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| Theme Paper

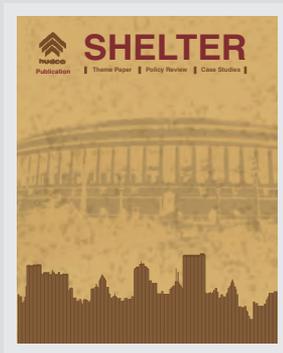
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URBAN GOVERNANCE

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Theme

URBAN GOVERNANCE

A major initiative in the direction of good governance was taken in 1992 through the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment which accorded a constitutional status to the urban and rural local bodies. The urban local bodies, which were mostly superseded and had become dysfunctional, got a respite and recognition. Democracy barged into local institutions, and representation of weaker sections, women and backward classes was installed at the helm of civic affairs. These landmark amendments gave recognition to the urban and rural local bodies as the third tier of government along with functional and fiscal autonomy. State Finance Commissions were set-up to facilitate fiscal decentralisation while the Twelfth Schedule was added to the Constitution to recommend functions to be handled by the urban local bodies. The transfer of power to people has just begun by these amendments and many such endeavours are needed for its furtherance.

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GOOD GOVERNANCE: PROCESSES THAT ENSURE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED AT BEST VALUE

PRATIMA JOSHI
ROSS PLASTER

Community participation is an important component in the implementation of policy and the execution of projects, and by extension an important component of good governance, as it ensures that there is dialogue between the executive apparatus and the beneficiaries who they plan for.

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Good governance can be defined as 'the effective implementation of appropriate policy'. Keeping this in mind, this article describes Shelter Associates' method of facilitating developments in marginalised communities, and advocates for the adoption of the principles of Shelter Associates' model when implementing government programs and providing municipal services. Shelter Associates' model has been refined over a 20-year period in urban and peri-urban contexts and has demonstrated its capacity for enabling the beneficiary community's ascent out of poverty in a timely, tangible, and permanent fashion.

The article references no external sources and draws upon the experience gathered from Shelter Associates' involvement in the process of slum rehabilitation. As an active participant or as a critic of other projects, Shelter Associates has advocated for these principles to be institutionalised in government policy as it is likely to: (1) ensure the effective expenditure of the public sector's resources (both funds and land), (2) maximize the impact of government interventions aimed at addressing the plight of Indian citizens living without access to housing or essential services, and most importantly (3) link public funds with the Shelter Associates model to amplify the benefits already achieved using relatively small private donations.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This article uses empirical evidence collected as an active participant in the process of slum rehabilitation and observations collected by critiquing other slum rehabilitation projects such as the Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) as it has been implemented in Pune and Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) as it was implemented

in Sangli & Miraj. These experiences and criticisms are organised under 4 categories: (1) data, (2) city-wide perspective, (3) community participation, (4) monitoring, and (5) joined-up thinking. Shelter Associates hold data and practical experience in high regard as opposed to theoretical concepts and hypothetical projects generated from a remote vantage point.

As the phrase good governance can be subject to interpretation, it should be stated at the outset that Shelter Associates' principal concern in relation to the issue of governance is the effective implementation of appropriate policy; the most important words in that definition being 'effective' and 'appropriate'. Processes devised and adopted by Shelter Associates to ensure the appropriateness and effectiveness of its projects are described in the context of two projects which the NGO's are engaged with: (1) 'From slums to housing societies', a city-wide slum housing project which provides homes with security of tenure that is being implemented as part of the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Program (IHSDP) of the Jawaharlal Nehru National

Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) in Sangli & Miraj, where Shelter Associates are being supported by the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and (2) 'One home, one toilet', a city-wide slum sanitation project that provides individual toilets to individual families to address the dire state of sanitation in Pune and is being implemented using grants from private and corporate donors and philanthropy foundations. The projects differ in their scope, type, objective, and funding structure but the concepts which have been built into them to ensure the effective implementation of appropriate ventures are universal and applicable to policy writers and planning practitioners all across India.

2.0 DATA

Data provide the foundation for all of Shelter Associates projects; slum data are methodically collected, meticulously organized using GIS, and presented using Google Earth® as a base map. The spatial organization of slum data is a prerequisite for planning appropriately as it allows an accurate profile of a surveyed area, whether a city, a neighbourhood, or an individual slum, to be generated. Once an accurate profile has been created, the data are analyzed, and conclusions are generated which formulate the approach of the rehabilitation strategies. With an up-to-date and accurate data set, valid theories of cause and effect, or input and impact, can be composed

where input would be the proposed intervention and impact would be the desired result, such as providing security of tenure, reducing open defecation, or increasing a slum family's income.

