GOVERNANCE & URBAN POOR

A policy watch on young children living in urban poverty
HUMARA BACHPAN CAMPAIGN initiative

RAY

Abstract

India witnessed an impressive growth rate of an average of 8.5 to 9 percent during the Tenth and the Eleventh Plan periods. Much of the credit can be given to the performance of the urban sector whose contribution currently is about 62-63% of the GDP as per the Eleventh Five Year Plan. However, benefit of this rapid growth got polarized in and around few geographical nodes and within the affluent sections of the society, creating a wider income disparity between the rich and the poor. The city governance failed to address the needs of the urban poor, who are deprived of the basic civic facilities, social infrastructure and a proper place to live. Thus, to move towards a more inclusive cities approach, the Government of India (GoI) launched a scheme 'Rajiv Awas Yojana' (RAY) in pursuance of the vision of "Slum free India." This policy brief attempts to review RAY in terms of the progress made since its inception and analyzes RAY from the lens of a child.

Introduction

As stated by Kumari Selja, during her tenure as a Minister for Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, *"Growth can be sustainable only when it is inclusive. Inclusive growth calls for inclusive cities, built on the foundations of people-centric governance and based on people's needs, priorities and perspectives. We have to work towards an Urban India which acts as an engine of both economic growth and inclusion. The common citizen, especially the poor and marginalized, must be enabled to have access to descent shelter, basic amenities, livelihoods and a voice in governance."* This led to the emergence of RAY a centrally sponsored scheme which was launched in June 2011. The scheme is expected to begin in 250 cities having an estimated population of 32.10 million people living in slums.

Rajiv Awas Yojana

RAY is one of the most conceptualized and a well designed scheme under the mission of urban renewal to tackle the problem of slums holistically. The scheme was launched in two phases: the preparatory phase for two years which ended in June 2013 and the implementation phase for the period of 2013-2022. RAY envisages a two-step implementation strategy i.e. preparation of Slum free City Plan of Action (SFCPoA) on a 'whole city basis' and preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) on 'whole slum' basis for selected slum. In-situ development of selected slums will be preferred to ensure that development does not lead to loss of livelihood linkages or additional commuting hours leading to loss of income. Intervention in selected slums would either be in the form of redevelopment or upgradation.

The **vision** of this scheme is "Slum Free India" with inclusive and equitable cities in which every citizen has access to basic civic infrastructure, social amenities and decent shelter to provide a dignified and an improved quality of life by the year 2022. The **mission** of RAY is to encourage States/Union territories (UTs) to tackle slums in a definite manner, by focusing on:

❖ Bringing all existing slums, notified or non-notified (including recognized and identified) within the formal system and enabling them to avail the basic amenities that is available for the rest of the city

❖ Redressing the failures of the formal system that lie behind the creation of slums by planning for affordable housing stock for the urban poor and initiating crucial policy changes required

for facilitating the same

A bold new vision under RAY gives a clear policy direction for inclusion by assigning property rights to people living in slum areas and is based on a whole city approach. For a slum free India, it is not only important to address the existing issues in the slum, but equally important is to tackle the basic reasons behind the creation of slums.

Objectives of RAY

❖ Improving and provisioning of housing, basic civic infrastructure and social amenities in intervened slums

❖ Enabling reforms to address some of the causes leading to creation of slums

❖ Facilitating a supportive environment for expanding institutional credit linkages for the urban poor

❖ Institutionalizing mechanisms for prevention of slums including creation of affordable housing stock

❖ Strengthening institutional and human resource capacities at the Municipal, City and State levels through comprehensive capacity building and strengthening of resource networks

❖ Empowering community by ensuring their participation at every stage of decision-making through strengthening and nurturing Slum Dwellers' Association/Federations

Experience of community participation in Madhya Pradesh (MP)

