From Conflict to Collaboration:  
Nongovernmental Organizations and their Negotiations for Local Control of Slum and Squatter Housing in Mumbai, India

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In

Environmental Design and Planning

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Abstract

Interorganizational arrangements, such as partnerships between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental organizations (GOs), are increasingly regarded by policymakers as critical to effective social sector development. This is particularly true in the arena of housing provision for residents of slums and squatter settlements. The recent pursuit of collaboration between NGOs and government housing agencies in large urban agglomerations such as Mumbai, India marks a significant shift from the adversarial climate that previously characterized NGO-GO interactions. In other words, NGOs engaged in housing issues appear to be evolving from ‘housing rights advocates’ to ‘housing developers.’ However, very little research has examined the struggles and pressures facing organizations as they travel from confrontational to collaborative relationships. This dissertation provides an empirical and theoretical basis for examining the evolution of NGO-GO relationships over time and, in doing so, links research on urban political economy of housing to research on organizational life cycles and strategic institutional change.

Two questions are central to the dissertation: 1) How do shifts in state housing policies influence the strategies pursued by advocacy NGOs in housing the poor? 2) What are the factors that influence the emergence and sustenance of NGO-government housing partnerships? To address these, I use a multiple-case study analysis of critical incidents in the history (from 1981 to 2003) of three NGOs in Mumbai: Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti, Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, and Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres. In addition, I examine five State and city level housing authorities. The dissertation’s findings address three broad themes of literature: i) NGO-GO Interaction Styles; ii) Institutional Isomorphism; and, iii) NGO Development Continuum. Findings related to these broad streams of literature suggest that NGO behavior is shaped both by public policy orientation and by internal strategies and decisions. In efforts to gain and retain legitimacy, NGOs will likely use multiple interaction styles both simultaneously and sequentially. Analysis of internal institutional processes in NGOs suggests that organizational responses to isomorphic demands are circumscribed by path-dependent factors and the variability in NGO resource environments. NGO development strategies have evolved towards greater complexity and sophistication.
Acknowledgements

As this dissertation inched to the finish line, I realized that this would be the most difficult part to write. I owe so much, to so many. In particular, I owe my first and biggest debt to Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim for his steadfast intellectual and moral support. I express no less a sense of gratitude towards each and every member of my dissertation committee - Prof. Dyck, Prof. Koebel, Prof. Stephenson, Prof. Scarpaci, and Dr. Carmin. Their guidance, encouragement and friendship has made this long journey, very worthwhile.

I could never have started, let alone completed this research, without the spirited cooperation of the NGOs. In particular, I am deeply grateful to Gurbir Singh, P.K. Das, Anna Kurien, Minar Pimple, Priya Gopalen, Sheela Patel, Sundar Burra, and Celine D’Cruz for their participation as well as their gracious hospitality. My gratitude extends to all NGO personnel, field staff and associates who provided invaluable insights to this research especially, Ruchira Aghi, Pallavi Matkari, K.S. Baroi, S. K. Joshi, Sharad Mahajan, Sucheta Chogle, Mohan Chavan, Suresh Kadam, Kousalya Tai, Umanath, Sampath, and Chandrakant Mama. I also benefited tremendously from conversations with many government officials in the Mumbai Metropolitan and Regional Development Authority, the Slum Rehabilitation Authority, the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, the Housing and Urban Development Corporation and sincerely appreciate the insights provided by Gautam Chatterjee, Dr. T. Chandra Shekhar, U.P.S Madan, Ujjwal Uke, Anand Jagtap, A.N. Krishnamurthy and Vaijayanti Mahabale. My meetings with several slum and squatter residents were also precious. I thank them all.

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I express my fondest gratitude to my colleagues at Virginia Tech. I would, first of all, like to thank the magnificent seven of the “EDP Group.” Their insights and friendship have meant more than I can put into words. I especially thank Percy Summers, Joao Mil-Homens and Rachel Christensen. My appreciation and gratitude extends to all of my other colleagues and friends in the EDP program for their support and encouragement, oftentimes, when I have needed it most. Speaking of good friends, I thank Dhaval Makhecha for all of his very timely help.

I could not have completed this research without the warmth and financial support from the Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited in Mumbai. My special thanks to K.G. Krishnamurthy, Harish Khare, Tara Subramaniam, Manoj Nair, Bhaskar Baroi, Deepak Pangasa, Delnaz Paliwala and Suyash Valanju.

Finally, I owe my deepest and most invaluable debt to my family: My parents, Ramanath Sankaran and Meera Ramanath, my grandparents, particularly my grandfather M.K.
Venkatachalam for his enduring interest in housing, and to Rajeev and Sumathi. I would never have dared come this distance without their love and support.
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<td>AC(E)</td>
<td>Additional Collector (Encroachments)</td>
</tr>
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<td>ACHR</td>
<td>Asian Coalition for Housing Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAG</td>
<td>Bombay Environmental Action Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BECC</td>
<td>Bandra East Community Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMC</td>
<td>Bombay Municipal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSES</td>
<td>Baseline Socio Economic Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUTP</td>
<td>Bombay Urban Transport Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHS</td>
<td>Cooperative Housing Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRH</td>
<td>Committee for the Right to Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRZ</td>
<td>Coastal Regulation Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZMA</td>
<td>Coastal Zone Management Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCR</td>
<td>Development Control Regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVS</td>
<td>Dharavi Vikas Samiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>Floor Area Ratio</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCRA</td>
<td>Foreign Control Regulation Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSI</td>
<td>Floor Space Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFC</td>
<td>Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIC</td>
<td>Habitat International Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HID</td>
<td>Housing and Infrastructure Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUDCO</td>
<td>Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAS</td>
<td>Indian Administrative Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IASC</td>
<td>Indian Association for Savings and Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPRHC</td>
<td>Indian People’s Human Rights Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INR</td>
<td>Indian Rupees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JP</td>
<td>Jayaprakash Narayan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCGM</td>
<td>Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCZMA</td>
<td>Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHADA</td>
<td>Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Member of Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>Mahila Milan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMR</td>
<td>Mumbai Metropolitan Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMRDA</td>
<td>Mumbai Metropolitan and Regional Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSIB</td>
<td>Mumbai Slum Improvement Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUIP</td>
<td>Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUTP</td>
<td>Mumbai Urban Transport Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBS</td>
<td>Naujavan Bharat Sabha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCHR</td>
<td>National Campaign for Housing Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDZ</td>
<td>No Development Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHSS</td>
<td>Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHWC</td>
<td>Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NN</td>
<td>Nirmala Niketan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSDF</td>
<td>National Slum Dwellers Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDPHE</td>
<td>Peoples Movement for Human Rights Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMGP</td>
<td>Prime Minster’s Grant Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROUD</td>
<td>People’s Responsible Organization of United Dharavi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUCL</td>
<td>People’s Union for Civil Liberties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;R</td>
<td>Resettlement and Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSDF</td>
<td>Railway Slum Dwellers Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI</td>
<td>Slum/Shack Dwellers International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGNP</td>
<td>Sanjay Gandhi National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPARC</td>
<td>Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPPL</td>
<td>ShivShahi Punarvasan Prakalp Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRA</td>
<td>Slum Rehabilitation Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRD</td>
<td>Slum Redevelopment Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS</td>
<td>Slum Rehabilitation Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS</td>
<td>Slum Rehabilitation Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDR</td>
<td>Transferable Development Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TISS</td>
<td>Tata Institute of Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCDC</td>
<td>Urban Community Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ULCRA</td>
<td>Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
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<td>YUVA</td>
<td>Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action</td>
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</table>
# GLOSSARY of HINDI and MARATHI TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HINDI/MARATHI</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Akhil Dharavi Vikas Samiti</td>
<td>Committee for the development/welfare of all in Dharavi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apna Zopadpatti</td>
<td>Our slum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bal Adhikar Sangharsh Samiti</td>
<td>Committee to struggle for the rights of the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandh</td>
<td>Boycott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharatiya Jan Sangh</td>
<td>Committee of the people of India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhoodan</td>
<td>Gift of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chai</td>
<td>Indian tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chawl</td>
<td>Three to four storey buildings with one room tenements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipko Movement</td>
<td>Tree-huggers movement (‘Chipko’ literally means ‘to stick or hug’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dadagiri</td>
<td>Goon-power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalit</td>
<td>Ex-Untouchable (literally means, the ‘downtrodden’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalit Vikas Samiti</td>
<td>Committee for the development/welfare of Dalits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharavi Vikas Samiti</td>
<td>Committee for the development of Dharavi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharna</td>
<td>Street protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footpathvai Kruti Samiti</td>
<td>Collective of the residents of sidewalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footpathvai Nagarik Sangathan</td>
<td>Organization of citizens living on sidewalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garibi Hatao</td>
<td>Remove poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gherao</td>
<td>Blockade or encirclement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girni Kamgar</td>
<td>Front/committee of textile workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goondaism</td>
<td>Hooliganism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamara Shehar</td>
<td>Our city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>Committee of persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sunvai</td>
<td>Public hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand Mukti Morcha</td>
<td>Movement for the liberation of Jharkhand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamgar Aghadi</td>
<td>Workers’ front/committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khadi</td>
<td>Hand-spun and woven cloth made of cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khatiya</td>
<td>Cot/bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisan Sabha</td>
<td>Assembly of farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lathi</td>
<td>Truncheon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lok Sabha</td>
<td>House of the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahila Mandal</td>
<td>Group/committee of women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahila Milan</td>
<td>Collective of Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidan</td>
<td>Open field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandal</td>
<td>Group/committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masjid</td>
<td>Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan</td>
<td>Organization for the empowerment of workers and peasants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazdoor Sangh</td>
<td>Workers’ union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morcha</td>
<td>Demonstration march/protest march</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mumbai Nagrik Vikas Manch</td>
<td>Forum for the development of citizens of Mumbai</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Naujavan Bharat Sabha</strong></td>
<td>Association of India’s youth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nav Nirman Yuvak Samiti</strong></td>
<td>Youth for reconstruction association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nirman</strong></td>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti</strong></td>
<td>Committee for the protection of housing rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pucca</strong></td>
<td>In the context of this dissertation: a home made of bricks and cement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rahivasi Sangh/Sanghatana</strong></td>
<td>Committee of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rajya Sabha</strong></td>
<td>Council of the States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh</strong></td>
<td>National committee of mill workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saamna</strong></td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Samaj Seva Niketan</strong></td>
<td>Abode for the welfare/help of the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sampurna Kranti</strong></td>
<td>Total revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak</strong></td>
<td>SPARC’s assistance to collective community construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sangharsh Samiti</strong></td>
<td>Committee for struggle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sangharsh Nagar</strong></td>
<td>City/neighborhood of struggle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saree</strong></td>
<td>Five to six yards of cloth worn with folds by women in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sarvodaya</strong></td>
<td>Welfare of all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satyagraha</strong></td>
<td>Non-violent resistance/civil disobedience (literally means, ‘persuading by force of truth’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seva Niketan</strong></td>
<td>Abode for welfare/help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shiv Sena</strong></td>
<td>Army of Shivaji, a Maratha king of medieval India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ShivShahi Punarvasan Prakalp</strong></td>
<td>Rehabilitation project for the State of Shivaji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stree Manch</strong></td>
<td>Women’s group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swaraj</strong></td>
<td>Self-rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unnayan</strong></td>
<td>Development/self-realization (in the Bengali language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vikas Samiti</strong></td>
<td>Development committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yuva Sangharsh Vahini</strong></td>
<td>Youth action squads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yuvak Mandal</strong></td>
<td>Group/committee of youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zamindar</strong></td>
<td>Landlord</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Zopadpatti</strong></td>
<td>Slum</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

In late December 1992, as the passenger train inched its way into Bombay, I got my first peek at the city’s ubiquitous slums and squatter settlements. I vividly recall thinking that if I stretched out just a little, I could touch many of the homes from my window-seat in the train. These homes were dangerously close to the rail tracks. Slums and squatter homes encircled the city’s airport, precariously stood atop steep hills, stood on city’s sidewalks, and densely occupied swampy lands besides rivers and the city’s coastline. Together these are home to more than half of the city’s estimated 12 million people and occupy merely six percent of its total land area (World Bank 2000a; Chatterjee 2002, 11). I was however too eager to savor the pleasures of the city to spend time pondering over these most palpable manifestations of urban poverty.

This was my maiden visit to the city; a brief vacation undertaken with the animated hope to shop for in-fashion clothes, watch Bollywood movies, and eat plenty of road-side food. Sadly, the vacation saw me securely locked for days with my aunt in her high-rise apartment in a posh suburb of Bombay. The city (and much of the country’s northern parts) was suffering the worst Hindu-Muslim riots ever witnessed. The violence in Bombay, well-known as the most cosmopolitan Indian city, was a rude welcome. The city’s slum and squatter residents were among the worst victims of the riots. Little did I then comprehend that, starting the 1970s, the glitzy Bombay had also become the site of several crucial changes in commerce, finance, and industrial production and more
intriguingly, an arena where the most brutal and frenzied battles over wealth, space and ethnic identities were fought (Appadurai 2000, 630).

I reentered Bombay two years later, in 1994, to pursue a Master’s degree in social work. As a student, I learned that the riots of December 1992-January 1993, that had busted my introductory trip, were the careful handiwork of a Hindu fundamentalist regional party called the Shiv Sena.1,2 The Shiv Sena is widely perceived as a political party which over several years had launched a deliberate campaign of hate and fear to rid the city of its immigrants, including its slum immigrants. Other political parties had pursued violence, in the form of forced evictions of slums and squatter settlements, but starting the late 1980s, “this battle was intensified, as the nexus between real estate speculators, organized crime, and corrupt officialdom reached new heights” (Appadurai 2000, 648).

The Shiv Sena was held responsible for inciting the Bombay riots but, nonetheless, won the State elections of 1995, paradoxically, on the plank of providing 800,000 new and free homes to 400,000 slum and squatter dwellers of Bombay within five years. To realize this ostentatious goal, the new State government relied exclusively upon the booming real estate market of Bombay of the early 1990s. The idea was to tear down existing slum and squatter structures and reconstruct fully cross-subsidized apartment

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1 Shiv Sena (meaning army of Shiva, referring to Shivaji, a Maratha king of medieval India) was established in 1966 with the express slogan of “Maharashtra for the Marathi-speaking population” (Patel 2003a, 14).
2 According to the Census of India (1991), Hindus constitute 81 percent of the country’s total population while Muslims make up 12.12 percent. The riots in Bombay were triggered by the demolition of the Babri Masjid (the Babri mosque) in the northern Indian State of Uttar Pradesh on December 6, 1992. Even though the riots in Bombay were an immediate reaction to the demolition of the mosque by Hindu militants, over the next few weeks, anti-Muslim sentiments in Bombay were meticulously fanned by rumors and organization of grand Hindu rituals by the Shiv Sena (Sharma 1995, 268-286).
buildings and offer these as secure tenure to slum and squatter dwellers. By altering the city’s development regulations, the State government aimed to attract private for-profit developers who would invest in slum redevelopment in return for substantial financial gains from sale of a portion of the incentive floor space in the open market.

An interesting new participant in the milieu of actors who were expected to scuttle towards redeveloping slums were nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The expected participation of NGOs intrigued me particularly since involvement in implementation required these organizations to interact closely and directly with the state and market players. My education and understanding of the NGO sector was seeped in the rhetoric that NGOs are institutionally distinct from the state and the market and, in particular, are “reluctant” (Farrington et al 1993) and “uneasy” (Kudva 2004) partners with their other institutional associates.

Till today Bombay’s ‘free housing’ program, though unsuccessful in achieving its planned targets, is dominated by private for-profit builders and is ridden with speculation, corruption and political machinations (Tata Institute of Social Sciences 2003, 116). In such an environment, what are the NGOs engaged in slum and squatter housing doing? How have the professed shifts in state housing policies and practice—from one of forced evictions to slum redevelopment—influenced how these NGOs relate to the state, the market and their clientele? More generally, what do such shifts portend for the dynamics of NGO-government interactions in slum and squatter housing? I devote the remainder of this introductory chapter to discussing my key research questions, the methods I use to
answer the questions, a brief overview of the three NGOs that participated in this research, and a succinct overview of the research’s key findings and arguments.

**Abstract Revisited**

Interorganizational arrangements, such as partnerships between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental organizations (GOs), are increasingly regarded by policymakers as critical to effective social sector development. This is particularly true in the arena of housing provision for residents of slums and squatter settlements. The recent pursuit of collaboration between NGOs and government housing agencies in an urban agglomeration such as Mumbai, India marks a significant shift from the adversarial climate that previously characterized NGO-GO interactions. In other words, NGOs engaged in housing issues appear to be changing from ‘housing rights advocates’ to ‘housing developers.’ However, very little research has examined the struggles and pressures facing organizations as they shift from confrontational to collaborative relationships. This dissertation provides an empirical and theoretical basis for examining the evolution of NGO-GO relationships over time and, in doing so, links research on urban political economy of housing to research on organizational life cycles and strategic institutional change.

Specifically, two questions are examined in this dissertation:

1) How do shifts in state housing policies influence the strategies pursued by advocacy NGOs in housing the poor?
2) What are the factors that influence the emergence and sustenance of NGO-government housing partnerships?

To answer these questions, I use a multiple-case study method with two units of analysis. The primary unit of analysis is the NGO. I look at three NGOs working in the city of Mumbai: Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti\(^3\) (NHSS), Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA), and Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC). For each NGO, I focus on critical incidents in their histories, particularly as they relate to interactions with government agencies over housing. These incidents or “key housing interventions” are my second, or nested, unit of analysis. In this context, I examine a number of government housing agencies including five State\(^4\) and city level housing authorities: the Slum Rehabilitation Authority, the Mumbai Metropolitan and Regional Development Authority, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, the Shivshahi Punarvasan Prakalp Limited,\(^5\) and the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority. The case studies draw on in-depth semi structured interviews, impromptu group interviews, archival research of NGO and government records, and participant observation of NGO-community interaction. The dissertation involves an historical analysis of nine key housing interventions between 1981 and 2002 as well as data collection between August 2002 and August 2003.

\(^3\) In Hindi, this translates as “Committee for the Protection of Housing Rights.”

\(^4\) Throughout this dissertation, I use the term State to refer to an administrative unit of the government and state to refer to an institutional sector distinct from NGOs and the market. Please see literature review (section 2.3) for a discussion on the subject of institutional distinctions between NGOs, the state and the market. In his article on State-NGO relationships in India, Sen (1999, 327) distinguishes the use of State and state as follows: “For the purpose of clarity, the term ‘state’ is employed here to discuss the theoretical phenomenon, while ‘State’ is used to refer to the political, territorial, and administrative units in India.”

\(^5\) Shiv-Shahi Punarvasan Prakalap translates from Marathi as the rehabilitation project of the State of Shivaji, a Maratha king of medieval India.
Before outlining my theoretical and empirical findings, I offer a brief overview of the circumstances shaping the origins and development of the three participating NGOs. The birth of the three NGOs was brought about by a common triggering event in 1981--mass demolitions and deportations of those living on Mumbai’s sidewalks. The matter was petitioned in the Supreme Court of India by a concerned journalist. After much debate that lasted four years, the court acknowledged that those squatting on the city’s sidewalks had a right to livelihood and that this right was violated. However, the court upheld the municipality’s right to demolish unauthorized dwellings. The verdict sent several student activists into a frenzy that motivated the creation of a number of organizations.

1) Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti: NHSS was first among the few non-state actors to rise in public prominence following the Supreme Court Judgment of 1985. Using mass mobilization, street protests, slogan shouting, film, and street plays, NHSS convened nearly 26 grassroots organizations representing youth, students, slum groups, and trade unions with the objective to engage in ‘firefighting operations for the rights of slums’. Over most of its lifetime, NHSS advocated for people’s control of housing and it openly disapproved of State-initiated policies of Slum Redevelopment (1991) and Slum Rehabilitation (1995) which supported involvement of private developers in redeveloping slums. In 2001, however, NHSS decided to promote the delivery of a Slum Rehabilitation Scheme for nearly 16,000 evicted families in partnership with a private for-profit developer.
This was a dramatic shift in strategy that received unrelenting public scrutiny about NHSS’s real motives.

2) Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action: Unlike the strong and direct action flavor of NHSS’s contentious tactics, YUVA employed a repertoire of tactics such as lobbying through participation in advocacy campaigns, releasing documentary films, circulating information, and organizing youth training camps and leadership training programs among women and children in slums and sidewalks. Despite its fundamental opposition to the State’s Slum Rehabilitation Scheme of 1995, YUVA set up a new Housing and Infrastructure Development Unit which briefly and unsuccessfully cooperated with the state. The organization justified its strategic shift on the grounds that it wanted to facilitate and safeguard the interests of eager slum dwellers. Then again in 1997, YUVA accepted a role as an implementing agency of the State to carry out housing and basic infrastructure works on a relocation site for 900 evicted families. The process enmeshed YUVA in a long-drawn effort to get land cleared of a series of encumbrances while also managing an increasingly disgruntled community of slum dwellers.

3) Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres: Unlike the other two organizations, SPARC maintained that direct and open confrontation with the state was ineffective in achieving any substantial improvements in the lives of the poor. SPARC has long relied on its strong ties with bureaucratic elites, its influence over several thousand slum families, and its similarly well-built ties with international donor agencies. For SPARC, which endorsed and actively engaged in the formulation of the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme of 1995, the
government solutions were the only way for the city’s urban poor to get access to otherwise unaffordable land and subsidies. By the late 1990s, SPARC was well into implementing several redevelopment and rehabilitation schemes in Mumbai in the capacity of a housing “developer.”

Given these three cases, I develop the following central arguments:

a) **NGO-Government Interaction Styles:** A well-known taxonomy of NGO-GO relations, presented by Najam (2000), classifies NGO-GO relationships on the basis of different combinations of the goals and preferred strategies of each institutional actor. Applicable to a broad universe of NGOs, he classifies interaction styles to consist of cooperation, confrontation, complementarity, and co-optation, the “Four Cs.” This framework is a useful analytical tool for categorizing the evolving nature of NGO-government relations and I thus utilized it as a starting point to build a more nuanced and robust description of NGO-government relations in housing. In doing so, I add two layers of complexity to the characterization of NGO-GO interaction: a) NGOs with similar goals (of defending the housing rights of the poor) may rely on different strategies and tactics to advance their housing agendas with the state. This diversity in strategies and tactics can be attributed to the past experiences of members, their core values and beliefs, the housing philosophy of the NGO, and the needs of their clientele; and, ii) Furthermore, my analysis of NGO-GO housing interventions suggests that a robust understanding of NGO-GO relations demands making central, the possibility that multiple interaction strategies could simultaneously and
sequentially exist. In efforts to gain and retain legitimacy and relevance, NGOs are likely to shift strategies sequentially, and oftentimes, simultaneously. Analyzing NGO-government relations from within the framework of a selected intervention (the nested unit of analysis) helps provide a more robust explanation of their interactions, thus building on simpler classifications necessary in taxonomies.

b) **Limits to Institutional Isomorphism:** The second argument builds on the well-established notion that “once disparate organizations in the same line of business are structured into an actual field . . . powerful forces emerge that lead them to become more similar to one another” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 148). My analysis of internal processes in three NGOs operating in Mumbai reveals that, despite their physical proximity to one another and operating within the same public policy environment, each NGO used a different strategy in response to the same environment. In other words, variation in tactical response to similar institutional environments can bring about differentiation rather than isomorphism. Analysis of internal institutional processes in each of the three participating NGOs point to two primary factors that condition variations in organizational response to isomorphic demands, namely, path-dependency and variability in resource environments.

c) **NGO Development Continuum:** Korten’s (1987, 145-159) thesis popularized the notion that as NGOs become more sophisticated in their understanding of, for
instance, poverty, health or environmental issues, they evolve from simple service delivery related activities into engagement in more complex policy advocacy (from a “first generation” strategy to a “third generation” strategy). The dissertation’s findings support this thesis in that participating NGOs evolved from less to more complex levels of interactions with the state and other actors in the housing field. However, the findings do not support the normative direction of evolution and are presented in three steps:

i) In contrast with Korten’s thesis, participating NGOs are found to evolve in the opposite direction, from policy advocacy to housing delivery in cooperation with the state apparatus.

ii) My analysis of NGOs also reveals that engagement in service delivery is a complex task and may not be as simple as is sometimes assumed. It demands adding new tools to an existing pool of advocacy tactics and is likely to include: balancing of programmatic with institutional objectives; cajoling bureaucratic and political elite; inviting and retaining technical and governmental competency; creating and sustaining internal consensus for change; and, mobilizing sufficient financial resources.

iii) NGO evolution from activism to service delivery with the state also suggests that NGO advocacy work is likely to be circumscribed to individual project level advocacy in contrast to the broader, mass-based and systemic change efforts evidenced earlier in their lifetimes.
In summary, this dissertation informs theoretical and empirical literature on NGO-government collaborative relations in two important ways: a) it analyses how housing NGOs position and organize themselves to achieve the housing objectives of the state and their other key constituencies; and, b) it explores the challenges that NGOs face in the course of making critical adjustments to their environments.
CHAPTER 1
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

NGO-government working arrangements to house the poor provide an exploratory setting with rich potential to examine interorganizational relations. Theoretical development in understanding NGO-government relations has led to a number of broad typologies of relations between the two sets of actors (Coston 1998; Young 1999; Najam 2000). Though useful, I argue that such typological classification only scratches the surface of tensions that characterize NGO-government interactions. Achieving some understanding of the complex nature of how a relationship type develops requires understanding the various “strategies of engagement” that NGOs and government entities bring to bear in their efforts “to change or maintain the parameters of interorganizational domain in which they operate” (Hardy and Phillips 1998, 217-218).

This dissertation is an attempt to capture these micro level nuances and to do so, it embeds itself in interactions between “advocacy” NGOs engaged in housing and municipal and State government agencies working in the city of Mumbai, India. While concentrating on NGO-interactions with communities and State government, the research embraces other key actors and processes like national and international donors and for-profit players in the real estate market. Most of the participants represent organizations living in the thin and often permeable line dividing NGOs from their environment.

A more recent work that develops typologies of relationship types is that of Najam (2000). Najam classifies relations on the basis of institutional interests. The resulting typologies consist of cooperation, confrontation, complementarity and cooptation.
The following section describes my motivation to undertake this research, some of which are personal in nature. I follow this with a section that describes the research design. Looking back on my fieldwork experiences and my preparations towards it, I know that I ‘endured.’

As I began to write this dissertation I became increasingly aware that my struggles to gain entry and collect data are so strongly wedded to how I developed my research design that I can rarely speak of my research without narrating my own personal experiences with informants and more generally, with the field setting. In detailing my motivations and interests and the evolving nature of research design, I therefore adopt a combination of writing styles -- some of which is “confessional,” some “realist,” but for the most part is an “impressionist” tale. The objective is therefore to keep the “subject and the object in constant view” (Van Maanen 1988, 102). This is by no means unique in field research and is commonplace in ethnographic traditions wherein fieldwork occupies a position of primacy as a tool of data collection and is often an exercise demanding months, if not years of engagement, “with the human targets of study on their home ground” (Van Maanen 1988, 2).

