need to own private vehicles that were required to reach the sites (Taheri Tafti and Tomlinson 2016). Their difficulties to access land and housing within the new planned urbanisations were sharpened as speculation caused an exponential rise in land prices especially around the relocation sites. For example, land's prices 5 km south are four times higher than north of the walled city, and land values in settlements around Mundra Relocation Sites have grown 50 times compared to the pre-earthquake values³².

³² Interview with S. Mawani, 20-06-2018.

In fact, while real estate in Bhuj was already a favorite investment choice by many expatriates facilitated by the high values of the foreign currency, this dynamic increased as Kacchi entrepreneurs, industrialists, and farmers who enriched after the earthquake competed to reserve agricultural lands on the urban fringe in view of their future development. The urban landscape is nowadays studded with agricultural land plots enclosed by walls, where advertising boards near the gates present the future housing projects. However, new colonies have emerged only to the south or along ring roads at a distance from the slum settlements.

This polarisation also brings a cultural dimension as it sharpened the distances between communities. Both lower caste Hindu Indians, as well as poor Muslims, *Dalits*³³, Christians, Sikhs or *Adivasis*³⁴ were largely excluded from the emerging settlements to the south but relegated more and more to the northern areas and absorbed by slums. According to Simpson and Corbridge (2006a), this growing separation between different religious and caste groups reflects a militant Hinduism that tried to define India as a culturally Hindu nation – the project of Hindutva – and used place-making to challenge pluralistic tradition, damaging both Hindu-Muslim relations and the Hindu community as a whole. In this sense, "this socio-spatial transformation of the city produced a new consciousness in terms of not only class but also religion and caste while adding a spatial dimension to them" (Taheri Tafti and Tomlinson 2016:243).

2.4.2. THE INCREASING VISIBILITY AND DYNAMICS OF CHANGE IN SLUMS

The extension of the urban area brought by the implementation of the road network and the consequent development of residential colonies and commercial spaces, encompassed the slum settlements located out of the walled city. This caused an important change as their connection to the city increased. For example, a community leader of Ramdevnagar located 2 km far from the city centre explains that before the earthquake it took one hour to reach the centre by foot on a narrow road, whereas

33 The term *Dalit* refers to people belonging to the lowest caste characterized as 'untouchable' in the traditional Indian caste system.

34 *Adivasi* is the term used in India for tribes who are considered indigenous to places where they live and is also used for ethnic minorities.

nowadays it takes 10 minutes by rickshaw³⁵. Whereas these settlements were located on peripheral roads and considered external to the city, progressively they become part of it. The visibility of slums in the city increased with the implementation of the Development Plan between 2003 and 2005 after the reconstruction of the walled city, according to the president of the Bhuj association of Architects and Engineers:

"Before the earthquake, slums were located outside the city [...], before they were on peripheral roads, then ring roads were built so slums became connected to the rest of the city and for this reason they became visible. Before they were out of the city limits, they were not visible as part of the city [...]. The chain is that: first, connectivity so slums become visible; second, picture that slums exist in the city; third, need for their rehabilitation"³⁶.

Their inclusion in the city increased the gap between their perception as 'villages', and planned colonies, infrastructures and malls rising all around, which embodied the collective imagination of the urban future of Bhuj. Their non-conformity with the larger project of the city's modernisation exacerbated their lack of legitimacy in the urban society. In this sense, the president of the Bhuj association of Architects and Engineers continues:

"Before the earthquake they were located outside the city, for example *Bharwad* community that still today live of cattle, at the time they settled outside the city limits so still today you cannot call them slums. As the city grew they were confronted to the city but still they are not used to the urban lifestyle. Rural people coming to the city enter in a process of education to the urban lifestyle but that did not happen in Bhuj with these communities which still live of cattle"³⁷.

Slum settlements were little threatened of eviction by the implementation of the road network as per the Development Plan, and by market forces. Real estate development

35 Interview with P. Vaghela, 20-07-2017.

36 Interview with N. Nagrecha, Bhuj association of Architects and Engineers, 28-08-2017.

37 Ibid.

was almost absent near slums, because of the availability of lands at near distance and easily accessible by the new roads, and because of the poor environmental conditions for the higher risk of floods as the north of the city is lower. While the presence of water had initially contributed to the city development to the north, it became an obstacle as the hydrogeological system had been neglected for decades, leading to frequent floods of these areas (CEPT 2016). However, land values remained lower than elsewhere and did not attract development also because dominant groups preferred to settle far from lower caste, poor and Muslim communities since the Independence. The exposition to the changing urban scenario transformed the perception of legitimacy and precariousness of slum communities. Some communities aimed to regularise their settlements in order to secure the land and counter threats of demolition in the case of future developments. For some groups more influenced by the image of modernity embodied by the new colonies, developing their settlements also represent a process of emancipation from an image associated with their rural origins and habits, and inscribe into the city modernisation by affirming their belonging to the urban society.

Together with their changing perception, the slum population changed. The important inflow of migrants, attracted by the new job opportunities in the reconstruction and by the subsequent boom in constructions, was largely absorbed by slums that expanded and became denser. Migrants from rural areas settled in pre-existing neighbourhoods where family ties with their village existed, bringing homogeneous settlements to grow on the caste-based dominance. Differently, migrants could find houses in rent in mixed settlements or occupied vacating revenue land or settled in new informal settlements in the urban fringe. Slums also absorbed residents of the city that were pulled out from the formal market because of the increasing costs of land and housing. Such growing diversification of the slum population and their distribution in different settlements increased the complexity of their claims for legitimacy. Longer-established slum communities, especially since before the Independence assert their belonging to the city in contrast to migrants workers who arrived after the earthquake, and accuse migrants to take away their jobs and houses. At the same time, the "business of immigrants" also extended among the slum population, so that the rent out of houses in better-located slums became a source of enrichment for the residents. The arrival of 'outsiders' and the mistrust and uncertainty it caused in the local population (Simpson 2014) was thus equally strong among the urban poor and participate to a disintegration of social ties and increasing competition among lower caste communities.

CONCLUSION

The presence of slums in Bhuj emerged only recently as a problem linked to the changing scenario of urban planning and development and the role of urban policies and governance in the post-earthquake period. Rising disparities and the informalisation of the urban poor have been shadowed by a dominant discourse that highlights the success story of fast regional growth and its departure from former conditions of isolation and backwardness. This process was driven by state policies of industrialisation and development of port activities in the Nineties and later was intensified as the reconstruction became an opportunity to restructure state institutions and functioning in a neoliberal logic. However, the non-inclusive and unsustainable model of growth underlying the state policies resulted in a polarised territorial dynamics, of dispersed industrialisation and urban growth where slums proliferate by the attraction of migrant workers.

The concentration of efforts to make Bhuj the symbolic centre of the reconstruction, rather than the increase of industries attracted migrant workers and resulted into the growth of slums and urban poor. This dynamics is reflected by the city's morphology, as it accentuated the city polarisation between a neglected, poorer, and predominantly Muslim north where slums are concentrated, and a growing south which is bourgeois, Hindu and richer. However, such duality is part of a more complex process of social and morphological differentiation between several parts of the city that extends on a longer temporality. Whereas the new governance structure uses the category of 'slum' referring to their non-compliance with the planning system, it clashes with a local understanding associating them with their rural origins long before the earthquake and their belonging to a socioeconomic and cultural system of interdependence between communities.

Indeed, informal settlements in Bhuj started to be developed before the Independence by rural communities whose role of production and supply legitimated them in the socioeconomic system and the moral order of the city. While this survived in the post-colonial period, new urban elites drove the city development in the form of exclusive residential colonies that moved south the city economic centre. The urban poor and migrants were thus marginalised in the competition for the access to the land, absorbed

by the slum settlements in the north as they were locked out of the housing and rental market and affected by the decline of agricultural activities and the informalisation of the economy. Their precariousness also increased in the context of the change from a provincial town to a city culture, where the emerging middle class' and elite's desire of emancipation from 'traditions' led to a disaggregation of inter- and intra-community relations.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, the reconstruction process normalized such pre-existing inequalities, rather than aim to solve them. Despite their progressive instances of participation and integrated development, new regulatory instruments affected slum settlements out of the walled city in a classical planning approach, without leading to their regularisation or improvement of services provision. In the walled city, planning was one of the driving forces of displacement and dispossession as it excluded initiatives to secure land or supply affordable housing for the poor, but favoured more powerful groups to access the reduced residential spaces and expelled squatters. Along with the new planning system, the state-led housing recovery policy addressing only homeowners largely ignored the population in slums, compensation was almost absent in slums as houses were considered damaged and not collapsed.

The policy framework within the reformed governance system was also responsible as it implied the participation of civil society without considering the limited capacity of slum communities to start initiatives, and the lack of experience of local NGOs to address urban issues while local authorities were reluctant to recover slums. Finally, the reconstruction process displaced marginalized groups from well-located areas and from slums demolished for the construction of new infrastructures, recreating new landscapes of informality in the urban periphery. Even in temporary sites envisaged for poor earthquake victims, strongest groups succeeded first to occupy better located areas, that later turned into permanent slums as low income renters and squatters took their place.

The subsequent dynamic of urbanisation increased even more existing disparities as slums were left behind in the reconstruction process. The planning system favoured the extension of urban areas and a redistribution of groups in the different areas and neighbourhoods that widened the former polarisation. Attracted by suburban life and aspiring to modernity and emancipation, middle-class and dominant castes population moved to relocation sites and exclusive settlements to the south where speculation caused an exponential rise of prices. Conversely, slums absorbed more precarious groups as well as migrant labours attracted by the construction boom and new

population coming from rural areas, for which house and land prices in the south expansions became unaffordable. The resulting separation between different religious and caste groups translated into a process of place-making that challenges the pluralistic tradition of the city and the region.

At the same time, the visibility of slums and the need to improve them augmented as the expanding urban area encompassed them, increasing the gap between their rural origins and the on-going process of urbanisation and modernisation. Real threats of demolition and eviction were limited to the construction of new road, while dominant groups refused to develop new settlements near slum settlements. Rather, slum communities attempted to regularise and develop their settlements as they seek to increase their legitimacy in the new planning and regulatory context, and to integrate to the urban society by emancipating from the association with their rural origins and culture. At the same time, slums diversified by merging pre-existing and new identity forms. Claims for legitimisation oppose long established slum communities that assert their belonging to the city, against migrant groups who settled in existing slums and create new ones. The mistrust and uncertainty created by that the arrival of 'outsiders' participated to the disintegration of social ties and to increase competition among vulnerable groups to access resources.

PART 2

AN EMERGING MODEL

OF SLUM REDEVELOPMENT

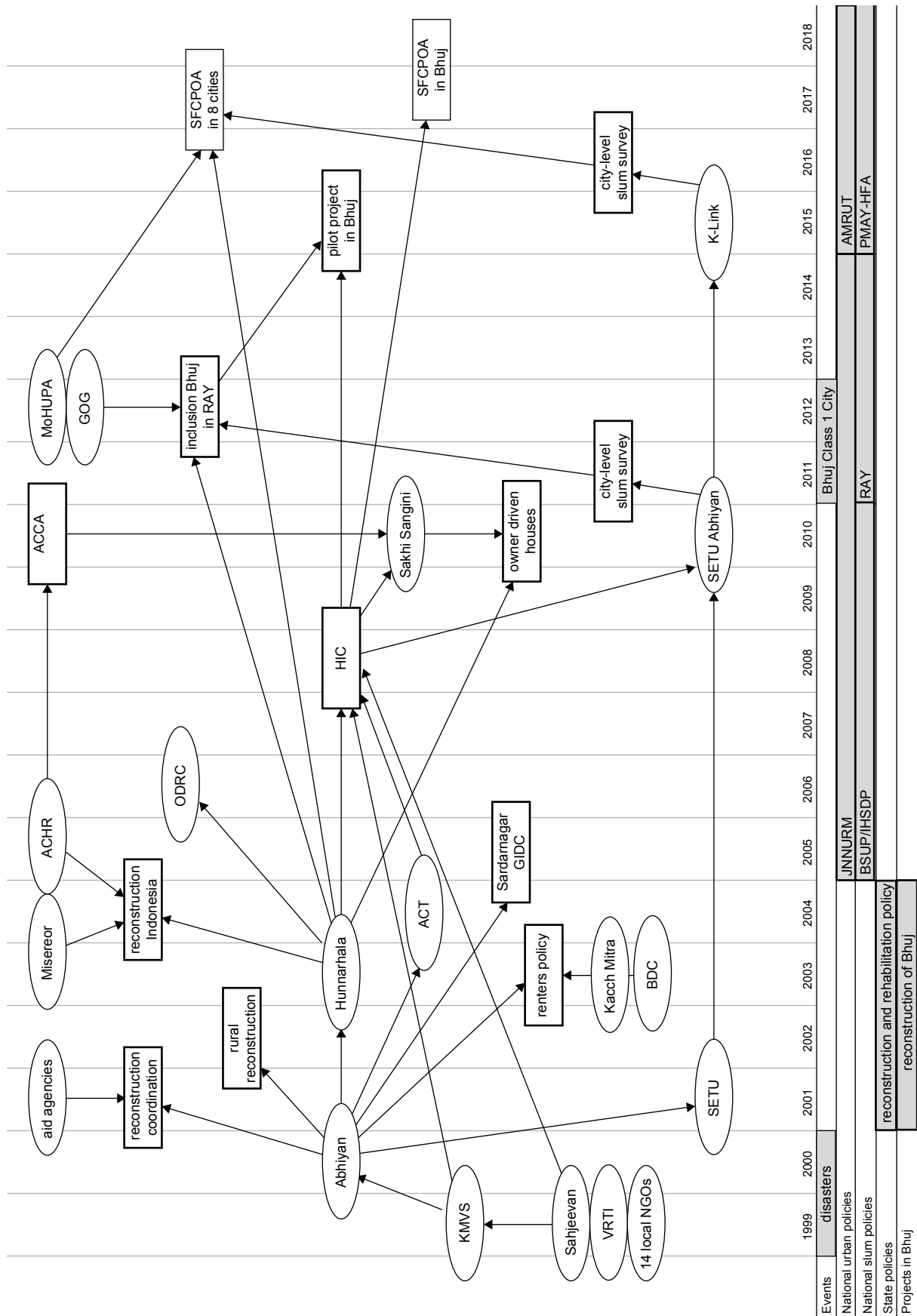
CHAPTER 3

FROM ABHIYAN TO THE ADVOCACY FOR OWNER DRIVEN SLUM POLICIES

While slums in Bhuj were neglected during the post-earthquake reconstruction, NGOs belonging to the local network Abhiyan took over their improvement within the Homes in the City (HIC) movement and the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) national policy scheme. A pilot project of slum redevelopment implemented in 2015 was recognised among the Best Practices in the country (GOI 2015) for being based on an owner-driven model and presented as an alternative policy solution for small cities. Such attempt to extend the purpose and vision of national policies beyond their focus on large cities brings the attention to local stories and forces and the way they interact with and transform 'mobile' policies (McCann 2011). The question extends beyond the pilot project in Bhuj to understand which transformations participate in this process (see Scheme 1). The project results from flows that bring local actors, forces and ideas to interact with other territories through national and international networks of cooperation. The study thus embraces a different perspective from the small cities paradigm that understands them as non-innovative and subordinated to the construction of modernity projects, but on the contrary as places where alternative visions of urban development emerge.

The chapter retraces the evolution of this city vision embodied in the slum redevelopment project in Bhuj. The first section describes the emergence of Abhiyan as a central actor in the rural reconstruction of Kacch and in the development and diffusion of the owner-driven model. Abhiyan opposed an alternative vision of self-managed communities and the recovery of traditional knowledge and practices against the top-down 'restructuring' of the region. Cooperating with government agencies and civil society, Abhiyan was acknowledged as an important development agency in the region and succeeded to support a greater decentralisation of the reconstruction, while its success led to extend the model from the rural context to urban and slum rehabilitation issues. The second section describes the creation of Homes in the City, as initiative of

Abhiyan dealing with long-term problems in the post-earthquake scenario. The movement found legitimacy in that it was promoted by local actors and reflected collective imaginations articulating notions of identity and progressive ideas. Its underlying city vision aims to foster collective action from processes of cooperation in slum settlements, opposing the urban society produced by the globalization of the region, embodied by an emancipated, competitive and individualistic middle class. The third section describes the implication of Bhuj in the national Slum-free Cities policies and the strategies of Abhiyan's NGOs to influence them. This implication extends the initiative as a model of slum redevelopment for small cities, where a 'retroactive effect' of mobilisations altering the initial policies seemed to emerge. However, the difficulties in implementing the programme following the central policy changes confirm its big-city bias that turned the initiative as a form of resistance.



Sources: interviews 2015-2018. Realized by: the author

Scheme 1. Emergence of the Owner Driven model of slum rehabilitation

3.1. THE NETWORK OF NGOS ABHIYAN AND THE 2001 GUJARAT EARTHQUAKE

3.1.1. THE ORIGINS AND AFFIRMATION OF ABHIYAN

By the end of the years 1980s, consecutive droughts produced an economic crisis that forced dry land communities to migrate from rural areas. The crisis weighted particularly over women in villages since this migration was mostly male, and resulted on a massive commercialisation and exploitation in the craft sector as more and more women started depending on handicrafts production for survival (Ramachandran and Saihjee 2000). To address this situation, the Gujarat State Handicraft Board (GSHDC) together with the NGOs' network JanVikas led to create the voluntary organization Kacch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) meaning 'women of Kacch together', which started in Bhuj in 1989.

KMVS belongs to the grassroots movements that contested the government's dominant model of development. Since Independence, the state government espoused the cause of urban and rural rich, with the consequence that one of the most industrialised states had not translated economic growth into social prosperity (Yagnik and Sheth 2005). Realising that it would not contribute to the conditions of the poor, a new generation of social movements challenging its development paradigm emerged in the cities of 'mainland' east Gujarat during the 1980s. Oriented to mobilise masses for politic action and sharing a strategy of networking and public advocacy, these NGOs increased their questioning and tried out innovations looking for alternative solutions by the 1990s.

JanVikas¹, which contributed to establish KMVS in Kacch, was one of these emerging network movements in the east Gujarat (Iyengar 2000). In this sense, the initiative represents an extension of mobilisation movement in Kacch, as it figures among the 'first generation' civil society organisations with a development perspective in a regional context dominated by charitable organizations. In fact, former voluntary organisations in

1 JanVikas was established in Ahmedabad in 1987 with the objective to ensure justice, dignity and equity to marginalised people, and engages in capacity-building and financial support of groups involved in development work, to understand people's problems and work out solutions with their active participation. Beyond KMVS, Janvikas helped to organise several organisations in the country like Sahjeevan, Drishti, Centre for Social justice, etc.

Kacch aimed to help poor and marginalised groups by providing services like food, health and education and creating work opportunities for them. Some of them were started by personalities involved in government programmes or as charitable initiatives of philanthropists under the government patronage, since programmes of rural reconstruction did not stray from the Gandhian economic thought². Other consolidated organisations were created by Kacchi entrepreneurs who became philanthropists after migrating and having prospered in other regions in India³.

KMVS' leaders belong to a well educated and cosmopolitan middle class radicalised in the student movements of the 1960s and 1970s, which after the gradual collapse of radical movements invested on professional training, communication and networking skills to become development workers⁴. While maintaining a critical approach towards the state's paradigm of development, KMVS tried to obtain recognition in the government's departments and to work with national financial resources. This approach was influenced by the increasing dependency of NGOs on state financial support since the 1970s, which brought them to seek the recognition of government as important partners of development (Iyengar, 2000). At the same time, its working style and values were influenced by the dependence on foreign funds resulting in the process of professionalisation of NGOs in the 1970s (ibid.).

KMVS' development perspective was oriented towards a mutual educational process with rural women, being conceived as an independent organisation that works towards developing their ability and confidence to address issues of their concern (Ramachandran and Saihjee 2000). While the NGO was initiated to organise rural women on alternative livelihood with a focus on craft production, in the 1990s it started working on eco-restoration through watershed development. The common idea of these initiatives was to respond to the economic crisis in Kacch by developing decentralised resource management systems that implicate rural communities. With this intention, JanVikas supported KMVS to create a dedicated cell that later evolved into the independent organisation named Sahjeevan, with a strong gender perspective on natural resources and an approach of learning from traditional wisdom (Sahjeevan 2009).

2 For example, leading personalities in the Green Revolution and the national Educational Plan started organisations like Saraswatam and Viksat.

3 Shrujan, Gram Swaraj Sangh and Anarde Foundation represent few examples. The 'Shroff family' is emblematic, heading of one of India's first domestic chemical manufacturers and having founded two prominent organisations: Shrujan and the Vivekanand Research and Training Institute.

4 KMVS was created with the catalyst initiative of Sushma Yeangar, who belongs to a family established in south Gujarat and graduated in development communications at Cornell University, and contacted JanVikas with the intention to work in rural Gujarat (Ramachandran and Saihjee 2000).

The approach of decentralised resource management supported by the NGOs represents an alternative model in the context of the political economy of drought and environmental deterioration. The state government considered the water scarcity of drought-prone areas as an obstacle to their economic growth and aimed to attend 'food self-sufficiency' through water-intensive agriculture and diversion of external water, like in the Sardar Sarovar multipurpose project on the river Narmada (Bharwada and Mahajan 2002). Government schemes introduced large irrigation and the construction of big dams in Kacch but this strategy failed because of repeated droughts that reached a peak from 1984 to 1987. The government thus diverted the strategy towards groundwater extraction but was soon forced to limit its extraction as large irrigation became over dependent on groundwater which started to empty. Such development approach, based on an unregulated and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, ended up turning the natural scarcity into a severe water crisis (ibid.).

The crisis is part of a broader political dispute over who should rule over Kacch. On the one hand, the state government and the entire spectrum of elite and middle class that with the dissolution of the princely state reduced former elites to a subordinate position, embodied a discourse of development that considers Kacch as a vast and unproductive territory with a marginal role in the economic map of Gujarat (Tambs-Lyche and Sud 2016). On the other hand, regionalist's calls converging into instances of political autonomy consider the state government as 'too far' to understand local needs and biased towards more central regions:

"Kacch is in need for a global vision [...] but there are more limits to that: the first is the slowness in policies implementation because of the distance, the second is the incapacity of central and state government to understand the local reality, the third is that less developing areas are less interesting for the centre, so they are not cared about. So we can only rely on the local people"⁵.

As opposed to the state's vision, such local discourse gets along with an understanding of scarcity as part of the regional history and identity. Mehta (2005) describes the Kacchi society as the result of processes of adaptation of migrant communities to the geographic isolation and environmental conditions of the region, where systems of self-

⁵ K.A. (Chartered Accountant), personal communication, 26-08-2017.

sufficiency and inter-dependency influenced all aspects of the regional culture. The traditional livelihood of local communities was progressively eroded in the urbanising and industrialising scenario of the region, leading to their disgregation and individualisation. Such perspective thus considers the externally driven modernisation of the post-Independence period as an interruption of this system and a threat to the regional identity, as put by the director of the local newspaper Kacch Mitra:

"So scarcity is the main reason of the region's uniqueness. For its geographic situation, Kacch always represented a bridge for civilizations, but those who settled here and who created this mix of cultures, they changed by adapting to these local conditions because they had to learn to live with this scarcity. All Kacchi culture is in fact a mix of cultures coming from outside [...]. After Independence, this scenario started to change. Still 15 years ago, in the most remote areas like in Lakhpat you had a small population of 500 people who could live isolated because they had created a system of interdependence and self-sufficiency between them. Now that circle is broken, because in the new emerging context, if they have no economic gain, then they come to the city [...]. This kind of development we are seeing, it creates damages to the traditional social and professional system"⁶.

Integrating this local understanding, the NGOs' vision to decentralise resource management from the state to rural communities brought a project of 'cultural' change. By restoring their 'faith' in their own capacities and on local resources, such project aimed to invert the loss of interest for the rural life and 'traditional wisdom' that came along with the abandonment of villages and the rising attraction of cities. At the same time, the scientific validation of traditional knowledge aimed to change a dominant mentality that considers it as inadequate⁷. For example, Sahjeevan explored and integrated traditional technologies that rural communities developed to survive in drought conditions. The NGOs thus developed an approach of learning and integrating traditional knowledge into alternative development models, and 're-educating' rural communities on local resources management systems.

⁶ D.T. (Kachh Mitra), personal communication, 30-08-2017.

⁷ The need for development research in providing help and training to the NGOs had led to the implication of research institutes to the networking movements. This research environment thus informs Gujarati organisations since the 1980s.

While originating from and maintaining strong relationships with the grassroots movements of the east Gujarat, the NGO's objective to bring long-term changes by integrating a local discourse of development manifests a process of becoming 'locals' in opposition to the state agencies and urban elites. This was a consequence of their approach to local networks in order to reach out to a large number of individuals in the government and in civil society and to develop an informal support group, and of the intensive approach of 'mixing with communities' in order to understand their issues. KMVS collaborated with prominent local groups like the Vivekanand Research and Training Institute (VRTI), Shrujan, Kacch Mitra, which share a vision to "help the socially and economically challenged people in rural areas of Kacch [...] without waiting for the government to do it for us" (VRTI 2018).

3.1.2. THE CENTRALITY OF ABHIYAN IN THE OWNER DRIVEN RECONSTRUCTION

At the end of the 1990s the Kacch region was hit by a sequence of disasters: two cyclones in 1998 and 1999, three consecutive droughts from 1998 and 2000, and the earthquake in 2001. This disaster situation led KMVS to expand into a larger movement that became a central actor of regional development. After the 1998 cyclone, KMVS together with Sahjeevan and VRTI initiated an informal cooperation with 14 local NGOs to support the state government to coordinate the recovery activities. While local organisations started to interact on several projects, the lack of synergy in the relief activities led to instances of duplication in some areas and missing out of others. Aiming to optimize their coordination, they started a network called Kacch Sankat Ane Punarvasvat Abhiyan that became an opportunity to strengthen the cooperation with government. KMVS mobilised the women groups to realise a survey that the state government accepted and used to calculate the rehabilitation fund.

As the government recognised the network as an important local partner in disaster relief operations and to address the sequence of disasters in the next two years, the network consolidated as Kacch Nav Nirman Abhiyan (locally known as Abhiyan), which federated 24 NGOs working in 400 out of the 900 villages of Kacch. Following the 2001 earthquake, the Government of Gujarat recognised Abhiyan as official coordinating NGO, who would manage relief and rehabilitation activities with aid agencies and the

District Collector. Supported by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and the Gujarat Institute of Development Research (GIDR), Abhiyan realised a damages assessment in rural Kacch that became the reference for the short-term relief and long-term rehabilitation agenda and allowed to set up supply collections and supply lines with aid agencies and government. In parallel, Janvikas set up the group Janpath in Ahmedabad to coordinate relief activities with over 200 NGOs, that the State Government recognised as official coordinating agency at the state level (Online Volunteers 2018). Consequently, a huge inflow of donations was addressed to Abhiyan, that its partner organisations used in works of shelter, livelihood and dam repairing. Following the announcement of the US president Bill Clinton, the America-India Foundation donated to Abhiyan 3 *crore* 40 *lakh*⁸ rupees, then corresponding to 450,000 US dollars. Other national and international organisations that donated to Abhiyan included the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, Save the Children, Swiss Development Cooperation, and the Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC). The donations amounted in total at 6 *crore* 38 *lakhs* rupees, then corresponding to 850,000 US dollars (Kacch Mitra 2001).

Abhiyan maintained a two-fold role. It supported its member organisations in rehabilitation activities creating 33 coordinating units named SETUs in key locations in Kacch to control the distribution of relief materials, and organising village committees to plan the rehabilitation phase (www.onlinevolunteers.org). Secondly, it acted as a platform for community-based development initiatives with a long term perspective. The network pursued initiatives already started before the earthquake, like training of rural youth for social work and policy advocacy on drinking water, primary education and industrialisation. However, a claim to develop a rehabilitation framework in partnership with communities was raised against the highly centralised process of rehabilitation and was supported by the District Collector. Abhiyan was openly critical to the model of the state government:

"The problems that bog the government-led and managed relief operations are well known: a susceptibility to pressure from vested interests leading to inequitable relief distribution, siphoning off of relief funds due to corruption with their ranks, total lack of involvement of local people and lack of trained

8 In the Indian numbering system, a *crore* corresponds to ten million and a *lakh* corresponds to one hundred thousand.

personnel to manage relief works. [Abhiyan's] approach is in sharp distinction to the largesse approach of a paternalistic 'sarkar' which doles out charity to victims who queue up. While the former is an empowering process that builds self-confidence and enables people to take control of their lives, the latter feeds post-disaster depression and has long-term debilitating effects"⁹.

Advocating for decentralising the processes of reconstruction, Abhiyan focused in particular on the housing needs. The initial reconstruction package generalized common relocation for all and '50-50 Public-Private Partnership', where the beneficiaries were entitled of 50% funds from Government and the remaining 50% was to be borne by private agencies and NGOs (Abhiyan 2005). Bringing privates to build housing units reflects the reluctance of the State authorities to get involved in the housing construction themselves. The Government of Gujarat was in fact careful to avoid the mistakes made by the Maharashtra State during the 1993 Latur earthquake, when it built western style sprawling suburban villages that revealed inappropriate for the local culture, lifestyle and climate (Mukherji 2008).

However, shortcomings of the reconstruction package emerged soon: it attracted donor agencies to 'adopt' villages along main highways while isolated areas were neglected, thus creating an unbalanced rehabilitation; the leading role of agencies without community implication favoured a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, where specific needs of individual communities and diversity within the community were not taken into consideration; contractor-led developments produced poor quality works in an effort to maximise profits. The frustration was particularly manifested in new villages by relocation, where people refused *en masse* to move and preferred to stay in their old damaged houses (Barenstein 2006).

Pursuing former attempts to develop people-led housing construction¹⁰, Abhiyan sets up a Shelter Innovation and Support Centre to address the big housing demand, by training masons in building disaster-proof houses with local materials and to foster participation of local people in reconstruction (Chiodero 2006). Supported by demonstrations and the

9 Online Volunteers 2018.

10 Some people in KMVS interacting with master craftsman, artisan and building communities for which Kacch is renowned raised the interest to develop their traditional building practices. This led KMVS, supported by the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore (IIS), to start in 1999 an initiative to introduce innovation in traditional technologies and promote local crafts (Chiodero 2006).

interest of rural communities to build *in-situ* by themselves¹¹, Abhiyan convinced the state government to rehabilitate houses in villages in an owner-driven approach, where they could train 22,000 masons to build 10,000 houses in 40 villages ('Hunnarshala: A Tradition In The Eyes Of The World' 2013). One of the directors describes their advocacy:

"Abhiyan together with the Collector met the Government of Gujarat and asked the Chief Minister for the possibility to adopt this alternative model of rehabilitation based on an owner-driven approach, and he gave us four months to try it [...] The audit of this first attempt was quite disturbing because of the low performance of results, so we asked the government of Gujarat a second chance. With Narendra Modi, social facilitation should have become more difficult to implement, and they gave us a very short delay. So we acted by camp basins, we told everybody influential in Abhiyan to move to villages they were more connected to, and to organise camps for intensive reconstruction training. They teach the basics, only ten things, and they gave technical guidelines for earthquake-safe construction. At the end the audit resulted 60%, it was one of the fastest rehabilitations in the world"¹².

The success of the rural reconstruction in Kacch convinced the Government of Gujarat to change the reconstruction package as *in-situ* rehabilitation and owner-driven, marking the first time that an owner-driven approach to housing reconstruction was implemented at policy level and on a large scale (Baresntein 2006). The state policy integrated guidelines that the Shelter Innovation and Support Centre realised to support local masons in the large-scale reconstruction programmes, and the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA 2001) recognised them officially for reconstruction of Seismic Safe houses. The success of the rural reconstruction brought Abhiyan into a larger implication in the post-reconstruction period and to emerge as a main development agency in the region.

In parallel, Abhiyan emerged in trans-national networks of post-disaster rehabilitation.

11 The first realisation was a village of 230 houses in Rudramata, started few months after the earthquake and completed in three months. On the initiative of Sahjeevan, KMVS and Abhiyan, Rudramata was built using Stabilized Compressed Earth Blocks technology, and people took proactive initiative in the implementation, from designing the new *bhungas* to their construction. After that it was possible to proceed with the construction of other villages while perfecting the construction process used (Chiodero 2006).

12 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

As the reconstruction process in the rural Kacch was completed in 2003, Abhiyan participated to several disaster recovery activities where it supported State governments to set-up rehabilitation programmes. During the 2003 Bam earthquake in Iran, Abhiyan collaborated with UNDP and the NGO Peace Winds Japan (PWJ) to support housing recovery by training local masons and developing guidelines for the Government. In subsequent years, Abhiyan participated in disaster-recovery programmes for the South India tsunami-affected areas in Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu, for the Kashmir Earthquake in 2005, and in the Bihar Flood in 2008 (Kacch Mitra 2013). After the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, Misereor, the development agency of the Catholic Church of Germany and one of the main promoters of Abhiyan¹³, supported a partnership between Abhiyan and the Urban Poor Linkage Indonesia (UPLINK), a national coalition of organisations focused on urban poor issues that lacked experience in post-disaster reconstruction.

The partnership favoured the development of an implementation strategy, where Abhiyan facilitated the participation of affected people in a way that reflected their needs and capacities (Jha and Barenstein 2010). The success of the rehabilitation process in Indonesia was decisive to mainstream the model internationally as Owner Driven Reconstruction (ODR), and by then the World Bank promoted and financed regularly programmes of reconstruction based on an owner-driven approach (Vahanvati 2018). Its resonance led to the creation of the Owner Driven Reconstruction Collaborative (ODRC), a resource group of 27 organisations that enables States to develop mechanisms for mainstreaming the application of Owner Driven approaches in post-disaster situations¹⁴. In parallel, Abhiyan continued its activities focusing on rising development issues in the post-earthquake Kacch after the process of rural rehabilitation was completed in 2003. Several groups addressing specific issues evolved into 14 independent organisations, but the experience of coordinating the reconstruction activities influenced them to work as a collaborative: the same people lead more organisations, they shared resources depending on the needs of different projects, and continued sharing the same objectives, values and working style.

Among these initiatives, the non-profit company¹⁵ Hunnarshala Foundation for Building

13 Misereor is an international organisation that pursues secular work oriented towards people-driven approaches, in particular marginalised sections in rural areas (Misereor, 2017). In India, JanVikas and Abhiyan have been among the main recipients of its funds (Secular Work of Germany's Catholic 2019).

14 ODRC was started as initiative of the UNDP, Abhiyan, Hunnarshaala Foundation for Building Technologies and Innovations, People-in-Centre, Unnati, Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS) (Abhiyan 2014).

15 Section 25 companies are meant to achieve charitable purposes without a profit-making motive, but to carry

Technology & Innovation, commonly known as Hunnarshala, was created in 2003 out of the Shelter Innovation and Support Center. Hunnarshala, or 'school of skills' in Gujarati, was the name of an institution created by the King Lakpathji in 1752, and later renamed as 'school of art' in the colonial period before its closing in 1942¹⁶. Using the same name, the NGO identifies with the role of patronage of local artistic and cultural expressions that the royal family held until the Independence, while at the same time referring to Kacch as a place of circulations and influences¹⁷.

Founders of Abhiyan promoted Hunnarshala with the aim to extend owner-driven housing processes beyond post-disaster rehabilitation, while its success favoured the participation of key institutions that increased its acknowledgment and facilitated the access to resources: its directors are connected with the Shroff family of industries that supported KMVS since the years 1990s, HDFC and the Gujarat Rural Housing (GRUH) finance group that were implicated in the housing reconstruction in Kacch, and the IIS, Bangalore that collaborated with the Shelter Innovation and Support Centre to develop people-led reconstruction¹⁸. Started with a long-term engagement, Hunnarshala integrated some emerging issues concerning disaster safety, sustainability and the changing society influenced by the reconstruction process as one of its directors explains:

"After two months of intense and fast relief, we started to look at the future and how this reconstruction that was on-going would have create long-term changes. So new main question arouse. First, the need to limit damages in future disasters, we started focusing on building with earthquake-safe structures. Secondly, we looked at green materials, because of the awareness of environment issue. And third, since people are exposed to global influences and lifestyle, we started questioning about new designs in relation to the traditional design. These questions influenced the way our activity developed"¹⁹.

philanthropic purposes with limited liability upon direction of the Central Government.

16 R.E. (tourist guide), personal communication, 04-06-2018.

17 According to a director of Hunnarshala, the name was chosen as the founder of the 'old' Hunnarshala aimed to share the knowledge he had acquired in Europe, that he applied to the construction of Prag Mahal palace, a symbol of Bhuj and example of transfer and adaptation of knowledge (K.T. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 02-08-2017).

18 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 18-07-2018.

19 K.T. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 02-08-2017.

3.2. HOMES IN THE CITY: FROM RURAL RECONSTRUCTION TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1. THE POST-EARTHQUAKE PERIOD, FROM RECOVERY TO DEVELOPMENT

By addressing emerging issues of long-term development, the NGOs mirrored the globalising scenario of the region after the earthquake and the unfolding process of urbanisation in which rising disparities emerged. Abhiyan and other local groups – the newspaper Kacch Mitra²⁰ and the citizen group Bhuj Development Council (BDC)²¹ – denounced the partiality of the housing recovery programme towards low-income homeowners, renters and squatters (Abhiyan 2003). Among them, slums were excluded from the housing recovery process as houses were not eligible to public assistance, and from the urban planning that did not supply infrastructures and services to them (Taheri Tafti 2017). While the need to review the government's housing recovery policy to address squatter's needs was soon highlighted, state agencies were however reluctant to modify the policy.

Worried to make Bhuj a post-disaster model and that World Bank's loan funds were disbursed in time, the state government exercised tight control to respect deadline over the reconstruction programme (Mukherji 2008). The predominance of rental units among the destroyed houses directed the priority of the recovery programme towards the housing programme for renters, while the recovery of the slums constituted a too big risk that would have compromise the entire programme. Moreover, officials changed very frequently in relation to the political priorities of the government, resulting in the discontinuity of programmes. Finally, the presence of powerful groups capable of influencing local authorities favoured the interests of their communities, leading authorities to support land speculation (Taheri Tafti 2017). Excluded from assistance distribution and without support from local groups and administration, squatters were

20 The newspaper Kacch Mitra cooperated with Abhiyan in the reconstruction, and then the director was among the promoters of Hunnarshala and is a board member of Sahjeevan.

21 BDC is a civil society organisation created in the 1990s to initiate city's development activities, which became the most important civil society partner of Environment Planning Collaborative (EPC) that prepared the plans for reconstruction (Balachandran 2010).

thus the group which most struggled to recover (Mukherji 2008).

Questioning the legitimacy and moral authority of the Gujarat State, Abhiyan, Kacch Mitra and BDC coalesced to advocate for policy change. After an unsuccessful attempt to organise a citizens' federation with the aim to influence the housing recovery programme as community-based²², the pressure group for slums was however not strong as the organisations focused on the needs of renters and managed to extend the recovery programme to include this group, but did not pay particular attention to the slums (Mukherji 2008). Furthermore, Abhiyan disposed of limited resources to address urban issues as it was occupied on the process of reconstruction in rural areas (ibid.). In fact, there were few NGOs working on urban areas in Kacch for being historically a poorly urbanised region and therefore they focused on the recovery of rural areas²³. As an exception, an informal housing recovery programme was realised in Bhachau thanks to the presence of an NGO capable to impose itself in the centralised governance of the city, becoming in fact a consultant of the state and overcoming the inability of public assistance to target squatters (Mukherji 2018).

Abhiyan's NGOs only moved their attention to the recovery needs of slums in Bhuj at the end of the reconstruction, when the acceleration of the process of urbanisation brought them into the picture. Their focus on slums embodies an understanding of the post-earthquake scenario as it was experienced by components of the civil society implicated in the process of reconstruction. According to Simpson (2005), against the highly centralised reconstruction locally referred to as a 'second earthquake': "all shared the concern that the 'outsiders' governing and reconstructing the land had no clue about local conditions, the sensitivities of the population or the nuances of local culture and that, through their ham-fisted efforts, 'Kachchhi identity' or 'pride' (*asmita*) was being destroyed" (ibid.: 232).

Abhiyan aligned with this collective sentiment since before the earthquake, when it shared visions of "self-governed Kacch" with other local organisations (Abhiyan, GSDMA, and UNDP 2002). Whereas Abhiyan was active in the rural rehabilitation, the links established with the civil society in Bhuj where it was based, favoured its

22 In 2003, Abhiyan, Kacch Mitra and Bhuj Development Council, together with the Environmental Planning Collaborative, attempted to form a community based organisation called Swajan (Our Own People), to facilitate the District Collector and the State Government to adapt the recovery policy for Bhuj to the needs of local communities. However, the state government's priority for a successful housing recovery pushed the District Collector to place the initiative under the control of the Bhuj Authority, whose tendency to exert firm control over initiatives out of the policy implementation led to its collapse (Mukherji 2008).

23 The only NGO who worked for the recovery of slums in Bhuj was the Disaster Mitigation Institute (DMI), however not being a local based organisation (Sadhu and Shah 2012).

implication in the early interest for identity and enlivening of traditions, and later in the protest movements against perceived injustices suffered in the reconstruction. Abhiyan thus embodied a vision of political change "towards a Kacch which is governed by community initiatives, encourages self-help development, especially with marginalised sections"²⁴ (ibid:1).

At the same time, the focus on slums was influenced by the process of 're-structuration' of the local society produced by the redistribution of wealth, power and order after the earthquake, and the collective image of fading Kacchi identity. The changing perception of slums was influenced by the alteration of structures of government and society that challenged the relationships between landscape, humanity and place which constituted the regional identity (Simpson, 2014).

Saving 'traditional' communities from such disruptive effects meant to ensure the continuity of the local identity in the vision of the NGOs. In this sense, slum settlements and communities became associated to forms of heritage of cultural and social processes or 'intangible heritage' according to Smith (2006), where the inherent cultural value prevails over the material basis. The interest for Bhuj's slums might represent an example of emerging forms of patrimonialisation of informal settlements just like Dharavi in Mumbai (Srivastava and Echanove 2016), however the discursive or intangible aspect is privileged to the material basis.

Securing the continuity of lifestyle and identity of communities living in slums becomes a strategy for subverting the disruptive changes and reorganizing the urban society on collective lines. In this sense, the NGO's intention to rehabilitate slums exceeds the objective to meet their recovery needs and close the gap with the rest of the city but is concerned with reconstituting the interest for collective action that the individual dependency on the resources of the government had fragmented. Such vision inverts the current role of these neighbourhoods, as it re-establishes their importance to change the urban society as a whole. As a reaction to the disruptive changes produced in the aftermath, the programme looks at the urban fringe as a space where processes of modernisation are faster and where such struggle about identity is at play.

24 The name Kacch Nav Nirman Abhiyan can be translated as 'movement for the re-foundation of Kacch', carrying a vision of politic reformation that exceeds the objectives of post-disaster recovery. It also echoes the Navnirman Andolan, the student and middle-class people movement against economic crisis and corruption of Gujarat Government, in which the founders of Abhiyan's NGOs were grounded.

3.2.2. THE HOMES IN THE CITY MOVEMENT AND THE FOCUS ON SLUMS

To deal with the impacts of urbanisation on the urban poor, in 2006 KMVS realised a comparative study of socio-economic conditions in rural and urban areas that highlighted the rapidly changing scenario of slums because of migration and the worsening of living conditions, in particular for women. Working with urban women became a must for KMVS to remain effective, which implied an identity change from rural to Kacch women's collective, and a move beyond the capacity building of women on livelihood options, to include different kinds of intervention inherent with slums. This led KMVS to develop a perspective on urban poverty as well as the capacity to deal with legal aspects of urban development and to work with the local government in order to access urban development schemes (KMVS 2006). According to the director of KMVS:

"We had not seen that after earthquake many changes came in Kacch, many areas were being urbanised, industrial development was attracting huge labour force, and even within Kacch rural to urban migration was happening. So when we studied this, we understood that in fact urban way of living was becoming harder compared to the rural area [...]. Whereas they migrate from rural to the urban, neighbours are strangers, and specifically for women here getting full employment is hard when migrating from rural because here the employment are skills and expertise required, is different whereas in rural you go to your neighbour and whatever work you can do, and those are traditional skills but here in factories if you don't have skills you can't work. Moreover here in urban areas when they come they come as small families, so they have to take care of children and they don't have time because they work for 8 hours"²⁵.

In 2008, KMVS created a separate team to address development activities in the slum areas in Bhuj, which soon converged into the collaborative programme Homes in the City (HIC) between five partner organisations aiming at starting collective action at the city level. The partnership was started between the NGOs KMVS, Hunnarshala and

25 H.A. (KMVS), personal communication, 30-11-2015.

Sahjeevan. The latter were already collaborating in a rental housing project in GIDC Relocation Site, where they experimented an integrated system of decentralized water management and waste treatment that would have served the entire site, and they started interacting with KMVS as it visited urban poor communities. Later the partnership was extended to Arid Community Technology (ACT) and Urban SETU, all of them belonging to the same 'family' of organizations originated from Abhiyan.

ACT was established from a water knowledge cell created within Sahjeevan in the Nineties, and evolved into an independent organization in 2004 to educate and build confidence of communities about local water management²⁶. A project called SETU Abhiyan was created in 2010 to address governance issues by bridging the gaps between the citizens and the government departments as well as mobilising communities, and was later registered as an independent organisation in 2013 (HIC 2011). Misereor and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) supported the initiative financially. Misereor, the development agency of the Catholic Church of Germany, which already supported KMVS and Abhiyan since their creation, continued financing Abhiyan as main local partner in Kacch after the reconstruction. Misereor was also instrumental in the institution of the partnership with ACHR, whereby Abhiyan has developed a strong relationship since the participation to the reconstruction programme in Indonesia.

By developing partnership with ACHR, Abhiyan got involved in a transnational co-production of contemporary urban entrepreneurialism around informal settlements and urban poverty (McFarlane 2012). Established in 1989 in Bangkok, ACHR is a network of community organisations supporting the development of grassroots organisations to advocate for housing and land reform for the urban poor. Its approach is to organise communities to combine their savings in city development funds that allows them to leverage public finance from national and local governments and international donors, and to take on much larger development projects. ACHR has supported exchanges among informal settlements, cities and countries, allowing the urban poor to share success stories and lessons learned across Asian cities, thus favouring successful innovations to be replicated and to influence policy and programmes²⁷.

26 ACT was established in response to the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation in terms of pressure over local water resources. In first place, after the earthquake the priority of water supply was put on industries, thus threatening water security at the district level. Secondly, the increasing urbanisation augmented the water pressure on rural areas. With these conditions, the objective of water self-dependency could no more be resolved only at village level in the post-earthquake scenario but required intervening at the urban context (Y.J. (ACT), personal communication, 24-11-2015).

27 ACHR has close ties with the Slum Dwellers International (SDI) movement, a trans-local assemblage of

As the organisations' experience was in rural development, they started mobilising slum communities in Bhuj in order to understand their conditions and the interventions to prioritise²⁸. This process brought to the creation of 11 Self Help Groups (SHGs) practicing microfinance, collecting small savings from the group members and disbursing loans to them basing on their needs²⁹. The SHGs were later linked together in a city-level platform registered in 2010 as an independent organisation named Sakhi Sangini meaning 'female friends together'. Sakhi Sangini integrates two mutually constitutive processes of financial disciplining and marketisation on the one hand, and socially progressive collective support on the other: it aimed to cumulate the funds of the SHGs and to access larger resources and entitlements from Government programmes and make them circulate in order to finance more projects, and to take collective action on common issues, develop leadership and encourage their participation in governance, and create a pressure group for policy advocacy (HIC 2011).

Sakhi Sangini raised housing rehabilitation and land regularization as primary objectives of the HIC programme, while another main concern was the lack of basic services (ibid.). Long-settled communities implicated in the federation raised these priorities against the risk of demolition and eviction occurring with the process of reconstruction and urbanisation after the earthquake. Their location close to the walled city and along main radial roads augmented the perception of the changes that undermined their sense of belonging to the land, contributing to increase the claim for legitimacy.

As 'to secure shelter' was given priority by the federation, two connected programmes for housing and urban planning managed by Hunnarshala assumed a central place in the initiative, while Sahjeevan started a programme for decentralised drinking water, sanitation and participatory solid waste management³⁰. While each organisation focused on different issues, the programmes were developed together as interdependent:

NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBO) working on sanitation and housing in slums in over 20 countries, and a key site in the propagation of models of urban intervention (McFarlane 2012). Both Abhiyan and the Slum Dweller International (SDI) collaborated with ACHR around slum rehabilitation in Indonesia, and they are today the only partners of ACHR in India.

28 This process started through a door-to-door waste collection project in collaboration with the Bhuj municipality, where two low-cast communities participated constituting the initial core of social mobilisation (H.A. (KMVS), personal communication, 30-11-2015).

29 Microfinance is a key technique of contemporary urban entrepreneurialism, and SDI is an important actor of its development in relation to urban informality. Variants of microfinance are daily repeated across the Alliance's (the core group of SDI) partner groups in India and in SDI cities, and form the basis of a range of other activities (McFarlane 2012). The influence of 'SPARC's learning', where 'SPARC' is used to refer to the 'Alliance' equally characterises in Sakhi Sangini.

30 Sahjeevan expanded in a second phase to work with pastoral communities in the city, by creating an urban pressure group named Bhuj Maldhari Sangathan and developing an 'animal hostel' model.

Hunnarshala developed the sanitation programme as an integrated component of slum rehabilitation, by constructing toilet units and connecting them to gutter lines; KMVS carried the solid waste management programme in partnership with Sakhi Sangini into door-to-door collection and recycling of plastic bags, reusing wet & kitchen waste as cattle feed, and conducting awareness programmes ; ACT and the pressure group Jal Strot Sneh Samvardhan Samiti (JSSS) carried the water management programme³¹ ; finally, Urban SETU together with Hunnarshala and KMVS undertook a governance programme to mobilise communities and elective members to address needs in slums.

3.2.3. ENVISAGING A MODEL OF OWNER-DRIVEN SLUM REDEVELOPMENT

The housing programme in slums within Homes in the City was proposed as owner driven, with the aim to extend the approach from the context of post-disaster reconstruction to the slum rehabilitation. The programme was facilitated by the Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA), a programme that ACHR created in 2010 to support local organisations on citywide and community-driven slum upgrading³² (ACHR 2015). As a partner of Hunnarshala, ACHR released a revolving fund of 1.7 *lakh* rupees, that was transferred to KMVS and to Sakhi Sangini which could integrate it to the cumulative income of SHGs. As the founder of KMVS explains:

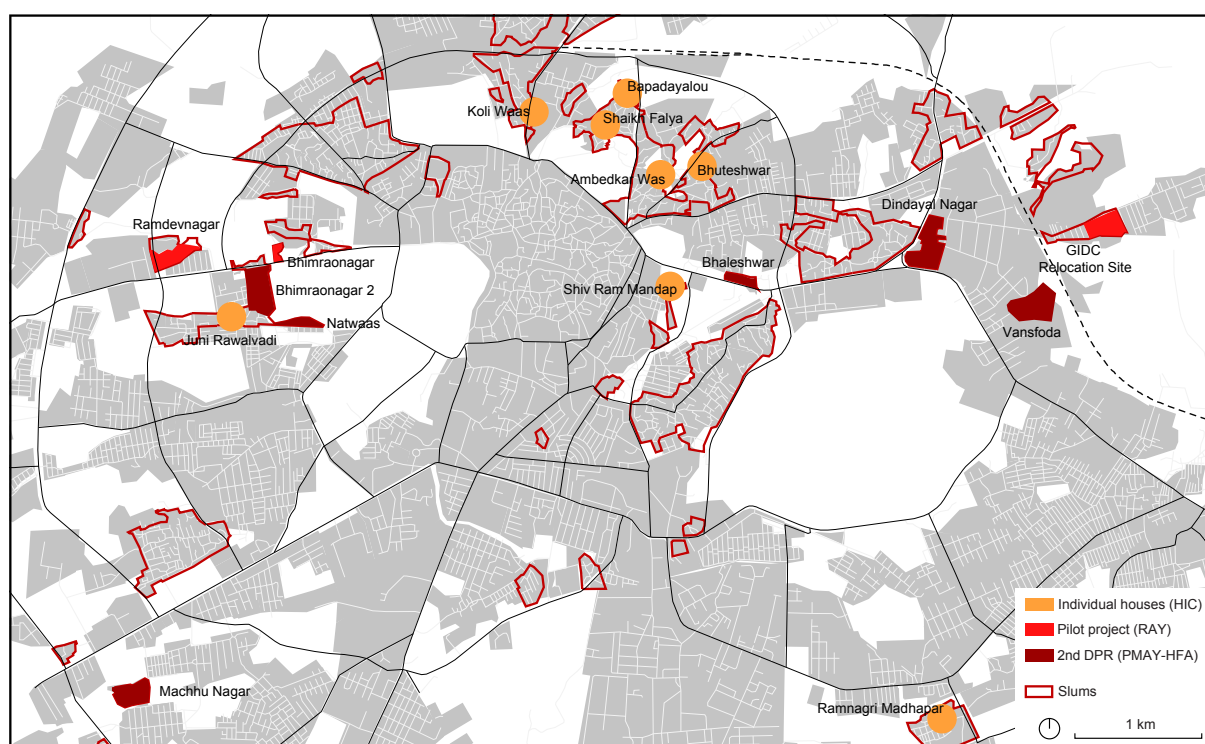
"We had supported the formation of SHGs, but it was Sakhi Sangini's leaders who demanded to open the housing issue, they said very clearly that we wanted legitimate houses and thus the federation chose to work for that. We had just begun the federation at that time. Hunnarshala was part of ACHR and as partners they were giving us a small revolving fund for rehabilitation of poor families in the city. There was no housing programme existing at that time, so we thought as partners that we have women

31 At the city level, an integrated watershed management plan was developed by reviving a traditional harvesting system, in view to make Bhuj self-dependent; in parallel, a local-level groundwater management in slum areas was based on the city-level plan, by creating or reusing wells within the recharge area of nearby lakes and connect them with community supply system ; finally, the initiative includes the diffusion of roof rain water harvesting (HIC 2011).

32 The ACCA programme enabled the expansion and evolution of savings processes, so that local groups were able to offer more sophisticated financial products: longer-term savings for housing, interest-earning savings accounts, insurance/welfare schemes and loans for both individual livelihoods and community enterprises (Boonyabancha 2018).

federation as SHGs in HIC, they have the technical skills at revolving funds, and as demand of the federation also. That is when they decided to start a small owner-driven housing programme through Sakhi Sangini"³³.

Hunnarshala and KMVS assumed a leading role in the process: the former by giving technical support in the design and construction, and the latter through social mobilisation. KMVS supported the creation of a committee including representatives of each SHG of Sakhi Sangini, charged to identify most vulnerable families among their members that were given priority in the housing programme. The committee developed criteria for loans and a format for application, and oriented all the SHGs about the program. Individual loans were fixed at Rs. 50,000 and 12% annual interest. Basing on the need assessment in each SHG, Sakhi Sangini divert them a part of the revolving fund. Individually, SHGs would monitor the disbursement of loans to its members, the construction implementation, and the re-collection of loan from members that is given back to Sakhi Sangini in a way to finance further projects (Kacch Mitra 2013). The program allowed to support around 230 members of Sakhi Sangini to build their houses distributed in different slum areas where the SHGs are settled (see Map 8, Image 6).



Map 8. Location of owner driven housing projects in slums in Bhuj

Sources: HIC 2011, Hunnarshala 2014a, 2014b, 2014c. Realized by: the author

33 H.A. (KMVS), personal communication, 30-11-2015.

Still, the houses built through the owner-driven housing programme remained illegal and could not be provided with basic services as they were re-built *in-situ* over Government land. In order to overcome these limitations and to extend the programme to other slums in Bhuj, Hunnarshala focused on urban planning with a whole-city perspective. To overcome the lack of exhaustive and updated information about the slum population, in 2011 Urban SETU realised a city-level household survey that identified 74 slum areas with 11,234 households (around 30% of the city's population), all of them occupying government owned land (Hunnarshala 2014a). Conducted with a participatory approach with the SHGs of women living in those slums, the survey incorporates caste and family networks in the way slum areas were identified in the city's plan, and slum communities became the unity around which the programme was oriented. Hunnarshala then studied the integration of the slum rehabilitation into the city planning with a view to develop an owner-driven housing model for the slum through the entire city. This was carried at two levels of town planning at the city level and micro planning at the settlement level.



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 10-2015



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 07-2017

Image 6. House in Bapadayaalou Nagar built under the HIC program (left).
Image 7. 'In 2016 Slum Will Be in the Past for 1570 People of Bhuj' (right).

Hunnarshala conducted a study to understand the possibilities of *in-situ* rehabilitation and legalisation of slums by extending the Town Planning beyond the walled city³⁴, demonstrating that it was possible to maintain most of slums in the same location reassigning land to the Government along main roads and near commercial areas. In second place, the Town Planning was proposed in view to integrate a sustainable

34 A 'town planning exercise' was realised over a land pocket of 1 ha to the north-east of the walled city, covering most part of wards 2 and 3 where KMVS and SETU were most active and established.

planning approach to slum rehabilitation. With the participation of the other organisations involved in the HIC programme, a water drainage system, waste water treatment, green and recreational spaces were studied, so that the development of each slum could be integrated to the area-level system³⁵. The study thus aimed to justify the legalizing of slum land and also a sustainable approach to planning (HIC 2011).