In order to ensure community ownership and sustainability of the scheme, RAY strongly advocates for community participation. Citing the case of MP wherein total of six pilot projects has been approved one each for the city of Indore, Bhopal, Ujjain, Sagar, Gwalior and Jabalpur, the experience of community participation in Indore shows a complete different scenario and is a matter of concern. With six slums of Indore being selected under the scheme, residents stated that no one had come to conduct the survey, and take their suggestions. Slum dwellers were not informed or educated about the project and nor have they signed any letter of consent which is essential to get the DPRs approved and yet the DPRs has been approved by the Union Government. This is an alarming situation and clearly point towards some serious irregularities in the project. In Gwalior also rather than conducting the survey, the local administration asked for applications from slum dwellers for those who were 'interested' in getting houses. RAY is not about interest but about providing a decent standard of living. Though the scheme envisages and places greater importance to community participation, but nothing much is observed in practice and this is just one such example. Moreover, in the entire procedure of community participation children are not identified as a potential stakeholder and children's views and right to speech has not been given due recognition in RAY.
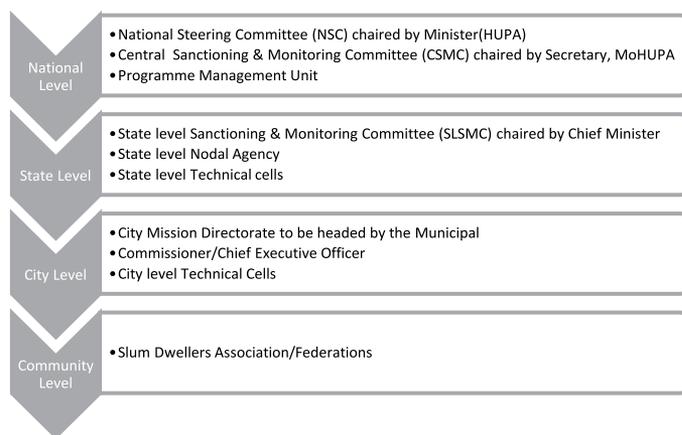
Scope & Coverage

RAY is to be implemented in a mission mode and will provide financial support to States/UTs/ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/ Central Government Agencies for providing housing and

improvement of basic civic infrastructure and social amenities in each selected slum. Rental and transit housing will be admissible under the scheme. Operation and maintenance (O&M) of assets created under this scheme will also be eligible for funding. RAY will also extend financial support to States for creation of affordable housing stock through public-private partnership (PPP) under the Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP) component of the scheme.

The scheme is applicable to all cities/ Urban Agglomerates (UAs) of the country. The selection for seeking assistance under the scheme will be made by the States in consultation with the Centre. The cities/UAs covered under preparatory phase of RAY are automatically included under implementation phase of RAY.

Mission Structure

National Level
• National Steering Committee (NSC) chaired by Minister(HUPA)
• Central Sanctioning & Monitoring Committee (CSMC) chaired by Secretary, MoHUPA
• Programme Management Unit

State Level
• State level Sanctioning & Monitoring Committee (SLSMC) chaired by Chief Minister
• State level Nodal Agency
• State level Technical cells

City Level
• City Mission Directorate to be headed by the Municipal
• Commissioner/Chief Executive Officer
• City level Technical Cells

Community Level
• Slum Dwellers Association/Federations

Key Recommendations

• Strengthen community level participation through continuous engagement with the slum dwellers

• Children should form an integral part of the Slum Dwellers Association/Federation at the community level

• Children to be given the right to speak and to be heard especially while preparing the DPRs

• Interface between urban planners, agencies involved in pilot projects and community including children

• Slum surveys to be inclusive and thoroughly designed in consultation with experts keeping in mind a child's perspective as well

• Houses, child-care centers, playgrounds should be designed as per the needs and requirements of children and should be more child-friendly

RAY and Convention on the Rights of the Child

Needs of an every child is increasing with increasing urbanization and surprisingly children are the ones who face the greatest violations of their rights. Children living in urban poverty have full range of civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights which is recognized by international human rights instruments. The most rapidly and widely ratified of these is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). India being a signatory of

United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989, slow attempts are being made by the government to abide by UNCRC. Children living in urban poverty in India are deprived of basic necessities of life such as safe drinking water, proper sanitation facilities, adequate living area, and security of tenure, durability of housing, playgrounds for recreation facility, proper and well ventilated anganwadi centers. All these factors deter their growth and development.

As per Article 3 (best interest of child) wherein all adults should do what is best for children. When they make decisions, they should think about how their decisions would affect children and this particularly applies to budget, policy and law makers. Unfortunately RAY completely ignores this aspect. Similarly, Article 2 (Non-discrimination), Article 4 (Protection of Rights), Article 6 (Survival and Development), Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child) have not been given due justice during the formulation of the scheme. As per the Article 27 (Adequate standard of living) it is the duty of the Government to help families who cannot afford to provide food, clothing and housing. The needs of the family have to be understood, a standard rule cannot be applied to all the residents of the slum. As per RAY, slum dwellers without pucca houses to be provided with new dwelling units (DUs) of carpet area between 226.04-290.63 sq.ft. However, for many of the slum families the designated area is much less than what they are occupying already. Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture) and Article 43-54 (Implementation measures) as to how the government and international organizations should work to ensure children's rights are protected is also not efficiently executed.