In the chapter that follows, I narrate a few significant stories of how I gained entry, established rapport with informants, and the small sagas of hardships endured (and many overcome). As I begin this tale, I wish to emphasize that I am not interested in arousing...

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7 I set foot in Mumbai in July 2002 with plans to start data collection by mid-August. It took a full month to find residence in the city and furthermore, it was not until December 2002 that I gained wholehearted consent from the three participating NGOs.

8 Briefly described, a realist tale is an objective description of the field setting; a confessional tale describes the emotional experience of the researcher; and, an impressionist tale is a combination of the two and describes the experience as well as the findings. In an impressionist tale, the researcher is partially visible in the text, but the events of the study are told in such a way that the “learning process” can be identified (Van Maanen 1988, 104).

9 Such a style is recommended by others who reject an overly realistic rendering of field experiences (Wolf 1992; Burawoy 1998).
sympathy for my field experiences. Rather, I intend to make clear how I came to understand the participating NGOs and in the process, gained significantly greater clarity about the NGO-government climate in Mumbai which I was attempting to explore.

1.2 MOTIVATIONS FOR RESEARCH

My association with one of the case organizations, YUVA, began in 1995-1996 when, as a student social worker, I was trained as a member of YUVA’s housing rights team. More specifically, I worked with a community based organization initiated and organized by YUVA called the Organization of Citizens on Pavements (Footpathvaasi Nagarik Sangathan in Hindi). Later, in 2000, I visited YUVA to discuss my dissertation research. I saw more computers in its Mumbai office than I recalled seeing earlier and the clear cement floored room used to conduct community and staff meetings was now full of desks and file cabinets. I was introduced to many new and young recruits some of who were civil engineers and urban planners. All of this somewhat confused and intrigued me.

I was puzzled by why the pavement unit in YUVA had shrunk from four senior community workers to one. One of the senior employees with whom I had worked was shifted from field level organizing and mobilizing of pavement communities to the sole task of monitoring community dynamics on a slum resettlement site in north Mumbai.\(^{10}\) I even visited this slum resettlement site where YUVA was the implementing arm of the

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\(^{10}\) Pavement dwelling as distinct from slum dwelling comprises those who build their homes on footpaths/sidewalks of the city. Homes such as these are characteristic of most urban centers in India but particularly widespread in metropolises such as Mumbai and Kolkata (Calcutta). Unlike slums that come up on vacant land or other stretches of land whether public or private in the city, pavement tenements come up on sidewalks meant for pedestrians. Such structures use the support of a wall that separates an adjoining building or other built space from the street/road.
State -- a partnership arrangement between YUVA, the community, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a State-level housing authority. I was intrigued by what I understood as significant strategic developments in YUVA.

As I began preparation for my field research in mid-2002, I anticipated that there was much more to the arena of NGO-government interactions in slum housing than meets the eye. My mentors at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, where I had completed a Masters in Social Work in 1996, and my own review of a dissertation recently completed by a student from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) pointed my attention to a housing NGO called SPARC. SPARC had not only worked with many of the state’s housing programs over the last two decades but had also graduated to taking on an active role as an independent nonprofit housing developer. Much talked about was also a third NGO, the NHSS in Mumbai, well known locally for its vocal opposition to the State’s newly adopted slum redevelopment policy. Intriguingly, this NGO had recently entered into negotiations with the State and a private housing developer to convene the resettlement of 33,000 eligible slum families in possibly the largest slum resettlement program in Asia.

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11 I had framed criteria for selection of NGOs to be included in the study prior to heading to India for data collection in mid-2002. In September 2001, I had sent out letters to four NGOs in the city requesting an introductory meeting with them (see Appendix B). I did not hear back from any one except YUVA. YUVA shared with me some of their recent housing interventions and also expressed its consent to participate in the research (via email). It was only after I reached India in July 2002 that I could follow-up on other NGO participants namely, SPARC and NHSS. I shall discuss the criteria used to select NGOs and my protracted efforts to gain entry into the latter two in a following section.

12 Mukhija (2000) *Squatters as Developers? Mumbai’s Slum Dwellers as Equity Partners in Redevelopment*. This was subsequently published as a book with the title *Squatters as Developers? Slum Redevelopment in Mumbai* (Mukhija 2003).
My preliminary analysis of the sector as represented by the chosen NGOs (SPARC, NHSS, and YUVA) may be summarized as follows: All three NGOs had begun work in Mumbai in the same time period; they had become major NGO players in housing in Mumbai; and, they had started work on a common platform of dissatisfaction with state policy. In addition, they had all independently, and at different points in time, joined the bandwagon of working with state (and market) to deliver housing as a product. This was, in essence, a strategic shift from their roles as rights-based advocates to that of service deliverers. For the initial months of 2002, even as I collected data for my research, I occupied myself with a series of questions: How do NGOs, known to maintain an adversarial position with state housing policy and practice, develop a new routine of working with the state apparatus? Why does such a “major shift” in NGO-government strategies occur? Does such a mutation in routines portend the end of the NGOs’ ability to “resist from below?”

1.3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The above interests and motivations were summarized into two research questions that guided the remainder of the dissertation process:

1. How do shifts in state housing policies influence the strategies pursued by advocacy NGOs in housing the poor?

2. What are the factors that influence the emergence and sustenance of NGO-government housing partnerships?
1.4 MULTIPLE CASE STUDY DESIGN

I selected a multiple case study design as the most useful means to answer the above two questions and to therefore study the phenomenon of NGO-government interaction over time.\(^{13}\) Currently, there exists limited empirical evidence on the origins and evolution of NGO strategy, and particularly about decision-making processes in relation with government. In order to develop knowledge about this important but neglected area, it was crucial to study NGOs and government in the context of their work among slum dwellers and squatters in Mumbai. The research methodology adopted is analogous to that described by constructivists such as Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen (1993) and Appleton and King (1997).\(^{14}\) My plans were not “set in tablets of stone” (Appleton 2002, 91). This section attempts to describe the emergent nature of research design adopted for data collection and analyses and the utility of such a design in achieving my research objectives.

Process of selecting NGOs & their housing interventions

Criteria for selecting NGOs and their housing interventions

To the extent that NGOs can broadly be described as members of a distinct sector, there is no comprehensive directory of NGOs in Mumbai. Moreover, no clear categorization

\(^{13}\) Multiple case studies involve “collecting and analyzing data from several cases and can be distinguished from the single case study that may have subunits or subcases embedded within” (Merriam 1998, 40). Yin (1994, 44) cites the example of the study of innovations in schools wherein innovations such as open classrooms, teacher aides, and new technology occur at different school sites. Each site thus is the subject of an individual case study and the study as a whole is referred to as a “multiple-case design.” The use of multiple case studies is recommended for increasing the external validity or generalizability of ones research findings. According to Merriam (1998, 40), “the more cases included in a study, and the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be.”

\(^{14}\) According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003, 35), “the constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent cocreate understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures. . . . Terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity.”
of NGOs predominantly engaged in housing exists. Desai (1999) gathered information from a sample of 67 NGOs in the city of Mumbai and distinguished her data set of NGOs based on 27 specified areas of activity. Desai found a handful of the NGOs to be exclusively engaged in just one of the above activities -- the majority was engaged in about three and the median stood at four. Out of her sample of 67, four NGOs were engaged in ten or more activities and she also found that the older ones tended to engage in multiple areas as opposed to those that were relatively new. Her field research located ten NGOs in the city to be principally engaged in housing.

This ability of some NGOs (and organizations in general) to ecologically interface their skills with their client communities posed an initial dilemma in selecting NGOs for this dissertation research. Desai’s observations, along with my own knowledge of housing NGOs in the city, made me aware of the difficulty of selecting NGOs that I could comfortably describe as engaged in “housing.” I began by selecting NGOs which started work in Mumbai on an agenda of addressing housing concerns of the urban poor, and up until the time of the start of my data collection in 2002, continued to describe housing as

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15 The designated activities comprise health, education, vocational training, other training, counseling, child care, riot relief, credit, AIDS related, income generation, legal aid, research and documentation, drugs related, food and shelter, housing, slum infrastructure, sponsorship, youth programs, street theatre, funding, community organization, employment bureau, women’s center, gender awareness, adoption and fostering, waste management, identity cards.

16 The term “ecological interfacing” is borrowed from Normann (1985, 237). Normann refers to ecological interfacing as one of the four powerful conditions for learning in social organizations. He describes this ability in the following words: “… with their relatively flexible structure and a certain discretionary freedom as to what they choose to do … they can pick out what part of the environment they can interact with and what external demands they want to expose themselves to.”
a ‘major’ organizational activity. I then formulated tentative criteria for selection of housing NGOs to be included in the research:

1. Their mission statement and activities at the time of inception should demonstrate pursuit of advocacy-related activities. I defined advocacy as a defined set of strategies that NGOs use to advocate their mission of protecting and promoting the housing rights of those residing in slums and squatter settlements. These advocacy-related activities may include mobilizing communities towards organized protests and demonstrations, and the organization of campaigns and movements. Stated briefly, these are NGO activities that explicitly demonstrated displeasure with state housing policies towards slums and squatter tenements.

2. The selected NGOs should have cooperated with city government organizations in projects to deliver housing and related services to the urban poor. Delivery of housing comprised a diverse set of tasks including, for example: working with sites and

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17 YUVA, one of my case NGOs reacted strongly to my labeling it a housing NGO. YUVA likes to describe itself as an NGO that engages in any activity that demands social justice (see Chapter 4 under formation of YUVA). As a result, it works with a variety of different issues which it categorizes as work with various sections of the urban population (women, children, youth, the unorganized sector), rural populations, training and capacity building, development consulting, and building activities (See http://www.yuvaindia.org/portal/Templates/YuvaHome.jsp accessed last on May 30, 2005). This is true of NHSS and SPARC as well. However, it is to be noted that in selecting key interventions, I have concentrated on their work in housing and therefore wish to make clear that this dissertation does not address the NGO in its entirety but that component of the NGO (in time and physical space) that works to address the needs of housing tenure and security of those living in the slums and squatter settlements of Mumbai.

18 Government organizations to be included in the study were determined in the course of interviews and documentary analyses in NGOs and participating communities of slums and squatter dwellers.

19 Slums and squatter settlements are usually distinguished as follows: A ‘slum’ refers to the condition of a settlement (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4 for the definition of a ‘slum’ in India). A slum is defined using such criteria as the level of congestion, the physical quality of the environment, the access to and availability of infrastructure facilities including sanitation, drinking water and all other amenities. The term squatter settlement, on the other hand, emphasizes the legal status of the settlement. A majority of Mumbai’s slum dwellers are squatters in that they do not possess a legal title to their land or in other words, they do not possess secure rights to their property.
services projects, slum redevelopment projects, slum upgradation and improvement programs, in cooperation with the state.

The above two criteria ensured that I selected NGOs that had adopted two explicit and diverse set of strategic positions vis-à-vis state policy – one of conflict and the other of cooperation. That NGOs can play an advocacy role in all types of relations with government was not lost; what was essential was the prevalence of simultaneous or sequential divergence in strategies towards government policy.

3. The NGOs should have been in existence for at least five years. A time span of five years, I estimated, would facilitate tracing and examining the growth of NGO-government interactions over an extended period of time. In five years, I also assumed that learning (through interactions with government for example) becomes embedded in organizational routines, technologies, hierarchies, and norms and practices of organizations and its participants. This would allow detailed examination of the changes in behavior that are likely influenced by repeat interactions between organizations.

4. The NGOs should give written permission to allow access to their internal archives consisting primarily of project-related files. Such files could include minutes of meetings, memos and letters exchanged with government agencies, minutes of board meetings and meetings with members of the community, among other project related documents. I also wanted permission to attend internal staff meetings and meetings with government agencies. A complete list of documents and records accessed is provided in section 4.2.
5. Each NGO should be registered\textsuperscript{20} with the state as a voluntary development organization working in the city of Mumbai.\textsuperscript{21}

Some aspects of the selection criteria listed above had to be altered and modified, and some were even sidelined in the final selection process. For instance, I included NHSS in the pool of NGOs even though it is not a registered NGO.\textsuperscript{22} Its highly publicized and controversial efforts to work with the state and a private developer, in resettling 33,000 slum families, offered a unique and real time opportunity to learn how an NGO principally opposed to private sector involvement in housing delivery made an about-turn to work in close cooperation with one. Also, SPARC did not favor my attending its meetings with government officials. I therefore suggested that I be allowed either to examine recorded minutes of meetings or discuss the outcome of the meetings with them.

I estimated that I would include three or at the most four NGOs for the dissertation. I believed this would allow me to examine, in depth, multiple instances of a process in different NGOs and all NGOs operating in housing in the city of Mumbai. A purposive

\textsuperscript{20} The state requires NGOs to register under specified State and Central legislative acts. “The Societies Registration Act of 1860, the Indian Trust Act of 1882, and the Charitable and Religious Act of 1920 are the primary mechanisms for registration” (Kudva 2004, 5). Another important legislation is the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) of 1976 which seeks to regulate the flow of foreign funds to the sector.

\textsuperscript{21} The urban expanse of Bombay (now called Mumbai) is considerable demanding explanation of the various geographical and political jurisdictions: Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Greater Mumbai and the Island City. Bombay was originally a group of seven islands (see Chapter 3 for details). These seven islands together with the marshy areas between them were reclaimed over several years and the amalgamated area is called the Island City. Greater Mumbai on the other hand, includes the suburban areas spreading northwards and includes the Island City, the suburbs and the Salsette Island. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region, commonly called by its abbreviation, the MMR, is a much larger area and includes the municipalities of Thane, Kalyan and New Mumbai. New Mumbai is a town planned as a counter-magnet to the Island City and like the Island City is comprised of a port, residential and commercial facilities and is located to the east. In this dissertation, the nine key housing interventions fall within the Greater Mumbai region (see the three subsections in Appendix A for a map of India, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region and Greater Mumbai, respectively).

\textsuperscript{22} To receive state and foreign funds, NHSS works through a sister agency called the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre, created in 1988, seven years after the formation of the NHSS (explained in Chapter 5).
selection was necessitated by the motive to derive analytical rather than statistical
generalization of NGO-government collaborative networks (Yin 1994, 36). In summary, I
narrowed the pool of NGOs to three for two key reasons:

First, I actively sought to select NGOs that had ‘influence’ in government. The NGOs
namely, SPARC, NHSS and YUVA are well known NGOs in government circles as well
as in the housing NGO community, both locally and nationally. This profile has persisted
since the time of their inception and is of particular interest to the phenomenon under
study, namely, that of deciphering strategies and tactics used by the NGOs to engage with
government in housing the city’s poor. Moreover, in my first few weeks in Mumbai and
my analysis of newspaper articles of the year, I found that SPARC and NHSS’s housing
interventions were the subject of several newspaper articles. In discussing my criteria
of selection, SPARC’s Director reacted saying that her NGO did not fit criterion 1, i.e. it
has not consciously or explicitly sought to display its commitment to preserving and
promoting the housing rights of slum and squatter dwellers by organizing protest
demonstrations and organization of campaigns. She stated that SPARC never takes an
openly confrontational position with the state. My initial review of case studies on their
web-site and conversations with a few others in SPARC seemed to confirm this. I was
therefore determined to negotiate my entry into SPARC because it appeared to offer the
prospect of “showing [a] different perspective on the problem, process or event” that I
wished to portray and explore (Creswell 1998, 62). Like NHSS, SPARC did not neatly fit
my criteria of selection but again offered a unique possibility of understanding the

23 Some newspaper articles concerning NHSS include: The Times of India (March 27, 2002); The Times of
India (May 7, 2002); The Indian Express (May 7, 2002); The Indian Express (June 12, 2002); The Times of
India (June 24, 2002). Select articles covering SPARC include: The Times of India (January 23, 2002);
The Times of India (February 14, 2002); The Times of India (March 15, 2002); The Times of India (March
24, 2002).
phenomenon of NGO-government interaction. YUVA’s work with a housing project in north Mumbai, while not the subject of newspaper coverage, was in a difficult stage of dealings with the Ministry of Environment and Forests. All in all, my analysis of the work of NGOs involved in housing naturally led me to select these NGOs as cases with rich potential to examine the nuances of NGO-government working partnerships.

A second reason for limiting the pool of NGOs was logistical in nature. The phenomenon I set out to understand involved getting a handle on the origins and development of NGO strategy. This required that I spend ample time interacting with the NGOs, their client communities, and government agencies. In addition to in-depth interviews with key informants, a critical source of cross-validation and triangulation was examination of NGO archives. The archives mainly were comprised of project-specific files. Going through archives required that I spend time with informants in their work setting and, at other times, in more informal circumstances\(^{24}\) to develop the nature of trust and friendship that allows for relatively free wheeling and in-depth conversations. As I analyzed each of their histories roughly over the past two decades, I found each NGO to be shaped by several key turning points. Each such event or turning point became a secondary unit of analysis within NGO as the primary unit of study. All of the nested case studies together made up for nine housing interventions across the three NGOs. I went through a protracted process of repeat triangulations to determine the salience of these events to each NGO’s history vis-à-vis government agencies -- a task that logistically allowed for the inclusion of no more than three NGOs in the dissertation.

\(^{24}\) Such circumstances were more a consequence of the heavy work schedules of most of my key informants. A conversation over dinner or tea either in a hotel or in their residence; a chat while in a local bus or in their cars as they gave me a ride to my dormitory -- were more common means of catching up with latest developments and engage in in-depth conversations.
**Why Mumbai?**

I chose the city of Mumbai as a specific city focus for the following reasons:

a) **My familiarity with the city and its development community:** I spent two years in the city completing my Master’s in Social Work with a specialization in Urban and Rural Community Development at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) from 1994-1996. As a student with TISS, I was placed with a shelter for street boys called ‘Shelter’ Don Bosco in my first year at TISS and, in the second year, chose to work with a housing NGO called the Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA). My work with YUVA\(^{25}\) initiated my interest in organizations working with housing issues for the urban poor.

b) **Access to my Masters institution enabled me to use its faculty as a sounding board and also a source for ensuring the validity of my interpretations.**

c) **Proficiency with the Indian language of Hindi.**\(^ {26}\)

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**Units of Analyses**

I used a multiple-case study method with two units of analysis. The primary unit of analysis is the NGO. For each NGO, I focused on critical incidents in their histories,

\(^{25}\) YUVA was the first NGO that I approached and was also the first to give its consent to participate in the research.

\(^{26}\) Marathi is the language spoken by the native people of Maharashtra. However, several different languages are spoken in Mumbai, the financial and commercial capital of the country. One can get by with Bambaiya Hindi (this is a version of Hindi typical of the city) with the result that many migrants do not learn Marathi, but a great many still do. I could comfortably conduct my interviews with slum and pavement dwellers as well as with field level NGO workers and government officials in Hindi. But this also meant that I could not comprehend government circulars and some of the minutes of NGO meetings (in YUVA), and newspaper clippings, which were recorded in Marathi. The script of the Marathi language is similar to Hindi. I can read but with limited comprehension. I sought the help of friends in HDFC and from staff of participating NGOs who would occasionally help translate critical government documents. My limited knowledge of Tamil, my native language, also came handy in making friends and conducting interviews with Tamil-speaking slum dwellers.
particularly as they relate to interactions with government agencies over housing. These incidents or “key housing interventions” are my second, or nested, unit of analysis. Each key housing intervention is “instrumental” to understanding NGO-government relations in housing (Stake 1995). I analyze nine such key housing interventions over the lifetimes of the three NGOs.

The NGOs selected were studied since the year of their inception and the selected housing interventions included a variety of different working arrangements. These arrangements were defined by the participating NGOs and not only included projects (for example, a contractual agreement) that brought them to work with the state but also included acts of mass protests against state-led acts of forced evictions; joint participation in key policy making bodies; or, even a failed attempt in entering a collaborative arrangement. All of these involve the creation of interorganizational systems and fall within the broader rubric of collaborative housing networks that bring the two to interact with one another and were therefore included.

*Getting ready for Mumbai*

In advance of commencing field work, I mailed a page-long letter to directors/executive directors of each proposed NGO (see Appendix B) in January 2002. In the letter I introduced myself, my research topic, the above criteria for selection, and requested a meeting to explore jointly the possibility of including their organization in my research or, alternately, to gain their insights on my research topic. Four NGOs were part of my first list of probable participants – YUVA, SPARC, Apnalaya, and the Bandra East
Community Center based on the section criteria noted above. I was well acquainted with YUVA’s work but was almost entirely unfamiliar with the work of the rest. SPARC allowed some degree of familiarity as it has maintained an extensive web-site of its activities over the years. My association with Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) also afforded familiarity with some of the work of the last two listed above. Like me, my colleagues at TISS were placed with different NGOs for their fieldwork training for their Masters degrees. Living together in the Institute’s dorm (called ‘Ladies Hostel’) allowed for frequent, if brief, discussions about the work of other NGOs. Since my contacts were limited to YUVA, the response of the rest to my introductory letter was crucial to my sense of comfort with the data collection process in Mumbai.

I sent out the letter on June 14th 2002 and did not hear from any of them in writing or by email by the time I left for India in mid-July 2002. In the meantime, I contacted my mentors at TISS and other writers on the subject of NGOs and slums in India\textsuperscript{27} to reassure myself of the pool of NGOs I was considering. I received feedback in that I was selecting NGOs that are well-funded and well-known in donor and government circles, both locally and internationally. This, they stated, was likely to bias my research findings. For instance, it would be difficult to generalize my findings to other NGOs that are small in size and do not have access to the kind of funding typical of NGOs I was

\textsuperscript{27} I got in touch with Ms. Gita Dewan Verma, an urban planner and consultant based in New Delhi (and author of ‘Slumming India: A Chronicle of Slums and their Saviours’, 2002) and Dr. Vandana Desai of the University of London (and author of Community Participation and Slum Housing: A study of Mumbai, 1995). I heard back from Gita. She was the first to suggest that I include NHSS, for it engaged in the type of advocacy that I was particularly interested in exploring (personal communication via email Thursday, June 11, 2002). Until the time I received her email, the thought of including NHSS never occurred to me. Nivara is not a registered NGO and does not maintain a web-site. I managed to find their mailing address on a web-site but was not convinced about their inclusion in the study until I reached Mumbai. NHSS’s unique characteristics offered considerable potential to examine the phenomenon of NGO-government relations.
considering. It was also pointed out by my mentors in TISS that sustained interventions in slum and pavement housing requires access to substantial financial resources and political leverage – conditions that do not hold for all members of the NGO community. To ensure generalizability of my research findings beyond the three NGOs that were likely to be selected, I made a deliberate attempt to maintain contact with my mentors in TISS who were both familiar with other NGOs in the city as well as with government and other stakeholders in housing issues for the poor. They referred me to key informants in NGOs and experts who were not part of my initial list of “sources of evidence”. Dr. Amita Bhide, a Professor with the Department of Urban and Rural Community Development at TISS, accepted an invitation to join my committee as an external ‘reader’28. Her role would be to offer comments on the final draft of the dissertation. Periodic conversations with Dr. Bhide and other professors at TISS, and with other experts, became a source of additional questions that I would ask of NGOs and government agencies participating in the research. I used insights gained from them to identify alternate interpretations and a wider set of issues periodically, problems and factors that I may have missed as a result of focusing my research on just three NGOs. This process is frequently referred to as investigator triangulation (Denzin 1989; Patton 1987).

Upon reaching India, I called YUVA some time during the third week of July 2002 and fixed an appointment for the 5th of August 2002. This was to be my first face-to-face official meeting with a new team leader of its “Slums and Pavements Unit.” I also had a

28 This is a role that I jointly conceived with a committee member, Dr. C. Theodore Koebel.
telephone conversation with SPARC’s Director from my home in Chennai. She had not received the introductory letter that I mailed her from Blacksburg so I briefed her on my research topic. She thought that the topic was interesting but added that while SPARC typically welcomed researchers, the NGO had lately grown suspicious of their research plans on two grounds:

a) Knowing that I proposed including other NGOs such as YUVA as part of the research, SPARC was concerned about how I would treat the data collected. This skepticism was linked to SPARC’s highly strained relations with other NGOs in the city. The Director stated that this could be attributed to SPARC’s comparative success in weaving good relations with government. She was concerned that comparative analyses could further jeopardize an already tense scenario. Despite my assurances that directly placing one NGO against the other was not the objective of my research and that I could maintain anonymity, if required, she was not convinced.

b) A second major concern was related to time constraints among those in SPARC. She stated that frequent or prolonged interviews, while useful and essential as a data collection tool, would be too costly for SPARC. She did not feel capable of doing justice to the extent of time and argumentation demanded of ‘good’ academic research. SPARC’s experiences with doctoral students had not been very pleasant or useful. She cited a recent experience with a doctoral student who spent several months analyzing a slum redevelopment project facilitated by the NGO. The resulting dissertation was critical of SPARC’s role. I could do little more than request that I be given a chance. After a fair amount of coaxing she agreed, but she added that my entry would be based on comments from other SPARC personnel and a careful evaluation of benefits accruing to
SPARC as a result of this association. I emailed her my 5-page research proposal (see Appendix G). After reading the proposal, she asked me to meet with her when I reached Mumbai.

While in Mumbai

I finally set out into the field in July 2002 with worries about how best to gain access to the field setting and finding means to finance the data collection period. I also carried with me two broad areas of investigation in mind. First, I wanted to identify key turning points in the history of slum and squatter housing interventions as perceived by NGOs and government entities. Second, I sought to identify organizational and interorganizational factors that conditioned the pursuit of an NGO housing strategy.29

Negotiating my access into the field setting

I shall use this section to recount the efforts that I put in -- the many types of mediation and bargains struck -- to gain entry into the field setting. Despite my familiarity with the norms, practices, and culture of the city and its development community, I went through a protracted struggle to negotiate access to the three NGOs. The process was a revelation of not merely my own strengths and weaknesses as a researcher, but also decisive in developing lasting impressions of the worldviews held by those who guard the multiple gates dividing NGOs from their external environment.

29 Please see literature review for the use of the term “strategy” in this research.
I understood that gaining entry into a field setting is not a one-time process particularly when the time span considered for data collection and analyses requires that the researcher asks participants to recount events and processes many years past. Projects and events that are part of this research include both ongoing processes and those that had acquired a sense of completion in the minds of those involved. Analyzing events in and between organizations and people over a period of time means that there were successes and failures - events that are proudly narrated, and still others that are carefully concealed or narrated with caution. Even though the process began with an initial nod from the head of an organization (be it an NGO or a government agency and at other times, the leader of a community), this did not mean that I had automatic access to documents, staff, clients and other stakeholders and processes. Every step I took in the eleven months devoted to data collection was the result of long and often tiresome processes of negotiation and complex networking with several people in and off the field. I shall try and substantiate this as I describe and analyze the nine case studies across the NGOs. I wish to emphasize the process of gaining entry not only because the amount of time spent and the methods used to gain entry, but also because establishing mutual trust and friendship had a key impact on the quality of information collected.