Basing on the town planning, the study was deepened in detail at the settlement level. This was explored in Bapadayalou Nagar, a slum settlement chosen as demonstration model. Here the Sakhi Sangini federation was very active as it was one of the places where the social mobilisation started in 2008, and where several houses were rebuilt within the owner driven housing programme. A detailed plan was realised in a portion of Bapadayalou Nagar, the Koli Cluster, with the intention to create an example of ideal Economic Weaker Section (EWS) housing. The design process studied seven existing structures with a common space and a *mandir*. As a demonstration model, the Koli Cluster exemplifies several planning and design principles (HIC 2011). The experience demonstrated a model implementation that could be replicated. This aspect was a main issue for Hunnarshala, conscious of the importance to demonstrate a model for policy advocacy that could be replicated in Bhuj and in other cities.

The proposal appears in continuity with the process of city development started a decade before (Balachandran 2011) where the Development Plan (DP) aimed to integrate slums in the urban planning by extending Town Planning schemes, while its focus to improve slum conditions without targeting their regularisation was in fact a main reason for their exclusion from the development process. In realising the town planning, Hunnarshala was supported to handle technical issues by B. R. Balachandran, an architect and urban planner, who during the reconstruction of Bhuj had led the team of urban planners from EPC in preparing the plan for reconstruction.

35 ACT studied the location and condition of the existing channels and water bodies, and identified main intervention to realise at the settlement level; Sahjeevan studied the solid waste management and sanitation, as well as the existence of cattle and the need for animal hostels within the area (HIC 2011).

3.3. BHUJ AND THE NATIONAL SLUM POLICIES: TOWARDS A MODEL FOR SMALL CITIES ?

3.3.1. HIGH EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN BHUJ

Despite the success of the owner-driven housing programme for urban poor under HIC, its extension and the integration in the city planning required a larger government intervention. Hunnarshala attempted to include the programme in the Integrated Housing Slum Development Program (IHSDP) but its implementation in Bhuj was prevented by complications in the process of land transfer from the state government to the municipality. When the new Central policy for slum rehabilitation Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) was launched in June 2011, Hunnarshala advocated with the Government of Gujarat for the inclusion of Bhuj in the list of cities to be covered by the programme³⁶. The Central and State Government accepted to implement the scheme in Bhuj as owner-driven with an expectation to make it "one of the first Slum-Free City in India".

The inclusion of Bhuj in the RAY policy resulted from the longer process of mobilisation and advocacy. In first place, NGOs in Bhuj had prepared slum communities to cooperate at a larger implication, and citizens groups that had been organised earlier could be mobilised by Hunnarshala to pressure over government officials. The houses realised under the HIC programme represented a demonstration of the potentials of the owner-driven approach in slum areas. Convincing government officials was easier thanks to the works done before. Secondly, Hunnarshala could leverage on the relations with State departments consolidated during the reconstruction period that facilitated the dialogue with State and Central Government and their interest to the project. Hunnarshala had developed close relations with the head of the Urban Development & Urban Housing Department and part of the Affordable Housing Mission (AHM), which had started the RAY programme at the state level. The advocacy for the owner-driven approach since the post-earthquake reconstruction succeeded in rising political interest in a context of inter-states and inter-cities competition to access public assistance.

Following the inclusion of Bhuj in the preparatory phase of RAY, Hunnarshala developed a

³⁶ While the scheme was applicable to all cities/UAs of the country, the States in consultation with the Centre are responsible to select cities and respecting certain criteria as per the policy guidelines (MHUPA 2013).

pilot project for the first phase of implementation³⁷. The pilot project included a strategy of implementation and management and emphasised the cooperation between government bodies, NGOs and beneficiaries, aiming to create a model for the whole city. In order to federate local politicians on common objectives of the programme, in December 2013 Hunnarshala organised a workshop where the programme was discussed with government authorities. The project was limited to three slum settlements (Ramdevnagar, Bhimrao Nagar-1 and GIDC Relocation Site) (see Map 9) where slum dwellers were "ready" to accept the project. As the director of KMVS explains, the main reasons preventing slum communities to participate to the project were the fear of eviction and the compromise of losing part of the land:

"Implementing this particular housing scheme in a particular area means people will have to let their excess land go, what they have encroached [...]. The encroachment in some areas is so big that it looks like almost a small village, whereas [in these three areas], when we are asking to free their land for others, so many people are ready for that. So all areas are not immediately ready, these three areas were ready to access this scheme"³⁸.

The communities of Ramdevnagar and Bhimrao Nagar-1 had already attempted to improve the conditions of their areas by accessing government support. Their mobilisation started with the HIC programme in 2008, and the NGOs chose them earlier for the housing programme since their unity towards this objective represented an important condition for the success of the project. Differently, GIDC Relocation Site was considered a priority by NGOs and state authorities because of its conditions of vulnerability and being considered a failure of the post-earthquake reconstruction process (Jauhola 2019). For the NGOs, the inclusion of the settlement in the pilot project also represented an opportunity to extend the experimentation of affordable housing for the poor started ten years before with the Sardarnagar project for low-income renters.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the pilot project was submitted to the Central and State government at the end of 2013 and was sanctioned one year later³⁹ (see Image 7) and was

37 Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) was launched in June 2011 in two phases: the preparatory phase for a period of two years which ended in June 2013, and the implementation phase for the period of 2013-2022 (MHUPA 2013).

38 H.A. (KMVS), personal communication, 30-11-2015.

39 The project proposal for Bhuj was approved by central government during the 4th Central Sanctioning and

included amongst 15 Best Practice models out of 171 projects sanctioned in 21 states (MHUPA 2016). The Best Practices is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation with the aim to select projects for their innovativeness and to indicate models for the future housing projects under the national scheme⁴⁰ (GOI 2015). The project in Bhuj was selected for the community participation through an owner-driven approach, environment friendly features, and design and planning approach. Acknowledged as one of the few in the country to approach the slum redevelopment in an owner driven manner, it was likely to become a model for the Country and to influence the central policy (Hunnarshala 2016b).

The replicability of the pilot project was one of the reasons why it was selected by the Central Government, as Hunnarshala developed the programme's capacity of replication in other cities with a whole-city approach conforming with slum-free cities policies' objective to eradicate slums before 2022⁴¹. Consequently, Hunnarshala was invited by the central government to discuss the possibility of policy changes and to prepare guidelines based on the experience in Bhuj that could be used by urban local bodies and organisations in other cities. However, the policy redefinition following the 2014 general elections perturbed this process.

3.3.2. ADVOCATING FOR OWNER-DRIVEN SLUM POLICIES

In June 2015, the Central-sponsored scheme Pradhan Mantri AwasYojana - Housing for All (PMAY-HFA) replaced the previous slum housing scheme RAY. The new scheme targets 4041 statutory towns (as per Census 2011) and focuses on 500 Class I cities (with a population of 100,000 or more) to be covered in three phases between 2015 and 2022 (GOI 2016). Bhuj was automatically included in the new policy scheme being already selected under RAY, while the continuation of on-going single projects was granted as per the previous guidelines. Hunnarshala submitted a second project proposal by early 2015 for the rehabilitation of another six areas⁴² and revised them to fit the new policy scheme but the new

Monitoring Committee (CSLM) meeting in 12-12-2013, but it required an application by Hunnarshala to the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi for the pilot project to be sanctioned by Central Government.

40 The Best Practice process is an initiative of the Mission Directorate under Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, supported by Building Materials & Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC) and the Housing & Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) (GOI 2015).

41 M.U. (BDC), personal communication, 08-08-2017.

42 Hunnarshala realised and submitted three DPRs for the rehabilitation/resettlement of six slum settlements on four different sites: Machu Nagar, Natwaas, Bhim Rao Nagar 2, Bhadeshwar, Dindayal Nagar and Wansfoda. They were given priority because of more critic conditions and the solicitation to redevelop them by local

policy guidelines prevented its approval.

To encourage private participation to redevelop the slums *in-situ* wherever financially viable, PMAY adopts the principle of 'land as resource' where the entire occupied land is allocated to the developer and the provision of housing for slum dwellers is supported by a 'free sale component' so as to cross subsidize the project (ibid.). To determine the financial viability of each project, slums are analysed with respect to their location, number of slum dwellers, area of the slum land, market potential of the land, FAR/FSI available⁴³ and density norms applicable to that piece of land (GOI 2016). These data allow calculating the profit margin for developer, which should not be less than a desired 20%-40% of the total investment (Hunnarshala 2018). However, since private developers need to produce higher margins in order to finance the slum rehabilitation component, they are encouraged to privilege highly lucrative emplacements and to minimize expenses by opting for high-rise, high-density and standard solutions.

Following the new policy rationale, the value of the selling component for slums in Bhuj would be too low to attract developers (ibid.), because of the low land values of slum areas and because the city development regulations had limited the height and the Floor Space Index (FSI) of new building constructions for security reasons, with the result that developers are not allowed to increase the building's height and density in order to increase the profit margin. The proposal for slum redevelopment was not viable as it did not meet the requirements of the PMAY scheme. At the same time, slum communities in Bhuj were reluctant to participate considering the new conditions, as the proposal to assign them individual houses and land plots as in the pilot project under RAY policy scheme became inapplicable under the new scheme.

The inclusion of Bhuj in the policy and the acknowledgment of the owner-driven approach within the previous policy framework had resulted from the advocacy of Hunnarshala. The Central Government had demonstrated the interest for the proposal of slum-redevelopment in an owner-driven approach by including it in the Best Practices. But whereas the Center Government was favourable to a policy change, its responsibility is reduced to the legislative role in the new policy scheme, while the State Government assumes the responsibility of the policy implementation. After the informal request of guidelines by the Ministry of Housing

authorities. In the case of Machu Nagar, the District Collector asked to relocate it since it occupies land owned by the Forest Department of Gujarat, which already threatened to evict the slum community; Natwaas, Bhim Rao Nagar 2 and Bhadeshwar occupy flood-prone areas; Dindayal was a temporary relocation site having become later a permanent slum ; Wansfoda occupies part of the industrial belt on Bhuj.

43 Extra Floor Space Index (FSI)/Floor Area Ratio (FAR) or Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) are provided to make these projects financially viable (GOI 2016).

and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MOHUPA) was declined with the government change, Hunnarshala proposed to the Housing Secretary of the State Government to review the policy guidelines, but the process was relented because of repeated changes of the government body and because the Housing Secretary submitted the proposal to the Centre to get the approbation⁴⁴.

While the reticence of State Government to accept a policy change is understood in the current political context where a larger decentralisation of powers preconised by the new policies seems to be hindered in their implementation (Jaffrelot 2019), it is also explained by more restrictive guidelines of the new policy. In RAY, the property rights of the land occupied by the slum area were first transferred to the municipality, which became owner of all the slum land before transferring individual property rights to the beneficiaries, thus allowing for modifications of the housing plots along the project. Differently, the new policy scheme predicts that the land should be transferred directly from State Government to the developer that is charged of slum redevelopment. In an owner-driven perspective, such provision implies that the property rights of individual land plots are transferred to individual beneficiaries preventing any changes that would rise during the implementation. As the State Government owns the lands that should be transferred to beneficiaries, Government officials rejected the request to modify the policy, as one of the Hunnarshala's directors explains:

"They don't care, they don't allow to build because they don't have the land. First the lands have to be transferred to beneficiaries' name and this is the problem in this process. Government officers do not want to take risks. If anything happens in the process, the responsibility comes to them. So if you want to fix the problem following the guidelines you have to talk to the Government, and to change guidelines you have to approach Delhi. In Delhi people say we don't mind, we are just releasing funds to States and the rest can be done by them, but at the State they are sending guidelines to the centre to probe to their rules, and I think it is very convenient to answer that. Between these two people are we"⁴⁵.

44 AHM, which is responsible for the project implementation at the state level, is hosted by the Housing Department of the Government of Gujarat. The secretary of Housing Department changed in August 2016 and then in July 2017. At every change of secretary, this process of submitting the proposal and starting a discussion about the possibility of policy change had to be done anew, thus leading to report the possibility of policy change more times. During my last meeting in July 2018, Hunnarshala was still waiting for another meeting with the housing secretary to discuss policy change.

45 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 27-06-2017.

Facing this reticence of State Government to take risks in accepting the proposal, Hunnarshala orients towards a strategy of influencing Central Government to change the policy guidelines by allowing for another vertical, proposed as 'fifth vertical' for slum redevelopment as owner-driven. In order to demonstrate the model in Bhuj to the Central Government, Hunnarshala aimed to conclude rapidly the pilot project as one of the Hunnarshala's director explains:

"Central Government is very interested by the project and they could change the guidelines, but for doing so they have to see a finished project and how it results. For this reason we are planning a big workshop here in Bhuj where we will invite government officials, medias and the representatives of the Urban Local Bodies of the other cities we are charged for, in order to discuss how to go further in the project and to plan together with them policy changes. When Nagar Palika releases funds, then in two months the project is finished, so we are ready to organise this workshop"⁴⁶.

Beyond attempting to extend the programme in Bhuj, Hunnarshala adopted a strategy to extend the owner-driven model of slum redevelopment to other cities. In order to assess the housing demands in each of the around 170 cities in Gujarat covered under the PMAY scheme, the AHM launched a request for proposals to select consultants which would have studied the housing scenario in each city: consultants were charged as Project Management Agencies (PMA) with the responsibility to develop Slum Survey, Demand Survey and Preparation of Housing for All Plan of Action (Hunnarshala 2018).

Hunnarshala participated to the empanelment together with around 25 agencies and was selected in June 2016 along with other four agencies. Hunnarshala was entrusted to work on eight small cities in Gujarat, out of which only three are located in Kacch; excluding Bhuj, all them are small cities of category C (with a population between 25,000-50,000), since a preference was given by Hunnarshala to work only on small cities⁴⁷. Hunnarshala represents

46 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

47 Hunnarshala was allotted eight cities around the state. Bhuj, Rapar, Bhachau are the cities located in Kacch. Furthermore, Dehgam, Chaklasi, Mansa near Ahmedabad, and Khambhalia and Jamjodhpur are located in Saurashtra (Hunnarshala 2018). Hunnarshala also applied to work in bigger cities, but their experience and their preference influenced Government to allot them only small cities. The cities out of Kacch were allotted basing on a preference for locations where partners could have supported Hunnarshala in the process. While it could be facilitated by SETU in Rapar and Unnati in Bhachau, in the other cities Hunnarshala had collaborated with two agencies since the post-earthquake reconstruction: People in Centre (PIC) from Ahmedabad, and DU Studio in South Gujarat. As Project management Agency, Hunnarshala thus invited them to form a group to develop studies in all the eight cities.

an exception since it was selected for working on small cities and to develop a strategy to address their specific conditions: it was in fact selected because of its intention to work in small cities and the capacity demonstrated in the work done in Bhuj to develop people-led processes⁴⁸. Following the empanelment and the constitution of the group to implement the policy, Hunnarshala developed Slum Free City Plans of Action (SFCPOA) for the eight cities⁴⁹. The SFCPOA was intended to demonstrate that the approach of 'land as a resource' is not applicable in small cities, and instead an owner-driven approach is proposed to be adopted. Demonstration was to be organised through workshops in each of the allotted cities, where the owner driven slum rehabilitation could be presented and discussed with Government Authorities:

"Our intention now is to organise a workshop in each of the eight cities within the next two months. The workshop will be with Urban Local Bodies, and will be invited other local NGOs, Government officials taking advantage of our knowledge and good relations, and contractors that could be interested in this kind of strategy. We submitted a request to the Chief Officers and we are waiting they give us a date. This workshop will be the occasion for getting feedback and suggestions from all stakeholders involved in the strategy we propose. Only after that, we can integrate all the suggestions in the strategy and submit to Central Government a definitive proposal for a new strategy for all India, a fifth vertical"⁵⁰.

But in the following months, the Bhuj Municipality never gave the availability to participate to the workshop and the extension of the programme in Bhuj has remained unfinished.

48 Most of the participants are engineering and planning agencies empaneled to work on big cities. The selection was based on a bid for tender, thus on a proposal of remuneration and not on a strategy proposal. Anyhow, the acknowledgment of the project realised in Bhuj by Hunnarshala, especially after the Best Practices process, influenced the process results.

49 In the eight cities, a workshop with the municipality and the city stakeholders was first organised to elicit the cooperation of the towns elected representatives and involved citizens, and to ensure their cooperation in the survey (HIC 2017). The strategy was thus based on a citywide survey both for slums and the housing demand of non-slum urban poor. The slum survey in Bhuj was realised in 2016 by SETU and the technical organisation K-Link under the HIC partnership. Its analysis demonstrates that in the eight cities the total housing demand can be done through *in-situ* slum redevelopment but not by developers since they are not attracted to participate (Hunnarshala 2018).

50 J.S. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 01-09-2017.

CONCLUSION

The programme of slum redevelopment in Bhuj resulted from a process extended on a much longer temporality, and from the interaction of local actors and ideas with national and international policy and cooperation networks that the globalizing context of the region made possible. The initiative was rooted in a social movement started in the 1980s in response to the economic crisis in the rural Kacch, which advocated for community-based resource management against the centralised process of industrialisation and modernisation. Embracing an understanding of scarcity as part of the regional history and identity rather than an obstacle to its economic growth, the movement aimed to restore the traditional system and culture of self-sufficiency and interdependence of rural communities that the post-Independence modernisation driven by the state and urban elites participated to dismiss.

Whereas local NGOs originated from an educated middle class from the 'mainland' Gujarat invested in social mobilisation, their strategy of networking and policy advocacy legitimated them as an important development actor in the region. The disaster situation at the turn of the century led to the consolidation of Abhiyan as main local partner of the state government in relief and rehabilitation activities, while at the same time supporting community-based initiatives. Contesting the centralised housing recovery policy based on a strategy of relocation and contractor-led construction, Abhiyan advocated for decentralising the processes of reconstruction and succeeded to change the policy as *in-situ* and owner driven. Its success opened the way to the implication in other state-led disaster recovery programmes where the approach mainstreamed as Owner Driven Reconstruction (ODR) and extended into trans-national networks where reconstruction and development models circulate.

In parallel, Abhiyan moved the attention to the changing scenario of urbanisation in the region. The NGOs took part of a larger movement denouncing the perceived injustice by 'outsiders' agencies governing and reconstructing the land, and coalized to advocate for policy change to address groups neglected in the city's reconstruction. The focus on slums resulted in a later stage of rehabilitation which attests the moving of development issues from the rural to the urban context, influenced by the dynamics of a rising small city. At the same time, a common sentiment of nostalgia influenced the intention to

develop slum communities, represented as part of a former 'traditional' society. The programme thus embodies locally constructed expectations to restructure a social and moral order along collective lines and integrating notions of identity and tradition threatened by the disruptive effects of the reconstruction.

In 2008, NGOs connected to Abhiyan started the collaborative programme Homes in the City (HIC) to carry development activities in slums in Bhuj. Their implication in trans-national co-production of urban development influenced a strategy to mobilise the urban poor in city-level network of Self-Help Groups, integrating collective action and financial disciplining and marketisation. Long-settled slum communities influenced the programme around their claim for legitimacy, rising land regularisation and housing with basic services as primary objectives, while the NGOs' understanding of the local context oriented them as decentralised and community-based. After a successful attempt to extend the owner-driven approach from post-disaster reconstruction to rehabilitate the urban poor, the NGOs advocated for legalising the slum lands and include a sustainable approach into the city's planning.

The inclusion of Bhuj in the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) policy scheme represents an exception, for being a small city and diverging from the policy guidelines by addressing the slum upgrading as owner-driven. The model developed from the interaction between mobile policies and local stories and forces, as it resulted from the NGO's advocacy, community mobilisation and demonstrations and rising political interest to influence the central policies, particularly after the inclusion among the Best Practice models. A pilot project implemented in 2015 aimed to create an example to be replicable in the policy's whole-city approach, and included informal settlements perpetuated by the city reconstruction but also brought out more active self-managed slum CBOs.

The next policy scheme strengthened the big-city bias and the participation of private promoters in slum redevelopment using land as a resource, preventing its implementation as owner-driven. Facing difficulties to pursue the programme in Bhuj, the NGOs advocated with government departments for a more radical policy change, by using the pilot project as a demonstration and extending the model geographically and mobilising local actors in other cities. However, their mobilisation failed because of the delays of implementation of the pilot project and the reticence of the state government to change the policy guidelines.

CHAPTER 4

BHUI: A MODEL OF SLUM REDEVELOPMENT FOR SMALL CITIES

The model of owner-driven slum redevelopment underlying the pilot project implemented in Bhuj within the HIC collaborative programme emerged as an alternative approach of slum improvement compared to the model underlying national policies. The interest of the central and state government appeared in the inclusion in the Best Practices by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MOHUPA), that recognised the pilot project in Bhuj for the expandable traditional unit with cluster planning, innovative environment friendly services, recycling of existing building components, and the role of NGOs in ensuring community participation & project implementation (GOI 2015). The pilot project in Bhuj was one of the very few in the country to address slum rehabilitation in an owner-driven approach within the national slum policies (Hunnarshala 2016b), and the goal of making it replicable turns the project into a model to address processes of slum redevelopment in small cities.

The chapter aims to analyze how the model takes into account the conditions of small cities that slum policies fail to recognise and address. Their slum redevelopment strategy, that involves private promoters and transforms land in slums into real estate development projects, is hardly applicable in small towns where developers are not interested to work. Favouring the development of high rise, high density housing for slum dwellers over a part of the slum land by separating housing from land tenure, the kind of development that national policies support risks to disrupt livelihoods activities and forms of social reproduction linked to their more rural nature. National policies also disadvantageous to small towns as they preconise a decentralised implementation without building on the capacities of local administrations to address urban planning and services provision, as well as to manage community participation.

The divergence of the model from national slum policies results from a process of policy making influenced by the exclusion of slums in Bhuj from reconstruction policies.

Developed by local NGOs operating in this changing context, the model incorporates the Owner Driven Reconstruction (ODR) approach and aims to overcome shortcomings of its conceptualisation in the frame of public policies to make them more inclusive. As its construction was inserted into the dynamic of urban transformation in Bhuj, the model incorporates ideas of urban development based on the NGOs' specific understanding about local issues, which merges ideas of tradition and identity with progressive urban planning. The chapter therefore seeks to understand the influence of the context in the way the model was framed and the agency of local forces and actors in small towns that lead to the emergence of alternative city visions. Mainly based on project documentation and interviews carried with NGOs and other institutional stakeholders, this chapter analyses in detail the owner-driven slum redevelopment model starting from the pilot project in Bhuj that represents its main application. The analysis focuses on aspects related to the implementation and management system that are addressed in the first part of the chapter, and planning and design system on which the second part focuses.

The first part of the chapter begins by analysing how the model fits into the framework of the national slum policies, and how it differs from them by incorporating the owner-driven approach developed during and after the reconstruction process in Gujarat. The sub-chapter studies in particular the management system and the role attributed to the various actors involved in the slum redevelopment process, focusing in particular on how the centrality of slum dwellers is envisaged. The analysis is divided in two parts concerning the subsequent phases of project preparation that aim to develop strategies at the urban level and Detailed Project Reports (DPR) in each slum to redevelop, and to implement them by building housing and infrastructures. The second part of the chapter focuses on the planning system and design arrangements that underlie the model, aiming to better respond to the specificities of slums in small cities and develop contextual-sensitive solutions. In particular, this section focuses on settlement regularisation and redevelopment by providing individual housing units with land to each beneficiary household, the housing and settlement's design developed from local traditional typologies, and the provision of sustainable and locally managed infrastructures and services.

4.1. SLUM REDEVELOPMENT AS OWNER-DRIVEN

4.1.1. THE MODEL, FROM POST-DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION TO SLUM REDEVELOPMENT

The main peculiarity of the model is to address the slum rehabilitation with an owner-driven approach that places the owner-occupiers at the centre of the process. Vahanvati (2018) situates the approach within the notion of 'self-help housing' attributed to John Turner who considered housing in terms of agency rather than as a commodity, and sustained the centrality of people in the housing process and in choices about location, tenure forms, project and building to respond adequately to their needs. International institutions like the World Bank and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS)/UN-Habitat, and national and local governments recognised self-help housing for its vital role in providing affordable housing solutions to the urban poor. In India, this approach inspired neoliberal housing policies reforms since the 1970s aiming to enlarge the saving-investing process in housing and increase the proportion of housing capital in overall capital formation. These reforms popularised modalities of housing provision like 'sites-and-services' and *in-situ* slum upgrading, and encouraged the participation of NGOs in including Self-Help Groups and cooperatives in government programmes, which were used to mobilise savings, propose schemes and manage projects (Pugh 1991).

However, the term 'owner-driven' was employed for the first time within the framework of post-earthquake reconstruction in Gujarat and has mainstreamed as ODR to refer to an approach that enables homeowners to rebuild their houses themselves with external financial and technical assistance. Its popularisation after the 2001 Gujarat earthquake acknowledged many benefits of the ODR approach, mainly as the fastest, cheapest and most empowering approach in comparison to top-down or Donor Driven Reconstruction (DDR) (Vahanvati 2018). Other reasons of the success and diffusion of the ODR approach include the strong influence of World Bank as a funding agency on governments' reconstruction policies, and its capacity to overcome the difficulties of government in managing large-scale contractor or agency-driven reconstruction efforts in difficult or conflict-ridden terrains (Barenstein and Iyengar 2010).

The success of the reconstruction in Bhuj revealed the need to extend the model beyond the reconstruction process. Indeed, the Abhiyan's NGOs proposed to use an owner-driven approach to rehabilitate slums, basing itself on the vision that a national owner-driven housing policy in normal times may help people to ensure control over their home building in social housing construction processes and not only in post-disaster reconstruction programmes (Ibid.). This intention blurs the distinction between housing provision in response to emergency conditions, and in 'normal', non-disaster situations. The need to address slums in priority recognises their greater vulnerability in disaster situations. In fact, disasters have catastrophic effects because poverty or discrimination forced victims to live in marginal, high-risk areas and in weak or inadequate homes (Barakat et al. 2003). Therefore, reducing vulnerability should not only be a prerogative of reconstruction programmes but the scope of housing policies, in particular for Economic Weaker Section (EWS) in order to strengthen their resilience in disaster situation: in this sense, the owner-driven slum rehabilitation merges both the perspectives of inclusive and resilient development.

The growing precariousness of poor and vulnerable groups in Bhuj, as a consequence of their exclusion from the reconstruction process, brought out the need to review the policy framework to make it more inclusive. By addressing the urban poor, the model of owner-driven slum rehabilitation attempts to overcome some of the limitations of the ODR model as it was formulated in the process of reconstruction in Gujarat. According to Taheri Tafti (2012), the policy formulation of the ODR model cannot be considered inclusive because it excluded non-owner groups from housing recovery options, left part of the housing recovery process to the private sector which might not be able to or willing to appropriately cover all the left groups, and implied an incorrect assumption about equal capability of households to manage their housing reconstruction. Targeting slum dwellers who occupy the land illegally, the owner-driven approach of slum rehabilitation aims implicitly to surmount the exclusion of non-owner and poorest groups caused by a misinterpretation of the term 'owner' in the ODR model, where the term refers rather to their authority or decision-making power, irrespective of whether those involved are land owners or not (Vahanvati 2018).

The centrality of owners-occupiers instead of private developers in the process of slum rehabilitation represents a main difference of the model from the current housing policies' approach and goes back to the orientation of the housing policies of the pre-reform period. Neoliberal housing policies focus on the implication of market forces as a

strategy to integrate Indian cities in the global economy. The argument that government intervention should enable the market to operate better in cities underlies the national programme Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and its sub-mission Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP), and was pursued in the more recent strategy of Slum-free City planning at the basis of the housing policy schemes Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Housing For All (PMAY-HFA). A major implication of this neo-liberal agenda has been the role of the private sector in the provision of affordable housing through the introduction of a public-private-partnership (PPP) model (Dupont 2011).

The participation of the market favours the policy's implementation in big cities and appears as of the main reasons for the limited implementation in small towns. In this sense, bringing owners back to the centre of the slum redevelopment process aims to extend the scope of slum policies beyond big cities. However, the big city bias at the foundation of government strategies has guided the approach of national slum policies, making it difficult to integrate the owner-driven model into the policy framework. While both the central policy schemes promote private participation in the process of slum rehabilitation, they differ in how they envisage the participation of the slum communities and the market. Whereas RAY promotes community participation in all the stages and supports beneficiary-led housing models of implementation beyond PPP and direct public 'social housing' (GOI 2010), the PMAY-HFA mandates the participation of the private sector using land as resource, limiting the possibility of community or beneficiary driven processes (GOI 2016). In Bhuj, this change in the national policies represents a main obstacle to the implementation as owner-driven, thus modifying the policy guidelines was needed to scale projects up on an owner-driven approach¹.

Among the many variations to the owner-driven approach that Barenstein (2006) identifies in the reconstruction process in Gujarat, the model uses a participatory approach in which the NGO, although assuming a leading role in housing reconstruction, does not engage a professional contractor and gives a major emphasis to involve house owners in project planning, housing design and construction. The participatory housing approach and the owner-driven approach with NGO assuming a subsidiary role were more successful than others as they were preferred by the residents

1 In PMAY-HFA, beneficiary-led construction for households residing either in slums or outside the slums requires they own the land. In order to implement the policy scheme in Bhuj, the land in slums should be subdivided and allotted to individual household before the redevelopment process, but state authorities did not accept this arrangement.

and assured their ability to maintain disaster resilience in relation to housing².

In the context of the national slum policies, the owner-driven model of slum redevelopment aligns with the objective of community participation of operating in Community-Based organisations (CBOs) as it is conceptualized in RAY. The model envisages government authorities and Civil Society organisations including NGOs and CBOs as enablers rather than aid providers or facilitators, thus assigning to homeowners and the state's responsibilities in a mutually reinforcing and accountable manner. In this sense, the owner-driven approach promotes a radical shift from top-down relationship between the government or Civil Society Organization (CSO) and the communities towards a more collaborative approach (Vahanvati 2018), as expressed by the director of the NGO Sahjeevan:

"This is an experiment of how emerging cities can be treated with more citizenship values that will bring in sustainable development [...]. Government has different models, one is they give more funds to the municipalities and corporations, that is the present scenario, and second they design and build new cities. So what we are trying is an alternative model in which we allow the urbanization to happen, and support people to get citizenship values for sustainable development"³.

Beyond recognising the capacities, skills and resources of house owners, the aim to mobilise communities is intended to regain confidence and make informed decisions for themselves. According to Barakat et al. (2003) on post-disaster and post-conflict housing reconstruction, driving the decision-making process on collective lines refocuses it from the single 'house' and individual needs, to take into consideration wider benefits of the communities. In this sense, mobilising communities in the housing project and construction aims to federate slum dwellers around a common project and strengthening them to drive a collective change. The goal of community mobilisation was influenced in particular by the reconstruction process in Bhuj where the allocation assistance on

2 An example is the reconstruction of the city of Bhachau, where the leading role of the local NGO Unnati ensured the inclusion of squatter settlements into the reconstruction process through a participatory housing approach (Unnati 2006; Mukherji 2008). The major limitation to include non-owner groups emerged instead in the owner-driven approach without NGOs, whereas the subsidiary housing approach ensured that communities facing a precarious housing situation before the earthquake were assisted in claiming and using the government compensation.

3 B.H. (Sahjeevan), personal communication, 03-12-2015.

individual household basis undermined forms of collective action by fragmenting relations and networks of solidarity inside and between communities (Simpson 2005). Furthermore, this objective incorporates considerations shared by NGOs about processes of cultural change among local groups that were exposed to globalization forces. Considering the 'strength' of communities in slums as depending on solidarity networks ensured by common values, the exposure to these fast cultural changes may increase the risk to fragment them, according to one of Hunnarshala's directors:

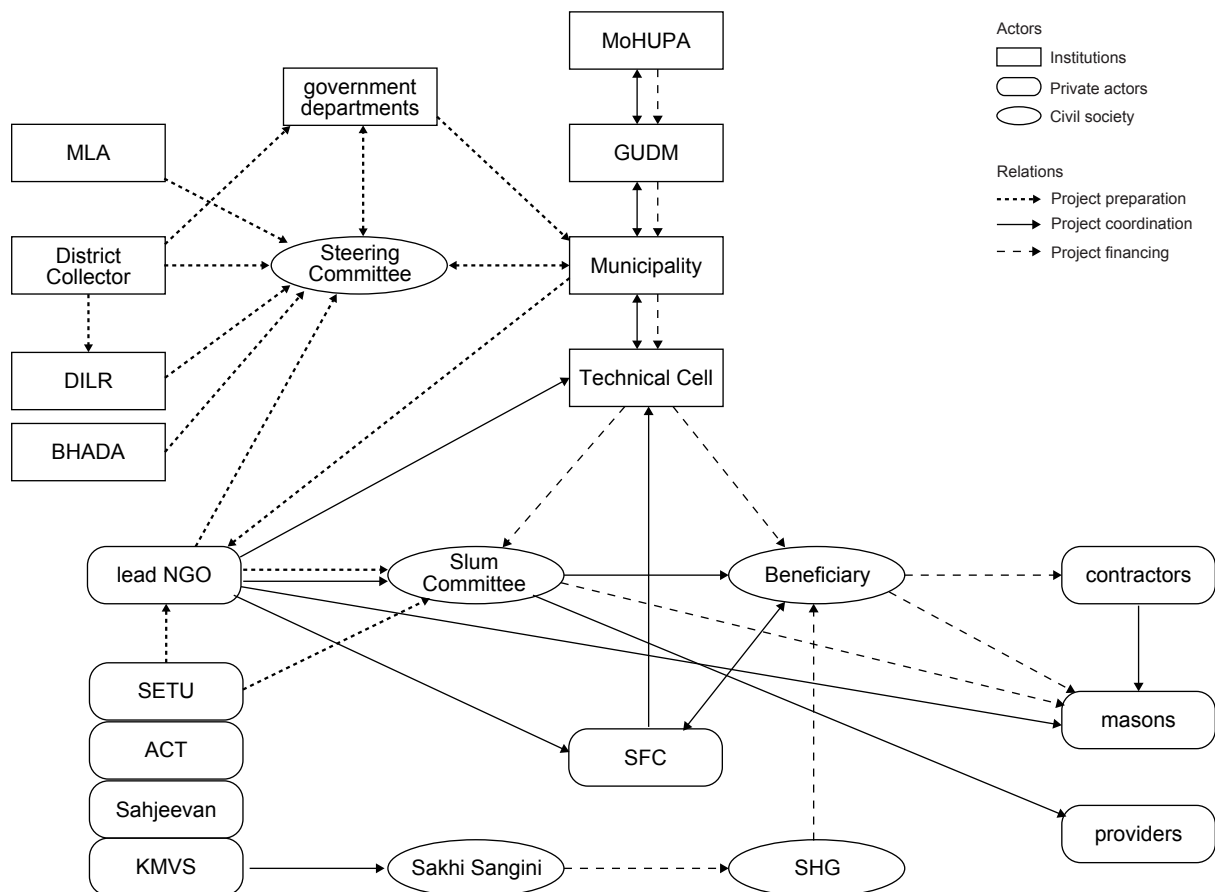
"Ramdevnagar is only one community, they are there from hundred of years so they have a common way of cooperation and they share common values [...]. But because of global changes, that starts to be influenced and some people start questioning their traditional values [...]. If the community is strong, they are able to take what is useful but if it is not strong, certain people bring in values which they are not agreed by everyone"⁴.

The model embodies the organisations' intention to strengthen existing ties of long-established urban poor communities, to counter the disintegrating effects produced by the process of globalization, as it has happened in the rest of the city. But while recognising the capacities of organisation of 'strong' communities, at the same time it calls for slum dwellers in heterogeneous and fragmented groups to organise collectively towards the realisation of common projects. In this sense, the model embraces a "dynamic understanding" of community formation (Mulligan 2015) based on the development of existing slum communities but also on the creation of communities, especially where existing social ties are weaker.

4.1.2. THE ELABORATION OF THE SLUM REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The collaborative approach of the model appears in the implementation framework that presupposes that all concerned parties work in coordination with each other with a focus on achieving the objectives of the project (Hunnarshala 2014a). The management system integrates the guidelines of the RAY central policy scheme that specify a succession of steps, each one involving different stakeholders (see Scheme 2).

4 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 08-12-2015.



Scheme 2. Implementation mechanism

Sources: Hunnarshala 2014a, interviews 2015-2017. Realized by: the author

Relying on the Indian framework of decentralized governance, the model insists on the importance of the government at each level. Whereas the Central Government has a main legislative and administrative role through the MOHUPA who releases policy guidelines and funds to states and cities, the latter are responsible for the policy implementation. The national policy entrusts the State Governments to designate a State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA) to guide and monitor its implementation⁵, which in Gujarat corresponds to the Gujarat Urban Development Mission (GUDM)⁶. At the city level, the Urban Local Body (ULB), which corresponds to the Nagar Palika or Municipality in cities with a population between 100,000 and one million, is responsible for the policy implementation including the transfer of state funds for construction.

5 RAY entrusts states to prepare a State Slum Free Plan of Action which lists the towns and cities to be covered, assigns property rights to slum dwellers/urban poor and include the legislative framework for redevelopment/rehabilitation of slums, including spatial planning norms covering density, development controls and other parameters (GOI 2010).

6 GUDM was constituted in 2005 within the state's Urban Development and Urban Housing Department, and designated as Nodal Agency within the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). Under the current national policy PMAY-HFA, the role of State Level Nodal Agency was attributed to the Affordable Housing Mission (AHM) of the Gujarat State.

The implementation of national policies in small municipalities had poor results for several reasons, which include the limited resources and the incapacity of small ULBs to access central funds (Khan 2017), the lack of interest of traditional local leadership (Guin 2019), the centralisation of decisions without any relationship with the elected representatives (Coelho and Vijayabaskar 2014). To support the ULB, the RAY entrusts it to establish a Technical Cell that houses a finance, technical and grievance redressed unit and coordinates with other state agencies, in particular the town planning authority and the District Administration to ensure the programme implementation.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) submitted by Hunnarshala and approved by the State Government details the roles and responsibilities of the Municipality, which include the preparation of new DPRs, setting up the Technical Cell and contracting the lead NGO as Project Management Agency (PMA), ensuring the project implementation as per DPRs, conducting regular socio-technical internal audits, providing secretarial responsibilities to the Steering Committee, and that the Chief Officer of the municipality should report monthly to the Municipality board and get their approval about the progress of implementation of sanctioned DPRs and preparation of new DPRs (Hunnarshala 2014a). Moreover, the model introduces a city-level Steering Committee to provide policy guidance and approval to the programme and coordinate between local and state actors. Its responsibilities include approving DPRs, developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), defining 'Beneficiary', carrying studies to develop special projects and dovetailing other state programmes for slums (ibid.). The Steering Committee includes all the local institutional stakeholders as suggested by RAY⁷, that in Bhuj were identified in a preparatory workshop organised by Hunnarshala together with partner organisations, with the support of the District Collector.

In Bhuj, the Steering Committee is chaired by the District Collector and presided by the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) of Bhuj *taluka*, and comprises office bearers of the municipality (the Chief Officer (CO) as secretary, the Dy Collector, the President and the Chairman), the Bhuj Area Development Authority (BHADA), the District Inspector of Land Record (DILR), along with representatives of the lead NGO and civil society supporting the program. Despite being a small city, Bhuj is in this sense privileged for being a district headquarter and for the presence of several state agencies and development authorities which compensate the low performance of urban local

7 The RAY policy guidelines give a list of potential stakeholders and leaves to each city the possibility to change them.

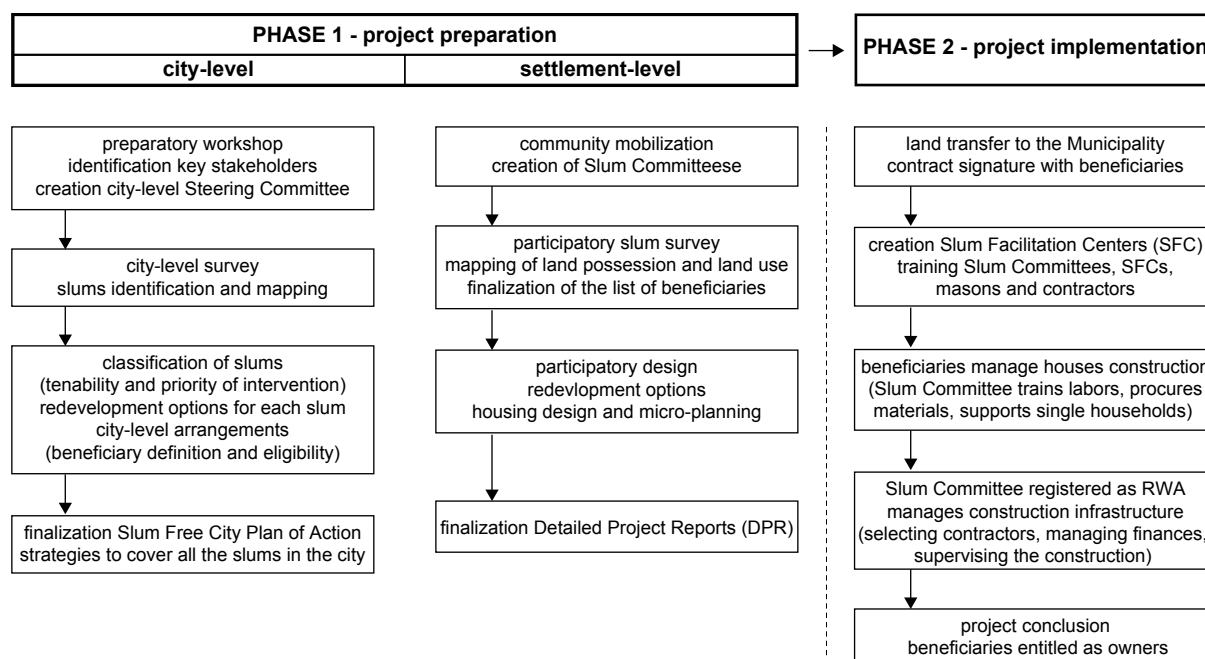
governance (Bercegol 2017). For example, the coordination with the BHADA is facilitated to make the objective of slum upgrading compatible with the city planning. Whereas the Development Plan (DP) elaborated in 2003 did not provide indications for poor settlements as it was based on zoning, in 2016 BHADA earmarked all the slum areas as residential in the revised DP, in order to prevent from land use changes in further projects. The District Collector (supporting the program as most slums in Bhuj are located on land owned by the Revenue Department of the Government of Gujarat) was instrumental for coordinating with the state departments and prioritising the redevelopment of slums located on land owned by them, and mediated with them to avoid the eviction of slum dwellers. The District Collector also facilitated the earmarking of slums undertook for redevelopment, by communicating with the DILR who holds land ownership records. The model suggests that the District Collector who heads the DILR facilitates the preparation of DPRs in accordance with the land records, by asking DILR to measure the perimeter of the government-owned land.

The RAY policy recommends the engagement of NGOs/CBOs to overcome the lack of social development expertise of the ULB. The implementation mechanism thus includes the lead NGO in the role of Project Management Agency (PMA) as the central stakeholder. The DPR envisaged four main roles of the lead NGO to implement RAY in Bhuj: supporting the Steering Committee by offering secretarial services through the Chief Officer; preparing the Slum Free City Plans of Action (SFCPOA) and strategies to cover all the slums in the city, and DPRs for slums, and developing technical solutions for public services and buildings; supporting the Technical Cell to implement DPRs and to release funds for construction, and creating Slum Facilitation Centers (SFC) to facilitate the construction process⁸; and organising training school for Slum Committees, SFCs, masons and contractors to ensure capacity and quality for implementation (Hunnarshala 2014a). In Bhuj, Hunnarshala assumed the role of PMA and was assisted by its partner NGOs in HIC: Kacch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) in social mobilisation, Arid Community Technology (ACT) in water resources design, Sahjeevan in waste management design and SETU in managing information and coordination.

The policy guidelines organise the process of slum redevelopment in several steps of slum survey: preparation the SFCPOA, preparation of housing plan and sites layout (DPR), construction of houses and infrastructure, and post-construction operation (GOI

8 Each SFC has a social mobiliser, a technical person and a manager, and is easily accessible to the slum dwellers (Hunnarshala, 2014a).

2012b). Likewise, the model divides the slum redevelopment in several steps divided in the two main phases of project preparation and implementation: the first phase at city level includes slum surveys and the preparation of the SFCPOA, while the second phase focuses on projects in individual settlements and includes the preparation of slum development plans (see Scheme 3).



Scheme 3. Implementation phases

Sources: Hunnarshala 2014a, interviews 2015, 2017. Realized by: the author

In Bhuj, the NGO SETU realised a city-level slum survey in 2011 with the engagement of the slum communities. The SFCPOA aim to identify and map all the slums integrating spatial and socio-economic data, to categorize them in terms of tenability⁹ and priority of intervention and to indicate redevelopment options for each slum among *in-situ* upgrading, redevelopment or relocation. But while the preparation of SFCPOA is part of the project preparation phase, the national policy allows cities to prepare it after the implementation of pilot projects that are intended to test city-level strategies. Indeed in Bhuj, the SFCPOA was not prepared at the time of the pilot project, but it was later in the framework of the most recent PMAY-HFA policy scheme¹⁰.

9 The plans of actions can categorise slums as semi-tenable when located on sites which are earmarked for non-residential uses as per Master Plan, non-tenable when located on hazardous or objectionable locations, or tenable in the other cases.

10 The RAY policy designates the city's plans as SFCPOA, whereas PMAY-HFA policy designates them as Housing For All Plan of Action (HFAPOA) and integrates the slum rehabilitation component with non-slum

However, during the pilot project, the stakeholders in the Steering Committee discussed specific arrangements for the city like beneficiary definition and eligibility, which influenced the citywide strategy of slum redevelopment. Whereas only slum dwellers living in *kaccha* or 'temporary' houses are eligible to become beneficiaries of the RAY policy scheme, the Steering Committee agreed to include also those living in *pucca* or 'permanent' houses with carpet area lower than 27 sq.m as eligible for building assistance for upgradation, and those living in *pucca* houses with built up area less than 45.5 sq.m to be awarded land tenure rights and to be compensated for infrastructure facilities on the condition that they retrofit their houses to ensure disaster safety. This measure seeks to extend the scope of the policy to the conditions of slums in small cities that do not fall within the definition of slums behind slum policies. Furthermore, whereas according to policy guidelines the slum dwellers must hold a document to demonstrate they have been living in the slum for more than 5 years in order to become beneficiaries, it was decided that councillors can write in their behalf to the Steering Committee for approval. In this way, the project sought to limit the risk of excluding a part of the beneficiaries, a common trait of state-driven policies as observed for slum policies as well as in the reconstruction process in Bhuj where squatters were excluded from the state assistance as they did not possess documents despite they filled eligibility criteria.

The DPRs, that specify the project needs and feasibility in each slum settlement including the dwelling unit design, site layout design and provision of services, are prepared by the lead NGO for the Municipality. The lead NGO facilitates the preparation of DPRs ensuring extensive community participation in order to include their needs and priorities, as recommended by the RAY policy guidelines (GOI 2012b). The NGOs thus mobilized slum dwellers to organize and create Slum Committees in each slum settlement that are responsible of the project implementation. After their creation, the lead NGOs held meetings only with the Slum Committees that intermediate with the slum communities in decisions concerning the preparation of DPRs and the construction of houses and infrastructures (Hunnarshala, 2014a). To establish Slum Committees, the NGO mobilise communities to organise a slum *sabha* or assembly where they decide by themselves their representatives. However, the NGOs also influence their creation with the aim of making them accountable and efficient in

housing provision. When a SFCPOA is already prepared under RAY, the PMAY-HFA policy allows to integrate it as part of the HFOPOA (GOI 2016).

relation with institutions. This happens by identifying people who are more 'capable' to take responsibilities in the Slum Committees; including women who lead Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the community, to integrate community financing in the accountability of the project leadership; and including representation of all the communities living in a slum; furthermore, the NGO demands to change the members of slum committee every 3 years, except the president, vice-president, and cashier who can stay for longer.

In parallel to the creation of Slum Committees, the NGOs realise a survey of the slum population with the participation of communities in each settlement so to include all the slum dwellers and verify land possession and land use. In Bhuj, the household survey was realised by small groups with a site supervisor, a technical responsible from Hunnarshala and a social responsible from KMVS, who visited every house in a way to include all the families. The teams recorded information on social parameters as well as photographic documentation of beneficiaries, and demarcated slum boundaries, number and location of households and dwelling units and existing infrastructures, before reporting them in the GIS city base maps, as prescribed in RAY policy guidelines (GOI 2012a).

Its ratification by the Slum Committees allows finalising the list of beneficiaries before collecting their consent (Hunnarshala, 2014a). Basing on the survey, the lead NGO discusses options among upgrading, redevelopment or relocation with the Slum Committees and considering the number of dwelling units to provide, the supply of physical infrastructures and the need of social infrastructure. In parallel, the NGO facilitates the community participation to develop housing prototypes and the site layout plan, and it prepares cost estimates based on detailed designs. The layout plans are developed within the project boundary provided by DILR and accordingly with the DP developed by BHADA. The preparation of the project phase ends with the lead NGO submitting of the DPR to the state government for approval.

4.1.3. OWNER-DRIVEN IMPLEMENTATION

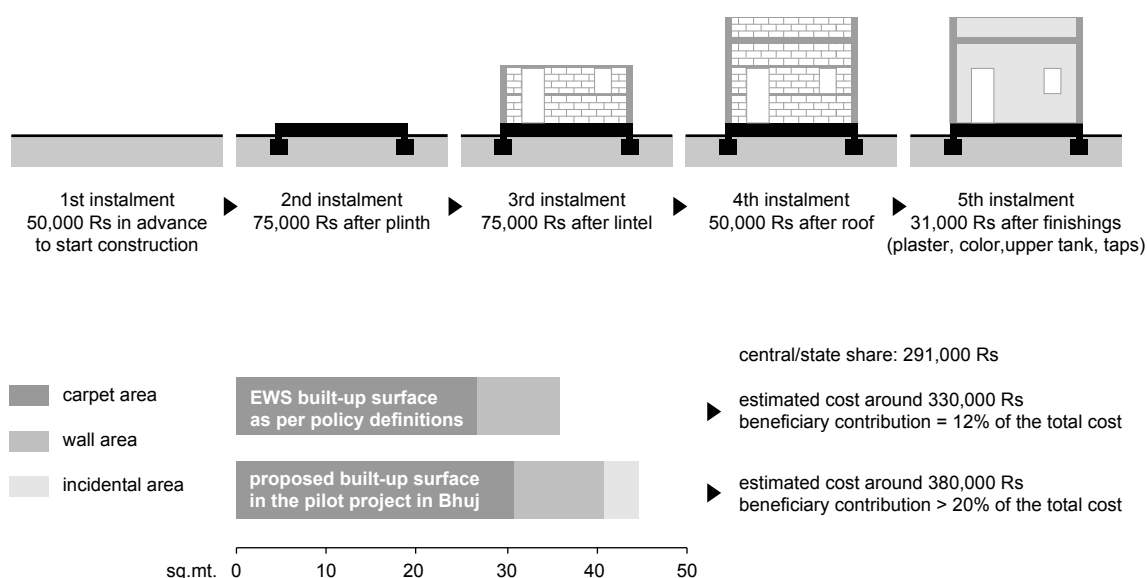
What most differentiates the owner-driven model of slum rehabilitation from the orientation of state policies is the centrality of slum dwellers organised in CSOs in the construction process, instead of private companies. Indeed, the RAY policy scheme allows for flexibility of the choice of construction approach and arrangement of funds

with regard to housing, ranging from monitoring and supervising the construction to direct engagement of slum dwellers in construction of housing and slum-level infrastructures (GOI 2012b). However, beneficiary-led construction has been implemented in very few cities as part of the national policy. The centrality of slum dwellers coordinated by the Slum Committees appears in the implementation mechanism (see Scheme 2): the Slum Committee is entrusted to facilitate the construction of dwelling units (by identifying and training labours, procuring bulk materials on behalf of the beneficiaries, helping single-person households), and the physical infrastructure (by selecting contractors, managing finances and supervising the construction), and to coordinate with the slum community and the SFCs set up by the lead NGO. SFCs are also proposed as building materials production yard to provide cheaper but good quality building materials for the construction of houses as well as to upgrade livelihood of unskilled construction workers from the Slum.

The responsibilities of the beneficiary households and the Slum Committee are however distinct in the construction: the beneficiaries are entrusted to build the housing units and the Slum Committee the physical infrastructures that include roads, water supply, sewerage and street lighting. This separation corresponds to the division of land occurring in the redevelopment process. After the government department that owns the land transfers the portion of land to redevelop to the Municipality, the latter entitles the beneficiary households as owners of individual housing plots earmarked in the DPRs, while the rest of the land is demarcated for infrastructures and common areas, whose property remains with the Municipality. At the end of the redevelopment process, the ownership of the dwelling unit is transferred to the beneficiaries in the name of the wife or in the joint name of wife and the husband. Accordingly to this split of responsibilities, the model attributes central/state funds individually to each beneficiary for the construction of his house, and to the Slum Committee for the construction of the infrastructures. In this sense, it differs from the policy guidelines that dispose the disbursement of the state assistance to the slum community organised as CBO, while the Slum Committee is responsible for supporting individual beneficiaries in managing the construction process. The Municipality, who receives the funds from central and state government, is thus entrusted to release them separately to the beneficiaries and the Slum Committee. Through the Technical Cell, the Municipality is responsible to manage the beneficiaries' bank

accounts with the supports of the lead NGO and to transfer them the funds¹¹.

The release of the funds to the beneficiaries is organized in five installments that correspond to the stages of construction progress (see Scheme 4): the 1st installment is released in advance for the procurement and managing of materials, labour and equipment; the 2nd installment is released after building the plinth; the 3rd after the lintel; the 4th after the roof; and the last one after completing the construction works. During the project preparation, the lead NGO establishes the amount of each installment depending on the construction cost estimate for the related stage. In the pilot project in Bhuj, the central/state contribution of Rs. 2.91 *lakhs* for housing unit is released in five installments of 50,000 Rs., 75,000 Rs., 75,000 Rs., 60,000 Rs., 31,000 Rs.



Scheme 4. Stagewise funds release (top); higher housing size in the model (bottom)

Source: Hunnarshala 2014a
Realized by: the author

Each construction phase includes multiple steps: first the Technical Cell of the Municipality transfers the installment to the beneficiary's bank account; the beneficiary then withdraws the installment and uses it to realise the works; after the construction stage is completed, the SFC verifies the quality of execution and reports to the Technical Cell; finally, the Municipality informs the state and asks to release the installment for the next construction phase. In the SFC, a supervisor assures the quality control that

11 The beneficiaries and the Chief Officer of the municipality jointly operate bank accounts. In the pilot project, it was agreed that both the Chief Officer and the beneficiaries must sign the cheques before the latter can withdraw the funds. As only a small percentage of the beneficiaries had a bank account, the lead NGO supported the majority to open bank accounts in ICICI bank.

includes the respect of design plans, specifications and materials and acceptable workmanship, by regularly supervising the construction works. At the conclusion of the construction works, the supervisor realizes a quality checklist and approves the release of the last installment so that the dwelling unit contract is considered closed¹². However, the technical staff of Hunnarshala realized the quality assurance and quality control of the pilot project in Bhuj as no SFC was created, since SFCs were proposed to cover approximately 500 houses and the pilot project counts only 314 houses.

In addition to the central and state government share of the cost of both housing and infrastructures, the model integrates the financial participation of the beneficiaries in the housing construction as the RAY policy recommends, while the costs of physical infrastructure as well as of their operation and maintenance is shared by the Municipality. To co-finance the project, the model integrates the community finance approach in which existing or new SHGs in the settlements are included in the Sakhi Sangini federation so that they can access the Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA) fund by the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) to support the housing construction. The approach has a collective focus since local groups decide together how to use their savings, differently from microfinance where the emphasis is on individual access to credit and loan repayment (Boonyabancha and Kerr 2018). In particular, decisions about the release of loans for housing purpose to the beneficiaries can be discussed collectively as the women who lead the SHGs are included in the Slum Committees. In this sense, community financing is expected to reduce the risk that a high beneficiary contribution could increase the capture by higher income groups and exclude the poorest, a risk inherent to the financial modalities and focus on home ownership of the slum-free city planning strategy (Dupont 2011).

Whereas the RAY guidelines fix the minimum beneficiary contribution to the 12% of the cost of the housing unit, the model proposes a beneficiary share that exceeds 20% because the proposed housing surface is higher than the policy's definition of EWS housing¹³. In fact, the central share for each dwelling unit is fixed by the policy guidelines at 3 *lakhs* Rs. including housing and infrastructure, while the State's share

12 The construction works are considered concluded when the last phase of finishing is completed, which includes the plaster and colour on the exterior walls, the construction of an upper tank on the roof, and the installation of the taps.

13 The beneficiary contribution proposed is minimum 12% (Gen Category) or 10% (SC/ST/Backward Caste (BC)/OBC (Other Backward Caste), PH (Physically Handicapped) & Other weaker sections) of Dwelling unit cost. In case of higher contribution it is certified that the EMI (Equated Monthly Instalment) burden (bank/soft loan) does not exceed 25% of monthly income of beneficiary household (GOI 2012a).

and the contribution of the municipality may change in each city¹⁴.

