

Intentions, Design and Outcomes

Reflections on IHSDP in Maharashtra

HIMANSHU BURTE

This paper examines the implementation of the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme in the smaller cities of Maharashtra. It discusses the reasons behind the poor quantitative and qualitative performance of the IHSDP in the state and examines why the programme has not been a success, either in terms of the completion rate or beneficiary satisfaction.

The research and fieldwork on which this paper is based was conducted between late 2011 and early 2013 as part of a larger project of the Urban India Research Facility at the School of Habitat Studies, TISS, Mumbai, funded by Ford Foundation. The research related to housing, including on IHSDP, was a collaborative effort within SoHS as well as with local individuals, institutions and teams in three cities: Akola, Sangli and Aurangabad. In SoHS, the housing team included Amita Bhide, Himanshu Burte, Smita Waingankar and Simpreet Singh. Many discussions within this team have helped shape the arguments in this paper. In particular, Amita Bhide's insights and comments throughout the research and writing have been very important. In Akola, the local team included Anjali Maydeo and Sandeep Pundkar, and Shankar Pujari in Sangli. This paper is part of the author's ongoing research for a PhD in urban planning at CEPT University, Ahmedabad.

Himanshu Burte (hburte@tiss.edu) teaches at the School of Habitat Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

This paper reflects on the implementation of the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) in the smaller cities of Maharashtra. Maharashtra accounts for over a fifth of the dwelling units (DUs) sanctioned nationally under the IHSDP, a programme launched nationally under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). This paper combines an overview of the numerical performance of the programme in the state with an investigation of its implementation in the cities of Akola and Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad, and includes the perspectives and experiences of different stakeholders, especially beneficiaries. While the numerical performance of the programme in Maharashtra as a whole has been poor, it has been worse in both the cities studied, with not a single home being completed, as per official reports. Unofficially, however, a number of homes have been occupied in Akola. Some perverse potential outcomes, as well as unanticipated contours of the implementation process illuminated by the research, suggest the need to re-examine the intentions (and assumptions) underlying affordable housing programme design on the one hand, and the reality of their alignments with the policy and procedural design, as well as the supposedly desired outcomes, on the other. This paper fills a gap in the academic literature about IHSDP's implementation and adds to the discussion of state housing initiatives, especially under JNNURM.

The main objective of the research was to get a more grounded understanding of the different dimensions of the experience of implementing IHSDP that selected cities have undergone. While the focus, naturally, was on the experience of the "beneficiaries" (did they really "benefit", and whether they did or not, how and why?), the approach and experience of the urban local bodies (ULBs) as well as of other actors were also examined. The research methodology combined a review of policy and other official documents related to IHSDP, with case studies of selected cities and sites where the programme has been launched.¹

The study finds that a hoary contradiction marks IHSDP: centralisation of power to decide and the decentralisation of the responsibility to cope with such decisions. The latter responsibility inevitably falls disproportionately on the least able as we go down the line – first on unempowered ULBs who then pass on a significant share to the putative beneficiary. Centralised decision-making is marked by the professional convenience of the decision-maker (Turner 1977). The knottiest issues in the project – land and price escalation – are left to the

lower levels (state government, ULBs, building contractors, community) to resolve or cope with, while the central government's liabilities are very clearly and strictly delimited qualitatively (being only financial) and quantitatively from the start. Thus issues like land availability and price escalation can be routinely expected to obstruct implementation, as they have done in this case, especially if lower level actors are unable to leverage relevant state government resources. Interlinked indicators of such centralisation include: rigid standardisation, overdetermination and mass production of the DU; misconception of the home as an inert product (and not a complex system of affordances for sustenance and upward mobility); disregard for the crucial centrality of beneficiary agency to housing provision; and resistance to the programme and the DUs by beneficiaries.

Central administrative burdens were, arguably, further simplified in practice by what may be seen as a (top-down) subversion of crucial flexibilities in the Modified Guidelines (MG) 2009² (Anon 2009) – those that allowed upgradation and in situ construction – presumably because they threatened to complicate the task of remote project monitoring. Together these features have shaped some perverse outcomes-in-the-making.

The centralisation has also been technocratic in nature – the political class has been completely ignored in the programme design but has played a key role in implementation (Kamath 2012). In Akola, local corporators have challenged the top-down subversion of the programme administration (that intensified its centralising tendencies) with bottom-up counter subversions that effectively (and paradoxically) realise some of the intended values of MG2009. In Sangli, where the programme strategy was conceived from a city-level centralisation of planning and implementation vision, and where the local corporators and ULBs have not (with a single exception) actively stood by the poor, perverse outcomes loom on the horizon.

The contradiction between centralised power and decentralised responsibility plays out in ways that reveal the specificities of the small city context, whose dimensions include the key role of local urban politics (and its relations to state and central politics), the weaker institutional and financial capacities of ULBs, as well as the more rural habitus, land occupation, lifestyle, and livelihood patterns of the poor. In particular, politics, and the real power to mobilise people and resources, may explain an unexpected feature in Maharashtra: the smaller the city the greater the likelihood of reported success in terms of project completion. Key informants across sectors believe that smaller cities are more likely to have a single strong local political leader or administrative officer who can ensure consensus from beneficiaries for projects, quell oppositional forces within the ULB and outside, and access government-owned land for IHSDP. This experience also suggests another hypothesis for further examination: the implementation of a centralised programme like IHSDP in fact depends on the actually existing local capacity to act that the programme withholds formally, but which is already present on the ground because of other reasons.