I reached Mumbai for a weeklong visit (from the 4th to the 9th of August), a month before my scheduled start date of data collection. Owing to heavy rains, my meeting with SPARC was the only appointment that came through. I had my first meeting with the Director of SPARC on the 8th of August 2002. She restated her fears and apprehensions about the research and guided me to meet the Associate Director, whom I later
understood was SPARC’s official ‘gatekeeper’. The Associate Director had reservations about the utility of the research to the NGO. I was, however, given the opportunity to convince her about the usefulness of the research to the NGO. I used my weeklong visit to Mumbai to achieve two other objectives: a) a first interview with the Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC) at its headquarters in South Mumbai for the position of a research consultant; and b) finding a safe and affordable accommodation.

Source of funding, a critical tool for gaining entry

With funds I had at my disposal, I could only afford six months of data collection. I had applied to grant foundations (the American Association of University Women and the Aspen Institute)\(^\text{30}\) for funding my dissertation research but by the time I set foot in India, I had not heard back from them. Finding a job was therefore critical to extending my data collection time by another six months. Prior to heading to the US for my doctoral studies in 1999, I had worked with HDFC\(^\text{31}\) (from 1996-1998) as well as the Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited in its department for Community Development (HUDCO for a few months).\(^\text{32}\) The relations established in the course of my work with

\(^{30}\) While collecting data, I also applied to the American Institute of Indian Studies.

\(^{31}\) As part of HDFC, I had worked with a fledgling not-for-profit Micro-Finance Institution called the Indian Association for Savings and Credit (IASC). In August 1996, when I joined HDFC, IASC was about to be registered as a joint venture between HDFC and a rural NGO called the Palmyrah Workers’ Development Society. I was hired as the venture’s field-level liaison and was also given the responsibility of formulating a business plan. I worked with them from 1996 to 1998. This was my first job after completing my Masters in Social Work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in 1996.

\(^{32}\) The two prominent national level players in housing finance in India are HUDCO and HDFC. HUDCO is a national public sector housing finance agency set up in 1970 and HDFC is a private sector financial company that was set up in 1977. The two have offices across a majority of states in India. Their respective policies towards financing the housing needs of the urban poor (most of which is through NGOs) are a critical factor in influencing the nature and scale of NGO activity in housing.
HDFC led me to approach them once again. While discussing my research plans with HDFC, I was asked to work on a monograph documenting HDFC’s experiences with the development sector over 25 years of its existence. I joined HDFC on the 26th of August 2002 after signing a yearlong contract. I worked as a research consultant with its three-person team called the Development Finance Division. Over the years, HDFC had worked with many NGOs in Mumbai (including NGOs that participated in my research) and elsewhere in the country. My work involved documenting projects financed by HDFC and recording the Company’s experiences in financing urban and rural housing projects, disaster relief and rehabilitation efforts, micro finance initiatives and grants made to NGOs and other development agencies. I conducted several interviews with personnel in HDFC and NGOs. The work also gave me access to several project related files and facilitated understanding many NGOs working to house those living in slum and squatter settlements as well as those in villages in rural India. All of this was an unexpected and valuable bonus.

My own housing struggle

Having taken care of sources to fund my research, I had to look for a roof over my head. Getting a safe accommodation was constrained by the requirements of my field research. I anticipated that my time in the field would keep me away in the slums and pavements until late at night. My experience informed me that a majority of community meetings, whether coordinated by the NGO or by slum and pavement dwellers themselves, are held

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33 The members of the Development Finance division are part of a larger department called the Technical Services Department, whose five member staff evaluates, finances, and monitors developer-driven projects.
at night. I wanted to observe the NGO in ‘action’ with the client communities. It is after a full day of work that residents have the time to attend meetings or to participate in interviews and group discussions. Hostels (dorms) typically require that the resident return within a certain time frame. Residence in a working women’s hostel was ruled out. SPARC and YUVA extended help by way of referring me to paying-guest rooms but their suggestions were beyond my budget. My struggle to find a residence in Mumbai was the cause of long chats in SPARC – women in SPARC identified with my struggle. This got me closer to them on a personal level but SPARC took a lot longer to accept my research agenda. Finally, in desperation, I took up residence in Bandra, christened the ‘queen of Mumbai’s suburbs,’ as a paying-guest at the residence of someone known to my family. The location was very convenient and I stayed there for a month but then eased out of the arrangement, as it proved extremely burdensome on my meager budget and erratic work hours. Besides, I was denied access to the kitchen. This led me to a frantic search for other accommodation. Friends and family helped locate a hostel in Andheri, further northwards into Mumbai’s suburbs, which was relatively more understanding of my working hours and served breakfast and dinner in its cafeteria. My struggle to find accommodation and a source of regular meals was an oft-repeated

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34 These are relatively popular means of residence for students, airhostesses, and those in the city on short, work-related assignments. Homeowners rent out a single room with an attached bath and one has to typically make ones own arrangements for food, laundry and the like (though the amount of services vary and reflect on the monthly rent demanded of the guests). One could shop for such homes using rental agencies that charge a brokerage both to the lessee and the owner. I spent several hours during my weeklong visit hunting for a room with the help of someone familiar with the locality of Bandra. He was a friend of the family and spent his work-hours taking me from one home to the other. Nothing quite seemed reasonable or safe. Bandra was a preferred location as I have an Aunt who lives in the area. She was and continues to be my mentor and guide to the city of Mumbai ever since I knew the city while doing my Masters. Her home served as my home away from home! During the months devoted to data collection, I spent several weekends in her home to unwind, elaborate on my field notes, and prepare for interviews. Last, but never the least, I relished many a home cooked meal at her home!

35 Out of a total of eighteen full-time staff in SPARC, thirteen are women. These include the Director, Associate Director, Financial Manager, Researcher and Administrator among others.
narrative in my conversations with slum and pavement dwellers. I couldn’t dare compare my search for housing with theirs but it gave us something to talk about whenever I had to tell my part of the story about how I located an affordable and safe roof in the city. Many reacted saying that things would’ve been a lot easier had I considered staying with them!

Final selection of NGOs

I dropped Apnalaya and Bandra East Community Center from my list of probable NGOs because, by September and before I could follow-up with them, I had decided to include SPARC, NHSS and YUVA. In retrospect, the following criteria guided a purpose-driven selection of SPARC, YUVA, and NHSS:

1. SPARC and self

In 1990, HDFC sanctioned a housing loan to two cooperative housing societies of slum dwellers. SPARC was the facilitator for the cooperative housing societies and was additionally responsible for collecting loan repayments from slum dwellers. As the mediating NGO, SPARC had defaulted in its repayments to HDFC in both these housing projects. This had somewhat soured relations between the two. In HDFC we were convinced that being its first urban housing project for the poor, the experience must find reference in the monograph. I organized a telephone interview with SPARC’s Associate Director who served as Project Coordinator in the early 1990s. Despite the apparent conflict of interest, I decided to conduct the interview assuring her that the HDFC-related conversation was solely focused on SPARC’s interaction with HDFC and information

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36 Interview with Senior General Manager, Technical Services, HDFC, Mumbai; and, Assistant Manager, HDFC, Mumbai (Interview held on the 9th July 2003 with the former and on 23rd June 2003 with the latter. Both these interviews were conducted in HDFC’s headoffice in Churchgate, Mumbai).
gathered in the process, would not be used towards my dissertation research without her informed consent.\textsuperscript{37} My association with HDFC did not promise to make my entry into SPARC any easier.

I persisted in sending emails and making phone calls to SPARC expressing my continued interest in including it in my dissertation research. When my efforts yielded no results, I informed SPARC that I was willing to help them with some of their documentation work. An arrangement with them finally came through after I was called for a meeting with the Associate Director and an Advisor to SPARC on the 14\textsuperscript{th} of November 2002. They were keen that I document SPARC’s work with women savings and credit groups (a micro-credit impact assessment) and also wanted help with evaluating their ongoing efforts at rehabilitating railway slum dwellers. I accepted the offer. Within a weeks’ time, SPARC got back to me stating that the Director wanted to meet with me to discuss my research and that the entire team wanted to hear my research plans in the format of an oral presentation. At the conclusion of my presentation, I was told that SPARC would participate in my proposed study but it was not willing to have me attend its meetings with government agencies.\textsuperscript{38} Moreover, SPARC’s requirements of me shifted from documenting savings and credit groups and railway slum resettlement work, to preparing

\textsuperscript{37} I make reference to SPARC’s work in these initial housing projects only to the extent that they were mentioned in the course of my key informant interviews with other members in SPARC, its partner agencies and members of the community. SPARC’s experience with HDFC, I later found, was critical in shaping SPARC’s comfort in dealing with HDFC (and other domestic housing finance agencies) and vice-versa.

\textsuperscript{38} It was in response to SPARC’s refusal to let me attend their meetings with government agencies that I reworked my agreement with SPARC to state: Alternately, perusal of recorded minutes of such meetings or a discussion of the outcome of such meetings as part of interviews with members (see Appendix F, section VI titled ‘Procedures’).
case studies of six housing projects across the country.\textsuperscript{39} SPARC wanted my help in documenting the process history and the technical (statutory) history as well as each project’s financial requirements. The Director stated that SPARC was currently in the process of negotiating non-refundable loans for its many housing projects and wished to use the reports to negotiate for bridge funds and guarantees from banks and financial institutions. I was averse to committing for fear that I would not have sufficient time to fit SPARC’s requirements into my research and work-related schedules but I struck a deal that I would submit whatever I could by the end of my data collection stint in Mumbai. I signed an agreement with the Director of SPARC (see Appendix F).\textsuperscript{40} In response to her demands, I assured her that I would share my findings before submitting the final draft of my dissertation. Any objections that did not match my interpretations would be annexed to the dissertation. This helped address their anxiety over not getting sufficient room to counter the findings of academic research.

2. YUVA and self

As described earlier, my entry into YUVA was the starting point of my interest in this dissertation. My meeting with YUVA’s Founding Executive Director finally came through in mid-September. YUVA, too, wanted deliverables for the time I was to spend with its staff and client communities. The Director wanted me to document YUVA’s work with resettling and rehabilitating a slum community in northeast Mumbai called

\textsuperscript{39} Four of these housing projects were in Mumbai; one in the city of Bangalore in South India; and, two others in the neighboring cities of Pune and Sholapur in Maharashtra.

\textsuperscript{40} A general consent form as approved by the IRB at Virginia Tech was additionally shared and signed by informants prior to each of my first interviews with them. I paid a professional to translate the Informed Consent Form into Hindi. On occasion, I even tape-recorded the consent of select participants.
New Bhabrekar Nagar (see agreement with YUVA, Appendix E). Fortunately, Bhabrekar Nagar was a project that I had already chosen as a key turning point in YUVA’s housing history. My already existing and newly formed friendships with the staff at YUVA facilitated relatively easy access to project related files and other documents. In addition, among the three NGOs, YUVA was the only one with a library. I became a regular attendee of its internal staff meetings as well as meetings with the community. Besides, New Bhabrekar Nagar, I volunteered to document YUVA’s work with pavement communities and was approached to write a biography of its Founding Executive Director. All of this fitted relatively well with my own research agenda.

3. NHSS and self

My entry into NHSS took the longest time. None of NHSS’s leading members (its ‘strategists’) is a full-time worker (employee) of the NGO. They devote a relatively small proportion of their time ‘managing’ the NGO from their respective jobs. This made access to them, for an initial conversation, difficult. My first meeting with its Joint Convener at his office was arranged after many emails and phone calls. NHSS agreed to participate in the research. As was stated earlier in the chapter, NHSS was in the process of negotiating an arrangement with HDFC. It was keen that HDFC participate in assessing the financial feasibility of its resettlement and rehabilitation project with a private developer. This, surmised HDFC, was pursued to lend the controversial project with much-needed credibility in the media and among its own staff. The matter was

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41 Interview with Vice-President, NHSS en route from Juhu to NHSS’s Malad office, Mumbai on the 1st of December 2002.
under discussion. Realizing that my association with HDFC could be a conflict of interest, I consciously refrained from offering any inputs related to assessing financial feasibility of the scheme or other discussions within HDFC as regards NHSS.42,43

It took until the night of the 1st of December 2002 before I was introduced to the rest of NHSS’s staff and community workers. I was invited to a public meeting of nearly 100 slum dwellers who gathered in NHSS’s field office, home to the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre. I was not ‘formally’ introduced to the community but given assurance by two of NHSS’s strategists (the Vice-President and a member-journalist) that I could exercise full freedom in visiting their project sites and in speaking with members of the communities spread across various slums in the city. I became a regular fixture in their weekend meetings with staff and communities.

4. Government agencies and self

Similar to gaining access to NGO participants and records, I utilized each NGO and its client communities to direct me to departments and individuals in government

42 This was a role that I carefully and consciously planned with HDFC. Within a month of me joining HDFC, NHSS began negotiating with HDFC requesting HDFC to “share its views on the financial viability of the proposed scheme.” Knowing that HDFC’s dealings with NHSS held the potential to jeopardize my just-initiated relations with NHSS’ members (and more specifically, my research), HDFC did not give me any responsibility related to the project. Moreover, I did not have the capacity to financially appraise the project – a shortcoming known and recognized by HDFC. I was invited to be a participant observer in select meetings between HDFC and NHSS. HDFC withdrew from the project in January 2003.

43 The term “scheme” is not used in its pejorative connotation but, instead, is an officially accepted term applied to refer to the housing programs of slum redevelopment and slum rehabilitation. Hence, the slum redevelopment program is referred to as the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) and was succeeded by the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS). I explain details pertaining to these schemes (housing programs) in Chapter 5.
organizations. Each time a key government official and an associated department were identified, I would visit the government department and interview the identified official. I typically preceded each interview with a personalized letter to the concerned government official (Appendix D). Government officials interviewed primarily included senior State level bureaucrats, who are administrative heads of such State government agencies as the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA); the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA); the Mumbai Metropolitan and Regional Development Authority (MMRDA). I also interviewed relevant project heads within each such agency – such as officials administering the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (under MMRDA); or those in charge of specific aspects of NGO-government projects such as social development specialists, urban planners, engineers, architects.

Data Collection and Analysis

I find it difficult to segregate narration of my data collection experiences from explanation of how I analyzed the data. They were, for the most part, simultaneous endeavors. I therefore use this section not only to outline the nature of data collected but also address the manner in which I made sense of the data gathered during the twelve

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44 NGOs typically begin by dealing directly with administrative heads of the departments (bureaucrats drawn from the Indian Administrative Services). Once a working arrangement such as a specific contract takes off, NGOs also begin interacting with those down the chain of command. Therefore, those interviewed in government also included lower level staff such as engineers (in SRA), architects (in SPPL), community development workers (MUTP-MMRDA, MCGM), Officers on Special Duty with specific projects (MCGM), and some select Ward Officials (of the MCGM).

45 State departments typically have an administrative head and a political head. The CEO of the SRA for instance is answerable to the state Chief Minister, the highest elected official of the State. Similarly, the Vice-President and CEO of MHADA is answerable to the President, MHADA who is a political appointee.
months of my stay in Mumbai.⁴⁶ I used several different sources of evidence to examine the growth and development of housing-specific routines among the three participating NGOs. These include:

1) Semi-structured interviews with NGO members, former and current residents of slums and pavement settlements, and government participants:⁴⁷ Most of the data gathered stemmed from in-depth conversations with members of the NGOs and their client communities as they attended to their day-to-day activities. Since I rarely used a tape recorder, the conversational data are only as accurate as memory and ear allowed. I conducted in-depth interviews with approximately 40 members across the three participating NGOs; interviewed about 30 State and municipal government officials; and, had conversations and impromptu group interviews with nearly 100 community members in slum and squatter communities in which the NGOs worked.

2) Periodical (annual, monthly, semiannual) reports in NGOs and government departments.

3) Minutes of internal staff meetings (maintained by the selected NGOs and government departments) and minutes of meetings with government/NGO

⁴⁶ I was in Mumbai from August 2002 until August 2003 and made another week-long trip to Mumbai in July 2004. I needed to subject some of my data and tentative interpretations to another round of “member check” (Merriam 1998, 204). On this second visit, I met with NGO leaders, some of the NGO staff, and a few government officials. I also gathered some archival material from the TISS library and from the NGOs.

⁴⁷ I had planned to tape-record all my formal interviews with research participants. It took but one interview with the President of YUVA’s Governing Board for me to decide that tape-recording interviews was not going to be feasible. The tape recorder was more of a distraction than help. I deduced that the nature of details demanded of the research required lengthy conversations with people who would often say, “By the way, this is off the record.” Some members particularly the leaders of NGOs would request that I tape record the interviews so they could retain a copy for their own archives (SPARC). I tried transcribing the notes as soon as I found the time and a quiet place. Most such interview notes were taken in notebooks and notepads and were elaborated into detailed notes on my laptop.
officials. All of my documentary evidence was sourced from NGOs. I therefore would go back to government officials to confirm my interpretations of the course and content of events.48

4) Journal and newspaper articles: Out of the nine projects that are part of this study, two were the subject of frequently published articles in the local dailies (English, Marathi and Hindi dailies). All of these were recorded and their claims triangulated with organizational and community members.

5) Photographs, brochures, video recordings of events, life histories of organizational leaders, case studies/reports on specific projects, and recorded histories of the organizations,

6) Memos and letters exchanged within and between NGOs and government departments.

7) Participant observation of meetings between communities and each NGO, their donors, meetings with government officials, and internal NGO staff meetings. I was a participant observer in many NGO-community meetings and internal project staff meetings in NGOs. I observed a few meetings between NGOs and

48 The smaller of government departments were willing to talk about project specific details but would not let me access files. I had to request an organization head (e.g. the CEO of the SRA) to let me speak with officials responsible for a project. These officials would summarize details from their respective files or would sit with the files and read out to me what they perceived to be relevant details about the housing projects. Despite the awkwardness of the arrangement, it served my purpose well. Some of the details that were not part of records were generously shared in impromptu group and personal interviews with government and NGO officials. Some of the narrations were long, passionate, and were off-the-record details. I would stop taking notes when requested.
government officials\textsuperscript{49} and also convened a few NGO-community meetings (e.g. NHSS).

These multiple sources of evidence helped validate the data collected and also aided identification of “key events” in each NGO’s housing history. The research design is therefore built around the analysis of a sequence of key events. Each such key event can thus be considered a case study. Key events history, also called “social dramas” by Turner (1957), is a useful means to uncover the emergence and development of NGO-government relationships.\textsuperscript{50} Some of the advantages of collecting data and analyzing organizational history using ‘key events’ are:

a) Each key event (key housing intervention) served as a clear point of data collection, an important practical consideration when studying events, people, and processes over an extended period of time. I analyzed the NGOs and these key events over nearly two decades of their lifetime -- a “retrospective data collection” process from 1981 until July 2002 and “real-time data collection” from August 2002 to August 2003 (Pettigrew 1979, 571).

b) Each key housing intervention became an in-depth case study within an overall study of NGO-government relations. The process of writing these case studies began while I was in Mumbai.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{49} When feasible, I expanded on scribbled notes as soon as I left the field setting. Such notes comprised interpretations of what I observed, the conversations I engaged in, and also included expansion on archival material in possession of slum dwellers, NGOs, donors and government agencies.

\textsuperscript{50} The reasons listed above rely, in large part, on Pettigrew’s (1979, 571) articulation of the advantages of using “social dramas” as means to understating the development of organizational cultures.

\textsuperscript{51} Some of the case studies included as part of this dissertation began as reports to be submitted to the NGOs. As stated earlier, two of the NGOs (YUVA and SPARC) wanted me to write case studies for them in return for their willingness to participate in my research.
c) A longitudinal study of ‘dramas’ allowed sequential understanding of NGO history. It provided the consequence and the meaning in relation to various housing routines. For instance, I would have found it difficult to understand fully and convincingly explain the nature of challenges faced by NHSS in working in partnership with a private developer without understanding that NHSS, for most of its lifetime, confronted the state’s housing policy for tolerating private sector participation in slum housing. It afforded the opportunity to study continuous processes as opposed to examining organizations or their networks in a point in time.

As I began writing each case study and even as I was collecting data in Mumbai, I developed a chronology for each identified key intervention (a time line comprising smaller events within each key housing intervention). I used all the sources of evidence gathered, listed above, to develop each time line. This was useful because not only did it ensure that I triangulated, and therefore addressed internal validity, reliability and the generalizability concerns, but it also helped me to develop a “case study data base” (Yin 1994, 37) as a ready-resource which I could use to locate specific data during periods of intensive analysis.

The time line was useful during theory building: It facilitated breaking down the data into themes or main variables. For example, after several rounds of looking at the time line

52 Initially there were eleven identified key events. I brought these down to nine since the excluded two did not add anything new to my already emerging empirical and analytical findings.
53 Among the case studies covered in this dissertation, I attach a time-line for the three case studies in Chapter 4. Similar time-lines with details gathered from multiple sources, including archival material, interviews and site visits, were developed and used to describe the other key housing interventions detailed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.
(and a first draft of each case study), reflecting on it, triangulating and being skeptical about my first impressions about it, I began observing and noting predominant patterns in NGO-government interaction strategies. Towards this end, I found Najam’s (2000) classification of NGO-government relations\(^\text{54}\) a useful analytical tool to gain new depths and insights on the possibility that multiple NGO-GO interaction strategies are sequentially and, oftentimes, are simultaneously deployed (i.e., my first research argument). Such succession in NGO-government housing strategies, transcended specific cases and was applicable to all participating NGOs over the entire course of their observed lifetimes.

As I completed writing and analyzing each of the nine case studies, I took them back to the participants from whom they were derived. I shared all the case studies with the NGO participants asking them if my historical narration and the results were plausible.\(^\text{55}\) Additionally, I shared emerging interpretations with colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerged.\(^\text{56}\) As pointed out earlier, I have also periodically shared my conclusions with my mentor at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Dr. Amita Bhide.

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\(^{54}\) Najam (2000) classifies NGO-government relations on the basis of institutional interests. The resulting typologies consist of cooperation, confrontation, complementarity and cooptation – the Four Cs.

\(^{55}\) I typically shared the case study via email with the head of the NGO and requested that they be forwarded to all concerned staff for their review. Either the NGO heads themselves responded with detailed feedback or forwarded my request to project coordinators and board members for their comments. So far, I have received such feedback from YUVA (on all three case studies) and from NHSS (on the SGNP case study – see Chapter 6).

\(^{56}\) This was facilitated by a seven-member group of doctoral students in the Environmental Design and Planning Program at Virginia Tech. The getting-together was largely motivated by the advice of my dissertation advisor, Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim. We first convened in Spring 2004 and have, ever since, met every week or every other week to review each others’ research materials. This was an invaluable resource for support, feedback and friendship.
The nine case studies presented in this dissertation follow a consistent pattern of reporting. The lifetime of each of the three NGOs is divided into three phases -- from 1981-1999 (Chapter 4); from 1991-1999 (Chapter 5); and, from 1997-2003 (Chapter 6). This categorization roughly corresponds to periods of distinct state housing policies for slum and squatter residents of Mumbai. In each of the three empirical chapters, I anchor my narration to one key housing intervention in each NGO.57 Before delving into description of the NGO in the housing intervention, the chapter lays out the key theoretical and empirical contributions. This is followed by an explanation of critical policy developments during these years. I then begin describing the case (focusing on the NGO as it implements its housing agendas under an identified intervention) and follow the case description with analysis of the repertoire of tactics (identified routines typical of the NGO as it relates to a State agency) identified in the course of implementation. I repeat this process with each of the three NGOs.

The following chapter attempts to build a broad, conceptual framework that helps tie many of the key ideas into a framework for this dissertation. I then discuss literature relevant to that framework.

57 As indicated earlier, each of the nine key housing interventions, spread over a lifetime of these NGOs, was selected using multiple sources of evidence. Detailed examination of organizational archives, repeat conversations with NGO leaders and staff, with key government officials and with members of the slums and squatter communities helped organize my attention on key interventions. The choice of these housing-specific interventions of the NGOs were repeatedly confirmed and corroborated during the duration of my stay in Mumbai by members of the NGOs, concerned government officials and the intended beneficiaries of these interventions, namely, the slum and squatter residents.
2.1 INTRODUCTION

My analysis of advocacy NGOs raises a number of questions regarding the origins and evolution of interactions between NGOs and government organizations (GOs), specifically, among those engaged in slum and squatter housing. How is it that NGOs originally engaged in criticizing state housing policy and practices later transformed their core practices to working in cooperation with the state? Why did each NGO adopt cooperative strategies with the state at distinct points in its respective lifetime? Does such a shift in housing strategy—from confrontation to cooperation—imply erosion in an NGO’s ability to advocate for change in housing policy? More generally, what do such shifts portend for the dynamics of NGO-GO interactions in slum and squatter housing?

These observations are informed by two research questions that are central to this dissertation:

1. How do shifts in state housing policies influence the strategies pursued by advocacy NGOs in housing the poor?

2. What are the factors that influence the emergence and sustenance of NGO-government housing partnerships?
This chapter is organized around discussions of literature relevant to the three key findings of the dissertation that relate to: NGO-Government Interaction Styles, Limits to Institutional Isomorphism, and NGO Development Continuum. The findings build on and sometimes challenge theoretical and empirical postulates on the origins, growth and outcome of NGO-GO interaction. Before delving into the literature, I devote the following section to discussion of the idea of an “ecosystem.”

**2.2 DYNAMICS OF NGO-GO RELATIONS: A COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM**

I apply the analogy of an “ecosystem” in an effort to build a broad conceptual framework for understanding NGO-GO interactions over the lifetime of three participating NGOs. In a general sense, an “ecosystem” refers to organisms and the interconnected environment in which they function. The dictionary definitions of the term include “a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment” (Compact Oxford 2003). My usage of the term is solely intended to highlight the progressively complex nature of NGO-GO interactions in housing. Like a rainforest or a coral reef, the institutional environment of NGOs is posited as emerging and evolving from relatively less to more complex forms; from sparse to more densely populated; and, from low to higher degrees of interconnectedness between the components in its habitat. As an ecosystem evolves, over time, into a more interconnected system of organisms, so does the very composition of the species (the NGOs and the GOs and all other members in the housing field) that constitute it. In this section, I explain how organizational theory conceptualizes ecosystems and attempt to identify how an ecosystem perspective can be
a useful lens for understanding how an NGO environment is created, how it operates, and how it changes over time.