Key Recommendations

▶ *To strictly follow the UNCRC and make stringent efforts to achieve the rights of the children*

▶ *Recognition of children as an important stakeholder in all stages of the scheme starting from preparation, to design and implementation*

▶ *Incorporation of child's perspective in RAY after consulting children*

▶ *Encourage and ensure children's participation especially during slum survey and mapping*

▶ *Active involvement of children w ith the community, policymakers and other government officials*

Pilot Project Analysis

Figure 1: Eight States having 76% share of RAY DUs

As on 31st January, 2014 the total number of projects approved in the preparatory phase is 55 at the all India level across 16 states and 48 cities/towns. Although, RAY has been approved in 16 states but only 8 states have garnered more than 75% of the projects as shown in Figure 1. This clearly reflects that RAY pilot projects are not fairly distributed across the country and only selected few states have managed to get the pilot projects. In total 42,488 DUs have been approved for 48 cities but just 10 cities have got about half of the DUs. The total number of DUs for these 10 cities is 19,564 (Figure 2). This again reflects the lop-sided progress of the scheme across various cities.
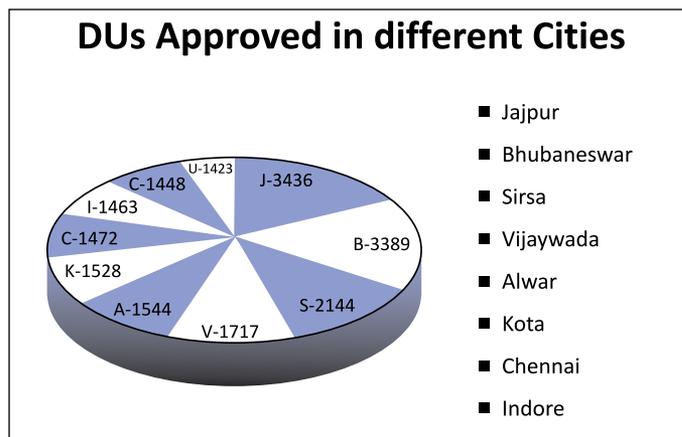

Figure 2: Ten Top Cities in RAY Projects in DUs Approved

Experience of Pilot Phase in Uttar Pradesh (UP)

The slum population in UP is about 9.5% of the total slum population of the country as per the Census 2011. In Uttar Pradesh 8 projects have been approved from 6 cities: Lucknow(1), Kanpur(2), Agra(1), Kannauj(1), Rai Barelli(2) and Rampur(1). Out of the 8 projects, 6 are in-situ redevelopment and up-gradation and 2 projects of relocation.