At the broadest level, the findings also suggest a possibly useful juxtaposition that this paper does not delve into: the over-regulation of the housing product and programme procedure in low-income housing programmes like IHSDP on the one hand, and the progressive deregulation of the housing product and production catering to the middle and upper classes, that often serve a speculative function, on the other. Concrete examples of the latter deregulatory tendency reveal its orientation: the opening up of the real estate sector to foreign direct investment (FDI) on the one hand, and, on the other, the “relaxing” of building regulations to enable super crowding densities in vertical rehabilitation towers in slum redevelopment or resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) projects in bigger cities. Whether this is a genuine contradiction or simply an example of state control alternately exercised through regulation and deregulation (as argued by Roy 2009) may be worth exploring in the future.

IHSDP: Intention and Instrument

IHSDP is a component of JNNURM. It is a national programme for producing affordable housing for the urban poor in smaller, non-mission cities. Total approved project cost nationally is Rs 11,877 crore (for housing and infrastructure), while the committed central share is Rs 7,604 crore, out of which Rs 5,970 crore has been released. Progress has been slow nationally: only 41% of the 5,58,974 sanctioned DUs have been completed (and 29% occupied), while 25% more are in progress. Construction on a full 34% has yet to begin.³ The programme was scheduled to close in 2012, but has recently been extended up to 31 March 2015 for projects sanctioned up to 31 March 2012.⁴

The important substantive objectives of IHSDP included striving for “holistic slum development” and facilitating the creation of a “healthy and enabling urban environment” through the provision of “adequate shelter and basic infrastructure facilities” in smaller cities and towns.⁵ This should naturally be one key parameter for judging the record of the programme, since it marks a shift in state thinking from a commitment to only providing shelter, dwelling units in official terms, to providing a wholesome, serviced habitat (Kamath 2012).

The various provisions and parameters of the programme are to be found in MG2009,⁶ though more can be inferred from the many implementation and sanctioning decisions that have been reported by key informants and can also be found in the minutes of various meetings conducted by the Government of India's (GoI) Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MOHUPA).

IHSDP, following the JNNURM approach, required cities to apply directly to the central government (with state government approval) for grants with Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for affordable housing projects for the urban poor. States were supposed to be allocated funds in proportion to their share of the national urban population. Only those cities that have had elections or have elected local bodies in place were eligible to receive funds.

Slum improvement/upgradation/relocation projects (including the construction of new houses and infrastructure like water and sewerage) were included in the programme.⁷ The cost of land was always excluded from the project cost considered under the programme, with state governments and ULBs expected to secure the land required for IHSDP projects. The maximum cost of construction for a DU was considered as Rs 1,00,000 (revised from Rs 80,000 in 2005-06) to determine the central share for projects sanctioned from 2008-09 onwards. There was no provision for increasing this central share to account for price escalation in the period after the announcement of the guidelines (which has proved to be an important factor stalling the programme in Maharashtra and elsewhere). Additional costs for a DU were to be allowed but would have to be met by the state government, ULB or the beneficiary. The minimum floor area of a DU was set at 25 square metres (i.e., 269 square feet), distributed across two rooms and one kitchen. By all indications, in Maharashtra at least, both conditions have been enforced fairly stringently. Moreover, in 2009, Maharashtra state decided to contribute an additional share and raised the cost ceiling of a DU to Rs 1,25,000.

In IHSDP projects, 80% of the approved project costs (i.e., a maximum of Rs 80,000 out of the ceiling cost of Rs 1,00,000 per DU) were to be covered by an Advanced Central Assistance (ACA) from the central government, while the remaining 20% was to be raised by the state government or the ULB, which included the compulsory beneficiary contribution.

IHSDP also allocated funds (approximately equal to those for building DUs in a project) for infrastructure provision in slums (which was an important improvement over the preceding Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana or VAMBAY scheme). Though the MG2009 do not specify the allocation, in Maharashtra it was understood to be equivalent to the approved project cost of the DU. The title to land or the DU title was to be in the name of the wife or jointly held by husband and wife, though a provision existed for exceptions with the title going to the male. An important condition was for a compulsory beneficiary contribution of 12% (10% for scheduled caste/scheduled tribe) of the cost of the DU (that is, the estimated amount of Rs 1,00,000 as per MG2009). While the Member of Parliament (MP) or Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Local Area Development (MPLAD) funds could be used towards covering the state's share, they could not be used to raise the beneficiary contribution. An important condition is that consent from beneficiaries is compulsory for IHSDP projects, including for relocation. A biometric survey of the slum and provision of biometric cards to beneficiaries were also compulsory.

In the initial stages of the programme implementation, it was decided that upgradation would not be an allowable option. According to reports from other cities in Maharashtra, in situ construction was also discouraged in practice, and only new, multistorey buildings with a "cluster" design – stacked DUs enclosing an open space – were made compulsory informally.⁸ An important implication of this focus on new buildings was that existing houses would have to be demolished and households shifted to transit housing, for which there was

no financial allocation by the centre. These conditions were apparently relaxed a bit in practice, reportedly after 2011, after they were found to be inappropriate for many situations, or to trigger beneficiary resistance because of a lack of fit with their needs and expectations.

The programme required ULBs to be the implementing agencies, with a State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA) appointed by the state government as the monitoring agency which would liaise with the Central Sanctioning Committee (CSC) of the central MOHUPA. Maharashtra appointed the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) as SLNA for the state. Interestingly, MHADA has many decades of experience in housing production, while local ULBs in smaller cities in Maharashtra have very little to none, though they have better institutional capacity to engage with slums than MHADA.