How does a forest, say a tropical rainforest, grow and evolve over time? To answer this question a popular response is the notion of “ecological succession.” Odum (1969, 263-264), who pioneered the concept of an ecosystem, described the process of ecological succession as follows:

As the ecosystem develops, subtle changes in the network of food chains may be expected. The manner in which organisms are linked together through food tends to be relatively simple and linear in the very early stages of succession as a consequence of low diversity. . . . In contrast, food chains become complex webs in mature stages. The time involved in an uninterrupted succession allows for increasingly intimate associations and reciprocal adaptations between plants and animals, which lead to the development of many mechanisms . . . such mechanisms, enable the biological community to maintain the large and complex organic structure that mitigates the perturbations of the physical environment.

Early ecologists such as Odum (1953) are known to have explained the progressive growth of an ecosystem towards complexity but are also identified with placing “equilibrium” as a core characteristic of their models. The idea that a system tends towards greater complexity and simultaneously towards more stable conditions, is the subject of considerable debate among ecologists. Since the 1970s, several “non equilibrium models” were presented with such central ideas as variability, resilience, persistence, resistance, sensitivity and surprise (Harrison 1979). This debate in ecological science is strikingly similar to debates that have shrouded the study of

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58 The idea of succession is commonly associated with Clements (1916 1-512) who explained how vegetative successions reach a “climax.”
organizations in relation to their environments. Scoones (1999) summarizes the
pervasiveness of the debate across a variety of different fields as follows:

In the past, social science debates have often taken a static, equilibrial
view of ecological systems, premised on assumptions about a balance of
nature. This has led to a framing of issues that has tended to ignore
questions of dynamics and variability across time and space, often
excluding from the analysis the key themes of uncertainty, dynamics, and
history. Such a selective view of ecological issues necessarily results in a
partial and limited social analysis. This in turn may result in the exclusion
of certain perspectives on ecological-social interactions that might be
derived from alternative readings of ecological and social theory.

For present purposes, I wish only to note that there are many parallels that this debate
shares with the history of the “conceptions of environments” on organizational life from
rational, natural to open systems perspectives (Scott 1998, 123-148).

Since about the 1950s, conceptions of environments have traveled the course from
viewing organizations as instruments designed to attain predetermined goals with
maximum efficiency (rational systems) and those driven by a concern to survive (natural
systems) to a more recent recognition as systems continually engaging in interchanges
with their environments (open systems). Each of these therefore provides contrasting
perspectives on how to analyze organizations. A number of analysts have, however,
attempted to combine the three perspectives “into more complex models of
organizations” (Scott 1998, 119). Many ecologists, like most organizational theorists,
seem to concur that a system moves towards greater complexity and interconnectedness.
The point of difference and debate centers on how these changes take place over time and
indeed, the scale (level of analysis) at which these changes should be observed.
I now turn to discussing how literatures on organizations conceptualize ecosystems. To help address this, I focus on three streams of organizational theory which share many of the ideas of ‘complexity,’ ‘succession,’ ‘diversity,’ ‘adaptations,’ and, others that find reference in ecosystem literature: population ecology, institutional theory and resource dependency. Before I delve into discussion of each of these strands of organizational theory, I briefly review the work of Emery and Trist (1965) whose evolutionary conception of environments resonates strongly with models of ecosystem development. Emery and Trist (1965, 21-32) were among the two most popular proponents of the idea that it was indeed possible to characterize the general direction of change taking place in the environments of organizations. They wrote (Emery and Trist 1965, 21):

A main problem in the study of organization change is that the environmental contexts in which organizations exists are themselves changing, at an increasing rate, and towards increasing complexity.

They classified environments into four “ideal types” based on how resources are distributed and how the extent to which organizations share the same territory are obliged to take into account the behavior of others: i) the *placid, randomized environments*, in which the “goals and noxients (‘goods’ and ‘bads’) are relatively unchanging in themselves and randomly distributed” (Emery and Trist 1965, 23). At this stage, a critical organizational property is that organizations “can exist adaptively as single and indeed quite small units”; ii) *placid, clustered environments* in which survival of the organization is linked with what an organization knows of its environment. Organizations

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59 A somewhat similar typology was forwarded by Warren (1967) who classified organizational context into social-choice context, coalitional context, federative context and a unitary context. The typology is based on the extent of inclusiveness in the decision making structure of an organization.
grow in size, becoming multiple and tending towards centralized control and coordination; iii) \textit{disturbed-reactive environment}, in which competitors try to improve their own chances by obstructing one another, each cognizant that the others are playing the same game. A key organizational characteristic is that control becomes more decentralized and stability would require “coming-to-terms between competitors” (Emery and Trist 1965, 24); and, iv) The fourth step comprises \textit{turbulent environments}, where “the turbulence results from the complexity and multiple character of the causal interconnexions” (Emery and Trist 1965, 29). At this fourth stage, individual organizations are unsuccessful in adapting merely through direct interactions and have to rely on connections with a far broader set of actors that populate the field. “The ‘ground’,“ as Emery and Trist (1965, 24) put it, “is in motion.”

These evolutionary models though generally accepted,\textsuperscript{60} “describe these developments rather than explain them” (Scott 1998, 146). It is at this juncture, that it would be useful to turn to the three dominant strands of theoretical perspectives on organizational-environmental theories - \textit{population ecology, resource dependency, and institutional theory} - which help understand the direction and more importantly, the content of the change in organizations.

Fundamental to \textit{population ecology} is the study of “populations” of organizations rather than individual organizations. Leading population ecologists include Hannan and Freeman (1977, 929-964) and Aldrich (1979). Drawing analogies between biological studies of plant and animal populations, Hannan and Freeman describe populations of

\textsuperscript{60} See Terreberry (1968).
organizations as “species” of organizations that share common genetic structures, a blueprint, comprising “formal structures,” “patterns of activity,” and a “normative order” (Hannan and Freeman 1977, 935). Population ecologists believe that there exist strong inertial pressures\(^\text{61}\) that constrain adaptation among species. These comprise constraints arising from inertial forces such as sunk costs, availability of information, internal politics, and an organization’s own history. Constraints arising from external forces comprise legal and fiscal barriers, access to information, claims of external legitimacy and the problem of collective rationality (i.e., a strategy that works for one organization may not work for others in the species). These inertial forces, according to population ecologists, account for the creation of variety, the selection of some forms over others, and the retention of such forms over time (Campbell 1969). Environments are therefore understood to select out weak organizations or organizational forms and replace them with new organizations or forms of organizations (Hannan and Freeman 1977; Carroll 1984).

But organizations do undergo change, “radical change,” sometimes even in their strategies and structures. But to change, they must overcome inertia. In describing inertia, Hannan and Freeman acknowledge that “organization changes of some kinds occur frequently and that organizations sometime even manage to make radical changes in strategies and structures” (Hannan and Freeman 1984, 149). However, it is under resource dependency perspectives that such concerns, over how individual organizations (in contrast with populations) adapt and work to improve chances of survival, become

\(^{61}\) Hannan and Freeman (1977) borrowed the concept of inertia from the work of two other organizational theorists, Burns and Stalker (1961) and Stinchcombe (1965).
The importance and the scarcity of a resource to an organization determines the extent of an organization’s dependency on its environment (Zald 1970; Wamsley and Zald 1973; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). In this perspective, organizations are viewed as active, not passive, in determining the course of events that shape their survival and growth. As a result, they are likely to deploy a host of strategies to increase the number and variety of linkages that help them secure their technical core while also enhancing legitimacy and support for their activities. Strategies that organizations deploy to actively shape their fate could range from bridging, bargaining, contracting, co-opting, and entering into strategic alliances, joint ventures, mergers, and partnerships.

A third perspective that is of particular relevance to our discussion of the emergence and evolution of NGO environments is the institutional perspective which, some assert, is “relatively silent” (Halliday et al. 1993, 515) on the analysis of organizational change but is critical to understanding the influence of legal and rule-based systems in which organizations are embedded. For institutional theorists, organizations are influenced by their environments but are primarily governed by socially constructed belief systems and normative rules. Leading institutional theorists include Meyer and Rowan (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983). The state, for instance, provides the context and the frame within which an NGO functions to house the urban poor and is a critical source for legitimating NGO change and behavior. “New Institutionalism” in organizational analysis asserts the importance of the state “as a major influence in the development of organizational forms” (Halliday et al 1993, 515) and in the process, understands change

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62 The resource dependency perspective applies to individual organizations as well as sets of organizations and an organizational field.

in organizations to be the result of their relative embeddedness in markets and the state. This suggests that in order to understand change in NGOs, it is important to understand the political economy in which they evolve.

This dissertation recognizes the many old, new, and often competing theories concerning organizations as they relate to their environments. I give particular attention to the interactions between two “species” in the ecosystem of slum and squatter housing in Mumbai, namely, NGOs and governmental organizations (Hannan and Freeman 1977, 935). This reductionism is necessitated by practical considerations. Yet, the dissertation is mindful that the direction and the content of NGO-GO interaction over time is determined by the actions of scores of other species including the political system (politicians at the State and national level), private market agents (builders and developers), western governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, and national funding agencies, and the intended beneficiaries, namely, slum and squatter communities. These species consistently emerge and are an integral part of the case narratives covered in this dissertation.

As NGOs journeyed through their formative years, in the 1980s, until the time that I last observed them, in 2003-2004, circumstances both internal and external have demanded taking greater cognizance of connections with other members in the field, particularly the state and the private for-profit players. NGOs that started work in slum and squatter housing using a predominantly confrontational strategy with the state eventually overcame their inertia and radically changed their strategies and structures to work with
the very actors they once unequivocally criticized. The evolution of NGO environments is, however, more nuanced and variegated than the label “from conflict to collaboration” (my dissertation title) or a typology of “placid” to “turbulent environments” (Emery and Trist 1965), might suggest. NGO-managed housing delivery is rife with diverse and distinct sets of struggles and constraints. This dissertation seeks to examine the strategies and tactics that NGOs use to manage these struggles and constraints, and in the process to construct and reconstruct boundaries across which they relate to the state. In sum, it is useful to examine NGO-GO relations as a dynamic ecosystem in three key respects:

1) The emergence and evolution of NGOs can better be understood as being a product of a broader political economy;
2) NGO-GO relations are made up of complex and interdependent struggles and interactions that change over time; and,
3) NGO activities are likely to grow in complexity over the course of their lifetimes.

I now review literature relevant to the dissertation’s three key findings.
2.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature is woven around three key research arguments of this dissertation related to: NGO-Government Relations; the concept of Institutional Isomorphism; and, NGO Development Continuum. In the process, I also identify and explain key concepts that appear through this dissertation. These include Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), NGO Advocacy, Strategy and Tactics, and Institutional Isomorphism, among others.

NGO-GO Relations

Following a tradition in most writings on NGOs, I begin this section with a definition of NGOs. I borrow the definition from Lewis (2001, 38) who describes NGOs as “a subset of third sector organizations concerned with development, human right and social change.” This is an insightful definition not only because it recognizes NGOs as members of a “distinct institutional sector” (Najam 2000, 378), the third sector, but also identifies the possibility: a) that there are all types of third sector or nongovernmental entities such as recreation clubs, music associations, ad hoc activist coalitions, social

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64 The connotation of NGOs has evolved in several different and diverse ways. As a result, the task of defining NGOs is wrought with confusions. For extensive discussions on the problems associated with defining and categorizing NGOs, see the works of Najam (1996); Vakil (1997); Lewis (2001).

65 The term third sector was coined by Levitt (1975) to refer to activist organizations that multiplied during the 1970s in the United States, causing Levitt to refer to them as “new organizations arisen to institutionalize this activism in order to tackle problems which for so many years were ignored by the other two sectors and generally tolerated by the rest of society?” (Levitt 1975, 7). The state is characterized as the first; the market, the second; and, the “residuum” (ibid. 49), the third sector. Building on this initial categorization, others such as Nerfin (1986) and Najam (1996; 2000) refer to the first, second and the third sector as the prince, the merchant, and the citizen respectively.

66 To start with, Lewis (2001, 37-38) accepts the wisdom of the ‘structural/operational definition’ of NGOs forwarded by Salamon and Anheier (1992a, 1992b) who define NGOs on the basis of five key characteristics which include: formal, private, nonprofit distributing, self-governing and voluntary. In the same chapter, Lewis also recognizes that the definition, though applicable to a wide universe of NGOs, is likely to exclude entities that resist formality or move from less to more formal/bureaucratic forms, later in their lifetimes.
movements, trade unions, street theater groups, and others that have likely predated the more recent revival in interest in nongovernmental entities; and, b) that NGOs may have their roots in informal, ad hoc associations or voluntary groups and, over time, drift towards more formal or bureaucratic organizational forms. The definition therefore recognizes the diverse and dynamic character of NGOs. In addition, describing them as a conceptually distinct sector alongside, instead of isolated from, the state and the market also identifies NGOs as occupying a space bounded with thin and often permeable boundaries. In conclusion to a chapter on “contexts, histories and relevant concepts,” Lewis (2001, 61) writes:

While it is clear that different parts of the world face very different relative profiles of state, market and civil society, it is important for NGOs to be seen not in isolation but as development actors alongside many others.

Moving to the specific aspect of NGO-government relations, the inevitability of interaction between the two has prompted construction of a fairly substantial number of typologies. Before I delve into description of some of the more well-known typologies, I discuss some dominant trends in literature on NGO-Government relations with a particular focus on its growth and evolution in India.

**NGO-GO Conflict, 1960-1989**

Literature from developing nations is rife with illustrations of NGO-GO confrontations (Bratton 1989; Fowler 1991; Blaney and Pasha 1993; Fisher 1998). Confrontations appear in a variety of different hues ranging from outright repression (led by the state)
and rivalry, to NGO-led policy defiance and opposition against the state apparatus. Perceptions among scholars vary on whether a predominantly confrontational relationship is beneficial to the larger goal of solving societal problems or not. Some scholars view confrontational relation in positive terms with NGOs playing a vital civil society function of a necessary “countervailing force” (Mackintosh 1992, 3), an antidote that contains “the power of the state through public scrutiny” (Diamond, 1994, 6), and a “watchdog on the state” (Nelson 1995, 41). Conventional wisdom in political science, public policy, and public administration values “conflict” on grounds that its converse - “collaboration” - is likely to lead to agency capture, co-optation of public policy goals, and result in the failure to protect fundamental rights and other policy values important to a democratic society (Weber 1998, xiv-xv).

Overt expression of discontent with prevailing state policies and practice are typically associated with human rights advocacy NGOs defined variously as “those that are primarily concerned with the defense of individual liberties against the state” (Hyden 1998, 29) or NGOs that “actively encouraged their beneficiaries to stand up to government in demanding their rights” (Smillie and Hailey 2001, 21). It is recognized that advocacy may persist across all relationship types. In fact, many scholars attach their

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67 Civil society is usually interpreted as the space occupied by institutional forms distinct from the state, family and the market and includes a wide range of group of organizations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organizations, community groups, women’s organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups. The emphasis on civil society was resurrected from a past that dates back (though significantly altered and grossly misunderstood) to the Roman, Hegelian, Marxist, and Gramscian interpretations of what is predominantly a Western notion of ‘civil society’ (The North-South Institute 1996, 2). In its renewed form, NGOs are believed to be important vehicles for realizing the goals entailed in a ‘civil society.’ This faith in NGOs as vehicles for greater democratization and as “mediating structures” (Berger and Neuhaus 1977) with their unique capacity to garner people’s participation has resulted in a significant rise in their number and type. This trend was described as the ‘global associational revolution’ (Salamon 1994, 1), a phrase widely quoted in civil society literature.
classification of NGO-state relations with the caveat that advocacy is a “function” and not a relationship type (e.g. Coston 1998, 364; Najam 2000, 391). In this dissertation, the cautionary note that NGOs can play an advocacy function in all types of relations - particularly, conflicting and cooperative relations - with the state is not lost; what was deemed essential in selecting the case NGOs was the simultaneous or sequential pursuit of advocacy across confrontational and cooperative NGO-GO strategies. Najam (2000) draws a distinction between activist and persuasive advocacy. Lewis (2001, 44-56) distinguishes between a radical and liberal view of civil society and associates each with two different forms of advocacy. The liberal, more dominant view of civil society is characterized by an emphasis on incremental reform (with careful negotiation, balance and harmony) and the radical view is associated with outright revolution. Edwards (1993) distinguishes between two forms of advocacy: the first seeks to influence global-level processes, structures and ideologies, and the second, is directed toward specific projects, policies and programs. The first type of advocacy relies on a huge base of support and is often confrontational and publicly critical (for example, of dominant neo-liberal ideologies) and is characterized by call for a fundamental change in lifestyle. The latter, similar to Lewis’s liberal view of civil society, is characterized by constructive dialogue with the object of reform and requires a certain level of expertise and practical experience in order to be taken seriously. Advocacy in this form is more likely to take place behind closed doors and is more cooperative than confrontational. In practice, however, the lines dividing various forms of advocacy are more blurred than is implied in these categorizations.
The role of NGOs as radical human rights advocates, in general, and of the rights of the poor, in particular, draws in large part from the ideas of “post-Marxist analysts” - mainly Antonio Gramsci (Hyden 1998, 26). Under this view, civil society is viewed as the “context” (Shaw 1994, 647) where power struggles are addressed and is additionally envisioned as a perennial force that works to blunt the power of the state to dominate social, economic, political and cultural life. But Gramsci saw in civil society the same possibility to dominate and exploit that one tends to attribute to the state. He therefore emphasized the need to inhibit the growth of such civil associations through social movements that raised their voices against “local, regional, racial, bureaucratic and other forms of domination” (Simon 1991, 74).

Though rarely couched in civil society or Gramscian terms (Blaney and Pasha 1993, 14), India from the 1960s to the early 1980s, witnessed the rise of many awareness-oriented NGOs alongside “new” social movements that positioned themselves in an oppositional role vis-à-vis the state (covered in detail in Chapter 3). Examples include the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha [Liberation of the region of Jharkhand movement], the All-India Assam Students’ Union, the Tamilnadu Agriculturalists’ Associations, and the Khedut Samaj of Gujarat [State level body of farmers], were all founded in the early 1970s. In addition

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68 Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) saw in civil society the same tendencies to dominate as he observed in the state. Gramsci grappled with Marx’s proposition that history ought to be interpreted as a social terrain, upon which the working class would become conscious of its struggle. Unlike this form of deterministic Marxism prevalent in Italy at the time, Gramsci found himself favorably leaning towards Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Subsequent to the outbreak of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the socialist movement was, according to Forgacs (1988, 19), deeply divided between those who believed in revolution and others who were in favor of a strategy of reforms. Gramsci believed in the former, “but vehemently rejected the idea that the overthrow of Fascism could be followed directly by the establishment of socialism” (Forgacs 1988, 24). While the militant overthrow of capitalistic bourgeoisie was successful in Russia, it has not seen equivalent success in the rest of the world. During his days in prison, Gramsci analyzed the reason behind the continued dominance of the Fascist regime in Italy. It is in this context that he deduced that the working class must build its own hegemony in civil society prior to taking power in the state.
was India’s most famous environmental movement, *Chipko*, and the organization of the ex-untouchables (called the *Dalit* movement) that were both initiated in the early 1970s.

After a period of pervasiveness of Gandhian and faith-based NGOs, most of which were involved in welfare and relief activities and received state support, this new breed of NGOs in India were christened actors of the “antagonistic” era (Sen 1999, 336)\(^{69}\) and popularly known as “action groups.” Some of these groups allied themselves with movements and others formed cadres that headed to the villages to organize peasants and the landless - often over wage or land struggles for the rural poor - against local elites. Many were also known to align themselves with leftist political parties (Fernandes 1985, 2). These action groups represented not only the “cynicism and frustration with established parties and political models” but were also products of “reformist trends in the world of funding agencies” (Omvedt 1993, 191). Two sets of NGO-led development approaches became popular during the 1960s and 1970s: One of these was the role NGOs in securing livelihoods through income generation projects and as harbingers of participatory technologies for sustainable development; and, the other set comprised the

\(^{69}\) This does not imply that NGOs of other persuasions ceased to exist. In fact, just as *action groups* were multiplying, the state continued supporting welfare oriented NGOs and welcomed their participation in relief work (Sen 1999, 337). Sen (ibid.) notes the prevalence of all types of NGOs including welfare oriented NGOs, indigenous NGOs formed by international NGOs, CBOs formed by other types of NGOs or by the local government, associations of corporate philanthropy, developmental NGOs formed by the state, along with Gandhian and religion-based NGOs. However, the 1960s and the 1970s were particularly known for NGOs (labeled action groups) with an anti-state orientation formed by roughly six categories of people comprising: a) disillusioned education, middle and lower middle class youth; b) officials of existing NGOs who were similarly dissatisfied with “modernization” projects and moved to including “empowerment” in their interventions with communities; c) followers of the Sarvodaya movement inspired by Gandhi; d) followers of the revolutionary Maoist-Leninist group who were subverted by Indira Gandhi’s administration; and, e) by those intellectuals of Marxist persuasion educated in the West; and, f) those influenced by Brazilian Paulo Freire’s (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* - ideology of attention to education, awareness building and conscientization as tools to equip communities to fight for their rights.
more radical of NGOs (the action groups)\textsuperscript{70} that engaged in “conscientization” work inspired by Freirian ideology of attention to education and awareness building as tools for social transformation (Freire 1972; 1995).

In a tentative economic and political climate of the early 1970s, there was substantial pressure upon leaders of NGOs (the action groups) to “become political.” Many NGO leaders joined the ranks of movements to dismantle what was popularly perceived as Indira Gandhi’s (Congress Party) authoritarian government at the Center. In reaction, in 1975, Indira Gandhi announced the imposition of a nation-wide Emergency. Many political leaders, activists and NGO leaders were imprisoned. Censorship on the media was imposed and the rights of citizens to move the courts for enforcement of certain fundamental rights were suspended. In a move to control NGOs and maintain surveillance on their activities, especially towards those that received foreign funding and engaged in grassroots “conscientization” efforts, the state passed the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act of 1976. Despite a new policy environment of general tolerance towards slums (the Slum Improvement Programme of 1971),\textsuperscript{71} the two-year long period of Emergency (from 1975 until 1977) also saw a spurt in incidents of large-

\textsuperscript{70} Many scholars are averse to the idea of likening action groups to NGOs and indeed social movements to NGOs (see Kudva 2004). However, in my analysis of the history of origins of select NGOs, I found the lines dividing the two – NGOs and action groups/social movements – to be blurred enough to warrant a degree of overlapping in my usage of the terms. Not only do the NGOs share many of the tactics used by social movement activists of the time but many of the founding members of the participating NGOs were active participants in ongoing movements and shared common agendas of setting up a movement demanding housing rights of slum and pavement dwellers in the city.

\textsuperscript{71} Please refer to chronological account of slum related schemes in Mumbai, Appendix H
scale, state-led acts of forced evictions of slums and squatter settlements (e.g. in Bombay\textsuperscript{72} and Delhi).

The primary subjects of this dissertation were born in this general milieu of state repression and control of NGOs, of public antagonism towards government policies and practices, and, the rise of “participation” (Ebrahim 2003, 38), “rights awareness” (Kudva 2004, 9) and “development from below” (Sanyal 1998, 72) in development discourse.

The three Mumbai-based NGOs all began work on a platform to defend the rights of the poor to retain residence within the city. The broad patterns and trends in NGO-GO relations underscored the way in which NGOs interacted with the State and municipal government housing agencies using confrontational tactics of mass mobilization, street protests, slogan shouting, film, street plays and lobbying the state through international, national, and city level advocacy campaigns, and by supporting and aligning themselves with federations of slum and squatter communities. NGO work largely centered on sensitizing public opinion towards state action and exerting pressure upon central and State authorities to reform housing policy. In a situation where no earlier practice of such a nature existed in the field of housing – both in urban and rural India – NGO-led advocacy helped position housing in public and political discourse, alongside health, education and environmental concerns (Patel 1993; YUVA 2004). The political economy of slum and squatter housing that shaped the rise of the NGOs, along with case studies of early housing interventions in three advocacy NGOs constitute the subject of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this dissertation, respectively.

\textsuperscript{72} I frequently refer to Mumbai as Bombay when I write of the city before 1995. It was in 1995 that the name was changed from Bombay to Mumbai.
In the narrative of evolving NGO-GO relations in post-independence India, NGO rise to prominence in the late 1980s was accompanied by a perceptible shift in NGO-GO relations from primarily confrontational to more cooperative housing strategies. Some refer to this as the phase of “increased state control” (Sen 1998, 340) while others refer to it as the period of “uneasy partnerships” (Kudva 2004). The following section is devoted to discussing these more recent trends characterized by the burgeoning use of alternative institutional arrangements that defy traditional “conflict theories” of state-NGO relations, particularly in slum and squatter housing.

NGO-GO Collaboration, 1989-present

More recently, the wisdom of NGO-GO confrontational relations has come under substantial criticism from scholars who fervently argue for “an alternative theory that sees government and the non-profit sector as potential partners and allies” (Salamon and Anheier 1996, 43). Scholars on the more cooperative side of the NGO-GO fence (Annis 1987, 129; Edwards and Hulme 1992, 16; Diamond 1994, 7; Sanyal 1997; Sinha and Commuri 1998) see the pursuit of a conscious, deliberate confrontational relationship with the state and market players as counterproductive. Sanyal (1997, 31) recommends that NGOs work closely with market and state institutions and that doing so would provide NGOs with access to resources controlled by dominant institutions without unduly sacrificing their “autonomy fetish” and adds:
Just as development does not trickle down from the top, pushed by the state alone, it cannot effervesce from the bottom, initiated by NGOs alone.

In their study of an NGO’s struggle against child labor in India, Sinha and Commuri (1998, 8) concluded that “NGOs need other organizations to pave the way (to support) its objectives . . . For an NGO’s strategy to succeed, it needs to depend upon a web of relationships with other institutions that support its goals.” Diamond (1994, 14) supports this view, arguing that societal autonomy, when carried to an extreme, may pose a threat to democratic development. Bratton (1990) points out that it is insufficient for a country’s NGO sector to increase its size by building up capacity; it is its size combined with its ability to interact with the state and market sectors that holds the key to achieving a significant multiplier effect on its own efforts. “Most NGOs,” notes Lewis (2001, 149), “realize that their impact will be limited unless they form wider links, with one important option being a link with government.”

These positive views of NGO-GO collaboration also accord considerable importance to local governance. Fisher (1992) opines that active interaction between local government institutions and NGOs is a key factor influencing the degree of benefits reaching the poor. The drive towards institutional pluralism and the hope that NGOs can contribute in multiple ways towards garnering citizen’s voices into development planning has, according to some, reduced the trend towards NGO isolationism (Clark 1995, 597; Sanyal and Mukhija 2001, 2043-2057; Riker 1995, 19; Johnson and Johnson 1990; Uphoff 1986). Though perceived as risky and controversial, this redirection has led to a significant number of NGOs interacting with governments at the local, regional, and at
times, the national level. This trend, from one of state domination of the policy arena to a more recent prescription of institutional pluralism, resonates in the history of housing policy initiatives in several developing countries which I discuss in detail below.