Under USHA a comprehensive Slum Profile, Household Survey & Livelihood Survey was supposed to be initiated, which has not been executed properly. Hence, the Plan of Action (PoA) is being formulated without the survey being completed, which will not give a holistic picture of the slums. The Slum Free State Plan of Action (SFSPoA) for UP has not been formulated due to which problems is being faced. In Lucknow, under RAY 609 slums have been identified while as per the civil society survey there are 783 slums. In Allahabad, 27 slums that fall in
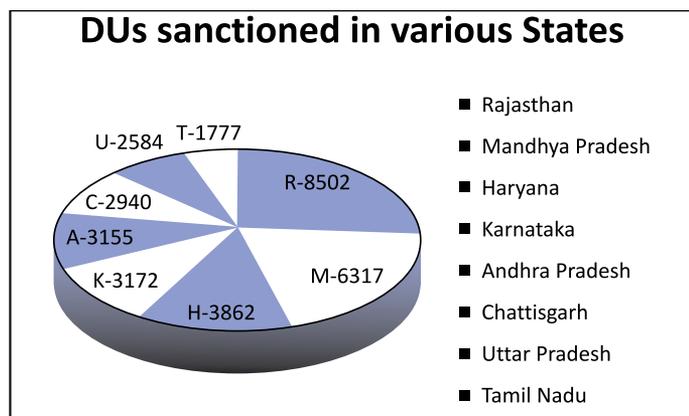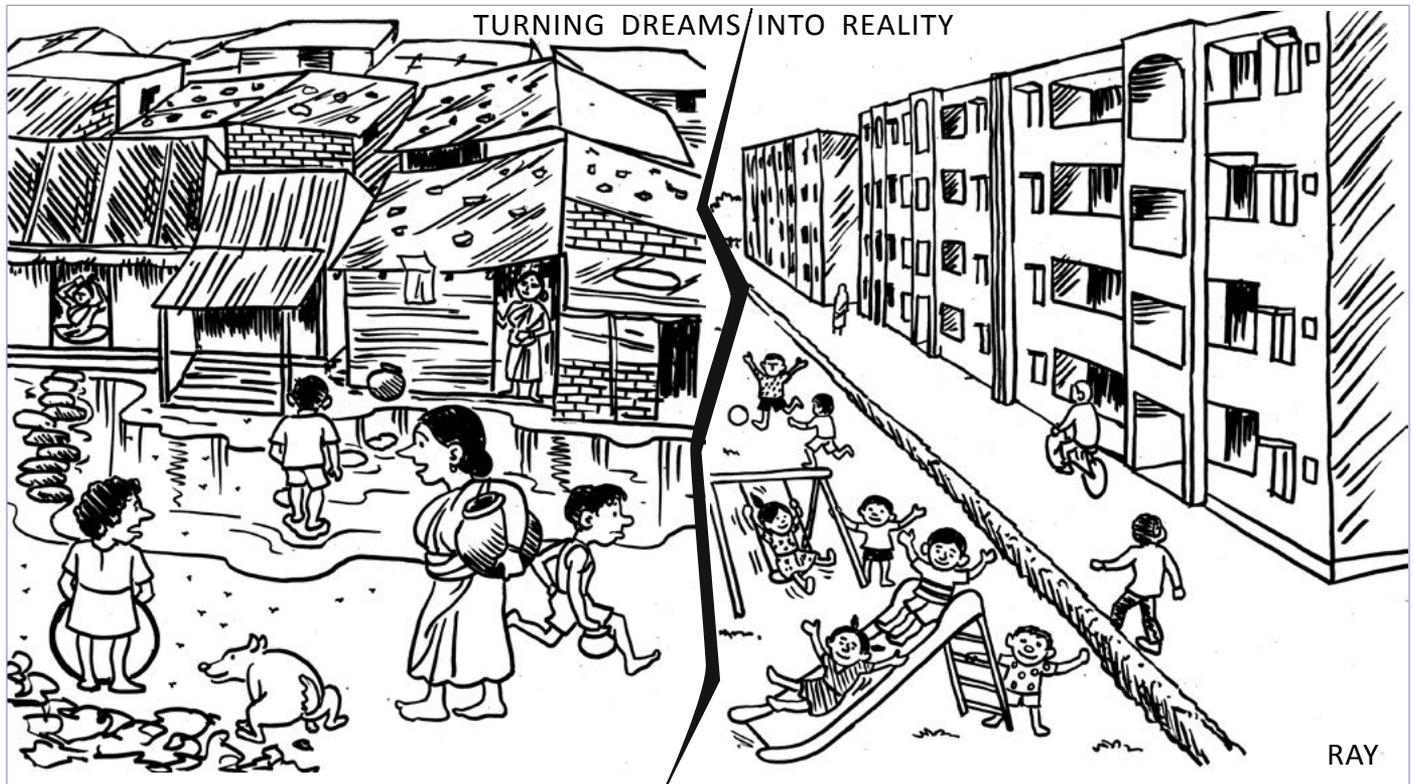
Key Recommendations

▶ *Spread in-depth knowledge about the scheme amongst the slum dwellers including children as that would ensure better strategizing of the scheme and meaningful engagement of the community with the states and the ULBs*

▶ *Encourage more states and cities to start with the pilot projects so that RAY is not restricted to selected states and cities*

▶ *Slum surveys to be accurate since it facilitates in making the DPRs*

the cantonment area have not been surveyed. Mismatch of numbers, exclusion of slums and inappropriate slum surveys pose a threat to an effective implementation of RAY in UP.

Conclusion

Rajiv Awas Yojana is one of the most ambitious urban renewal schemes. If the underlined objective and goals are achieved, India would definitely be free from urban poverty. However, from the child's lens the scheme completely ignores children's participation at the community level. Due recognition is not given to the voice and opinion of children while preparing the DPRs which leads to ignoring the issues of children in the DPRs. Despite the fact that children are also eligible to receive a fair share of resources no specific budget allocation is made for them. Hence, in order to achieve inclusive growth and to reduce urban poverty, immediate steps should be taken to give children the rights that they deserve and ensure that they grow in a health living environment.

TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY

RAY

HUMARA BACHPAN CAMPAIGN

HIG 44 Duplex | Sailashre Vihar | Infront of DAV School | Chandrasekharpur
Bhubaneswar - 751021 | Odisha

www.humarabachpan.org

Prepared By : Raksha Sharda, Policy & Advocacy Officer | Rizwana Akhtaree, Research Officer
Published by : Humara Bachpan Campaign

www.facebook.com/humarabachpanearlychildhood   www.twitter.com/humarabachpan   www.humarabachpan.wordpress.com

Open defecation leads to fatal diseases like diarrhea, parasitic infections, and worm infections, killing people especially children