Private participation was central to the implementation strategy. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were expected to be identified as the main consultants for preparing DPRs. Other consultants were to be appointed for surveys, project management, etc. Finally, construction was to be carried out preferably by private contractors appointed after a tendering process. Each of these process-related provisions focused on ensuring private sector participation have had uneven and even counterproductive outcomes, as will be seen in the cases. Interestingly, no specific role was envisaged for elected representatives, though in reality they have been crucial to the programme's success.

In my reading, the MG2009 as a document thus appears to imagine the field of implementation, or lived and practised urban space, as being perfectly homogeneous across cities, and fully transparent to the realisation of the conceived logic of the programme design.⁹ This conceived logic does not acknowledge the diverse political economic forces animating individual cities, and especially the many possible resistances and obstructions that these could potentially present to the programme. Nor does it reveal much interest in the real needs, constraints and predicaments of those down the line, who must bear the implementation burden of the programme. These include both the implementing agencies as well as the intended beneficiaries. The standardisation of most provisions, especially of the design and specifications of the DU, also suggest a belief that the conceived logic emerges from an optimal understanding of all the realities, institutions and lives that the programme seeks to reformat. The poor performance and too frequent counterproductivity of the programme suggest that both assumptions must be questioned.

IHSDP Status in Maharashtra

As mentioned, a little over one-fifth of the total DUs sanctioned nationally are in Maharashtra. From 2005-06 to 2011-12, the total ACA, i.e., the central government share of the project costs allocated to Maharashtra was Rs 1,130.60 crore out of which Rs 726.61 crore was actually released.¹⁰ So the way the programme performs in Maharashtra is significant for assessing its national-level performance.

Cities in which the scheme has been applied in Maharashtra range from million plus cities like Aurangabad to those with populations of around 25,000, like Ashta near Sangli. Between 2005-06 and 2011-12, a total 1,16,668 DUs were sanctioned in Maharashtra in 93 cities,¹¹ out of which 16,788 (14%) were completed and 15,089 were in progress. A more recent presentation by MHADA to MoHUPA in mid-2013 shows different numbers: a total of 22,845 DUs completed and 20,960 in progress, out of 1,08,848 that were sanctioned.¹² Thus, these latest figures report about 20% completion and a little under the same proportion ongoing, amounting to a total best case performance of approximately 40%, assuming all the work-in-progress is completed, which is highly unlikely under current programme conditions. This is much poorer than the national performance, though up to June 2012 they were comparable.¹³

When cities with more than 1,000 sanctioned DUs were analysed using the April 2012 status report for percentage of households covered by IHSDP (see indicative sample analysis in Table 1), a great variation is found. From other indications (like census data on percentage of city households in slums) it does not appear that there is such a great variability in the percentage of slum population to city population across cities in Maharashtra. This perhaps indicates that while in some cities (like Ashta and Buldhana), a significant proportion of slum dwellers have been covered by the IHSDP, in others (like Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad and Solapur) the proportion is minuscule.¹⁴ Again, we see that in terms of proportion of slum dwellers

Table 1: IHSDP Sanction and Completion Status in Select Cities in Maharashtra¹⁵

City	Population (2001)	Sanctioned DUs (Total)	Sanctioned DUs as Approximate Per Cent of Households (Pop/5)	Per Cent Complete (Number)	Per Cent Ongoing (Number)	Best Per Cent Completion Achievable If All Ongoing Completed (Number)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dondaicha-Varvade (Dhule)	42,436	3,796	44	54 (2,048)	15 (552)	69 (2600)
Ashta (Sangli)	33,203	2,206	30	54 (1,195)	24 (531)	78 (1,726)
Buldhana (Buldhana)	62,979	2,287	16	37 (846)	2 (46)	39 (892)
Tasgaon	33,457	393	6	92 (360)	8 (33)	100 (393)
Sangli (SMKMC)	4,36,781	3,973	4.5	0 (0)	14 (568)	14 (568)
Solapur	8,72,478	1,289	6	7 (89)	29 (371)	36 (460)
Malegaon	4,09,403	15,840	15	15 (2,448)	23 (3,696)	39 (6,144)

Source: Calculated from MHADA's status report up to April 2012.

covered, the best performers are the smaller cities and that the larger cities like Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad and Solapur perform poorly (Malegaon being the exception). This converges with the first finding above from another direction.

From a status report prepared in April 2012 (the original programme closing date) by MHADA it emerges that the smaller the city, the better its completion rate. Specifically, district places are not among the best performing cities, except Sawantwadi (64% completion in 2012, 100% by September 2013) which, however, is a small city with a population of only 22,901. In general, successful cities in terms of completion rate are some of the smallest: Dondaicha-Varvade I and II (100% and 95%) in Nashik region; Ashta (95%) and Tasgaon (91%) in Sangli district; Buldhana (95%) and Khamgaon (86%) in Akola

district. The reasons for this could be the easier availability of land than in slightly bigger cities like Akola and Sangli, as well as the greater possibility of securing consensus for implementation within "beneficiary" groups in smaller cities, where there is one clear dominant political leader or state officer committed to realising the programme. Land and the leadership (especially political) have proved to be significant factors in the implementation story of IHSDP in Maharashtra.