The history of housing policy initiatives shows a shift from a debate once dominated by state-provision of housing on the one hand and self-help housing on the other to a more recent discussion of a wide range of institutional arrangements. The dominance of the state over housing planning and implementation, in the form of slum clearance programs, was challenged by Turner (1967; 1968; 1972; 1976; 1978) and several others (Abrams, 1964; Mangin 1967; Perlman 1976) who criticized the state for evicting the poor without fulfilling the promise to provide them medium-rise apartments (under slum clearance). They suggested that it was time that the state vest control of the housing process in communities. In Turners’ view, self-help housing was a productive activity with potential for extensive long-term benefits to the poor and could function as a critical ingredient in a much broader developmental agenda to empower communities. In Turner’s school, therefore, the full value of a house was to be ascertained not just by its exchange value in the market but by including the use-value comprising its ability to generate satisfaction, a sense of pride and belonging for the household.

Turner’s idea was criticized by neo Marxists and dependency theorists such as Burgess (1978; 1985) who saw in self help the potential to perpetuate growth of capitalistic interests of accumulation and appropriation and an equally latent capacity to be used as a political pacifier intended to co-opt grass-roots opposition. Burgess (1978) referred to
Turner’s conception of housing as “petty commodity production” and argued that self-help was more about creation of market values than the purported creation of use values. Nevertheless, Turner’s ideas found their way into World Bank housing policy and took the shape of site and services and settlement upgrading programs under the guiding principles of affordability, cost recovery, and replicability (World Bank, 1972, 1974, 1975). The housing strategies entailed in sites and services and settlement upgrading programs, often couched in Turner’s self-help ideas, relied on the logic that if the government were to lay infrastructure, provide housing materials and also ensure legal tenure, the actual construction of homes could be incrementally financed and managed by the poor. A legal title was therefore considered a sufficient incentive both to induce community investments in housing as well as to serve as collateral to access finance from the formal housing market. However, as implied by the Marxists, implementation of the schemes were rife with managerial shortfalls, corruption, poor site selection, exclusion of the poorest and were, overall, successful in addressing only a very limited range of housing sector issues, “excluding mass shortages and systems malfunctioning in land, finance, and other aspects of formal sector housing markets” (Pugh 2001, 404). Referring to later research by several scholars (such as Doebele 1975; Payne 1982), Mukhija (2003, 6) points out that “indeed . . . [l]and markets are commodified and enterprising land developers [much more so than self-motivated communities] played a key role in developing squatter settlements.”

The 1980s witnessed adoption of ‘enabling strategy to housing’ with governments being exhorted to cease being providers of housing and to redirect their roles as enablers or
facilitators of the housing market as a whole (World Bank 1993; UNCHS 1996). By the late 1980s provision of housing to the urban poor began to be subsumed under efforts to liberalize developing economies. The decade of the 1980s also witnessed the emergence of ‘democratization’ as a key theme in development discourse worldwide (Sanyal and Mukhija 2001). Building on the twin discourse —of neo liberal economics and a call for democratization—the enabling strategy supported involvement of a range of different stakeholders as a necessary prerequisite to realize the strategy’s goal of reducing “institutional monopoly of government over the lives of the urban poor” (Sanyal and Mukhija 2001, 2043). The strategy was predicted to take the shape of partnerships among public agencies, the private for-profit sector, NGOs, and community based organizations (CBOS) (Adusumilli 1999, 17). Broadly stated, public agencies were expected to make land available for housing; the private sector, motivated by the promise of profits, was expected to contribute by way of financial equity; and, NGOs were to “mediate between communities, governments and private sector actors” (Payne 1999, 5).

Like in other policy arenas such as health, education, and agriculture, NGO involvement in housing delivery was justified on grounds that it would infuse the housing process with much-needed flexibility, commitment and cost effectiveness. NGOs are credited with their capacity to “build the networks of trust and reciprocity” (Boris 1999, 3), are perceived as relatively autonomous from political parties, are expected to be less bureaucratic and more innovative and flexible, and, function as a vital instrument for generating social capital and participation to allow democratic societies to function effectively (Putnam et al 1993; Gittel and Vidal 1998, 48-49; Mohan and Stokke 2000, 248). These and other factors have caused governments to seek non-governmental
organizations to deliver services to the poor, a role hitherto reserved for governments (Sanyal 1998, 75; Gordenker and Weiss 1997, 443).

Like governments of other developing countries, the Government of India heeded the advice of the World Bank, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) and other international funding agencies by rewording its housing policy in 1994 to express commitment towards an enabling housing agenda.

Overall, the involvement of NGOs in service delivery is hailed in NGO literature as a positive development. Their inclusion in delivery in cooperation with other institutional actors, it is believed, promises not just to infuse delivery with the positive attributes listed above but also provides NGOs an opportunity to expand their degree of influence in policy planning and implementation (Brinkerhoff 1999, 62). As a result, it is now common to see a much wider characterization of NGOs as playing a variety of roles - service deliverer, project manager, intermediary and spokesperson, information disseminator, dialogue promoter, and/or advocacy and lobbyist (Brinkerhoff 1999, 64). (Najam (1999) describes NGOs as “policy entrepreneurs” and puts forth four distinct roles that NGOs engage in as they travel through the “policy stream”: service providers, advocates, innovators and monitors. Others describe NGO as ladles for a global soup kitchen (Fowler 1995, 1), working as service providers and sub-contractors to the state, providing cost-efficient, innovative and targeted services that withdrawing states cannot, or refuse to, provide. Despite the bevy of positive narratives, doubts are beginning to be raised about NGO roles in service delivery, particularly with respect to

73 Kingdon (1984)
74 Ibid.
sustainability, capacity and accountability. I analyze some of these with reference to the NGOs that participated in this research.

Despite the ubiquity of the state in NGO-life, little research is devoted to analyzing how an NGO manages its various roles, particularly the twin roles of advocate (making the government do the right thing) and service-deliverer or collaborator. Very little research has focused on analyzing the everyday reality of NGO work, particularly in managing, relations with government agencies through shifting policy environments. What, for instance, do these shifts - from predominantly confrontational to cooperative relations with the state - signify for the housing strategies of participating NGOs? How do NGOs that were hitherto (until about the late 1980s) dissenters of state housing policy and practice, transform their core practices to work in cooperation with the state?

**NGO-GO Typologies: The Four Cs Framework**

In an effort to organize a vast array of ways in which NGOs relate to the state, several broad typologies have been proposed (Coston 1998; Young 1999; Commuri 1995). Najam (2000) concludes that despite the presence of many typologies, scholars have tended to look at NGO-government relations only from the perspective of one of the two sides [either the NGO or the government].” Commuri (1995), for instance, organizes relations along a continuum of government attitudes towards NGOs which range from supportive and facilitative to regulative and repressive. A noted exception is a typology forwarded by Young (1999) who classifies relations into supplementary, complementary, or adversarial styles taking into account both the government and the NGO. Najam
(2000, 382) proposed that there is need to build a “firm theoretical basis” applicable to interactions between NGOs and governments across the world. The theoretical framework must account for the fact that “the final shape of NGO-government relations is a function of decisions made by government as well as NGOs-something that too many scholars ignore.”

Towards this end, Najam proposed that it would be both realistic and rational to view NGOs and governments as actors that have their own individual preferences for strategies (means) that they choose to deploy in pursuing their respective goals (ends). As a result, relations between the two could span the spectrum of many possible interaction styles ranging from cooperation and co-optation to confrontation and complementarity. He refers to this as the “Four-C’s Model” based on a “theory of strategic institutional interests” and the model is depicted in Figure 2.1 below):

![Figure 2.1 The Four-C’s of NGO-Government Relations](image)

Source: Najam (2000, 383)

The relationship is *cooperative* when the government and NGO have similar goals and deploy similar means to achieve them. *Confrontation* on the other hand implies a
disparity in both goals as well as means. *Complementarity* and *Co-optation* are further likely situations with the former occurring when the government and the NGO want to achieve the same end but do not share the same strategies or means to achieve the goal. A relationship is co-optative when there is agreement over means or strategies but a disagreement over intended goals. Following Najam (2000), my analysis of NGO-Government relations recognizes an NGO as having its own emergent perception of its position and purpose vis-à-vis government policy.

But in contrast to Najam (2000), my analysis of NGO-Government housing strategies, focuses on the *tactics* used over the course of an intervention. In doing so, I draw from Oliver (1991) who chooses not to define tactics but implies that these comprise of a set of actions that collectively help define and identify a strategy. For instance, she describes a strategy of ‘compromise’ to be made up of such tactics as balancing, pacifying and bargaining. She develops a typology of strategic responses that organizations enact as a result of the institutional pressures towards conformity that are exerted on them (see Table 2.1).

*Table 2.1 Strategic Responses to Institutional Processes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquiesce</td>
<td>Habit, Imitate, Comply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>Balance, Pacify, Bargain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid</td>
<td>Conceal, Buffer, Escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defy</td>
<td>Dismiss, Challenge, Attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulate</td>
<td>Co-opt, Influence, Control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Oliver (1991, 152)
Unlike Oliver (1991) Najam’s (2000) framework does not draw a distinction between strategy and tactics. It confines categorization to comprise four types of relations between NGOs and government agencies. I use the concept of strategy and tactic to understand NGO-GO relations as follows:

*Strategy* is a term that has its origins in military science and is generally used to refer to what one does to counter a competitor’s actual or predicted moves. In the context of this dissertation, the term strategy is used to describe a “principal method to achieve the mission.”\(^{75}\) It therefore includes the notion of positioning and perspective. Position refers to the service or expertise offered by the NGO and perspective involves the values and ways of operating which come from a combination of experience, knowledge and dialogue.\(^{76}\) An NGO is therefore understood as having its own emergent perception of its position and purpose vis-à-vis government policy. The concept of strategy as applied to nonprofits is the subject of the works of Drucker (1992), Mintzberg (1994), and that of Smillie and Hailey (2001, 91-113).

I use the term *tactic* to operationalize the concept of organizational “strategy.”\(^{77}\) In other words, tactics are actual interventions (action-forms) that fall within the broad category of a strategy. For example, a strategy of confrontation may entail use of a variety of different tactics that range from challenging government’s action in a face-to-face meeting, to holding a public demonstration, or mobilizing a nation-wide campaign.

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\(^{75}\) Kelleher et al (1996, 63).

\(^{76}\) Ibid.

\(^{77}\) I introduce the term tactic primarily because the term “strategy” lends itself to a variety of different definitions and is described as an “elusive concept” (Pennings 1985, 1-34).
I find it useful to think collectively of NGO tactics and strategies as a “repertoire.” My usage of this term draws from the work of Tilly (1995, 42) who describes it as “a limited set of routines that are learned, shared, and acted out through a relatively deliberate process of choice. Repertoires are learned cultural creations. . .” (Tilly 1995, 42). At any given point in time, there typically exists a limited set of activities that organizations rely on and the activities chosen are characterized by a dominant approach used to promote change. Contentious repertoires, for instance, are described as “the established ways in which pairs of actors make and receive claims bearing on each other’s interests” (Tilly 1995, 43). Although contentious actors are always learning new action forms and adapting to changing circumstances, they do so within the wider context of a general repertoire, which remains relatively stable. The accepted term in social movement literature is “repertoires of action.” I use the term repertoire of tactics to imply the same thing, i.e., “established ways in which pairs of actors make and receive claims bearing on each other’s interests” (Tilly 1995, 43) and extend it to all kinds of tactics employed between NGOs and government organizations. The term “action” is therefore replaced with “tactics” to highlight the distinction between strategy and tactics.

In this dissertation, the Four Cs framework offered by Najam (along with the notion of tactics by Oliver (1991)) is used to analyze NGO-GO strategies and tactics in each of the nine key housing interventions. Multiple strategies are found to be deployed sequentially and, oftentimes, simultaneously. Thus, an examination of the strategies and tactics used by NGOs in a series of key interventions helps provide a robust explanation of their

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78 The dictionary meanings of the term repertoire consist of: “a list or supply of dramas, operas, pieces, or parts that a company or person is prepared to perform”; “the complete list or supply of skills, devices, or ingredients used in a particular field, occupation, or practice” (Merriam-Webster Online 2005).
interactions, thus building on simpler classifications necessary in taxonomies. This is demonstrated throughout the dissertation and is discussed, at length, in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

**Limits to Institutional Isomorphism**

As more and more NGOs shift from confrontational to more cooperative relations with the state, institutional theorists inform us that it would be reasonable to expect that organizations (NGOs) will become more homogeneous, or more similar in their “structure, culture and output” (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, 64). This is referred to as ‘isomorphism.’ Isomorphic processes are expected to take place in an “organizational field” defined as “a system of organizations operating in the same realm as defined both by relational linkages and by shared cultural rules and meaning systems” (Scott 1998, 129).

The three Mumbai-based NGOs operate in a single field along with other actors including for-profit market players, national and international housing finance institutions, the intended beneficiaries living in slum and squatter settlements. My analysis of isomorphic change among participating NGOs pays attention to both the means or processes (strategies and tactics) adopted by NGOs to carry out housing-specific activities as well as to the structure of NGOs as observed in organizational hierarchies, technologies, departments, positions and roles.

This distinction is influenced both by Meyer and Rowan (1977) on the one hand and by DiMaggio and Powell (1983), on the other. Even though both Meyer and Rowan (1977)
and DiMaggio and Powell (1983) propose that “by incorporating institutional rules within their own structures, organizations become more homogeneous, more similar in structure, over time;” these two sets of institutional theorists appear to emphasize different parts of isomorphic processes (Scott 1998, 212-213). Meyer and Rowan (1977) devote attention to the influence of homogeneity on the observable structures of organizations whereas, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) probe the different processes through which isomorphic change occurs and how each such process creates its own set of antecedents in organizations. Discussion of structural change is therefore complemented by discussion of “more subtle and less explicit imposition of organizational models on dependent organizations” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 151). I devote some time to discussing the differences as I see them in the works of Meyer and Rowan (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983).

In their influential article titled “Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony,” Meyer and Rowan (1977, 345-346) describe “the origins and elaboration of formal organizational structures” to be the outcome of rationalized myths “which make formal organizations both easier to create and more necessary.” These rationalized institutional myths take the form of such elements as professions, programs, and technologies which spread rapidly in modern society requiring participants to organize and reorganize along prescribed lines, thus leading to homogeneity in organizational structures. They elaborate stating that:

After all, the building blocks of organizations come to be littered around the societal landscape; it takes only a little entrepreneurial energy to assemble them into a structure. And because these building blocks are
considered proper, adequate, rational, and necessary, organizations must incorporate them to avoid illegitimacy.

They then propose that “as rationalizing institutional myths arise in existing domains of activity, extant organizations expand their formal structures so as to become isomorphic with these myths” (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 345). Such myths tend to be taken for granted as legitimate, often times irrespective of their impact on organizational activity. Negligence on the part of organizations to incorporate these myths in their structures could threaten the flow of resources and endanger an organization’s success and survival. Besides, serving as threats to resources and survival, marrying these myths to their structures also opens up opportunities for expansion by helping mobilize commitment from internal participants and external stakeholders. Meyer and Rowan (1977) discuss specific processes that generate rationalized myths of organizational structure and therefore isomorphism: relational networks, legal mandates, and leadership in organizations. First, they note that “as the relational networks in societies become dense and interconnected, increasing numbers of rationalized myths arise.” They provide the following example (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 347):

In modern societies the relational contexts of business organizations in a single industry are roughly similar from place to place. Under these conditions a particularly effective practice, occupational specialty, or principle of coordination can be codified into mythlike form. The laws, the educational and credentialing systems, and public opinion then make it necessary or advantageous for organizations to incorporate the new structures.

Second, Meyer and Rowan (1977, 347-348) identify how myths receive the sanction from legal mandates created and interpreted by legislative and judicial authorities:
The stronger the rational-legal order, the greater the extent to which rationalized rules and procedures and personnel become institutional requirements. New formal organizations emerge and extant organizations acquire new structural elements.

A third factor influencing the formation of rationalized myths of organizational structure and therefore processes that make organizations isomorphic with their institutional environments is the role of leadership. Aspects of leadership indicate that not only do organizations respond to changes in their institutional environments but play an active role in shaping their contexts. Powerful organizations force members in their relational networks to adapt to their own structures and relations. Furthermore, leading organizations also create new standards which in due course are propagated as institutionalized rules.

Throughout the article, the emphasis is on the impact of institutional environments on the structural features of the organization expressed as its impact on the labels of the organizational chart and its vocabulary (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 349). Isomorphism with an elaborated institutional environment effects organizations in three important ways: a) it causes organizations to decouple their structural subunits from each other and from activity. This is undertaken to buffer the organization from inconsistencies and anomalies that arise from technical activities. Meyer and Rowan cite the example of how organizations make their goals ambiguous or vacuous. Hospitals, for example, treat, not cure patients. Schools produce students, not learning. Formal structures therefore help buffer the anomalies generated in day-to-day activities; b) it causes them to begin maintaining face and creating an aura of confidence by relying on the confidence and
good faith of their internal and external constituents; and c) they seek to minimize inspection and evaluation by both internal managers and external constituents.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) build on the foundational work of Meyer and Rowan (1977) and in doing so extend discussion of isomorphism beyond analysis of rationalized myths and ceremonies and focus instead on how these myths and ceremonies arise. By focusing on processes that trigger isomorphic change, it becomes possible to “predict empirically which organizational fields will be most homogenous in structure, process, and behavior” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 154).79

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify three clusters of processes that produce isomorphic change in organizations:

1) Coercive isomorphism can be brought about when organizations adopt structures or procedures because they are compelled to do so. Through regulation, oversight, and funding relations, the state can push nonprofits and business firms towards greater levels of homogeneity;

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79 Towards this end, DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 154-156) develop a series of hypotheses that include organizational-level predictors and field-level predictors. The hypotheses developed at the organizational level include: a) The greater the dependence of an organization on another organization, the more similar it will become to that organization in structure, climate, and behavioral focus; b) The greater the centralization of organization A’s resource supply, the greater the extent to which organization A will change isomorphically to resemble the organizations on which it depends for resources; c) The more uncertain the relationship between means and ends, the greater the extent to which an organization will model itself after organizations it perceives to be successful; and, d) The more ambiguous the goals of an organization, the greater the extent to which the organization will model itself after organizations that it perceives to be successful.

Hypotheses at the field-level include: a) The greater the extent to which an organizational field is dependent upon a single (or even similar) source of support for vital resources, the higher the level of isomorphism; b) The greater the extent to which the organizations in a field transact with agencies of the state, the greater the extent of isomorphism in the field as a whole; c) The fewer the number of visible alternative organizational models in a field, the faster the rate of isomorphic change in that field; d) The greater the extent to which technologies are uncertain or goals are ambiguous within a field, the greater the rate of isomorphic change.
2) *Mimetic isomorphism* takes place when organizations *mimic* what is perceived as a successful model, or a more legitimate practice. This often occurs because of uncertainty regarding how to achieve a desired end or when there is ambiguity about the end itself; and,

3) *Normative isomorphism* emerges from shared cognitive maps (Hall and Taylor 1996, 949). In a certain profession, participants across the domain develop a common means to interpret solutions to a problem.

In practice, as noted by DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 150), the three types of isomorphic pressures coalesce in less predictable ways and are therefore far less distinct than is implied in their typology. In outlining the subtle yet significant distinction in how Meyer and Rowan (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell (1988) treat isomorphism, I have attempted to highlight that isomorphic change processes can be observed not merely through examination of structural features of organizations but manifest themselves in internal decision making processes and behavioral features as well.

In this dissertation, I do not analyze the housing field as a whole but instead focus on individual NGOs as they relate to governmental agencies. As such, the dissertation’s findings pertaining to isomorphic processes cannot speak in detail to the nature and content of the isomorphic change processes. Analysis of such change processes is limited to those observed in NGO strategies and decisions vis-à-vis the state. Analysis of the three housing NGOs in this dissertation reveals a few isomorphic processes among NGOs. For instance, when state housing policy context in the 1990s made it possible and
financially attractive for NGOs to engage in housing delivery, even NGOs seemingly embedded in confrontational tactics began reorienting their primary strategies to facilitate smoother and efficient cooperation with the state. There was an element of normative pressure upon NGOs to engage in delivery and many began (consciously or otherwise) mimicking the now fairly common tactic of hiring a former government bureaucrat to help manage delivery related responsibilities. While Meyer and Rowan (1977) may observe these changes at the structural level and point to how the organizational chart of most of these NGOs appear to have a new personnel in the organizational hierarchy, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) might, instead, focus on the conditions that shape the origin of similar practices across NGOs.

Discussing the mechanisms by which isomorphic change occurs in organizational fields opens up a much wider field of inquiry on change processes in organizations. Leiter (2005, 1), for example, devotes an entire article to discussing whether “nonprofit organizations (NPOs) resemble one another structurally? If they do, why, and with what implications? If they do not, why not, and again, what are the implications?” Leiter (2005, 5-6) notes that nonprofit organizations could be expected to resemble one another because: a) Nonprofits are perceived to be highly dependent upon their funding sources and are therefore the subject of coercive isomorphic pressures; b) The mission of nonprofit entities is often unclear, and the means to achieve these missions are, more often than not, in a state of flux. They are therefore vulnerable to mimetic isomorphism; and, c) Professional and other expert advice, such as those from private consultants who suggest strategic reorientation and reordering is increasingly available to nonprofits. Such
expert advice may originate from universities, donors, international conferences and exchange visits, government agencies, and nonprofit trustees and managers who are increasingly professionally trained; hence, normative isomorphism should contribute to similarity among nonprofits.

However, minute examinations\textsuperscript{80} of internal institutional processes in the three NGOs reveals greater heterogeneity than homogeneity. This argument is developed in Chapter 6. This argument of organizational diversity even in response to the same institutional environment is the subject of the work of several nonprofit scholars briefly reviewed here.\textsuperscript{81} Leiter (2005, 6-7)) found that “isomorphism among nonprofits is . . . hardly a forgone conclusion.” He directs readers to the works of Skoldberg (1991) who found heterogeneity to be the result of variations in the internal workings of nonprofit, their contexts and components. Similarly Scheid-Cook (1992) and Lune and Martinez (1999) found nonprofits to be “enacting” their environments in response to legal mandates (Weick 1979, 164). The notion of enactment means that not only do organizational members selectively perceive their environments but also directly influence their environments through their own actions. Barman (2002, 1191) shows that “nonprofits differentiate themselves when facing a crowded market.” Barman argues that:

\begin{quote}
Differentiation occurs when nonprofits work to convince other actors that they, rather than their competitors, deserve resources. They seek to assert
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{80} This is a level of analysis referred to as microinstitutionalism. Zucker (1991, 105) draws attention to the fact that most explanations of institutional environments have concentrated on macroinstitutionalism without paying cognizance to the “direct investigation of transmission and maintenance processes” which have potential to yield “insights into the variability of organizations’ strategic responses to similar institutional environments.”

\textsuperscript{81} In organizing this brief review, I rely almost exclusively upon the set of literature reviewed by Leiter (2005, 1-31).
uniqueness and superiority over their rivals by constructing a hierarchical relationship between themselves and others.

Peyrot (1991, 20) argues that organizations located in complex institutional environments who must deal with conflicting demands from their constituencies, could adopt “a chameleon strategy.” Like Meyer and Rowan’s concept of “symbolic adaptation,” Peyrot (1991, 20) found that by “decoupling of presentations from technical activity, ideology is used to establish and maintain institutional sponsorship, leaving consumer-oriented services unconstrained.” Steane (2001), in a study of Australian nonprofit boards of directors, argued that values, ideology, and board composition ought to slow or prevent nonprofit isomorphism. He argued that heterogeneity in these factors, which is much greater in nonprofits than in for-profits, could be expected to produce substantial variation in nonprofit practices. In discussing his findings from 93 randomly selected Australian employment organizations, Leiter (2005, 26-27) questions the suitability of the nonprofit sector as the appropriate field within which isomorphism is produced. Contrary to DiMaggio and Powell’s assertions, it is very likely that nonprofit organizations “are less dependent, less subject to uncertainty, and less enmeshed in networks of experts than many believe.” Furthermore, nonprofit leaders could be pursuing other forms of strategic adaptations in order to adjust to their institutional environments (see Table 2.2, Oliver, 1991).

My analysis of the work of three advocacy NGOs in Mumbai reveals two factors that limit the possibility of uniformity in NGO-GO strategies and tactics and therefore challenges the notion of institutional isomorphism: Path Dependency and Variability in
Resource Environments. Path dependence implies institutional persistence and suggests that institutional arrangements are not flexible; they cannot change rapidly in response to disturbances in the environment (Skowronek 1982; Krasner 1984). Path dependent processes make it difficult for organizations to explore alternative options. New forms and ways of doing things do arise but are typically described as processes wrought with constraints – a major one being the embeddedness of the organization in its founding conditions (including founding values, technologies, knowledge and other supporting structures and resources) (Westney 1987; Romanelli 1991). Chapter 6 of the dissertation is devoted to a detailed analysis of the three NGOs and the extent to which isomorphism is apparent in their efforts to cooperate with the state.

**NGO Development Continuum**

In an influential article titled “Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centered Development,” David Korten (1987) suggested that the “programmatic strategies” of NGOs could be divided into relatively distinct generational orientations. In the article, Korten proposed a model of organizational evolution in which NGOs were depicted as organizations traveling through a series of stages – from relief and welfare and local self-reliance to sustainable systems development activities; from purportedly less to more sophisticated development strategies.

Korten (1987, 147) begins explanation of his generational model with the important caveat: that given the wide variety and diversity in NGO purposes and experiences, they “defy attempts at precise classification.” Yet he suggests that “there is an underlying direction of movement that makes it appropriate to label these orientations as first,
second, and third generation” (Korten 1987, 147). Likening generational strategies to the life cycle of a human family where new generations begin to live alongside older ones (rather than replace older ones as suggested in the usage of the term in the computer field), Korten (1987, 147) argues that:

As individual NGOs have grown in sophistication regarding the nature of development and the potentials of their own roles, many have undertaken increasingly effective strategies involving longer time perspectives, broadened definitions of the development problem, increased attention to issues of public policy, and a shift from exclusively operational to more catalytic roles.

I explore this model and its related arguments in greater detail below.

This model was developed from Korten’s then decade-long experience of working in Asia with such official donor agencies as the Ford Foundation, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and later with NGOs in Asia (Korten 1987, 145).82

In his analysis of “leadership and life-cycles,” Lewis (2001, 88-93) reminds his readers that the concept of life cycle was first applied to the study of organizations by Griener in the 1970s. Griener applied the analogy of human life cycles to explain structural changes in organizations. He divided the lifetime of an organization into five stages: entrepreneurial, collectivity, delegation, formalization and collaboration phases. In Greiner’s typology each organizational phase is characterized by an archetypal leadership style, and change from one stage to the other is triggered by a grave crisis that threatens organizational survival.