In Bhuj, the central/state share for housing is fixed at 2.91 *laksh* Rs. per housing unit, but the pilot project estimates the construction cost of each housing unit at 3.73 *lakhs* Rs. (or 4.49 *lakhs* Rs. including the cost of infrastructures). This estimate corresponds to the effective expenses and to the market prices of around 1. Rs. per sq.ft, as it was confirmed by most of the contractors that participated to the pilot project in Bhuj. Such higher cost implies that the remaining amount of 82,000 Rs. is expected to be covered as beneficiary contribution. However, the project proposal suggests that beneficiaries unable to afford such a high contribution should contribute the minimum 12% share for the construction of houses with minimum housing surface (Hunnarshala 2014a).

Such higher beneficiary contribution to finance larger housing units is proposed in particular in the context of small cities where houses in slums are larger than the standard size recommended by the national slum policies. Whereas the latter provide financial assistance for building houses with 21-27 sq.m carpet area (36 sq.m built up area), the pilot project in Bhuj extends the individual housing surface to 30-35 sq.m carpet area (41 sq.m built up area), and extends the eligibility of upgradation of permanent houses with a minimum carpet area from 21 sq.m to 31.20 sq.m (ibid.). Moreover, the proposed housing design includes 'extra works' in the exteriors like boundary, stairs, underground water tank, etc. that exceed the standard provisions of EWS housing of two rooms, kitchen, toilet/bathroom, and increase the cost of the housing construction of around 50,000 Rs. (see Scheme 4).

However, the idea of owner-driven construction underlying the model implies that beneficiaries can reduce the housing cost by taking control of the construction process. The model suggests that slum dwellers can reduce the construction costs through different strategies: by performing themselves the construction works instead of hiring labours, by procuring and managing materials and services collectively, by recycling building materials and debris from the demolition of the old houses that also represents a significant environment friendly measure. Furthermore, the owner-driven construction allows for incremental development of the housing construction. Beneficiaries are thus suggested to leave the construction for a second phase of 'extra works' excluded from the project contract and conclude first the basic requirements of the project so that they can occupy the houses.

14 In Bhuj the State share for housing and infrastructure was fixed at 61,000 Rs., and the share of the ULB at 80,000 Rs.

The priority to imply the beneficiaries in the construction works influences the house design and leads to favour locally available materials and technologies that they can manage independently, whereas technologies that require specialized skills and equipment force the beneficiaries to subcontract works. The pilot project generalised the most widespread local masonry construction technique and structure in reinforced cement concrete (RCC), although community participation in the development of the project allows for using different building technologies communities might be familiar with and then can develop their own preferences¹⁵. Hunnarshala's interest in the use of local and 'traditional' materials was supported since the aftermath when the destruction of high-rise building brought to the widespread perception that cement and apartments do not belong to the local culture.

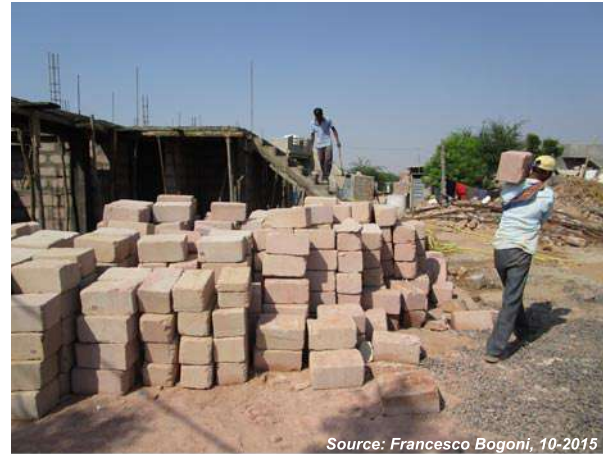
However, building regulations and specific regulations hamper the model of giving autonomy to beneficiaries to manage the construction. For example, disaster-safe regulation¹⁶ gives precise dimensions of the structure in RCC for corner pillars, floor slabs and sill, plinth, and lintel bands. These rules influence the management of the construction process in stages that corresponds to the completion of the horizontal structural bands of the plinth, the lintel and the roof, and limit the possibility to modify the position and size of doors and windows. The rule to install elevators beyond the 3rd floor, that would require the intervention of a company, also influences the low rise of the project. Above all, realising the structure in RCC requires specific knowledge implying that beneficiaries hire centering contractors or craftsmen to provide and install the steel, fix the centering, cast concrete, etc (see Image 8). In any case, the use of local available materials influence all construction processes in term of time, cost and the need to hire labourers and contractors. The material employed to build houses in the pilot project were *kamera* or *thora* stones for the plinth, *gajiya* or sandstone blocks for the walls, iron and concrete for the floor and roof slabs, the corner and junction pillars, and the lintel band. These materials were preferred for their availability near Bhuj so that owners-occupiers and contractors could manage their procurement from providers (sand, iron and cement) or from producers of stones and blocks that are caved in villages at 20 km from Bhuj like Dhaisara, Khunariya, Saratha (see Image 9).

15 In the pilot project, few attempts were made to employ different building technologies. In the following phase of slum redevelopment, it was proposed to a slum community belonging to the *Vansfoda* caste to employ bamboo as building material they traditionally employ for producing baskets.

16 All the structural design is regulated by state-level guidelines developed by Abhiyan and adopted by the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) for the reconstruction of houses in the post-earthquake period (GSDMA 2001).



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 10-2015



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 10-2015

Image 8. A contractor fixing the centering before casting the roof slab (left).

Image 9. Sandstone blocks procured by beneficiaries on the project site (right).

Consequently, for the implementation to succeed, beneficiaries are expected to manage by themselves the expenses for labours and bulk materials and to avoid expenses related to the contractors' profits. Examples given by few beneficiaries confirm that the costs for labours and materials together are included in the State contribution without demanding them to add their resources. Two beneficiaries, who built houses for themselves and their neighbours in the pilot project, report to have spent similar amounts to build respectively 9 and 15 houses: less than 3 *lakhs* per house in total, out of which between 60,000 and 120,000 to pay workers, and between 120,000 and 150,000 Rs for the building materials (excluding finishing like electricity, plumbing, and painting on walls which are provided as part of the charges of plumber, electrician and masons). For both of them, the effective duration of the construction works did not exceed 4 months, excluding downtime. So, one of these beneficiaries describes the process of construction (see Table 3):

"First we demolished the old houses and cleared all the land during four to five days, it costed 5,000 Rs. for clearing the site, so we informed Hunnarshala that the land was free and they came and marked the plot on the land. Then each contractor started to dig the foundations for his group of beneficiaries, I built 15 houses. During 5 days I hired 6 labours from Madhya Pradesh living in nearby settlement, who dig the foundation at 6,000 Rs. The first installment of 50,000 Rs. arrived before starting the construction. So I built the plinth for 15 houses that costed 70,000 Rs. per house. To build the

plinth I put *kamerai* stones, sand, and iron cages on the corner, up to 1.5 feet over the ground level, and then 4 inches minimum of concrete. I worked with my brother who is contractor and I hired two masons and the 6 labours because I wanted to work fast, so I finished the plinth in 15 days. I kept until the end the same people. Soon after the plinth I started to build the walls, and until the lintel they were working fast and altogether, from the floor to the lintel it took around 10 days, and two more days to finish the wall from the lintel to the roof. Then we started the roof for three houses together at a time. We prepared the centering in 2 days and cast the slab in more 3 days, so within 5 days we finished the centering and called Hunnarshala who came to check on the 6th or 7th day and it was ok, so in 8 days we finished the slab for 3 houses. To build the slab first I fixed the plates, then I did the iron works connected to the iron cage on the walls, and then I put 5 inches of concrete, and we use vibrator to fix and press properly this package. The carpenter only put the plates to support the slab, I have done all the work. After I got the 4th installment of 60,000 Rs. I made the plaster, then tiles, then electricity, then plumbery, then doors and windows, then stairs and boundary, and at last the color, then I got the last installment of 31,000 Rs. For 15 houses I made the plaster, put tiles for 10,000 Rs. in total, the plumber was made by a relative who put for 1,000 Rs. to fix, electricity connection was made by a labour for 2,000 Rs., the colour was put by people from Natwas. All these works took one month. So to build 15 houses it took 17 or 18 weeks of work without interruption, but we built the slab of 3 houses at a time. I managed all the materials alone, independently from other contractors, and they were provided by a wholesaler from Bhuj. *Kamerai* stones and sandstone come from Daisara village. I purchase 7 trucks of 10 tons at 2,000 Rs. each truck; 1,000 sandstone blocks per house at 22 Rs. each; sand is from Kandia, 5 trucks at 2,000 Rs. each; cement, 180 bags of 50 kg at 300 Rs. each ; iron is from Bhuj at 50 Rs. /kg, I used 400 kg per house. In my group, people did not participate in the construction, I built everything. I hired different experts, to put iron I hired an expert in centering work, then a carpenter and a mason for walls and plaster. One labour costed 350 Rs. per day, and one mason 600 Rs. per day. I work since long with them basing on

requirements, so we know and use to work well together. Only to the carpenter I gave the work on contract, which used his own materials and costed 80 Rs. per square feet, I also know him since long. In total we hired 5 carpenters to work on 40-50 houses in Ramdevnagar and they were moving as per requirement, but labours were always with me, I did not let them move to other works. Hunnarshala was coming regularly, one day before finishing each stage they passed and checked and in my case not an accident happened. For decorations they gave no instructions, they said you make as your style so we will know something more, and finally they were surprised. I received regularly installments and Hunnarshala was impressed for my speed"¹⁷.

These may be considered as successful examples of self-managed construction where the beneficiaries managed to not exceed the State provisions. As their main activity is in constructions, they could take advantage of their professional network and hired labours and masons living nearby that they are used to work with, who realised the works under their supervision. In this way, even if they could not avoid to employ labours, they managed to negotiate and reduce their charges, and avoided that the construction duration get extended when other beneficiaries were not able to pay in time. The same labours realised all the works, with few exceptions like for centering which was realised by carpenters, and finishings like electricity, plumbing and painting on walls, which were provided as part of the charges of plumber, electrician and masons. However, the final cost in other cases was higher due to a number of aspects and management choices that led to different expenditures. These include the beneficiaries' skills to manage several building techniques, their professional relation with providers/producers of materials and with labour workers in order to reduce their charges, their capacity to keep to work in order to not extend the construction time, etc. The model ranges between self-help construction 'in its purest form' where the beneficiary performs the construction works by himself with support from the community, to the notion of 'self-managed' construction where the beneficiary manages the building activities, including the purchase of construction materials, the contracting of specialised craftsmen for masonry, plumbing, painting, etc., as well as the provision of equipment (Bredenoord and Van Lindert 2014) (see Images 10-11).

¹⁷ S.V., personal communication, 21-08-2018.

Manpower/Services

Construction phase	Works (duration)	Cost (in rupees)	
		/house	/15 houses
Plinth (1 month)	Demolition (5 days)	350	5,000
	Excavation of the plinth (5 days)	400	6,000
	Construction of the plinth (15 days)	5,000	75,000
Lintel (15 days)	Construction of walls from plinth to lintel, pillars and lintel band (10 days)	3,300	50,000
Roof (45 days)	Construction of walls from lintel to roof (2 days)	450	6,750
	Preparation of the centering (2 days/3 houses)	35,000	525,000
	Construction of the roof slab (3 days/3 houses)	5,000	75,000
Finishings (1 month)	Plaster, tiles, stairs and boundary, colors	10,000	150,000
	Electricity	2,000	30,000
	Plumbers	1,000	15,000
TOTAL		62,500	937,750

Building materials

Materials	Quantity per house	Cost (in rupees) /unit	/house	/15 houses
Sandstone blocks	1000	22/block	22,000	330,000
Kamerai stones	7 trucks of 10 ton	2,000/truck	14,000	210,000
Cement	180 bags of 50kg	300/bag	54,000	810,000
Sand	5 trucks of 10 ton	2,000/truck	10,000	150,000
Iron	400 kg	50/kg	20,000	300,000
Tiles			10,000	150,000
Doors and windows			7,500	112,500
TOTAL			137,500	2,062,500

Table 3. Costs to build a house in the pilot project*Source: interviews 2018. Realized by: the author*

The model is influenced by the idea that "in India everybody is able to build" that Hunnarshala developed by working with building artisans in rural communities. Despite that, this approach requires significant technical support to the beneficiaries and Slum Committees to ensure the management and performance of the construction process. In this sense, the model suggests that the lead NGO trains them and labour workers before the start of the works, and the SFC monitor the construction works all along the

process¹⁸.

The model attempts to balance between owner-driven and contractor-driven approaches where the beneficiaries prefer to entrust the construction works to contractors. Beneficiaries can entrust all the construction works of their houses to small contractors, both individually or organised in groups, but contractors are not allowed to build too many housing units that in the pilot project were limited to 5, and beneficiaries should follow the construction process in order not to lose their control over the contractors' work. Distributing the construction works among more contractors also aims to share power and benefits by implicating more artisans and labours in the process, following Hunnarshala's vision of 'democratization' of the constructions. However, the lead NGO has no power in relation to the contractors as beneficiaries are responsible to take decisions about contracting works.



Image 10. A family who built their own house in GIDC Relocation Site (left).

Image 11. Masons hired by a contractor who built houses for his relatives (right).

Finally, the model proposes a flexible management of the transit accommodation after the demolition of the existing houses and during the construction of the new ones. By controlling the building process, families are supposed to manage the construction of temporary houses on the project site, differently from the contractor-driven process where all the land in the settlement is vacated to free the project site, resulting in the need to pay a rent or causing the creation of transitory camps that require vacant lands (Dupont 2014). However, beneficiaries' consent to participate in the project requires

¹⁸ In the pilot project, this responsibility was taken by the lead NGO who organised a training workshop for the beneficiaries with the support of the Kutch Association of Civil Engineers and Architects.

their agreement to support a rent accommodation during the construction works.

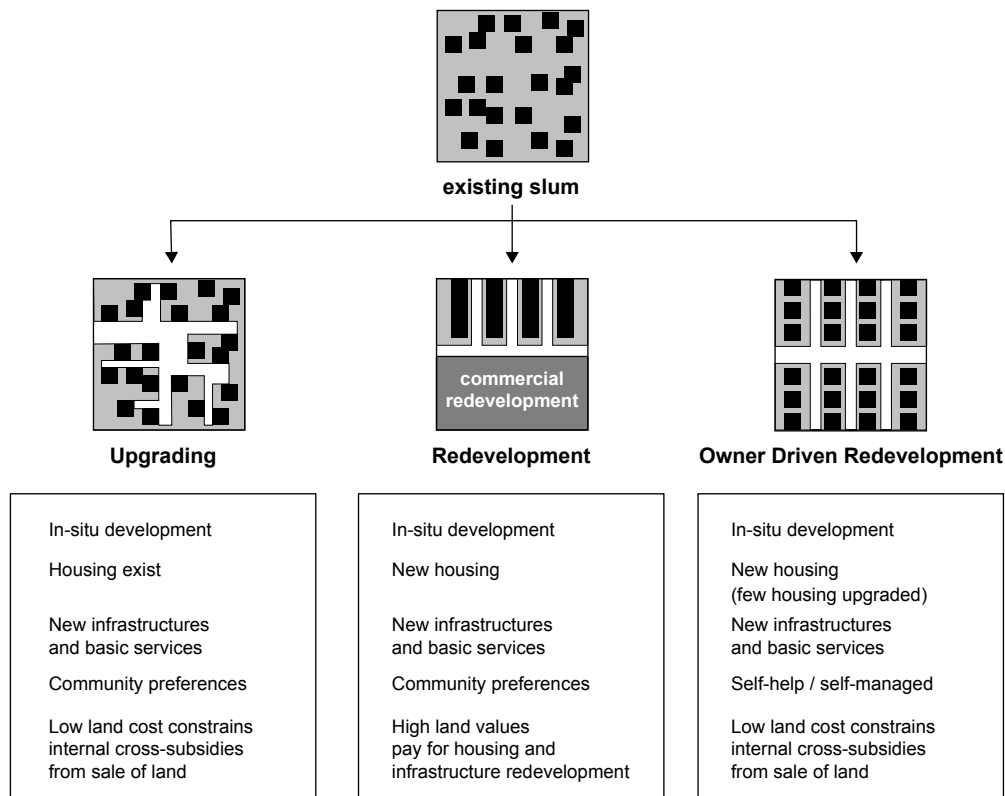
In parallel or after the construction of housing units, the Slum Committee manages the construction of physical infrastructures. The split of responsibilities between beneficiaries and Slum Committee to build housing and infrastructures does not imply to separate them temporally, however the NGOs in Bhuj suggested to build the houses before the infrastructures to prevent that the movement of building materials for the houses' construction could damage them. The Slum Committee is registered as Residential Welfare Association (RWA) to receive state/central funds and manage the operations as required by the RAY policy guidelines to ensure the quality assurance and the operation and maintenance of infrastructures (GOI 2012b). The Slum Committee registered as a RWA is entrusted to manage the construction of physical infrastructures and it can instruct a contractor for the purpose. The implementation mechanism is the same as the house units but the Slum Committee receives only an advance payment to start the works and the final payment upon certification by the Technical Cell. The ULB then entitles the beneficiaries as owners of the housing units and only then the project is concluded. Differently from the housing units, the municipality continues owning the land of common areas and the infrastructures, and the RWA is expected to pay taxes to the municipality. The maintenance of the infrastructures is entrusted to the Slum Committee in collaboration with the ULBs which with the Central and State government cover a part of the costs of maintenance, corresponding to 4% of the total project cost.

4.2. URBAN PLANNING IN SMALL CITIES BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

4.2.1. A FOCUS ON LAND AND INDIVIDUAL HOUSING UNITS

The model of owner-driven slum redevelopment privileges the approach of *in-situ* slum upgrading recommended by the national housing policies, to develop existing slum settlement by providing basic forms of assistance which include security of tenure, improved housing and basic services (GOI 2010). However, the model proposes to entitle slum dwellers of individual houses and land tenure rights, suggesting an approach that blurs distinctions between *in-situ* slum upgrading and redevelopment as they have been conceptualised in Indian slum policies (Patel et al. 2011). In order to guarantee the disaster-safety of housing, only a small number of *pucca* or permanent houses are upgraded while the majority are demolished and rebuilt. In this sense the model resembles the redevelopment approach where the entire slum is demolished to accommodate the slum dwellers in new housing built on the site, rather than the upgrading and land sharing approaches where an attempt is made to keep disruption to a minimum. However, the model differs conceptually from slum redevelopment as it aims to accommodate the slum dwellers over the entire slum land, instead of splitting the land into a commercial component to be sold in market to cross-subsidize the residential component where slum dwellers are accommodated in high-rise apartment buildings (see Scheme 5).

In the model, the entitlement of individual houses to slum dwellers implies also that the land plots occupied by the houses are registered in their name. For this reason, the model differs substantially from slum housing policies as it brings together right to land and the provision of housing. While state policies recognise the importance of land tenure in housing the urban poor, they have focused on the housing needs but have not been committed with regard to making land available for them. This split between housing and land, which has characterized the approach to urban poverty in India, led to exclude the poor from the planning vision of cities and the formal planning process (Mahadevia 2009), and at the same time hindered the possibility of incremental investments by the slum dwellers (Kamath 2012).



Sources: Patel et al. 2011, Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

Scheme 5. Owner Driven compared to other approaches of slum rehabilitation

The focus on land and individual housing units is in itself an implication of the owner-driven approach of construction where the owner/occupier manages by himself the construction of his house in self-help and beneficiary-led construction. On the one hand, the use of building technologies the slum dwellers can manage and maintain over time prevents from building high-rises and multi-apartment buildings as in developer-driven construction. On the other hand, the model addresses some of the peculiarities of small towns where slums have a low density and the buildings rarely exceed the ground floor as they developed in peripheral locations with large availability of land.

Considering these conditions, the model proposes to redevelop slums with a low-rise development based on the fact that the existing and expected slum population can be accommodated in existing slums without recurring to a high-rise development or occupying further land. Although Mahadevia (2009) demonstrates that both in small and big cities enough free land exists where the urban poor can be accommodated in low-rise housing, this option is particularly preferable in small cities where slum dwellers occupy large lands and slums are more rural in character, for which redeveloping them in apartment buildings implies more important changes in the domestic and community life

(Burte 2014). In Bhuj, the refusal of the slum communities involved in the project to be re-housed in apartment buildings reflects the fact that individual houses are the most common solution.

The model proposes that the size of individual housing plots may change depending on the land occupation and availability in each city. In Bhuj, the pilot project proposed to allocate to each household a housing plot of 65 sq.m¹⁹ and single-storey housing unit according to the disaster-safety regulations which limited the height of new constructions to prevent a multi-storey development. Considering that the single-storey housing unit has a built surface of around 41 sq.m (or 30-35 sq.m carpet area depending on house types, which exceeds the EWS housing surface defined by the state policies between 21 and 27 sq.m), each housing plot includes a courtyard at the ground floor of around 20 sq.m surface, and a terrace on the rooftop that is accessible by the beneficiary. However, in few cases where the lack of space in denser settlements prevent to accommodate families in land plots of 65 sq.m, the regulations allow to increase the building height up to G+1 (ground floor and first floor), and up to G+2 following the changes of Planning Regulations made in 2016.

Entitling land plots to the slum dwellers aims at securing their use of the open spaces not simply as a place of residence but also as a workplace and a means of conferring social status and standing, in a multi-faceted understanding of housing (Barakat et al. 2003). Slum dwellers usually perform domestic and livelihood activities in open spaces that represent a real extension of the home life, especially in small cities where slum settlements have a lower population density (Kundu and Dibyendu 2011). In Bhuj, the importance to allow for different uses beyond the residential one emerged after the housing recovery programme, as the housing assistance was allocated only for residential purposes, leading to the disappearance of multi-unit buildings with mixed use and tenure (Taheri Tafti 2012). But more ideological reasons underlie the focus on land in the vision of the NGOs in Bhuj, which places slum communities in the larger context of the city history and the identification between communities and neighbourhoods that reflect notions of identity centred on the royal heritage, as expressed by the vice-

19 The size of housing units was determined on the basis of the housing density of slums at the city level, calculated as the total area of all slums for the total number of households. In Bhuj, it was decided that each household in slums would be allocated 65 sq.m as currently most of them occupy between 60 and 80 sq.m and in some cases even higher surfaces. The average land occupation of slum dwellers in Bhuj was revealed by a study realised by Hunnarshala and the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), Ahmedabad in 2011, and a following planning exercise led to hypothesise the size of housing units at the city level that was later agreed during the preparation of the pilot project to become a reference for the city (Hunnarshala 2014a).

chairman of Hunnarshala :

"Slums in Bhuj were originated for providing services to the old town. For example Bhimraonagar was initiated by people who provided wood to the city from villages, and the Rao gave land to those people to settle down. Actually, the land where they settled was owned by the Rao, so if we follow the current policy, part of that land will be given to developer, who will sell to privates. That means to take that land away from the Rao and give it to the market"²⁰.

Acknowledging their relation with surrounding villages and the transformation in periurban settlements in the process of integration to the city, the original role of these communities in the city is underlined. The objective of guaranteeing access to land to slum dwellers in the post-earthquake context of development and modernization therefore takes on a particular meaning in the vision of NGOs, for which continuing traditional collective practices connected to the use of land is intended as a way to prevent them from the disruptive changes witnessed by the city. While most of the slums in Bhuj were created after the Independence, the NGOs' focus on the communities developed under the King's rule who claim their belonging to the city as it was granted by the King, show the influence of a collective sentiment of nostalgia for the Old Bhuj identified with the colonial period (Simpson 2005).

However, the model recognises the precariousness of the role of the slum land as a commons, similarly to the way how Bharwada and Mahajan (2006) warn against the "quiet transfer of commons" occurring in the rural Kacch, where the state government redesignate grasslands that ensure livelihood security to marginalised communities, as wasteland to attract corporate farming. Recognising the slum land as a common or the collective benefit of the city, the model allocates all the land freed up from the slum redevelopment for the needs of urban poor, like providing rental and transit housing and livestock to slum communities, instead of allocating it for private developments, thus differing from the government's vision of commodification of assets in slums by using land as resource for builders (Raman 2015). At the same time, the model addresses the inadequacy of the national strategy in the context of small cities, where the low density and the availability of lands limit the scope for speculation and keep the land values low in slum settlements.

20 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 25-11-2017.

4.2.2. LOCATING TRADITIONAL DESIGN IN THE POST-EARTHQUAKE RECONSTRUCTION

The model addresses the slum redevelopment with a 'whole-city' planning approach, rather than a process that affects individual settlements, also considering that the small size of the city facilitates at once the study and planning of the rehabilitation of all its slums²¹. Planning principles were defined and generalised to guide the slum redevelopment, from fixing the size of house units on the basis of the slum's density at the city level, to prepare slum redevelopment plans and designing the housing, with a 'sustainable approach to planning' that includes social, environment, mobility, services, public building and infrastructures. Hunnarshala formalised these planning principles as the project was included among the Best Practices in India and the MOHUPA asked them for guidelines based on the Bhuj's experience²². A main feature of this approach, that the Best Practices models also highlighted, is the inclusion of cultural-sensitive design and planning. After identifying the permanent houses and infrastructures to retrofit²³, the development of layout plans is based on the principle of housing clustering. By organising families in clusters of houses, the model aims to increase their collective participation to the construction works and to develop neighbourly relations in order to manage collectively their common spaces and services, develop economic activities, etc.

The layout plans of settlements in the pilot project organized housing units in parallel rows along access roads connected to peripheral roads. This organization reiterates the plan of a dozen of '*Patel*' villages that were built by the *Mistri* community, one of the traditional building communities of Kacch, out of which the 'new' Madhapar built near Bhuj in the early 20th century is a renowned example. The plan of Madhapar is organized as a grid of regular housing plots along parallel streets oriented north-south, that integrates climatic strategies design typical of vernacular hot and arid house

21 D.Y. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 01-06-2018.

22 J.S. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 04-12-2015.

23 Before starting the preparation of layout plans, the model proposes to retrofit existing houses and infrastructures to reduce the cost of construction, and to entitle their occupiers as house owners and allocate them only the funds for infrastructure provision. Those families living in houses smaller than the size proposed by the project become beneficiaries for upgradation and are allocated Rs. 1.62 *lakh* including the cost of housing and infrastructures to build one room and toilet-bathroom with a carpet area of 10.24 sq.mt. (Hunnarshala 2014a). The layout plans are thus developed so that existing houses are dropped into housing plots and are subject of an *ad hoc* extension and integrate the existing structures.

typologies worldwide²⁴. The layout plan that Hunnarshala proposed in the pilot project uses some of the planning principles manifest in Madhapar, as one of the directors of Hunnarshala describes (see Images 12-13):

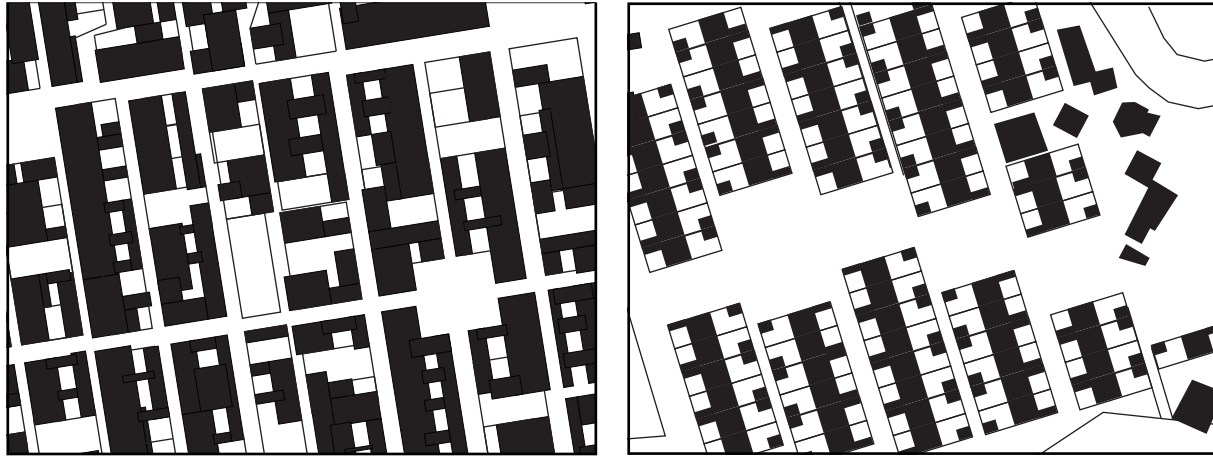
"Like in Madhapar, we proposed two main roads that run along the border of each settlement, and between them, a green/common path running central to the settlement. Between the main road and the common area, there is a series of parallel lines of houses with different length, each line served by an access road which represents its own *falya*"²⁵.

The inclusion of regional settlement design in the slum redevelopment demonstrates the long-term influence of visions of urban development focused on the continuity of 'traditional' urban forms that emerged in Bhuj after the earthquake. The reconstruction of the walled city raised the interest to prevent disruptive changes in the socio-cultural identity by preserving the urban forms. With this intention, the plan for the reconstruction was developed in articulating the position and hierarchy of the road network in order to retain as far as possible the structure of *falyas*, residential areas which had evolved from strong community or occupational pattern (Balachandran 2002). In the system of *falyas*, the house and neighbourhood form were inseparable from each other and culminated into the settlement structure: a house with a courtyard was the basic element, then extending in a cluster of houses sharing a common court, while more clusters were connected by a network of roads with commercial activities. In the reconstruction of the walled city, roads and clusters were kept as much as possible in the previous position independently from the fact that many houses collapsed during earthquake. Similarly, the clusters of houses and the households occupying them in slums are maintained near or in their previous position after they are demolished and rebuilt. Likewise the Town Plan for the reconstruction of the walled city, the redevelopment of slums in Bhuj was thus affected by the concern to preserve the previous socio-spatial organization, independently from rehabilitating physical

24 Houses are refreshed by cool winds from the southwest as their short walls with windows and doors face east/west. Houses aligned along narrow streets create shadow and are built with thick sandstone walls and plastered to increase their thermal resistance. The courtyards protect the interior from hot winds during the day but doors and windows can be opened at night to allow for ventilation, and wet functions like washing, laundry and cleaning aid in evaporative cooling of the houses' micro-climates. Small openings on walls, high ceilings and ventilator windows help keeping the interior cool (Gradillas 2015).

25 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

structures that were demolished. In this sense, rehabilitating slums participates to the larger project of patrimonialisation of the city's 'intangible heritage' (Smith 2006) where the inherent cultural value prevails over the material basis.



Sources: Gradillas 2015, Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

Image 12. Site plan of Madhapar (left) and project proposal for Ramdevnagar (right).



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 08-2017

Source: Francesco Bogoni, 08-2017

Image 13. Row of houses (left) and access road in Ramdevnagar (right).

During the reconstruction, the generalised focus on seismic resistant design led to ignore other issues such as comfort, adaptability and the regional traditional system that includes house, veranda and courtyard. The lack of traditional housing design considerations in post-earthquake NGO-led permanent housing realisations led in some cases to later reappropriations by the owners themselves that reintroduced the missing traditional elements (Sanderson 2012). This understanding at the basis of the model rooted the house design in local architectural traditions. The context of large scale housing policy which gives a precise definition of EWS housing, as well as the city-

level definition of the individual housing surface brought to develop a house design that could be used in all the slums in the city. Although the house design proposal allows for changes and incremental expansion, the pilot project provides for individual housing units with 2 rooms, kitchen, bathroom and toilet, and veranda, with a carpet area ranging between 30 and 35 sq.m depending on house types (see Image 14). Furthermore, the house design integrates earthquake resistant features that the disaster-safety regulations require in the new constructions, notably the sizing of the load-bearing structure and the position and sizing of the doors and windows (GSDMA 2001).

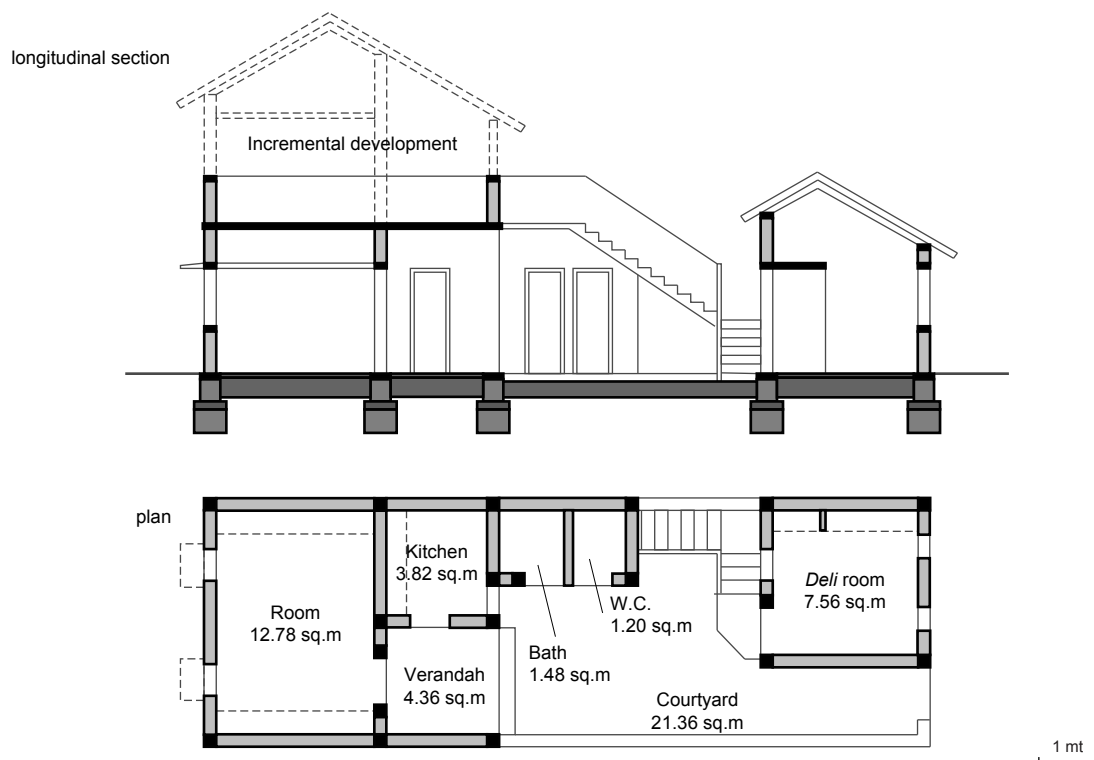


Image 14. Proposed design for dwelling unit in the pilot project

Source: Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

The traditional typology of the courtyard house represents a cultural fact as its spatial organization inscribes in local meanings. This typology characterises the house design and settlement planning both in rural areas and in the walled city in Bhuj, and in many informal settlements (but also in relocation sites and some recently built colonies), whereas it was absent in multi-storeys apartments in planned settlements. Its recovery in slum settlement is thus in continuity with a local tradition that was interrupted in the post-independence period. In the courtyard house, rooms are organised around the courtyard where the family performs daily domestic activities and where "women and

elders can stay outside in the evening" and people can sleep in summer. The courtyard constitutes a filter between the family and the community spaces, whose separation is reinforced by the presence of the *deli* rooms between the courtyard and the street, an independent part of the house that is traditionally used for hosting visitors or seniors of the family (Udamale 2003).

The pilot project also reiterates the veranda that covers the house entrance in traditional and informal settlements, where daily domestic activities take place. But whereas in slum settlements the kitchen is commonly placed outside or in the veranda, the pilot project integrates it indoor. In the vernacular housing of the region, the kitchen is a gendered space that represents the central role of the housewife in the household, paralleled by the central position of the kitchen in the house plan from where women can see visitors entering the courtyard without being seen (*ibid.*). But such gendered characterisation of the domestic space is lost in slums where houses are mainly composed of a single room and women perform daily activities outside or in the veranda. In this sense, taking the kitchen indoor represents an attempt to reiterate in slums the traditional role of women in the domestic space²⁶. The house design integrated to the settlement's regular grid as in Madhapar includes low-cost and climatic design considerations, as one of the directors of Hunnarshala explains:

"The house plot have a proportion of 4/3 (4 parts deep and 3 parts large), a built one part deep facing the road is dedicated to guests, and the main house in the bottom, 2 parts deep, is separated from the guest's part by a courtyard. The veranda of the house is included in the built part, giving the courtyard a square proportion. This is the most economic solution, since more units have the longest longitudinal walls in common, and you can subdivide easily the house in 2 by adding another central longitudinal wall. This configuration also offers a thermic advantage because, since the longitudinal walls have no windows and the other perimetral walls open to the front and back roads, the houses are always windy. The orientation is parallel to the main wind direction, and the two-folds roof also helps by creating an internal temperature gradient for having always 1 sunny and 1 shaded fold"²⁷.

26 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 27-10-2015.

27 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

Despite the intention to avoid inappropriate designs by integrating a context-sensitive approach, it can be argued how the courtyard house design corresponds to families' preferences or allow them to change the design to better respond to their needs. On the one hand, the house design reiterated closely the internal organisation and dimensions of the model house of Madhapar (Gradillas 2015), and the possibility of variation left to the inhabitants lied in the choice of 'house types' that left the plot size and the internal organisation unaltered.

On the other hand, the model allows for a flexible appropriation by families who can share their courtyards in common grounds instead of enclosing them with walls. Such configuration resembles the joint family's structure and collective form of land use that characterises many slum settlements, where no divisions separate neighbours' houses of relatives living in *wadas* or clusters. This intention to favour a shared use of land differs from housing design like apartment buildings in many planned urban settlements, where the lack of common open spaces hinders neighbourhood relations that differ from the nuclear family.

Similarly, the policy arrangement of the ODR model in Gujarat to assist individual households prevented the possibility to respond to housing needs differentiated from nuclear families' ones (TaHERi Tafti 2012). This flexible configuration represents an attempt to incorporate in the house design lifestyle a change that emerged in the post-earthquake scenario, according to one of the directors of Hunnarshala:

"In 2001, after the relief activities during some months, we started to ask the young generation in Bhuj how they wanted to live in the future. They answered they wanted independence from their parents, but still to live in community. This inspired us to design housing units that can be subdivided or multiplied, but keeping proximity and connection"²⁸.

Furthermore, this house design allows for incremental growth by building upper floors, which is not considered in apartment buildings and the orientations of national housing policies. Entitling only married couples of individual housing units, the national slum policies do not respond to the future needs for housing of unmarried couples who continue living in the parents' house before occupying nearby lands. Differently, the

28 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

possibility of incremental growth by building extra floors allows for the families to integrate their growing needs in the future. Since families can organise collectively the house's occupation according to their current and future needs, incremental housing design is thus understood as a way to extend the processes of participation and community building beyond the slum redevelopment project. This expandable housing approach also integrates the traditional system in the walled city, according to one of the directors of Hunnarshala:

"Before 2001, in the old city 27 communities were organised around *falyas* that you could reach through gates, so you had 27 gates. Each community had a well, so there were 27 wells getting water from Hamirshar Lake. As there was no more land available, they have grown vertically up to 3-4 floors over the last two centuries. We adopted the same principle in our plans"²⁹.

While the pilot project proposed to redevelop slums with single-storey housing units that are enough to rehouse all the existing families within the project sites, the DPRs prepared for the redevelopment of other slums proposed different building heights depending on the actual slum's density. For example, in Natwaas, one of the denser slum settlements in the city where there is not enough land to rehouse all the families in single-storey housing units, the project allocated three-storey housing units to joint families composed of parents and married sons.

4.2.3. THE INCLUSION OF SUSTAINABLE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The introduction of a planning system to regulate the post-earthquake reconstruction and development of Bhuj brought civic society groups to consider the earthquake as an opportunity to bring in new technologies and concepts and make the city environmentally progressive with green belts, water harvesting system, sewage recycling, separated pedestrian and vehicular traffic (Abhiyan 2003). The planning approach to slum redevelopment in the pilot project iterates some of these progressive ideas that concern mobility, basic services and the environment. To organise the mobility in the slum layout plans, Hunnarshala attempted to define a hierarchy of roads

²⁹ F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

to separate vehicular, pedestrian and animal traffic. Main roads along the perimeter of the slum settlements were proposed for vehicular traffic, while the access roads to the house clusters would be mixed between pedestrian and vehicular and would be used only by the families living in each cluster; and pedestrian paths crossing the settlement were proposed as spaces to perform community activities and would connect different settlements without the need for the inhabitants to go on vehicular roads. At the same time, these pedestrian ways would act as ecological corridors allowing the transit of animals and the preservation of rivulets and local trees based on ecosystem and topography, as many communities depend from open spaces for food production.

Another idea reiterated from regional planning systems is the provision and management of services (sewer, water, electric and communication networks) to individual housing units from dedicated back roads instead of the access roads where the houses' main entrance as well as trees and solar lighting are placed. This separation has practical as well as climatic implications: in the case of works or reparations, access roads are always free; placing electrical lines on the back lines, it is possible to plant trees and shadow the access roads; internal ventilation is created by having free space in front and behind houses; finally, the back space will never be encroached because it is important for the connection between houses. The model aims to supply basic services to the slum settlements in a decentralised system, shifting their management from the municipality to the slum dwellers represented by RWAs. The decentralisation of services aims to cope with the lack of capacities of the municipalities in small cities to manage their offer and distribution, but responds especially to specific conditions of the region characterised by the scarcity of resources and a limited urban development:

"If houses are connected to municipal water supply, the water will come from Narmada river in south Gujarat, that is very far. Since Bhuj is so far from the centre, at the least problem the water will go first to central areas and water in Bhuj will be cut. And the slums being the weaker areas in the city, they will suffer first and mostly from this. In fact the need for a decentralised water service is part of the history of Kutch because this has always been an arid region"³⁰.

30 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

The model does not replace the city's supply of services but integrates local resource management systems to them. Along with the connection to the municipal water supply, it proposes to reactivate existing bore wells in the slum settlements that have been abandoned, to provide to them a local water supply resource. Individual underground tanks connected to the municipal water supply are integrated in the house design, to provide an additional water reserve during cut periods³¹. In this sense, the model exceeds the RAY policy's objective of extending city's services to slums through slum upgrading, and transforms slum settlements in spaces to experiment sustainable solutions of resource management.

In slums that are not reached by the municipal sewerage, an integrated system of wastewater treatment and solid waste management is proposed. Each house is provided with a dual plumbing system separating the grey water from the black: the grey water from washing and cleaning is treated at the household level and re-used to irrigate plantations, while the black water is processed in Decentralised Wastewater Treatment System (DEWATS)³² and reused to irrigate fodder crop, whereas the composted wet waste collected door to door is used to fertilise it. The fodder and wet waste could be re-used to feed the domestic animals reared in the shed, creating livelihood opportunities at the door to door collection stage, processing dry waste stage, in the maintenance of DEWATS, in upkeep of communal animal shed, in farming of fodder, in animal husbandry as well as in sale of surplus fodder and organic compost while at the same time ensuring decentralised and sustainable processing of solid waste as well as wastewater. Finally, the model reserves part of the land in the slum redevelopment for the provision of livelihood areas and Low Income Group (LIG) housing. Like all other areas, except the residential one that becomes the property of individual households, the shop area became the property of Nagar Palika and is managed by the slum committees that decide how to use them.

31 The model proposes a system to recharge bore wells, helping to reduce floods during monsoons, and recharging the underground water table helps reducing the water salinity risen since they have been neglected. Water from these bore wells is treated by RO plants to provide safe drinking water on nominal charges using card system at the water treatment plant. The same technology has been implemented by another NGO partner of Hunnarshala (HIC 2011).

32 Hunnarshala and the partner NGO Sahjeevan has developed the expertise in designing and installing DEWATS systems and has created a few DEWATS systems in the city.

CONCLUSION

The context of post-disaster reconstruction in Gujarat and the process of development and modernisation unfolded in the city of Bhuj influenced the emergence of the model of owner-driven slum redevelopment. The success of the Owner Driven Reconstruction increased the interest to extend the approach to housing programmes in non-disaster situations, and in particular to the slums settlements as they are considered more vulnerable. Targeting slums aimed to overcome the non-inclusive formulation of reconstruction policies in Gujarat, whose strict interpretation of 'owners' excluded non-owner groups from housing recovery. In the context of national slum policies, the model differs as it replaces the centrality of developers with the owners-occupiers in the slum redevelopment. By doing so, it represents an alternative to the government's approach of market inclusion cantered on big cities. However, difficulties of implementing the national slum policy in Bhuj demonstrate the need for policy changes to extend its scope to smaller towns.

Following the RAY policy guidelines, the model's implementation framework adopts a collaborative approach between different parties that include government agencies, NGOs and slum communities. To cope with the lack of capacities of the local government in small towns, the model seeks to coordinate between institutional stakeholders through the creation of a Steering Committee. The inclusion of institutions and planning authorities facilitates the integration of slum upgrading into the city planning and the definition of specific arrangements for the city. The lead NGO takes on the main responsibilities of project development and management, as well as mobilising slum communities in participatory surveys and design and organising Slum Committees. The community mobilisation is envisaged to strengthen its responsibility and accountability, but at the same time it is moved by the concerns for the effects produced by reconstruction policies as well as the globalising scenario of Bhuj that fragmented collective action inside and between communities.

Above all, the model differs from national policies for the implication of slum communities in the construction, where house owners build individual housing units separately from the physical infrastructures entrusted to Slum Committees. According to

this separation, the model implies to subdivide and entitle housing plots to the beneficiaries while the rest of the land remains with the municipality, and implies that government allocate housing assistance to beneficiaries while the funds for infrastructures go to the Slum Committee registered as RWA. The aim to build better and larger houses that responds to the specificity of small cities involves a higher financial contribution from the beneficiaries. For this reason, the model integrates the community financing approach through the disbursement of loans from SHGs to the beneficiaries. Furthermore, the same owner-driven approach where owners-occupiers are expected to take control in self-help or self-managed modes is intended to reduce construction costs. These modalities involve the support of the lead NGO and SFC in training and quality control, and influence the housing project by including building technologies and materials that do not require specialised building knowledge, despite the limits imposed by construction regulations.

Concerning its planning system, the model differs in several aspects from the preconisation of national slum policies. By keeping all the land for the slum dwellers and entitling them of individual houses and land tenure rights, the right to land and housing provision are brought together, unlike the slum redevelopment approach at the basis of national slum policies. This difference fits the context of small towns where slums have low density and low rise development, and can be redeveloped *in-situ* with a larger individual housing surface. The land ownership also aims for other uses than the residential one, which in small towns have a higher importance for the more rural character of slums. The focus on land rights is particularly influenced by the historical context of Bhuj as it gives legitimacy to poor communities as a component of the city's collective history.

Slum redevelopment is addressed in a sustainable approach to planning that includes considerations concerning social organisation, environment, mobility, services, etc. Layout plans are developed with the principle of housing clustering, which brings the concern to extend 'traditional' urban forms and socio-spatial organisation that emerged in the reconstruction process in Kacch, in opposition to standard design solutions. Also the regional typology of the courtyard house is inscribed in local meanings as the performance of domestic activities and inherent family relationship and habits are incorporated. The context of large scale housing policy led to define a standard housing plot surface and housing typologies to be replicated in more settlements, that may not respond to different and changing needs of slum dwellers. Furthermore, the attribution

of individual land ownership does not correspond to other existing forms of collective land tenure in slums. Despite these arrangements, the model aims to a flexible organisation by joining and sharing housing plots and expanding them incrementally to include the growing needs of families.

Along with the local traditional settlement and housing design, the model included ideas of rationalisation and sustainability also brought about by the post-earthquake reconstruction. These ideas concern the mobility organised in a hierarchy of roads that separate different kinds of traffic, and where ecological corridors are envisaged to connect settlements to each other and facilitate social and livelihood activities. Furthermore, the model aims to decentralise the management of basic services to slum communities registered as RWA and integrate them with local resources, in particular water supply, wastewater treatment and solid waste management. Ecologic and low-consumption features are integrated in the design of houses and infrastructures.

The example of Bhuj participates to the emergence of urban models that challenge the vision of market-based inclusive growth in neoliberalised cities, but also of other technological approaches such as the smart city, and that bring forward a focus on collective action and social welfare. It belongs to practices that consider slums not only as marginal spaces in the city's economy and to be reintegrated to it, but where social resources can be activated to experiment and invent alternative urban models. What is particularly innovative is the repositioning of these approaches away from large cities that are privileged in the production of urban models, and to find ideas for a just city and sustainable urban development in the small city and local culture.

PART 3

QUESTIONING THE MODEL
THROUGH THE PILOT PROJECT

CHAPTER 5

THE PILOT PROJECT AS A PROCESS OF MOBILIZATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

This chapter analyses the mobilisation of communities in the pilot project, in participatory practices of survey, mapping and enumeration, housing and settlement plan design. While the focus on owner-occupiers is brought forward in the owner-driven model, community participation mandated by national policies depends on the capacities, interests and visions of the lead NGO / Community-Based Organizations (CBO). On the other hand, while national policies recommend intermediaries like NGOs to support participation, literature demonstrates that they pursue their interests and hold power over the residents, and their understanding of communities as homogeneous lead to standardise participatory practices (Raman 2015; De Geest and De Nys-Ketels 2019; Dupont et al. 2014; Dupont 2016; Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016).

Such understanding influenced by the national policies' conceptualisation of participation based on the notion that slum dwellers are organized into a 'community' (Dupont 2016) hides the heterogeneity of groups of people living together and fail to recognise local complexities and conflicting interests between groups and inhabitants. While organising slum dwellers into a 'community' to facilitate collective action, this occurs within subgroups around objectives that not all the community share alike (Haritas 2013). Furthermore, federating slum dwellers in CBOs who are supposed to represent the community does not take into account logics of patronage (De Wit and Berner 2009) where established elites, who focus on individual interests and do not represent all the groups, can limit the capacity of inhabitants to organise collectively.

Providing information and sharing knowledge are pre-requisites for effective participation (Arnstein 1969; Deboulet 2007; Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016), particularly in practices like mapping and community-led enumeration that are expected to render the titling process transparent and ensure the inclusion of weaker groups (Raman 2015). However, conflicting role and interests of squatters, intermediaries and other actors like the private sector concerning the land property, may bring to retention and belated communication of information to the slum dwellers (Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016). Consequently, consultation can result in project choices that do not respond to community

preferences and needs and in the creation of public housing style projects where local social complexities go unheard, where slum-dwellers can only voice their needs or demands through contestation (De Geest and De Nys-Ketels 2019).

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section introduces the context of the three settlements where the pilot project was implemented, analysing how they developed in relation to the urban dynamics and how this influenced their social and economic characterization, as well as morphology, forms of land tenure, and the conditions of housing and infrastructures. In particular, the way how the earthquake in 2001 and the reconstruction affected them is questioned. The next sections analyse the process of community mobilisation and how it resulted in particular project arrangements.

The second section focuses on the organisation of communities and their participation to general project arrangements, survey and enumeration. In particular, the analysis aims to explain how allocating individual housing units with land and the owner-driven implementation mechanism correspond to individual and collective interests of the inhabitants. This question is addressed considering specific conditions of the slums in small cities, like the sense of belonging to a community and the identification with a space in caste-dominated settlements and the importance of collective land tenure forms for extra-residential needs. On the one hand, the role of leaders is questioned to understand who drove the communities to participate, which motivations moved them and how they were shared or discussed with the rest of the community. In particular, the influence of traditional or pre-existing leadership to organise communities and creating Slum Committees is considered. Furthermore, the role of inhabitants in participatory survey and mapping and in deciding the list of beneficiaries is analysed to understand how these practices were influenced by the interests of specific groups leading to the inclusion or exclusion of inhabitants in the project.

The third part questions the participation of communities in developing design choices. A central question is to understand how the house design and planning approach developed by NGOs including considerations of cultural or environmental adequacy correspond to preferences and needs of inhabitants. Specifically, how these considerations were included in the design and management process to allow inhabitants to modify or adapt their house design and managing their occupation? Finally, the fourth part analyses the changes that the project produced in the settlements and communities implicated, in terms of living conditions related to the domestic space but also of family and collective practices occurring with the change of social status associated with the project. The effects of the slum improvement to increase the settlements' value both in economic terms and of the communities' position in the urban society are analysed in relation with their motivations and expectation of change.

5.1. CONTEXTUALIZING THE PROJECT SITES: SETTLEMENTS PROFILES AND HISTORY

5.1.1. RAMDEVNAGAR: FROM FARMERS TO CITIZENS ON THE EDGE OF THE CITY

Ramdevgnagar is a settlement with a population of 502 people extended over 21.700 sq.m owned by the Revenue Department of the Government of Gujarat. The settlement is located in the ward 8¹ two kilometres west of the city centre to which it is connected by Kodki Road. Formerly a narrow road, its enlargement as part of the Development Plan (DP) after 2001 increased the connexion of the settlement with the city centre (see Image 15). Surrounded by farmland until the 1990s, it is currently bordered by a private colony (Prabhu Park) to the south, another slum settlement (Bharwadwas) separating it from farmland and wastelands to the north, and a 24 m wide road to the west of the settlement that separates it from the Sector Headquarter of the Border Security Force. Other neighbouring slum settlements are located to the east along Kodki Road and to the south in the area known as Old Rawalvadi (see Map 9).

The settlement has been developed before the Independence by a group of families belonging to the Hindu *Devi Pujak* community², one of the largest in Bhuj whose population lives east of the centre near the old railway station (in the slum settlements of Buteshvar, Shiv Ram Mandap, Ram Nagri) and along Kodki Road (in Ramdevnagar and Devi Pujak Waas). The *Devi Pujak* think they come from the Marwar region of Pakistan and think they have settled in Bhuj since seven generations. Their presence in the region is concentrated in urban areas to the east and south and is linked to the migration flows following the connexions of the ex-princely state with the east Gujarat in the 20th century. Their migratory history still influences characteristics as their language and the

1 Kodki Rd leaves from Patwadi Gate in the walled town and heads towards the village of Kodki 10 km west of Bhuj. It crosses the ward 8 since 2016, when the Revised DP reduced the previous administrative division of Bhuj from 14 to 10 wards of the municipal area. Before Ramdevnagar was located in the ward 1.

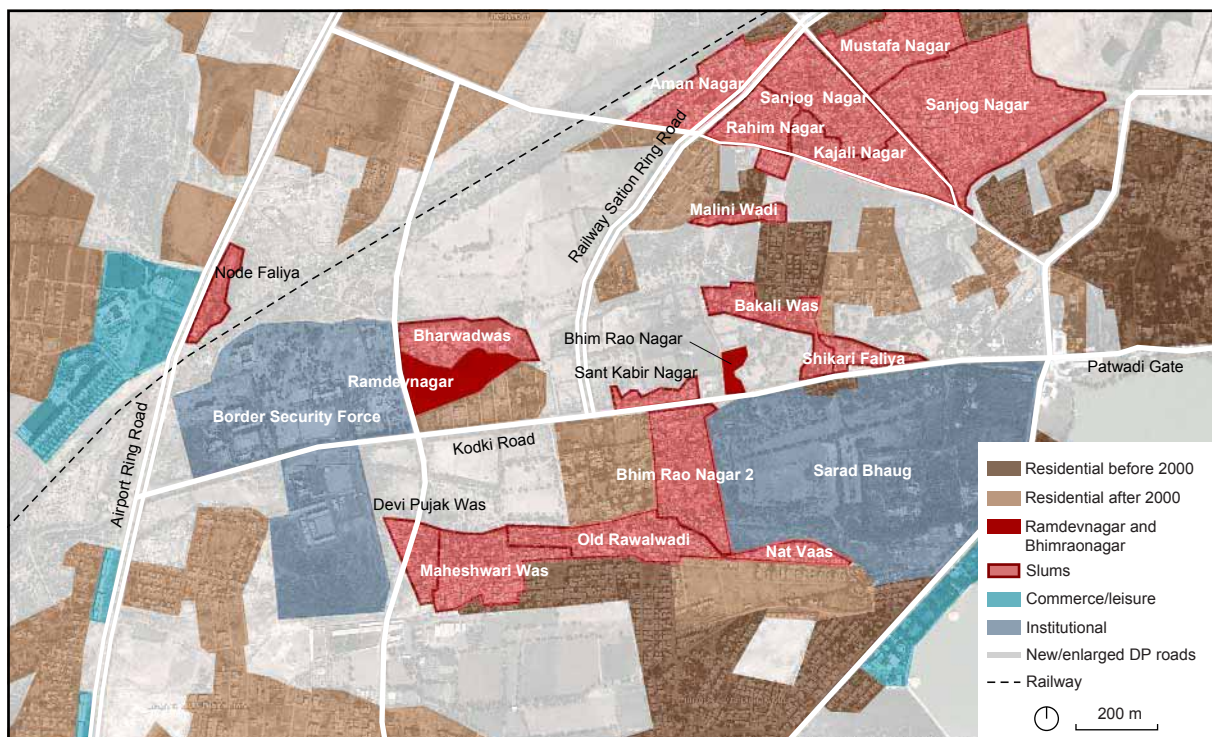
2 *Devi Pujak* is a modern name that replaces the old appellation *Vaghri* (meaning 'like a tiger'), considered by its members as pejorative. In Kacch, the community is referred to as Scheduled Tribe, traditionally nomadic and meat-eaters, working as masons or labourers (Singh 1998). The name change, the new vegetarianism, as well as the claim to belong to a Brahmin community, highlight practices of sanscritization (Srinivas 1956). The pilot project in Bhuj identifies the population of Ramdevnagar as other backward classes (OBC) (Hunnarshala 2014a).

way locals see them as marginal to the urban society³.