The programme has certainly not been a success, in general, either in terms of the completion rate or beneficiary satisfaction. Even on the simple count of completion, success has been very unevenly distributed and rarely achieved in bigger of the small cities. Occupation rates are even poorer, being 7.5% as per the latest data.¹⁶ In fact, it has too often been counterproductive tending to perverse policy outcomes. It is also stalled everywhere because of a variety of factors often acting in synergy.

Many of these are known to the SLNAs (like with MHADA in Maharashtra) and the state government, and have been reported to MoHUPA at the central government.¹⁷ The main reasons for the poor rate of completion reported by MHADA for Maharashtra are: non-availability of government land for IHSDP projects (affecting 42,663 DUs, that is almost 40% of the total sanctioned number for the state); the lack of a "cost escalation" provision which makes the project unattractive to private contractors since construction costs have risen drastically in the programme period; beneficiary resistance towards relocation as well as to living in multistorey apartments (19,382 DUs); constriction of supply of river sand required for construction due to the Supreme Court order on sand plots and auctions; and, interestingly, the fact that ULBs are not under the direct control either of MHADA or of the housing department of the state government, making effective monitoring and review difficult!

The case studies of Akola and Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad put further qualitative flesh on the bare bones of this story of the programme.¹⁸ In particular, they throw light on the way the programme has traversed the interlinked political, administrative and community terrains, specific to each city. Both cities had over 3,000 DUs each sanctioned under the scheme, without a single DU having been completed in either city, according to official reports. The Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad Municipal Corporation (SMKMC) has over a third of the DUs in progress while in Akola the figure is about 9%. However, the very different context, process and qualitative outcomes information are, in themselves, instructive to examine.

Akola

Akola (Census 2011, population, 4,27,146) is a municipal corporation (upgraded from a municipal council in 2001) covering an area of 30.55 square kilometres (3,055 hectares) with an annual budget in the range of Rs 177 crore (2012). It has long been an important trading centre for cotton and pulses. Almost half the population of Akola stays in informal settlements as per local information. Twenty-five per cent live in slums and the remaining in Gunthewaris (a form of illegal plotted development; see Bhide in this issue). Land is expensive in

Akola, partly because of high demand and the non-approval of a proposal for limit extension mooted by the Akola Municipal Corporation (AMC) in 2001.

Politically, Akola city has had very little purchase in state-level politics, with few senior functionaries in any party being from the city or district. The Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been in power in the district while its rival Congress-Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) rules the state. Moreover, the dominant caste at the state level does not rule Akola city, which currently has the Bharatiya Republican Party-Bahujan Maha Sangh (BMS) led by Prakash Ambedkar in power.

Informal settlements, especially slums, have enjoyed the strong support of local political representatives in Akola, a fact of great significance to the implementation of affordable housing schemes. Forty-three out of the 72 wards in Akola are informally considered deprived wards (colloquially, "*paleet*" wards, possibly from the Urdu *paleed*, meaning "polluting" or "defiling"). Many corporators representing these wards themselves live in the slums that constitute the majority of their wards. Some of them have tried hard to bring different affordable housing projects to their constituencies over the years. An earlier national-level scheme, VAMBAY, has been perceived locally as having been fairly successful in Akola, especially because of the flexibilities it offered (or which the city administration informally allowed). By and large, thus, the local political culture, and to some extent the ULB administration, have been sympathetic towards informal settlements.¹⁹

A total of 3,334 DUs were sanctioned for Akola up to February 2009 under the IHSDP, at an approximate cost of Rs 35 crore though only 309 DUs were in progress till April 2012, according to MHADA's status report. The programme is completely stalled in the city, with no immediate signs that any of the under-construction projects will be completed.

Interestingly, IHSDP, which was conceived partially to overcome the weaknesses of VAMBAY, has been experienced as being much more rigid and unresponsive in Akola. Part of the problem might well be the fraught relationship between the ULB's administrative cadre and the corporators, with the latter being much more powerful than in other cities. Many corporators blame the AMC's bureaucracy for delays in forwarding proposals to the state government which has led, through cost escalation, to projects stalling.²⁰

Programme provisions have also provoked beneficiary resistance. These have to do with the size of the DU, the multi-storey design and the requirement of a lump sum payment of the beneficiary contribution. Beneficiary resistance revealed the rigid unresponsiveness of the architectural design and financing model of the programme. After much effort, the corporators have had partial success in winning more flexibility from the rigid IHSDP guidelines in a number of cases after many visits to Mumbai to argue their case with the state government. But this has still only ensured that less than a tenth of the sanctioned houses are in progress. Officially, no DUs are mentioned as being completed in MHADA's status report,²¹ but on the ground, 55 units in one slum and 36 in another were reported to be occupied, with this author having visited some

in both places. A further 60 houses are supposedly complete in a third slum, except for doors and windows. Infrastructure work is supposedly complete in this project.

For its part, the AMC struggles with manpower shortages, with over 80% of senior positions being vacant (while 29 posts out of 31 for technical staff were vacant a couple of years ago).²² AMC also currently carries a financial liability of over Rs 64 crore.²³ The contrary alignments of local and state politics have also made the AMC's task more difficult. It does not help that many state cadre officers are reportedly reluctant to move to Akola because of the dominance of the local political representatives in the ULB.

At the same time, in spite of the contrary opinion of corporators on specific instances, the AMC administration has also been amenable to relaxing some of the rigidities of the IHSDP guidelines, as it had done with VAMBAY. For instance, AMC officers reportedly convinced the state government to allow beneficiaries to build their own houses within the specifications of the programme since the contractors were unwilling to bid for the projects because of unattractive rates.