When composing the city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj in 2009, slum level data were collected from all the slums across the whole urban area and organized spatially. Once this city profile was created, we saw that there was an opportunity to provide security of tenure to the families of 29 slums with the use of only 7 slum sites. The city profile created using the slum level data showed that of the 29 slums, 7 were on tenable land and 22 slums were in un-buildable zones (situated on land that was reserved for other land uses, or on land that flooded, or on land that was likely to be affected by road widening schemes.) The city profile also indicated that all the 22 slums on land that could not be developed, were within two-kilometres of one of the 7 sites that could be developed. Our planning concept was simple, to redevelop the slums on tenable land to a higher density so that they can become receiving sites for one or more of the slums in their proximity which are on land that is untenable. This way all 29 slums could be included within the rehabilitation process and none of the slum dwellers currently residing in the non-buildable zones will be relegated to the outskirts of the city.

As part of the Pune city-wide slum individual sanitation project, slum level data are also being collected by Shelter Associates for all slums in Pune (approximately 300 slums) and verified on site with the assistance of the slum communities and the administrative ward offices' engineers. This extensive data set permits the most vulnerable slums in each of the 15 administrative wards to be identified and allows for the efficient application of resources. The funds awarded privately to Shelter Associates will be used over a 3 year period (2013 – 2015) to provide 1,500 individual toilets to 1,500 families living without access to improved sanitation and in the most vulnerable settlements across the 15 administrative wards of Pune. The idea being that if a pilot project can be produced in each of the 15 administrative wards, and if the data sets for each administrative ward can be made available to the appropriate administrative ward office as part of a comprehensive toolkit, then the administrative ward officers will be able to prioritise their own sanitation spending and target their own sanitation interventions.

Just as up-to-date and accurate data sets can allow for the composition of policies which can catalyse projects that are appropriate for, and tailored to, the issues of either housing, sanitation, or any other development issue, inaccurate or insufficient data can have the

inverse effect. The draft Pune City Sanitation Plan (CSP) contains heterogeneous data which are inconsistent and ambiguous. The data related to open defecation indicated within the tables of the document does not match with the associated open defecation map, and neither the tables nor the open defecation map correlate with the actual ground reality. This misinformation creates confusion, fails to establish a base line and therefore creates an atmosphere where it is difficult to generate appropriate projects or monitor the impact of any intervention.

3.0 CITY-WIDE VISION

A city-wide vision is as important as data because it affords the opportunity for the impact of a

project to be greater and it allows for the efficient use of a valuable and finite city resource, land.

The central idea of the city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj, the relocation of 22 slums on untenable land to 7 tenable sites which are being developed to a higher density, was only possible because Shelter Associates had generated an accurate profile of each slum within the city and displayed the information all on one interface. This allowed the slums of the city to be viewed as a city-wide issue and the GIS software allowed data to be interrogated at a city level to create a series of outputs which showed information such as: (1) land ownership, (2) development plan reservations, (3) flooding, (4) or any other data which had been collected. This concept of city-wide

planning and identifying untenable and tenable sites was vital to Shelter Associates city-wide slum housing project as it not only allowed the maximum number of potential beneficiaries who could be included with the scheme but also permitted them to stay within the same neighborhood and not moved to an unfamiliar area of the conurbation or expelled to sites beyond the edge of the urban area where there are very few amenities and essential services and limited access to emergency services.

Had the isolated slum-by-slum approach been adopted where slums are regenerated in-situ, such as the 'kutchra' to 'pucca', such as the projects being implemented in Yerwada in Pune as part of the BSUP of the JNNURM, land would have been wasted because only the 7 tenable slums would have been included in the scheme and there would have been no effort to investigate increasing the capacity of the site to accommodate vulnerable slum dwellers on untenable land within the proximity, or as part of a strategy to provide affordable homes for an increasing migrant population. The typical slum-by-slum, kutchra to pucca, approach is severely limited as it: (1) is unable to address the needs of slum dwellers who reside in non-buildable zones, (2) provides neither a safe nor a healthy environment for its beneficiaries, security of tenure remains lacking and the existing foot print, with narrow lanes, is made more permanent by the transformation of

Shelter Associates and data

Shelter Associates have and maintain 'on-line city profiles' for Pune and Sangli & Miraj on the Shelter Associates web site. Each city profile contains information for all slums within the municipal areas including: the land ownership, the condition of the residences, the condition of infrastructure, and the connection to essential services. The information is available on-line and is free for everyone including the city administration.