Source: Francesco Bagoni, 08-2017

Image 15. Kodki Road crossing slums in Ravalvadi area



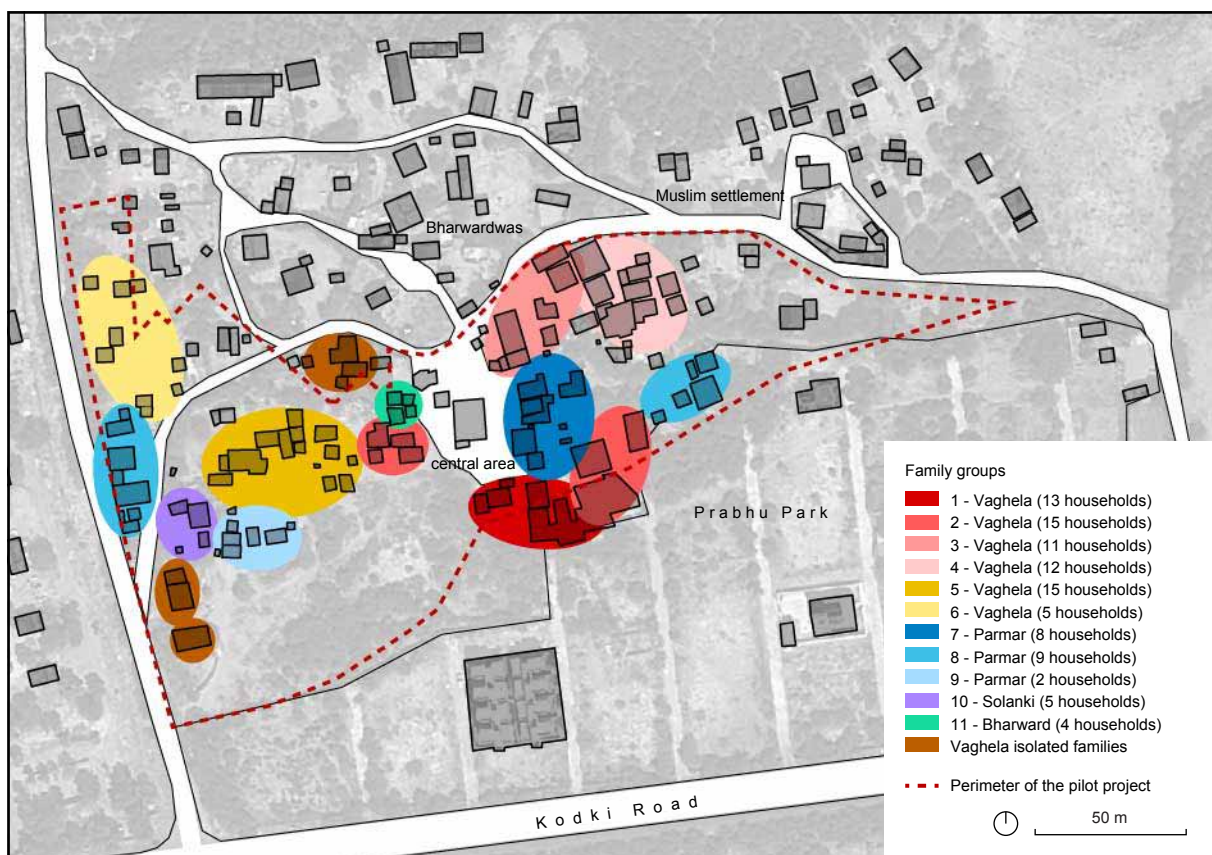
Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

Map 09. Urban areas around Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar

The community of Ramdevnagar recognizes itself as belonging to a division of the *Devi*

3 The leader of the community of Ramdevnagar who preserves the memories of the *Devi Pujak* in Bhuj, retraces their journey from the region of Sindh, passing by the villages of Sanchore, then Vaav, Tharad, Halwad, Maliya, Palasawa, before reaching Bhuj seven generations ago. According to my personal assistant, the language spoken by *Devi Pujak* in Bhuj is very similar to that of *Vaghri* in Ahmedabad. They are considered as separate from the mainstream society, independent and hard to give them direction. They are used to business like vegetables selling, but risky and easy to lose in business (R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017).

Pujak, the *Kambaliya*, an endogamous group that includes several exogamous clans with a common ancestor. The families in the settlement belong to two clans, Vaghela and Parmar, which usually form alliances between them, and a third clan, Solanki, united with the clan Parmar. The settlement has developed over time as groups of families belonging to the same clan who built their houses around *wada*⁴ or clusters of different sizes: 74 households from the clan Vaghela are organized into six large family groups (groups 1-6) and three isolated joint families, 19 households from the clan Parmar are divided in three groups (groups 7-9), and the clan Solanki counts only a small family group of 5 households (group 10)⁵ (see Map 10).



Map 10. Family groups in Ramdevnagar

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

Ramdevnagar, named after the Hindu folk deity Ramdev Pir⁶ that the community venerates since the early years of the settlement, was developed on what was previously

⁴ *Wada* means compound in Gujarati.

⁵ The available anagraphic information allow to trace family relationships up to 4 generations, but different family groups may actually have common ancestors.

⁶ Ramdev Pir is a deity regarded as an incarnation of Krishna, which in Bhuj is followed by low caste communities like *Marwada* and *Devi Pujak*, but also Jain.

an agricultural land. According to the elders in the community, the original owner of the farm gave it to be managed by a family of the clan Vaghela (family group 1) who left its community in the city near Bhid Gate, and built a *bhunga* in the farm. As the owner of the farm was facing financial difficulties because of droughts, the King requisitioned the land and entrusted it to the family who has continued to use the land as farmland.

Later on the family expanded as a second family from the same clan moved nearby in 1955 and joined the farm activity, and was followed by others of the clans Vaghela and Parmar who formed alliances both with families from Bhuj and other cities. Nowadays, 30% of the families of the clan Vaghela in Ramdevnagar are linked in marriage with families of the clan Parmar settled in Shiv Ram Mandap, Bhuteshvar and Ramnagri in Bhuj, and another 30% from Jamnagar in Saurashtra and other cities in Kacch. In parallel, also the family groups of the clan Parmar has grown by joining with Vaghela families from other settlements in Bhuj. In the 1950s, also with a family of the Hindu *Bharwad* community⁷ settled in Ramdevnagar (group 11), followed in the 1970s by 14 *Bharwad* families from the village of Haripar in Saurashtra, that settled down near Ramdevnagar giving rise to the settlement known as Bharwadwas. Also later on some Muslim families settled to the northeast⁸.

The family of the clan Vaghela who first settled in Ramdevnagar remained the most important as the ownership of the farmland is handed down within the family, and the hereditary of the land holds a role of community leader as well as *bua* or medium between the deity and people. Its centrality is reflected by the settlement's morphology: together with family of the clan Parmar which hands down the role of *pujari* of Ramdev Pir (group 7), the Vaghela family occupies a central space in front of a common area connected to Kodki Road, in the centre of which a *mandir* or temple was dedicated to the deity in the 1970s. The settlement has gradually developed to the north and west, so that today the families located on the edge of the settlement have lower bonds with the Vaghela family. Furthermore, whereas other families who are consanguineous with the latter could occupy the land by inheritance, families with affinity ties settled to the west and build their houses after buying the land from the former. For example, one family of the clan Parmar who settled in the Eighties in Ramdevnagar near their relatives (group

7 *Bharwad* is one of the shepherd communities of Gujarat (Singh 1998).

8 In Bhuj, the name Ramdevnagar is equally associated with the area where *Devi Pujak*, *Bharwad* and Muslim communities live, which designate their own settlements differently. Hunnarshala identifies Bharwadwas as a slum settlement with a population of 92 households.

8), affirms to not have received the land by inheritance as all the other families⁹. Another isolated family from the clan Vaghela settled in the years 2000s in Ramdevnagar and purchase the land from the family owner of the land¹⁰.

The community developed around the farm activity but because of droughts and labour shortages in the 1980s, many families moved to other sectors of activity as labour workers, especially in the wholesale market and the construction. In the end of the 1990s, the family who owned the farm sold a part of the land to a developer who in the 2000s divided it into residential lots (Prabu Park south of Ramdevnagar). In parallel several *Devi Pujak* families in Bhuj developed the construction of *mandap*, temporary decorations for ceremonies that refer to the craft skills traditionally associated to their caste. 11 families in Ramdevnagar work in *mandap* enterprises located mainly around Bhid Gate, and 2 families hold their own *mandap* activities, one of the clan Parmar (group 7) who started in the 1970s and a second one started in 2010 by the family who owned the land. These two activities employ relatives and sometimes hire labours both inside and outside the community.

To cope with the lack of work in Bhuj, during the 1990s around 20 inhabitants moved to Oman and the United Arab Emirates where they worked in the construction industry, and came back in the 2000s attracted by the economic boom after the earthquake. Also in this period some families from other settlements moved to Ramdevnagar. For example the family of the clan Solanki (group 10) was living in Ram Nagri when the head of the family went to Oman for work, and they moved near the wife's relatives in Ramdevnagar as the family remained alone and faced some security issues, and later on they continued living there. After the earthquake, the construction of Kodki Road facilitated some families to move to trade activities in other areas of Bhuj.

Today the majority of the working population is employed as labours: 17 families work at the Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMS) and whole-sale market as well as in industries and 7 are employed in the construction sector as labour workers, while only 3 households have their own activities in the construction sector. 12 households are employed in commercial activities, of which 2 own small grocery shops. Some families who left *mandap* and commercial activities in recent years have become rickshaw-drivers, of which 3 own their autorickshaw. The rest are employed as labour workers in fairs or as scrappers, while some families continue to be linked to farm activities as

9 V.P., personal communication, 23-08-2017.

10 M.V., personal communication, 16-04-2018.

labour workers or still own some lands outside Bhuj (see Table 4). The high presence of labour workers in most families affects on average their low capacities to save money¹¹. At the time of the earthquake most families lived in one-storey *bhungas* with one or two rooms, organized in *wadas* demarcated with stonewall or vegetation fence (see Image 1). Some built separate *bhungas* for their married sons, but most commonly joint families of siblings and their parents occupied the *bhungas*. For example, F.P. (group 7) explains that his family of around 20 people lived in an earth house covered with dry cow shit on the walls, that his wife built with the help of her family. The house had two rooms, each one of about 10 sq.m¹². The 1998 cyclone and the 2001 earthquake damaged many houses, but few collapsed as most of them were well built with good quality finishing, as many families are employed in the construction. The families moved to temporary houses provided by the government and NGOs near the settlement, and very few obtained state subsidies to renovate their damaged house and build new houses. The survey carried out in 2013 qualifies 64.6% of the houses in Ramdevnagar as semi-permanent and 27.4% as temporary, while only 9 houses are considered permanent with Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) slabs and brick stone walls (Hunnarshala 2014a).

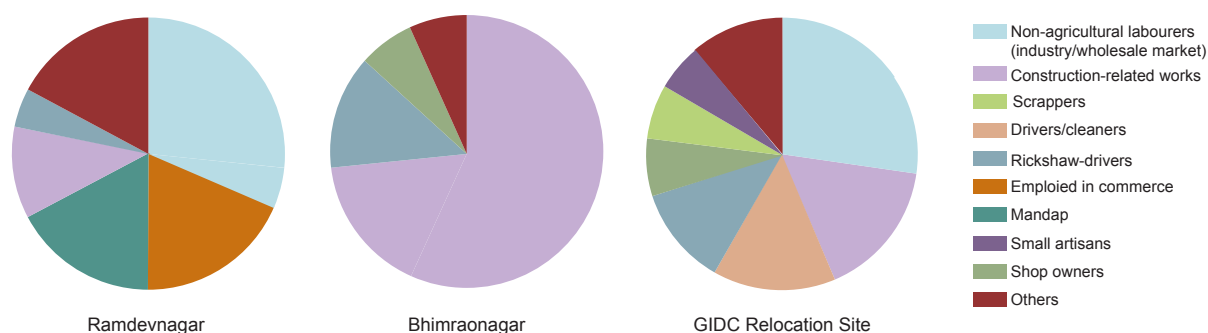


Table 4. Distribution of Households by Primary Occupation

Source: interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

As for the majority of the informal settlements in Bhuj, the houses in Ramdevnagar are not covered by basic services provided by the municipality. The water supply depends on public taps and wells, its frequency is irregular and the water has high salinity. Only

11 According to the survey realised by the NGOs to prepare the pilot project, the average monthly income of the families in Ramdevnagar is 5,062 Rs. while the average monthly expenditure is 4,676 Rs. (more than half of the families earn between 3,001 and 5,000 Rs., and spend between 3,001 and 5,000 Rs. in a month). On an average, families in Ramdevnagar save 5,262 Rs. in a year (Hunnarshala 2014a).

12 F.P., personal communication, 29-08-2017.

one third of the families have toilets and few share community toilets or septic tanks, but the majority defecates in the open. There is no drainage but the settlement does not suffer from floods thanks to its natural slope. All the houses have electricity, individual or shared, and there is no waste collection so the waste is dumped in the open. In recent years, some educational activities for the children have been developed in the central common space near the *mandir*: a dome structure used for tuition classes, an *aanganwadi* (kindergarten), a *chabutro* (pigeon house), all them enclosed by a compound¹³.

5.1.2. BHIMRAONAGAR: A COMMUNITY OF MASONS LOOKING FOR LEGITIMACY

Located along Kodki Road 1 kilometre away from the city centre, Bhimraonagar covers an area of 4,672 sq.m owned by the Revenue Department of the Government of Gujarat. The settlement is surrounded by farmland and other Muslim communities north of Kodki Road (Bakali Waas, Shikadi Falyiu, Sant Kabir Nagar) and Hindu communities to the south in the Rawalvadi area (see Map 9). Bhimraonagar has a population of 169 people belonging to the Hindu *Marwada* community¹⁴ which is considered *Harijan*¹⁵ in Kacch and lives in settlements near the old railway station (Shastri Nagar, Ramnagri, Ambedkar Was, Sant Roidas Nagar, Ashapura Nagar), and west of the city centre (Juni Rawalvadi and Bhimraonagar-2). The community is organized in seven family groups that belong to exogamous clans that regulate their marital alliances (see Map 11).

According to the community leader, the settlement started to develop before the Independence by two families of the clan Bhuchya. These families used to travel daily from Makhana, their village located 15 km west of Bhuj for selling wood in the city, and

13 In common area with the *mandir* at the centre of the settlement, an *aanganwadi* or kindergarten was built before the earthquake, owned and managed by the government and ran every morning, but today it is in dilapidated conditions. The community demanded its demolition and the creation of a new one, and to build a primary school in its place whereas currently the families send their children to study in nearby schools. In 1998 the community built a *chabutro* or pigeon house next to the *aanganwadi*. After 2010 the NGO Ramkrishna Mission financed and built a 'dome' structure, where they started daily tuitions in the evening for the children of the communities of Ramdevnagar and Bharavarwas. To protect the area containing the *aanganwadi*, the dome and the *chabutro* where children meet, the community enclosed it with a wall that was funded by the NGO Shrujan.

14 *Marwada* or *Marwara* is one of four traditional endogamous groups of the *Meghwali*, which in Gujarat are concentrated in Kacch and claim the *Kacchi* as their mother tongue (Singh 1998). The *Marwada* think they come from the region of Marwar that lies between Rajasthan and Pakistan, and to have traveled all around India. The *Marwada* are considered a Scheduled Caste in Kacch.

15 Mahatma Gandhi employed the term *Harijan* referring to the untouchable castes.

later they settled near Patwadi Gate as the city gates began to close at night for security reasons. The family was displaced by higher caste groups who moved out of the walled city, and shifted on vacant land few hundred meters to the west, near the settlement known as Bakali Was occupied by the Muslim *Bakali* community¹⁶.

Such origins are still visible in the settlement's morphology: the main access was initially from a north path that crossed Bakali Was, and the settlement grew to the south around a central path connecting with Kodki Road. As the *Bakali* community who moved vegetables by ox carts damaged this path, the *Marwada* families asked them to stop to use the access from Kodki Road, which since has become exclusive to them. After the first family (group 1) settled down, other relatives from the village moved nearby and joined to the wood-selling activity.



Map 11. Family groups in Bhimraonagar

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

¹⁶ The *Bakali* community is traditionally dedicated to the production of vegetables, and created the settlement known as Bakali Waas long before the *Marwada* families settled down in Bhuj. According to one of the descendants of the former royal family, Muslim communities of *Bakali* and *Sikari* were allowed by the royal family to settle near the Sharad Baug, the King's residence built at the half of 19th century (P.A., personal communication, 15-07-2018).

Meanwhile, the family expanded through alliances with other families in the villages of Lakhpath, Nalya and Nakathrana *talukas*: above all the husbands' families, who were facing the crisis in agriculture, left the villages and settled close to the brides' families¹⁷. Unlike in Ramdevnagar where all the lands were initially owned by one family, in Bhimraonagar the families occupied nearby portions of land. A *mandir* dedicated to Ramdev Pir and an *angaanwadi* were built at the crossing point with another internal road that creates a central space in the settlement, as the community leader explains:

"This point is central because if you enter and if you want to reach any house you have to pass there because it is at the crossing point of the main road that takes to Bakali Was and the other internal roads in Bhimraonagar. If we sit down here, little by little all people will gather around because it is their old lifestyle to stay outside, and if somebody is there, other get together"¹⁸.

With the arrival of new families, the settlement has densified and organized as a series of adjacent compounds connected to the outside by narrow paths. The settlement was known as "Bhunghio" for the type of construction and was later named Bhimraonagar by one of the first families, which was linked to Bhimrao Ambedkar's campaigns against discrimination towards the untouchables. In time, *bhungas* were replaced with single-storey masonry buildings. As no more land was left free, other families started to settle south of Kodki Road, so today the name Bhimraonagar is associated with a larger area mostly inhabited by *Marwada* and *Maheshwari* communities¹⁹.

The families whose livelihood was initially wood selling moved to other activities, in particular to handicrafts like weaving and leather works that are traditionally practiced by the *Marwada*. However with the expansion of the construction sector in the 1980s, more and more families moved to the constructions as labour workers and specialized in centering, masonry, plumbing and electrical work. Due to the concentration of labour

17 According to R.B., the elder of the Buchiya family (group 1) that settled first in Bhimraonagar, in the beginning they had only 2 *bhungas*, and then a Siju family (groups 2) arrived from Bebar located 45 km far to sell wood in Bhuj, and they sold them a *bhunga* for 10 Rs. Later on other families arrived: Kokar (group 4) came from Nara 100 km far, one family came from Mata no Madh 90 km far, 2 families Mirya and Odhana (groups 6, 7) came from Zura 30 km far, another family Bambhaniya (group 5) came from Ludava 35 km far (R.B., personal communication, 27-06-2018).

18 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

19 The name *Maheshwari* refers to another endogamous group of the *Meghwal* caste. The slum survey realized by the SETU in 2011 makes a distinction between Bhimraonagar-1 to the north of Kodki Road and Bhimraonagar-2 to the south.

workers in construction, the contractors and builders in Bhuj find labours among the communities in Rawalvadi by word-of-mouth because they know each other who are living in this area and because contractors are from Bhuj.

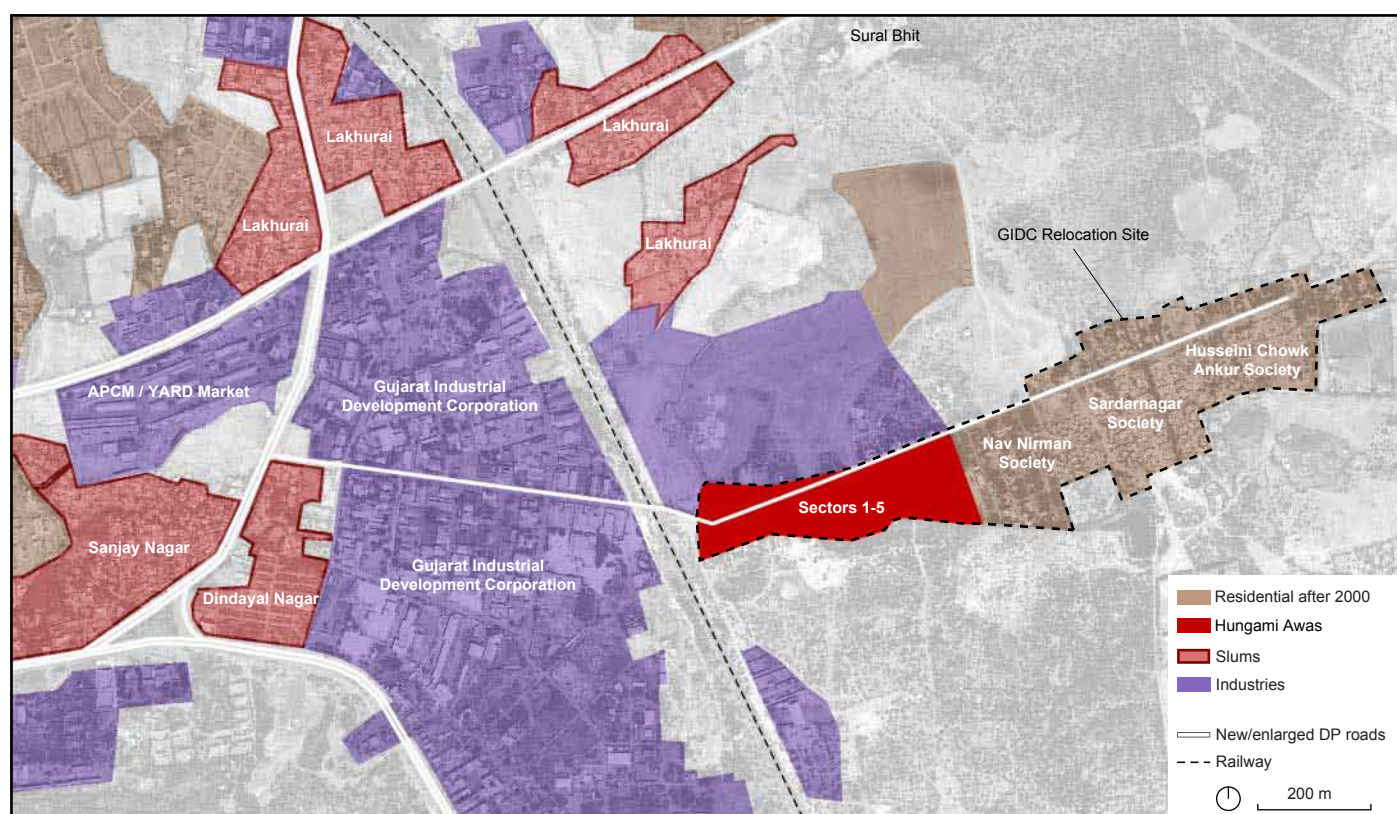
The main activity for 22 families is in the constructions mainly in centering works and as masons, out of which 7 families have their own activity and employ relatives. Other main activities are commerce, 3 families having a shop near the entrance of the settlement and a fourth one in the settlement, and rickshaw-drivers for 4 families (see Table 4). This high presence of families leading their own activities and a lower presence of labour workers than, for example, Ramdevnagar, is reflected in a higher financial stability of the families²⁰. Most of the women remain at home as housewife but some of them are involved in embroidery work. In the last decade, the community of Ramdevnagar was affected by the crisis of the sector following the boom in the reconstruction period, and few families left the activity. After 2010, 4 families moved from the constructions to other activities like rickshaw driving, commerce and weaving. However, a group of 3 families whose occupation was weavers started to work in constructions. The situation got worse with the economic slowdown related to the reform of demonetization, which for example caused the reduction of daily wages of masons from 500-550 Rs. to 400 Rs. in few years.

The conditions of the basic services provision are equally poor. Concerning water, in 1984 the Water Department provided a stand post for drinking water supply in the settlement and in 2009 the municipality provided water connexions to 37 families, which is supplied once in two days, while the rest get water through their neighbours. The water was not potable but recently drinking water started to be supplied through the same lines once in four days. Most of the people have their own toilets connected to soak pits in absence of municipal drainage, and some families share toilets in their clusters. However many toilets are in dilapidated condition and open defecation is common. There is no drainage and due to lack of space the washing activities are carried out in the open but the site does not suffer from floods during the monsoon as the ground slopes from north to south. Electricity was provided to the settlement in the 1980s and today all houses have electric connexion, individual or shared. As there is no waste collection, waste is dumped in the open (Hunnarshala 2014a).

20 According to the survey realised by the NGOs, the average monthly income of families in Bhimraonagar is 6,630 Rs. while the average monthly expenditure is 5,797 Rs. (more than half of the families earn between 5,001 and 10,000 Rs., and spend between 5,001 and 10,000 Rs. in a month). On an average, families in Bhimraonagar save 10,000 Rs. in a year (Hunnarshala 2014a).

5.1.3. GIDC RELOCATION SITE: ENDURING ILLEGALITIES AND MARGINALISATION

The GIDC Relocation Site covers 22 hectares of land located in the ward 3²¹, 5 km east of the city centre beyond the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) (see Map 12). Its population has changed over time, from 1,500 families in December 2001, to about 700 families 10 years later. The settlement was built between 2001-2002 on government-owned land under the jurisdiction of Bhuj Area Development Authority (BHADA) and was brought into the municipal limits in 2010. Unlike the other three relocation sites, it was conceived as *Hungami Awas* or 'Temporary Shelter' to accommodate poor and vulnerable groups during the implementation of the reconstruction policy. The local government divided the site into 19 sectors as every community wanted their shelters clustered; and the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), NGOs and community organizations have contributed to build housing units.



Map 12. Urban areas around GIDC Relocation Site

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

21 Before the Revised 2025 DP approved in 2016, the site was included in ward 14.

Although conceived to target the needs of the vulnerable and poor populations, strongest groups financed before others the construction of 1,378 shelters in sectors 1-7, 9-10, and 13 in exclusive communities, mostly belonging to *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya* and merchant castes: *Bhanushali* (sectors 1-2), *Gujjar*, *Mistry*, *Bhawsar* (sector 1), *Rajyagor* (sectors 2-10), *Thakkar-Lohana* (sectors 3-5-6), *Soni*, *Kayasth* (sector 4), *Khatri Hindu* (sector 5), *Salat* (sector 7), *Darji Suthar* (sector 9), *Mochi*, *Rajput* (sector 10), *Ghanchi* (sector 13) (Mukherji 2008). Also a group of NGOs provided assistance along religious lines and shared the construction costs with the households: Caritas India (sectors 1-8), Swaminarayan Trust (sector 2), Islamic Relief Committee. Only the UNDP (United Nation Development Programme) through a joint venture with the Government of Gujarat funded completely and built 1,060 units in the remaining sectors (11-12 and 14-19) for people who could not afford to construct their own²². Out of these, 250 units were given to the Islamic Relief Committee and only 400 of the remaining units were occupied as they did not have attached toilets (ibid.).

Contrary to the initial perspective of temporary occupation, delays in implementing the reconstruction policy and changes in the governance system extended the construction of temporary shelters and resulted in longer-term housing needs that justified the use of semi/permanent solutions. This brought to a long-term use of the site, which was critically evaluated as a failure of the project as since the beginning it had never been comprehensive or holistic (Jauhola 2019). Already in 2001 many beneficiaries moved to the city centre and other relocation sites once the reconstruction process was completed. However, only the richer groups sold or rented their houses to newcomers while the families who could not access permanent houses were left behind (see Image 16).

Recognizing its long-term occupation, later the government declared it as a Relocation Site and was supported by NGOs to develop the settlement. In 2004, Abhiyan prepared a Master Plan²³ to build 1,200 new houses, and the government along with donors and

22 UNDP provided houses in GIDC Relocation Site for free but some families affirm that they paid 3,000 Rs to UNDP for the land and toilets in order to have a proof that they had not encroached the land.

23 The group composed by Abhiyan, Bhuj Development Council (BDC) and Kacch Mitra pressured the BHADA to develop a housing program for renters, recognizing that the housing shortage could leave low-income renters either homeless or living in temporary housing in squatter settlements. Thanks to their advocacy, in 2004 the housing recovery programme was extended to renters whose houses were destroyed in the earthquake, they became eligible to apply for a housing plot at one of the relocation sites. A separate housing programme was planned for low-income renters staying at the GIDC temporary housing site, where they could apply for a new house in a planning scheme built in 2005 by Abhiyan. Its implementation was anyway hindered by the lack of application of the BHADA, since the problem exceeded their mandate for the rehabilitation. While BHADA initially participated in the detailed planning, it did not allocate the land promised for the housing scheme, which thus continued in illegal status until recently (Mukherji 2015).

banks allocated 4 *crore* Rs. to develop infrastructures and to support the construction of houses. However, only 475 houses were built and the program was suspended because the settlement continued to be on government land. Abhiyan built 280 houses for poor tenants affected by the earthquake. These houses of 65 sq.m. with 2 rooms, kitchen, toilet and bathroom were built at the place of the temporary houses in sectors 8-9 and 11-15 (renamed Sardarnagar Society, Abhiyan Society, Husseini Chowk/Ankur Society).



Image 16. Houses by *Rajyagor* community (left) and UNDP (right) in GIDC Relocation site.

In 2005 the temporary houses in sectors 16-18 were demolished and the government allocated 200-250 single-room permanent houses for the residents of illegal settlements who were evicted by the implementation of the DP. The program was implemented only in the sectors developed by the UNDP and state agencies but not in those occupied by caste and religion-based communities, except for the sectors 6-7 re-built by the *Thakkar-Lohana* community in 2006-2007 (renamed Nav Nirman Society).

The last policy announced in Bhuj in 2008 entitled the renters who were left out of the previous policies as eligible to buy a plot in GIDC Relocation Site, but it was not implemented due to delays in fixing the land price by the local authorities (Taheri Tafti 2017). Waiting for its implementation, around 350 families still occupy temporary houses provided in 2001 in sectors 1-5 and 11-12. Most of them are not the initial beneficiaries but moved later to GIDC Relocation Site. Many families whose houses in the walled city were destroyed by the earthquake were temporarily housed by NGOs or occupied vacant lands from which they were evicted being private lands, or because of the implementation of the DP since 2002. After they moved to GIDC Relocation Site, they could no longer support the city's prices. Another part of this population moved

from nearby slums or industries where they were employed and occupied empty 'fibber houses' in the last sectors. Furthermore, a number of migrants was attracted by the reconstruction economy in Bhuj and settled in GIDC Relocation Site²⁴.

In the following years, the people who settled and still live in GIDC Relocation Site were mostly squatters and migrants. Between 2004-2007, families arrived from nearby slum settlements where demolitions were going on. This process accelerated in 2008-2010, when construction works in the city slowed down because of the real estate crisis, and many labour workers could occupy a house in rent in the first sectors. After 2010, the influx continued as other families arrived from slums and industries, but most of all from nearby villages or other cities and states²⁵ (see Table 5).

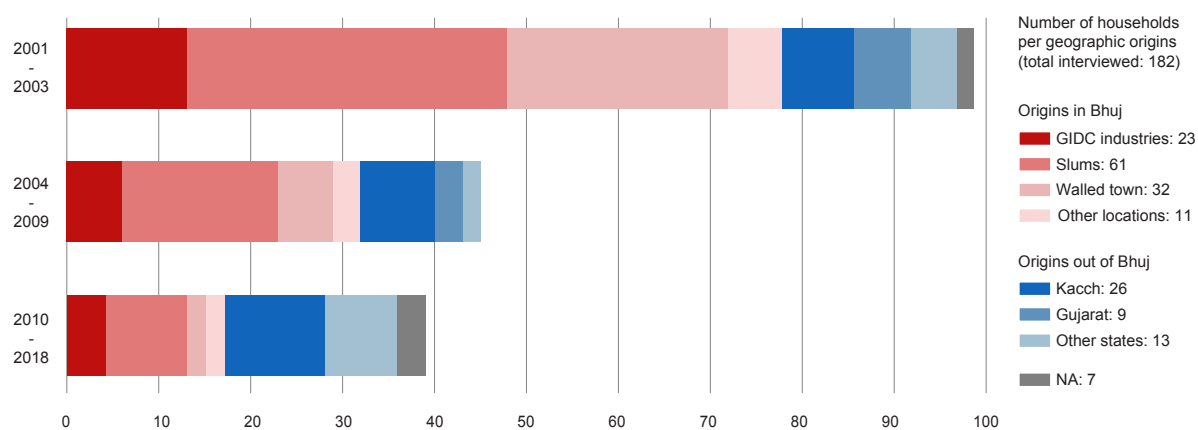


Table 5. Distribution of Households in sectors 1-5 and 11-12 by Geographic Origins

Sources: interviews 2018
Realized by: the author

As since the beginning the strongest groups were favoured to occupy better placed sectors, the same disparity continues today where in the first sectors only 1/4 of the families are from communities of upper *Brahmin* (*Vyas, Joshi, Srimani, Gor, Gunsai*), *Kshatriya* (*Jadeja, Rajput, Bhavsar, Charan*), merchants and landowners castes (*Patel,*

24 Out of 182 families interviewed of the around 350 that live in sectors 1-5 and 11-12, only 54 arrived at GIDC in 2001 and more 34 between 2002 and 2003, mostly as beneficiaries of the relocation program. 46 moved from industries in GIDC area and slum settlements such as Jesta Nagar, Ramnagri, Dindayal Nagar, Mehndy Colony, Camp Area, mostly due to demolitions. 23 families lived in neighbourhoods in the walled city such as Khatri Chowk, Ganchi Falya, Nagar Chakla, Vokla Falya, and near Bhid and Sarpat Gate. Only 5 families moved from settlements located south of the walled city, mainly because of the slum's demolitions, and from the northwestern settlement of Sanjog Nagar.

25 Of the families interviewed that arrived after 2003, only 16 arrived before 2008, 28 between 2008 and 2010 and 39 after 2010. While half of the current families are from the city and *taluka* of Bhuj (63 and 21 families respectively), the rest are from other *talukas* of Kacch and especially Gandhidham-Adipur-Anjar and Nakhatrana (28 families), from other districts in Gujarat and especially Mahesana and Ahmedabad (39 families), and from other states and especially Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (29 families).

Vanya, Thakkar-Lohana, Banushali, Khatri, Soni). All the rest are from communities of lower artisans and peasant castes (*Vaghri, Jogi, Kumhars, Koli, Prajpati*), as well as *Dalits* (*Ahir, Marwada, Maheshvari, Gujra, Rabari*) and Muslims. From their residential trajectories emerge a common difficulty to get out of precarious conditions in which the regularisation projects participate. Each project evicted many occupants as their houses were demolished, and only the families initially beneficiaries of NGOs could move to the new houses. Some families were evicted several times as it has happened for example to F.J.:

"When we moved in GIDC we started living in the sector 12, in a house made of ply and wood (...). Then we moved in sector 15 in fibber house where was the project of Abhiyan [...]. Even in the sector 15 we faced this problem and they again informed now we are going to clean this house so you please move somewhere else. We moved near the temple of Hanuman [in sector 7] where were also fibber houses [and] from there we moved again because there also they cleaned the land. Behind there was a house of Sindhi so we moved here but after few years the Sindhi thought if we stay here long time we become owner, so he said us to move away. So we moved to another house of a Muslim who told I am about to sell this house, do you want to buy? We said we don't have enough money, how can we buy the house? (...). So he sold the house, then we moved to another house near Abhiyan and started to live there."²⁶

Many inhabitants complain that even the houses in the newly-built colonies, which were supposed to host poor tenants and squatters who were evicted by the implementation of the DP, were occupied by strongest communities who rented them out at higher values. Poorer families were forced to purchase or rent temporary houses in the first sectors after the former occupants had moved to the centre. According to Taheri Tafti (2017:116), "these groups have been dispossessed of the diverse forms of urban life in the walled city including access to job, services, and their social network in the face of inadequate rental units and rising rents. These households are living in a limbo condition, or 'permanent temporariness' ", waiting for the implementation of the policy

26 F.J., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

introduced in 2008.

The project of Sardarnagar in particular was controversial as many beneficiaries were replaced by others who were initially not entitled. After occupying the houses, the latter rented them out while those initially entitled to become owners in the project continued to live in the same place in rent. According to a community leader:

"There was corruption, so it was very easy independently of people were really entitled and since how long they stayed here, 1 week or 1 year, but if they were putting some money on the table, then very easily they could get a house. There was any kind of [negotiation], I want here, you want there, just put money and get your house [...]. I went to the collector with so many people with fast strike and rally, so few people came to me and told me you are leader of these strike so we are giving the keys of the houses in Abhiyan but you stop this protest. I said no, as leader I will not accept, and then my name was removed from the project. Also few people there sold out the houses and run away from Abhiyan"²⁷.

The community leaders consider Abhiyan partially responsible of this situation, as the project was led by a social worker from the organization who did not live in GIDC Relocation Site but he himself was entitled of several houses in the project. Former beneficiaries in Abhiyan Society evoke the bad living conditions in the houses because of the poor quality of construction and because the beneficiaries kept for themselves part of the money instead of investing in the construction of the houses. The committee leaders affirm to have repeatedly asked Abhiyan to stop this corruption, but as they did not receive a response they assumed the organization to be involved and claimed a court case over Abhiyan but then they lost it.

GIDC Relocation Site has continued to attract migrants and residents of nearby slums also because of the job opportunities offered by the industrial belt and along Madhapar Road. Most of the working population work both as unskilled and casual workers in industries, the APMC and wholesale markets and as truck drivers. Another main sector of employment is the construction, while many have based their activities as rickshaw drivers and shop owners as there are no commercial activities nearby and the site is not

²⁷ S.C., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

served by public transport²⁸. Due to the construction delay of a road that the 2001 DP proposed to cross the settlement²⁹, many inhabitants built illegal shops to the north of the existing road which became the commercial backbone of the settlement but only for basic items (see Table 4). Since most of the families rent a house in GIDC Relocation Site and have high transportation costs as they travel daily for work and for shopping, their average savings are very low because of high expenditures³⁰.

GIDC Relocation Site developed differently from the community-based settlements common in the city, being characterized for the heterogeneity of the geographic, caste and religious origins of its inhabitants. Families of different castes and religions are neighbours or live in small groups of relatives or from the same community. Their coexistence brought to a greater openness to intra-community relations, as one of the residents explains:

"For example in this line each house come from different place, so we don't have a previous bond with each other, I don't know how is their lifestyle [...]. People have come to this area after the earthquake and have no bonding or knowledge about each other, we came from different backgrounds and our mind-set is also different. After staying together for several years we shall have relationship and respect for each other and our children also shall respect us and their equals. Having stayed together for 12-13 years, now things are improving and fights are decreasing"³¹.

Because of such diversity, many family situations in GIDC Relocation Site are uncommon in the local conservative society like love marriages, inter-caste and inter-religion marriages, unmarried or divorced women, prostitutes, etc. This seems to be a further reason in addition to the low financial resources why many families struggle to leave the settlement. A number of local men from high caste communities married

28 Out of the interviewed families, 67 families are labour workers or drivers/cleaners in industries, and 26 in the construction sector, 19 are rickshaw drivers and 11 have a store in GIDC Relocation Site. Other main jobs are domestic helper as cook and cleaner, street vendors in city markets, security guard employed in GIDC industries, scrappers in GIDC and Bhid area, and craftsmen in the city centre.

29 The 2001 DP proposed to build a 24m road crossing the settlement, which was retrieved by the Revised DP in 2016 as part of a road network extended to the northwest of the city, but it was never developed beyond the railway line.

30 In GIDC Relocation Site, the average monthly income of each family is around 6,680 Rs. while the average monthly expenditure is 6,551 Rs. On average, the families save 1,554 Rs. in a year (Hunnarshala 2014a).

31 T.H., personal communication, 22-03-2018.

women from other states who are mostly from low caste communities or *Harijan*. For example, a local man of the *Banushali* community married a girl from Maharashtra from the *Koli* community, considered as belonging to the Scheduled Castes. As they were very poor, they could not find a wife of the same caste, and the marriage in turn reinforces their isolation as it is not accepted by the community. The same is true for communities of lower castes like a Gujarati man of the *Gunsai* community, also a conservative community suffering from lack of women, who married a woman from Kerala.

Few women from Kerala married with locals did not arrive for migration reasons but possibly because families from Kerala sell their daughters, according to my assistant. Similar examples demonstrate that many families moved to GIDC Relocation Site also because they are not required to conform to social rules as in community-based settlements³². This concerns both initial beneficiaries of the rehabilitation policy, hindered to leave the settlement by low social and economic resources, but also the population who continue to move to the site for work. In this sense, GIDC Relocation Site appears both as a space of segregation of the poor but also of marginalisation of individuals pushed out of the society.

The majority of the inhabitants perceive the settlement as dangerous and not desirable as a place to live because of the lack of social control, and they describe it as a "hub for prostitution, robbery, fighting"³³. Despite these situations have decreased thanks to the effort of the police, even during my interviews I heard several stories that were occurring of murders and people taken into custody by the police. Furthermore, the settlement presents difficult environmental conditions such as the lack of drainage, weed vegetation, insects and snakes, etc., as it was developed in an isolated area surrounded by 'jungle'³⁴. The physical distance from the city is in this sense related to a symbolic distance from the urban and a 'good' society and overlaps with precarious social and environmental conditions. In the reconstruction years, the proposal to be resettled in the Relocation Sites was considered as offensive by many residents as they were perceived

32 According to my assistant, if a couple wants to rent a house in the city they need to demonstrate their origins, and if people feel that the couple do not conform with the social rules of the community they would not be accepted. Even hotels are used to ask for marriage certificates.

33 F.O., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

34 In the 1970s a tree locally known as *gando*, meaning mad in Gujarati, was introduced in the Banni region as part of the green revolution and have expanded in Kacch. It is a highly invasive tree which prevents other species to grow and which expands very quickly, whence the name. GIDC Relocation Site is surrounded and infested by this tree and the people should continuously keep on cutting it but leave it growing as they are not aware about the problem.

far from the civilisation, but later on this perception changed as such distance from the city centre came to symbolise a process of modernisation (Simpson 2014). But this did not happen the same way in GIDC Relocation Site because of its precarious conditions and as it continued to be poorly connected in an unattractive part of the city. However, some families include also advantages of living in GIDC Relocation Site beyond the lower rates of housing, like the safety in case of earthquakes because it is an open area, the availability of space and good ventilation, etc.

Nowadays, the main cement concrete road that crosses the settlement is dilapidated and there are no access roads leading to the houses. In the beginning the settlement had infrastructures like roads, street lights, drainage, but they were damaged by the heavy traffic during the several housing projects, and in the absence of drainage it is frequently flooded as the hydrogeological system was initially compromised³⁵ (see Image 17).



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 07-2017



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 07-2017

Image 17. Precarious environmental conditions: weed vegetation (left) and floods (right).

A primary school, an *aangarwadi*, and a small government hospital were created after the earthquake but the latter was abandoned, so the people demand a new hospital. Most of the houses have toilet but many are in dilapidated and people defecate in the open. Water supply depends mostly on public taps and wells, all houses have electricity connexion, individual or shared, and people dump waste in open as there is no waste collection. According to inhabitants, a main reason which prevented from improving is the neglect by the local authorities so for basic needs like gutter line, electricity, RCC roads, regular water supply, "they have to struggle and fight with authorities", but also

³⁵ The land for the settlement is on plain terrain and gradually slopes from west to east. The site drains towards east during the monsoon and heavy floods occur regularly during the rainy seasons.

the "lack of unity" of the people to request their intervention³⁶. Until 2010 when it was brought into the municipality limits, the settlement was under the jurisdiction of BHADA, which was indifferent to any issue of development exceeding its mandate related to the reconstruction (Mukherji 2008).

Yet even under the municipality, the settlement as well as all the northern areas of the city became victim of politics as the municipality led by the ruling party has always ignored them in majority to the opposition³⁷. After the road was destroyed by the passage of trucks, the municipality rebuilt and put drainage but it was destroyed again. Local leaders have demanded to the authorities to rebuild the roads but the response has been inadequate. Some locals have formed a leadership to claim improvements to the settlement's conditions through demonstrations as the authorities do not give attention to their demands, but they complain about the difficulty to organise the inhabitants to protest against authorities. At the same time, many inhabitants complain about the absence of a leadership they can rely, as they hardly helped to solve problems: "if you face a problem, nobody is there to help you"³⁸.

36 J.M., personal communication, 04-04-2018.

37 The councillor of the ward 3 in charge since 1997 is a supporter of the Congress Party.

38 H.S., personal communication, 21-03-2018.

5.2. THE MOBILIZATION OF COMMUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT

5.2.1. THE COMPROMISE OF LOSING LAND FOR A GOOD PROJECT

After the process of reconstruction and the subsequent urban development, the family owner of the land in Ramdevnagar attempted to develop and legalise the settlement. In this process they came in contact with the NGOs of Abhiyan who were trying to rehabilitate the slums settlements within government programmes. This happened because of an educational project that the NGO Ramkrishna Mission had started a few years before in Ramdevnagar: aiming to support the community to give basic education to the children, the Ramkrishna Mission financed the construction of structures and started tuition for adults. According to a committee member, the community became highlighted among other poor communities in Bhuj as people day by day become more littered, and came in the visibility of the NGOs³⁹.

In 2010, the NGO Kacch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) started saving groups with the women of Ramdevnagar in connexion with the city network Sakhi Sangini. The community leader supported a woman from another Vaghela family (group 4) who later became one of the leaders of Sakhi Sangini, to create a saving group in Ramdevnagar with the aim to finance some project of development for the settlement⁴⁰. However, when in 2012 Hunnarshala proposed them to participate to the project, they received a strong opposition from the community. The families were reticent to participate to government-led programs for more reasons: the illegal settlements in Bhuj did not benefit from the post-earthquake reconstruction, the slowness of the state to implement programs increases the risk of eviction after the people leave their land, and the doubt that the houses shall be taken back by the government or NGOs after the expiry of the lease period.

Most of all, the community opposed the proposal to develop the housing project in apartments, fearing that the government might confiscate part of the land freed after the slum redevelopment and give it to private developers to build apartments. The

39 B.S., personal communication, 18-08-2017.

40 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

community rejected the proposal also because living in apartments would significantly change their domestic life: by increasing the mutual influence between neighbours used to live in single-storey houses and preventing them to carry livelihood activities such as farming or breeding. Some inhabitants also justify their preference for single-storey buildings as they are safer in case of disasters. The community's reject of the project and their preference for single-storey houses led Hunnarshala to modify the project as the community leader explain:

"First Hunnarshala proposed 3 floors, then they took some changes to the plan. So some day after Hunnarshala approached us with another proposal in which they agreed with our conditions [to build single-storey buildings]. After 2 weeks they organised a meeting for discussing map, construction, installments, our only condition was to not have apartment-type of house, and Hunnarshala's condition was only to build with plinth, pillars, became beneficiary and take two pictures"⁴¹.

The acceptance of the project was, however, progressive within the community. Many families mostly connected with the family owner of the land (group 1) were opposing the allocation of individual housing plots of 65 sq.m as they occupied larger lands. Although the community leader R.V. aimed first to rehabilitate the settlement, he himself opposed the project because the entitlement of individual housing plots to the other families would imply the loss of land for his family. On the other hand, the NGOs influenced some other families (groups 3 and 4), by organizing SHGs and convincing them of the advantages of on-going slum rehabilitation projects within government schemes, and these families helped Hunnarshala to organize meetings in order to convince the others who were opposing the project⁴².

The disagreement between families lasted around one year until the family owner of the land was finally forced to accept the project as the majority became favourable. Despite the community leader had opposed the project, his central role in the community led him to become president of the committee⁴³, with the accord even of the families favourable

41 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017.

42 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

43 Different narrations question the role of R.V. as community leader before the project. Whereas the majority affirm that he was community leader and he supported the project, according to others he was not community leader because of internal divisions between families. V.V. of which R.V. is uncle of 7-8 generations far,

to the project. So, one of the elders of the families who supported the project so describes this change:

"At that time R.V. was not part of the project, he was not regularly coming in the meeting, he always avoided. Then it was survey and it was decided who became beneficiary but he was not ready to leave his place. He was landowner and some other people were also landowners, but I did not have any property or land. So they selected me for going to Rajkot, all the land was surveyed and became in behalf of me, all the land of one big family, all are relatives and I am the head and all these 116 households are entitled to get their houses. R.V. didn't want to lose his land and the organization said him if you have a legal possession please show us because for us all this land is of government, and he did not have any proof. He was very unhappy with me because of my interest in this project, and because I went to collector when he was not ready to clean his land, and I asked to force him to clear the land. The organization also said now you clean your land otherwise this project cannot continue. It was in the newspaper that Ramdevnagar was about clearing and me myself cleaned my own 12 houses, then machines came and cleaned the land of R.V., so he was very unhappy. So I said to the organization to make him leader and to give him construction work of some houses, that's how he entered in the project, but very late. He tried to avoid the project until the last and when there was no other option he accepted"⁴⁴.

Along with the community leader, 11 people constituted the slum committee in the project. The NGOs influenced its creation by including women and young educated: half of the committee members are male and the rest are female who lead 4 self-help groups in which half of the families participate, and four members attended the tuition offered by Ramkrishna Mission. The community decided that each committee member should belong to a clan but in reality some families are not represented in the committee (groups 2, 6, 8 and the isolated families). Therefore the committee elected by the community embodies an existing hierarchy between families.

explains that the community leader before the project was L.V., who was owner of the land and *bua* of the tutelary deity of the clan Vaghela, from which R.V. inherited the land when he expired (V.V., personal communication, 20-06-2018).

44 V.V., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

The survey realized by the NGOs was carried within a boundary that borders the road crossing Ramdevnagar to the north and Prabu Park to the south, and identified other two family groups living to the northwest beyond the longitudinal road. The survey identified a population of 502 people (half male and half female) organized in 116 households of parents and children with an average size of 4,3 people, all them included in the list of beneficiaries in the program (Hunnarshala 2014b). Along with 112 *Devi Pujak* families, only 4 *Bharwad* households from the family that settled first in Ramdevnagar became beneficiaries but the project was not extended to the rest of the *Bharwad* community living to the north of Ramdevnagar. The NGOs as well as some *Devi Pujak* families tried to convince them to participate⁴⁵ but they did not accept because they mistrust of state programs and because the project would prevent them from practicing their traditional activity of pastoralism that they consider most important: "we don't care to have new houses, we are our cattle"⁴⁶.

In Ramdevnagar, the community mobilisation in the pilot project was driven by the NGOs who acted by persuading the community and by taking hold of favourable families. However, the participation to the project created divisions within the community between families who agreed and other who opposed the project because the land they occupied would have been reduced by being entitled of individual housing plots. Whereas all the families in the *Devi Pujak* community of Ramdevnagar became beneficiaries, some accepted the project as a 'compromise' to get good houses by losing part of their land, while other were forced to participate as all the families occupying the project site have to demolish their houses for the project to be realized.

5.2.2. CREATING UNITY TO SECURE THE LAND

The houses in Bhimraonagar were damaged by the earthquake but did not collapse and the families lived temporarily in prefabricated houses provided by Caritas in the surrounding farmland, before moving back to their houses. Yet as the reconstruction

45 Within the HIC collaborative program, Sahajeevan developed the 'animal hostel', an experimental model with the aim of integrating the livelihood of cattle herders' communities as part of the slum redevelopment. The model proposes to reserve land plots for building animal sheds into the layout plans of slum redevelopment, and to integrate them in the resource management system at the settlement level. The model was developed by the NGO Sahajeevan in collaboration with Hunnarshala, which demanded to the State and Central Government a financial support to include it within national policies (B.N. (Bhuj Maldhari Sangathan), personal communication, 30-05-2018).

46 N.M., personal communication, 24-07-2018.

progressed, the community was concerned that the settlement occupied a government-owned land, whose regularisation became a priority for them. The construction of Kodki Road as part of the implementation of the DP led to the demolition of some houses in the settlement, but only one family was entitled to a new house in GIDC Relocation Site. However the construction of another road parallel to the west border of the settlement was suspended and still did not start as the limit between revenue and private lands was not clear in the land records. This delay in the construction of the road increased the uncertainty for the families whose houses should be demolished⁴⁷.

Following the implementation of the DP, the area increased in value and started attracting investments as its former peripheral position was found on the connexion with the outer ring road. Community leaders explain that "agencies, NGOs and rich people" attempted several times to resettle the community outside the city offering them compensation, but they always rejected the proposals as they were attached to the land⁴⁸. The community justifies their land occupation because the King gave them the permission to settle but they found to lack evidence to prove it. Although they succeeded to oppose pressures to vacate the land, the situation raised their awareness that the status of the land occupation had become more precarious as they were unable to demonstrate to be landowners. According to R.B., before the earthquake they did not feel the need to legalise the land because they were aware of a map of the area that indicated the presence of *bhungas* belonging to *Harijans*, but then they discovered that the map did not mention who lived in the *bhungas*⁴⁹.

This increasingly precarious situation pushed the families to unite to tackle the problem. J.K., a community leader and one of the elders (group 6), explains that in order to regularise the settlement he had to bring families together against the attempts to evict them, and to obtain a collective agreement with the land legalisation. Hence, as he went to know about the housing project in Ramdevnagar, he invited Hunnarshala to visit Bhimraonagar for asking to participate in the project: unlike the other sites, the initiative came from the community. In addition, if their interest in the project was aimed at legalising the land occupation, the project allocated funds to build new houses. However J.K. struggled to convince all the community to accept the project. Initially the families

47 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

48 Ibid.

49 The mentioned map belongs to the owner of the farm to the east of Bhimraonagar. The map was realized by the government as a land survey, and indicates the presence of some *bhungas* to the south of the farmland but without mentioning the owner (R.B., personal communication, 27-06-2018).

doubted the risk to be evicted after demolish their houses, influenced by the experience of the slow implementation of government programmes, and not being sure whether to trust NGOs that might be influenced by vote banks⁵⁰.

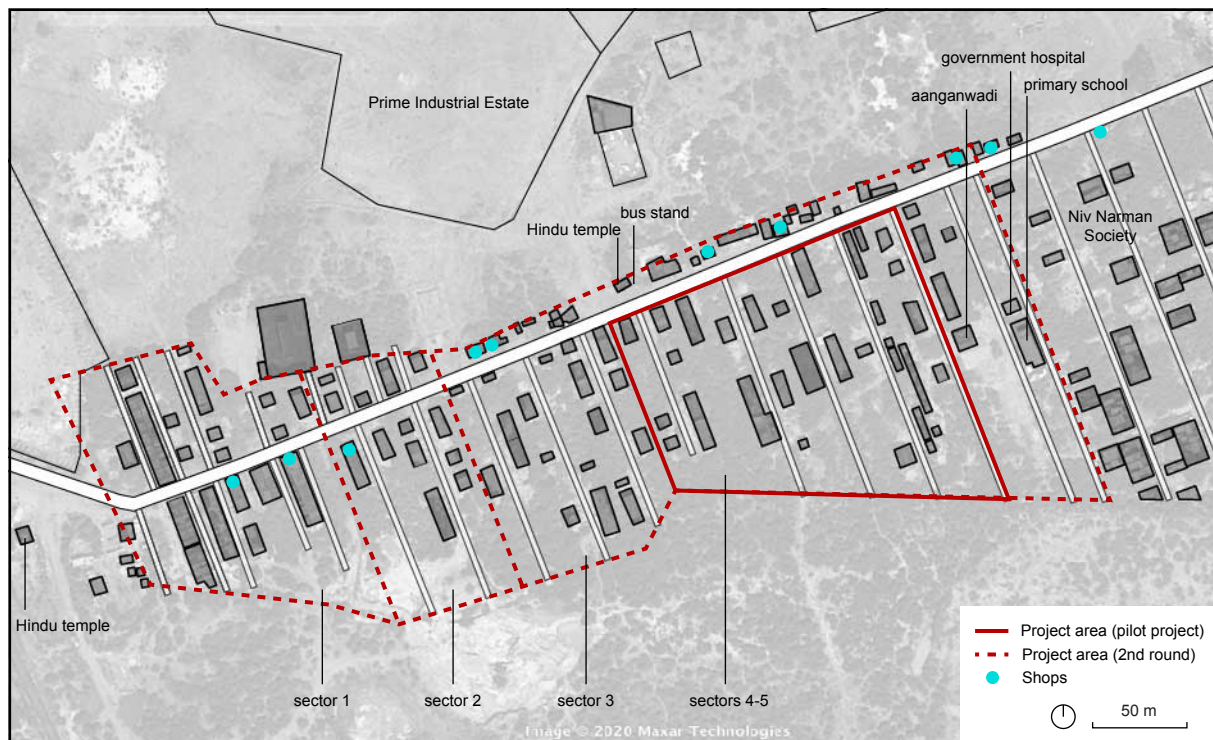
J.K. became president of the slum committee of 6 members, half male and half female which head a saving group of 35 members organized in 2 groups, and including 2 young English-speaking members. Like in Ramdevnagar, the slum committee embodies a hierarchy between families, as the members belong to some families with closer family ties and exclude others (groups 1, 5). The NGOs realized a survey on the entire population within the perimeter of the settlement and identified 42 households composed by parents and sons with an average size of 4 people, all of them included in the list of beneficiaries. While the NGO acted to mobilise the community around the objectives of slum redevelopment, the latter was already "united" by the effort of the community leaders to regularise the settlement's occupation status. This facilitated the organisation of the Slum Committee and the participation of all the families in the project.