82 Also see web-site [http://www.davidkorten.org/] accessed on May 26 2005.
The evolutionary model proposed by Korten (1987, 155), draws on Greiner’s emphasis on leadership styles and is based on “strategic competence” as a measure of an NGO’s (and the leader’s) ability “to position its resources to achieve its objective within a complex and dynamic setting.” A first generation intervention is conceived as relatively simple and straightforward demanding “little in the way of strategic competence” (pp. 155). Several large international NGOs such as Catholic Relief Services, CARE, Save the Children, and World Vision and such national NGOs as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) in Bangladesh began work by providing relief to victims of floods, famines and war but contributed “little or nothing to the ability of the poor, whether countries or individuals, to meet their own needs on a sustained basis” (Korten 1987, 148). They served such immediate needs by way of “direct action such as the distribution of food, the fielding of health teams, and the provision of shelter – all funded by private contributions” (Korten 1987, 148). The relationship is characterized by a high level of clientele dependence on the NGO and its resources. Korten describes such NGOs as doing little more than temporarily alleviating the obvious symptoms of underdevelopment and demand just one organizational competency, namely, “the ability to identify population of people who lack the goods or services the NGO is prepared to offer” and “the rest is primarily logistics” (Korten 1987, 155).

A second generation strategy emerged in the 1970s when “NGOs undertook community development style projects in areas such as preventive health, improved farming practices, local infrastructure, and other community development activities” (Korten 1987, 148). These second generation NGOs typically work with the state to improve service delivery and operate on a small, near insignificant scale of a village or a
neighborhood. Like the first generation NGOs, the “small-scale self-reliant local development” activities of second generation NGOs are typecast to fall considerably short of addressing the root causes of developmental problems. According to Korten (1987, 148), a second generation NGO activity parallels those of the government, “but are defended on the grounds that the government services are inadequate in the villages in which the NGO works.”

It is only NGOs operating in the third generational strategy that, at long last, begin addressing real, broader systemic issues. At the time that Korten (Korten, 1987, 149) wrote this article, he observed that “currently segments of the NGO community are again engaged in re-examination of basic strategic issues relating to sustainability, breath of impact, and recurrent cost recovery.” In this phase, an NGO’s “focus is on facilitating sustainable changes . . . on a regional or even national basis” (Korten 1987, 149). The focus now shifts to policy and institutional reforms requiring NGOs to interact with a host of different public and private sector organizations including local and national governments, private enterprises, other independent sector institutions, etc. An NGO’s success is based “on skillfully positioning the NGOs’ resources in relation to the target system” (Korten 1987, 149). Korten wrote:

The more fully the NGO embraces third generation program strategies, the more it will find itself working in a catalytic, foundation-like role rather than an operational service-delivery role — directing its attention to facilitating development by other organizations, both public and private, of the capacities, linkages and commitments required to address designated needs on a sustained basis.
Korten (1987, 149) highlights that such a three-generational classification may not apply to an entire NGO but is more applicable to specific programs in an NGO. He elaborates as follows:

A given NGO may find that one of its programs is characterized by a third generation orientation, whereas others may be dominantly first or second generation – each responding to different needs. . . . In any given setting it is most likely that the needs addressed by the different strategies will be met by different NGOs representing different purposes, constituencies, and competencies.

The article has received favorable attention over the years (Bratton 1989, 569-587; Bebbington and Farrington 1993, 199-220; Vakil 1997, 2057-2070; Coston 1998, 358-382; Mitlin 2001, 151-173; Brown et al 2002, 814-838; Goodhand 2002, 841; Hackenberg and Hackenberg 2004, 385-399). Subsequent to his 1987 article, Korten (1990, 113-132) published yet another generational model titled the “Strategies of Development-Oriented NGOs: Four Generations.” In it, he introduces a fourth generation of NGO strategies and described the evolution as follows: The first generation NGOs evolved into second, third and fourth generation NGOs. The first generation NGOs were primarily “doers” that undertook relief and welfare activities and subsequently (in the late 1970s) evolved into “mobilisers” involved in local self-reliance and community development (empowerment or human resource development) type activities during the second generation. These second generation NGOs then evolved to working as “catalysts” undertaking sustainable systems development during the mid-1980s.83 The fourth generation NGOs comprise “loosely defined networks of people and

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83 To highlight third generation NGO strategies, Korten (1990, 120-121) sites examples of NGOs operating in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India. The Indian example sites the Samakhya and the Multi-
organizations” which see NGOs as activists or educators and demands that NGOs coalesce and energize self-managing networks of people and organizations at the national or the global scale.

This gradation of NGO methodologies also resulted in a few other such lifecycle models such as the one presented by Avina (1993). Avina uses the metaphor of a lifecycle to develop what he refers to as “An Indicative Continuum of NGO Methodologies.” He argues that NGOs exhibit different characteristics during different stages of their evolution—start-up, expansion, consolidation and close-out.

Korten’s thesis, though widely cited, has come under some criticism by those who posit that it is both normatively simplistic and unfair to the diversity of NGO competencies (Smillie and Hailey 2001, 6):

If an NGO wants to be a welfare organization, what is wrong with that? If it wants to provide ‘service delivery’, what is wrong with that? . . . Some are large and mature and have not moved, nor are they expected to move, from ‘first generation’ to two and three . . . some may move, but many will not. This does not invalidate their success in their chosen field, nor does it invalidate the lessons they may have to teach about management.

In an oft-ignored response to criticisms such as these, Korten (1990, 129) indicated that:

[E]ach generation meets an important need and has its place within the NGO family, much as the generations in a human family. I have not, however, given up using the generational terminology. In truth I am partial [emphasis in the original]. I do believe that the future of development, perhaps of global society, depends on many more VOs [Voluntary Organizations] engaging boldly and effectively in the third and fourth generation type strategies.

Coops Association which “carried out an extensive state and national campaign involving use of the courts, media, lobbying and public demonstrations to force the Government of Andhra Pradesh State to restore free elections to cooperatives throughout the state.”
In support of Korten’s thesis, I find that the housing specific activities of the NGOs are indeed analogous to a human life cycle. Furthermore, similar to Korten’s analysis, NGOs that participated in this research were also found to evolve from less to more complex levels of interactions with a host of different actors in the housing field. My analysis of the three NGOs demonstrates that circumstances, both internal and external to the NGO, have demanded taking greater cognizance of connections with other members in the field, particularly the state and the private for-profit players.

My analysis of three advocacy NGOs in the city of Mumbai extends Korten’s three generational typology to apply to the arena of housing and critiques it in two important ways: In contrast to Korten’s (1987; 1990) thesis, I find that: a) the three participating housing NGOs evolved in the opposite direction: from engagement in broader systemic change efforts to service delivery in cooperation with the state apparatus. Despite their continued principal opposition to the state housing policy environment and the obvious challenges and contradictions encountered between their project and institutional (NGO) objectives, NGOs appear to be engaging in less policy and institutional change efforts than those evidenced in their formative years. Internal and external pressures generated by relatively favorable changes in the provincial housing climate—from one dominated by state-led acts of forced evictions and clearances to that of slum redevelopment—appears to have limited NGO attention to provincial, project advocacy rather than the collaborative, system challenging activities witnessed in an NGO’s formative years; and, b) Unlike the simple “logistics” that Korten presumes in service-delivery type activities, I
found engagement service delivery to be a complex task requiring NGOs to incorporate a whole “new” and complex set of organizational capacities.

These two sets of arguments receive elaboration in Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

It is to be noted that this dissertation recognizes that service delivery receives a somewhat different treatment in Korten’s (1987; 1990) work. Korten describes “first generation” NGOs as those that began work in the development arena by undertaking relief and welfare related work in situations such as famines, floods, and wars. NGO work in service delivery as covered in this dissertation is not precisely equivalent to a response to a disaster or an emergency-like situation. NGO engagement in delivery is, nevertheless, a response to a dire and critical and, often times, urgent human need (for housing) and an institutional need (for legitimacy).

Summary

In summary, this dissertation analyzes the emergence, growth and evolution in the ecosystem of slum and squatter housing by focusing on two key ecological species of the housing field: NGOs and government housing agencies. I begin the dissertation by describing the ecosystem just prior to the emergence of the three participating NGOs. To do so, I begin by describing the political economy of Mumbai between 1950 and 1981 (Chapter 3). The three decades studied in this chapter are characterized by significant social and political upheavals in India and more specifically, in the city of Mumbai. The drama of these years set the stage for the creation of the three advocacy NGOs that were born with the common agenda of protecting the rights of the poor residing in the city. I
then dive into the first five years of their lifetime and analyze the emergence of the ecosystem from the view-point of the three participating NGOs, the State housing authorities and the intended beneficiaries of the interactions, namely, the slum and squatter dwellers (Chapter 4). During these years (from about 1981-1989), even though confrontation was a defining strategy used by a majority of the housing NGOs, I found them to also cooperate, complement and co-opt the state in efforts to establish new legitimacy with slum and squatter communities. However, the ecosystem is characterized by dispersed ecological species of NGOs, each using a distinct set of tactics and creating a unique niche in housing. More interestingly, the lowest common denominator in their housing strategies is strong disapproval of state housing policies. The state is vociferously labeled the central “problem” confronting their agendas to protect the housing rights of the poor.

The ecosystem shifted in structure in the 1990s (Chapter 5) when the state decided to open up the housing field to NGO and private sector participation. Some of these NGOs, in fact, helped open the field for their colleagues. This was a critical change in the housing policy environment for NGOs because not only was the “demonized” state assuring secure tenure for NGO-clientele but was even offering attractive financial incentives to both the clients and their benefactors, the NGOs. These developments created a flurry of activity in the housing field. Some NGOs strongly resisted the change, others burnt their fingers only to give up working in the new policy environment, and a third NGO chose to plunge into delivery and actively shaped and endorsed the housing agenda of the state. Those that questioned the merits of the new environment fell back on
their formative strategies of keeping a safe distance from the pressures of the delivery environment.

Further into the 1990s, when the state showed no signs of altering the policy framework, the two dissenting NGOs began to face substantial pressures from their clients and from their own staff to prove their new worth in delivery (Chapter 6). Those that had fought the state tooth and nail, decided to begin working with it. Thus an isomorphic pattern appeared, but only on the surface. On closer examination, each NGO was found to carry its own baggage of unique strengths and limitations that constrained or paved the way for closer interaction with the state. Nevertheless, the housing field is today a dense network of NGOs each negotiating with the state and host of other stakeholders to establish ever greater legitimacy in the housing field.
CHAPTER 3
THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SLUM HOUSING, 1950-1981:
LABOR MIGRATION AND SLUM POLICY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to narrate the history of the budding years of NGO involvement in housing without engaging in historical process tracing—a process that does not begin with an undisputed trigger event but a series of “social dramas” (Turner 1957) and “moral shocks” (Goodwin et al 2001, 16). One such “shock” in Bombay was the state-led slum and pavement demolitions of July 1981 (Panwalkar 1995, 124; Tata Institute of Social Sciences 2003, 4). In reaction to the massive drive of demolitions, a civil liberty group called the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) headed to the city court and obtained a temporary stay restraining the city and State governments from demolishing slums and pavements. An advocate with the PUCL recalled it as his first and single biggest achievement in defending the rights of pavement dwellers.  

This event marked the beginning of a key turning point in the history of slum and squatter housing, not just for the city of Bombay but for non-state actors across India who had been fighting slum and squatter evictions. This was among the foremost factors that triggered the rise of NGOs interested in addressing housing rights issues of the poor in the city of Bombay. This chapter sets the stage for the emergence of NGO activity by outlining the political economy of India and more specifically, Bombay. In describing the context, I focus on the political paradoxes leading to the years of internal Emergency.

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84 Interview with the advocate for PUCL and member NHSS, at his residence in Colaba, Mumbai on May 8, 2003.
in India (June 1975-January 1978) during which time, founding members of a majority of the participating NGOs actively participated in student unrest and uprisings. I then review literature that focuses on the political economy of the city of Bombay and the conditions that led to the increased visibility of the issue of slum and squatter settlements.

3.2 A CALL FOR “ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT”:
POLITICAL CLIMATE IN PRE-EMERGENCY INDIA, 1950-1974


The shift - from a “basic needs approach” to one of “participatory development” - was prompted by two key sets of factors. First, many centrally planned policies had failed to reach the poor. It became increasingly apparent that eliminating rural poverty, through agricultural development including providing basic services using the medium of large-scale irrigation and power projects, would require interventions beyond a policy entailing technology and financial transfers. Power structures ensured continuation of inequalities and control of assets and income by a small minority at the cost of a vast rural majority of India (Fernandes 1985, 16-17). A second impetus for the change came from
development activists themselves. In the 1970s and 1980s, the country saw the rise of many awareness-oriented NGOs alongside “new” social movements that positioned themselves in an oppositional role vis-à-vis the state demanding that citizen involvement and participation be a necessary precondition for any developmental effort (Omvedt 1993; Kudva 2004; Sen 1999). These were decades of extreme restlessness and extreme dissatisfaction with the way things were.”

It was therefore not a surprise when, using the campaign slogan of “Garibi Hatao” (eliminate poverty), Indira Gandhi led the Congress Party to a landslide victory in the national elections in 1971. India’s triumph in the war of 1971 against Pakistan and the explosion of a nuclear device in 1974 helped enhance Indira Gandhi’s reputation among middle-class Indians as a tough and shrewd political leader. However, by the end of 1973 much of north India was replete with angry demonstrations about high inflation, growing unemployment, severe drought and accompanying shortage of food and rampant corruption – all of which precipitated an economic crisis. For nearly three years, the country was “rocked by violence, student agitations, strikes, gheraos [blockades or encirclement], bandhs [boycotts], civil strife, calls for revolt and finally for revolution” Dhar (2000, 237).

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85 Interview with an Officer on Special Duty (OSD) with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (also called BMC), in Andheri, Mumbai on January 19, 2003.

86 Prior to the elections of 1971, the Congress Party suffered a split in 1969 caused by power struggles between the “older party bosses” (who are credited with having led India’s struggle for freedom from the British) and a “younger group of socialist radicals” (Frankel 1978, 389). The radicals offered their support to Indira Gandhi causing a split and the formation of the Congress (R) or Requisition led by Indira Gandhi. The older faction called themselves the Congress (O) or Organization. Congress (R) won the national general elections of 1971 capturing 43% of the total seats. The other political parties that contested the election included the Congress (O), the Jan Sangh (considered a quasi-fascist organization that used communal, populist and militarist styles), Swatantra (also considered a communal group), the SSP (Samyukta Socialist Party), PSP (Praja Socialist Party), the CPI (Communist Party of India), the CPM (Communist Party of India – Marxist), the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam), some independents and others.
Agitations started in the State of Gujarat in western India in 1972. At the time, Gujarat was reeling under severe drought and a rise in prices of essential commodities. The agitations ultimately resulted in bringing down the Congress Ministry and the dissolution of the State Assembly in Gujarat (Dhar 2000). The spark was lit, writes Frankel (1978, 424-525), when students of a college in the city of Ahmedabad protested against a hike in their mess charges (fee paid for food at the college canteen). The Chief Minister ordered riot police into the college campus leading to student arrests and several students being severely beaten (Frankel 1978). As a result, trade union organizations, white collar employees in State governments departments, all joined hands to protest police brutality and used this as a platform to voice many other grievances, most of which were related to price rises. Gauging an opportunity for political mileage, opposition parties such as the Bharatiya Jan Sangh and the Congress (O) supported the agitations against government failure to control prices and encouraged them to form the Nav Nirman Yuvak Samiti (Youth for Reconstruction Association) – a movement that spread to other parts of the country soon after the success of bringing down the government in Gujarat. The movement received the support of a Gandhian social worker, Jayaprakash Narayan, 88

87 The highest ranking elected political office of a State.
88 Jayaprakash Narayan appeared on the political map of India in 1934 when he along with Narendra Deva and other younger Congress intellectuals formed the Congress Socialist Party (CSP). The CSP drew heavily upon Marxist ideology. Complete independence from Great Britain and establishment of the Socialist Party were its two political goals. This finds extensive coverage and analysis in the work of Frankel (1978).

The collapse of the civil disobedience movement led by Gandhi in the early 1930s, convinced socialists inside Congress that class-based peasants’ and workers’ associations were necessary to a militant nationalist struggle. This idea while not overtly endorsed by Nehru, received his active support. In a series of articles called ‘Whither India?’ published in 1933 Nehru raised his concern over Gandhi’s conciliatory political tactics in the following words (Nehru 1933, 5-19): “We cannot escape having to answer the question, now or later, for the freedom of which class or classes in India are we especially striving for? Do we place the masses, the peasantry and workers, first, or some other small class at the head of our list? . . .
popularly referred to as JP. The uprising in Gujarat was a political watershed. It marked what Frankel (1978, 527) describes as the “collapse of shared consensus on [a] legitimate method of conflict resolution between government and opposition groups.”

JP believed that youth were historical agents of social change.  Similar to the student-led agitation in Gujarat, he led a movement in his home-State of Bihar in north India by announcing that the moment for ‘Sampurna Kranti’ (total revolution) had come. JP’s agenda for revolution included “all-round changes in the pattern of education, elimination of corruption in the government, checking the moral decline in public life, arousing public opinion against corrupt ministers and legislators, saving democracy from authoritarian trends, ushering in of basic electoral reforms . . . and building up of ‘people’s power’” (Chandra 2003, 44-45). The long-term goal of the revolution was the creation of a “communitarian society” and a partyless democracy much of which echoed Gandhi’s approach to village reconstruction but went a step further in that it asked for an all-encompassing “social, economic, political, moral and cultural revolution” (Chandra

If an indigenous government took the place of the foreign government and kept all the vested interests intact, this would not even be the shadow of freedom.”

Besides a patron in Nehru, JP’s CSP also gained an ally among communists affiliated to the Community Party of India (CPI), formed in 1925. Members of the CPI joined CSP’s ranks in 1934. Since its formation the CPI had organized peasants and workers to instigate demonstrations, strikes, and ultimately revolution (Frankel 1978, 54). CPI was banned in 1934 until 1942. It went underground but found Marxist sympathizers in the CSP. In 1935, JP established provincial kisan sabhas (farmer’s assembly) both in Bihar and the United Provinces – this soon gained national voice in the form of the All India Kisan Sabha. Led by the communists, the peasant movement adopted a radical anti-imperialist struggle. However, after the violence and bloodbath that followed the partition of India and the death of Gandhi in 1948, JP turned from an enthusiastic follower of Marx to a devout Gandhian. After Congress’s victory over the Socialists in the first general elections in 1951-1952, Nehru offered JP a position in his Cabinet but JP refused on account of Nehru’s refusal to accept JP’s fourteen-point program. This refusal won him many admirers across the country. Within two years, in 1954, JP announced that he was renouncing politics and joining Vinoba Bhave’s Sarvodaya movement. Sarvodaya was a nonviolent social revolution that asked larger landowners to contribute one-sixth of their holdings in bhoodan (land-gift) for distribution to the landless. In 1974, JP reentered politics as a response to the rise in corruption, steep rise in prices of essential commodities and high rates of unemployment but most importantly, to put an end to what he perceived as an undemocratic government led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

89 JP was influenced by several ideologies including Marxism, Socialism, Gandhism, and Sarvodaya.
Parties from the left and the right responded to the call. While Bihar and Gujarat remained the center of all the commotion, students and youth across large parts of India were drawn to the ideologies it claimed to represent. Massive rallies in Delhi (the nation’s capital) demonstrated support for JP’s agenda and the movement’s goals mobilized many from urban and town settings throughout northern India (Rudolph and Rudolph 1977, 837).90

3.3 THE RISE OF ‘NEW’ SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Besides the student agitation in Bihar, the year 1972 was also the year of the formation of several ‘new social movements’ in India (Omvedt 1993, 47). These are described as “new” because they “articulated conflicts over resources and other issues hitherto neglected by political organizations, and they are frequently autonomous of political parties, although some have formed alliances with voluntary organizations and nongovernmental organizations” (Routledge 1993, 17).91 Numerous important organizations were founded that year, including the Jarkhand Mukti Morcha, the All-India Assam Students Union, the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat and farmers’ organizations such as the Zamindari Union of Punjab, the Tamilnadu Agriculturalists’ Association, and the Khedut Samaj of Gujarat. India’s

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90 Among the many middle and upper middle class youth who were attracted to JP’s call was NHSS’s (one of the three case study NGOs) leading convener.

91 As I describe the rise of “new social movements” in India, I recognize that the term has different connotations in western societies. Scarpaci (1991, 119-120) describes such movements to comprise a variety of organizations that grew in the post-World War II period and “include feminist, ecological, regional or sexual minorities, anti-nuclear, and peace movements.” Citing Slater (1985), Scarpaci (1991, 120) identified these as new because “they respond to social developments in capitalist societies that cut broadly across class lines.” In the west, they are typically understood as movements that call for a fundamental change in lifestyles, the creation of collective identities and are distinct from traditional movements that focus on changes in policy or in economic relations.
famous environment movement, Chipko, too began the same year. The Sarvodaya movement led by JP became widespread and reached its peak in the mid-1970s. Youth Action Squads (Yuva Sangharsh Vahinis) were formed as an offshoot of the Sarvodaya movement – the main goal of which was to protest against Indira’s authoritarian rule. Sarvodaya however lost much of its steam by the end of the 1970s (Sen 1999, 337).

The experience with movements in India, most of which have originated in rural areas, show how different social movements, occurring within the same country, articulate dissent and create place-specific “terrains of resistance” (Routledge 1993, 35-38).92 A majority of these such as the Chipko, the Sarvodaya were non-violent in nature. The exception being the Naxalite movement that originated in West Bengal region of eastern India.93 The demand for social justice, class-less society, redistribution of land among the landless and cultural revolution, caught the fancy of the youth and, as a result, thousands of youth, denouncing what they called “theoretical education” headed to rural areas. Young men and women, typically university students, hoped that their involvement “in the life of the rural poor who have till now been neglected by all including political

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92 Routledge (1993, 36) describes a terrain of resistance as “an interwoven web of historical, political, cultural, economic, ecological, geographical, social and psychological conditions and relations – a site of contestation among differing beliefs, values and goals that are place-specific.”

93 The Naxalite movement was a Marxist-Leninist armed movement that was born in the northern Bengal region of eastern India called Naxalbari. The region was the scene of peasant agitation since 1959 and among the few movements in India to generate local leadership from among members of the tribal, low-caste, and Muslim peasant communities. Its organizers embraced communist ideology and concentrated on forming strong peasant associations. The Naxalites had the support of the Marxist political party, the CPI (M), for a short duration but separated in 1967. Vast portions of arable land in the Bengal region belonged to feudal landlords. These landlords (the zamindars) retained control over their holdings despite abolition of the zamindari system. They exercised undisputed power over tilling rights of all peasants. Most peasants had to work without wages to fulfill debt obligations and some others had to fulfill debt obligations of their ancestors and therefore, forced to work without pay. It was against this backdrop of exploitation that the peasants’ movement gained roots. Its main goal was to “liberate rural areas through revolutionary armed agrarian revolution and encircle cities, and finally, to liberate the cities and thus complete the revolution throughout the country” (Franda 1971, 173).
parties” would usher in a “new era of rural transformation” (Fernandes 1985, 1). These were called “action groups” that proliferated in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The Formation of Action Groups

The period of the 1960s and the 1970s not only saw the flight of a notable number of urban middle class students and professionals but an equally significant number of officials of NGOs to rural hinterlands in “search for new instruments of political action … when large vacuums in political space are emerging…in rural India” (Kothari, 1989, 45). From the time of India’s independence until the late 1950s, NGOs were well accepted in government circles as quintessential delivery channels for the State’s rural modernization projects. A sizeable proportion of the government budget during the First Five Year Plan (1951-1956) was earmarked for lending to NGOs active in khadi and village industries and those working to economically empower the rural poor. Such NGOs were also approached to assist government officials employed in development projects. For instance, the Ministry of Community Development involved Gandhian NGOs in organizing and conducting training programs for its extension workers. These NGOs do not neatly fit into what became known as “Public Service Contractors” or

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94 Interview at with member-journalist of the NHSS at his residence in Churchgate, Mumbai on 13th January 2003.
95 The explanation in this paragraph draws heavily upon the work of Sen (1999).
96 A frequently cited example is that of Aruna Roy (Fronda 1983, 90-107). An officer with the Indian Administrative Services (IAS) until 1974, Roy resigned from the IAS to join the Social Work and Research Center (SWRC) in Tilonia, Rajasthan, which was set up by her husband Sanjit ‘Bunker’ Roy. She worked at the SWRC until 1983 and then moved to Devdoondri in rural Rajasthan in 1990. She set up the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathana (Organization for the Empowerment of Workers and Peasants), a Grassroots’ Organization that has used processes of collective analysis and political action as a means of empowerment. Among its other achievements, the MKKS succeeded in getting the State of Rajasthan’s ‘Right to Information Bill’ passed.
97 Khadi is a coarse hand spun and woven cloth made of cotton. It was made popular by Gandhi who advocated the use of khadi instead of manufactured, imported fabrics, believing that its use would provide employment to many and make India self-sufficient eventually paving the way to ‘swaraj’ or self-rule.
“nonprofits for hire” (Smith and Lipsky 1993) but more or less fitted the bill as well-accepted arms of the government or what Sen (1999) describes as the beginnings of “attempts to create a shadow state”98.

Distressed and weary professionals typically from urban areas formed into Action Groups or what were also referred to as “non party political formations (Kothari 1984; Kothari 1989, 228) or ‘Grassroots’ Movements (Karat 1984, 25). After a period of pervasiveness of Gandhian and faith-based NGOs, this new breed of players were christened actors of the ‘antagonistic era’ (Sen 1999, 336). These action groups proliferated in rural India. Many of the Action Groups and movements “proposed traditional system of knowledge, ecologically sustainable economies and maintenance of local culture, all of which tend to stand in opposition to the changes wrought by modern development” (Routledge 1993, 1).

Action Groups of the 1960s and 1970s were an expression of not only the restlessness among youth over unemployment and rising prices but a more deep-seated disappointment over the inability of political parties to improve social and material conditions. They wanted to see a “radical change” through social action at the “micro-level” (Manohar n.d.).99 Tandon and Pandey (n.d.)100 also correlate the emergence of action groups to the failure of political parties but add another dimension by stating that it was the failure of political parties to take cognizance of large sections of the working

98 The term ‘shadow state’ was coined by Wolch (1990).
99 These is an undated reference to the work of Manohar in Roy (1985, 130-31). Viegas (1985, 160) also refers to action groups as working at the “micro-level”. 
100 Ibid.
class in the unorganized sectors that were rapidly growing in urban India, which led to the formation of action groups (Tandon and Pandey n.d.).