The key characteristics common to Akola's different IHSDP projects perhaps explain the small but important qualitative success of the programme in the city: projects have not involved relocation, have been built in situ, largely with independent houses standing on their old footprint, sometimes with customisation in the details, the leadership and commitment of local corporators (including those who failed to get projects in their community approved) who have a close relationship with the beneficiaries and who have used all possible means to try and overcome the common obstructions to the programme. Thus, the conception, championing and implementation of the programme has been relatively decentralised in practice, spatially and operationally. Corporators across political parties have taken leadership in getting the programme to their slums. And beneficiaries in two of the three ongoing projects appear to have had some control over aspects of the final product and the process. But all of this has involved significant struggle with the programme administration, including multiple trips to Mumbai.

Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad

In 1998, two small and old cities in the prosperous sugar cane belt of western Maharashtra, Sangli and Miraj, were merged with a third small town nearby, Kupwad, to form the SMKMC which has a population of 5,02,697 (Census 2011) and covers 118 square kilometres. All three entities have distinct histories and identities. Kupwad, the least known of the three, is home to the industrial estate set up by the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC). By conservative estimates, 40% of the population of SMKMC lives in informal housing (gunthewaris and slums) (Joshi et al 2002: 233).²⁴ In two phases, a total of 3,973 DUs have been approved in SMKMC under IHSDP at a total project cost of approximately Rs 96 crore. The annual budget of SMKMC at the time of approval was comparable, and is today approximately Rs 374 crore. Sangli city and district have long been at the centre of state

politics, and even today state ministers continue to have a stake in city politics.

Compared to Akola, corporators and the city administration have shown relatively less commitment to resolving slum housing issues or championing affordable housing projects over the last few decades. They have paid greater attention to the more widespread issue of Gunthewari, investing efforts to provide infrastructure to these layouts in spite of the fact that no official provision can be made by law except through the unpopular Gunthewari Act 2001. It is also generally believed that corporators as a group are less powerful than the local bureaucracy in the SMKMC. This fact is perhaps pertinent to the case of the IHSDP project for Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad which completely bypassed the local corporators who have themselves also not taken much interest in implementing these projects (with exceptions like at Bal Hanuman Nagar).²⁵

Governmental affordable housing schemes prior to the IHSDP in SMKMC have already been controversial, and make it difficult for slum dwellers to trust the ULB (or the state government). For one, slums have faced multiple evictions and relocations. Reservations for public housing in the Development Plan have also been ignored by elected representatives. Finally, completed and occupied VAMBAY projects in Sangli and Miraj have serious deficiencies, like lack of operational infrastructure services, very poor construction quality and unsafe design. Apart from the increased difficulty of accessing their old jobs and livelihood options from relocation sites, slum dwellers also consider the small size of the apartments (160 square feet for VAMBAY, and 25 square metres or 269 square feet for IHSDP) and multistorey design inappropriate for their basic livelihood and lifestyle needs, which include ground-level space for subsistence-level animal husbandry.

The conceptual proposal for IHSDP was prepared by a Pune-based NGO consultant with professional skills and experience in architectural design for the urban poor and an avowed commitment to participatory approaches. Apart from its promise of efficient production of housing, the proposal can be seen to resonate partially with a key value of the JNNURM, that of centrally coordinated (at the city level) integrated planning. Given the lack of adequate viable land in every existing slum location, the proposal sought to move slum communities from 29 locations that had important development plan reservations (like for roads), onto seven plots of land owned by the ULB/state government that were large enough to host the total population of the 29 slums.

This spirit of centralisation marks the project implementation in Sangli too. In their own different ways, both the ULB officials²⁶ as well as the beneficiaries communicate a sense of being bypassed in crucial decision-making on the programme in Sangli. Resettlement is key to the centralised coordination of land in the Sangli plan, which places the relocated beneficiaries in a particularly precarious position now that the project is stalled. Their resistance to relocation, also related to the multistorey cluster design, the financial burden of their compulsory contribution, as well as their distrust of the city administration, complicates the task of ULB officials. The

latter's predicament is precarious in its own way, since they are responsible for implementing a much resisted project that private contractors are also withdrawing from because of unviable rates.

Perverse Policy Outcomes in the Making

A few impacts-in-formation can already be seen on the ground in IHSDP's incomplete and stalled state. Some are perverse policy outcomes in the making, and offer an important vantage point from which to analyse the obstructions the programme has faced and its general performance, especially in light of the stated intention to provide shelter and an enabling environment to slum dwellers. These relate to the predicament people and administrations find themselves in at the moment. They are not necessarily permanent since the project has not been wound down yet, but have already affected beneficiaries, in particular, severely. They are also potentially enduring, especially for the poorest.

In Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad, some communities and families (usually the most vulnerable ones) face the prospect of being rendered homeless by the IHSDP. Part of this possible outcome is due to them either being absent from the beneficiary lists – by accident or because of “ineligibility” – or their inability to pay the beneficiary contribution. The impulse to exclude is almost inevitable in a programme made expensive because of its heavy central subsidy programme. But clearly the potentially perverse outcome of any actually existing slum dwellers being forced into a worse new slum settlement violates all the stated aims for this programme.

Another way in which the programme may “dishouse” people in the city is related to the “city-wide” mapping-based approach of resettling 29 slum communities on seven slum sites at higher densities. Many communities have been relocated but the under-construction projects meant to house them have come to a halt for a variety of interlinked reasons, some not related to the city-wide approach.²⁷ Sanjay Nagar, Miraj, is a community that moved around Diwali in 2011 from its original location on the basis of what they saw as a promise by the ULB that they would not have to pay anything for the new houses being built on their site.²⁸ The consultant's plan for this site involved resettling this entire community as well as parts of another community in multistoreyed “cluster design” apartments.