5.2.3. AN UNFAIR PROCESS OF HOUSES ALLOCATION

The inclusion of GIDC Relocation Site in the pilot project reflects the priority of NGOs and local authorities to rehabilitate the site, because of its conditions of vulnerability but also because it is acknowledged as a major failure of the post-earthquake reconstruction process. For the NGOs, the inclusion of the settlement in the pilot project represented also an opportunity to extend the experimentation of affordable housing for the poor started 10 years before with the Sardarnagar project for low-income renters. In 2013, the NGOs got in touch with some community leaders at GIDC Relocation Site and organised a general meeting to present the project. The meeting was public but only a few residents were invited to participate, and later Hunnarshala and KMVS carried out a survey of the whole area to identify the beneficiaries. The survey identified about 350 households as liable to receive a house allocation but only 156 were included in the pilot project as they lived in GIDC Relocation Site for more than 5 years and being in possession of documents, while the others were to be included in a 'second round' of

50 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

development⁵¹. The total project area extended over the sectors 1-5⁵² was thus divided in two parts to be developed in subsequent phases⁵³ (see Map 13).



Map 13. GIDC Relocation Site : project area

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

Differently from Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar where some families contested the land reduction by getting individual housing plots, the inhabitants did not question the project and they attempted on the contrary to ensure their inclusion since the project phasing meant to exclude many of them. Another consequence of this arrangement was the mismatch between the residents' location before and after the project. Some families living within the project area were excluded as their documents were considered insufficient, whereas families from other sectors became beneficiaries. For example,

51 The 156 households with an average size of 4.58 people belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBC category for the 75% and to the minority communities for the 25%. Women head 43 households, of which 30 belong to families living below the poverty line, which are more than half (Hunnarshala 2014a).

52 The sectors 1-5 correspond to a part of the settlement that has not been rehabilitated, while also other parts not rehabilitated like the sectors 11-12 are not included.

53 According to a ward councillor, the decision to divide the project into two phases and the reduction of families included in the pilot project was influenced by some land and house owners who opposed the project. The inclusion of 156 households was possible with the 'sacrifice' of large landowners who accepted to lose their land to realize the project but many more families could have been included in the pilot project (S.K., personal communication, 26-07-2018). A different explanation was given by the director of the DILR (District Inspector of Land Records), according to whom the choice of where to start the project was influenced by the better condition of the infrastructure (D.D., personal communication, 20-08-2018).

K.K. affirms to have been evicted from a house within the project area:

"I was living where nowadays there is [the project] and I was owner, this is my house and you are going to clean it so where I have to stay? So they made a small accommodation here [...]. I am not satisfied with this work because they allotted a new house for me [...], I did not become beneficiary because they gave excuses that I had no ID card, but I have now and they promised me that in second round they will allot to me"⁵⁴.

If the families were chosen according to the established definition of beneficiary, other criteria took over and were used arbitrarily in their selection. Some community leaders took part actively in the survey as they were concerned that those "who really need" houses were entitled⁵⁵. These leaders had participated to the Sardarnagar committee but were excluded from the list of the beneficiaries and suspected the corruption of the NGO in fostering the interests of some groups, and later they set up a three-person committee speaking for the previously excluded residents⁵⁶. Differently from the other project sites where the communities elected their committee members within the pilot project, this self-proclaimed committee guided the project since the beginning. According to the president of the committee S.C., the pressure from some groups to become beneficiaries in the pilot project was even stronger than in the Sardarnagar project:

"People who were involved in corruption in Abhiyan came here and said why not to ask some money from people to pass their file, but I said no I don't want this kind of money, I don't want to do how you did. I was going to buy vegetables and on the road they beat me and I was admitted at the hospital. Then I said now it is time to fight [...] so here it was very much struggle then

⁵⁴ K.K., personal communication, 03-04-2018.

⁵⁵ S.C., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

⁵⁶ The president of the committee S.C. was a supporter of the Congress party and ran for the municipal elections to represent GIDC Relocation Site but lost the elections. L.T., the vice president was an exponent of the ruling party and very close to the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). The third one, D.B. became cashier of the committee. Both S.C. and L.T. were members of a former committee that represented the entire settlement and at that time of Abhiyan's housing project, the NGO's surveyor P.M. referred to them directly and they automatically they became members of the project committee of 40 people. L.T. and P.M. were superior to S.C. and selected the beneficiaries. P.M. who was an employee of Abhiyan, told S.C. who is from the same community to write all the names of their community, but no one on that list got any house, not even S.C., and later he became owner of 12 houses (F.O., personal communication, 12-06-2018).

in Abhiyan"⁵⁷.

The effort of the leaders to include the families who were liable to become beneficiaries turned the survey selective: 40 families that were living in the project area at the time of the survey were not surveyed. In some cases the leaders participated in the survey accompanying the NGOs, but in other cases they personally invited the residents to fill the forms or filled the forms for them and gave them to the NGOs. Some people affirm they were aware of the project but they did not know how to access the survey. For example H.H. describes the selection process as a 'silent activity' as no one shared information with her and she got the form as she went to ask to the community leaders⁵⁸. Several testimonies affirm that S.C. indicated that those families she knew were living there since a long time and were excluded from the project in Sardarnagar. Consequently, many families were not surveyed as the leader did not know them personally.

Furthermore, a distinction between local residents and 'outsiders' turned the selection of beneficiaries more complex than along the government's time-based criterion. Locals who moved to GIDC Relocation Site after they lost their houses in the city consider themselves legitimate to become beneficiaries because they do not have any other properties, rather than migrants that may be landowners and may sell their houses when they will leave the place. Some people complain that some 'outsiders' became beneficiaries:

"Some people from outside Kachh wanted to take benefit of getting these houses while our point was to allot houses to local people who suffered and not to outsiders who already had houses in their places and were not staying here since five years. They were greedy people, I took the case at the police station against them, but they don't want to go to the police so they ask for a compromise. (...) Why they allotted houses to them and not to local people? I have an impression that somewhere both municipality and organization are corrupted"⁵⁹.

57 S.C., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

58 H.H., personal communication, 25-07-2017.

59 J.G., personal communication, 05-04-2018.

Furthermore, the survey was extended to families occupying houses in rent that were considered more liable to become beneficiaries, whereas house owners were expected to be included in the project's second phase. However, many house owners who purchased their houses from the previous occupiers were equally liable as the ownership was not legal. A further criterion for inclusion was that in a family only the parents could be entitled of a house but not their married sons, unlike in Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar. However, the community leaders and the families mobilized arbitrarily these criteria to legitimate their inclusion and oppose other families, and some were excluded from the project as the 'second round' was never realized, as several inhabitants affirm:

"I said to the surveyor that I was staying in rent but for corruption some people said I was owner of the house. Neighbours opposed me because I was living in my father-in-law's house and I was not paying money and even I did some additional work to the house. I proved to [Hunnarshala] that I was not owner and so I became beneficiary but I had to work hard"⁶⁰.

"Some families could get separate houses for each family member, but we could not. [My sons] all live separately in rent and married with children, but they did not become beneficiaries. I told to [the leader], you are also from here, you know very well that my sons live separately from me, each and every documents they have already. But she said no, one family can get only one house and very shortly another round will be there so next time we will give to them"⁶¹.

"The people who were doing the survey were about to ignore this line [...]. The organisation gave excuse that these people are not living here, they are living in the city. I said since few days only I moved to the city because the situation of our house was bad, everything was broken, but the rest of the people in this line were living in fibber houses. So of the other people who became beneficiaries, I took photos of their houses which were locked since so long, and I went to the organisation saying that you have surveyed these

60 S.A., personal communication, 13-06-2018.

61 D.K., personal communication, 29-03-2018.

people who are no more living in this area, but why our line of 7 people you have not surveyed? I challenged the organisation and they agreed to survey and so these people got a house"⁶².

In total, 37 families interviewed that owned a house before the project became beneficiaries, whereas 35 families that were in rent and equally liable were not surveyed or did not become beneficiary. Of these, 13 were initially entitled as beneficiaries but were later excluded. Even more controversial was the removal of several beneficiaries after their inclusion in the project: many were selected and allotted a house number⁶³, but were later contacted by officers reporting that their files were rejected as the documents were incomplete (see Image 18). Some of them contest that the committee tampered with the selection and favoured people of higher communities who became beneficiaries in their place. Among them, D.G. explains that:

"Plot No. 68 was allotted to me [...]. At the process' end when it was the last formality of taking signatures, when I saw the man coming I went to him and asked why you are not coming to get my signature, they said we'll be back to you but they didn't come back. So I went to the people who were taking signatures and I fought with them, and people said they got a call from the organization, that you are not becoming beneficiary. [...] At that time, people from slum committee were taking signatures, at that stage the organisation was not involved and this committee members were handling things. [...] I have doubt about corruption, it seems that some people of a higher community have been allotted our houses, poor persons like us are left out"⁶⁴.

According to Hunnarshala's architects, the main problem in GIDC Relocation Site was that community leaders are politically strong and manipulated the beneficiaries' selection in order to get votes. Although the policy scheme can only include people who are living in the settlement since at least 5 years and are present at the time of the survey, the leaders appealed to former residents in possession of rent documents who had already moved to other houses in the city, and promised to allot them a house in the

62 R.A., personal communication, 19-06-2018.

63 During my interviews, some families showed me the documents indicating the house number they were allocated.

64 D.G., personal communication, 04-04-2018.

project even if they could not become legally beneficiaries. Hunnarshala could not prevent the project to be captured by the vote bank and even when they tried to avoid it, the leaders did not give up as they needed these people's votes to win the elections. Consequently, many families who were liable to become beneficiaries were not allotted any house whereas some of those who were allotted a house sold it to other people.



Image 18. Renters excluded from the beneficiary list (left), and the documentation received by a beneficiary before being removed (right).

For some beneficiaries, the project became also or exclusively a source of income. 30% of the families interviewed that moved to the new houses until 2018 own another house in GIDC Relocation Site, some of which sold or rented it out once they moved into the new house. For example, the cashier of the committee sold at 40,000 Rs. its previous house located in sector 11 to a new family that arrived in 2018⁶⁵. Some who were not living in the settlement at the time of the survey sold out their houses although the policy prevents transactions within 15 years from the house entitlement⁶⁶. The same president of the committee "took care" of some houses as the beneficiaries were unable to complete the construction and then sold them out, according to some neighbours⁶⁷. Another house was rented by the beneficiary, who was facing financial difficulties, to a family who was living beside her house and who think they are the only family staying in rent in the new houses⁶⁸. The project in this sense seemed to reproduce the same exclusionary dynamics that occurred in the previous project of Sardarnagar.

Some of the initial beneficiaries who were later rejected contested their exclusion with

65 D.B., personal communication, 24-07-2017.

66 H.S., personal communication, 21-03-2018.

67 J.H., personal communication, 23-06-2018.

68 F.O., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

the president of the committee, but the latter threaten them to retaliate against those who would try to stop her. Five people denounced the event and she accused them appealing to the Atrocities Act⁶⁹ to ask for their arrest. According to D.C. who was among these five people:

"When I knew that my house was not over there, I went to S.C. and asked why you removed me? She said she had not removed my name but some authority did. But I said how, you are doing everything, we are sending all documents to you and you even don't inform us. As she didn't reply, I said if there is any corruption done by you and you wanted some money why you didn't say to us, we could give you, but we are poor people, why you removed our name from the houses, don't you know how houses are important for us? Then S.C. complains against me, that I came to her house to threat and beat her, and I said some words that are harming her reputation [...]. We gave written application to the Collector that we are in doubt of corruption, so you please inquiry about it, and we went to DSP office for the same reason. S.C. claimed on all the people who went to apply to the Collector, even the rickshaw driver because he was supporting, this happened 2 years ago at the time of allotment, a case under Atrocity was filed against us to harass us [...]. One lady who is also in the case by S.C., her name is L.T. and she is very close to the MLA. The MLA is a strong personality so the case is not so much strict, S.C. is not able to create strong evidence against us. That's why we are out of jail, otherwise with Atrocity we all were inside"⁷⁰.

The beneficiaries' selection was therefore strongly controlled by the committee leader S.C. who threatened the beneficiaries in order to prevent protests and led the other leaders to withdraw from the committee. Some residents assume their responsibility for this takeover as they did not understand her real intentions and having themselves

69 Popularly known as the Atrocities Act, the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to prevent atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Its purpose was to help the social inclusion of *dalits* into the Indian society, but the Act has failed to live up to its expectations. A number of cases of misuse of this Act has been reported, and in 2018 the Supreme Court of India banned immediate arrest of a person accused of insulting or injuring a Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes member to protect innocents from arbitrary arrest.

70 D.C., personal communication, 06-04-2018.

supported and accepted her as leader, but also for their inability to fight and being unaware of their rights⁷¹. Even the organization of decision making in project choices such as house allocation became competitive and contentious among beneficiaries, so Hunnarshala sought to reduce the control of S.C. over the project. This happened after S.C. accused the NGOs and the municipality of corruption for not releasing the state funds entitled to the beneficiaries to build the infrastructure⁷². Hunnarshala rejected S.C.'s request to register the committee as Resident Welfare Association (RWA) in order to prevent her from seizing the state funds. With the approval of the project, in December 2014 Hunnarshala supported the beneficiaries to organize a new slum committee of 14 people that were to become group leaders in the project.

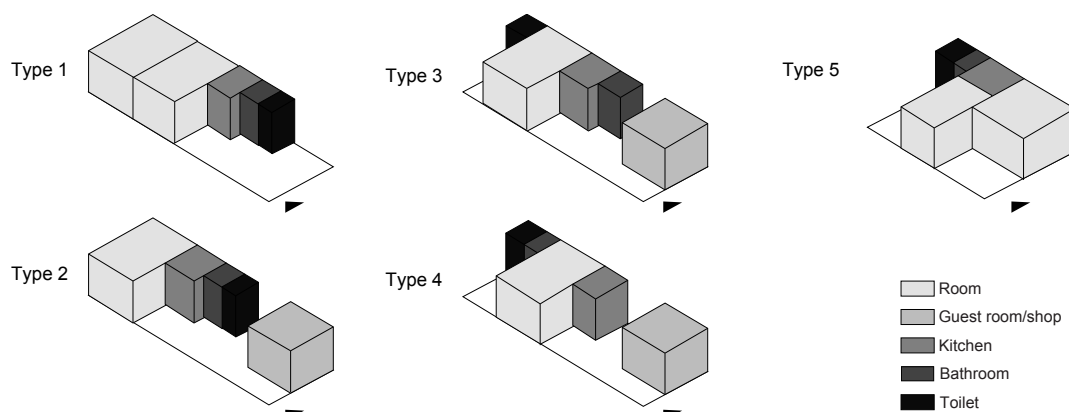
71 D.C., personal communication, 06-04-2018.

72 S.C., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

5.3. FROM PLANNING PRINCIPLES TO THE PROJECT PROCESS

5.3.1. DIFFERENT VALUES OF THE DOMESTIC SPACE IN THE HOUSE DESIGN

The communities participated in the project preparation through the committees in each slum settlement, who finalised the house design and the layout plans. The pilot project aimed to define a house design that could be adapted in all the slum settlements that were undertaken for redevelopment at the city level. However, only the community of Ramdevnagar had a role in this process, since it rejected the initial proposal to build apartments and asked Hunnarshala to develop different design options of individual houses. Hunnarshala proposed a standard design with some variations and finalised five house types. Four variants of the model of courtyard house differ for merging or separating the two rooms and for the position of toilet and bathroom⁷³. As they have the same plot dimensions, the beneficiaries can choose them individually. A fifth house type named 'square house' has different proportions and a different plan with two courtyards on the front and back and a larger living room. Hunnarshala proposed this house type to create common spaces between rows of houses, but only in GIDC Relocation Site where the available housing surface is higher, since it takes up more surface than the others house types (see Scheme 6).



Scheme 6. House types variations

Source: Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

⁷³ The house type 1 merges the two rooms by placing the courtyard on the street, while in the other three the two rooms are separated by the central courtyard; the toilet and the bathroom are placed in the courtyard in the house type 2, in the back of the house type 4, and are split in two in the house type 3.

The house design was presented in a collective meeting where the community accepted it. However, some residents described it as a consultation where Hunnarshala had already developed the house design and left little space for discussion. A member of the Slum Committee explains that they asked to do very little changes in the house design proposed by the NGO, like moving the toilet-bathroom in the back of the houses, but the NGO insisted to leave them in front in order to not reduce the courtyard surface⁷⁴. The discussion involved mostly the community leaders but other residents affirm to have participated passively due to an unclear presentation of the project, and that they only understood the project later, when they asked the documentation to Hunnarshala. For example V.P. describes in this way the meeting:

"The maps and drawing were presented in a small format, I was far so I did not see very well. As it was late, some people didn't go to the meeting, I also was tired so after a while I went home. As I did not see the presentation, I went to Hunnarshala and they gave me printed material and they told me to read it and think about the project"⁷⁵.

After the community of Ramdevnagar accepted the house design, it was used in the other project sites without consulting the communities. Beneficiaries in GIDC Relocation Site affirm that they got some information about the project from the NGOs or the community leaders during the survey but they did not see the site plan and the house design, so they had to go to the Hunnarshala's office after the survey to ask for more details about the project⁷⁶.

Differently, when the community of Bhimraonagar saw the house design already approved in Ramdevnagar, they pretended to modify it in order to better meet their needs. Indeed, they modified the house plan in a way that families of father and son could share a double house composed of a single larger living room accessible from a common courtyard, a kitchen on the front and two rooms which give access to the toilet and the bathroom separately in the backside (see Image 19). Moreover each family in Bhimraonagar built its own house and for this reason "each house is different from the

74 M.S., personal communication, 04-04-2018.

75 V.P., personal communication, 23-08-2017.

76 H.H., personal communication, 25-07-2017.

others"⁷⁷. For example, a family of father and son (group 6) joint their houses with a bridge connecting them to the second floors⁷⁸ (see Image 20).



Image 19. Joint houses shared by parents and the family of a son in Bhimraonagar (left).
Image 20. Two houses of father and son connected by a bridge in Bhimraonagar (right).

Another family (group 4) used the space under the stairs as part of the kitchen so as to reduce the size of the kitchen inside the house, put the bathroom outside in the courtyards so as to use the space in front as a garage, and built a veranda on the upper floor using the materials of the old house⁷⁹. Although Hunnarshala conceived the model design to allow the families to modify it, only the community in Bhimraonagar succeeded. Their capacity to appropriate the project was possible as most of them work in the constructions but also for the importance they give to traditional values such as living in joint family, as the community leader explains:

"When we got the map [house plan] the first time from Hunnarshala it was different from now, houses were like for VIP people who live in the town. We rejected that map and pretended to decide by ourselves because we have our traditional lifestyle and relations with relatives that we want to maintain in the new houses [...]. In the plan by NGO, every house had a kitchen and hall connected, so the hall results as a narrow space. But it is our tradition that in a house live father and son, they are only one family, and they meet lot of people in their house, so we [joint the halls of two houses] and

77 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

78 K.M., personal communication, 26-06-2018.

79 T.K., personal communication, 25-06-2018.

removed one of the two kitchen so we got more space"⁸⁰.

Most of the families in the three settlements chose the house type 1. In Ramdevnagar, except one family (group 5) that chose the house type 2 as they uses the *deli* room as a family temple, the community leader R.V. chose the house type 1 for all the community. According to another committee member, everybody accepted the decision as "he is president and all people follow him", and because there was little difference between the house types⁸¹. In GIDC Relocation Site, the choice of house type was made individually but almost all the beneficiaries chose the type 1 as it combines the 2 rooms, reaching a higher housing surface and optimising the courtyard surface. Many families expressed their intention to build other rooms at the place of the courtyard. Single women chose the types 2 and 3 as the *deli* room increases the privacy and as they did not need two rooms, except a family whose unmarried son occupied the *deli* room⁸². Even the community of Bhimraonagar preferred to lose surface in the courtyard in order to have more dwelling surface. The communities chose a higher dwelling surface as families on average have more than four members, while the model of courtyard house does not respond to their needs.

Indeed the house type 5 or 'square house' was generally preferred and some even criticised the house type 1, for example a committee member in Ramdevnagar who dislikes the succession of spaces that she compares to a corridor going through the rooms like in a train⁸³. Likewise, according to one of the builders in GIDC Relocation Site:

"The square houses are well organized, you can recognize that there are two rooms and a kitchen, while the long houses have not a good plan. How can you say these are two rooms? In the living room how can you cook and put bed and everything? That is not a room, it is just a small hall [...]. There is huge space in front of the house but not too much behind, but boundary behind is important because sometimes they leave the doors open for wind but so animals like cows enter so they have to close them"⁸⁴.

80 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

81 B.S., personal communication, 18-08-2017.

82 T.G., personal communication, 23-06-2018.

83 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

84 H.M., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

However the amount of "square houses" in the pilot project was limited to only 30 units in GIDC Relocation Site, where the families competed to allocate them these houses. According to Hunnarshala's architects, the "square house" was preferred for its plan but also because it can be expanded more easily by occupying a part of the common ground behind the house and building more rooms. Beyond considering this as not equitable because "the guys that are stronger got these plots for themselves", Hunnarshala was led to further control the construction process in order to avoid encroachments, also because they would imply to exceed the percentage of individual built area allowed by the building code⁸⁵.

Hunnarshala proposes to the communities to participate in technical experimentations concerning the use of different materials and construction techniques. In Ramdevnagar, Hunnarshala supported four families to build one extra floor, where the former built the walls of the rooms and the NGO financed the construction of the roofs with different materials, to test their thermic capacities in cooperation with MIT. Furthermore Hunnarshala proposed to test the roof construction using a different technology of masonry dome, that only two families have allowed⁸⁶.

Except these interventions, house design changes were limited to the individual choice of finishing materials and few modifications to the elevation that were limited in most cases to the decorations. Many beneficiaries decorated the openings on the walls and the guards of the upper terrace and chose the finishing materials such as the floor coverings, the plaster on the walls, the frames of the doors, etc (see Image 21). Concerning the changes made to the interiors, a dozen families removed the wall that separates the kitchen from the living room in order to enlarge the living area, and many changed the position and the shape of the masonry shelves that traditionally have a dual function of storage and displaying family items, as well as reinforcing the walls⁸⁷ (see Image 22).

85 The Floor Space Index (FSI), obtained by dividing the total covered area or plinth area on all the floors by the area of the plot, is fixed at 1,4 in Bhuj. In a one-floor building, the plinth area cannot exceed 70% of the plot surface but occupying a part of their courtyard by building an extra room, FSI would exceed such limit (P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015).

86 E.B., personal communication, 15-08-2017.

87 The house design extends the lintel band inside the rooms so that it can be used as a shelf. Some beneficiaries in Ramdevnagar changed the plan that places a shelf along the longitudinal walls, by extending it to the other walls in order to increase the storage space and reinforce the walls. During my fieldwork, many families brought my attention to their family items that were related to the dowry, carefully displayed on shelves integrated into the walls. Since showing the dowry is an identity action that affirms the economic capacity of the family, many beneficiaries modified the shelves to facilitate this demonstration. For example family in Ramdevnagar changed the project by moving a shelf from the external to the internal wall of the back room, so when people enter from the back door they can see all their "stuff" on the shelf (C.V., personal communication, 12-04-2018).



Image 21. A contractor in front of the window he designed for his own house in Bhimraonagar (left).
Image 22. Shelves in the kitchen with a structural function (right).

In very few cases the beneficiaries managed to make more important changes such as the position of the walls, but they had to convince Hunnarshala. During the implementation phase several families asked to modify the house design but Hunnarshala rejected their demands as they did not conform with the project. D.H., who is beneficiary and built 13 houses in GIDC Relocation Site, aimed to increase the depth of the living room by 1 meter by adding a beam inside the slab in his houses as well as 3 other houses, but he had to ask to the director as Hunnarshala's architects did not allow this change.⁸⁸ Hunnarshala's refusal was due to the stringent disaster-safety regulations that considering the small size of the house design left no space for modifications. Some families carried out the works without the approval of Hunnarshala as they wanted to build quickly, but in some cases the latter forced them to demolish the works:

"I made one floor and also started the wall of second floor, and the officer came and shout why you made it? My all blood was burning. I wanted to make a door to my kitchen with a very beautiful roundset but the officer came and he became angry because I cannot make a door to the kitchen, he called my mason to break everything. When nowadays I visit houses there are several designs. I made the house on my own, I don't have a contractor"⁸⁹.

Finally, the families generally consider the house design as improving over their previous conditions. However, the implication of slum communities in the design

⁸⁸ D.H., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

⁸⁹ D.C., personal communication, 06-04-2018.

process was limited, despite the NGO's attempt to develop it as a participatory practice. In first place, it depended on their capacity to negotiate changes to the design proposed by the NGO. Only the community of Bhimraonagar succeeded to modify it in order to better meet their preference of living as joint families. Secondly, a collective discussion about the house design was absent as the community leaders, who were entrusted in the project to intermediate with the slum community, took decisions for all the families. The latter were just invited in public meetings but lament that the project presentation was unclear or absent, and became aware of the house design only later.

The house design developed by the NGO, based on a traditional courtyard housing model, left few possibilities of change to the families considering the small size of the housing plot and did not respond to their preference for a higher dwelling surface. The families' choices were limited to variations of the courtyard houses with little changes among them, and they competed to be assigned to houses with a different design that the NGO limited to few units in only one project site. Despite the idea of centrality of the owners-occupiers in the choices about the house design, strict building regulations and the context of large scale housing policies prevented the families to change their house design.

5.3.2. SITE PLANNING RE-APPROPRIATED BY SLUM COMMUNITIES

As the house design, Hunnarshala guided the preparation of layout plans with the consultation of the communities. Hunnarshala developed the layout plans based on the planning principles of cluster design, by organising the houses in rows of 10-12 units aligned along access roads and connected by a perimetral road. These principles were used in Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site which are larger and where existing roads to the north were integrated in the plan as perimetral roads, whereas the layout plan in Bhimraonagar maintains the current configuration with a central north-south road giving direct access to the houses⁹⁰ (see Annex 4).

The layout plans reserve common areas (marked as public space) that include existing structures the communities demanded to be maintained in the project. In Ramdevnagar the plan retrofitted the *mandir* (while other family temples were demolished), the dome structure, the *aanganwadi* and the *chabutro*. Furthermore a common area nearby

90 The layout plan in Bhimraonagar integrates the road that the 2001 DP located to the west of the settlement.

(marked as parking in the plan) was demanded by the community as no more surface was left for celebrations, and where community leaders aim to create a garden and to build a larger community temple after the construction of the infrastructures and roads. In Bhimraonagar, the *mandir*, *aanganwadi* and the central space in front of them is retrofitted in the layout plan⁹¹, modifying the former plan approved by the government that demolished these structures.

In GIDC Relocation Site all the houses and several family temples were demolished while new areas were reserved in the layout plan for facilities and services such as *aanganwadi*, community centre, *mandir*, etc. The layout plan also reserves in the three sites portions of land for livelihood activities and shops⁹², infrastructures and low-income groups (LIG) housing⁹³. Hunnarshala also identified permanent houses to be retrofitted in the project: only 4 houses are retrofitted for upgradation in Ramdevnagar⁹⁴ and 5 houses are maintained in Bhimraonagar whose families became beneficiaries only for the infrastructure, while in GIDC Relocation Site no houses are maintained as all houses were temporary.

The development of the layout plans took place on several rounds of consultation with the communities, but as for the house design the discussion seemed to be limited to the community leaders and the slum committees. However the communities demanded to modify the layout plans after the government had already approved them. At the inauguration of the project construction, the community of Ramdevnagar asked to change the houses orientation as it did not respect the rules dictated by their religion. According to an architect of Hunnarshala, this problem was due to the lack of communication with the communities during the project process:

"When we started, we designed a layout with houses oriented southwest-

91 This area is not identified in the layout plan as public space but the project maintains the existing configuration of open spaces.

92 In Ramdevnagar, where some families run *mandap* activities, the layout plan reserves a plot to relocate them, but the request of more shops by other families led Hunnarshala to not provide any shop and to leave the community to manage the area. In GIDC Relocation Site a plot was reserved to host new shops in view of the construction of the DP road that will lead to the demolition of existing shops along the road.

93 Only in Ramdevnagar where there is a lower population density, the layout plan introduces common infrastructures and reserves land for LIG housing. A planned garbage-recycling unit was later suspended as the NGO Sahjeevan started to collect and recycle garbage from the area. In its place, Sahjeevan proposed to create a water treatment system for reusing grey water from the houses for irrigating the plantation of the area. Its construction started in 2018 after obtaining the funds from the American NGO Curry Stone foundation. In the other project sites the plans only redevelop to recharge bore wells already existing.

94 The layout plan for Ramdevnagar approved by the government retrofitted 9 houses, of which 4 for upgradation and 5 as beneficiaries of infrastructure, but the latter were demolished in the final version.

northeast because we had the wind direction coming from the southwest, then they met and they suddenly realized that this orientation did not allow their belief, they wanted houses to be oriented east-west. We showed before this plan 2 or 3 times but they did not understand. What happened, there was this inauguration with the Gujarat chief minister, we just layout one house on the site and there was a temple there oriented perfectly east-west, and then they suddenly realized the house orientation was not east-west. So we had to change after this plan had already passed the approval by municipality, Ramdevnagar community does not understand drawings"⁹⁵.

Also in Bhimraonagar the community demanded to modify the layout plan already approved by the government. Because of the lack of space in Bhimraonagar, the layout plan submitted by Hunnarshala proposed to resettle 8 families to the site of Ramdevnagar in such a way that every family could be allotted a housing surface of 65 sq.m. The community rejected this proposal preferring to stay together on the site and on the other hand, the community of Ramdevnagar also did not agree to mix with the *Marwada* community that they consider lower in the local caste system. Moreover, as the community leader R.V. initially aimed to develop the project for his family in Ramdevnagar, he allowed only his relatives to occupy his land⁹⁶.

The community of Bhimraonagar called for reducing the individual house plots by dividing the total project surface for the 42 families, thus reducing the individual housing plot to 47.5 sq.m. and the built area to 38.90 sq.m. This change occurred together with the reduction of the project boundary as the DILR gave the precise perimeter in the three sites after the project approval, forcing Hunnarshala to modify the layout plans⁹⁷. These changes to the layout plan after the project approval were possible as the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) policy allows to allot the housing units to the beneficiaries after the realization of the project, as long as the municipality owns the

95 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015.

96 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017.

97 Hunnarshala developed and submitted the layout plans for the government approval before knowing the precise perimeter of the project sites from DILR, as this process takes long time. As the project perimeter provided by the DILR did not correspond exactly with the project proposals, in the three sites Hunnarshala changed the layout plan after the government's approval. In Ramdevnagar the layout plan included a portion of private land, thus Hunnarshala modified it in order to accommodate the number of approved beneficiaries in a smaller project area. This happened after the construction of some houses had started, forcing to reduce the surface of some other housing plots. The same happened in Bhimraonagar where the layout plan was modified after its approval due to an inconsistency between the land records and the plans owned by the planning authority (P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 26-10-2015).

land. However, as the communities demanded to change the layout plan only during the implementation phase, the communication of the project by Hunnarshala seemed to limit the community participation. Furthermore, preferences of the communities related cultural practices, caste affinity and land ownership appeared as limits to the strategy to re-distribute the slum population over different areas.

The layout plans developed with planning principles of space rationalisation transformed the settlements' morphology. However, the house allotment to the families decided by the slum committees during the implementation phase reproduces the neighbourhood relations before the project. In Ramdegvnagar the house allotment was decided by the community leader R.V. who allocated to the families housing units in proximity of their old houses and placed in rows of houses groups of families that before the project were organized in *wadas*. R.V. allocated adjacent houses to related families (parents and married sons), recreating family groups of different sizes⁹⁸. For example, next to his house he allocated three house units to his married sons, two to the sons of his expired elder uncle, four to a cousin and his three married sons. This house allotment thus reproduces the pre-existing hierarchy of families: the family of R.V. (group 1) and the family of the clan Parmar *pujari* of Ramdev Pir (group 7) have a central position in the project, and the house of R.V. gets visibility as it is in front of the new common area designed for community celebrations and where the community aim to build a new *mandir* (see Map 14).

The families accepted the house allocation chosen by R.V. as in the project "they are the same neighbours"⁹⁹. Only in one case the sons asked to be separated from their parents because of family issues (group 7)¹⁰⁰. Only one woman affirm that before the project they were more united with their relatives and now they live separately¹⁰¹, and in fact it is the only one (group 4) that was split in three¹⁰².

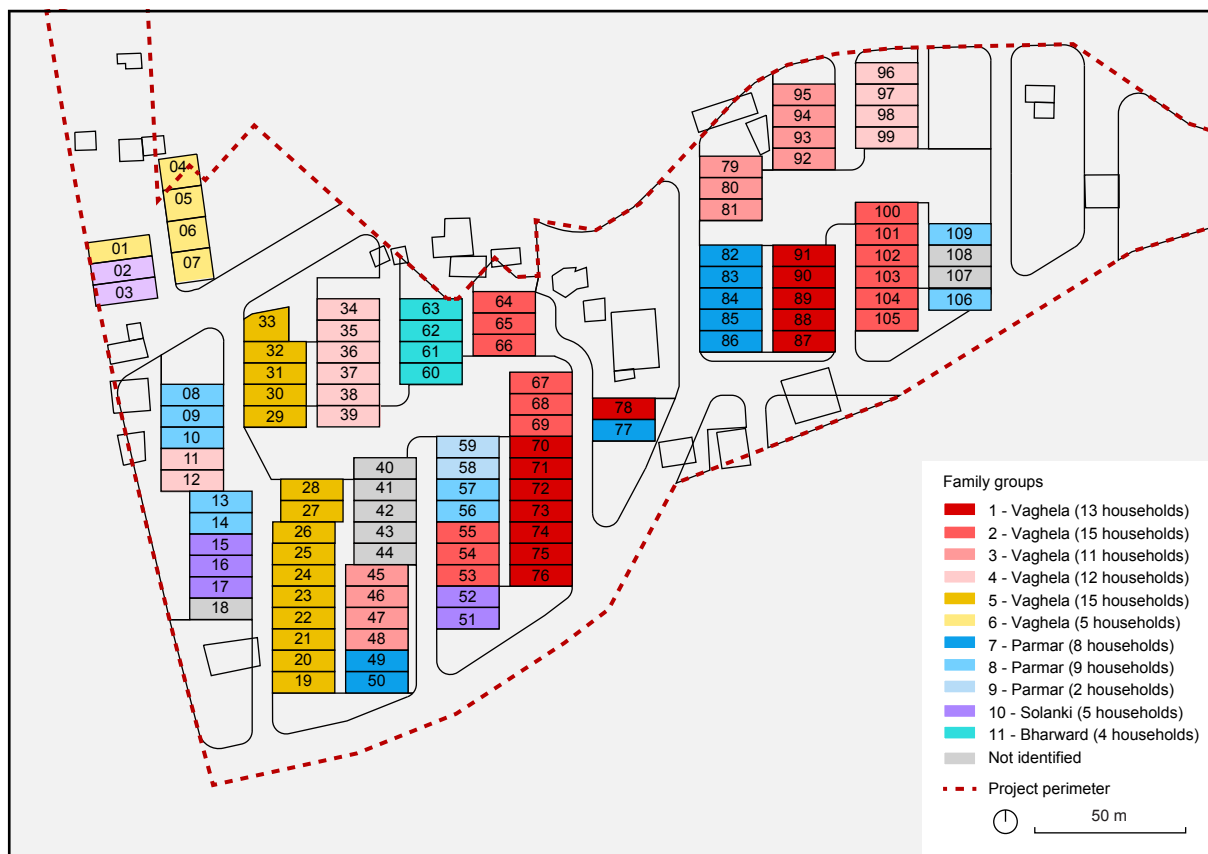
98 B.S., personal communication, 18-08-2017.

99 K.S., personal communication, 17-08-2017.

100 R.P., personal communication, 19-08-2017.

101 P.V., personal communication, 16-08-2018.

102 The group 4 belong to the family of V.V. that was most supportive of the project and forced the community leader R.V. to accept the project. It is possible that R.V. decided to split the group as revenge.



Map 14. House allotment in Ramdevnagar

Sources: Google Earth, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

Also in Bhimraonagar where the site layout reproduces even more the settlement's morphology, the slum committee allocated the houses reproducing the previous position of each family, and thus resuming the existing structure of family relations. Families of the same group previously contained in a compound are aligned in rows of houses in the project, thus joint houses are allotted to parents and the married son, and increasing to larger groups up to 5 houses of parents and 4 married sons (see Map 15).

The situation was different in GIDC Relocation Site, where the beneficiaries differ from the families living in the area before the project. Hunnarshala proposed to the families to organize themselves in groups that would determine the house position internally. 15 beneficiaries were elected to become group leaders and the families decided to stay with a leader from their caste¹⁰³: groups were formed by families of the same community like *Jogi*, *Vaghri* and Muslim, and others of different but related castes (see Table 6).

¹⁰³ The group leaders belong to different communities: *Vaghri* (group 1, 2), *Jogi* (groups 3, 4), Muslim (groups 5, 6, 7, 8), *Oja* (group 9), *Koli* (group 10), *Marwada* (group 11), *Thakkar-Lohana* (group 12), *Goswami* (groups 13, 16), *Patel* (group 14), *Jadeja* (group 15).



Map 15. House allotment in Bhimraonagar

Sources: Google Earth, Hunnarshala 2014a, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

Group leaders were chosen by the residents and by the NGOs who selected beneficiaries who were participating actively in the project and continued to attend meetings after the beneficiaries were confirmed. Unlike in Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar where neighbourhood relationships based on the family network remained unchanged in the project, the creation of groups of families of the same caste reiterates the principle of social organization that characterise the initial occupation of caste and religion-based communities in GIDC Relocation Site and more generally in Bhuj.

The group 11 is the larger and most heterogeneous as its members belong to different communities and in many cases they did not know each other before the project. Unlike the beneficiaries in the other groups, they do not identify with one group and consider the president of the committee S.C. as the leader of the whole project. They consider themselves isolated compared to families in other groups. For example a family explains that before the project they and their neighbours in the project were in the group of S.C. but they do not have relations with her anymore, and they know by face the other

people in the group but they do not have relations with them¹⁰⁴.

Another family explain that they were asked where they want to live, but while the others decided in function of their caste or went with the previous neighbours, nowadays they do not know the families in the group as only another family is from the same caste¹⁰⁵. The group 11 is also the one in which NGOs intervened most, for example creating two groups of 19 households composed of a single person, mainly unmarried, divorced and widowed¹⁰⁶. The belonging to the same caste or religion and the former relationships as neighbours were thus determining the capacity of beneficiaries to create groups. That this group is mainly composed of families who belong to different communities suggests the greater capacities of homogeneous groups or dominated by communities from related caste, both high castes (groups 12-16) and lower castes (groups 1-8).

Group	Size	Upper caste communities (<i>Brahmins, Kshatriyas, merchants, landowners</i>)	Lower caste (artisans, peasants), <i>dalit</i> and Muslim communities
1	7 households		Vaghri
2	6 households		Vaghri
3	5 households		Jogi
4	6 households		Darji, Jogi, Vaghri
5	10 households	Banushali	Maheshvari, Vaghri, Muslim
6	11 households		Muslim
7	11 households		Muslim
8	9 households		Muslim
9	12 households	Ahir, Gunsai	Vaghri
10	8 households	Bhavsar, Gor, Pande, Thakker	Koli, Kumhar, Vaghri
11	36 households	Ahir, Banushali, Chodhri, Gunsai, Joshi Khatri, Shrimali, Singh, Rajput, Vyas	Gujra, Koli, Kumhar Maheshwari, Marwada, Vaghri
12	8 households	Bharot, Khatri, Modh, Thakkar-Lohana	Thakor
13	8 households	Ahir, Gunsai, Joshi, Tomar, Suvera	Vaghri
14	5 households	Murji-Patel, Rajput	Marwada
15	4 households	Jadeja, Rajput, Soni	
16	9 households	Bhavsar, Darji, Gunsai, Thacker, Vanya	

Table 6. Beneficiary groups in GIDC Relocation Site

Sources: interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

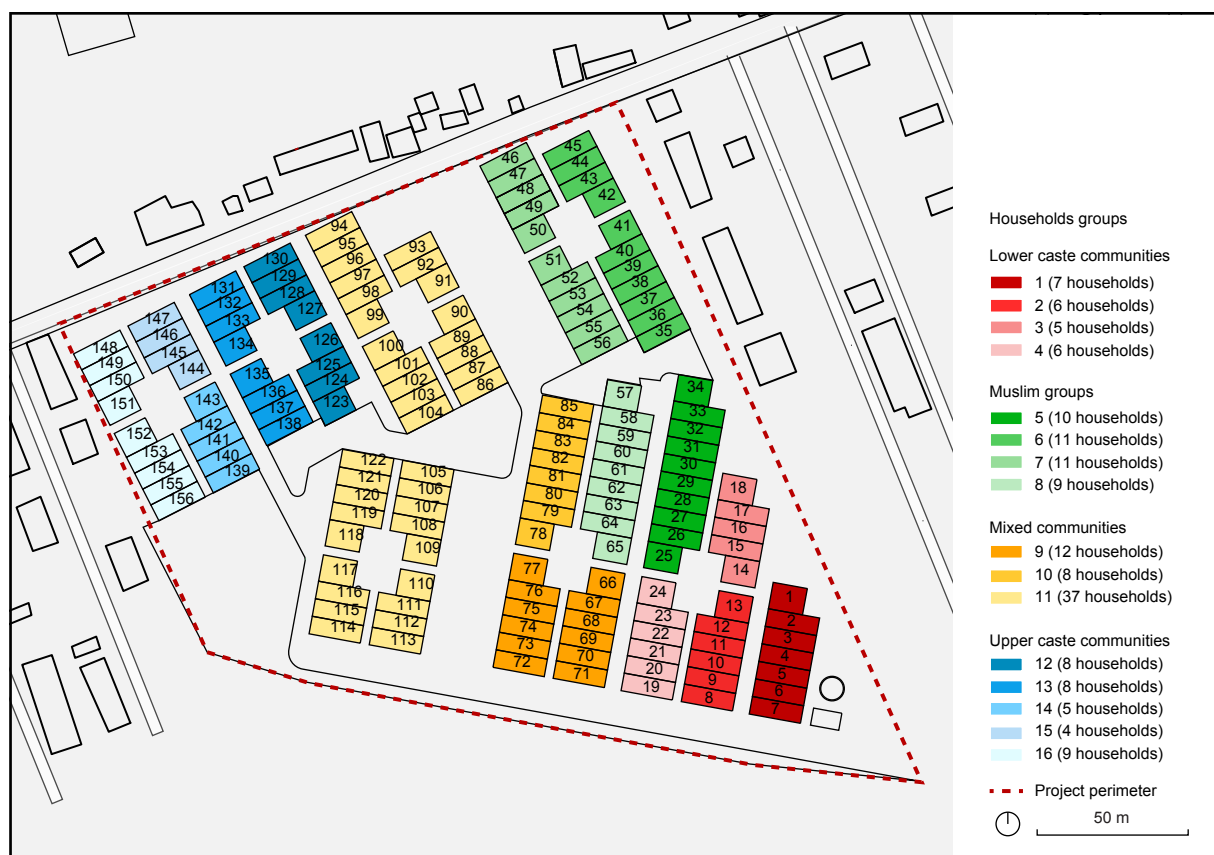
Hunnarshala decided the position of the groups in the layout plan with the participation

104 H.S., personal communication, 21-03-2018.

105 S.C., personal communication, 27-07-2017.

106 F.K., personal communication, 26-07-2017.

of some group leaders¹⁰⁷. It reproduces the spatial hierarchy in GIDC Relocation Site since the groups dominated by beneficiaries from communities of *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya* and merchants castes are better located closer to the city centre: the same logic in which upper castes communities occupied the first sectors in 2001. Groups mostly composed by families from high caste communities (groups 12-16) are oriented towards the urban centre while those made up of families of lower caste and Muslim communities (groups 1-9) have a peripheral position, the space reserved for common services creating a separation between them (see Map 16).



Map 16. House allotment in GIDC Relocation Site

Sources: Google Earth, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

The visibility of the families is also related with their distance from the main road that crosses the settlement, in a way that the groups dominated by lower castes communities are located far from the road. In fact some beneficiaries affirm that the groups location was decided on the basis of the 'importance' of the communities that compose them (see Image 23). According to a leader of the *Vaghri* groups (groups 2), initially the house

¹⁰⁷ S.C. kept the plan for herself for 4 days to think about how to organize the groups before sharing with the others (S.C., personal communication, 27-07-2017)

numbering started from the road and his group was allotted the first house numbers but they changed the map in a way to shift them to the backside, and that happened because they are from lower caste communities, while upper caste communities nowadays are in front¹⁰⁸. However, this arrangement facilitates the contact between related castes that develop relationships with each other. Several families of the *Vaghri*, *Jogi* and Muslims groups are in favour to live close to each other and the same is true for families from upper caste communities, for example a *Thakkar* family who is happy to stay close to other families of related castes and to stay far away from families of lower caste communities¹⁰⁹. In other cases the position was dictated by specific preferences. For example, the leader of a Muslim group affirms that few people are cattle herders and preferred to occupy the first lines as in front there is open space where they can keep their cattle¹¹⁰.



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 06-2018



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 07-2017

**Image 23. Board renaming a row of houses of an upper caste group into a 'society' (left).
Image 24. Prominent 'square house' occupied by a group leader (right).**

Except in some cases where the NGOs decided the house allocation like for disabled people placed along the street, the allocation of houses to each family was decided internally in the groups, facilitating related households as well as beneficiaries of the same caste within mixed groups to become neighbours in the project. However, contentious situations between beneficiaries occurred as they competed to be allocated

108 L.P., personal communication, 08-06-2018.

109 N.A., personal communication, 31-03-2018.

110 J.T., personal communication, 13-06-2018.

the 'square houses' and houses along the main road¹¹¹ they preferred to the others, that were mostly occupied by group leaders and strongest people according to Hunnarshala's architects¹¹² (see Image 24). For example a family of the *Goswami* community (group 9) who pretended to live in a square house, as the NGO replied that they could not because too many people want to live there, they threatened to complain against the NGO and so they accepted to allocate them a square house¹¹³.

111 The houses located along the road are preferred because they are directly accessible from the street, and they can be connected immediately to the sewer line, so the families who occupied them asked for individual connection and didn't have to wait for the realization of the project's infrastructure (S.B., personal communication, 01-08-2017). In addition, their visibility from the street increases the status of the families who occupy them as in the case of the president of the committee S.C., whose house is compared to a temple by some beneficiaries.

112 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 27-10-2015.

113 B.G., personal communication, 28-03-2018.

5.4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CHANGES OCCURRING ALONG WITH THE PROJECT

5.4.1. CHANGING DOMESTIC LIFE AND ECONOMY

Although after three years the project implementation is still on-going and only a number of families are occupying the houses still not registered as house owners, the pilot project has produced important changes for the communities in the three settlements. The allocation of individual housing unit and the house design have transformed in many ways the domestic life of the families. The project reduced the household size by allocating an individual house to each couple with children and increased the average housing size as each house unit has a higher surface with two rooms. This has mostly impacted the families in Ramdevnagar where households going up to 20 people and occupying a single or two-room were split in nuclear families of 4,3 people on average who occupy an individual house. Although in the other settlements the household size has not changed, the new houses are larger: in GIDC Relocation Site where households of 4,5 people on average lived in single-room temporary houses of 10 sq.m, and in Bhimraonagar where all households built extra rooms at the second floor to increase the housing surface in the project.

The families describe several changes in their domestic life, especially in terms of privacy. In Ramdevnagar, the householder of a joint family (group 10) who shared a single-room house and was entitled of 5 housing units for the parents and 4 married sons talks about a "revolutionary change"¹¹⁴. One of the sons explains that they faced difficulties as more couples sharing the same room had not enough space for privacy, influencing many daily aspects from sleeping together to the way they wear clothes. Previously the women used to cover the head with a veil also at home as a form of respect for their relatives. According to J.V. (group 3), in the new houses the people have no more "disturbed thinking" created by the overcrowding, and also the children can concentrate better and become more educated¹¹⁵.

However, some families criticise the project for reducing the house size compared to

¹¹⁴ K.S., personal communication, 17-08-2017.

¹¹⁵ J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

their previous conditions, for example a family (groups 7) of 15 people who lived in a large house with four rooms, a kitchen and 4 separate toilets, and was split in 8 households in the project¹¹⁶. Another joint family of 13 people (group 5) who lived in a two-rooms house built in the 1990s and was included in the project for upgradation complains of the worsening of the living condition. The project entitled only two of three married sons as beneficiaries, as during the survey the third one was living in a temporary house nearby, and split the existing house in two separate rooms and added a second room to each of the two households¹¹⁷ (see Image 25).



Image 25. 'One of the better' houses in Ramdevnagar before the project (left), and the worsening of condition as it was upgraded in the pilot project (right).

Some families in GIDC Relocation Site described their surprise as they knew that the new houses have two rooms while they were expecting only one. The project allows the household to separate their activities in the two rooms, whereas in many single-room houses the domestic activities are mixed up in the same space. The rooms on the courtyard are mostly used as living area where people perform daytime activities such as eating and meeting relatives, and place objects like the family temple, pictures, furniture reused from the previous houses and dowry items. The back rooms are used as bedrooms, although most of the households use both rooms for sleeping because of the big household size.

Furthermore, the introduction of individual kitchens in each house takes on different values among the communities. Whereas in GIDC Relocation Site most of the households already had individual kitchens integrated to the temporary houses, in

116 R.P., personal communication, 19-08-2017.

117 K.V., personal communication, 13-04-2018.

Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar the women used to cook outside in verandas while very few families had a room they used as kitchen. In this way, the introduction of a kitchen inside the houses increases the importance of the housewives in the households as it is a space accessible only to them¹¹⁸.

The kitchen and its equipment with gas stove instead of using clay or *sigri* stoves for cooking represents a change towards domestic practices associated with the urban society, despite many families continuing to cook in the courtyards with *sigri* stoves as they cannot afford to purchase gas cylinders¹¹⁹ (see Image 26). However, the context of the project seems to increase the comparison between families who can afford gas stoves and those who cannot. For example, some women in Ramdevnagar accepted to be photographed but prefer to cover their faces for shame of being filmed while cooking in the courtyard.



Image 26. A couple in Ramdevnagar producing *sigri* stoves (left), and a woman portrayed in the kitchen integrated in the house design (right).

For many women, also the introduction of individual toilet-bathrooms in every house turned their life safer, especially in Ramdevnagar where before the project only a third of the houses had toilets and few shared community toilets or septic tanks. However, as the black waters are still not connected to the city's drainage system because of the delay of the infrastructures implementation, the families continue to defecate outdoors in the

118 During my interviews, many women explained to me that they chose the decorations and in particular in the kitchen as it is the room they occupy and use.

119 The *sigri* is a handmade stove commonly used in north India by those who cannot afford gas stoves. The fuel is usually coal, dried cow dung and wood. Some women in Ramdevnagar appreciate that the appearance of the kitchen is cleaner by cooking with gas stoves, as previously the interior became black because of smoke.

three settlements¹²⁰. This situation represents a worsening especially for families who already had toilets connected to soak pits in absence of drainage. A higher sense of security is associated in all the settlements for the houses being *pucca*¹²¹. The houses construction using disaster-resistant features represents a change for the families who faced difficulties to recover from the earthquake, which damaged their houses and increased their vulnerability in the next years. Families also evoke the houses' solidity for the higher protection from the elements, especially in GIDC Relocation Site where the temporary houses were designed after the earthquake for a duration of few years and had deteriorated over time¹²².

Living in the new houses is felt as safer, the enclosure of the courtyards with walls increase the separation from outside. Before, the houses grouped in *wadas* shared common open spaces fenced with stonewalls or vegetation in Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar, while in GIDC Relocation Site the houses were separated and surrounded by vegetation. In this sense, whereas before the project the families faced thefts, security problems, fights, the area became safer as "now they get doors", according to the community leader in Ramdevnagar¹²³. Some women in GIDC Relocation Site, who during the day were alone as their husbands were out for work, did not feel secure to go out and leave their children at home, but that changed in the new houses so they could also start some activities outside¹²⁴.

Most of families built the boundary in their courtyard before occupying the house as they worried about security but also to ensure a private control on the exterior. Especially in Ramdevnagar, the project seems to create the conditions for the families' nuclearisation, although more households who belong to the same family often live promiscuously in more houses. But whereas joint families used to perform together daily activities in their *wadas*, all the households prefer to enclose their courtyards (see Image 27). On the contrary, the house design allows to leave the courtyards open and to share them between more households, in the intention of Hunnarshala of favouring a collective use of the space. Hunnarshala attempted to avoid this change by convincing the families to not build the boundaries, as an architect explain:

120 During my last visit in august 2018, only in GIDC Relocation Site the municipality had started to excavate in order to lay down the connexions to the municipality's services.

121 The pilot project classifies the existing houses in the three settlements as *kaccha* at 37%, *semi-pucca* at 60%, and only 3% as *pucca* (Hunnarshala 2014a).

122 L.P., personal communication, 08-06-2018.

123 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017.

124 H.G., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

"We are convincing them to not build boundary, because here will be a *falya* that means a common ward for a group of houses [...]. So everybody does not have to make each one boundary, only common walls. We are talking to them, it is in discussion but they say if there is a boundary wall they can say now this land is mine, so they can clean it, but if it is all open everybody says: who will clean this? [...] Everybody thinks for themselves, they think they are alone when they think how they want to live, but we try to keep them together"¹²⁵.



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 06-2018



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 10-2015

Image 27. House units not separated by boundaries (left) and beneficiaries contesting Hunnarshala's proposal to not build boundaries (right).

The project also affected the home-based economic activities, which the families moved to the new houses while few other families started new ones. In Ramdevnagar, two families who ran *mandap* activities (groups 1, 7) used the second floor of their houses to store the materials waiting for the creation of a livelihood area, and the *Bharwad* families (group 11) aimed to prepare a shed in their courtyard to keep their cattle¹²⁶. Two existing grocery shops run by the community leader (group 1) near the common area, and by a Parmar family (group 8) to the west of the settlement, continued during the project but they aim to move them in the new houses when they will be demolished, and a third family who ran a shop before the project moved it to the new house. Their clients continued to be the inhabitants of the settlement, however a family (group 7) started recently a new grocery shop to the north of the common area, and some families

¹²⁵ P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 27-10-2015.

¹²⁶ E.B., personal communication, 15-08-2017.

started selling food, cosmetics and accessories in their houses, waiting to build small stores in their courtyards.

Some families affirm that they started to save money and left their labour work to initiate their own business. For example, a man (group 3) who was labour in the Yard Market purchase an autorickshaw to take children to schools, thanks to the loans from the Self Help Groups (SHG)¹²⁷. Also in GIDC Relocation Site, the family of D.B. (group 11) who already owned a tea store in the settlement started a grocery shop in front of his house as well did H.H. (group 7), while other families plan to start new shops in their houses but they do not have enough resources. In Bhimraonagar, few families who ran home-based activities pursued them in their houses at the entrance to the site as they were not demolished. These changes depended upon the resources of the families and in few cases were facilitated by Sakhi Sangini, while the housing project allowed the families to integrate their activities in their houses.

For the families in Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site, the housing project and the settlement regularisation also increased the economic value. According to the president of the committee R.V., a contractor asked the community of Ramdevnagar to purchase some houses and the cost of the land in the colony in front of the settlement has increased¹²⁸. A committee member affirms that the project helped to find 'more valuable brides' than before, and gives the example of a woman from outside who did not move to her husband's house as the settlement was a *jopad-patti*, but she changed her mind after the project because of the improvement¹²⁹. As the practice of dowry represents a high burden especially for the poorest families, the project helped them as it raised the value of their daughters, according to E.B. (group 11)¹³⁰. Similarly, a Muslim woman beneficiary of a house in GIDC Relocation Site (group 6) considers that it will be easier to find a wife for her sons even from another caste, "because women want owners of cars and houses"¹³¹. The project represents also a radical change as it turned renters into owners, thus helping many families in GIDC Relocation Site to invest resources in social and economic relationships.

127 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

128 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017. However, only 4 houses were built in Prabu Park in front of Ramdevnagar after the project. In GIDC Relocation Site a number of factories were built around the first sectors as well as a new exclusive caste-based colony owned by the Patel community. These changes indicate a recent dynamic of development in an area that was not attractive until recently, in which the housing project participates.

129 T.V., personal communication, 23-08-2017.

130 E.B., personal communication, 15-08-2017.

131 H.S., personal communication, 21-03-2018.

5.4.2. PROJECT MOBILIZATION TO REAFFIRM A PLACE IN THE CITY

In a context of rapid social change induced by the process of urbanization, the communities mobilized in different ways their inclusion in the pilot project to legitimise their place in the city. The communities of Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar associate an exclusive use of the land with their specific settlement history. Both consider themselves as legitimate owners of the land that the King granted to them, thus inscribing in the socio-spatial and moral order of the kingdom, and participate to the project with the intention to reaffirm their place in the city. However, the project participates in processes of identity making that change for different communities or groups.

For the *devi pujak* community, the housing project participates to a process of social elevation through their integration with the urban society. As J.V. describes the visit of the Prime Minister of Gujarat at the inauguration, the project brought out the community of Ramdevnagar as initiator of a change among other slum settlements in Bhuj:

"At that time, all the people from here were present, and also all leaders from the three sites of the project. There was a big presence of policemen for security reason because it was an important event at the city level. They prepared a big banner for the inauguration where the name of Ramdevnagar was written, and they put it in Bhuj near the market area, so everybody could see it and they felt important. [...] Anandiben Patel arrived with 25 cars, and other people related to the project were also present, like MLA, people from Nagar Palika, NGOs [...]. Now Ramdevnagar has become famous, if you ask to anybody, people say is that place where new houses grew?"¹³².