*The ‘City side’ of Rural India: Collective Action in Bombay*

As much of the narration above reveals, political power in India is closely linked to land ownership, which in turn parallels the local caste hierarchy. Reference to land and caste-class hierarchies in rural India have dominated description of any attempt at effecting change in social and economic relations in post-independent India. These are additionally identified as root causes for urban poverty. Studies on the origin of slum and pavement dwellers identify “landlessness,” “lack of employment in the native place [rural],” and property-related disputes with other family members, and “droughts, floods, cyclones, communal and caste riots” as critical factors that cause pavement and slum dwellers to migrate to cities such as Bombay (SPARC 1985, 20-21). However, what is considered important in the description that follows is to highlight an oft-ignored aspect of describing important factors that “pulled” a large number of slum and pavement dwellers to come to the city and “suffer” similar tensions. The character of the Indian economy, writes Chandavarkar (2003, 2), “has been widely perceived as essentially agrarian and historiographical concerns have largely reflected this perception . . . this concentration upon the agrarian economy has often excluded the interplay with the urban and industrial economy.” This section of the chapter will detail the growth of Bombay as the home for over five and a half million slum and squatter dwellers and briefly describe the emergence of various forms of collective action before concluding with the High Court’s temporary stay order against further demolitions and deportations issued in July 1981.

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101 Ibid.
The focus therefore is on explaining the tensions among land, labor and the poor residing in the city of Bombay.

**Labor Migration to Bombay**

Immigration to Bombay\(^{102}\) predated its nineteenth century industrialization. The urban pull on the hinterland did not raise an alarm in municipal corridors until the late nineteenth century. The pull was “only as strong as the work it could provide” (Masselos 1995, 31). The largest swarms of immigrants were almost entirely refugees – victims of a series of famines in Kutch, Kathiawar, and northern Gujarat in 1824/25,\(^{103}\) the Deccan famine of 1876-77 and famines of 1888/1889 (Masselos 1995, 29-41). Treated initially by the government and general public with suspicion and fear, the colonial government soon learnt that these new settlers weren’t the ‘types’\(^{104}\) who would carry arms and in fact tried gainfully employing many of them in public works programs and even built them huts. Some of Bombay’s early nineteenth century pavement dwellers became successful and wealthy. Not finding jobs, a fair number left the city in search of opportunities...

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\(^{102}\) The city of Bombay was formerly a cluster of seven islands, named by its original inhabitants, the native *Koli* fisher folk, after the goddess Mumba-Ai. The Portuguese acquired the islands in 1534 and named the harbor Bombiam (“beautiful bay”). The English then acquired Bombiam (and renamed in Bombay) from the Portuguese as part of Catherine Braganza’s dowry when she married Charles II in 1661. In 1698 the East India Company leased Bombay and adjoining hinterland from the British crown. Bombay was attractive for two reasons: its proximity to the port city of Surat in Gujarat (where the Company had an established trading station or “factory” for cotton trade and textile manufacture) as well as its “insularity which could ensure independence and security” (Kosambi 1986, 31). Much land has been reclaimed from the sea -- the reclamation process actually began in 1862 -- and the city is now a long finger-shaped isthmus (Source: Kosambi 1986, 30-31).

\(^{103}\) The victims of the famine were subjects of the then princely states (not part of British India). Refugees of the Deccan famine were mainly from the British districts of the state. Efforts were made to alleviate their situation by setting up relief camps. This process however also went hand in hand with measures to police them via strict vigilance over their movement around the city (Masselos 1995).

\(^{104}\) Masselos (1995) quotes from the recorded reply of a Stipendiary Magistrate which states that they were ‘a better class of people and have in most instances brought property with them.’
elsewhere. By the time another famine struck the Kathiawad region of Gujarat in 1888/89, government officials had begun to label refugees as “lazy and indolent beggars,” “a source of contagion and infection” and “foreigners and vagrants” (Masselos 1995, 41-52). Large-scale deportations were reported and so was a concerted effort on part of the Municipal government along with the government of Bombay105 to stop famine refugees at the borders of the State of Bombay. This was in direct contravention of the directives of the Famine Commission that disallowed deporting famine refugees from the city. To the city government, Bombay was open only to those who came to the city to work.

Colonial Bombay however left its doors wide open for those who came to work in its burgeoning textile mills. With the onset of the Industrial Revolution, British East India Company grew hungry for ever larger supplies of raw cotton from India (mainly Gujarat) to Britain and Europe, and Bombay served as an “excellent natural harbor” (Kosambi 1986, 32; van Wersch 1992, 9). The salience of Bombay as a cotton and textile-trading hub was fueled by the construction of railways between Bombay and Thane106 and the

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105 The history of British India is dominated by the British East India Company until 1858. The Company was incorporated in 1600 to set up trade on the mainland of India and in the Spice Islands (East Indies). The first trading post, known as a station or factory, was set up at Surat, a city on the western coast of India north of Bombay (it was then part of the Bombay Presidency) in around 1612 and a second factory at Fort St. George (Madras Presidency) in southern India in 1640. Another factory was set up in Calcutta in the East. After Indian independence in 1947, many princely states, including the state of Gujarat and the states of the Deccan were merged with the former Bombay province. In 1956, the state of Bombay expanded eastward to include the Marathi-speaking region, of Marathwada, in the state of Hyderabad; the Marathi speaking Vidarbha region of southern Madhya Pradesh; and, the Gujarati-speaking Saurashtra and Kutch. The southernmost, Kannada-speaking portion of Bombay state became part of the new linguistic state of Karnataka. Bombay state was partitioned into Gujarat and Maharashtra states on May 1, 1960. The present state of Maharashtra was thus formed on the basis of the common language of Marathi. Bombay (now Mumbai) city became the capital of the new state of Maharashtra (Kosambi 1986, 30-35; van Wersch 1992, 8-9; Desai 1995, 92-105).

106 Thane is an adjoining Municipality, located within the precincts of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (see Appendix AB).
opening up of the Suez Canal in 1869 (van Wersch 1992, 10). These developments helped reduce time taken to transport raw cotton from cotton-growing areas around Bombay and then to Britain. By the late nineteenth century, Bombay had become India’s most favored port, “a leading commercial and financial centre, the largest cotton market in Asia, and a nodal point for cotton piecegoods trade” (Chandavarkar 2003, 4). Bombay attracted a host of businessmen from across different parts of India who flocked into the city to make a fortune from the cotton boom. Entrepreneurs, who saw in Bombay the possibility of building a sizeable fortune, began investing in textile mills. A Parsi businessman, with the support of the British, built the first textile mill in 1854 in Central Bombay. By 1875, Bombay had 27 textile mills set up by other entrepreneurs, and the number of mills would grow to over 80 by the end of the nineteenth century (van Wersch 1992, 11). Textile manufacturing (most of which involved spinning of cotton yarn for export) took over as a major driving factor for Bombay’s growth in the decades following the mid-nineteenth century.

This spurt made Bombay, “a haven for migrants of all kinds, upper castes and deprived castes from Maharashtra now from the backward regions, as well as from other regional groups, from Punjab and other northern, eastern, and southern states” (Patel 2003a, 8). By the 1930s, half of the city’s population was economically dependent on its textile mills (Kooiman 1978, 6). In addition to its textile mills, were a host of forward and backward linkages with the dockyard, the railways, construction and other services like transport, energy, food processing, clothing – all of which grew and flourished with the booming cotton textile industry (D’Monte 2002, 75). However, by the 1920s, Japan emerged as a
formidable competitor in producing cheap cloth using modern machinery and Britain began to lag behind (van Wersch 1992, 15; D’Monte 2002, 76). The mill owners’ answer to increasing competition from Japan as well as from Pakistan and China was scouting the countryside for cheap labor, particularly weavers. Hungry for quick profits, there was little long-term planning and innovation in the industry. The period witnessed its first series of general strikes by textile workers in 1919 and 1920. Chandavarkar (2003, 5) describes Bombay during the decades of the 1920s and the 1930s as “the most dramatic centre of working-class political action.” In response to the strikes, wage concessions were made but no sooner than the Mill Owner’s Association relented to the demands for increased wages on behalf of owners, than the Great Depression dealt a severe blow to wages leading also to large-scale retrenchment and rationalization. Mill owners reduced earnings and this was to continue at the whim and fancy of individual mill owners.107

The increase in numbers of those that eked out a living from Mumbai’s textile mills grew despite strong pressures to modernize and rationalize. Between 1941 and 1971, two-thirds of the city’s residents were born outside the city (Patel 2003a, 8). Between 1941 and 1951, Bombay’s population grew as a result of a wartime economic boom and an influx of refugees from districts that are now a part of Pakistan. Rapid growth in mills

107 Big blows in wage earnings were typically followed by great strikes by mill workers. The strike of 1928 led to the rise of the communist Girni Kamgar Union. van Wersch (1992, 15) notes that “there had been earlier forms of organization of mill workers but the structure of those, founded by social reformers, was rather loose. … It was not before the communists came to dominate the labour scene that trade unions proper started taking root in Bombay.” Other strikes occurred in the 1933-34 strike and strikes in 1940, 1950, 1956, 1974, and then in 1981 (Anand 1982, 13). A majority of mill workers had rural origins. Periods of strikes that lasted for weeks and at other times for several months, saw workers leave the city to make ends meet in their villages. Their strong rural ties were of crucial significance to a low-wage-earning mill-worker’s ability to participate in frequent strikes.
was sustained by a large migration of mainly Marathi speaking workers from nearby rural hinterlands into the city. Most often, the male member of the family would work in the city, leaving the rest of the family in the village. These workers were initially accommodated in hostels. Eventually, chawls, structures typical of the central Bombay, were built by the City’s Improvement Trust or by mill owners or some times by private builders. However provision of housing for mill workers and the maintenance of chawls were among the last of priorities of mill owners and the City (D’Monte 2002, 75). Each room in a chawl, meant for about six men, was crowded by over a dozen or at times twenty to thirty of them. Chawls became tenements with full families crammed into single, tiny and often dingy rooms of less than 20 square meters in size.

According to Sharma (2000, 10), “after this initial attempt to house workers, nothing more was done.” According to D’Monte (2002, 75), “neither the government nor owners paid much attention to housing the workers.” By 1929, only a fifth of the city’s 64,000 mill workers were living in chawls and the remaining majority found shelter in zopadpattis (slums) on vacant lands (D’Monte 2002, 75). In a sample study of 150 rooms and huts in which mill workers from different mills in the city lived, van Wersch (1992, 310-315) found that three-quarters of the workers lived in a rented room which they shared with other workers or with their family and about a fifth of the workers owned the

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108 Interview at with member-journalist of the NHSS at his residence in Churchgate, Mumbai on 13th January 2003. Also interviews with two former mill-workers who are now employees of two case study NGOs: NHSS (on the 6th of April 2003) and YUVA (on 5th July 2003 at YUVA’s Parel office, Mumbai).

109 Chawls are typically three to four storey buildings with one room tenements. They consist of scores or even hundreds of rooms all opening on long corridors. Similar buildings were constructed by the Bombay Improvement Trust for dock workers and municipal workers as well as the police (Sharma 2000b, 9; D’Monte 2002, 75).

110 The Bombay City Improvement Trust was created on December 9, 1898, in response to the plague epidemic of 1896, through an Act of the Parliament. The Municipal Corporation of the city and the government handed over all vacant lands to this body.
place in which they lived. The rents paid were minimal and it was moreover common for a worker-lessee to sub-let his room to other workers and use this as a source of reasonable income. Still others, who did not find or could not afford residence in chawls and slums, squatted on pavements or besides railway tracks. They set up domicile wherever land was available and with whatever materials they could gather.

The textile backbone of Bombay declined soon after India’s independence and fell into steep decline in the 1970s. It was in the general backdrop of frequent wage cuts in the textile industry, retrenchment, poor working and living conditions, obsolete machinery and massive influx of migrants that the great Bombay textiles strike of 1982-83 occurred. There was also a simultaneous transfer of millwork into the unorganized, informal sector. According to a report prepared by a State level committee, growth of slums in the city “coincided with the city’s industrialization and today [1981] 70 percent

111 According to an article published by YUVA in the quarterly journal of the Committee for Right to Housing (1994, 9), a 36 square feet home in a slum costs between INR 5,000 to INR 10,000 while in the pavements, many have to pay INR 2,500 to local musclemen who control certain pavements. Five to fifteen percent of pavement dwellers are renters. They pay between INR 50 to INR 200 monthly for accommodation depending on the location of the pavement. In financial year 1994-95, one U.S. dollar was equivalent to 31.40 Indian Rupees.

112 It may be noted that the migrants included those in the city for reasons other than working for the textile mills. As stated earlier, work in the dockyard, the railways, in construction, and other services were among some other reasons that brought migrants to Bombay.

113 The most well-cited strike began on the 18th of January 1982 and lasted for eighteen and a half months. The strike was led by Dr. Datta Samant, a local trade union leader and a medical doctor by profession. He rose in popularity as a successful negotiator in disputes between management and labor in other industries. He was also a politician who formed an independent Party called the Kamgar Aghadi Party and also founded the Maharashtra Girni Kamgar Union. He provided new leadership to workers who had grown disillusioned and even upset with their official trade union, the Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (formed in 1947). Nearly 240,000 workers were involved in the 1982 strike. It was the biggest ever industrial action of its kind in the world. The strike eventually did not succeed and many mills were closed down and nearly 75,000 strikers lost their jobs (van Wersch 1995, 64). Also, see Pendse (1981) for details about Datta Samant and the growth of a militant trade union movement in Bombay.
of the slum dwellers have now been resident for ten years or more.”

A parallel trend was the growth of a significantly large informal economy. Between 1970s and 1980s, “there was an overall decline in manufacturing in Mumbai city (especially in the textile mills, where employment fell from 200,000 to 70,000)” (Sherlock 1996, L34). As a result, Sharma (2000a) notes that “thousands of redundant textile workers took to hawking after the closure of mills in the city” and, their “numbers continue to multiply.”

It is of particular significance in the context of this dissertation that the decline in the city’s textile base and the consequent restructuring of production in Bombay had profound effects on the city’s labor market. Starting in the 1970s, the city saw a rapid growth in those informally employed (Patel 2003a, 12). A majority of the city’s slum and pavement dwellers work in its informal sector and most of this work takes place within the precincts of slums and in the homes of those living on the city’s sidewalks (SPARC 1985; YUVA 1999a, 5). Newer industries such as the pharmaceuticals and chemicals inherited the position of primacy from textile mills as the city’s largest formal sector employers.

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114 There were an estimated 4.3 million slum dwellers in Mumbai in 1981. The total population of Greater Mumbai was 7.57 million and that of the Bombay Metropolitan Region stood at 9.58 million (Mukhija 2000, 47).


116 Panwalkar (1995, 122) notes that while in the early phase of industrial growth, slums tended to grow around the mills and other workplaces, more recently, “they come into existence wherever open spaces area available.” She estimates the number of those that work within the slum itself to be between 10 and 15 per cent.

117 YUVA (1999a) cites from a memorandum submitted to the MCGM by a Deshpande (no citation) which notes that: the number of those employed in the informal economy increased from one half of the total employment in 1961 to about two thirds in 1991 and that their numbers as a proportion of total employment continued to increase.
Although the municipal government had, by this time, begun providing a measure of services to the migrants, a majority of them had to depend on their own resources to manage their housing and other basic needs. The city expanded into various settlements, “on the one hand in deprived housing colonies, later called slums, and on the other, in colonies largely consisting of regional groups [from various States in India]” (Patel 2003a, 9). How did the state respond to the burgeoning rise in slum and pavement settlements in the city? I devote the following section to describing a series of State and central government housing policies between 1950 and 1981.

3.4 HOUSING POLICY CONTEXT: 1950-1981

Regulatory Structure of Housing

Before presenting a brief history of housing policy interventions in Bombay between 1950 until 1981, I begin by detailing the institutional framework governing planning and implementation of housing in India. After independence, in August 1947, India adopted a federal system of government. The structure of India’s federal or union form of government creates a strong central government. The State and local governments are subordinate to the Center and the three – the Central, State and Local – are governed by the constitution adopted in 1950.118 The constitution (seventh schedule of Article 246) determines the functional jurisdiction of each tier of government. The division of powers between the union government and the States is defined in three Lists: the Union List, the State List, and the Concurrent List. List I corresponds to the Union list and includes

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118The form of government adopted in post-independent India is an amalgam of the American (presidential) and British (parliamentary) patterns of representative government.
areas such as defense, foreign affairs, currency, income tax, excise duty, railways, shipping, posts and telegraphs, and others — all of which fall under the law-making powers of the Center. List II, also called the State list, includes areas such as public order, police, public health, communications, agriculture, lotteries, taxes on entertainment and wealth, sales tax and octroi, among others. Housing, urban development, and land is the functional preserve of the State government and appears in List II in the following words:

18. Land, that is to say, rights in or over land, land tenures including the relation of landlord and tenant, and the collection of rents; transfer and alienation of agricultural land; land improvement and agricultural loans; colonization.119

The Central government maintains the right to legislate on matters relating to housing, urban development and land since these appear in the List III, namely, the Concurrent list of the constitution. Both the Central and the State governments have the power to legislate on items appearing on this List and these include such aspects as criminal law and procedure, economic and social planning, electricity, marriage and divorce, price control, social security and social insurance, and trade unions, to name a few. Therefore while the central government issues directives and model legislation, it is up to the State government to adopt a suggested policy and legislation relating to housing. Local governments, on the other hand “can and do take initiatives but they are required to follow the framework established by the state government” (Mukhija 2003, 155).

For example, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, the city’s planning authority, frames the Development Control Regulations (comprising building codes and

regulations) but the plans and any amendments to it have to be approved by the State government’s Urban Development Department vide the Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act, 1966 (Government of Maharashtra 1991). Similarly, even though the Central government’s Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment suggests the broad legal and policy framework for “the process of slum development and improvement” in its draft of the National Slum Policy (Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment 1999, 1), it is up to the State government to adopt and implement the suggested policy objectives and guidelines for implementation. Nevertheless, as Mukhija (2003, 155) points out, “the central government can still play an active role at the city level. First, through various Acts of the central government such as the Urban Land Ceiling (and Regulation) Act, 1976 (Government of India 1976), and second, through its financial allocations in the Five-Year Plans.” In sum, the constitutional framework provides “mainly for coordination between the Center and the States rather than central control over State policies, programs, and administration,” including planning and implementation of housing (Frankel 1978, 82).

A Brief History of Slum Related Schemes: From Slum Clearance to Improvement

Until about the early 1950s, chawls, the multi-storey, one-room tenements were the primary means of shelter for the urban poor and slums did not emerge as a “major” problem (Sharma and Narendra 1993, 3-4). From 1943-1956, “the government of the then-existing Bombay State disbursed scanty grants to various municipal bodies for

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121 Some of the key slum-related government programs are chronologically organized in Appendix H.
122 As noted earlier, the poor level of maintenance and the extent of crowding in these chawls was so excessive that Chandavarkar (1994, 26) had noted: “Human excreta choked the open drains and the homes of workers were squalid; they were already weakened by their hot, ill-ventilated mills.”
improving unauthorized areas” (Panwalkar 1995, 123). In 1956, Bombay was taken up as one among six pilot cities under a Central government sponsored “Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Scheme.” The scheme’s objective was to demolish existing slums and replace these with medium-rise apartment housing on grounds that “the slums are a menace to the safety, health and morals of the inhabitants and is of imperative necessity that improvement in, and clearance of, the slum areas have be taken in hand immediately (Deopujari 1996).123 The State government was vested with powers to compulsorily acquire slum areas and redevelop them. Areas “unfit for human habitation or dangerous or injurious to health” were declared clearance areas and structures therein subject to demolition. ‘Slums’124 were defined under Section 3 of the Slums Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act, 1956 as areas where buildings: a) are in any respect unfit for human habitation; b) are by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light, sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors which are detrimental to safety, health and morals.125

Despite the lofty intentions of the scheme, “the pace of demolition exceeded the pace of redevelopment” (Tata Institute of Social Sciences 2003, 4). The government of Maharashtra passed the Maharashtra State Slum Improvement Act in 1963 to ensure

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123 This was noted in the “Statement of Objects” in the Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act, 1956 and is quoted in the preface of Deopujari (1996).
125 As per the Census of India (2001), the definition of a slum area is as follows: (i) All areas notified as ‘Slum’ by State/Local Government and UT (Union Territory) Administration under any Act; (ii) All areas recognized as ‘Slum’ by State/Local Government and UT Administration, which have not been formally notified as slum under any Act; and, (iii) A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities.
prompt action under the Central Government plan (Panwalkar 1995, 123). The intentions were commendable and the plans elaborate in that efforts were to be made to rehabilitate slum dwellers on existing sites or at nearby sites to ensure they were not uprooted from their areas of employment. The program was progressive for its times. But the efforts were soon watered down by the inability of the government (the City’s Municipal Corporation) to allocate necessary resources required of redevelopment and moreover, the pace of construction of subsidized housing could not keep pace with the rapidly increasing demand. The cost of construction too was on the rise and the high-rise homes were beyond the rent paying capacity of many slum dwellers. Most were forced to shift to far, inaccessible areas and were offered small pitches (usually 150-300 square feet) and no basic amenities such as water, drainage and electricity (Jha 1986, 23; Sharma 2000b, 12; Pendse 1995). Most of the cleared settlements were in South and Central Bombay (the city’s elite business and residential districts). Examples of slums that grew as a result of such repeat clearances include the growth of Dharavi, Asia’s largest slum, which was then located at the ‘far flung fringes’ (Sharma 2000b, 13). As communities were evicted and ‘dumped’ in the marshy lands of Dharavi, they gradually reclaimed land by dumping waste and soil.

The Municipal Corporation is also known to have acquired land in the eastern and northern most areas of the city to serve as resettlement colonies for slum and pavement

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126 Conversation with an Officer on Special Duty with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai on 24th February 2003 at his office in Ghatkopar, Mumbai.
dwellers. Residents were given assurance that the land now belonged to them and that this would be their permanent place of residence. Resettlement colonies such as these sprung up in the dozens during the 1950s (Jha 1986, 100-114). These were mostly distant and underdeveloped areas with no basic amenities in place at the time of allotment. Each demand for development in the city in the form of construction of a business house or a residential complex would therefore go hand in hand with evictions and movement of squatters and slum dwellers to distant suburbs.

India-wide, slum policy shifted gears from clearance and redevelopment to that of Slum Improvement in the early 1970s. In 1971, the Government of Maharashtra enacted the Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance, and Redevelopment) Act. The new Act was framed in line with the National Slum Clearance and Improvement Act of 1956 and empowered the State government to declare certain areas as slum colonies and provide these with basic amenities such as water, sanitation, roadways and drainage among others. The Maharashtra Slum Improvement Board Act 1973 provided for the creation of Slum Improvement Fund and Area Improvement Committees. Pockets of land across the city were declared “slum improvement areas” and slum dwellers were required to pay a service charge for provision of facilities to the municipal authority. By the time the

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127 Examples include the Janata Squatters Colony, a part of a large slum area in the suburb of Jogeshwari in Mumbai. In the early 1950s, the Municipal Corporation granted the evicted settlers, a legally binding title deed known as a Vacant Land Tenancy. The tenants were required to pay a monthly rent to the Corporation (YUVA 1999a, 7). Another example is that of Janata Colony in the northeast suburb of Mumbai which was first settled in the 1960s.

128 Improvement works included laying water mains, drains, sewers; provision of urinals, latrines, community baths and water taps; widening, realigning or paving existing roads, lanes and pathways and constructing new roads and lanes; providing street lighting; cutting, filling and landscaping the area, playgrounds, welfare and community centers, schools, dispensaries, hospitals, etc, demolishing obtrusive and dilapidated buildings, and so on.
Slum Improvement Board was set up in 1973, the scheme was severed of funds from the Centre requiring the State government to fund the scheme out of its own budgetary provisions (Panwalkar 1995, 123). The scheme ran into problems related to excessive tenement density (making it difficult and near impossible to carry out improvement works in the slums) and inadequate funding resulting in poor maintenance of amenities. Moreover, slums located on private and Central government lands were excluded. Nevertheless, after a prolonged period of adherence to a policy of slum clearance (without much resettlement), it seemed that an era of repeat demolitions had ended and another begun.

The year 1976, saw two new and significant developments. One of these was the first ever census of slums to be undertaken in the city of Bombay. The other was the passing of the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act of 1976. On January 4, 1976 a census of slums in the city was carried out under the sponsorship of the State government. It was a single day head counting operation with the help of 7,000 personnel covering hutments on Bombay Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra Housing Board and Government Land

129 India adopted the Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act (ULCRA), in February 1976. Narayanan (2003, 183-206) traces the growth of this controversial piece of regulation to the campaign documents and statements generated by the Congress Party from the early 1960s. The Party, as noted earlier, was keen on alleviating poverty through equitable distribution of land. Following the rabid demolitions that characterized the Emergency period, the Act is believed to have been used to soften the blow wielded on the urban poor (ibid. 185). The Acts’ stated purpose was to prevent concentration of large urban landholdings in the hands of a few, and the speculation and profit that this entailed (Government of India, 1976). The government could exercise its right to acquire landholdings from those other than the state who possessed vacant land in excess of a prescribed ceiling limit (500 square meters for a Category ‘A’ city and the Greater Mumbai region qualified as Category ‘A’). The acquired lands could subsequently either be used by government to build subsidized housing for the ‘weaker sections’ of populations, or resold to worthy recipients like cooperative housing societies, and to industrial and commercial complexes. In Bombay, for instance, only 213 hectares of the 1,360 hectares of land identified as surplus were acquired by the government (Das 2003, 223). The government has managed to build very few tenements on ULCRA land in Greater Mumbai.
(excluding slums on private lands and lands owned by the Central Government). Socio-economic data on slum settlements were collected and more significantly, householders were given identification cards (called photopasses) which they could in the future produce to authorities as evidence of their right to proper resettlement in the wake of displacement. The enumeration was not only carried out to maintain records but also as a means legitimately to collect what was known as compensation/license fee and service charges from each hutment. Their homes were numbered and circulars issued to concerned officials to keep an eye for any new structure or enlargement or conversion of use of the structure. Such changes, when reported, were to be ‘summarily demolished’ (Government of Maharashtra 1976). It was decided that slums which were in existence for a long time and which were improved and developed would not normally be demolished unless the land was required for a public purpose. In the event that the land was so required, the policy of the State Government was to provide alternative accommodation to the slum dwellers that possessed these identity cards (Government of Maharashtra 1976). All public lands vesting in Government, Maharashtra Housing Board, and the Municipal Corporation which were vacant and not required for specific public purposes in the immediate future were to be deposited with a “Land Bank” for resettlement and the position of a “Controller of Slums” was created for coordinating the effort.