In addition to the 'on-line city profiles', the NGO has developed an 'on-line survey system' where all collected data can be inputted, and in September 2013 a mobile application was developed which allows data to be uploaded to the 'on-line survey system' by a surveyor with a smart phone in a slum, ward office, or any other location.

Shelter Associates was the first organization in India to create and use data profiles for planning for the poor and their technology led model for generating appropriate and effective interventions has resulted in various awards: (1) the title of 'Google Earth Hero' in 2007, (2) a grant for winning a philanthropic organizations due diligence process in 2013, and (3) a grant from Google Giving for being 1 of the 10 finalists in the Google Impact Challenge India in 2013.

kutchra houses to pucca structures so the residents continue to be denied access to natural light, natural ventilation, and emergency services, and (3) can actually be considered as detrimental to the city as it blocks precious land that could have been developed to a higher density.

The advocates for a slum-by-slum approach state that slum dwellers should be allowed to remain where they currently reside and should not be evicted and use this as a critique of a city-wide vision which includes relocation of slum dwellers. This is a moot point because slum-by-slum advocates cannot provide a solution for slums in areas which flood or are reserved for road widening or are affected by other development plan reservations, nor can they provide solutions which provide a basic level of access to light, ventilation, and emergency services. Slum-by-slum advocates state that slum dwellers should remain on their existing sites as they are against evictions; Shelter Associates are also against evictions; of the three moves which have happened so far as part of the city-wide slum sanitation project in Sangli & Miraj, two have been peaceful relocations where the slum families dismantled their homes and moved, and one was mainly peaceful but did include the arrest of a few slum lords who were against the project as they had vested interests in keeping the slum as a slum. We have found that when the communities are included within the project as stakeholder

and are involved in the design and decision making process, they are much more receptive to the rehabilitation venture, which in

discredits the administration but it disheartens the intended beneficiaries and represents a waste of public spending.

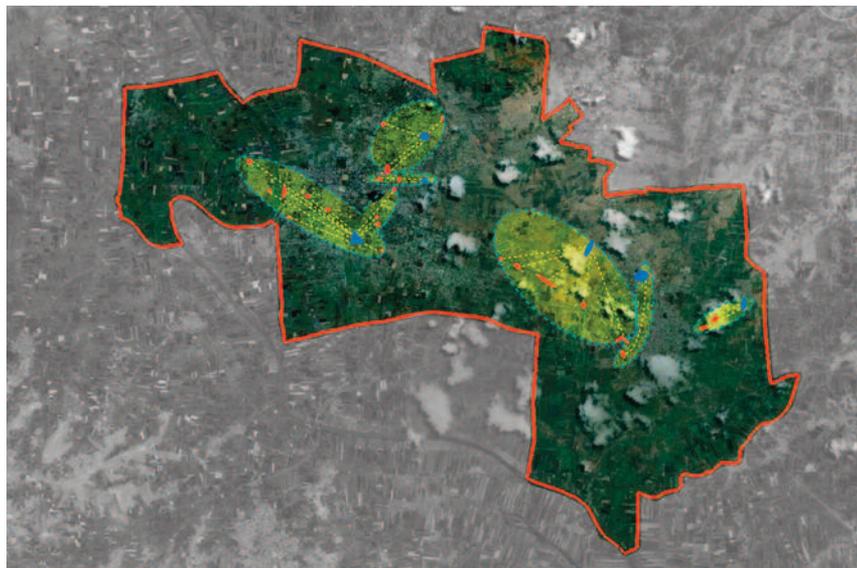


Figure 1: Shelter Associates' city-wide concept for slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj

turn makes the rehabilitation effort much more likely to succeed.

4.0. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Community participation is an important component in the implementation of policy and the execution of projects, and by extension an important component of good governance as it ensures that there is dialogue between the executive apparatus and the beneficiaries who they plan for. An authoritarian approach to governance, and slum rehabilitation, can result in policies and projects which are inappropriate for the conditions and ineffective in terms of the policy's intentions. This not only

A project which clearly illustrates the importance of community participation is a slum rehabilitation project which was implemented in Sangli & Miraj under VAMBAY in 2003/2004. 'Shelter Associates' was not involved in this project but, due to working within the same context, was aware of the detrimental impact that the project has had on its beneficiaries. The VAMBAY project in Sangli & Miraj poignantly illustrates the importance of community participation as the slum communities were not involved in any stage of this project, which is largely the reason why the project has failed to achieve its rehabilitation objective.