The project transforms the perception of the settlements from being a *jopad-patti* to a 'society' or planned settlement, which is associated with values of emancipation embodied by the symbols and lifestyle of the middle and upper classes. This process of change of identity and practices appears for example in the way how the community aims to become a 'good society' by embodying values of gender equality, education, solidarity and development. During the project implementation, the *Devi Pujak* community in Bhuj started a *samaj* or community network with the aim to foster their participation to the political life in the city. The NGO KMVS drove this project and organized meetings for the community

¹³² J.V., personal communication, 25-08-2017.

leaders to discuss common objectives. During a meeting at the offices of Sakhi Sangini (12-04-2018) the leaders agreed on the principles on which a 'good society' should be based: "Ladies and gents should be similar in society; everybody should respect elders; people should speak with elders in case of issues or before spending money; education; knowledge; no bad habits; people in society should help each other; society should get benefits from government for social development; support daughter/daughter in law; there should be a community councillor; a good leader should be elected; *kuri vajo* [bad customs which are traditional like dowry] which harm the development of society should not be there".

Similarly, the housing project goes along with the appropriation of values like cleanliness, respect of the nature and good manners in the community and public life. During my last visit in 2018 I observed that the inhabitants wrote sentences in Gujarati on the walls of the houses and on the children's compound, like "my area is a clean area; where is cleanness there is God; growing trees is good for the development of Kacch; with lot of trees there is healthy life; hard work of today is result of tomorrow; everybody loves who is polite; never put garbage anywhere". Their educational intention shows a commitment to move away from the conditions of pollution, inhumanity and unhealthiest that are associated with the collective imagination of the *jopad-patti*.

The elevation of the role of the woman inherent to this process has particular relevance in the project. This change passes through habits like the way of dressing that is exalted only for women. Several families in Ramdevnagar say that before the project women were not well dressed and now they are, first they used *sari* and now *salvar kamise*, first they had to cover their heads and now they are not. The families of Ramdevnagar boast the role of their children and especially the daughters in the project leadership as they are educated, when in peasant caste communities like the *Devi Pujak* the daughters drop their education soon to become housewives. The NGOs had a main role in such elevation of women in the politic life of the community, expanding the access to education and inciting their participation in the collective organization of the project. For example, J.V. who is secretary in the slum committee describes the project itself as "good for education":

"Before the earthquake I cleared standard 5 and after a break of 17 years I appeared for exams of 10 standard. This was possible because of Ramkrishna mission who provide coaching classes for this community. I appeared as external student, for example I gave an exam along with other children 16 years old, all were shocked that I am married and I appeared for the exam at this age

and with 2 children; suppose I was not well educated so I wouldn't even know what a map is"¹³³.

As seen before, the project participates to increase the value of women by allocating to each household an individual house and departing from the common practice of the joint family. In this sense J.V. affirms that women, whose social role is associated in particular with the domestic space and the kitchen, started to 'think in a good way' as now they have their own house¹³⁴. Such increasing value of the woman in the household also emerges in 'rules' accorded by the *Devi Pujak samaj* like to accept to give a daughter in marriage only if a new house is prepared before marriage and only to people who do not drink alcohol: the community associate both drinking alcohol and continuing living in the parents' house after marriage, to the lack of resources and dependency of the husbands which are degrading for the woman who enters her husband's family as a bride. At the same time, a rise in the women's value is sought by changing 'bad habits' like drinking *chai*, tea at the market in order not to harm their reputation and finance¹³⁵.

By allocating an individual house to each couple, the project reaffirms a traditional role of women who takes care of the household's economy in terms of savings and investment as well as of control of the woman's behaviour in society. These practices, associated to the family individualisation that the housing project favours, show an attempt of emancipation from traditions in order to get closer to the urban society, like for living as nuclear families and the abandonment of residential mobility. However, together with this desire for emancipation other traditional rules among the community are reconfirmed, like the authority of the elders to take decisions for the community.

Rather than highlighting a process of social change that goes along with the project, the *Marwada* community of Bhimraonagar emphasises their will to not transform the settlement into a 'society' that they identify with the way of living of "VIP people who live in the town", and to continue their community relations and practice of joint family¹³⁶. Such different relation with the housing project emerges for example in the way how the *Devi Pujak* describe it as a 'radical change' and the houses as 'dream houses', whereas the

133 J.V., personal communication, 21-07-2017.

134 J.V., personal communication, 21-07-2017.

135 My assistant explains that the *Devi Pujak* are locally known as their women use to gather for drinking *chai*, to the point that some tea shop only live thanks to them. Besides representing an economic weight, this habit is considered to harm the traditional role of women that is associated with the domestic space and who manages the home economy for example by cooking.

136 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

inhabitants of Bhimraonagar bring forward the way how they modified the house design so as to not transform their 'traditional way to live'.

This affirmation of traditions rather than the desire to join the urban society shows an ethnocentric position in the process of identity building. This emerges for example in the way how the community relates to the NGOs and authorities. While the NGOs had to convince other communities to participate to the project, the families in Bhimraonagar point out that they asked the technical support of Hunnarshala for the regularisation of the status of the land occupation, but they emphasise their autonomy of organization and their capacities in constructions. For example K.M. (group 6) who has a long experience as contractor and built his own house in Bhimraonagar, describes his independence from the help of the NGO:

"At the time of measurement for plotting, engineers from organization were trying a lot, almost one hour they tried to measure but they could not so they come to us and saying we don't understand why but these four angles we are not able to understand how to make, because land was not regular. I said ok now you sit down and in 15 minutes I did with my son, they were surprised how did you do, so they asked in which university you had your engineering degree? The engineer from the organization came to check but then went away with more knowledge. [...]. The engineer challenged me for these stairs, he said you will never be able to build stairs here, you have not enough space [he shows me the guard of the staircase in blocks of 5cm thick] the engineer told me that it is not enough, but I realized it and it works, the engineer knows the theory but he doesn't know the practice"¹³⁷.

Differently from the *Devi Pujak*, the *Marwada* community resists to their integration into the city's governance that the housing project entails. For example, after KMVS organized self-help groups among the women in Bimraonagar, they separated themselves from the city network Sakhi Sangini and financed the housing through their own saving group, showing the intention to secure their financial and decision-making autonomy. A woman who leads a saving group in Bhimraonagar explains that the families withdraw from Sakhi Sangini as the annual interest rate of 12% was too high, and as they learned how to manage savings

¹³⁷ K.M., personal communication, 26-06-2018.

from the families, they started their own saving group with a lower interest rate¹³⁸. According to the community leaders, the community was the only one who requested to the District Collector the confirmation to become owners of the new houses and the land, and only later they agreed to demolish their houses as they still mistrusted the intentions of the NGOs¹³⁹.

While showing different forms of social identity change, both the *Devi Pujak* and the *Marwada* communities celebrate their activist entrepreneurialism as they initiate the housing project and become an example of change for other poor communities in the city. Other *Devi Pujak* communities living in the settlements of Shiv Ram Mandap and Bhuteshwar in the city centre and in Macchu Nagar, as well as *Marwada* communities settled south of Kodki Road in Ravalvadi and in Macchu Nagar, and *Bharwad* community in Ramdevnagar and Macchu Nagar agreed to extend the program to their settlements in the second project phase. However the agreement with the program between communities from the same caste or neighbour communities of related castes¹⁴⁰, does not extend to other communities such as the Muslim.

Some poor communities do not feel the need to regularise their settlements as they consider themselves to be the legal owners of the land. According to T.V. in Ramdevnagar, this happens a little everywhere in Bhuj and in some areas in particular like the settlement of Ganeshnagar where many families rent out or sell their houses as they think to be the legal owners¹⁴¹. In other settlements like Sanjog Nagar which are not considered *jopad-patti* as they were in fact planned without transferring the land ownership from the state to the occupiers¹⁴², the residents' indifference to regularise their land is supported by a regime of urban planning as a process of informality and deregulation (Roy 2009). However the celebration of the activist entrepreneurialism of some communities who agree with the program seems to lead to neglect other 'non-entrepreneurial' (McFarlane 2012).

Differently from the communities of Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar, in GIDC Relocation Site the families are from several geographic origins and castes and religious affiliations, and legitimate their participation to the project as they consider themselves to be the victims of marginalization and dispossession created by the reconstruction. As the families were

138 L.M., personal communication, 26-06-2018.

139 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

140 The caste-based slum settlements included in the second Detailed Project Report (DPR) prepared by the NGOs, like Bharwadwas, Bhimraonagar-2, Vansfoda and Machu Nagar are occupied by *Bharwad, Harijan, Devi Pujak, Gunsai and Vansfoda* communities, while other slum settlements have a mixed population and are more central-located.

141 T.V., personal communication, 23-08-2017.

142 S.K. (ward 3 councilor), personal communication, 26-07-2017.

living in different parts of the city or elsewhere before moving to the site, an identification of the community with the place as in the other caste-based settlements is absent. The participation to the project is thus fragmented along former family ties or neighbourhood relationships, and small groups gather defending their legitimacy to become beneficiaries. The community membership influences the organization of groups in the project. More homogeneous groups whose families belong to the same community like *Devi Pujak*, *Jogi*, *Gunsai*, and Muslims participate in a collective way and recreate community and inter-community ties within the project, while mixed groups have lower capacities for collective action.

The families describe the project as participating to transform the settlement 'from *jopad-patti* to a good colony', in particular with respect to the symbolic distance from the urban society which is represented by the neglect of social relations as 'few people live together', and of the physical environment as the area is 'full of jungle'¹⁴³. However, families from upper caste communities affirm they still wish to leave the settlement despite the improvement created by the project. For example, a householder of the *Thakkar-Lohana* community (group 12) affirms that people having a good status do not want to live in GIDC Relocation Site as the area is not safe because of the presence of Muslim and lower caste communities¹⁴⁴. For him, living in good houses can facilitate to stay at home for protection, but cannot improve the area. Similarly other families think that the area continue to be problematic because of the lack of unity, and despite the houses improvement they prefer to move away as they will have the possibility.

Therefore, it is likely that in a near future other families from upper caste communities who are beneficiaries in the project will leave the settlement and will sell or rent their houses to the families left out of the pilot project or to new migrant families. The exclusion of many families who wait for a "second round" which probably will not be realised perpetuated the disparities between "rich, greedy people" and "needy people" as in previous housing projects, and the dependency of the latter from government programs. Therefore the project did not reduce substantially the spatial segregation of GIDC Relocation Site Site that is associated to its social heterogeneity and is not exempt from reproducing the pre-existing social system. On the other hand, families from lower caste communities have used the project to reinforce their presence and strengthening forms of ethnic communitarianism.

143 H.G., personal communication, 12-06-2017.

144 N.A., personal communication, 31-03-2018.

CONCLUSION

The pilot project in Bhuj was implemented in three slum settlements with different histories and populations, which influenced differently the project implementation and outcomes. The extension of the program beyond the pilot project would have allowed to expand the study of the model in the context of other settlements. However, the pilot project is interesting as it included slum situations that are emblematic of rising small cities and in particular of Bhuj: both long-settled slums that were incorporated in the reconstruction and development process, as well as new slums created by this process.

Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar are unplanned settlements where long-settled caste-dominated communities developed in relation to agricultural activities under the King's rule, whose later decline brought to stagnation and laborization of the economy. Differently, GIDC Relocation Site started as temporary relocation site during the city reconstruction but then became a permanent slum because of the improper management by authorities and as strongest groups took control reproducing pre-existing social disparities in the city. While the morphology and land tenure patterns of the former reflect kinship networks and hierarchies associated with caste-specific rules, the heterogeneity of the latter participates to its fragmentation and to perpetuate the difficulty of most disadvantaged to recover, despite its long-term duration led to a rising sense of belonging and activism among the inhabitants.

The community mobilisation in the pilot project shows important difference in the role played by the lead NGO that went from informing and consulting to partnership with communities (Arnstein 1969), and in the way communities were implicated depending on different motivations and expectations. In particular, the pilot project was in continuity with former attempts of regularisation supported by existing solidarity networks in caste-dominated communities and their attachment to the land. However, hierarchies and divergences between families regarding the project objectives challenged the mobilisation of communities without taking into account the diversity of sub-groups within them, thus leading to division and consequent demobilization of collective action (Dupont et al. 2016).

Some families owning larger lands were forced to accept the project by the rest of the community despite they opposed the arrangement to attribute each family standard-sized

land plots. Even more so in a fragmented community like in GIDC Relocation Site, individual interests led families and groups to compete to be included in the project, by arbitrarily mobilising different inclusion criteria. Especially because the division of the project into several phases and the uncertainty about its continuity led many families to fight to prove their higher legitimacy than others.

The role played by Slum Committees to bridge communities and the other stakeholders demonstrated the little attention of lead NGOs to the influence of patronage logic in participatory practices. Slum Committees were dominated by community leaders who oriented the project according to their interests, responding differently to collective interests. Beyond serving as a source of prestige and a forum for grandstanding' (De Wit and Berner 2009), for some leaders the project represented an economic opportunity and led them to take control over the process of slum rehabilitation. Whereas in some cases the communities accepted their traditional authority to guide and take decisions, in other cases forms of elite capture came to the point of coercing the inclusion of beneficiaries for individual interests.

Despite the process of housing and settlement plan design was presented as participatory, the communities described a limited participation where the lead NGO developed the design and then consulted the community leaders in the Slum Committees. Meetings with the residents representing different 'spaces for participation' (Cornwall 2002), moved from initial project presentations that correspond to 'invited spaces' (ibid.), to later initiatives from local leaders to promote their demands with the NGO and authorities in 'negotiated space' (Baud et al. 2008). These meetings were attended by a limited number of residents, mostly involved the local leaders, and informations were not communicated to all the residents. Retention of information and belated communication (Dupont 2016) happened at different levels, both between NGO and residents and within the community, and at different stages of the process.

The possibility of incorporating the traditional courtyard typology into the housing design was one of the reasons for the acceptance of the slum communities, opposed to be resettled in apartment buildings. However, the courtyard house typology responds to the needs of some groups but less to the priority of many families to have larger houses. Whereas the owner-driven construction system was expected to allow families to modify the house design to meet individual and community needs (Barakat 2003), this only happened when families built their own house. On the contrary, the need to define design standards in the context of large scale housing policy and the strict application of

building regulations prevented most of the families to change their house design.

Similarly, the lead NGO developed layout plans following planning principles of rationalisation that transformed the settlements' morphology. In some cases, the communities were able to modify the plans and adapt them to their preferences, but only during the construction phase due to the limited communication with the lead NGO during the project preparation. This confirms that the lack of information can also become a reason to mobilize when residents become aware of the stakes (Dupont 2016). The layout plan and the process of house allotment managed by the communities allowed to continue pre-existing neighbourhood relations and to create caste and religion-based groups in the project, which responded to preferences of community organisation but at the same time reproduced former logic of spatial segregation.

In most cases, the project transformed the domestic life by reducing the overcrowding, increasing the privacy to the family members and the sense of security of families, a major concern particularly in disaster-prone areas (Barakat 2003). The redevelopment of the settlements increased their economic value, while the transformation of slum dwellers into owners increased the social status and investment capacity of families, particularly of renters that are rarely included in slum rehabilitation projects.

The project also allowed families to continue or start new home-based activities and businesses by increasing their savings capacity. The participation in the project of certain communities more than others corresponds to their will to affirmation in the context of fast changes of the city, which reflects different trajectories of identity making. Communities such as the *Devi Pujak* mobilized the project to affirm their conformity to the urban society in aspects like emancipation, cleanliness, education, but also individualisation and abandonment of traditions, unlike the *Marwada* community which appropriated the project to reaffirm their identity as separated from the urban society. However in fragmented communities such as GIDC Relocation Site, the project reduced the precariousness of families from low caste communities and brought to the emergence of new forms of ethnic communitarianism, but did not reduce the stigmatisation of the settlement so that the project's control by strongest groups continued perpetuating disparities and the exclusion of the poorest.

CHAPTER 6

THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PROJECT

The owner-driven model was recognised as the fastest, cheapest and most empowering approach, overcoming the difficulties of the government in managing large-scale contractor or agency-driven reconstruction efforts (Vahanvati 2018). But while these advantages emerged in the context of post-disaster or post-conflict reconstruction, the pilot project in Bhuj was an attempt to extend the model to a normal-time situation and to include poor populations by considering their capacities and resources (Barenstein and Iyengar 2010). Furthermore, the model is confronted with a series of problems relating with its inclusion in the national slum policies. The centrality of owners-occupiers aims to reduce the risk that private and profit oriented stakeholders may limit the scope for community participation. However, this requires an important mobilisation of resources and skills that could represent an even greater burden for the poor and risk to exclude weaker groups, already charged of the financial participation to the project (Dupont 2011). Furthermore, the possibility of collective participation of communities clashes with diversity of interests among sub-groups and the role of community leaders who do not represent collective interests in a homogeneous way (De Wit and Berner 2009). In the model, overcoming the focus of national policies on the physical upgrading and extending it to social upgrading by strengthening a culture of collectivity is thus fundamental (Boonyabancha 2005), and NGOs may play a central role in conflict resolution to overcome existing divisions within communities.

Another difficulty concerns the implementation of national slum policies in the context of decentralised governance, where local government agencies become implementer without decision power while beneficiaries continue to see them as responsible (Kamath 2012). The model aims to a greater coordination between institutional stakeholders in order to overcome the limited capacities of small Urban Local Bodies (ULB) to perform urban planning and slum upgrading (Bercegol and Gowda 2014). However, despite Bhuj being districts headquarter where the presence of development and state authorities can overcome the lack of

capacities of the ULB (Bercegol 2017), its central role as implementation agency is not exempt from contentious relations with higher level authorities (Coelho and Vijayabaskar 2014). Furthermore, the access of poor communities to basic services in the participatory framework of governance is limited, compared to middle classes who have higher capacities to generate funds while the same local authorities discriminate poorest groups. Smaller municipalities dominated by traditional local leadership based on patronage networks are in fact captured by the upper castes and consider improving the conditions of poor population as not a priority (Sharma 2012). Councillors and local politicians may play an important role to support policy implementation, but they are not included in the programmes (De Wit and Berner 2009).

Considering that the coordination system in the model may not be sufficient to ensure overcoming the conflicting interests between stakeholders, the chapter analyses how these issues affected the implementation of the pilot project. The first paragraph begins by analysing the general project progress considering the timing of the construction process, then to focus on situations of late or non-construction of housing units and the reasons that prevented it, and on the management of transit accommodation. The second paragraph focuses on the collective organisation of the construction process and tries to explain which conditions internal or external to the communities facilitated or hindered it, and on the ability of inhabitants to mobilise economic and social resources and knowledge. The analysis leads to the identification of different forms of collective organisation based on the inhabitants' roles and their relationships within the groups and tries to understand what aspects influenced the formation of groups and their collective capacities in construction.

The third part focuses on the financial management of the construction works by the various actors involved: from the government who allocates funds to beneficiaries and Slum Committees, to the inhabitants who use them to pay materials and labourers or contractors, to the lead NGO who monitors the construction process and informs the government to release funds. The analysis seeks to understand how the implementation mechanism facilitated or hindered the construction process and the centrality of the inhabitants in controlling it. Furthermore, the analysis aims to understand how the inhabitants cope with the higher contribution required in the model and how builders were affected by these conditions. The fourth section summarises the way the collaboration between different actors involved – NGOs, local government, inhabitants, builders – and the division of roles and responsibilities in the implementation system responds to their diversity of interests and visions.

6.1. FROM SLUM DEMOLITION TO THE DELAYS OF THE CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

6.1.1. A BUILDING PROCESS DELAYED AND INCOMPLETE

The implementation of the pilot project was incomplete and with a significant delay compared to initial expectations. The NGO and the builders implicated in the construction considered that the house project could be realized within few months and that their completion would not require in any case more than one year. Conversely, only 4% of the houses were already finished in one year, while the majority was built between two and three years. Furthermore, 28% of the total houses were still not finished after three years from the start of the construction works, and 6% was never started or stopped at an early construction stage and did not reach the roof. After three years the infrastructures had not yet been built and consequently the occupants of the completed houses were not served with basic services and the outdoor spaces continued unmanaged¹.

The construction works officially started in February 2015 when the municipality and the beneficiaries signed the project agreement and the District Collector transferred the land ownership from the State Government to the municipality (Divya Bhaskar 2015), and when the Chief Minister visited the project site to inaugurate the project. However, the construction works began only in June in Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site after the first round of Central Funds was released, and in November in Bhimraonagar due to an inconsistency on the status of the land². Following the demolition of the old houses and the start of the construction works, the process advanced differently in the three project sites. After one year from the beginning of the works, only half of the houses reached the roof level while one fourth of the total was not beyond the plinth level and 10% had not yet started. After two years, around 90% of the houses reached

1 I visited the project sites around six months after the start of the project (winter 2015), and then after 2 years (summer 2017) and after 3 years (summer 2018).

2 Construction started late in Bhimraonagar because some government records indicated it to be privately owned land while it was under the revenue department. After the first installment was released and some inhabitants had already demolished their houses, in September the community went on a hunger strike demanding a confirmation that the land would be allotted to them before clearing the entire site. After the slum dwellers went on strike, the District Collector then accelerated the procedure for land allotment within a month and the layout plan was once again revised for the allotted land for redevelopment.

the roof level and it rose to 95% one year later, with a difference that the houses in which the works were completed beyond the roof level grew from 56% to 72% from the second to the third year. Differently, the works stopped after two years in around 5% of the houses that not reached the roof level.

The construction progressed in a similar way in the three project sites, suggesting that the causes of the delay and non-completion of some houses could be the same (see Table 7). The construction progressed faster in Ramdevnagar in the first period, where 71% of houses had reached the roof level after one year while the other sites lagged behind 50%, but the second year it grew to around 90% across all sites. However, while in Bhimraonagar 87% of houses reached the roof after two years and after did not grow, in the other sites they grew up to 94% and 98%. This was also due to the higher number of non-starters in Bhimraonagar compared to the other sites. After the second year, the construction mostly focused on the realisation of the finishing works after the roof, especially in Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar. In GIDC Relocation Site the number of houses that stopped behind the roof level were higher in absolute terms and only three houses that reached the lintel level reached the roof the third year.

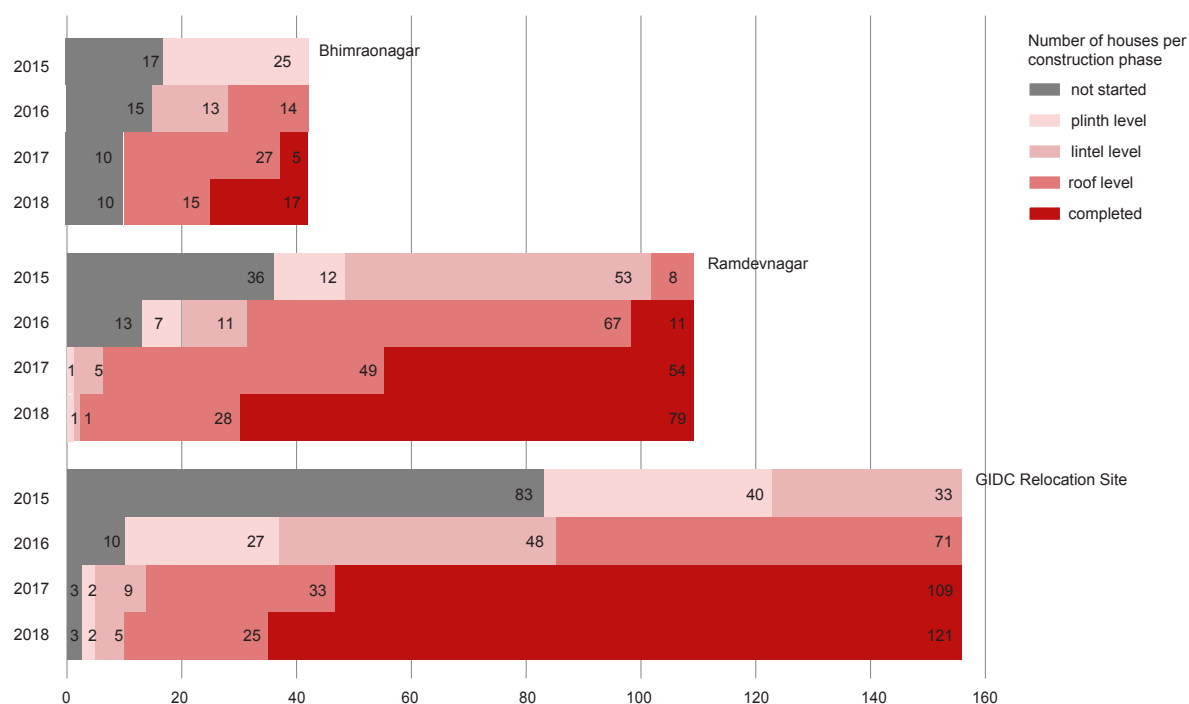


Table 7. Progress of the construction works

Sources: Google Earth, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

The families occupied the houses progressively: only 9% after one year from the start of the construction works and they grew to 66% after three years. Less than three quarters of the families occupied their houses after three years, less than the number of completed houses (the same difference was there after two years). Many beneficiaries were thus prevented to occupy their houses despite they were already finished. Like for the construction works, the occupation of houses progressed in a similar way in the three project sites. However, while in Ramdevnagar the houses were occupied as soon they were completed, in Bhimraonagar the families entered before finishing the works (one third of the families occupied their houses after one year as they reached the roof and the rest followed in the second year before the houses were completed), and on the contrary in GIDC Relocation Site all the families entered only at the second year but leaving many houses unoccupied. This suggests that the construction was managed differently in the three project sites, as only in GIDC Relocation Site the families were prevented to occupy their houses despite they were completed and continued occupying temporary accommodations.

Analysing the distribution of the work progression, similar patterns emerge in the three sites. After six months from the start of the construction works, groups of houses that advanced more rapidly were those occupied by the families linked to the communities leaders located at the centre of the settlements while the construction of houses peripheral started later. The same pattern continued in the next years but not in GIDC Relocation Site where it depended on the capacity of the different groups. Furthermore, while in Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar the progression of entire groups of houses advanced at the same time, in GIDC Relocation Site the advancement differed since the beginning between families in the same group. The same pattern emerges in the occupation progress of the houses.

6.1.2. CONFLICTING INTERESTS BETWEEN BENEFICIARIES

The project implementation started with the demolition of the existing structures and the preparation of the land for the new construction. This phase took place between April and May 2015 in Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site, but not in Bhimraonagar where it was delayed until November 2015. In Ramdevnagar, different builders from within and outside the community entrusted for the construction of groups of houses

also managed the house demolition, in Bhimraonagar each family demolished its house, and in GIDC Relocation Site the demolition of the existing houses was managed by the committee members and was carried out by the contractors in charge of the houses construction, except some families who demolished their own houses.

The temporary houses in GIDC Relocation Site occupied only a small part of the project area that was mostly covered by vegetation. Its removal was needed to start the excavation work for the plinth but both Hunnarshala and the municipality withdrew from this responsibility. R.A. from a Muslim group (group 7) helped the slum committee to finance the house demolition and the cutting of the vegetation, but later he could not recover the expense from the beneficiaries so that his house is still not finished:

"The land was ready to start the work but since it was full of forest the organization was saying how can we start, it is not our responsibility to clean this. So we went to the municipality but they said it is not our area, it falls under Madhapar [...]. Officers were not paying interest to this and we thought now it is very late and there is the possibility that grant maybe goes back. So I called the councillor and for half a day [the municipality] sent machines and they worked few hours then they went back. So finally I cleaned the land during 8 days, 75,000 Rs. I paid for machines. People said we have no money nowadays but when installments will come we will give you back, but not even 1 Rs. I got yet"³.

The demolition did not take place at once but was progressive as some families no longer agreed with the project. In Ramdevnagar, some families changed their mind because their children married after the survey, and Hunnarshala rejected their request to entitle them other individual houses as the number of beneficiaries had already been sanctioned. Hunnarshala persuaded some of them to demolish their houses but blocked the release of installments of two families that refused to demolish the old houses, as they wanted to leave them for their second son who married during the project. But the main reason why they opposed the project was that unlike the other families they purchase from the community leader R.V. the land they occupy, that is larger than the housing plots attributed by the project. MV., head of an isolated family entitled to one house for the parents and one for their married son's family, describes the problem in

3 R.A., personal communication, 19-06-2018.

this way:

"I bought this land from R.V. at 5,000 Rs., now we are getting only one house but we already have a house and a temple, if we become beneficiaries we lose all this. We paid 5,000 in cash, we purchase land and then built the house, we are here since 10 years [...]. This land nearby is also of us and my son will built his house, but the organization said there will be a road so we agreed because we don't want to stop the project, but we don't want to lose money we already paid. The Collector came and said this is a good temple, no need to demolish but the NGO said maybe in the future they will do, so it's a controversy. We want to talk with the NGO but R.V. doesn't allow us, and he says to NGO that we don't participate, now the NGO has this idea about us"⁴.

The other family (group 8) was entitled of two house units: one for V.P., his wife and unmarried sons, and one for his married son and his family. As the demand of V.P. to entitle a third house to another son was rejected, he refused to demolish his old houses:

"I am just making my son's future because I have land and enough money to build houses so I am just waiting for legal process [...]. This house I did not get from my parents, I built it and I doesn't want to lose what I obtained from hard work. Instead R.V. got the land from his family, but not me [...], my house is not on the R.V.'s land, it's my own land [...]. 12 months ago I went to the Collector office, and I applied for registering this land at my name. So I filled a form that was registered but the Collector never replied to me [...]. Now I have a married son who has no house, so it is up to my son what he wants to do, if my son wants to live there, I have nothing against it"⁵.

However, the house V.P. refused to demolish blocked the construction of 4 houses allotted to the *Bharwad* families (group 11), as it falls within their courtyard (see Image 28). These families built and occupied their houses but could not build the plinth, the

4 M.V., personal communication, 16-04-2018.

5 V.P. personal communication, 23-08-2017.

boundary and the stairs and could not bring their cattle in the courtyard⁶. As the *Bharwad* families put pressure on V.P. to demolish his house, the latter attacked some of their members. The community took side against V.P. and denounced the attack to the police who intervened and beat him. Following the incident, the community appealed to Hunnarshala which refused to give support and blamed the slum committee, but stopped the payment of state funds to V.P. To discharge from the responsibility of V.P.'s violent reactions, the committee sought consent among other communities by giving a press note in the local newspaper *Kacch Mitra*, and asked to the Collector the permission to demolish V.P.'s house (see Image 29). The president of the committee R.V. explains the problem:

"I want to highlight this problem in front of other people in other areas, but the committee has no money for press note or making video, suppose they are asking 50 Rs. per house but no one agrees, so we went to *Kacch Mitra* [...] That person is very aggressive, he throws stones, so we want to go by official way, we don't fight each other, we are afraid of that person, suppose in the future we demolish that house, we are afraid he put a court case on us or commit suicide"⁷.



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 08-2017



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 07-2017

Image 28. Old house not yet demolished preventing to complete new houses (left).

Image 29. Community leaders indicating their press note on the newspaper (right).

6 During my interview in 2017, the *Bharward* family owned 12 cows but they could take only 2 in front of their houses and left the rest out of the settlement. They wanted to take all the cows in the courtyard but first they had to build the plinth and the boundary in the courtyard, and cover the courtyard with a shed but they could not as the V.P.'s house was still occupying their courtyard (E.B., personal communication, 15-08-2017).

7 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017.

However, three years later the request to demolish the house has not been accepted yet and the problem remains unresolved. While the refusal of M.V. and V.P. hindered other families to finish the construction, Hunnarshala resolved other situations of disagreement by modifying the layout plan. For example, a part of the land that R.V. claims as his property was occupied by Muslim families who did not want to participate to the project. Hunnarshala tried to persuade them to leave the land free for the construction of four houses but their refusal forced the NGO to modify the layout plan and to move the houses away. During the construction process a *Devi Pujak* family from Rawalvadi built a family temple near the houses of related families in Ramdevnagar. Hunnarshala tried to dissuade the family from building the temple as it would prevent the construction of a house but finally they changed the layout plan and moved the house elsewhere.

In Bhimraonagar, two families did not demolish their houses because they disagreed with some changes to the project that were done after its approval by the government. A joint family (group 4) who became beneficiaries of two house units refused to demolish their houses when the individual housing surface was reduced from 65 sq.m to 47 sq.m. As this family occupied a larger land where the layout plan places another joint family (group 5), which is beneficiary of 2 houses, the latter could not demolish and continued to occupy the old houses, as in the project area no more land was free where they could be relocated. For this reason, another joint family in the same group that is beneficiary of 2 houses could not complete the construction of the courtyard and created a temporary side extension. As a result, the refusal of one family to demolish their houses prevented four other households from building or completing their new houses⁸.

Another joint family of three brothers (group 1) beneficiary of 3 house units refused to participate to the project as the plot surface was reduced and the houses orientation was changed to the south after the project approval. The family did not agree to build the new houses according to the layout plan as orienting a house to the south is not allowed by the *Vashtu* principles followed by the community. However, also in the previous version of the layout plan their houses were oriented south, so it seems that they also did not realize that before the implementation, suggesting a problem of passing information between NGOs and beneficiaries. The family continued claiming their right as beneficiaries and held Hunnarshala responsible for modifying the project without their agreement, as claimed by R.B.:

8 R.B., personal communication, 27-06-2018.

"At that time, the front of these 3 houses were looking south, so we applied to the municipality and the organization saying this is our family tradition, but organization said no, now the project passed and we cannot change the plan, so we did not accept to participate to the project [...]. We got first installment of 50,000 Rs., but then we got a letter from the NGO and the municipality, saying we are not beneficiaries, please give back the first installment. You said we are beneficiaries and we got money from the central government [...] or otherwise you give us a written answer of what is the reason why we are not beneficiaries. Since then we didn't receive any answer from the authorities, the municipality or the organisation, still we have these money in our bank"⁹.

In GIDC Relocation Site, the house construction was delayed as some temporary houses were still occupied by families who refused to demolish their houses as they pretended that the new house were built in the same location. 6 months after the beginning of the demolition, the construction of 25 houses was still not started as old houses occupied their plots. The NGOs persuaded most of them to demolish their houses but six months later they appealed to the municipality together with other residents waiting to start the construction, forcing them to leave their houses¹⁰.

In the three settlements, the construction started as the housing plots were freed, thus some families had to wait until their housing plots continued to be occupied by the old houses that the owners refused to demolish: while the owner-driven model allows the individual households to build their houses in a flexible way, its extension to the whole settlement requires that all the beneficiary families agree. Their disagreement questions the assumption that all the families accept likewise principles of land redistribution, counting and enumeration, and reorganization of the settlement plan at the base of the model, which replace other aspects such as the inheritance of the land and the growth of families over time.

The acceptance of the new rules by the communities creates distinctions among families, which sideline those who disagree with these rules. However, this happened because the project was implemented without the consent of the whole community, since they agreed after collective meetings but many families did not know the project in detail and they

9 P.B., personal communication, 27-06-2018.

10 D.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 28-10-2015.

knew only later as they asked to Hunnarshala. While consent forms were collected from all the families and were included in the Detailed Project Report (DPR), it seemed to be rather a formality or anyway disconnected from a real understanding and consent by beneficiaries with the project terms.

In Ramdevnagar, the beneficiaries who opposed the project, as they asked that their sons who married got houses, contested the entitlement of houses to the surveyed families. In Bhimraonagar, the families opposed the project as it was modified after its approval: the surface reduction of the individual housing plots was decided within the community without the agreement of all the families. The process of project preparation implicated mostly the committee members who were entrusted to share information and decisions with all the community, but this happened at different levels depending on the family ties. The families who refused to demolish their houses have lower relationship with the committee leaders. Their refusal prevented other families to build their houses but for the same reason, the rest of the community did not support the latter to resolve the problem.

6.1.3. THE TRANSIT ACCOMMODATION: WHERE TO STAY DURING THE CONSTRUCTION?

Despite avoiding the creation of transit camps is presented by Hunnarshala as one of the advantages of the owner-driven approach, in the pilot project this occurred only in part and the transit accommodation was managed differently in the three project sites and by the individual families (see Table 8). In Ramdevnagar, 44 families continued to occupy their old houses before the demolition, 33 families built temporary houses, 12 families were hosted by relatives in the settlements of Bhuteshwar and Rawalvadi, and only 3 families moved in rent.

Many existing houses whose location corresponded with the perimetral roads and non-residential surfaces were not demolished as the physical infrastructures were to be built after the houses. As a result, the families who lived in these houses (groups 1, 2, 8) could occupy them during the construction process, as well as did the four families who are beneficiaries for upgradation. Few families managed the demolition in a progressive way, like the family of K.V. (group 3) who demolished only a portion of the old house to free the space for the construction of the new house, while they continued to occupy

the remaining rooms of the old house¹¹ (see Image 30). These families were advantaged as they did not need a transit accommodation: after 3 years, around 15 of them still occupy the old houses as the construction of the new ones as well as the infrastructures were delayed.

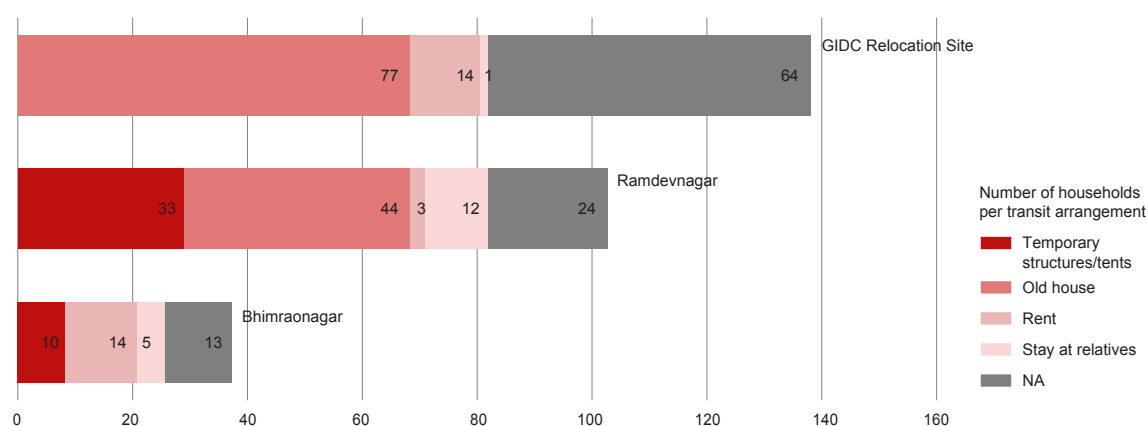


Table 8. Transit accommodation arrangements

Sources: interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

Among the families who built temporary accommodations, few built tents near the construction site of their new houses, 6 occupied the wasteland to the west of Ramdevnagar, and few other built tents on a land owned by a relative who lived in Bharwadwas. The delay of the project implementation affected most of them as they lived in difficult conditions for a long time. Because of this, some left the temporary accommodations even though the construction of their houses was not finished, and started occupying the houses of relatives that meanwhile were completed.

For example, K.S. affirms that during the houses construction, his family (group 10) occupied more houses: they slept in the back room of their house, during the day they stayed in the sons of R.V.'s houses that were completed, and they cooked in the kitchen of their old house behind¹². This flexible arrangement to occupy the houses during the construction process was facilitated by the ties between related families, while it was absent among distant families. For example, J.P. (group 13) who is widow and beneficiary for a house, was forced to stay in her temporary house even after the construction of the new one was completed, since the builder who is also a beneficiary and a relative of her, prevented her from occupying the new house until she had paid the

¹¹ J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

¹² K.S., personal communication, 17-08-2017.

total cost¹³ (see Image 31).



Image 30. Progressive demolition of a old house occupied during the construction (left).

Image 31. Temporary houses occupied after the new house was completed (right).

In Bhimraonagar, 14 families rented a house during the construction process, 10 families built temporary houses and only 5 families were hosted by relatives in other areas. Unlike in Ramdevnagar, the construction of the new houses required to demolish all the existing houses as their emplacement corresponded to the new ones. Except three families (group 2) who built tents in front of the construction site of their new houses to the north-west of the settlement, no other family built temporary houses on the borders as the new construction occupied all the project site. Other families (groups 3-4) were hosted by the *Bakali* community and built tents on their farmland.

Excluding 5 families who were hosted by relatives in the settlements of Rawalvadi and Bhujodi, the other families who moved in rent in Rawalvadi spent a monthly rate of around 1,500 Rs. The transit accommodation represented a burden for most of the families in Bhimraonagar, both financial for those who stayed in rent, or for the difficulties to live in tents for a long time. Some beneficiaries explains that a main difficulty they faced in the project was living in tents as often the water often came inside and they had to move away to go to the toilet, whereas their old houses had toilets¹⁴. This is one of the reasons why the majority of the families occupied the new houses sooner than in the other project sites: about 50% of the families moved to the new houses 6 months after the demolition, and the rest followed a year later (see Image 32).

13 J.P., personal communication, 13-04-2018.

14 H.J., personal communication, 25-06-2018.

In GIDC Relocation Site, 80% of the families living out of the project area continued to occupy their old houses during the construction, and before moving to the new houses. More than half owned their houses and left them to family members, sold or rented them out, but few abandoned or demolished them as they were in poor conditions. 20 families whose houses were demolished as they were located within the project area, rented other houses near relatives or families from the same community in Sardarnagar or Angoor Society in GIDC Relocation Site, where they paid a monthly rate of 1,000-1,500 Rs. during the houses construction. Few occupied temporary houses in the first three sectors where they could pay less for houses in bad conditions. Some residents were forced to occupy the temporary accommodations until the completion of the project that in most cases was delayed by two years, as their contractors did not allow them to enter until they had not paid the entire amount, creating a burden for those who stayed in rent during the house construction¹⁵ (see Image 33).



Image 32. A house occupied before the construction completion in Bhimraonagar (left).

Image 33. Beneficiary occupying a temporary house waiting for installment release (right).

15 F.K., personal communication, 26-07-2017.

6.2. COLLECTIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE BUILDING PROCESS

6.2.1. THE CENTRAL ROLE OF THE FAMILIES IN MANAGING THE HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

The owner-driven model of construction places the inhabitants or owners-occupiers at the centre of the construction process, either by building themselves their own houses or by employing labour workers or masons to carry out the work. Furthermore, the approach of owner-driven slum rehabilitation as it was proposed in Bhuj implicates the slum dwellers collectively in the construction process with the objective of community development. The community participation in the pilot project implementation differed substantially among the slum communities, where three main forms of organization emerged. In Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar, the families managed to organize the construction by themselves – in Ramdevnagar some beneficiaries built most of the houses organized in groups whereas in Bhimraonagar each family built its own house individually – whereas in GIDC Relocation Site most of the beneficiaries entrusted the house construction to contractors (see Table 9).

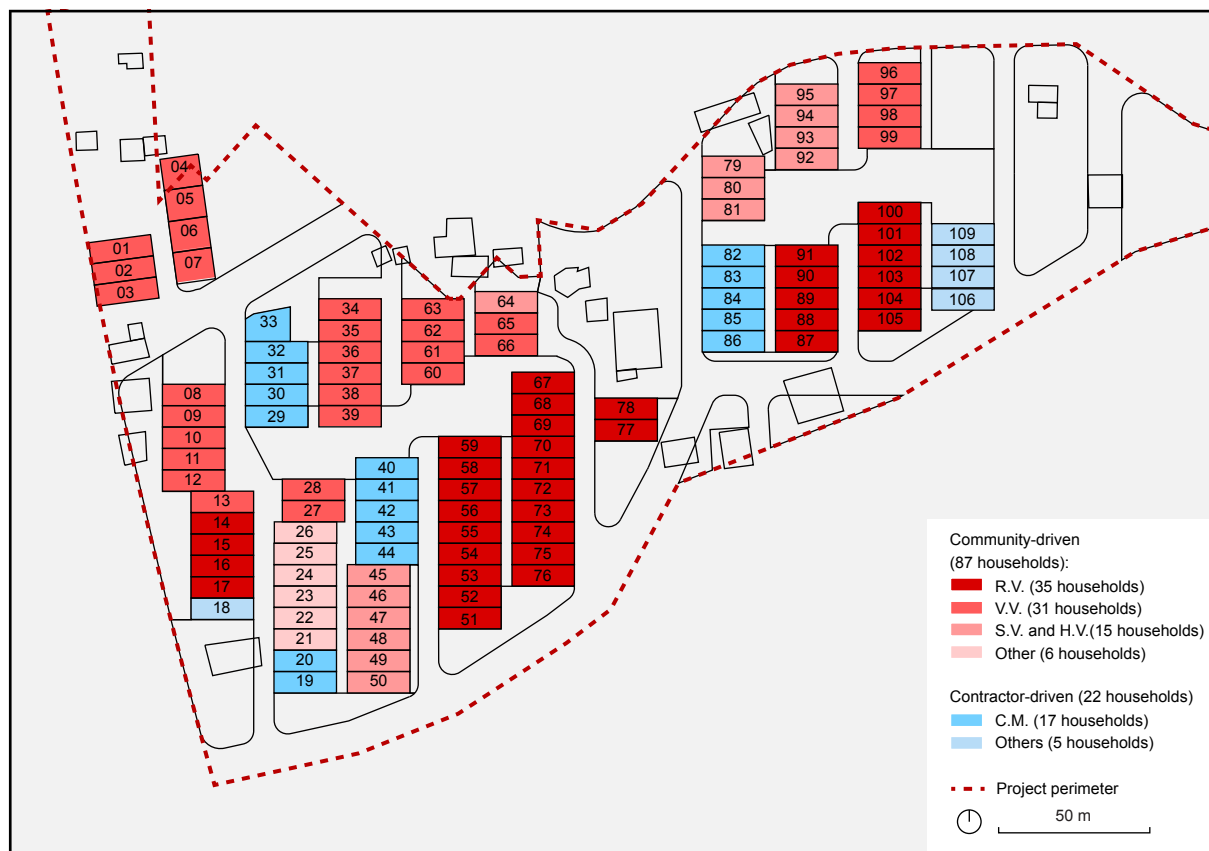
	Owner-driven		Contractor-driven		Unbuilt		TOTAL
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr
Ramdevnagar	87	75.0%	22	19.0%	7	6.0%	116
Bhimraonagar	33	78.6%	0	0.0%	9	21.4%	42
GIDC	17	10.9%	138	88.5%	1	0.6%	156
TOTAL	137	43.6%	160	51.0%	17	5.4%	314

Table 9. Collective management of the construction process

Sources: interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

In Ramdevnagar, the families organized in three groups built 81 houses (75% of the total houses), while the rest entrusted the construction to contractors and masons. The three groups were managed by some beneficiaries who built the houses of their relatives such as siblings,

children and grandchildren, as well as those of other families: R.V. built 35 houses, V.V. built 31 houses, and S.V. and H.V. together built 15 houses. These builders belong to families (groups 1, 3, 4) who played a main role in the community mobilization as they supported the project and constituted the slum committee and influenced the way the construction of houses was organized and divided in groups (see Map 17).



Map 17. House groups by builders in Ramdevnagar

Sources: Google Earth, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

According to them, the community leader R.V. (group 1), who opposed the project and was forced by the other families to participate, became president of the committee and was initially entrusted for the construction of the houses, to reaffirm his traditional role as community leader. However, Hunnarshala prevented R.V. from building such a big amount of houses because he was not an expert in constructions and did not have enough capacities. The houses he built were reduced to 35 and the other families organized the construction of the remaining houses¹⁶. R.V. explains that as other families started to build their houses, he "learned by observing what they were doing". He hired masons from outside Ramdevnagar

¹⁶ R.V. built 11 houses for his family (group 1), 15 for other families of the clan Vaghela (group 2), 5 for the Solanki family (group 10) and 4 for Parmar families.

who explained to him how to realize the construction works, and supervised his relatives who helped the masons to realize the works as labours¹⁷.

Yet because his limited experience, he faced difficulties to build the houses within budget and completed first the houses of closest relatives. After 2 years from the beginning of the construction, their houses were already finished and gradually occupied, while 19 were still in construction 1 year later and the families started to occupy them by august 2018. The families beneficiaries of these houses (group 2) continued to live in their old houses that had not been demolished, but the blood ties with R.V. seemed to hinder their capacity to take decisions. Differently, a family (group 4) related with V.V., entrusted the construction of their houses to the latter as they were not satisfied with the quality of materials used by R.V., and as he asked them to pay more if they wanted their houses to be built using better materials¹⁸.

The other two groups faced fewer delays and two years after the start of the project almost all the houses were completed and occupied. The group of houses built by V.V. was the first to start as Hunnarshala built four houses for a family (group 4), as a demonstration to convince the inhabitants who were opposing the project and to present it to the government¹⁹. Including his family members, V.V. took charge of the construction of 31 houses for other families who "were in need of help for building or looked for a contractor"²⁰. He entrusted the construction of their houses to D.P., his brother's son in law who is contractor, and acted as an intermediary with the inhabitants from whom he collected the funds²¹. The third group of 15 houses was built by two contractors, S.V. and H.V., who are brothers and residents of Ramdevnagar²².

The three groups managed the construction process in a similar way. R.V. and V.V. bargained with whole-sellers located in Bhuj and purchased bulk materials for all the houses in order to reduce the costs. S.V. and H.V. purchased the materials on credit thanks to the working relationship they have with the whole-sellers. Few families participated to execute the works in order to reduce the labour costs, mostly those with blood ties with the builders. For example, S.V. was helped only by his brothers and sons who participated in the construction works of their houses as he did not have to pay them, whereas he would have paid other

17 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017.

18 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

19 Ibid.

20 V.V., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

21 V.V. built 12 houses for his family (group 4) and two other families of the clan Vaghela (groups 2-6), for the Bharwad family (group 11) and for a Parmar family (group 8).

22 S.V. and H.V. built 11 houses for their family (group 3), 2 for another Vaghela family (group 2), and 2 for a Parmar family (group 7).

beneficiaries without blood relations to help him²³. Similarly, only the sons of R.V. helped him to build their houses²⁴.

The family of J.V. (group 3) helped D.P. to build only their own house, as most of the other families did since they were busy with their own house. The majority did not participate as they could not leave their jobs, and entrusted all the works to the builders²⁵. Finally, the participation of families in the works execution was very limited and in the three groups they paid labour workers and masons to realize the works. The builders also realized the finishing works or were helped by beneficiaries who are specialised in these works. For example, S.V. and H.V. put the plaster on walls and the tiles on the floors, but entrusted the installation of plumbing, doors and windows to a beneficiary, T.V. who did the same in the houses built by R.V., and entrusted labour workers for realizing the electricity connection and to put the colours on the walls.

Differently from Ramdevnagar, in Bhimraonagar all the families built entirely their own houses from the demolitions of the old houses until the completion of the construction, except some finishing works they entrusted to labour workers and masons. These families were facilitated to manage individually the construction as the majority work in the construction sector as contractors or masons. 8 households hired labour workers and masons from the area of Rawalvadi whom they already knew from working relationship, to help them to realise specialised works such as the plastering. However, the family ties favoured them to organize the construction process in a collective way, for example in the purchase of materials and the site preparation and demolition, as described by the community leader J.K.:

"Here there are only four, five elders and all their sons are living here so they live like a family. They realized that if individuals go alone to purchase materials it will be more costly, but not so much if they went all together. So they went to the market and purchased big bulks of materials so that it was cheaper. This was possible because they built by themselves the houses, they have no contractors"²⁶.

While each family built its house, few beneficiaries working as contractors helped related families to prepare the centering and to manage the construction site of their houses. For example, K.M. (group 6), who had experience as a contractor in Kacch, built only his own

23 V.V., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

24 R.V., personal communication, 20-07-2017.

25 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

26 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

house but helped his brother to design his joint house where he lives with the father, as well as some houses of other families²⁷. The households' autonomy to build their own houses facilitated by their employment in the construction sector, allowed the majority to realize the project in a shorter time compared to the other project sites: in six months, around 30% of the households managed to finish the construction of the roof and occupied the houses even though they were not finished, and a year later more than 80% of the households were already living in the houses. However, different resources and capacities of the families influenced the project progression. Those who built and occupied their houses later have fewer family ties with the beneficiaries who work as contractors and with the members of the slum committee.

6.2.2. ELITE CAPTURE BY COMMUNITY LEADERS

With few exceptions of households who built their own houses, in GIDC Relocation Site the majority entrusted the construction of their houses to contractors. Initially, only the groups dominated by households from communities of upper castes (group 12-16) appointed their own contractors, while the construction for the rest of the Hindu groups (groups 1-4 and 9-11) was entrusted to contractors by the president of the committee S.C., and another active member named R.A. that the Muslim families (groups 5-8) appointed as their leader. They aimed to centralize the control of the project implementation for supporting the individual households that R.A. describes as "illiterate and unable to go to the bank, fill up forms and transfer to a contractor"²⁸.

According to them, the families accepted their proposal to intermediate with the contractors by collecting their funds and paying the latter to realize the works, but some beneficiaries disagreed with the way they managed the funds. For example, a beneficiary affirms that R.A. and S.C. withdrew the first installment from the bank account of a neighbour without his consent, and later they gave the excuse that he was not paying them. However, in this way they ignored his decision as the beneficiary's signature is required to withdraw the installments from the beneficiary's bank account²⁹.

Many beneficiaries affirm that whereas they initially accepted S.C. to take control of the project as they trusted that she worked for the interests of the community, later she seemed to be driven mostly by individual interests as she saw the project as an opportunity to get rich. In

27 K.M., personal communication, 25-06-2018.

28 R.A., personal communication, 19-06-2018.

29 D.C., personal communication, 06-04-2018.

fact, she tried to manage the construction of as many houses as possible that she appointed to a contractor named Sajid, and she retained a part of the funds from the beneficiaries that she was supposed to pay to the contractor. In order to limit the amount of houses taken up for construction by each contractor, Hunnarshala reduced the houses entrusted to Sajid but he managed anyway to build more than 60 houses in the name of other people, according to the Hunnarshala's architects³⁰. Furthermore, she attempted to extend her control by taking over part of the houses that R.A. entrusted to one contractor:

"This was under my responsibility and I took L. Pathan to be contractor, everything was decided. Plots were drawn on ground, and on the next day at early morning, even beneficiaries were not aware what's going on their plot, few people came and started to work and to dig base. So they said to me that L. Pathan's workers are doing work, and he said no, who is doing work on this line that is under my contract? So I went to know that Sajid started working on this line, then I opposed him and S.C. came and stood saying now whatever you want to do, Sajid will build the 11 houses in this line [...]. Money have not arrived yet because it was time to dig before the first installment, only to get contract of this line for Sajid, to hijack the line he started to work here, so L. Pathan never worked on these houses and yet they are not finished"³¹.

S.C. tried to take advantage of the project by asking Sajid a percentage to carry out the work, and he agreed to work without a contract. However, Sajid was unable to build the houses. According to R.A., it was the first time that Sajid was doing this kind of work and he saw so much money altogether so he became "crazy": he was not taking care of the work and has spent the money, and he lost the control over the labours who started working independently³². According to the architects of Hunnarshala, since the beginning Sajid used more material than necessary to build the plinth, which he was unable to complete using the first installment:

"A lot of construction that happened in the government supervision has very bad quality because the contractor wants to make money [...]. So probably is what

30 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015.

31 Ibid.

32 R.A., personal communication, 19-06-2018.

this contractor might have expected, but since we use technology that requires quite an amount of supervision and quality, he was going back [...]. Instead of foundation that have to be 2½ feet wide, he was taking foundations that are 3 feet wide so he himself went to spend more. Now he wants money but we said it's your mistake [...] so he is very dependent on when the money is released but the municipality is not that [fast] to release money, so he is not able to spend more because he has no money [...]. Now we are not able to continue because the construction is too bad, so the solution that we found out is that it should be redone [...], we'll ask to remove that foundation and do a new foundation, and he will be paid only for the new foundation, not the charges for the previous one"³³.

However, Sajid was unable to finish the plinth, also because the installments were managed by S.C. who took over a part for herself, but neither the residents nor the NGOs could return the funds to the beneficiaries as the arrangement had not been formalised. L.P., leader of the *Vaghri* groups (groups 1-2) describes the situation in this way:

"In the initial stage we got 50,000 Rs. in the bank account and the organization said we had to pay 35,000 to the contractor and then after finished [the plinth] again 35,000 Rs. in the same system, but S.C. made us agree to give her 50,000 Rs. all together. How much she gave to Sajid this is a mystery for us. As he didn't start the work [of the second level], we complained and he replied within 15-20 days I will start but he didn't, so we went to the organization and said now what to do? The organization held a meeting of S.C., Sajid and us and they accounted all the things and costs [...]. It was difficult to find out who was playing mischief with us as regards our funds: [Sajid] said that S.C. did not pay him full amount, and S.C. said she gave him full amount, then the matter stuck because there was no written evidence"³⁴.

Beneficiaries affirm that they were "victims of the system", along with the NGO: Hunnarshala forced Sajid to demolish and rebuild the plinth at his own expense because it was not built properly, but the latter was unable to rebuild the plinth for lack of resources (see Image 34). Hunnarshala was forced to demand the release of the second installment to the beneficiaries,

33 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015.

34 L.P., personal communication, 08-06-2018.

who used it to pay the completion of the plinth that they were expected to have already paid.



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 10-2015

 A photograph of a handwritten ledger or checkbook page. A finger is pointing to a specific entry. The page contains a table with columns for dates, descriptions, and monetary amounts.