The construction, begun in late 2011, has come to a halt at an advanced stage because of unviable cost escalations that cannot be claimed by the contractor under the IHSDP rules. Following the city-wide approach, the entire city's IHSDP work had been awarded to a single contractor, who had then invested in special equipment for speed and economy of scale.²⁹ Delays in the project in Sangli because of land unavailability and beneficiary resistance, and simultaneous escalation of construction costs have now made the project unviable for the contractor who has already withdrawn from certain sites. The centralisation of contracting has now halted nearly all construction and put all relocated communities at risk in one stroke. In addition, the Sanjay Nagar community is particularly agitated that “outsiders” (in reality, possibly, beneficiaries

from other slums allocated DUs in this project as per the city-wide plan) are part of the list of allottees, while many from the community find their names missing. One person said: "This is a scheme that will make many of us who had a house, homeless. While others who had no house in our slum will get houses." The latter supposedly include some who had sold their homes and moved out prior to the programme. These fears may partly be put down to miscommunication and misinterpretation: after all, the consultant's original plan clearly incorporated DUs for non-Sanjay Nagar residents as part of the idea of densifying seven sites to accommodate those from other untenable sites. However, the city administration also admits genuine problems with the survey, since many families who had signed up for the earlier VAMBAY have found their way into the IHSDP lists clearly because they wanted to avail (against the rules) of the bigger houses and greater government investment in the latter (and later) programme.³⁰

Meanwhile, many beneficiaries in Sanjay Nagar and Bal Hanuman Nagar expressed concern about the unaffordability of the beneficiary contribution (Rs 12,500 for SC/ST and Rs 15,625 for others calculated), which is meant to be paid before occupation. Typically, it is the poorest and most vulnerable in such settlements that are at risk of losing their claim on a new DU if they do not pay up. These include a middle-aged woman living with her daughter, and a disabled young man and his small family in the worst part of the Sanjay Nagar transit camp. In Sanjay Nagar's case, the irony is that most people have spent around Rs 8,000 (between half and two-thirds of the beneficiary contribution) on the transit housing over and above the Rs 2,000 that the SMKMC could manage to offer out of its own budget since transit housing costs are not covered under the central grant for IHSDP.³¹ Thus, for some beneficiaries in Sangli, the IHSDP is certainly being experienced as an unaffordable dishousing programme.

The threat of perverse policy outcomes of the kind seen in Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad is largely absent in Akola, even if the (poor) numerical performance of the programme is comparable. This is largely because many of the stated or unstated IHSDP guidelines that were enforced by the centre have been subverted in the latter city either with or without the sanction of the state government. Successful implementation of a programme, even if limited, that can be traced to its subversion in practice, only reflects the inappropriateness of the original design. Corporators and AMC officials made strong representations to the state government and ensured that many compulsions were suspended and certain prohibitions reversed in the city.³² Instead of multistorey cluster designs, in situ construction of houses exactly where they stood has been the norm in Akola. Similarly, in most settlements, houses in good condition have been left untouched by the scheme against the requirement of necessarily rehousing (and often, relocating) everybody.³³ Moreover, slums on untenable land have also been included under the programme because of the pressure of local corporators and the AMC's tradition of accommodating the needs of the informal settlements, sometimes even against the letter of the law.

The more informal subversions have also been crucial. Like everywhere else, corporators championing the programme in their wards have had to deal with the unviability of the cost of construction (and the related grant from centre and state governments) for private contractors. Corporators and consultants reveal a number of strategies to combat this. These can never be formally accepted by the state, but they were the only way of ensuring execution. Simplest among them was to divert infrastructure funds of the programme to building construction through a variety of means. Corporators also supplied material informally for a profit, or used every possible means (especially their social capital) to get it cheaper for their projects and increase chances of completion. When beneficiaries could not afford the compulsory contribution, corporators often covered it themselves.

The crucial role played by corporators is interesting, since the IHSDP does not make any space for political actors in its procedural design, a dynamic also noted in Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) projects elsewhere (Kamath 2012). Doubtless, this role is clearly rooted in political self-interest and the many informal arrangements described above also possibly involve profits and commissions for the corporators. At the same time, it is important to note here that apart from ensuring some degree of completion against the odds, most subversions of the *practised* programme guidelines in Akola have ensured that even if the project stalls completely, the threat of the perverse or counterproductive outcomes visible in SMKMC is much lower in Akola. The fact that subversion of its formal guidelines is required to implement a programme, or pre-empt perverse outcomes, demands that the policy design, and core assumptions underlying it, are reviewed critically.

Implementation and Design

What do implementation experiences in the two cities above and others in Maharashtra tell us about the programme design and assumptions underlying IHSDP? The problems IHSDP implementation has faced in Maharashtra echo those faced by BSUP elsewhere in the country (Kamath 2012; Patel 2013). As mentioned before, they include lack of viable land with state agencies for programme compliant projects in cities; beneficiary resistance to relocation, multistorey living, a smaller DU size than many in smaller city slums, and what is often an unaffordable beneficiary contribution; delays at different levels of decision-making from the ULB to the central ministry; and a constant rise in construction costs through the programme period, in combination with the absence of a cost escalation clause in the programme which makes the project unviable for the private sector. These problems are all visible in different ways in most cities including Akola and SMKMC. Many of these problems have also synergised with each other to stall the programme.

