

# **Spanning boundaries?**

## Articulations and negotiations of urban regeneration in Delhi's informal settlements

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# Aspirational urban regeneration

- ‘Aspirational regeneration’’: “urban regeneration is area-based intervention which is public sector initiated, funded, supported, or inspired, aimed at producing significant sustainable improvements in the conditions of local people, communities and places suffering from aspects of deprivation, often multiple in nature” (Leary and McCarthy 2013: 9)
- Taking our cue from the above, we conceptualise urban regeneration as a two-way process: how aspirations and desires for change get framed and articulated within a wider context of state-led urban developments/redevelopments

# Settlement Categories in Delhi

	Type of settlement	Population in millions (2006)	Percentage of total Delhi population	Legality
1	Jhuggi Jhopri Cluster (JJC)	2.448	14.80%	Illegal and unplanned
2	Slum Designated Area	3.148	19.10%	Legal but unplanned
<b>3</b>	<b>Unauthorised Colony</b>	<b>0.874</b>	<b>5.30%</b>	<b>Illegal, unplanned but secure</b>
4	Resettlement Colonies	2.099	12.72%	Legal, planned, and informalized
5	Rural Village	0.874	5.30%	Zone of exception
<b>6</b>	<b>Regularised – Unauthorised Colony</b>	<b>2.099</b>	<b>12.72%</b>	<b>Legal but unplanned</b>
7	Urban Village	1.049	6.35%	Zone of exception
8	Planned Colony	3.909	23.70%	Legal and Planned
10	Total Population	16.5	100.00%	

Source: Heller, Mukhopadhyay, Banda and Sheikh (2015). Based on Delhi Development Report 2008, Bhan (2011), and Maria (2011).

# Unauthorized colonies and their regularisation

- Population estimates in UACs vary: 700,000 people as per *The Economic Survey of Delhi 2008-09*; 4 million people across 1639 unauthorised colonies according to GNCTD

## **What are they?**

- Settlements built in violation of zoning regulations and Master Plan guidelines.
- Sale of rural land for non-agricultural use, in violation of zoning regulations (Bhan 2013: 61).
- Different from slums, UACs are not squatter settlements
- Have *de facto* security of tenure, but are stuck in a 'limbo' situation due to their 'unauthorised' status

## **Regularisation involves?**

- a) recognition of land title; registration of individual land deeds
- b) provision of basic services, physical and social infrastructure (Sheikh and Banda 2016, Bhan 2013).

# Process and Methods

## Timeline

- Site visits: May 2015
- Fieldwork: April 2016 to July 2016.
- Follow-up fieldwork: April 2017 (during Delhi municipal elections), May 2018

## Methods

A total of **72 interviews** in Lalita Park and Mandawali with various stakeholders:

- i. Local residents, shop owners and local businesses;
- ii. Representatives of resident welfare associations (RWAs);
- iii. elected representatives (MLA and municipal councillor);
- iv. local volunteers of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP);
- v. NGOs active in the area(s);
- vi. property dealers.

# Guiding Questions on Field

In particular, we asked residents and representatives of resident welfare associations questions on:

- i. What changes they had seen in the settlement(s) in the past decade?
- ii. What changes did they expect to see?
- iii. Whom did they articulate their demands and expectations to?

# Urban regeneration: Insights from the field

## **Sites had a modicum of access to basic services, but there were routine negotiations over quality and regularity**

- Complaints over regularity of cleaning of drains
- Sewer line was being (re)laid in certain parts of the settlement