The VAMBAY project included the

construction of over 2,000 tenements across 3 sites which were all built on the outskirts of Sangli & Miraj. Once built, although not complete, as the drainage connections had not been carried out, the slum communities were moved from their community within the city to their new homes outside the conurbation. The project pushed the slum communities, who were relocated to 1 of the 3 sites, deeper into poverty as the new homes were remote from the settlement and poorly served by public transport; the VAMBAY beneficiaries have been moved out of the city and are no longer near any of the facilities which are necessary for their existence.

In addition to the lack of public transport networks, they are also no longer close to places of employment, government, hospitals, emergency services, markets, shops, or schools. Thus being relocated to the outskirts of the city has been detrimental to every aspect of their lives; the remote location has affected: (1) their access to income opportunities, (2) their access to government offices, (3) their access to healthcare, (4) their safety, (5) their education and training opportunities, and most worryingly (6) their children's future. This has had presumably unintended, although unsurprising consequences for the beneficiary families; it has been observed that many families with more than one child have had to prioritize their

spending in favour of the boy child if the family cannot support the, now increased cost of sending both the children to school. This is of concern especially when considered in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) which highlight the girl child's education as one of the main objectives of addressing poverty (MDG 2: Achieve universal primary school education and MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women).

The VAMBAY project, as executed in Sangli & Miraj, is the opposite of good governance because it has failed to be either appropriate to its socio-economic context or end user, or effective in achieving the desired outcome. It could be argued that it has even facilitated an impact that is contrary to the objective implied by the mandate of a slum rehabilitation project; it has

actively worked against its objective. It is an example of an insensitive planning strategy which was generated in isolation from the beneficiary communities and/as a result, has pushed the beneficiaries further into poverty and worse than that, has had a detrimental impact on the beneficiary's successor generation by reducing the education opportunities of the girl child. These issues are all additional to the fact that the design of the houses was worked out without the input of the community and does not suit their requirements and most of the houses, at the time of writing, are still lacking working toilets that are connected to either a septic tank or a municipal drainage line.

Shelter Associates' city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj is an example of appropriate and effective planning due to its city-



Figure 2: The city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj - Shelter Associates and a beneficiary community discussing the design of the residential building.

wide approach (explained above, which allows all beneficiary communities to stay within the same neighbourhood, and within reach of employment, healthcare, emergency services, markets, institutions, government services, commerce and education), and because the design of the: (1) residential buildings, (2) individual apartments, and (3) the community centres were all developed in close collaboration with the slum communities and influenced by slum profiles which informed the design process. The government, both the administration and the elected members were also included in the design development as they too were important stakeholders. This level of communication and sensitivity was applied to ensure

that the end product would be: (1) customer centric and suit the nuances of the beneficiary community's culture, the reality of their socio-economic situation and their aspirations for the future, (2) the municipal corporations planning codes and building regulations, and (3) the allocated budget.

The buildings of our city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj contain 31 residential units in 4 stories; there are 8 families per floor, except on the ground floor where one unit is removed to create an entrance into the internal courtyard, and an area for two-wheeler parking and they feature an accessible terrace at the top of the building. The beneficiary

community supported the design all through the implementation process, especially the idea of an accessible terrace as it will provide them with space that can be utilized for: (1) social functions, (2) informal gatherings, (3) drying papads, (4) drying clothes and cooking utensils and (5) it can be used as a study area for the children; feedback from the beneficiaries during the design stage indicated that the loud slum environment is not conducive to studying.

The IHSDP residential units are all arranged around an internal courtyard and are all accessed via single-loaded corridors. This means that the corridors are shared by very few families so the space can easily be used by the families to:

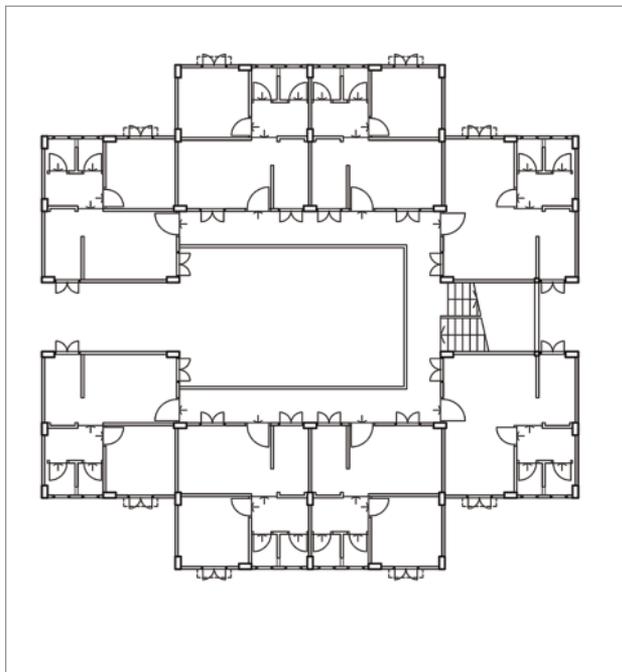


Figure 3: The city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj - residential units are organised around a central courtyard

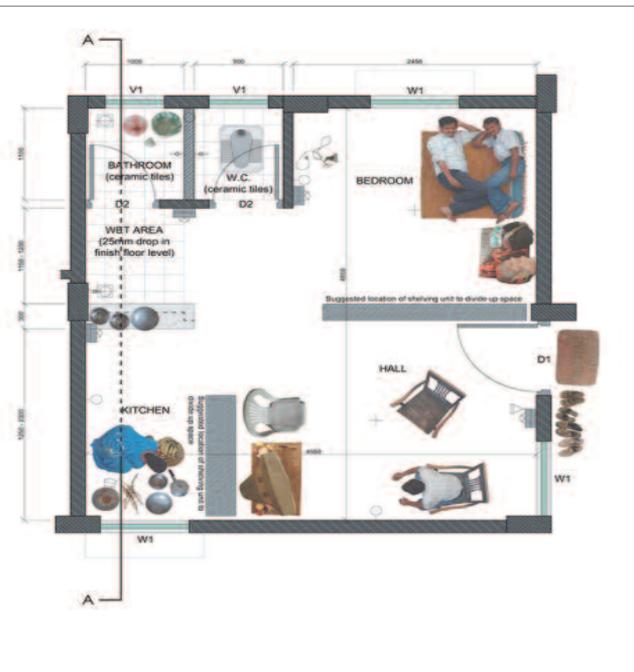


Figure 4: The city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj - residential units are designed to maximize the use of the 25 m² of floor area



Figure 5: Dattawadi housing project in Pune – beneficiaries have reported increases in their health & safety, economic situation, and employment, education, and matrimonial options

(1) store their chappals (sandals), (2) dry and air their clothes, (3) cultivate plants and (4) use as an external play area for small children. The internal courtyard in the building design also enables the apartments to be healthier and cheaper to run as every unit has an external wall which faces out of the building and an external wall which faces the inner courtyard. This allows windows to be positioned on both sides of the apartment thereby maximizing the potential for natural lighting and natural ventilation. This design means that the need to artificially light or artificially ventilate the beneficiary

family's home has been minimized. The plumbing lines and connections have also been designed to be fit on the external faces and along the main roads; no services are laid under buildings or in any other location which is difficult to access for maintenance purposes.

Designing small homes where space is limited takes skill and the location of: (1) doors, (2) windows and (3) the circulation should be considered. The entrance into the Shelter Associates' residential units has been positioned to minimize the circulation and to maximize the amount of usable floor area

available to the beneficiary family. The VAMBAY units in Sangli & Miraj are a good example of homes where little consideration has gone into their design; the entrance and the cooking area are diagonally opposite to each other in the rectangular plan, meaning that the main space is bisected by circulation, which reduces its usable floor area and its potential. In the Shelter Associates' houses, a window has been positioned directly over the proposed cooking area to ensure that the cook, typically the wife and/or mother, is close to a window should she wish to survey the housing society and

also to ensure that the cooking area is well ventilated. There is a requirement for the cooking areas to be well ventilated as the slum profiles indicated that most women in the slums of Sangli & Miraj typically cook using traditional methods which create a significant amount of indoor air pollution (IAP) which leads to severe respiratory problems. The slum profiles also indicated that the same women have a tendency to cook on the floor, this is why no kitchen platform has been provided in the kitchen layout (although there is space for one, should the family adopt a stand-up method of cooking in the future.)