Date	Particulars	Dr. (₹)	Cr. (₹)	Balance
20-08-15	IN BY CASH		1000.00	1000.00Cr
20-08-15	IN BY NEFT IN BHUJ MUNICIPALITY RAJ	50000.00		51000.00Cr
06-09-15	Int. 12-06-2015 To 31-08-2015		139.00	51139.00Cr
18-11-15				5139.00Cr
29-01-16	NEFT IN BHUJ MUNICIPALITY RAJIV	75000.00		74139.00Cr
02-02-16				1339.00Cr
07-02-16	Int. 01-09-2015 To 29-02-2016		439.00	1378.00Cr
15-04-16	Int. 01-03-2016 To 31-03-2016		16.00	1594.00Cr
19-08-16	NEFT IN BHUJ MUNICIPALITY RAJIV	60000.00		61594.00Cr
11-08-16	SELF WD	60000.00		1594.00Cr
09-09-16	Int. 01-06-2016 To 31-08-2016		25.00	1617.00Cr
03-10-16	NEFT IN BHUJ MUNICIPALITY RAJIV	75000.00		76617.00Cr
06-10-16	SELF WD		24.00	1841.00Cr
12-12-16	Int. 01-09-2016 To 30-11-2016		16.00	1857.00Cr
29-03-17	Int. 01-12-2016 To 31-03-2017		17.00	1674.00Cr
03-06-17	Int. 01-03-2017 To 31-05-2017		17.00	1691.00Cr
17-09-17	Int. 01-06-2017 To 31-08-2017		11000.00	32691.00Cr
28-11-17	NEFT IN BHUJ MUNICIPALITY RAJIV		24.00	32715.00Cr
01-12-17	Int. 01-09-2017 To 30-11-2017			

Source: Francesco Bogoni, 06-2018

Image 34. Demolition of houses' plinth because of improper execution (left).

Image 35. Delays of installment release in a beneficiary's checkbook (right).

A contractor introduced by Hunnarshala built the plinth and finished the construction of 18 houses in the *Vaghri* groups (groups 1-2) and 5 other houses, while the NGO provided a loan to the beneficiaries to pay him. Other 12 households withdrew from Sajid the construction of their houses that they entrusted to other contractors who completed the work³⁵. However, 35 houses continued to be under the responsibility of Sajid as the households had their money implicated and since no contractor would replace another one that is supposed to finish a work, according to the Hunnarshala's architects. As Sajid completed the roofs and the beneficiaries received the last fourth installment needed to finish the house construction, S.C. herself took the place of Sajid as contractor to finish the 35 houses that she entrusted to her husband who is mason. However, according to some beneficiaries, she did not complete their house when they paid her the last installment and she asked them to demand another loan to Hunnarshala so she could do the remaining work.

35 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015.

6.3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECT

6.3.1. LACK OF COLLABORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND THE INSTALLMENTS DELAYS

One of the main reasons of the delay in the project implementation was the slowness of the release of state funds to the beneficiaries. For most of them, this was the main difficulty they faced in the project, as it caused the extension of the construction process to process to 2 or 3 years, whereas it was initially expected to be completed in 8 months. The problem occurred since the first installment whose purpose was to support the construction costs in advance, that the government released 6 months after the signature of the project contract between the beneficiaries and the municipality³⁶. To not accumulate further delay, the communities in Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site anticipated the expenses to demolish their houses. In Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site the works started between April and June 2015 but the government released the first installment in August and transferred it to the beneficiaries' accounts in the following months³⁷ (see Image 35).

Very few beneficiaries affirm to have received the installments regularly or with a delay limited to a few weeks, while all the others report delays of several months. For example, S.V., who built 15 houses in Ramdevnagar, anticipated 11,000 Rs. per house to pay 6 labour workers who demolished the houses in one week, and dig the land for the foundations in 2 more weeks after Hunnarshala marked the plot, so that in one month he was ready to build the foundations before the first installment was released³⁸. In Bhimraonagar, the construction started by November 2015 but the beneficiaries also received the first installment after they started the demolitions. Hereafter, the next installments arrived also with constant delays that increased at the end of 2016 due to the economic slowdown following the demonetisation reform. As a consequence, many beneficiaries whose houses were finished by that time received the last installment at least 6 months later³⁹.

36 The contract signed in February 2015 between the beneficiaries and the municipality specifies that the former would receive the first installment of 50,000 Rs.in advance, at the time of the contract.

37 During my interviews in GIDC Relocation Site, some beneficiaries showed me their passbook that indicates the payment of the first installment marked as salary at the end of 2015, and in some cases going up to April 2016.

38 S.V., personal communication, 21-08-2018.

39 The final installment is released after the completion of the works that include the plaster and color on the

Most of the families who financed the construction with their own resources to cope with the delays of installments were in fact unable to bear the costs of the last stages and finished the construction. Therefore, many started to occupy the houses before the construction was completed, especially the families who stayed in rent during the houses construction and could not bear the rent expenses for too long. Although the families in Bhimraonagar succeeded to build their houses quite soon, some people left their job to cope with the delays of installments and accelerate the construction of their houses. Even those who succeeded to complete their houses remained dependent on the release of the last installment to finance extra works, as they invested their own resources. Because of this, in some cases the contractors prevented them from entering the houses as they had not paid the full construction expenses, and were forced to occupy the old houses or houses in rent even when the new ones were completed⁴⁰.

The delay of installments was caused by the slowness of government to release funds, as lot of time passed since the application by beneficiaries at every stage of the construction. One of the committee members in Bhimraonagar explains that the reason given by Hunnarshala for the delay was that the certification and payment mechanism consists of too many steps:

"We asked the NGO why and they said it's about document system. Each time the NGO has to be informed that a level is finished, so they come and check that house is ok, they have to inform Nagar Palika, then from the NGO to Gandhinagar, then money arrive to Nagar Palika, then they put in the bank, then when installment arrive the NGO has to inform us, and we have to go to the bank. We repeated all this cycle more times so we faced 5-6 months delay for every passage"⁴¹.

However, the local institutions rather than the State Government were responsible for the delay. The beneficiaries affirm that while Hunnarshala followed regularly the works and sent the certificates of completion of each construction stage to the municipality, the Chief Officer of the municipality who was charged to make the installments available to the beneficiaries,

exterior walls, the construction of an upper tank on the roof, and the installation of the taps. Upon completion of the works, the beneficiaries inform Hunnarshala, who visit the house and fill the last completion checklist that they submit to the central government together with photos of the house to obtain the last installment.

40 K.P., personal communication, 13-04-2018.

41 S.O., personal communication, 11-04-2018.

did not sign the cheques⁴². However, S. Khavda in GIDC Relocation Site explains that in some cases Hunnarshala waited for a whole group of houses to reach the same level before sending their certificates altogether to the municipality, causing a delay for beneficiaries who had already completed the work at that level⁴³.

According to the managing director of Hunnarshala, this happened as Bhuj municipality suffered from political instability after the change of central government in 2014, and as it withdrew from its role in the pilot project because of its low capacities to manage the project. The managing director of Hunnarshala explains that the municipality did not take charge of setting up the Technical Cell which is under its responsibilities as mentioned by the contract with the beneficiaries, even after Hunnarshala obtained the funds from the state government to hire personnel in the Technical Cell:

" We managed with the government and the government was ready to pay for those people a special slum rehabilitation cell within the municipality, so we made a proposal [...] that there is one engineer, one social worker, one accountant, separate infrastructure, so that there is no burden on the municipality to hire these people for two years, if these people were there they were enough to care about the project [...]. We actually organize interview also, we forced them, give the head in the newspaper so that we can put a panel for the interview, they have just advised interview but then didn't take any [step] for an interview"⁴⁴.

In addition to the houses construction, the municipality delayed the release of the funds allotted for building the physical infrastructures. Initially, Hunnarshala organised the project implementation in two phases of construction of the houses and the infrastructure, but after the Central Government awarded the funds in early 2017 and as the project got delayed, they asked to the municipality to release 108,000 Rs. to the beneficiaries which were entitled for the construction of the infrastructures. However, the municipality refused to allocate the funds to the beneficiaries and pretended to take over the construction of the infrastructure in their place. According to the organization's managing director, the municipality would not be interested to outsource the construction of the infrastructures as they get a percentage from

42 Whereas the contract between the beneficiaries and the municipality requires to complete the construction within 9 months after the release of the installments in order to limit its duration, it does not mention how soon the municipality has to release the installments to the beneficiaries, as it is supposed to do it as soon as they are transferred by the government.

43 D.H., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

44 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 18-07-2018.

their contractor to realize the works. Furthermore, the problem appears also as a conflict of power between the municipality and the NGO, in the words of its vice-chairman:

"In fact they [the municipality] are an elective body so they need to show to electors what they did in order to maintain their credibility. If NGOs like Hunnarshala play a major role in this project, they lose importance and it is not good for them. So they asked us a percentage for allowing us to do this project, but we refused"⁴⁵.

As Hunnarshala rejected it, the municipality stopped the release of the state funds for the infrastructures until Hunnarshala agreed that the municipality built the infrastructures instead of the slum committees. Even so, the municipality has continued to avoid to build the infrastructures, giving "excuses" to the numerous requests from the communities to start the works. For example, some families affirm that the municipality's officers replied that they still did not receive the state funds and that they could start only when all the houses in a settlement will be finished, both reasons discharged by Hunnarshala. According to its managing director:

"The reason not given by the CO is that there is not enough capacity in the municipality to handle this project. They need special people they never had, they have only one engineer who is looking at all the roads of the city [...] and one at the drainage and water supply in all the city. So the work of the whole programme is to be done by these two engineers which are really not efficient to do it"⁴⁶.

This situation continued until the summer 2018 when the municipality started to dig the land to build the infrastructures in GIDC.

6.3.2. THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE BENEFICIARIES TO CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY

The pilot project estimated the construction cost of each dwelling unit at 3.73 *lakhs* Rs.,

45 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

46 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication 18-07-2018.

higher than the amount of 2.91 *lakhs* Rs. provided by the government as it proposed to build larger dwelling units than the size recommended by the policy. The model thus expected that the beneficiaries participated to finance the cost of construction by contributing between 0.32 and 0.82 *lakh* Rs. However, considering the reduced financial capacities of the families, the project realization implied important efforts from them. In the pilot project, most of the beneficiaries contributed with less than 30,000 Rs. or used only the government funds, some contributed between 0.5 and 1 *lakh* Rs., and very few spent more than 1 *lakh* Rs. For example, D.B. who is a group leader (group 11) in GIDC Relocation Site, sold family jewels and spent more than 2 *lakhs* Rs. in addition to the state funds to build and decorate his house⁴⁷.

To cope with the higher construction cost of the dwelling units, the owner-driven model implies a higher participation from beneficiaries who consent to contribute in order to reduce the expenses⁴⁸. By managing the construction works, the families are proposed to participate in the construction in order to reduce the costs of hiring labours, to re-employ materials in the new construction they recover from the demolished houses, and to realize only the works required to complete the project and receive all the installments. However, these strategies required that the families have a certain capacity to organise and control the construction works, which depends on their individual preferences. Hunnarshala suggested that the beneficiaries participate in the construction works in order to reduce the costs of hiring labours, but only the families in Bhimraonagar and some in Ramdevnagar succeeded. The families' participation in the works depended in first place on their capacities and knowledge of construction: only the families in Bhimraonagar managed the construction autonomously, being facilitated by their experience in the construction sector. Except in Bhimraonagar, families helped in the constructions only when relatives built their houses and if they were not too busy with their labour activities.

To reduce the construction costs, Hunnarshala also suggested reusing materials in the new construction from the demolished houses, but very few families succeeded. In Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar, some families re-employed doors and windows and some furniture from the old houses when they were in good conditions, but very few reused debris from the demolition of the old houses to build the plinth (see Image 36). For example, the family of J.V. (group 3) in Ramdevnagar used debris from the demolition of the old house as filling material to build the plinth⁴⁹. In Bhimraonagar, a family (group 4) reused wooden beams and

47 D.B., personal communication, 24-07-2017.

48 All the beneficiaries in the pilot project gave their consent to contribute their financial contribution for the Dwelling Units as proposed in the DPR.

49 J.V. personal communication, 26-08-2017.

tiles from the old house to build a veranda at the upper floor. Families could re-employ debris from their old houses when built in stones or blocks, but not from *kachha* houses like all the temporary houses in GIDC Relocation Site.

However, even if many of the old houses in Bhimraonagar were built in stones, the families preferred to purchase and use new materials to build the houses because they expect to occupy them for life⁵⁰. Furthermore the families who participated in the construction works were capable of taking decisions, whereas contractors preferred to employ only new materials they purchased in the market. In addition to favouring new materials, the need for security of the inhabitants influenced by the disaster-prone context of the Kacch led many to oversize the structure of the houses using more building material with a consequent increase in costs.

According to the Hunnarshala's architects, around half of the families used more material than required by the anti-seismic regulations to build the structure, as they and their contractors were influenced by the most common way of building and for fear that the project indications would be not sufficient in case of disasters. The house design made by Hunnarshala proposed to build the structure using one reinforcement bar in the Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) columns, following the national building regulations for constructions up to G+1. But according to their architects, people in slums sees that contractors use 4 reinforcement bars in columns, and want to do the same as they consider it safer⁵¹. On their side, beneficiaries who built their own houses as they works in constructions consider illogical to put only one reinforcement bar as it cannot work for strengthen the column⁵². Despite the low cost house design, many families ended up spending more than needed to build their houses (see Image 37).

Hunnarshala suggested that the families complete the basic requirements in order to receive first all the installments and postpone the construction of "extra works" foreseen in the project which include the boundary, the stairs, the underground tank but also finishing like cement floor in the compound, tiles, colours, etc. But on the contrary, most families anticipated the construction of these works, which they financed with the government fund that were therefore insufficient to complete the construction. Consequently, many families could not complete the last stage of construction and receive the last installment, as they did not have enough resources.

50 M.J., personal communication, 25-06-2018.

51 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015.

52 K.M., personal communication, 26-06-2018.



Image 36. A window reemployed from demolished houses (left).



Image 37. Oversizing of structures preferred by beneficiaries for security reasons (right).

Many inhabitants attributed the problem to the lack of communication with Hunnarshala and affirm that they spent too much in the early stages as they did not understand the constraint of the payment mechanism of installments. However, the choices of house design also led the families to prefer to anticipate the construction of extra works. According to a project manager in Hunnarshala, the beneficiaries were inclined to not separate the construction works in more stages but to complete the project at once. For example, many preferred to cast the staircase while casting the slab because it is a part of it, otherwise it would result in more costs to resume the works afterwards⁵³.

In Bhimraonagar, almost all the families built the upper floor as soon as the roof was ready and before completing the finishing works, and anticipated the construction of the stairs and the boundaries that integrate them. Consequently, the families in Bhimraonagar contributed on average 1 *lakh* Rs. to build extra works but had no more resources to realize the finishing works required to complete the project and receive the last installment. Initially, Hunnarshala prevented the families from building the upper floor before receiving the certificate of project completion, to prevent families from using the installments outside of the minimum work required to complete the project. However, after the community of Bhimraonagar pretended to anticipate the construction of the upper floors as their houses are smaller than in the other project sites, in GIDC Relocation Site several families also built the second floor during the construction process, while in Ramdevnagar the families who built the upper floor sooner were supported by Hunnarshala.

Similarly, most families, especially in GIDC Relocation Site, anticipated the construction of extra works, in particular the boundary as they wanted to increase their security as soon as

⁵³ H.R. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 07-07-2017.

they moved to the new houses. In fact, many families explain they feel safer in their courtyard as it is enclosed, otherwise the toilet-bathroom are separated only by one door from the exteriors. As a consequence, not only many families could not reduce the construction costs of the minimum required works to complete the project but also ended up increasing the expenses as they included the construction of extra works in the project implementation.

In the three sites, many families could ask for loans from the Self Help Groups (SHG) to finance the house construction, thanks to a wide extension of the city-level network Sakhi Sangini in the three sites. In Ramdevnagar where 3 SHGs already existed since 2009, the NGO Kacch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) helped to create 3 new ones to support the project financing, reaching a total of 60 women organized in 6 SHGs all connected to Sakhi Sangini. In Bhimraonagar, the NGO supported the creation of 2 SHGs for a total of 35 women, who later left Sakhi Sangini and started to manage independently their savings as they considered the interest on the loans too high. In GIDC Relocation Site, Sakhi Sangini included around 113 women organized in 7 SHGs (Hunnarshala 2014a).

However, loans for the house construction could only be released once per family and up to a value which corresponds to the minimal beneficiary contribution against which almost all households spent more. Furthermore, the conditions to get loans also excluded some families, who were unable to contribute the minimum savings required to be part of a SHGs that was initially 100 Rs. and was extended to 200 Rs. per month, and who could not attend weekly meetings, while the amount of loans were decided case by case depending on how each family contributed to the group. The SHG of J.V. initially counted 20 members but 3 have left: a woman who never attended meetings, another one who could not put more than 60 Rs. each month, and a woman who was always asking loans. Out of the 17 women, few succeeded to get a loan for housing purpose for a total amount of 1 *lakh* Rs.⁵⁴.

Along with their different capacities, families' contribution to the construction costs varied according to the importance they attributed to the housing project. Especially in GIDC Relocation Site, diverging interests among families brought them to use the government funds for other purposes. According to some families, the houses whose construction has stopped belong to rich people who already have other houses elsewhere and were not interested in investing the government funds in the project⁵⁵. The leader of a Muslim group (group 6) explains that her neighbours started to build their houses to receive the installments but did

54 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

55 At my last visit to GIDC Relocation Site in august 2018, the works had never started or stopped at early stages in around 10 houses.

not worry to continue beyond the plinth level as they live in the city⁵⁶. However, poor families in GIDC Relocation Site also faced difficulties to build their houses as they spent the first installment for other purposes, "some people did marriage, few went to some holy temple, some bought bikes, etc.". Another group leader (group 12) explains that her neighbour used the first installment for paying health cures in the family and stopped the house construction at the plinth level as he moved to live with relatives in the Swaminarayan temple in Bhuj⁵⁷ (see Image 38).

As these families already spent the first installment, they could not realize the plinth and receive the second installment, and the construction works of their houses got delayed. Hunnarshala was forced to demand the release of the second installment for them even though the first stage of construction was not completed, but in doing so, the second installment was used to pay the first stage and this shift continued in the next stages. As a result, the families with low resources could not complete the construction of their houses as they waited the last installment to finish the work (see Image 39).

This problem challenges the owner-driven approach which turns beneficiaries responsible to use the state funds, assuming that they spend them in the housing project. Basing on this assumption, the model facilitates the beneficiaries to receive the installments in their bank account and to use them just by signing the checks and withdraw the money. Yet since some beneficiaries withdrew and spent the money for other purposes, Hunnarshala had to block their bank accounts to prevent them to continue. For this reason, group leaders in GIDC Relocation Site disagreed with this arrangement and think that the NGO should manage the state funds with the contractors instead of giving the responsibility to the beneficiaries⁵⁸.

However, the problem occurred only in GIDC Relocation Site, except one isolated case in Ramdevnagar⁵⁹. In the other project sites the families depended less on the state funds as they have more financial resources, but most of all forms of collective participation based on family ties led them to invest the funds in the housing project. J.V., who is member of the slum committee in Ramdevnagar, considers the presence of "lazy" people as one of the main reasons for delay in this project, so that some houses were built before others within the same

56 F.J., personal communication, 12-06-2018.

57 S.A., personal communication, 13-06-2018.

58 J.T., personal communication, 13-06-2018.

59 In Ramdevnagar a beneficiary did not build his house beyond the plinth level because of disagreement with the management of the funds. A neighbour explains "he went to Nagar Palika to ask how much he got from the government and they told him 4 *lakhs* Rs., so he said I want 4 *lakhs* Rs. and then I can start. His wife withdrew the first installment and started the work but he opposed it, I do not want to continue before I got 4 *lakhs* Rs. so [his house] remained so [unfinished]". However, this is an isolated case in Ramdevnagar, that unlike the other families was not part of a group and entrusted the construction of one of his house to a contractor who "took the money and ran away" (N.V., personal communication, 16-04-2018)

group. However, she forced them in meetings to accelerate the construction of their houses being her relatives, as did other active people in their groups. For the same reason, most of the families were bound by family ties with the constructors to pay them the installments instead of using for other purposes⁶⁰.

Also in GIDC Relocation Site, the groups where the most families succeeded to build their houses were more homogeneous and with more family ties, like the *Vaghri* and the *Jogi* groups (groups 1-4), where the construction of all houses is completed. Consequently, whereas individual families are responsible for using the state funds and financing the housing projects, their collective participation organised along family ties and caste belonging was instrumental as it acted as a form of control on individual resources. Differently, in the absence of such "unity", only "the people who can understand the intention of the project, they succeed", according to the families in GIDC Relocation Sites⁶¹.



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 06-2018



Source: Francesco Bogoni, 06-2018

Image 38. Unfinished house whose beneficiary spent installment for other purposes (left).

Image 39. Unfinished houses whose beneficiaries wait for the last installment (right).

6.3.3. CONTRACTORS AS VICTIMS OF AN UNMANAGED SYSTEM

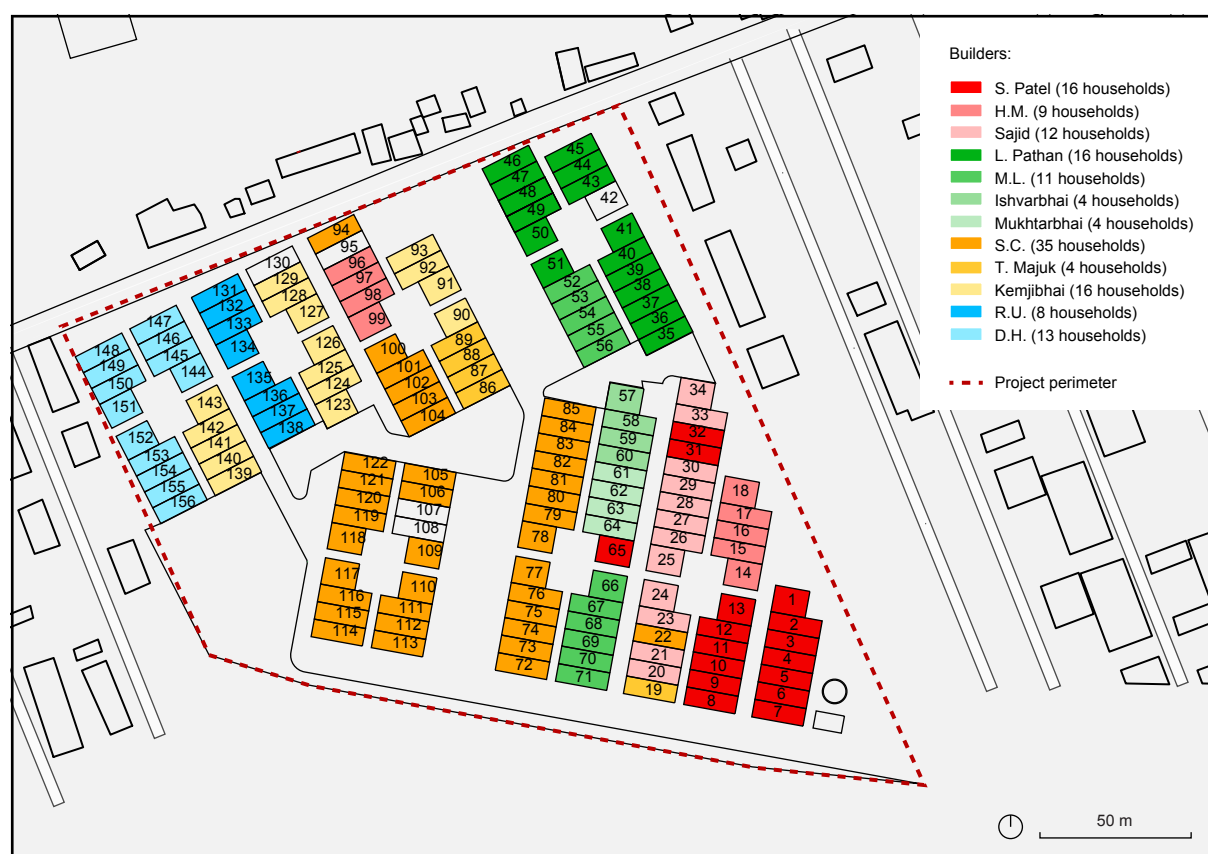
Contractors participated to the project in Ramdevnagar and GIDC Relocation Site. In Ramdevnagar the inhabitants relied on two contractors from outside the community: D.P. of the *Devi Pujak* community from the village of Shukhpar 7 km far from Bhuj, that V.V. invited to realize 31 houses, and C.M. from the village of Samatra 20 km away, who built 17 houses for three families (groups 5, 7, 9). D.V. contracted a mason who built 6 houses for his family

60 J.V., personal communication, 26-08-2017.

61 D.C., personal communication, 06-04-2018.

(group 5), but provided him the materials and negotiated his charges in order to "save money, because contractors buy extra material for themselves"⁶².

In GIDC Relocation Site, mostly contractors from outside built the houses. Beyond S.C. who built 35 houses, she appointed R.U. who built 8 houses and M.L. who built 11 houses, but both left the houses unfinished and the beneficiaries appointed individually masons or contractors to finish the works. R.A. appointed L. Pathan who built 16 houses, and P.V. from Nakhatrana who built 9 houses, but they also left most of the houses unfinished. Others contractors built houses for groups of families who invited them initially or to complete works that the contractors appointed by S.C. and R.A. left unfinished. Contractors chosen by the beneficiaries were H.M. from GIDC Relocation Site who built 9 houses, Kemjibhai who built 16 houses, Ishvarbhai from Bhuj who built 4 houses, Mukhtarbhai who built 4 houses, T. Majuk who built 4 houses and D.H. who is beneficiary and contractor and built 13 houses. Finally, S. Patel proposed by Hunnarshala built 16 houses left unfinished by Sajid (see Map 18).



Map 18. House groups by builders in GIDC Relocation Site

Sources: Google Earth, interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

62 N.V., personal communication, 16-04-2018.

Unlike in the other project sites where family ties within groups facilitated the families to participate to the house construction, in GIDC Relocation Site the households dealt exclusively with their own houses and entrusted the realization of the works to the contractors. They were also unable to contribute to the construction as most of them are very poor and they could not abstain from labour activities. Since this situation risked to sideline the households in the construction process and move away from the owner-driven model, Hunnarshala attempted to involve them but with little success. For example, a social worker of the NGO explains that they asked the beneficiaries to carry out everyday small works like curing the concrete outside the contractors' working hours. However this has created a dispute between beneficiaries and contractors over their responsibilities, as the latter discharged from this task whereas beneficiaries insist that they paid them also for it⁶³ (see Image 40).

Hunnarshala also attempted to facilitate the relations between beneficiaries and contractors to avoid the latter from taking over, by preventing them from building more than 5 houses. However, they did not succeed as many contractors built more and few took up to 35 houses. According to D.H. who is himself beneficiary and built 13 houses for his group (group 16):

"People from the organization said you are not able to do all 13, so we allot you only 5 houses. I said what's the reason why I am not able to do, give me a chance. I asked in how much time you said the plinth should be built and they said 15 days, and after 14 days I called the organization to come and check. I was regularly working day and night, I hired 10 labours, 5 working at day and 5 at night. Within one month I finished the plinth and asked the organization to give installments"⁶⁴.

For many contractors, the project has created more difficulties than opportunities. According to H.M. who wished to enter the project with the expectation that it would help him, not only the beneficiaries but also he himself became "victim of this unmanaged system"⁶⁵. As well as other contractors, he was constrained to work with insufficient budget and with the beneficiaries paying him in delay mostly because of the slowness of the government to release them the installments. Because of the payment delays, the contractors completed the work in two years whereas they expected to finish within one year.

The contractors who built houses in the pilot project affirm that the construction cost foreseen

63 P.C. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 30-10-2015.

64 D.H., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

65 H.M., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

in the project was insufficient considering the market values. The strategy envisaged by Hunnarshala relies on the capacity of the beneficiaries to manage the state funds and participate with a financial contribution but seems to underestimate a number of aspects. For example, only few beneficiaries paid regularly the contractors despite the delay in the release of installments, while others depended more on the government funds. The same happened as most of the households wished to anticipate the construction of 'extra works' like boundaries, stairs and underground tanks that increased the construction cost and so their financial contribution, but only few could bear them. Sometimes the contractors advanced the expenses that they hardly recovered from the beneficiaries, or suspended the construction as they waited to be paid by all the beneficiaries, as D.H. explains:

"In one month I finished the plinth and I asked to the organisation to give installments, and the installment arrived in late of three months. Even if the installment was not there I didn't stop working and continued until lintel level w I finished in 3 months. I spent my own money. After the first installment when I started the work in 2015, I got 2 installments together only in July 2016 [for the plinth in delay and lintel]. So after I finished the lintel, I stopped working for 2 months waiting for these installments [...], then in July I restarted the work but each installment was very delayed that's why it took so long [...]. 2.91 *lakhs* Rs. were fixed by the project, but my agreement with beneficiaries was of 3.70 *lakhs* Rs. including extra works, so when there was no any installment and work was stopped, I asked beneficiaries to give me some money so that I could restart the work and then pay them back, but at that time some were giving, and others not. So there was no continuity in the work"⁶⁶.

Late payments generally led to extend the construction time and consequently the project costs. D.H. affirms that he lost around 8 *laksh* Rs. as people paid on credit and the costs increased due to interests. The extension of the works duration caused the rise of the cost of labour workers, whose contract had to be suspended when the delays were too long, but this produced discontinuity and complicated the management of the construction site. The construction costs rose also because of the increase of the price of materials over an extended period. According to H.M. , the cement has the highest cost among the construction materials used and was one of the costs that increased most: while he calculated the initial construction

66 D.H., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

costs considering its value of 280 Rs. per bag, it rises up to 310 Rs.⁶⁷. Another difficulty some contractors complain about was the strict quality control by Hunnarshala and their rigidity in the compliance with work execution rules. Like in the case of Sajid, the NGO also forced other contractors to demolish and execute again some works at the expenses of the beneficiaries, when they were not built properly or differently from the "challenging" architectural and structural project.

The contractors faced these difficulties in different ways: some completed the construction while many 'ran away' and abandoned the project, especially at final stage because of the delay of the last installment. The contractors who come from far had no interest to finish the project as their remuneration was too low, while others completed the construction works by spending their own money⁶⁸ as they were constrained from other reasons. Some contractors were bounded to finish the works as relatives or families with close relationships are between the beneficiaries. In Ramdevnagar, only C.M. who has no family relations with the community left the works uncompleted and 'ran away' with the last installment he received from the beneficiaries. On the contrary, S.V. explains that:

"Here all are relatives and poor people, because of this I cannot make profit from them, and while working here I cannot work in the market. Being relatives, I cannot put pressure on people [to pay me] and I cannot put too much margin, but relatives they pressured me to finish. So I am still waiting 2 *lakhs* Rs. pending from all 15 houses together"⁶⁹.

In GIDC Relocation Site, D.H. wanted to stop the work because of the difficulties he faced but was forced to finish because he himself was beneficiary and had a good relationship with the others in his group, and because the organization convinced him to continue⁷⁰. Other contractors were constrained to complete the constructions to protect their "reputation in market" and not to lose customers⁷¹.

67 H.M., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

68 For example, D.H. lost 1.5 *lakh* Rs. of his own money to finish 13 houses in his group. H.M. suffered as people were not paying him but asked him not to stop working and promised to pay soon, and he still has not received 8-9,000 Rs. from each family despite the fact the work is finished (H.M., personal communication, 20-06-2018). S.V. did not lose but also did not get profit, because he has still to pay labours while waiting for beneficiaries to pay him (S.V., personal communication, 21-08-2018).

69 S.V., personal communication, 21-08-2018.

70 D.H., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

71 H.M., personal communication, 20-06-2018.

6.4. BEYOND THE SLUM DWELLERS: THE IMPLICATION OF THE OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

6.4.1. INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDERS AND LOCAL POLITICS

The state government who recognises the NGOs' advocacy for the poor supported the pilot project in Bhuj, and the local political context facilitated the coordination between agencies as the same party was ruling at the central, state and local level. In fact, the coordination between government agencies had been considered a main reason of success in the fast reconstruction process in Kutch also because the majority party was ruling in Gujarat and at the centre since before 2001⁷². Similarly, such circumstance which facilitated the establishment of Abhiyan as coordinating NGO of the reconstruction at the district level and its recognition for the role of advocacy for poor communities, continued facilitating the implementation of the pilot project in Bhuj according to the directors of Hunnarshala:

"Central and state government are interested to the project because in these years we played an advocacy role for poor communities, and our work is recognized by them. Also the Collector is supporting the project because it is not an elective body, he is charged by government so he doesn't have to account for with his electors. In Bhuj, all the slums are on revenue land that is owned by the Collector, so he has all the advantages to regularise them. The same is for MLA, she is not an elective body, she is responsible in the Bhuj Block for making the central and state level collaborating with the ULB, so she is supporting the project"⁷³.

Other institutional bodies implicated in the pilot project, like the District Inspector of Land Records (DILR) and the Bhuj Area Development Authority (BHADA), cooperated as they are appointed by the central and state government who support the programme in Bhuj. However, the whole programme implementation was delayed due to the lack of

⁷² I am grateful to D.T, former director of the local magazine Kacch Mitra, for this insight.

⁷³ F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

collaboration of the municipality to whom the RAY policy guidelines entrust this responsibility, who has impeded the release of installments to the beneficiaries and to the slum communities to build the physical infrastructures.

On the one hand, the frequent transfer of the Chief Officer in the municipality relented the transmission of certificates to the government and the release of installments to beneficiaries. According to the director of the HIC program in Bhuj, the Chief Officer has changed 11 times between 2016 and 2017, and since 2017 the Rapar's Chief Officer has been responsible also for Bhuj and Bhachau, which he regards as extra responsibility⁷⁴. Since the Chief Officer in the municipality represents the body appointed by the government, its absence hinders the implementation of government programs: in more occasions the process stopped due to the lack of signatures of the Chief Officer as its place was vacant. However, the coordination between the municipality and the other stakeholders was limited as it depended exclusively on the Chief Officer for the absence of the Technical Cell, that the policy guidelines entrust the municipality to establish to overcome its low resources and ensure the programme implementation. The reticence of the municipality to establish the Technical Cell despite the pressure by NGOs suggests its lack of implication in the project, as its absence allows the municipality to retreat from the responsibilities that the contract with the beneficiaries specifies to the Technical Cell⁷⁵.

The lack of interest of the municipality for the program also manifested as the pilot project aimed to shift to the slum communities some of the responsibilities that are prerogative of the municipality, notably the construction and maintenance of physical infrastructures. In fact, the municipality gets benefits from contractors that are entrusted with the realisation of the works, but that is not possible when the government entitles the slum communities organised in Resident Welfare Associations (RWA) with the realisation of the works. According to the NGO's directors, the municipality asked them to pay to let the communities carry out the work but they retained the government funds as the NGO rejected the request:

"Everything is corruption basically, because in the contractor-based work [the municipality] has interests because they have the system to pay money, bribes. We don't believe to pay the bribes anyway, and also we are not

74 H.I. (HIC), personal communication, 27-05-2018.

75 I am grateful to my personal assistant for this assumption.

getting money. Also people are building and so [the municipality] are not getting anything out of all this program, that is very sure that they are not interested"⁷⁶.

The retreat from their responsibilities in the program manifests in the position of the Chief Officer, holding that the pilot project was proposed by Hunnarshala while Nagar Palika was included later in the project and its responsibilities were decided after it was sanctioned: for this reason they lacked coordination since the beginning "but Hunnarshala makes it a guilt of Nagar Palika and they add political intervention"⁷⁷. This conflicting situation where both the municipality and the NGO accused the other for not taking their responsibility in the project demonstrates a clash between the vision of governance underlying the NGO's approach and the clientelism of local politics where the municipality gets benefits by contracting out the works.

The problem was also political, according to the NGO's directors who claim "the only agency that creates delays is Nagar Palika [because] they are an elective body, so they need to show to their electors what they did in order to maintain their credibility"⁷⁸. The lack of cooperation of the municipality was caused by the contentious position between the Chief Officer who is appointed by the government and signatory of the programme approval, and the general body held by the President and the Chairman of the municipality who are influenced by party politics⁷⁹. Since the ruling party leads the general body of the municipality since long time, and most of the poor Hindus and Muslim communities living in the northern wards of the city⁸⁰ are voters of the opposition party, the municipality has neglected these areas as they do not get enough votes from them⁸¹.

The reason is also ideological according to the director of the HIC program, since Muslim families are bigger and need more land that they occupy illegally, thus "they don't fit for colonies and the vision of Nagar Palika for Bhuj": the same NGOs acted strategically to work with Hindus communities in first phase of slum rehabilitation,

76 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 18-07-2018.

77 Chief Officer in charge of the Bhuj Municipality, personal communication, 10- 07-2018.

78 F.V. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 19-08-2017.

79 The general body constituted by the ward councillors that in Bhuj are 44. 4 ward councillors are elected by the people living in each ward, but include also members nominated by the ruling party. The general body elects a president and a vice-president every 2 and ½ years. For any decision concerning the use of government funds, the signature of the Chief Officer has to come with a resolution from the general body.

80 The majority of slums settlements are located in wards 1, 2, and 3 located north of the walled city.

81 E.C. (Congress candidate as MLA), personal communication, 13- 07-2018.

otherwise they would not have support from Nagar Palika⁸². Furthermore, the NGOs organized the project. For the same reason, they initially planned to implement the pilot project within the mandate of the general body of 2 and ½ years in a way to not stop the work, but the project was delayed⁸³.

The neglect is perpetuated as the municipality is not interested in providing facilities to these areas where the population does not pay taxes. The same municipality has not enough capacities to collect taxes or inform the population. On the other hand, as ward councillors are not salaried as in big cities, their limited resources and capacities prevent them to pressure on municipality to develop the areas not represented by the ruling party.

However, these areas are also discriminated by the same local leaders from the opposition who bargain for their area's votes with the ruling party in order to maintain their privilege rather than providing facilities like in other areas, according to a ward councillor. The scope of the NGO SETU to develop local governance in the wards 2 and 3 where poor communities live gave limited results. Too few people among communities followed the programme as it did not succeed to deal with municipal financing of public facilities, because of the NGO's lack of resources as it depended exclusively on external finance, and lack of cooperation of the municipality⁸⁴.

Initially the NGO attempted to collaborate with government agencies and invited several times the beneficiaries to solicit the municipality and the District Collector to release the installments and to build the infrastructures. Yet as the latter continued attributing the responsibility for the project delay to Hunnarshala, saying that the project is not ready to start the infrastructures, the NGO claimed a court case accusing the municipality of withholding the government funds without a valid reason. However, the court case was not carried on due to the absence of the Chief Officer. In parallel, by 2017 they started encouraging the communities to protest with the Collector to pressure Nagar Palika for realising the infrastructures. After one year of mobilisation and hunger strikes, it is only in June 2018 that the municipality has started the excavation to put gutter lines in GIDC Relocation Site three years after the beginning of the works (see Image 41).

82 H.I. (HIC), personal communication, 27- 05-2018.

83 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 18- 07-2018.

84 E.E. (SETU), personal communication, 28-05-2018.



Image 40. Meeting to resolve disputes between beneficiaries and contractors (left).



Image 41. Slum communities protesting against the delays of infrastructures realization (right).

6.4.2. AN EXCESSIVE RELIANCE ON THE SLUM DWELLERS' CAPACITIES

The delays of the pilot project suggest other limitations in the role of stakeholders envisaged in the implementation mechanism. Aiming to make the project implementation owner driven, the NGOs encouraged beneficiaries to control the process, especially to deal with conflicting situation with other stakeholders. The beneficiaries faced difficulties in financing the project because of the withholding of the government funds by the municipality, with the contractors who did not carry out the work due to the delay in payments or for personal interests, and with other beneficiaries within the community in situations of diverging interests.

While the model allows beneficiaries to choose who to they entrust the construction of their house and to manage the construction process, for those who entrusted the works to contractors the latter have taken control of the works. Being not capable to regain control, the beneficiaries appealed to Hunnarshala to intervene but they argue that it was not their responsibility since beneficiaries chose their contractors and the NGOs have no power over them, as one of the architects of the NGO explains:

"We haven't any control over contractors, we have control only over beneficiaries so there was no way to communicate with the contractor, we went to the beneficiaries to say please don't do it [...], now all we can do is to stop the money. The beneficiaries were not smart enough to see that this was happening [and] were also not getting together and listening to us, that is

another problem. Because their interest has to be there, if they were interested they would have taken personal care".

This problem occurred in particular in GIDC Relocation Site where families had less resources and capacities to handle the situation and even contractors were affected by the project. The NGO suggested that the beneficiaries claim court case on the contractors who were not working properly, but they refused "since it's not good for us to go to the police station and court and it would be very hard for our reputation in society"⁸⁵.

According to the NGO, when the government funds arrive in the beneficiaries' account, the latter have the responsibility to use them. For this reason, many beneficiaries disagreed with the approach to entitle the government funds to them, but rather that the government or the NGO should take the responsibilities of managing the project finances and contracting out the works. Finally Hunnarshala admitted that the owner-driven approach did not succeed in some cases and introduced their own contractor to continue the work left unfinished by other who "ran away" in GIDC Relocation Site.

As well as on the relation with the contractors, Hunnarshala held that the Slum Committees should manage the resolution of conflicts in the communities, which relate to the project. In GIDC, the problem also occurred within the community as the leaders attempted to control the project in the beneficiaries' selection, and to get benefits by appointing their contractor and taking over the houses construction. The NGO was unsuccessful in preventing the community leader from taking control of the project and invited the beneficiaries to go to court against it and the contractors they appointed.

However, they did not go "because of lack of unity [among people]" and because "[they] are afraid to take initiative or action against her [the leader], they are poor labours who never went to big cities or offices, they don't know what they can do", according to the leader of the *Devi Pujak* group⁸⁶. Similarly, both in Ramdevnagar and Bhimraonagar where some families refused to demolish their old houses preventing other to build the new ones, the community leaders considered solving the problem among the responsibilities of Hunnarshala as they proposed the project, whereas the latter responded that it is a problem of the Committee.

The community leaders and beneficiaries also accused the NGO who laid upon them the

85 S.T., personal communication, 11-06-2018.

86 L.P., personal communication, 08-06-2018.

task of convincing the municipality to release the government funds. As Hunnarshala was unable to speed up the release of the installment and unlock the funds for infrastructures due to the lack of coordination with the municipality, they invited the communities to ask to officers and politicians and supported them to protest. While the problem was between Hunnarshala, who claimed that the municipality was responsible, and the Chief Officer saying the opposite, "beneficiaries are those who suffered" according to the community leader in GIDC Relocation Site:

"This project arrived here thanks to the NGO, they came and informed us about the project. Now they are the people to whom we can ask, but they say to go and ask to the officers. So each time we face problems with money, because all days we travel [to go to offices], and it's expensive"⁸⁷.

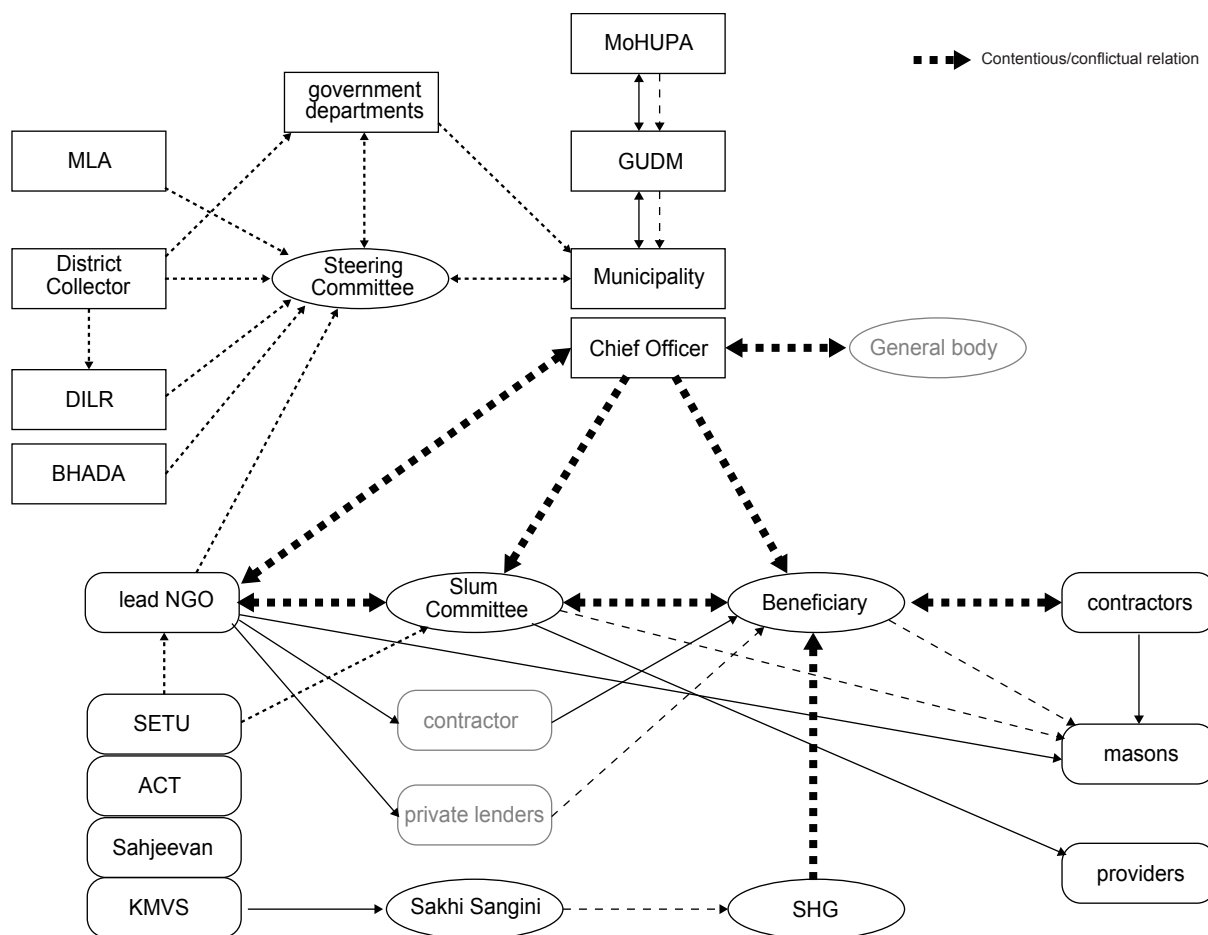
In fact, group leaders and active people in the project site complain that they were prejudiced as they spent lot of time and money to pay for the travels of other beneficiaries and organise protest against the government offices. While group leaders in the three sites left their jobs to dedicate themselves full time to the project, community members and group leaders also left their responsibilities as weekly meetings disturbed their jobs, where they had to communicate with the people in their groups and manage situations of disagreement between them.

The NGO based excessively the model on the assumption that the Slum Committees and the beneficiaries owned the resources needed to comply with these responsibilities. While everybody in the communities affirm that during the project implementation they paid regular attention to the compliance of the construction with the project and to speed up the process, their role was mostly in supervision and technical support but the social mobilization was limited. In fact, after the project preparation phase where KMVS helped organizing community participation, Hunnarshala mostly managed the relation with communities in the implementation phase. Furthermore, the organizations reduced their focus on the project as they had no more resources to invest beyond the expected duration of project implementation, and even doing the minimum to complete the project became a burden according to one of the directors⁸⁸. Recognising the difficulties faced

⁸⁷ D.B., personal communication, 24-07-2017.

⁸⁸ The team of Hunnarshala that supervised daily the construction works and held weekly meetings on the site to discuss issues related to the project implementation includes project assistants and a social worker. In the summer of 2018, only 2 people from Hunnarshala continued working regularly on the project. According to

to implement the model in an owner driven approach, Hunnarshala modified the implementation strategy in the HFOPOA proposal by revising the roles of stakeholders⁸⁹ (see Scheme 7).



Scheme 7. Shortcomings in the implementation mechanism

Sources: interviews 2017-2018. Realized by: the author

However, the communities reproached the NGO for not having ensured that the project will be finished and for having left the responsibility to them. The community leader in Bhimraonagar disassociated themselves with the organisation as after 3-4 years they have no infrastructures yet and since 2 years no one from the organisation came to visit

the managing director, the organization could not continue spending their funds for the project as it largely exceeds the expected duration of 1 and half year.

89 The facilitation steps include: 1. ULB assigns a Facilitating Agency; 2. The Facilitating Agency facilitates to assign contractors; 3. Homeowners certify contractors for stage-wise payment and the payment is carried out by the ULB directly to the contractors; 4. State government provides capacity building to the ULB toward the stage-wise assessment and release of payments; 5. Conflict resolution can be done by the Facilitating Agency with the help of Political Representatives; 6. Infrastructures development is carried out by the ULB (Hunnarshala 2018).

them so they lost interest in the project⁹⁰. Seeing the delay of the pilot project and the difficulties created, other communities also began to mistrust the capacities of the NGO to handle the project, also in slum settlements where the latter had prepared DPRs and submitted them to the government. For example, the slum community of Macchu Nagar already has left their land owned by the Forest Department, after a DPR was prepared in 2015 proposing their relocation and after the District Collector has written an advance letter for them taking the responsibility to allocate them land in another location.

On the other hand, Hunnarshala aimed to show to government officials the achievement of the pilot project implementation, as a demonstration of the owner driven approach and to advocate for its extension in the national policies. To this scope, they put pressure on around 80 beneficiaries to finish their houses in order to receive the last installment and to conclude the project, but most of them could neither afford the costs and the further delay to recover through the last installments, nor they were able to get loans from private banks. Hunnarshala thus proposed them to receive loans up to 1 *lakh* Rs. based on their paying capacities and on the requirement of houses, and organized it with the Gujarat Rural Housing (GRUH) which at the end of 2017 accepted to grant loans with low rates⁹¹. However, the group needed a certification from the municipality who is entrusted to release government funds to the beneficiaries, mentioning that government already allotted them the last installment as a guarantee that they will be able to pay back the loan. But the municipality had not signed the letter 6 months after the loans were ready⁹².

90 J.K., personal communication, 26-03-2018.

91 Hunnarshala was facilitated to accord a loan from the finance group as its director is also among the NGO's board of directors.

92 B.A. (Hunnarshala), personal communication, 18-07-2018.

CONCLUSION

The slow and partial construction and occupation of the houses in the pilot project created important difficulties for the families and highlight a series of shortcomings of the management mechanism. However, the long-term implementation of the project and the families' satisfaction despite the difficulties, demonstrate the acceptability of the owner-driven model of slum redevelopment and the interest to review the implementation mechanism in order to reduce shortcomings.

Firstly, the disagreement of a number of families with the arrangement of land subdivision and redistribution shows the limits of the model to focus on individual ownership and standard housing size by glossing over the existence of other forms of land tenure in slum settlements. While the model allowed families to manage the construction process in a progressive and flexible way, the disagreement of some families prejudiced others in building their houses, resulting in conflicts within the communities. However, this was mostly due to a lack of consensus during the project preparation and to a decision-making process led by community leaders who do not equally represent the interests of the whole community. To avoid the emergence of conflicts during the project implementations, community participation should take into account the diversity of interests within the community and that traditional leadership does not necessarily represent the interests of the entire community.

The transit accommodation was managed differently in each settlement, depending on the availability of space and the possibility to occupy old houses while waiting to demolish them. Few families built temporary huts on the construction site but rather on adjacent agricultural lands or wastelands, while many moved to rent. Except for a few families who continued occupying old houses they owned, the delay in the construction process affected the majority by increasing rental costs and staying in precarious conditions for a longer period, which prompted them to occupy the houses before they were completed.

Self-help and self-managed construction occurred only in the presence of forms of collective organisation that were supported by family ties and caste homogeneity, while community leaders managed the construction by entrusting the work to contractors

where these conditions were absent. Forms of elite capture emerged in all the project sites but the presence of family ties favoured the collective interest, differently from heterogeneous and fragmented groups that failed to oppose individual interests of leaders. Self-help construction was limited to a smaller number of families involved in construction like the majority in Bhimraonagar. Instead the traditional leadership and the family structure in Ramdevnagar influenced the organisation of works in groups of families, where few inhabitants built groups of houses of relatives or neighbours.

The delays of government funds release from municipality were the main cause of the project delay. Local government retreated from its responsibilities in the project because of the lack of interest for the urban poor who are not considered as their customers and because they are interested in safeguarding privileges associated to the provision of public services. In Bhuj, the resistance of the ULB to the project and the increasing conflict with the lead NGO confirm the difficulty to implement national policies in small cities due to the persistence of patronage logic and the lack of resources of the local government which reduce the possibilities of decentralised governance.

The late release of government funds turned even more difficult for families to finance the project with their own resources, highlighting limitations of the owner-driven model where a wider community participation is difficult to achieve to build larger and better houses with the scarce resources of the poor. Community financing helped families to cope with the delays of funds disbursement but only partially, as not all the families met the conditions required to get loans and because loans covered only part of the expected contribution from beneficiaries. Self-help construction required social, economic and technical resources which many slum dwellers do not possess, while construction strategies to reduce costs such as recycling building materials, reducing structural components and waiting to build 'extra works' did not correspond to families' preferences.

The increase in construction costs also resulted from the lack of communication between the lead NGO and the communities on the importance of these strategies, and from a house design that induced families to anticipate 'extra works' that they considered as a priority. Furthermore, where forms of collective participation supported by family ties and caste homogeneity acted as a form of control over individual resources, the use that many families made of government funds for other purposes questions the alleged priority and capacity the poor have for the project, where other needs appeared more important than housing.

Contrarily to the model expecting the implication of slum dwellers, and labours and masons under their control, small contractors managed the construction of entire rows of houses, reducing the resident's control of the construction process. The payments delays from house-owners affected the contractors as work duration got extended by increasing the overall construction costs. As a result, some contractors 'ran away' while others bound by closer ties with the house-owners ended up advancing and losing part of their money to continue the work. In many cases, contractors took control over beneficiaries in conflict situations, and the lead NGO's attempts to mediate were limited by the same implementation mechanism which gives the control of the construction to the owners without ensuring they have capacities for that.

Basing on the owner-driven perspective to make house-owners responsible and accountable of the project implementation, the lead NGO focused mainly on technical rather than social support and failed to prevent the elite and contractors from taking control of the construction. The resolution of conflicts with the contractors left in the hands of the beneficiaries brought many residents to disagree with the mechanism of giving them the government funds, and the NGO recognised the need for greater control of the management of funds between beneficiaries and contractors. Similarly, the communities felt they were left alone to resolve internal conflicts and struggle with the authorities to receive the funds they were entitled. Their disagreement with the lead NGO demonstrates an unclear division of responsibilities for resolving conflicts and an excessive relying of the latter on the communities' capacities. The lead NGO pressured to finish the project to advocate policy change but their inability to pursue this objective for a too long period led them to reduce the contact with the communities, who lost interest to finish and extend the project.

CONCLUSION

A FAILED ATTEMPT AT SLUM POLICY INNOVATION?

Studying processes of policy making in Bhuj allowed us to analyse how other considerations besides global capitalism and the 'world city' model participate in the formation of slum policies in India. The research highlighted a process of emergence driven by important state interventions in view of post-earthquake reconstruction. The fast transition of Bhuj from a provincial town to a model city of 'building back better' was enacted through the transformation of its governance and planning system and led a changing urban society influenced by emerging city visions. In this context of urban transition, slums came to identify those settlements considered as unfitting this city-making process, for their non-compliance with the formal urban system and their illegal tenure. In turn, targeting them as slums led to their exclusion from recovery policies, thus increasing even more their precarious conditions. The presence of slums in Bhuj appears then associated with exclusionary planning practices 'from above' enacted by state policies of reconstruction (Mukherji 2008; Taheri Tafti 2017; Taheri Tafti and Tomlinson 2015).

At the same time, these settlements are locally perceived in a different way from the idea of typical slum framed in the context of large cities. Rather, they are understood in relation to the rural-urban connexion that characterizes the small city context and as part of the historical, caste and social relations of the city embedded in the sub-regional environment. However, such image is constructed within an evolving urban landscape that is shaped by a middle class aspiring to modernization and emancipation, and which understands these settlements as in need for development. The way slums in Bhuj became entangled in processes of policy making was influenced by their changing perception in the context of rising city. Extending the analysis beyond the temporality of the pilot project implementation, Bhuj appears as a small city immersed in a rapid process of globalisation in which the circulation of knowledge, people, materials and politics participate in the co-construction of alternative policy ideas.

A longer process of social mobilization was driven by local activist groups who attempted to change policies and the living conditions of marginalized groups. This process was initiated

by an educated and cosmopolitan local elite, which is both grounded in the local context but also globally connected with trans-local networks of civic governmentality (Roy 2009). This elite mobilises citizens' responsibilities, long-term engagement with the poor, and is grounded on the local culture in ways that blur boundaries between NGOs and social movements (Jenkins 2010). This process opens spaces for policy innovation, where ideas of co-production and partnerships with the state dialogue with locally framed ideas of decentralization and sustainable and progressive urban development. The case of Bhuj challenges the understanding of small cities only as depending and waiting for state interventions to address slums, and conversely highlights their agency in policy construction and formulation and the attempt to adapt policies and practices to the context of small cities. The model of owner-driven slum redevelopment by which Bhuj aspired to become an example, attests local efforts to move from participation to co-production (Satterthwaite and Mitlin 2014) and to shape slum policies that challenge visions of urban development based only on entrepreneurialism (Harvey 1989).