One particular tension helps map these problems: that between the pursuit of depoliticised, technocratic centralisation apparent in the conception and management of the programme on the one hand, and the complex, inevitably politicised and variable, actually existing ground realities of

urban governance and housing in small cities on the other. The conceived logic of the programme and the lived logic of the city contradict each other. At the same time, the power to conceive is concentrated at the centre, while the responsibility of coping with decisions lies with those on the ground.

The strong beneficiary resistance to the programme in Maharashtra exemplifies this. Slum dwellings in small cities, including Akola and SMKMC, are usually independent units often ranging from 500 to 1,000 square feet, or even bigger. Like in bigger cities, common open spaces like those of inner streets and lanes work as extensions of dwellings. Their extent, design and layout also support needs related to livelihood (often goat or cattle rearing) and traditions of social reproduction that continue to be significantly rural in character for the urban poor in smaller cities. Thus, in spite of the presence of an open courtyard, the multistorey cluster design with 269 square foot apartments insisted upon by the CSC often violates real subsistence needs and felt entitlements (like to the size of the unit matching existing possession). Where does one tether one's goats while living on the third floor? And how does one extend the house when a son gets married?

The ULB too bears the brunt of this contradiction. A senior SMKMC officer reported that, in effect, the ULB was left to overcome the crisis of cost escalation created by the lack of an escalation clause in the guidelines and that threatened the

programme in the city, even though it lacked the funds to cover the added costs. The state and centre could simply throw up their hands. If the project were to be continuing in full swing, he estimated that the city would have to come up with an additional Rs 140 crore to cover the escalation as per the District Schedule of Rates, while its total annual budget itself was in the range of Rs 370 crore. Clearly, the question of "who decides" is crucial as argued decades ago (Turner 1977). However, the complementary problem of who bears the costs of the decisions is equally important.

Conclusions

The poor quantitative and qualitative performance of IHSDP in Maharashtra, as well as its possible counterproductivity, is related to the centralising tendency of its design and implementation that fails to acknowledge generic and specific peculiarities of small city contexts. Political actors neglected in programme design have proved to be influential in implementation. They have played an important role (including through resistance to and subversion of procedure) wherever the programme has been implemented even partially. The rigidity and comprehensiveness of technocratic centralisation attempted in this programme for the urban poor may usefully be juxtaposed against the contrasting attitude of deregulation towards the profit-centred real estate sector.

NOTES

- 1 Two other initiatives yielded important research insights: exploratory visits for preliminary fieldwork by research team members to four other cities across the state, as well as three state-level workshops across 18 months, with invited housing activists from many cities, researchers, as well as former state urban planners and policymakers.
- 2 Modified Guidelines for Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission.
- 3 Calculated from status report up to 1 October 2013, available at https://jnnurmmis.nic.in/jnnurm_hupa/jnnurm/Jnnurm_Ray_AHP_Progress_Report/Jnnurm_Glance_All_Progress.pdf. For state-wise status see https://jnnurmmis.nic.in/jnnurm_hupa/jnnurm/Jnnurm_Ray_AHP_Progress_Report/State_Wise_IHSDP.pdf. Both last viewed on 8 November 2013 at 4.04 pm.
- 4 Office Memorandum No N-11027/3/2012-BSUP/IHSDP/JNNURM/FTS-5089, Government of India, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, dated 18 September 2010. Downloaded on 19 October 2013 at 12.36 p m from https://jnnurmmis.nic.in/jnnurm_hupa/jnnurm/jnnurm_Extension_2014-15_19_09_2013.pdf
- 5 https://jnnurmmis.nic.in/jnnurm_hupa/jnnurm/IHSDP%20revised%20guidelines%202009.pdf, last viewed on 8 November 2013 at 4.52 pm.
- 6 https://jnnurmmis.nic.in/jnnurm_hupa/jnnurm/IHSDP%20revised%20guidelines%202009.pdf last viewed 8 November 2013 at 4.52 pm.
- 7 MG2009, p 1 (clause 4.1).
- 8 This was confirmed by a number of different

- stakeholders familiar with the IHSDP approval and implementation in Akola, Sangli and other cities like Parbhani in Maharashtra.
- 9 I make modified use of Lefebvre's (1991) distinction between conceived and lived space.
- 10 See CAG (2013), Table 1.5, p 5. This figure does not include allocations for DPR preparation charges, capacity bldg, etc, for which state-wise figures were not available to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). Last viewed on 8 November 2013 at 4.35 pm at http://saiindia.gov.in/english/home/Our_Products/Audit_report/Government_Wise/union_audit/recent_reports/union_performance/2012_2013/commercial/Report_15/Chap_6.pdf. The entire report can be accessed at http://saiindia.gov.in/english/home/Our_Products/Audit_report/Government_Wise/union_audit/recent_reports/union_performance/2012_2013/commercial/Report_15/Report_15.html.
- 11 Interview by Smita Waingankar of TISS-UIRF with an official of MHADA on 18 May 2012.
- 12 Presentation by MHADA at Meeting for Sectoral Discussions on Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (Issues and Allocations particularly for flagship/CCSs & ACA Schemes) in MoHUPA on 27 May 2013 (http://mhupa.gov.in/W_new/Presentation_Maharashtra_State_1_27_05_2013.pdf). Last viewed on 6 November 2013. The other documents related to the meeting are available at http://mhupa.gov.in/Meeting_Sectoral_Discussion.htm.
- 13 By 2012, nationally, a total of 540,756 DUs were approved, 121,421 (22.45%) were completed and 75,219 (13.9%) were occupied. See CAG Performance audit of the JNNURM, Chapter 6: Implementation of Housing Project, pp 41-42. available at http://saiindia.gov.in/english/home/Our_Products/Audit_report/Government_Wise/union_audit/recent_reports/union_