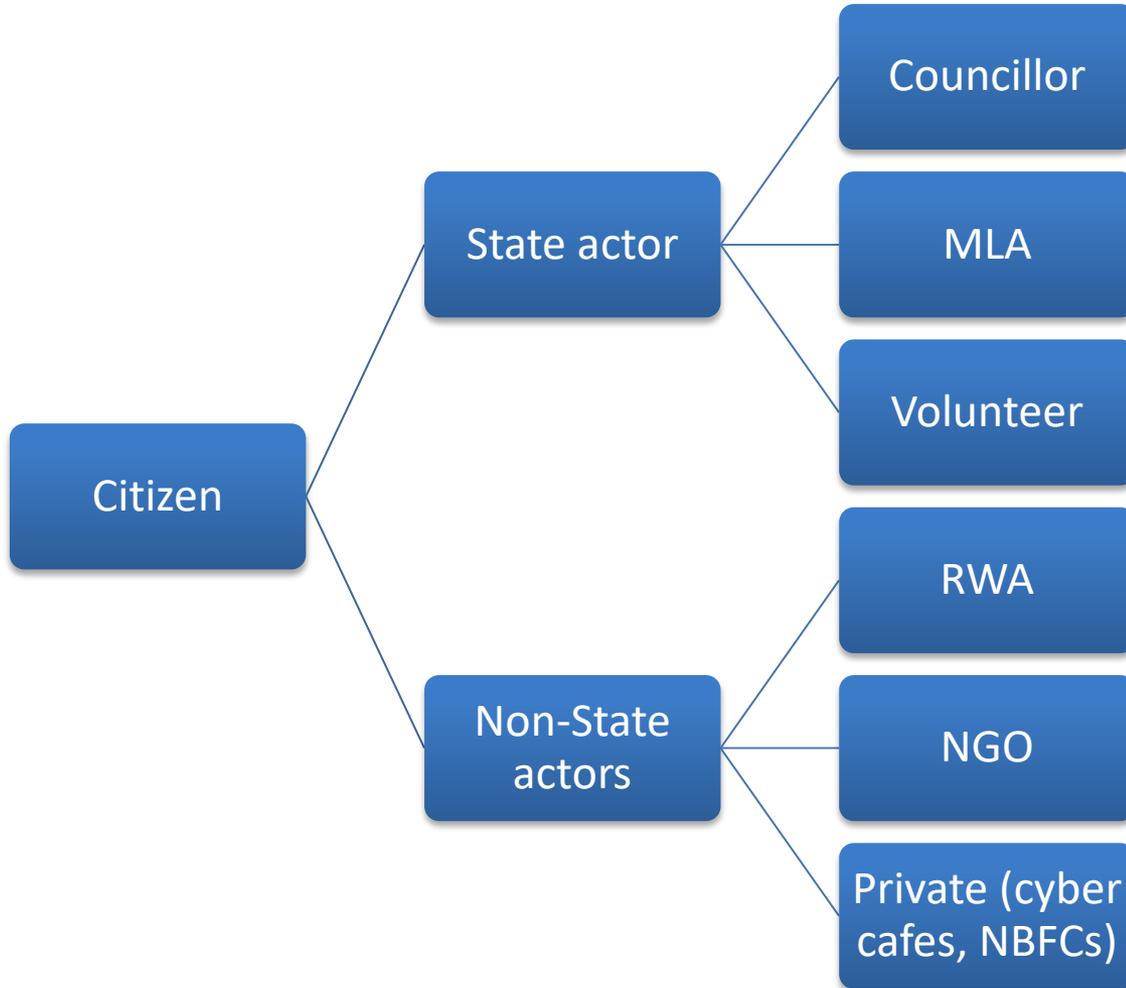
## **Negotiations aspirational in nature**

- Neighbourhood improvements: beautification of parks, development of public spaces, better parking spaces
- Housing improvements (adding floor, toilet, refurbishments)
- Building redevelopments (commercial and residential)

## **Expectations from regularisation**

- Regularisation expected to bring tenure security
- Access to cheaper formal finance

# Actors: State and Non-State



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## **State**

- i. MLA :Legislation, Complaints about water, sanitation, electricity, identity cards, pension forms, etc.;
- ii. Municipal councillor: Complaints about roads, drains, schools, PHCs
- iii. MLA's volunteer team: Facilitate interaction with MLA, help residents in paperwork, conduct weekly meetings

## **Non-state**

- i. RWAs: Regularisation paperwork; tree plantation drives, maintaining public spaces
- ii. NGOs: Support to government programmes; skill training programmes for women and youth; liaison with private agencies for placement of youth, creating awareness about good sanitation practices; beautification of parks
- iii. Private: Cyber cafes, Non-Banking Finance Corporations

# Boundary spanners, spanning boundaries: Introducing the concepts

- One who interfaces between the community, the state and civil society or other bodies, in an attempt to bring about change
- Emanates from organisational literature. Boundary spanners engage in relationship-building, mobilisation, communication and coordination across public, societal and/or private (organizational) boundaries
- Can the varied actors on field be thought of as spanning boundaries? What are the boundaries?

# Spanning boundaries?

## **Between RWA (non-state actor) and MLA (state actor)**

- Role of RWAs uncertain and in flux post AAP's Mohalla Sabha initiative
- Mohalla Sabhas envisioned as more participatory and inclusive than RWAs, but yet to start functioning
- Hitherto a relationship of co-production now turning into one of avoidance, barring specific engagements

## **Between two state actors: MLA and municipal councillor**

- Constant tussle between the AAP-led Delhi government and BJP-led municipal corporations
- Avoidance between MLA and municipal councillor

## **Between state, market and society**

- Emergence of private players suggests need to go beyond state-citizen binary
- State is an enabler and/or regulator, but demands such as housing realised through private players

# Concluding thoughts

- Urban regeneration multi-layered, contextual and localised
- Emergence of multiple actors with varying and often conflicting interests: relationship more of avoidance rather than co-production
- Boundary spanning as a working concept goes beyond patron-client and intermediary explanations of urban politics
- Citizens at the centre of these layered relationships
- Key demands directed to a certain actor, or to a multitude of actors (linked to outcomes)
- Citizens in informal neighbourhoods are negotiating and (re)shaping spaces based on their aspirations for urban living

# Thank you

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