While the IHSDP beneficiaries are yet to occupy their new homes, the subject of community participation has been proven to be an important factor in the long term impact of rehabilitation efforts in previous projects implemented by Shelter Associates. A slum rehabilitation housing project called Dattawadi, which was constructed in 1996 – 1998 in Pune, placed the same emphasis on community participation in the design (and construction) process, and has resulted in a project where all the original beneficiaries still reside there and have reported that their new houses have had a positive impact on their: (1) health, (2) safety, (3) employment options, and (4) matrimonial options. The slum dwellers have been rehabilitated into a housing society and have ceased to be identified as ‘slum dwellers’.

It should be stated that the funds sanctioned by the Government of India for the IHSDP in Sangli & Miraj, as with all other government projects, did not include a financial allocation for community participation. All the work carried out by Shelter Associates in relation to community participation, the various meetings to explain the project, answer questions, address fears, build support, design the buildings, residential units, community centres, and communicate the various implementation issues are being carried out with the support of the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust. It is important therefore to state that while community participation is a necessary component of good governance, it should be institutionalised as a formal component of the government’s slum rehabilitation policy, which should not only state the

importance and requirement of community participation as an official component of slum rehabilitation policy but also: (1) explain the methodology for actually ensuring that it happens and that it is effective, and (2) ensuring that there is an adequate budgetary allocation.

5.0 MONITORING

Monitoring is essential to the implementation of policy as it allows those in positions of power to ensure the compliance of the government departments responsible for the execution of their instructions. Currently there is no rule in India which makes regular monitoring with the stakeholders mandatory at any level of government.

When preparing the road map for the execution of the city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj in



Figure 6: The city-wide slum housing project in Sangli & Miraj – A progress meeting taking place to ensure that issues of implementation are overcome.

2011, 2-years after the funds had been sanctioned by the Government of India, Shelter Associates raised this issue with the state government and insisted on the inclusion of a clause requiring the local government, who were, and at the time of writing still are, the implementing agency, to convene a meeting every week with all stakeholders to discuss the progress of the project. The clause was added to the road map and listed those who should be invited as project stakeholders, they were: (1) the municipal commissioner, (2) the city engineer, (3) the slum officer, (4) the NGO/consultant – Shelter Associates, (4) the slum community leaders, (5) allied government agencies, (6) the contractor, and (7) the emergency services, when required.

This feature of the project has been instrumental in overcoming problems of implementation, as the meeting provides a forum for all stakeholders to come together and discuss the issues and make decisions in a transparent and accountable manner.

6.0 JOINED UP THINKING

Communication and co-ordination between the executive and the political sides of the government as well as the different departments within the administration, especially between housing departments and infrastructure (transport, water, drainage, electricity) departments is important for the implementation of effective policy.

The result of un-joined up thinking is that housing policies are framed in isolation of infrastructure policies and do not support each other, such is the case with VAMBAY house in Sangli & Miraj where the new housing has been completed and the infrastructure, the public transport networks and the drainage connections for the toilets are in the best case lagging behind, and in the worst case not planned at all.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, it can be said that ‘Shelter Associates’ has developed a methodology of implementing projects which are: (1) appropriate for their intended users, and (2) are effective and sustainable.

It is hoped that our experience and projects, which are documented and available on our website, can demonstrate the value of institutionalizing: (1) data collection, (2) a city-wide consciousness, (3) community participation, (4) monitoring procedures and (5) joined-up thinking when composing and implementing government policy. It is also hoped with equal measure that governments will be aware of the consequences of not applying these concepts and learn from experiences of the BSUP in Pune and VAMBAY in Sangli & Miraj. A lack of monitoring results in projects that do not take off, or progress timely, or are implemented to a substandard quality, and a lack of community participation can result in damaging projects; such is

the example of VAMBAY house in Sangli & Miraj which has pushed many Indian citizens from poverty into penury.

The current slum rehabilitation policy, Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY), goes some way to realising the integration of these concepts of good governance but unfortunately this policy document fails to institutionalise the requirement for monitoring and does not explain how to ensure community participation. Shelter Associates believes that the concepts advocated in this article, as the standards of good governance, should be an integral part of the training of government officers and reified into the next slum rehabilitation policy, or adopted as an associated statutory document, to ensure that the Government of India, the state governments, and the municipal corporations, all satisfy their duty associated with their station and their implicit obligation, as resource managers and service facilitators, to Indian citizens living in poverty.

There is a dire need to create strong linkages between the central, state and urban local bodies. Regular review meetings at all levels must be made mandatory whereby there is accountability built into the system from the ULB to the central government. These meetings must mandate participation of all stakeholders including NGO’s and community representatives.