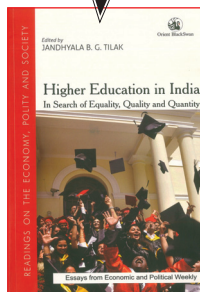
- performance/2012_2013/commercial/Report_15/Chap_6.pdf, last viewed on 8 November 2013 at 4.35 pm Maharashtra's performance thus broadly mirrors the national performance up to 2012.
- 14 Slum figures do not capture other informal settlement forms like Gunthewari settlements (unauthorised layouts), which hold the larger share of informal housing in many cities in Maharashtra.
- 15 Out of a total of 15,840 (36%) DUs, 5,760 DUs were sanctioned in 2012 in Malegaon. The rest (10,080) were sanctioned in 2009. Completion rates for DUs sanctioned in 2009 would be 24%, ongoing 37%, and the best case completion rate would be 61%. Care must be taken in interpreting the best case figures for cities where newly sanctioned projects constitute a significant percentage of the total sanctioned DUs, as in Buldhana. If the state-wide trend of stalled progress is true in Buldhana, the ultimate completion rate might be close to that existing today (Column 5). Similar caution is required in other cases where the "ongoing" rate (Column 6) is significantly higher than completed, as with Sangli, where the programme is largely stalled.
- 16 A total of 8,070 DUs have been occupied in Maharashtra out of an updated figure of 1,07,403 total DUs approved as per the city-level status report up to 2013 (compared to 1,16,668 as per the 2012 status report, in which occupied DUs were not mentioned). Available at https://jnnurmmis.nic.in/jnnurm_hupa/jnnurm/Jnnurm_Ray_AHP_Progress_Report/City-wise_IHSDP.pdf, last viewed on 8 November 2013 at 6.36 pm.
- 17 Presentation by MHADA at Meeting for Sectoral Discussions on Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (Issues and Allocations particularly

- for flagship/CCSs & ACA Schemes) in MoHUPA on 27 May 2013. Available at http://mhupa.gov.in/W_new/Presentation_Maharashtra_State_1_27_05_2013.pdf, last viewed on 6 November 2013. The other documents related to the meeting are at http://mhupa.gov.in/Meeting_Sectoral_Discussion.htm
- 18 A greater variety of problems and related factors is also evident in the CAG's performance audit.
 - 19 Water and other basic services have been provided to many illegal layouts or Gunthewaris in Akola by the ULB, though such settlements are not entitled to them, since they are not declared slums.
 - 20 At least two corporators who have tried to implement IHSDP from two different political parties mentioned this as an important problem in Akola.
 - 21 Monthly Progress Report, September 2013 (based on latest report from Akola for March 2013): https://mhada.maharashtra.gov.in/?q=jnnurm_autho
 - 22 Information on vacant senior positions from Anjali Maydeo, "Affordable Housing in Akola: Issues and Challenges", unpublished report submitted to TISS for the UIRF research project. Vacancies in technical positions mentioned in Anon (2012: 65).
 - 23 City Sanitation Plan (Anon 2012).
 - 24 Joshi et al record that almost 30% of the population lives in Gunthewaris at that point. In addition, they argue that the official figure of 10% of the population living in slums is an underestimation. Our local collaborator on the project, a labour and housing activist, Shankar Pujari, estimates that the share of the population living in informal housing might be closer to 50%.
 - 25 This has not prevented affordable housing projects being used tactically within the local and regional political conflicts, sometimes resulting directly in the stalling of a project.
 - 26 Author's interviews with city engineer and the engineer in charge of slums on 13 February 2013.
 - 27 Bal Hanuman Nagar (175 DUs) is closest to part completion among the projects in SMKMC because of the commitment of the local corporator.
 - 28 Discussions by Shankar Pujari and the author with community members at their transit camp on 13 February 2013. A copy of the *hami patra* (literally, assurance or guarantee letter) signed by the municipal commissioner was given to us by one of the residents. It guaranteed a house to every eligible slum dweller in the new project. Community members claim that they did not understand the implication of the word "eligible" at the time of moving. That word is now being used to deny many families a home, just because their names are (wrongfully, says the community) absent from the survey list or because of their inability to pay the beneficiary contribution.
 - 29 Interview with project manager on site, Sangli, on 13 February 2013.
 - 30 Interview with city engineer, SMKMC, 13 February 2013.
 - 31 This figure was given by the residents of the transit camp as well as a senior official of the ULB during discussions and interviews mentioned earlier. The official emphasised the fact that this assistance, which included providing vehicles for transport (but which transit camp residents said only went to a favoured few), was already beyond the ULB's financial capacity to provide and should ideally have been envisaged and covered under the IHSDP budget.
 - 32 Interview by Smita Waingankar, research officer on the project, with the officer in charge of IHSDP in AMC on 25 November 2011.
 - 33 This is the case even in the only project in Akola to have a multistorey cluster design, though only for ground and one upper floor, by and large.

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Higher Education in India

In Search of Equality, Quality and Quantity

Edited by

JANDHYALA B G TILAK

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