Particular conditions leaving space for experimentation and policy innovation in the post-earthquake period were decisive to extend the process over the years and to evolve in the model making of owner-driven slum rehabilitation. Bhuj appears itself as a space of inter-referencing and as a model city that these elites mobilize as example of urban success to reproduce, both in different policy context and in other places. Local actors mobilized national slum policies based on participatory approach that they deem capable for achieving desired transformations in slums. However, the failure to adopt the owner-driven model by national policies, despite the inclusion of Bhuj in the best practices and the interest of government authorities, was due to a change in national policies and weakened the social mobilization, while conflicts between stakeholders prevented the completion of the pilot project and its mobilization for policy change. The unsuccessful implementation of the pilot project in Bhuj represents a failure of the policy-making process to become influential (McFarlane 2012). It remains to be seen if more recent proposals to rehabilitate slums in an owner-driven approach in other small cities will pursue the journey to include the model in national slum policies. The analysis of the project implementation reveals a number of obstacles that highlight diverging visions and interests among stakeholders, included between NGOs and slum dwellers. Despite the supposed centrality of the latter in the model, the evidence of several conflicting relations questions the capacity of the movement as an emancipatory political force (Jenkins 2010).

THINKING ALTERNATIVE SLUM POLICIES IN SMALL CITIES?

This research aimed to understand how local conditions influence project outcomes and to which extent we could expect for similar outcomes in other small cities. However, the important delays limited the possibilities to study the transformations produced locally, while the only implementation of the pilot in Bhuj prevented to compare it with other settlements or cities. Still, we wonder if the owner-driven slum redevelopment as it was implemented in the pilot project in Bhuj can be considered a good strategy of slum improvement and if it can be considered replicable in other settlements and cities within the framework of national slum policies. To what extent this approach can correct some inadequacies of slum redevelopment with private participation when implemented in small cities, and facilitate rehabilitation processes that better respond to local conditions? The research highlights a number of shortcomings in the management system that may be redressed in order to include diverging visions and interests within communities and between stakeholders, and increase the model's capacity to work with poor urban communities.

To question the validity of this strategy we consider several aspects, following Mukhija's (2017) approach in evaluating slum redevelopment projects in Mumbai. In first place, we consider the interests of residents. Many families succeeded to complete and occupy the houses and expressed their satisfaction with the project outcomes despite the important delays and difficulties they faced. This suggests that slum dwellers are more favourable to an owner driven approach to slum redevelopment rather than contractor driven. Concerning the planning system, they prefer larger individual housing units that imply a reduction of the household size and an increased sense of security. Most importantly, their preference for housing units with land tenure rights are not met in the slum redevelopment using land as resource, where the security of tenure is divorced from incremental investments by the slum dwellers (Kamath 2012). Accommodating slum dwellers in apartments building without access to the land, they are prevented to continue or start new home-based activities, manage the house expansion through long-term investments (Kundu and Dibyendu 2011) and maintain family and neighborhood relations. Long-settled communities prefer to be entitled of the land they occupy, for their sense of belonging to a community that overlaps with locality (Raman et al. 2015) and as it reduces the uncertainty to share the land with private actors. At the same time, the provision of houses is preferred to the focus on just

services improvement and tenure regularization as in slum upgrading.

However, the pilot project in Bhuj created divisions between a majority of favourable families and few others who occupied larger lands that the community forced to participate. The insurgence of divisions around project arrangements like the allocation of standard-size housing plots confirms the difficulties to include the diversity of interests among sub-groups. The transition from collective forms of land tenure to individual property rights can also lead to important changes in the resident's social identity that influence their implication in the slum redevelopment process. Furthermore, whereas the strategy allows for a gradual and flexible implementation by the beneficiaries organized in groups or individually, a consensus needs to be reached among the entire community before the project is implemented, since the refusal of some to free their housing plot may hamper others to build their house. These difficulties show the importance to include the diversity of needs and interests among slum dwellers, for which collective action occurs within subgroups more often than at the level of the 'community' (De Wit and Berner 2009).

Individual interests moved community leaders to assert tight control, influence the beneficiary selection and the construction management, limiting the capacity of inhabitants to organize collectively or increasing their competition to be included in the project. This confirms the importance for NGOs to consider the influence of logics of patronage when federating slum dwellers with the intermediation of traditional leaders (*ibid.*). The experience in Bhuj confirms that, supporting participation, NGOs may be influenced by a simplified understanding of communities that hide the heterogeneity of groups (Dupont 2016), where traditional leaders do not necessarily represent the interests of the entire community. The consultation of community leaders without a collective discussion about project choices fails to respond to the needs and preferences of inhabitants, who end up expressing their demands through contestations (De Geest and De Nys-Ketels 2019).

Concerning the community implication in participatory practices of slum survey and housing and settlement design, NGOs and consultants need to ensure an open flow of knowledge and to include community-based knowledge in project choices (Jordhus-Lier et al. 2016). A collective discussion needs to be ensured during the project preparation to include different needs and situations within communities. In the absence of an effective participation of the community, building regulations and design standards in the context of large-scale housing policy risk to obstacle design choices that the owner-

driven construction expects to favour, and which end up depending on the families' capacity to negotiate changes to the design developed by the NGO.

Concerning the central place of slum dwellers in the construction process, existing relations like family ties or the belonging to sub-groups has a major influence in the project implementation in Bhuj. This suggests that allowing the community to organize the construction process is an important requisite to favour the emergence of collective forms of self-help and self-managed construction, as well as ensuring that slum-dwellers own capacities and knowledge in construction. When these requisites are missing, NGOs should support weaker families and groups in order to prevent leaders and contractors to capture the project.

Slum dwellers are also favourable to receive and manage the government funds for construction, which would increase their control over the slum redevelopment process. At the same time, their capacities to manage the project financially need to be ensured. Financing the construction of larger individual houses that imply a higher beneficiary contribution was a central issue in the pilot project in Bhuj that compromised especially the families with lower financial capacities. Although NGOs can support beneficiaries with strategies to cope with the high costs of construction, they are not enough to reduce the financial burden of the project on poorer families, for example when the disbursement of government funds is delayed. To implement slum rehabilitation as owner driven in poor urban communities, the beneficiaries' contribution should not exceed too much their financial capacities, at least for those families unable to access other resources or to adopt strategies to limit the expenses.

Whereas the owner driven approach gives a central place to slum dwellers in the project, the coordination with other institutional stakeholders continues to be a main condition for the model to succeed within the national policy framework. The example of Bhuj highlights in particular the role of the local administration. The strategy aims to bring benefits to the city as a whole and not only to slum settlements, by integrating the city planning and participating to more sustainable urban development goals, despite the non-implementation beyond the pilot project prevented to pursue these objectives. The approach participates to increase the value of slums and nearby settlements and to prevent the creation of "vertical slums" with poor quality and congestion of buildings, which developers are brought to build in the search for higher profit margins in selected profitable locations (Dupont 2014).

Although government official in the Municipality acknowledge these benefits, the

project did not meet the political interests at the local level and did not take into account the institutional constraints of small municipalities. The intention to bypass the Municipality by relating directly with higher authorities and to move to slum communities the responsibility to provide public services does not resolve but leave intact the lack of resources and capacities and the logic of clientelism of small municipalities in the context of decentralized governance. The example of Bhuj, where the Municipality delayed the release of government funds to beneficiaries and refused to outsource the construction of infrastructures, confirms that the local government needs to be included in slum rehabilitation not just as an implementer and to increase its coordination and decision power (Kamath 2012). At the same time, consultants need to consider the persistence of patronage logic and the lack of resources of the local government, which should be provided capacity building toward stage-wise assessment and fund release in order to overcome the difficulty to implement national policies.

NGOs are important for social mobilization and policy advocacy, particularly for their understanding of local issues. However, such understanding and institutional interests orient the project implementation in ways that do not always correspond to the preferences and interests of slum dwellers. In some cases, the priority to complete the project and mobilize it for policy advocacy led NGOs to arrange alternative solutions to the residents. The example of Bhuj confirms that intermediaries like NGOs are not impartial as they pursue their interests and hold power over the residents (Dupont 2016) and risk to standardize the participatory process into "organized participatory rituals" (Raman et al. 2016). Finally, whereas the strategy expects to shift control of the slum redevelopment process from private developers to slum dwellers, it is no less exempt from the involvement of profit-oriented stakeholders that risk to make community participation co-opted and inconsistently implemented (De Geest, De Nys-Ketels 2019). Except for some cases, the findings show a greater control by the contractors over beneficiaries, in particular in conflict situations, as the implementation mechanism gives the control of the construction process to the house owners without ensuring they have capacities for that.

ANNEX 1. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Personal and household information

- What is your full name? What is your wife's name?
- Which are your religion, *jati*, *up-jati*? And of your wife?
- How old are you?
- What is your education standard?
- Are you engaged in social or political groups? What is your role and activities?
- Who do you live with? Are you married, do you have children?
- Where do your other relatives live?
- What is the name of this place and which are its limits? What is there nearby?

Family and residential path

- What is your place of birth (state, district, city, ward)? And of your wife?
- Where is your father from? And of your wife?
- Where you were living before settling in this area? When and why you moved here?
- Which was the position of your house before this project? How did you find it? Who built that house? When you moved there?
- You were owner or renter? Who were the owners? How much did you pay as rent?
- Who were your neighbours? Where are they now?
- Who did you live with? Where are these people now?
- How many rooms were there?
- Which were the typology, materials and conditions of that house?
- Did you have water and electricity connection? Did you pay it? Did you have wc?
- Which difficulties your household faced before the project?
- There were demolitions in this area? When? Who was affected? Where they are now?
- Which changes did the earthquake cause in your life, household, neighbourhood?

Economic activities

- What's your main occupation? Are you owner or employed?
- When did you start this activity? What did you do before?

- Where is your work place? How is it far from home and how do you go there?
- Do you have relatives that participate to the same activity?
- Who works in your household and what's their activity?
- Do you have a bank account? Since when? In which bank?
- How did this project influence your activity?

Participation to the project

- Who told you the first time about the project? What did they tell you?
- How did you participate to meetings, trainings, planning, and construction?
- Do you belong to a Self Help group or a slum committee? What is your role and activities? Who is your group leader?
- Who decided the position of your house in the project? Who are your neighbours, how did decide their position?
- Which relations did you have with other beneficiaries during the project? And with the authorities and the NGOs? When you met them and which issues did you discuss?
- Who built the house? Did you participate to the construction? Who are your contractors and how did you chose them? Which works they did? Are you satisfied?
- Did you change the design of your house from the project?

Effects of the project

- When did you move to this house?
- Where did you stay during the construction process?
- Which difficulties did you face during the project, how did you overcome them?
- Have you been registered as house owner? To whom will be entitled the new house?
- How this project affects your life?
- What is your favourite party of the house and what you don't like?
- How you will modify the house in future?
- Can you describe your typical day at home?
- How the relations with neighbours and communities changed after the project?

ANNEX 2. INTERVIEWS WITH RESIDENTS IN SLUMS

Nr.	Name	Slum settlement	Interview date	Nr.	Name	Slum settlement	Interview date
1	R.V.	Ramdevnagar	20/07/17	40	P.S.	Bhimraonagar	11/04/18
2	J.V.	Ramdevnagar	21/07/17	41	B.V.	Ramdevnagar	12/04/18
3	D.B.	GIDC Relocation Site	24/07/17	42	C.V.	Ramdevnagar	12/04/18
4	H.H.	GIDC Relocation Site	25/07/17	43	D.V.	Ramdevnagar	13/04/18
5	F.K.	GIDC Relocation Site	26/07/17	44	K.V.	Ramdevnagar	13/04/18
6	S.C.	GIDC Relocation Site	27/07/17	45	J.P.	Ramdevnagar	13/04/18
7	S.B.	GIDC Relocation Site	01/08/17	46	K.P.	Ramdevnagar	13/04/18
8	S.V.	Ramdevnagar	14/08/17	47	M.V.	Ramdevnagar	16/04/18
9	E.B.	Ramdevnagar	15/08/17	48	N.V.	Ramdevnagar	16/04/18
10	K.S.	Ramdevnagar	17/08/17	49	P.V.	Ramdevnagar	16/04/18
11	B.S.	Ramdevnagar	18/08/17	50	L.P.	GIDC Relocation Site	08/06/18
12	R.P.	Ramdevnagar	19/08/17	51	G.J.	GIDC Relocation Site	08/06/18
13	S.P.	Ramdevnagar	21/08/17	52	S.T.	GIDC Relocation Site	11/06/18
14	V.P.	Ramdevnagar	23/08/17	53	H.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	12/06/18
15	T.V.	Ramdevnagar	23/08/17	54	F.J.	GIDC Relocation Site	12/06/18
16	J.V.	Ramdevnagar	25/08/17	55	F.O.	GIDC Relocation Site	12/06/18
17	J.V.	Ramdevnagar	26/08/17	56	S.C.	GIDC Relocation Site	12/06/18
18	F.P.	Ramdevnagar	29/08/17	57	M.P.	GIDC Relocation Site	13/06/18
19	T.V.	Ramdevnagar	15/03/18	58	J.T.	GIDC Relocation Site	13/06/18
20	A.V.	Ramdevnagar	16/03/18	59	S.A.	GIDC Relocation Site	13/06/18
21	H.S.	GIDC Relocation Site	21/03/18	60	R.A.	GIDC Relocation Site	19/06/18
22	T.H.	GIDC Relocation Site	22/03/18	61	H.M.	GIDC Relocation Site	20/06/18
23	J.K.	Bhimraonagar	26/03/18	62	D.H.	GIDC Relocation Site	20/06/18
24	B.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	28/03/18	63	V.V.	Ramdevnagar	20/06/18
25	D.K.	GIDC Relocation Site	29/03/18	64	J.H.	GIDC Relocation Site	23/06/18
26	N.A.	GIDC Relocation Site	31/03/18	65	T.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	23/06/18
27	A.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	02/04/18	66	H.J.	Bhimraonagar	25/06/18
28	K.K.	GIDC Relocation Site	03/04/18	67	R.J.	Bhimraonagar	25/06/18
29	R.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	04/04/18	68	D.J.	Bhimraonagar	25/06/18
30	M.K.	GIDC Relocation Site	04/04/18	69	M.J.	Bhimraonagar	25/06/18
31	D.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	04/04/18	70	T.K.	Bhimraonagar	25/06/18
32	J.M.	GIDC Relocation Site	04/04/18	71	L.M.	Bhimraonagar	26/06/18
33	M.N.	GIDC Relocation Site	04/04/18	72	K.M.	Bhimraonagar	26/06/18
34	M.S.	GIDC Relocation Site	04/04/18	73	R.B.	Bhimraonagar	27/06/18
35	B.J.	GIDC Relocation Site	05/04/18	74	H.O.	Bhimraonagar	27/06/18
36	R.T.	GIDC Relocation Site	05/04/18	75	P.B.	Bhimraonagar	27/06/18
37	J.G.	GIDC Relocation Site	05/04/18	76	N.M.	Maldhari Was	24/07/18
38	D.C.	GIDC Relocation Site	06/04/18	77	S.V.	Ramdevnagar	21/08/18
39	S.O.	Bhimraonagar	11/04/18				

ANNEX 3. INTERVIEWS WITH PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

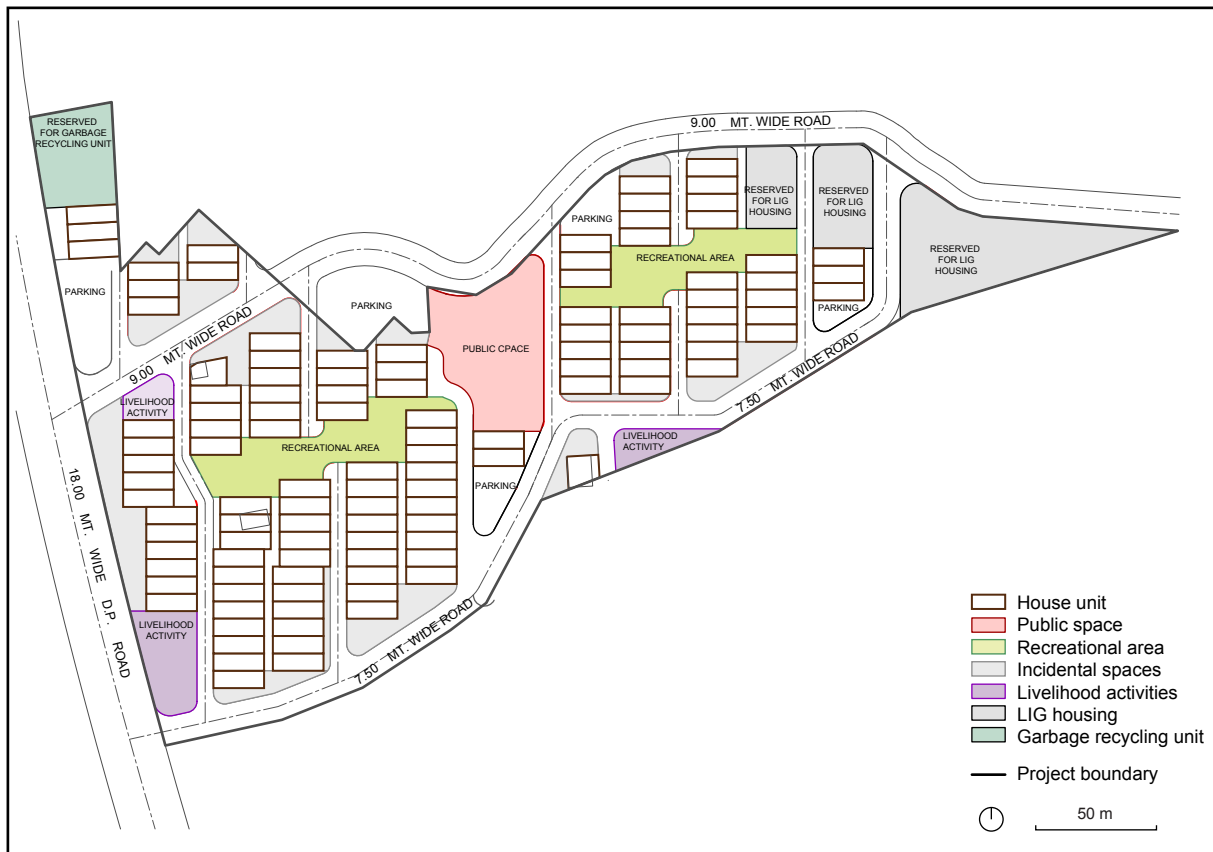
Nr.	Name	Organisation	Interview date	Nr.	Name	Organisation	Interview date
1	B.A.	Hunnarshala	21/10/15	25	K.A.	(Chartered Accountant)	26/08/17
2	D.A.	Hunnarshala	26/10/15	26	D.T.	Kacch Mitra magazine	30/08/17
3	P.C.	Hunnarshala	26/10/15	27	J.N.	Hunnarshala	01/09/17
4	P.C.	Hunnarshala	27/10/15	28	J.B.	BHADA	01/09/17
5	D.A.	Hunnarshala	28/10/15	29	H.I.	HIC	17/05/18
6	D.A.	Hunnarshala	29/10/15	30	H.I.	HIC	27/05/18
7	P.C.	Hunnarshala	30/10/15	31	E.E.	SETU	28/05/18
8	K.H.	SETU	06/11/15	32	B.N.	Bhuj Maldhari Sangathan	30/05/18
9	A.A.	Abhiyan	24/11/15	33	D.Y.	Hunnarshala	01/06/18
10	Y.J.	ACT	24/11/15	34	R.E.	(tourist guide)	04/06/18
11	H.A.	KMVS	30/11/15	35	U.V.	HIC	05/06/18
12	B.B.	JSSS	03/12/15	36	J.D.	FOKIA	06/06/18
13	B.H.	Sahjeevan	03/12/15	37	F.M.	High Court, Bhuj	20/06/18
14	J.S.	Hunnarshala	04/12/15	38	P.J.	Faruk magazine	09/07/18
15	F.V.	Hunnarshala	08/12/15	39	F.F.	Municipality Chief Officer	10/07/18
16	C.C.	SETU	08/12/15	40	T.S.	BHADA	10/07/18
17	B.A.	Hunnarshala	27/06/17	41	E.C.	Congress candidate MLA	13/07/18
18	H.R.	Hunnarshala	07/07/17	42	S.G.	Ward 1 councilor	15/07/18
19	K.T.	Hunnarshala	02/08/17	43	P.A.	(heir of the royal family)	15/07/18
20	D.E.	Shrujan	08/08/17	44	B.A.	Hunnarshala	18/07/18
21	M.U.	BDC	08/08/17	45	S.K.	Ward 3 councilor	26/07/18
22	F.V.	Hunnarshala	19/08/17	46	R.L.	MLA	26/07/18
23	T.A.	Hunnarshala	24/08/17	47	D.D.	DILR	20/08/18
24	M.G.	Bhuj association of Architects, Engineers	28/08/17	48	B.M.	District Collector	20/08/18

ANNEX 4. LAYOUT PLANS IN THE PILOT PROJECT IN BHUJ



Site Layout for Bhimraonagar

Sources: Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author



Site Layout for Ramdevnagar

Sources: Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author



Site Layout for GIDC Relocation Site

Sources: Hunnarshala 2014a. Realized by: the author

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RÉSUMÉ EN FRANÇAIS

INTRODUCTION

Cette recherche explore le rôle peu étudié des petites villes indiennes dans les politiques des bidonvilles et soulève la question de comment des acteurs et histoires locaux se mobilisent dans sa formation et mise en œuvre. En nous concentrant sur les politiques des bidonvilles, nous envisageons d'étudier les processus par lesquels des groupes sociaux dans ces quartiers s'engagent dans la formation et la transformation des interventions de l'État. Un des points de départ de la recherche est donc l'importance d'étudier la variété des contextes locaux afin de comprendre comment les politiques des bidonvilles se produisent.

Les études sur ce sujet ont négligé les petits centres urbains conduisant à construire la catégorie et les images associées à ces quartiers, ainsi que les politiques pour les aborder en tant que sujet des grandes villes. Cette focalisation s'explique lorsque nous situons les politiques des bidonvilles dans le « tournant urbain » des sciences sociales, dans lequel l'importance des villes est accrue par leur domination mondiale. Alors que la littérature sur l'impact du paradigme néolibéral s'est concentrée sur le contexte euro-américain, les études urbaines postcoloniales ont contribué à élargir la compréhension de l'urbain au-delà de la théorie des « villes globales » construite au Nord. Ces études ont conduit à revoir les concepts de modernité et de développement tels que construits historiquement et à considérer la théorie urbaine avec une perspective du Sud. Mais un tel tournant urbain a occulté les petits centres.

L'accent mis sur les grandes villes a caractérisé les politiques urbaines de manière plus générale depuis le début de l'État-nation, tandis que les petits centres faisaient partie d'une préoccupation plus large du développement territorial. En adoptant le projet néolibéral, l'Inde est également passée du développement dirigé par l'État à la déréglementation, à la subsidiarité et à des modalités plus entrepreneuriales de gouvernance urbaine et d'urbanisme. Au cours de la dernière décennie, il y a eu un regain d'intérêt pour les petites villes dans une tentative de dé-hiérarchiser dans l'élaboration de la théorie urbaine. Cela a conduit à une redécouverte de ces dernières dans des aspects tels que le rôle dans le processus

d'urbanisation, l'enracinement dans les structures sociales et politiques et les conditions qui influencent la gouvernance et la planification.

La recherche urbaine en Inde fait généralement référence aux petites villes pour indiquer les centres urbains plus petits et physiquement isolés des métropoles. Dans cette recherche, nous nous appuyons sur la classification du *Census of India* qui identifie comme des « villes » les centres urbains ou agglomérations avec une population de 100 000 habitants ou plus. Avec ce choix, nous nous concentrons en premier lieu sur la différence administrative qui les distingue des centres plus petits. Un thème largement traité est la difficulté généralisée à faire face à une plus grande présence de la pauvreté et à une demande plus élevée de services et d'infrastructures dans les petites villes. Un autre champ de recherche s'est focalisé sur la territorialité des petites villes, dont l'économie basée sur le commerce fonctionne en tant qu'économie de provision pour la population rurale, restant ainsi fortement connectée à leur arrière-pays et dépendante du secteur agricole.

Un des postulats de l'urbanisme subalterne est de comprendre les petites villes non pas en terme d'absence ou de présence de mondialisation, mais d'expliquer leur croissance à travers des forces de transformation locales qui les relient globalement, indépendamment des économies d'agglomération. Un cosmopolitisme propre aux petites villes peut être compris en relation aux liens à longue distance, tout en se différenciant par des modes de vie et d'appartenance au territoire. Nous évoquons ces considérations pour orienter notre exploration sur la façon dont les politiques peuvent être soumises à différentes conditions et forces, ainsi que sur différentes perceptions des bidonvilles qui peuvent interagir avec des futurs urbains construits localement.

Cette recherche commence par s'interroger sur la manière dont les catégories de quartiers informels et de bidonvilles, et les politiques qui les abordent, s'articulent avec les acteurs locaux, les histoires et les luttes dans les petites villes, et quelles forces autres que l'économie mondiale et la ville néolibérale participent à leur construction. De même, les études sur les bidonvilles se sont concentrées uniquement sur certaines grandes villes, en particulier Mumbai et Delhi, et sur l'influence du capitalisme mondial et du paradigme néolibéral sur les politiques des bidonvilles. Puisque la catégorie et les images associées aux bidonvilles se sont construites dans le cadre hégémonique de ce qui doit être urbain, c'est-à-dire dans les grandes villes, comment sont-elles mobilisées dans les contextes « périphériques » des petits centres ?

Nous nous concentrons notamment sur la situation des villes « émergentes ». Cette situation de transition urbaine conduit à se focaliser sur des relations qui brouillent les distinctions entre rural et urbain, petites et grandes villes, urbanisation *mainstream* et subalterne et à

s'interroger sur la manière dont la construction de ces catégories participe de différentes manières à définir les bidonvilles. La responsabilité du gouvernement local de contrôler le développement urbain amène inévitablement les bidonvilles dans le discours sur la construction de la ville. Alors que ces études se sont concentrées sur la manière dont l'État traite les bidonvilles dans les petites villes, peu d'attention a été accordée à savoir si et comment leur spécificité a influencé les revendications locales et les interactions avec les politiques de l'État.

L'accent mis sur le contexte local pour comprendre comment des histoires interagissent dans les processus d'élaboration des politiques nous conduit à étudier le rôle de la société civile dans les mobilisations des bidonvilles dans les petites villes. La littérature sur la mobilisation sociale fait une distinction entre les ONG, considérées comme réformistes et opérant par la négociation, et les mouvements sociaux comme radicaux et visant à l'émancipation des personnes. S'agissant d'organisations professionnelles plutôt que de groupes de citoyens et en raison de l'élitisme de leur structure et de leurs pratiques, les ONG ne peuvent pas remplacer les mobilisations populaires.

Les études sur l'action collective, après s'être concentrées sur la prise en compte de logiques et rationalités individuelles, se sont intéressées au rôle de l'hétérogénéité des acteurs, à l'influence des variables contextuelles pour expliquer des comportements collectifs. Les dimensions politiques et culturelles peuvent expliquer comment ces mouvements sont constitués d'individus définis par des identités qui existent dans le contexte local. La mobilisation sociale est généralement associée à l'idée de participation des habitants des bidonvilles à la mise en œuvre des politiques. La différence entre espaces de participation et de citoyenneté « invités » et « inventés » conduit à se concentrer sur les différentes manières dont les communautés collaborent avec ou se confrontent aux autorités étatiques, et donc sur la manière dont ces dernières contrôlent les citoyens.

Des stratégies politiques de « coproduction », où des partenariats sont construits avec l'État de manière à fonder le développement urbain sur les connaissances et les capacités des citoyens, sont considérées comme plus importantes que la participation à défier des visions de développement urbain. Nous cherchons à comprendre les processus de construction d'idées et d'actions collectives en proposant une perspective sur le long terme. Plutôt que se concentrer sur les résultats des projets et analyser les programmes en fonction de leur succès, cette approche se concentre sur les forces en place et les interactions entre les acteurs qui peuvent expliquer le succès et l'intensification des campagnes de mobilisation. Dans le même temps, le succès ou l'échec des projets soulève la question de la manière dont les conditions locales

ont produit ces résultats et celle de savoir dans quelle mesure nous pouvons nous attendre à des résultats similaires dans d'autres petits centres.

Dans cette recherche, nous visons à explorer non seulement la mobilisation sociale dans les petites villes pour « recevoir » ou contester les politiques de bidonvilles, mais aussi leur engagement dans les processus d'élaboration et de formulation des politiques. Nous adoptons l'approche de mobilité des politiques urbaines qui se concentre sur les pratiques, les représentations et l'expertise grâce auxquelles les connaissances politiques sont développées, mobilisées et opérationnalisées dans différents contextes. Les politiques, les modèles et les connaissances « mobiles » sont perçus non seulement comme étant reproduits entre les sites d'élaboration des politiques, mais comme mutuellement constitués avec eux, de sorte que les politiques mutent au fur et à mesure qu'elles se déplacent tout en refondant les paysages à travers lesquels elles voyagent.

Une focalisation locale sur la mobilité des politiques déplace l'attention sur la manière dont les acteurs locaux prétendent que les politiques sont capables d'atteindre des objectifs de transformation urbaine souhaitée, qui est basé sur les circonstances perçues de leur ville considérées de manière partielle et sélective. La littérature sur la mobilité des politiques a été fortement centrée sur le monde atlantique et anglophone et influencée par des normes idéologiques de la mondialisation néolibérale. Si certains chercheurs ont examiné le caractère distinctif des défis de politique urbaine auxquels sont confrontées les villes du Sud globalisé, leur attention reste cependant sur la diffusion du modèle de la ville globale.

Cependant, les études sur la variété des processus qui façonnent les villes autres que la néolibéralisation ont mis en évidence que les dynamiques politiques au niveau de la ville peuvent contribuer à une théorisation post-néolibérale des processus urbains. L'urbanisme asiatique se distingue par l'inclusion non seulement d'un modèle de concurrence et d'un inter-référencement entre les villes, mais aussi d'associations dans lesquelles le néolibéralisme et des formes d'activisme se fondent en coalitions complexes et créent de nouvelles configurations sociales et politiques. Peu d'études ont localisé la mobilité des politiques urbaines dans les petites villes pour déconstruire à la fois le centrisme euro-américain et celui des grandes villes. Nous nous demandons donc comment la dynamique politique dans les petites villes peut conduire à la production de politiques alternatives et innovantes en matière de bidonvilles.

MÉTHODOLOGIE

Cette recherche mobilise des travaux de différentes disciplines et une multitude d'approches et méthodologies pour enquêter sur l'émergence de politiques des bidonvilles, résultant de la mobilisation sociale d'acteurs locaux en interaction avec les politiques publiques. Une approche ascendante et centrée sur les acteurs a été privilégiée pour se concentrer sur les réponses des différents acteurs sociaux aux politiques nationales, en se concentrant sur les liens et les interactions entre les résidents des quartiers marginalisés, des organisations de la société civile, etc. Les recherches sur les « *Policies and Politics to Address Substandard Settlements* » dans le cadre du programme collectif Chance2Sustain ont inspiré l'approche méthodologique. Ces recherches étudient les politiques des bidonvilles comme construites et définies par une multiplicité d'acteurs et mélangent une approche ascendante axée sur les habitants des bidonvilles avec une perspective descendante sur le rôle des différents acteurs au niveau de la ville.

En parallèle, la recherche s'inspire des approches méthodologiques utilisées dans la recherche sur la mobilité des politiques urbaine, caractérisée par une certaine ouverture et flexibilité. Nous privilégions les approches d'analyse sociologique et anthropologique et une recherche « lente » basée sur un engagement qualitatif. L'approche d'« assemblage » a été privilégiée pour sa focalisation sur l'émergence plutôt que sur la formation résultante, et pour l'étude du pouvoir en tant que pluralité caractérisée par l'inattendu et le non-linéaire. En gardant la recherche centrée sur des sites spécifiques pour étudier les processus d'élaboration des politiques, nous nous concentrons sur une variété d'échelles d'analyse connexes. L'accent mis sur l'*agency* des acteurs locaux est initialement décliné à travers une approche rétrospective pour retracer les initiatives et les processus de changement de longue durée, puis analyser les résultats actuels.

Cette thèse analyse un programme de réhabilitation de bidonvilles à Bhuj, une petite ville et capitale du district du Kacch situé dans la partie nord-ouest de l'État du Gujarat. Le programme a été mis en œuvre en 2015 à travers un projet pilote dans le cadre du programme national de politique des bidonvilles Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY). Le gouvernement a reconnu les caractéristiques innovantes du programme, notamment la centralité des habitants des bidonvilles dans le réaménagement des quartiers au lieu des promoteurs, et pour favoriser des processus et des formes urbaines contextuels. Reconnu parmi les « bonnes pratiques » d'implémentation des politiques nationales, le programme a été censé influencer celles-ci pour aborder la réhabilitation des bidonvilles dans les petites villes. Le cas de Bhuj est donc

étudié comme un exemple pour approfondir le rôle des acteurs locaux dans les petites villes interagissant « par en bas » avec l'État pour un changement des politiques. Bhuj représente un exemple de ville en plein essor. Cette dynamique a suivi le tremblement de terre de 2001 au Gujarat, après quoi les politiques économiques et industrielles de l'État ont été dirigées pour relancer l'économie de la région. Le processus a permis de réorganiser le système de planification et d'accélérer le rythme d'urbanisation de la ville qui en peu de temps a étendu ses frontières, englobant les villages voisins dans le territoire périurbain. La présence de bidonvilles à Bhuj est donc remise en cause par rapport à ce récent processus de changement de système de planification et de gouvernance et son contexte de transition.

Le programme est étudié en analysant les relations entre les différents groupes et acteurs, et la façon dont ces relations s'inscrivent dans le contexte local et la dynamique de changement en cours. Alors que la recherche a été réalisée indépendamment du réseau local d'ONG Kacch Nav Nirman Abhiyan qui a promu le programme, sa centralité dans l'initiative et dans les efforts pour changer les politiques des bidonvilles en tant que *owner-driven*, a amené à concentrer la recherche principalement sur leurs activités. Ce réseau d'ONG a été créé pour répondre aux besoins de coordination des activités de reconstruction dans la région rurale du Kacch et a émergé comme un important acteur local du développement dans la période post-séisme. Le réseau a été initié par des militants impliqués dans des mouvements populaires et soutenu par des organisations bénévoles. Ces groupes ont convergé vers la création d'initiatives sociales basées sur des idées communes de développement inscrites dans la philosophie gandhienne du village autosuffisant.

Au cours de la période qui a suivi le séisme, les ONG ont consolidé leur position dans la région alors que les opérations de secours se transformaient en réhabilitation à long terme et ont assumé un rôle important sur la scène politique locale. La noblesse liée à l'État princier du Kacch s'était retirée de son rôle de patronage et d'initiatives sociales depuis que le gouvernement de l'État avait supprimé leurs privilèges dans les années 70, laissant ainsi les décisions concernant le développement de la région en grande partie entre les mains de l'État. Les ONG ont participé à des revendications nationalistes locales contre le paradigme de développement qui influence les interventions de l'État dans la reconstruction, tout en participant à la logique de la gouvernance décentralisée et du transfert des responsabilités de l'État au secteur privé. La centralité assumée par le réseau d'ONG dans la reconstruction les a amené à poursuivre des activités de développement et à se spécialiser sur des problèmes émergents dans les centres urbains du Kacch, parmi lesquels la réhabilitation des bidonvilles à Bhuj.

Ce terrain a été identifié en 2015 dans le cadre d'un post-master de recherche à l'École d'Architecture de Paris La Villette. Le choix de la ville de Bhuj a été confirmé lors d'un pré-terrain réalisé en 2015, lorsque je suis entré en contact avec les parties prenantes du projet et que j'ai développé la problématique. La première phase a débuté en 2015 par la collecte d'informations accessibles sur Internet et pendant le travail de pré-terrain réalisé entre octobre et novembre 2015. L'ONG Hunnarshala Foundation basée à Bhuj a soutenu de manière informelle la recherche, en me présentant à d'autres ONG partenaires et aux communautés impliquées dans le projet.

La collecte des données a été réalisée principalement dans la deuxième phase de recherche, lors de deux terrains de recherche de juin à septembre 2017 et de janvier à septembre 2018, pour une durée totale de 11 mois. Les deux terrains ont été réalisés avec le soutien financier du laboratoire CESSMA pour couvrir les frais de transport, d'hébergement et rémunérer les assistants de recherche. L'opportunité de démarrer une codirection au Tata Institute of Social Sciences de Mumbai a facilité l'obtention d'un visa de recherche qui a permis de rencontrer des acteurs institutionnels et des agents gouvernementaux.

La première phase de collecte d'informations visait à comprendre le contexte de la ville et des quartiers et à identifier les parties prenantes dans le projet. Les données ont été collectées au cours d'entretiens avec les ONG ainsi qu'à travers des sources secondaires, notamment des documents de projet et de presse locale liées au processus de mobilisation. La collecte de données au niveau des quartiers s'est concentrée sur les sites inclus dans le projet pilote, en particulier les trois quartiers de Ramdevnagar, Bhimraonagar et du GIDC Relocation Site. Ces informations ont permis d'identifier les acteurs pertinents à interroger au sein ou en relation avec les quartiers et de créer une base de données à partir de la liste préliminaire des familles bénéficiaires qui a ensuite servi de référence pour mener des entretiens avec les habitants.

La phase suivante de collecte de données s'est basée sur une recherche mixte qualitative et quantitative. Les principales sources de données étaient principalement des entretiens semi-structurés. Les entretiens individuels avec les habitants reposaient sur une série de questions ouvertes concernant les informations personnelles et familiales, le parcours familial et résidentiel, l'économie, le processus de mobilisation et l'organisation de la mise en œuvre du projet, et les effets du projet. En parallèle, j'ai collecté des données dans une approche plus quantitative à travers quelques questions directes.

Dans les quartiers inclus dans le projet pilote, j'ai interviewé au total 163 familles bénéficiaires qui correspondent à plus de la moitié du total (314) et 86 familles qui ne sont pas bénéficiaires du projet. J'ai mené 72 entretiens semi-structurés avec les résidents qui ont

généralement duré entre une demi-heure et 2 heures, tandis que les autres étaient des entretiens plus courts avec des questions directes. Le principal obstacle à la réalisation des entretiens était l'absence des résidents à leur domicile, en particulier ceux vivant ailleurs alors que la construction n'était pas terminée. J'ai réalisé la plupart des entretiens avec des femmes dans leur maison car les maris étaient au travail pendant la journée. J'ai d'ailleurs pu interroger des habitants d'autres quartiers impliqués dans la mobilisation sociale.

Les entretiens avec les principales parties prenantes ont également été réalisés à travers des guides d'entretien semi-structurés et préparés pour différents types d'acteurs. J'ai réalisé au total 50 entretiens avec différents interlocuteurs, dont 13 appartiennent à l'ONG Hunnarshala et incluent des directeurs, des architectes et des travailleurs sociaux. En plus, j'ai interviewé 12 personnes clés d'autres ONG partenaires locales (KMVS, SETU, ACT, Sahjeevan, K-Link, Kacch Navnirman Abhiyan), des organisations de la société civile (HIC, Sakhi Sangini, JSSS, Bhuj Maldhari Sanghatan) et d'autres ONG locales (Khamir, Shrujan).

Les autres parties prenantes que j'ai interviewé comprennent des politiciens locaux tels que les conseillers des *wards* 1 et 3, le membre de l'Assemblée Législative du Kacch et le candidat de l'opposition, des représentants du gouvernement dans le District Collectorate, la Bhuj Area Development Authority, la municipalité et le District Inspector of Land Records (DILR). J'ai également pu interviewer des représentants de l'Association des Ingénieurs et Architectes de Kacch, de la Fédération de l'Association des Industries de Kutch (FOKIA), du Conseil de Développement de Bhuj (BDC), des journaux locaux Kacch Mitra et Farooq, l'héritier de la famille royale, ainsi que d'autres habitants de Bhuj.

Les langues utilisées dans les entretiens étaient le gujarati et le kacchi avec les habitants des bidonvilles et l'anglais avec la plupart des parties prenantes et autres informateurs. Ce contexte multilingue a nécessité le soutien d'assistants de recherche pour réaliser le travail de terrain. Les collaborateurs de Hunnarshala m'ont initialement soutenu pour accéder au terrain en me présentant aux leaders locaux. Plus tard, les assistants de recherche m'ont aidé dans la prise de contact avec les résidents pour l'organisation de la recherche.

L'observation participante, notamment lors des rencontres avec les résidents, m'a aidé à mieux comprendre les pratiques et les représentations des interlocuteurs. J'ai réalisé la plupart des enquêtes de terrain chez les résidents que j'ai pu observer pendant leurs activités quotidiennes dans l'espace domestique. De plus, j'ai assisté à des rencontres de groupe avec des habitants, y compris des comités de bidonvilles, des réunions régulières organisées par des ONG pour discuter des problèmes liés au projet, et des rencontres fortuites d'habitants dans les espaces communs au cours desquelles j'ai pu observer leurs relations. Quelques promenades

commentées dans les quartiers ont été particulièrement intéressantes, lorsque j'ai accompagné les leaders locaux et les travailleurs sociaux de Hunnarshala qui ont décrit le quartier et le projet, me permettant de comprendre les transformations en cours et rencontrer des familles. Pour réaliser les entretiens, j'ai demandé le consentement des habitants et assuré la confidentialité des données collectées en les gardant anonymes. Des situations conflictuelles entre l'ONG et d'autres acteurs clés ont entravé la réalisation d'entretiens lorsque ces derniers se méfiaient de mes objectifs. Des difficultés similaires sont survenues lors des entretiens avec des résidents qui ont souffert du fait que les leaders locaux poursuivent leurs propres intérêts dans le projet.

J'ai retranscrit la majorité des entretiens semi-structurés à partir d'enregistrements réalisés avec un microphone portable. Un assistant de recherche a ensuite comparé les transcriptions des entretiens avec leurs enregistrements et a ratifié ou ajouté des informations. La transcription des entretiens m'a permis de créer le corpus ethnographique que j'ai ensuite analysé. En parallèle, j'ai extrait les données à partir des transcriptions des entretiens semi-structurés et des notes et je les ai reporté sur une base de données. La systématisation des données a permis de reconnaître certaines questions pertinentes au niveau des quartiers, comme la structure familiale et communautaire et sa spatialisation avant et après le projet, l'avancement du processus de construction et sa gestion par les constructeurs.

Plusieurs sources secondaires ont contribué à enrichir le corpus ethnographique. Celles-ci incluent des documents officiels, des plans et des rapports réalisés par des parties prenantes et des institutions locales, et une série d'articles de presse concernant des projets dans des bidonvilles. J'ai mené des analyses sur des problématiques spécifiques liées aux dynamiques régionales et urbaines et à l'émergence du modèle. Les données extraites à partir du *Census of India* ont permis de visualiser la dynamique urbaine en relation au processus d'industrialisation.

Au niveau de la ville, la dynamique d'urbanisation a été cartographiée en comparant des photos satellites à des moments différents référencées sur une base cartographique. Ceci a permis d'analyser les changements survenus après le séisme. D'autres données quantitatives sur la population des quartiers obtenues à partir du *Census of India* ont permis d'affiner ces connaissances. L'accès aux profils des quartiers réalisés par l'ONG SETU en 2011 et aux données collectées par l'ONG K-Link en 2016 m'a aidé dans la réalisation d'analyses démographiques et socio-économiques des bidonvilles de Bhuj. Le profil socio-économique des bidonvilles et leur représentation cartographique ont contribué à la compréhension de la ségrégation socio-spatiale dans la ville.

ORGANISATION DE LA THÈSE

La thèse vise à explorer le rôle des petites villes dans la politique des bidonvilles, en prenant la ville de Bhuj comme cas d'étude. Comment des forces, acteurs et idées locaux interagissent-ils avec des politiques plus larges dans la construction de modèles alternatifs de réhabilitation des bidonvilles ? Le texte est organisé en trois parties, chacune présentant un angle d'analyse différent pour répondre à cette question.

La première partie situe la recherche dans le contexte géographique et politique indien et dans le cas spécifique de la petite ville de Bhuj. Le premier chapitre passe en revue la littérature sur les politiques des bidonvilles et sur les petites villes en Inde. D'une part, le chapitre explore comment les dynamiques urbaines des petites villes et l'inclusion dans le contexte social et politique local différencient les bidonvilles des grands villes ; et d'autre part il retrace le rôle des petites villes pour discuter leur marginalisation dans les stratégies néolibérales des « Villes sans Bidonvilles », ainsi que leur approche participative.

Le deuxième chapitre analyse la présence de quartiers informels à Bhuj à partir de la littérature sur la région et la ville, en particulier sur la reconstruction et le développement post-séisme. Après avoir situé la ville dans le contexte plus large de la précarisation des pauvres urbains dans les politiques de l'État, le chapitre analyse la présence des bidonvilles de Bhuj à travers une perspective historico-géographique. L'analyse montre la relation entre l'émergence des bidonvilles et le processus de reconstruction post-séisme et d'expansion urbaine, qui ont accru la vulnérabilité des quartiers illégaux et fusionné des conditions de précarité préexistantes et nouvelles.

La deuxième partie se concentre sur le modèle de réhabilitation des bidonvilles *owner-driven*. A partir d'entretiens avec des acteurs institutionnels et des documents de projet, le chapitre analyse l'émergence locale du modèle et ses particularités par rapport à la stratégie dominante dans les politiques nationales. Le troisième chapitre reconstruit le plaidoyer des groupes de la société civile locale et des militants pour réclamer des approches de reconstruction axées sur les communautés ; et comment le modèle *owner-driven* a circulé et s'est étendu de la reconstruction post-catastrophe dans la région rurale du Kacch au problème émergent de la pauvreté urbaine. Ce processus d'élaboration de politiques à long terme explique l'interaction ultérieure avec les politiques nationales faisant de Bhuj un modèle de réhabilitation des bidonvilles pour les petites villes.

Le quatrième chapitre analyse en détail le modèle pour comprendre en quoi il s'écarte de la stratégie politique nationale et comment il intègre des visions de développement des petites

viles qui diffèrent du modèle urbain dominant. Le chapitre se concentre dans un premier temps sur la mise en œuvre et le système de management pour montrer la centralité des habitants dans le processus de développement et d'implémentation du projet. Ensuite, les systèmes de planification et de conception sont analysés pour montrer comment le modèle développe des solutions contextuelles pour répondre à la spécificité des petites villes, en se concentrant en particulier sur les logements individuels, des typologies traditionnelles et des infrastructures et services gérés localement.

La troisième partie analyse la mise en œuvre du projet pilote à Bhuj et s'appuie davantage sur les résultats du travail de terrain et sur des entretiens et des observations avec des habitants des quartiers impliqués. Après avoir présenté le contexte de ces quartiers, le cinquième chapitre analyse la mobilisation des communautés dans des pratiques participatives d'énumération et de conception. L'accent est mis sur la manière dont la diversité des intérêts et des visions des leaders et des sous-groupes au sein des communautés, ainsi que des ONG interagissent dans le processus, aboutissant à des solutions de projet qui reflètent les conditions spécifiques des petites villes. Le chapitre se termine par l'analyse des transformations en termes de conditions de vie et de vulnérabilité, mais aussi du statut social des communautés et de la valeur des quartiers.

Le sixième chapitre analyse le processus de construction en se concentrant sur le rôle des acteurs impliqués, principalement les habitants, les ONG, les constructeurs et les agences gouvernementales. En particulier, ce chapitre discute de la manière dont les habitants mobilisent collectivement leurs ressources et connaissances, gèrent financièrement le processus dans le cadre du mécanisme d'implémentation et font face à la contribution attendue. Enfin, il analyse comment l'organisation des rôles et responsabilités des acteurs impliqués répond à la diversité de leurs compétences et intérêts.

CONCLUSION

L'étude des processus d'élaboration des politiques à Bhuj nous a permis d'analyser comment d'autres considérations en dehors du capitalisme global et du modèle de la « ville globale » participent à la formation des politiques des bidonvilles en Inde. La recherche a mis en évidence un processus d'émergence motivé par d'importantes interventions étatiques en vue de la reconstruction post-séisme. La transition de Bhuj d'une ville périphérique à un exemple de *building back better* a été décrétée par la transformation de son système de gouvernance et de planification et a guidé une société en mutation influencée par les visions urbaines

émergentes.

Dans ce contexte de transition, des quartiers considérés comme inadaptés à ce processus de production urbaine ont été identifiés en tant que bidonvilles, pour leur non-respect du système urbain formel et leur régime d'occupation illégale. À son tour, les cibler comme des bidonvilles a conduit à leur exclusion des politiques de réhabilitation, augmentant ainsi encore plus leurs conditions de précarité. La présence de quartiers informels à Bhuj apparaît ainsi associée à des pratiques de planification exclusive « d'en haut » édictées par les politiques de reconstruction de l'État.

Dans le même temps, ces quartiers sont perçus localement d'une manière différente de l'idée de bidonville typique construite dans le contexte des grandes villes. Ils sont plutôt compris en relation avec le lien rural-urbain qui caractérise le contexte des petites villes et comme faisant partie des relations historiques, de caste et sociales de la ville ancrée dans l'environnement sous-régional. Cependant, une telle image est construite dans un paysage urbain en évolution qui est dominé par une classe moyenne aspirant à se moderniser et s'émanciper, et qui considère ces quartiers comme nécessitant du développement.

La façon dont les bidonvilles de Bhuj ont été impliqués dans les processus d'élaboration des politiques a été influencée par leur perception changeante dans le contexte de la ville en plein essor. En prolongeant l'analyse au-delà de la temporalité de la mise en œuvre du projet pilote, Bhuj apparaît comme une petite ville plongée dans un processus rapide de mondialisation dans lequel la circulation de connaissances, personnes et politiques participe à construire des modèles urbains alternatifs. Un processus plus long de mobilisation sociale a été mené par des groupes d'activistes locaux qui ont essayé de transformer les politiques et les conditions de vie des groupes marginalisés.

Ce processus a été initié par une élite éduquée et cosmopolite, qui est à la fois ancrée dans le contexte local mais aussi connectée globalement. Cette élite mobilise ses responsabilités en tant que citoyenne, qu'elle s'engage à réduire les disparités urbaines et s'appuie sur la culture locale de manière à brouiller les frontières entre les ONG et les mouvements sociaux. Ce processus ouvre des espaces pour l'innovation politique, où des idées de coproduction et de partenariats avec l'État, de développement urbain durable et progressif dialoguent avec des idées de décentralisation encadrées localement.

Le cas de Bhuj remet en question la compréhension des petites villes uniquement comme dépendantes et en attente des interventions de l'État ; et à l'inverse, met en évidence leur *agency* dans l'élaboration et la formulation des politiques et la tentative d'adapter celles-ci au contexte des petites villes. Le modèle *owner-driven* de réhabilitation des bidonvilles, par

lequel Bhuj aspirait à devenir un exemple, atteste des efforts locaux pour passer de la participation à la coproduction et façonner des politiques de bidonvilles qui remettent en question des visions du développement urbain basées uniquement sur l'inclusion dans le marché. Des conditions particulières laissant place à l'expérimentation et à l'innovation politique dans la période post-séisme ont été décisives pour prolonger le processus au fil des ans et pour évoluer dans la création de modèles de réhabilitation des bidonvilles dirigée par les propriétaires. Bhuj se présente comme un espace d'inter-référencement et comme une ville modèle que ces élites mobilisent comme exemple de réussite urbaine à reproduire dans des contextes politiques différents.

Cependant, l'incapacité à étendre le modèle *owner-driven* dans les politiques nationales, malgré l'inclusion de Bhuj dans les « Bonnes Pratiques » et l'intérêt des autorités gouvernementales, est due à un changement des politiques nationales, tandis que des conflits entre les parties prenantes ont empêché l'achèvement du projet pilote et sa mobilisation pour un changement de politiques. L'échec de la mise en œuvre du projet pilote à Bhuj montre les difficultés du processus d'élaboration des politiques à devenir influent. Il reste à voir si des propositions plus récentes visant à réhabiliter les bidonvilles avec une approche axée sur les propriétaires dans d'autres petites villes poursuivront le chemin pour inclure le modèle dans les politiques nationales des bidonvilles. L'analyse de la mise en œuvre du projet révèle un certain nombre d'obstacles qui mettent en évidence des visions et des intérêts divergents entre les parties prenantes, y compris entre les ONG et les habitants des bidonvilles. Malgré la prétendue centralité de ces derniers dans le modèle, l'existence de plusieurs relations conflictuelles remet en question la capacité du mouvement en tant que force politique émancipatrice.

Au départ, la recherche visait aussi à comprendre comment les conditions locales influent sur les résultats du projet et dans quelle mesure nous pourrions nous attendre à des résultats similaires dans d'autres petites villes. Cependant, les retards d'implémentation ont limité les possibilités d'étudier les transformations produites localement, tandis que l'unique mise en œuvre du projet pilote a empêché la comparaison avec d'autres quartiers ou villes. Néanmoins, nous nous demandons si la réhabilitation des bidonvilles axée sur les propriétaires telle qu'elle a été mise en œuvre dans le projet pilote à Bhuj peut être considérée comme une bonne stratégie d'amélioration et si elle peut être considérée comme reproductible dans d'autres quartiers et villes dans le cadre des politiques nationales des bidonvilles. En ce sens, l'analyse de l'implémentation nous permet d'avancer quelques considérations.

En premier lieu, nous considérons les intérêts des résidents. En terme de conditions de vie, les

habitants des bidonvilles considèrent la stratégie acceptable pour la taille plus grande des logements et l'accès au foncier, ainsi que la possibilité d'extension du logement et des investissements à long terme qu'ils jugent importants pour développer leur activités économiques et maintenir les relations familiales et de quartier. Dans le même temps, la possibilité de construire des nouvelles maisons est préférée à la seule amélioration des services et la régularisation foncière.

Les intérêts individuels peuvent être renforcés par des intérêts collectifs quand les communautés des bidonvilles peuvent garder tous les terrains occupés, comme dans le cas de quartiers plus anciens dominés par une communauté. Cependant, la conception et la taille standard des unités d'habitation se heurtent à des intérêts divergents entre sous-groupes, tandis que les réglementations risquent de limiter les capacités des habitants à modifier le projet des logements. D'autre part, la stratégie répond seulement en partie à l'attente de réduction de la vulnérabilité des quartiers.

L'attribution de droits de propriété individuelle et le processus de régularisation foncière figuraient parmi les raisons de l'intérêt des habitants, mais la non-conclusion du projet pilote a empêché l'enregistrement des bénéficiaires comme propriétaires. En outre, le passage des formes collectives de régime foncier à l'attribution de droits de propriété individuelle a conduit à des changements qui ont influencé les revendications et l'implication collective des résidents dans le programme.

Si la stratégie de réhabilitation *in situ* visait à inclure tous les habitants d'un bidonville donné en tant que bénéficiaires, elle ne parvient pas à éviter des situations d'expulsion en raison des critères d'éligibilité dans le cadre des politiques nationales. Les habitants étaient également favorables à l'augmentation de la valeur immobilière du bâti, mais ont été affectés par l'importante contribution requise pour financer le projet qui compromet en particulier les bénéficiaires aux capacités financières plus faibles.

La stratégie visait à apporter des bénéfices à la ville dans son ensemble et pas seulement aux bidonvilles, en intégrant la planification urbaine et en participant à des objectifs de développement durable, mais l'échec de la mise en œuvre au-delà du projet pilote à Bhuj a empêché de poursuivre ces objectifs. Le projet a contribué à accroître l'attraction des bidonvilles et des quartiers voisins et a empêché la création de bidonvilles verticaux.

Outre les intérêts des habitants, nous considérons les intérêts des acteurs institutionnels : la société civile et les acteurs économiques et politiques de la ville. Le manque de soutien de l'administration locale, qui apparaît comme l'une des principales raisons de l'échec du projet pilote, a démontré que la stratégie ne prend pas suffisamment en compte les

intérêts politiques et la logique clientéliste des institutions locales, des contraintes auxquelles les petites municipalités sont confrontées.

Les ONG locales ont joué un rôle central dans la mobilisation sociale et le plaidoyer politique, en particulier par leur compréhension des problèmes locaux qui ont abouti à la construction du modèle. Cependant, cette compréhension et leurs intérêts institutionnels ont orienté la mise en œuvre du projet d'une manière qui ne correspond pas toujours aux préférences et aux intérêts des habitants des bidonvilles. Dans certains cas, la priorité des ONG à mener à bien le projet et à mobiliser les habitants pour plaider contre les politiques les a amenées à trouver des solutions de compromis avec les habitants.

Enfin, alors que la stratégie visait à déplacer le contrôle du processus de réhabilitation des bidonvilles des promoteurs privés vers les habitants, l'importante participation des constructeurs et leur intérêt pour le profit ont entravé le projet. À l'exception de certains cas où les habitants ont réussi à maintenir un contrôle sur le processus de construction grâce à la présence de liens familiaux avec les constructeurs, dans la plupart des cas, des constructeurs externes aux quartiers ont occupé un rôle prédominant. Ces conflits d'intérêts entre parties prenantes ont entravé de plusieurs manières le mécanisme de mise en œuvre à la base du modèle *owner-driven* de réhabilitation des bidonvilles.

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