A very haphazard census operation followed where, admittedly, a large number of slum dwellers and all pavement dwellers were left out. Some pavement dwellers who were erroneously counted and given identity cards were allocated small plots of land in a far-
off site in northwest Bombay. In and of itself, the census was a critical event for it symbolized the very first time that slum dwellers (and unintentionally some pavement dwellers) were given recognition in State records. The identity cards were issued to households who were in undisputed occupation of their structures at the time of the census. The card was to serve as a proof of domicile in the city and this was in turn also to serve as a cut-off date for a household’s eligibility to claim resettlement rights in the event of a demolition necessitated by a likely ‘public purpose’ project. This card did not, however, guarantee security of tenure to the slum dwellers.

The emergence and evolution of NGO-GO relations can be understood as being a product of a broader political economy. I have described the political economy of housing in Bombay from 1950 until 1981. The period was characterized by half-hearted attempts on the part of the state to address the housing needs of those living in its rapidly expanding population of slum and squatter dwellers. The period is particularly marked by the absence of NGOs interested in addressing the grave housing concerns of the city. Despite State managed policy developments, to improve settlements and enumerate slum dwellers, both of which suggested a move towards more humane and realistic policies towards slum and squatter settlements, a massive spate of demolitions began in Bombay

130 In July 1981 when government officers made an effort to ascertain the magnitude of the problem of evicting pavement dwellers, it was discovered that some persons occupying pavements, carried census cards of 1976. The government was obliged to resettle affected pavement dwellers on alternate site and Malvani was the chosen site. The alternate site provided to the displaced pavement-dwellers on the basis of the 1976 census, were deemed ineffective because “those sites are situated far away from the Malad Railway Station involving cost and time which are beyond their means. There are no facilities available at Malvani like schools and hospitals, which drives them back to the stranglehold of the city” (Olga Tellis & Others v. Bombay Municipal Corporation & others, July 10 1985).

131 In 1979, the World Bank began evincing interest in including Bombay as the site of its new approach to slums namely, slum upgradation. After a series of consultations, the state government inaugurated the Bombay Urban Development Project in January 1985. The project offered a 30-year renewable, leasehold tenure to cooperative societies of slum dwellers. Please see chronology presented in Appendix H.
July 1981. It was in this city level context that NGOs, stepped on to the stage with the objective of holding the state accountable for its decisions and actions. Few other cases portray the fervor of the times more suitably than the case demanding the right of pavement dwellers to retain residence within the city. This case, popularly called the Olga Tellis case, is the opening subject of the following chapter. The chapter then explains the formation and first key housing intervention of three advocacy NGOs in the city of Bombay.
CHAPTER 4
AGENDA BUILDING IN THREE HOUSING NGOs, 1981-1989

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Several broad typologies have been developed to examine NGO-government interactions (Seibel 1992, Coston 1998, Young 1999, Najam 2000). Among these, Najam’s (2000) “Four Cs framework” has received considerable attention and classifies relationships on the basis of cooperative, complementary, co-optative and confrontational interaction styles between NGOs and government agencies. The chapter puts forth two key arguments that build on Najam’s framework for understanding NGO-government interactions. Firstly, NGOs with similar goals are likely to rely on different tactics and strategies to advance their housing agendas. Despite similarity in formative conditions, participating housing NGOs were found to display inter-organizational diversity. Early NHSS interaction with government was based on collective protest. YUVA, however, engaged in community mobilizing and organizing as well as institutional tactics of lobbying through participation in national and city level advocacy campaigns. SPARC significantly digressed from common tactics of protest to engage instead in tactical alliances with federations of the poor and with government departments.

The second key argument in this chapter calls for more robust frameworks for discussing NGO-government interactions. My analysis of NGO-GO housing interventions suggests that a robust and more complete understanding of NGO-GO relations demands making central the possibility that multiple interaction strategies could simultaneously and
sequentially subsist. Even though confrontation was an overarching strategy defining NGO-government interaction in the 1980s, my analysis suggests the prevalence of other relationship types. Tactics used were therefore not just different across NGOs but were deployed alongside other strategies which reflected a willingness to cooperate, a tendency to co-opt, and efforts to complement the strategic interests of the state. Whilst in some policy arenas clear ‘battle lines’ are drawn, NGO interventions in housing are rapidly shifting and multifaceted. This dynamism has important implications for theories of NGO-government relations and housing policy implementation.

Before delving into the specifics of each housing intervention, I first elaborate on the “Olga Tellis Case.” The previous chapter located the developments of the late 1970s and early 1980s in Bombay within the larger context of the growth of a rights-based development discourse worldwide. The Olga Tellis case on the rights of housing of pavement dwellers, began in the High Court of Bombay but soon found itself within the walls of the Supreme Court in New Delhi where it was debated for nearly four years. In this chapter, I begin by detailing the legal see-saw that preceded the announcement of the Supreme Court judgment. This is important because the oscillation and the judgment that followed serve as the immediate backdrop against which housing advocacy NGOs were formed. I then focus specifically on the formation of my case NGOs – NHSS, YUVA, and SPARC. Building on concepts from social movement, nonprofit management and institutional theory, I devote this chapter to discussing the factors influencing the initial selection of NGO housing strategy. I anchor the description in the first five years surrounding NGO formation and focus on the first key housing intervention of each of
the three participating NGOs. To provide the narration with the distinctiveness and particularity that each participating NGO deserves, I treat one NGO at a time.

Readers less interested in the details of this case may skip to section 4.6 for a discussion of the key findings of this chapter.

4.2 THE OLGA TELLIS CASE

In 1981, the Chief Minister of the State of Maharashtra initiated “Operation Eviction” (Singh 1987, 64) - a massive “Pavement Clearance” program intended to clear the city of 100,000 pavement dwellers and deport them to their places of origin. This was justified on grounds that theirs is “a very inhuman existence. These structures are flimsy and open to the elements. During the monsoon there is no way these people can live comfortably” (Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation, AIR 1986 SC 180). Ten days later “on one of the worst days of the monsoon, the Government began deporting the pavement dwellers without any prior notice” (People’s Union for Civil Liberties 1983).

In the wake of these demolitions, a group of urban professionals decided to take action by using the courts as instruments to effect changes in policies (affecting lives and livelihoods of pavement and slum dwellers). Article 32 (1) of the Indian constitution empowers a citizen of India directly to seek recourse to the Supreme Court for enforcement of fundamental rights guaranteed under Part III, Article 14-32 of the

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Constitution. The Supreme Court, as well as the High Courts, are authorized to take cognizance of any such complaint and issue orders as a writ. It is this provision that was brought to play at this critical turning point in the housing history of slum and squatter dwellers across the country.

The People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), approached the High Court of Bombay on the day of the demolitions (23rd July 1981) requesting an order of injunction restraining the officers of the State Government of Maharashtra and the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) from conducting further deportations. The council for the petitioner, the PUCL, conceded that the pavement dwellers do not claim any fundamental right to put up huts on pavements or public roads. Indicative of the strong judicial activism that was characteristic of the 1980s, nearly 20 lawyers gave their support to the PUCL. The Government of Maharashtra conceded that the deportations were illegal and unconstitutional and provided assurances not to deport hutment dwellers who were covered by the 1976 “slum census” unless they were given alternate pitches (plots) of land. The petitioners gave assurance to the court to vacate their huts on or before October 15, 1981. The respondents comprising the Bombay Municipal Corporation and the State of Maharashtra agreed that the huts would not be demolished until October 15, 1981 and the writ petition was disposed of accordingly on the 14th of August 1981.

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133 I use ‘Bombay’ when I refer to events in the city prior to the year 1995. ‘Bombay’ was renamed ‘Mumbai’ in 1995.
134 Interview with the advocate for the PUCL and member of NHSS, at his residence in Colaba, Mumbai on May 8, 2003.
The order was barely passed when a journalist, Ms. Olga Tellis, through her advocate, filed a petition in the Supreme Court of India (SC). She argued that hutment dwellers enjoy a fundamental right to housing. The PUCL chose not to pursue this course deciding that such a move would only amount to “asking for too much from the judicial system. More importantly, no such right can be claimed”. The PUCL however did feel that “the Supreme Court was the only forum which could decide the wide-ranging and important issues raised by the PUCL” (PUCL 1983, 4). Finally, there were two sets of separate petitions filed in the SC on the 19th of October 1981. The first set was comprised of only pavement dwellers (two pavement dwellers along with Tellis) and the other set included both slum and pavement dwellers (in all, there were twelve petitioners – five petitioners from a slum settlement in Bombay, four from a pavement community along with the PUCL, the Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights, and a journalist).

Once in the SC, the two separate petitions were combined and heard as one. The petitioners offered the following major arguments:

a) that the right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, is a right that cannot be exercised without a means to livelihood. Denying pavement dwellers their homes, therefore, is tantamount to denying them their right to life. This was forwarded under “commonsense” evidence that people do not choose to live in slums and on

135 Ibid. The advocate’s position in the matter is based on the reality that it is rarely possible to present housing rights as the sole basis of a legal complaint before national courts. This is despite the fact that many governments accept their obligations to fulfill housing rights. Housing rights, in and of themselves, are not directly enforceable in the form of individual complaints at the international level of human rights monitoring machinery. This is an imperfection in the system of human rights and is a pretext that has, so far, aided governments to support their lack of initiatives to realize the right to housing to all its citizens (Leckie 1989, 90-108).
pavements but are forced to by circumstances necessitated by the want to be close to their place of work.

b) that people are forced to live on the pavements for want of alternative sources of accommodation. Since necessity drives them to live on the pavements, it cannot be deemed a trespass.

c) that pavement dwellers ought not to be perceived as trespassers for the additional reason that pavements are public property. Pavements are property that is held in trust for the public and pavement dwellers are part of the public. “If the pedestrians are entitled to use the pavements for passing and repassing, so are the pavement dwellers entitled to use pavements for dwelling upon them” (Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation, AIR 1986 SC 180).

The government of Maharashtra and the city’s Municipal Corporation, the BMC, fought the case tooth and nail and posed the following counter-arguments to those raised by the petitioners:

a) By evicting illegal encroachers, the authorities were not depriving them of their right to live. They were not stopping them from living, only from living on the pavements which were public property. Only the act of actually depriving them of life can be deemed a violation of the right to life and this was clearly not the case.

b) The counter-affidavit stated that “no person has any legal right to encroach upon or to construct any structure on a footpath, public street or on any place over which the public has a right of way” (Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation, AIR 1986 SC 180).

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136 The BMC is also known by its more recent acronym, the MCGM – the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai.
c) If a person puts any public property to a use for which it is not intended and is not authorized so to use it, he/she becomes a trespasser. The BMC filed a counter-affidavit stating that it acted entirely within its powers when it resorted to demolishing without prior notice.

Most importantly, the government declined availability of vacant land in the city to rehouse pavement dwellers. It justified its claim on the oft cited basis of paucity of resources. This claim of shortage of vacant land was disputed by petitioners who presented the court with evidence stating that the city had nearly 20,000 hectares of vacant, unencumbered land. Citing the failure of the government to implement the Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act, the petitioners stated that “the reason why there are homeless people in Bombay is not that there is no land on which homes can be built for them but, that the planning policy of the State Government permits high density areas to develop with vast tracts of land lying vacant. The pavement dwellers and the slum dwellers who constitute 50% of the population of Bombay, occupy only 25% of the city’s residential land. It is in these circumstances that out of sheer necessity for a bare

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137 India adopted the Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act (ULCRA) in February 1976. Narayanan (2003, 183-206) traces the growth of this controversial piece of regulation to the campaign documents and statements generated by the Congress Party from the early 1960s. The Party as noted earlier, was keen on alleviating poverty through equitable distribution of land. Following the demolitions that characterized the Emergency period, the Act is believed to have been used to soften the blow wielded on the urban poor (ibid., 185). The Acts’ stated purpose was to prevent concentration of large urban land holdings in the hands of a few, and the speculation and profit that this entailed. The government could acquire landholdings from those (other than the State) who owned vacant land in excess of a prescribed ceiling limit (500 square meters for a Category ‘A’ city and the Greater Bombay region qualified as Category ‘A’). The acquired lands could subsequently either be used by government to build subsidized housing for the ‘weaker sections’ of populations, or resold to worthy recipients like cooperative housing societies, and to industrial and commercial complexes. In Mumbai, for instance, only 213 hectares of the 1,360 hectares of land identified as surplus were acquired by the government (Das 2003, 223). The government has managed to build very few tenements on ULCRA land in Greater Mumbai.
existence, the petitioners are driven to occupy the pavements and slums.” The arguments went back and forth for nearly four years.

Ambiguity Rules

Finally, the Court rejected the BMC’s argument and determined that the eviction of pavement dwellers would lead to the deprivation of their livelihood and ultimately their life. However, despite holding that the petitioners had a right to livelihood (to live on the pavement) and that such right was violated, the Court sided with the BMC and offered little by way of relief to the petitioners. First, the SC ordered that the pavement dwellers could not be evicted until one month after the monsoon season. Second, the court directed that the government should give the “highest priority” to resettling misplaced pavement dwellers by allotting them such land as it “finds to be conveniently available” (Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation, AIR 1986 SC 180). Thus, the Court stopped short of ordering any definitive government action in alleviating the problem of the homeless in Bombay. Four years after the BMC first demolished their hutments, the pavement dwellers of Bombay were left with a right to livelihood, to live on the pavement, with no relief in sight from the government other than a notice before their dwellings were to be destroyed. In fact, in Bombay, the real threat of (and actual incidents of) slum and pavement demolitions increased substantially following announcement of the judgment in 1985. For many, the judgment meant that the “municipality now had powers reinforced by the highest court in the country that
sanctioned it to proceed with demolishing pavement dwelling and slums on public lands.\footnote{Interview with the advocate for PUCL and member NHSS, at his residence in Colaba, Mumbai on May 8, 2003.}

The first among the few non-state actors to rise in public prominence following the Supreme Court judgment of 1985 was a group that called itself the Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti (NHSS). I devote the following section to describing the origins of the NHSS. In doing so, I dive into the first few years of NHSS’s lifetime. I follow the same pattern in describing the remainder of the two NGOs, YUVA and SPARC. In particular, I utilize each organization’s first major intervention in slum housing as the basis upon which to analyze the development of subsequent organization-specific repertoires of action. As stated earlier, I primarily rely on interviews (with members in the NGO, the government, and participating communities) and archival material with the NGO to identify the factors affecting each NGO’s choice of a repertoire of action to advance its initial agenda vis-à-vis housing the poor.
4.3 FORMATION OF THE NIVARA HAKK SURAKSHA SAMITI (NHSS)

The Supreme Court judgment sent several activists\textsuperscript{139} into a frenzy. For NHSS, work towards opposing the government’s position towards slum dwellers began even before the Supreme Court could announce its judgment on the 10\textsuperscript{th} of July 1985. Its lead members distrusted the High Court’s stay order of 1981. They maintained that the stay order was a hollow promise used by the High Court to placate temporarily a widespread sense of public outrage over the brutality of the demolitions. Despite the stay order, demolitions continued. Members of the NHSS therefore concluded that, “Unless the workers and the poor were organized to struggle for the defense of their homes, the bulldozing of their huts would continue” (Singh 1987, 67). Nearly 26 mass organizations representing the youth, students, slum mandals (groups), and trade unions got together under the banner of the Nivara Hakk Suraksha Samiti (henceforth referred to as the NHSS) in 1982. One of NHSS’s founding members alludes to its philosophy in the following words (Bulletin, February 14 1987):

It is only through education that people can be made aware of unity. After all rights can only be won, when the people unite. Take the trade unions for example . . . if there was a union comprising of the slum dwellers, they would not be exploited as they are today.

His opinion was echoed by NHSS’s Vice-President,\textsuperscript{140} who vehemently pointed out that, “We are not an NGO. We are not highly funded. We believe that struggle is a means of

\textsuperscript{139} I interviewed some of the activists who were to later become founding members of my case NGOs. They include, a journalist with a leading national daily called the ‘Economic Times’; a human rights lawyer and advocate with the Bombay High Court; two students of social work from Bombay’s college of social work, and many upper and middle class professionals and student activists who joined hands to protest against the discontent caused by the Supreme Court order.

\textsuperscript{140} He did not join the NHSS until the late 1980s. I interviewed him in his office in Prabhadevi area of Mumbai on September 11, 2002.
achieving our aims of organizing slum dwellers. You can say that this is our mission – to
demand for a right and to negotiate for a right.” During NHSS’s first General Council
meeting on 31st November 1997, one of its leading members\textsuperscript{141} described the original
activities of NHSS: “Nivara Hakk was originally an \textit{adhoc} body of committed individuals
engaged in firefighting operations for the rights of slums.”

Often described as a front organization that “struggles for the rights of the poor”, NHSS
is not a registered NGO.\textsuperscript{142} Members of NHSS never fail to bring to my attention that
NHSS is not an NGO. They suggest that it is a network, and as the name suggests, a
“committee” formed among those who share a common goal to “fight to protect the rights
of the poor to shelter. We never wanted to be an NGO and have no plans of becoming
one.”\textsuperscript{143} Their registered arm is the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre\textsuperscript{144} formed in 1988.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{141} They referred to each other as Comrades. This was likely the direct result of NHSS’s prior linkages with
the Naujavan Bharat Sabha (NBS), a Maoist youth organization associated with Bhagat Singh, a
revolutionary freedom fighter.

\textsuperscript{142} The connotation of NGOs has evolved in several different and diverse ways. Acknowledging the broad
universe of entities that inhabit the sector, Martens (2002, 282) confines definition of NGOs to those that
have “a minimal organizational structure which allows them to provide for continuous work. This includes
a headquarters, permanent staff, and constitutions (and also a distinct recognized legal status in at least one
state).” NHSS did not wish to adhere to such criteria.

\textsuperscript{143} Interview with a member-journalist of NHSS who is one of NHSS’s earliest members. I interviewed
him on January 13, 2003 at his residence in Churchgate in Mumbai.

\textsuperscript{144} The formation of the NHWC was prompted by receipt of a generous contribution of INR 500,000 from
the Indian Red Cross Society in 1986. The donation was mobilized by the film-actress/President of NHSS
for the welfare of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar residents (explained later). The formation of NHWC is covered in
detail in Chapter 5. NHWC has an extremely lean staff (a teacher who runs the pre-school center, a doctor
who lends his time during the evenings to run a child’s clinic for an honorarium, and another girl who
assists the doctor for a meager salary). In fact, later with work in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park
(Chapter 6), NHSS worked under the legally recognized label of NHWC. The relations between the two
entities are very close and overlapping. The President of NHSS is also the Chairperson of NHWC and the
social-worker member of NHSS is the President of NHWC.

\textsuperscript{145} NHWC was registered as a charitable trust with the Charity Commissioner in Bombay on the 8th of
August 1988. To accept overseas donations, NHWC has also sought clearance under the Foreign
Regulations Control Act (FCRA) of the Government of India. None of the NHSS members interviewed
knew exactly when the Welfare Centre was registered. I could determine its exact date of registration upon
reading an article in a newspaper weekly called the Sunday Observer (issue dated February 11-17, 1996).
The newspaper article identified 1988 to be the year of the Welfare Centre’s registration. I verified this
with the India Relief and Education Fund, a California based relief agency formed in 1993 “with the twin
This distinction – between the registered and the unregistered face of Nivara Hakk -- while clear and unambiguous to those within NHSS, is less so for other stakeholders in government or in the development community in the city. The almost active hostility towards formalization, as expressed by select founding members of the NHSS, is symptomatic of those who do not resist organizations as vehicles for goal pursuance but are skeptical of the merits of overly rationalist forms of organization as vehicles for realizing their mission. Such organizations are labeled “collectivist organizations” (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Rothschild and Whitt 1986). NHSS leaders believe that the demands of being a formal, registered entity, would limit its creativity and spontaneous responsiveness to exigencies and particularly, exigencies that it believes are best dealt with by a show of “collective identity.” They additionally believe that such an identity can be best achieved by an ad hoc, spontaneous network of committed believers. NHSS functions with a broad and vaguely stated goal “to demand for a right and negotiate for a right” allowing its members the latitude to take up a variety of causes.\footnote{Examples of these include NHSS’s involvement with convening the formation of a coalition of human rights and public interest groups, unions and concerned citizens in Mumbai in response to the U.S. and U.K. led war on Iraq in March 2003. As part of this effort, a public protest meeting with invited speakers was organized in Mumbai and was followed, a few weeks later, by a candle light march. The activities towards these were carried out under the banner of “People Against War” with some of NHSS’s members pledging their monetary and networking support. Another example is NHSS’s involvement with providing temporary housing relief to victims of a massive earthquake that hit in the western state of Gujarat in 2001. NHSSs’ mobilized volunteers in Mumbai who left for Gujarat to work in relief efforts undertaken in cooperation with Jet Airways and a French aircraft manufacturer (Avions de Transport Regionale). NHSS’s architect & Vice-President designed the earthquake resistant homes.} I analyze NHSS’s professed skepticism towards registering itself as a nongovernmental entity related more to the profile of its leading activists rather than a dislike towards prevailing modes of organization (such as that of an NGO). To this day, activities towards the objectives of organizing India awareness educational activities in the U.S. and supporting like-minded organizations in India, as well as supporting disaster relief work in India.” I spoke with a staff of IREF in April 2005, and confirmed NHWC’s date of registration. NHWC is listed as one among other India-based NGOs on IREF’s web-site (http://iref.homestead.com/About.html accessed on the 5th of May 2005).
NHSS are a relatively small portion of the day to day activities of its lead members. All of its members are full-time workers in distinct organizations and professions leaving them with limited time to devote exclusively to the cause of the NHSS.147

The geographic scope of work of the NHSS covered most of Bombay. NHSS’s earliest achievement is recorded as the role it played in the formation of the Footpathvasi Kruti Samiti, a collective of pavement dwellers formed in reaction to the government’s violation of the stay order issued by the High Court. Singh148 (1994) writes, “NHSS and NBS149 … led the formation of the Footpathvasi Kruti Samiti in 1983 which united the pavement dwellers of E. Moses Road, Nagpada and other central Bombay150 areas. The highlight of the struggle was the occupation of the Race Course by the slum dwellers, where they symbolically erected a hut. Several hundred were arrested by the police.”

The analysis below of NHSS’s housing interventions focuses on its work with the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum as its first key activity in achieving its stated goal of fighting to protect the rights of the poor to shelter. The following section, describes NHSS’s entry into the slum and a review of its work with slum residents. This is done with the specific

147 The Convener in NHSS’s formative years is a widely known and controversial film-maker. Currently, its lead members include a Bombay-trained architect who heads an architectural firm in the city; two human rights lawyers who practice in the city’s High Court; a social worker; and, another is a writer working for a leading national English daily.
148 Singh is frequently quoted in my narration of NHSS’s earliest interventions. He has retained his position as a lead member and strategist of the NHSS since its formative years. He is known to have consistently used his skills acquired as a journalist to advocate for NHSS’s cause in the print media.
149 NBS is the Naujavan Bharat Sabha, an active constituent of the NHSS in the first five to six years of its existence.
150 These are areas, which till today, house the highest concentration of pavement dwellers in the city of Mumbai.
intent to analyze the origins and development of each of its key repertoires. A summary of events is provided at the end of the section in Table 4.1.

NHSS and the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum

Located within Bombay’s elite residential and business district, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum was struck by a demolition drive led by the Additional Collector (Encroachments)\textsuperscript{151} on March 12, 1986. To subdue the likelihood of resistance from slum dwellers, the Collector’s office\textsuperscript{152} sent a convoy of men including five vans of police, six truckloads of municipal workers, an ambulance, a fire brigade vehicle, and other assorted vans and cars (Singh 1986, 684). This is regular practice in all exercises of slum or pavement demolition, particularly when concerned government officials anticipate resistance from the dwellers and their supporters. In the case of this slum, the grandiose preparations were linked to the slum’s connections with a vociferous and just-born group of activists who called themselves the NHSS.

\textsuperscript{151} An officer of the Indian Administrative Services (IAS) appointed by the Government of Maharashtra occupies the post of the Additional Collector (Encroachments), henceforth referred to as the AC(E). The office of the AC(E) is in charge of encroachments on land belonging to the government of Maharashtra. By the powers vested in this office under the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance, and Redevelopment Act), the AC(E) is the ‘competent authority’ with powers to collect revenues from each slum dweller of government land and also to provide some minimum facilities to certified slums (and those formed up to a cut-off date of 1976 which was later extended to a new cut-off of 1980). Under the Maharashtra Slum Areas (ICR) Act, 1971 there is a provision that there must be a competent authority to certify or in other words, regularize a ‘slum’. This power has been vested on the Additional Collector (Encroachments). He/she assesses the condition of the area as dangerous or injurious to public health and fit for human habitation and the area is declared a slum after publication in an Official Gazette (Government of Maharashtra 1997a). It becomes a ‘slum area’ only after the official certifies it to be so.

\textsuperscript{152} For purposes of administration, Mumbai is divided into two revenue districts: Bombay City (comprising the Island City) and the Mumbai suburban district. The Collector of Bombay is in charge of Bombay City and unlike the powers enjoyed by his rural counterpart, has powers limited to and primarily devoted to issuing identity cards to slum dwellers, collecting service charges from them, granting entitlements to government lands, and removing unauthorized structures on public land.
Before NHSS stepped onto the scene, in 1985, the slum residents were being aided by a small welfare agency called the Shaila Welfare Trust. A social worker,\textsuperscript{153} volunteered as a teacher in a preschool center sponsored by the Trust.\textsuperscript{154} The slum was relatively small, comprising 325 hutments (about 1,600 people)\textsuperscript{155} built on land that belonged to the Collector. It was originally settled in about 1976 by migrant laborers most of whom were from the southern Indian state of Karnataka. Residents recall that there were barely seven make-shift rooms and each home had to pay INR\textsuperscript{156} 10 to the Collector’s office. As the number of homes grew, the slum came under the Collector’s radar and with it followed several notices of demolition and unexplained incidents of fire.\textsuperscript{157}

The slum soon reached the “limits of its growth” and became the subject of heated and widely publicized controversy (Singh 1985, 2241). Threats of demolitions and actual demolitions and fires soon became commonplace. Sometime in 1982, the social worker went to speak with governmental authorities about its notices. Along with the slum dwellers, she recalls having tirelessly negotiated with the Collector for alternate housing sites such as in Mankhurd in north Bombay (Singh 1985, 2242). However, the efforts were nullified when a new Collector replaced him and claimed ignorance of any such

\textsuperscript{153} The wife of an executive of a leading advertising house in Mumbai, NHSS’s social worker served as treasurer for the Sangathana and later took on the role of the President of the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre.

\textsuperscript{154} According to the social worker, the Shaila Welfare Center was a charitable trust managed and run by a group of Punjabi ladies most of who were wives of well-to-do businessmen in the city (Interview with researcher on July 4, 2003 at her residence in Colaba, Mumbai).

\textsuperscript{155} The government typically estimates an average of five persons per household.

\textsuperscript{156} INR stands for the Indian Rupee. It is also denoted with the abbreviation ‘Rs’. I use ‘INR’ to distinguish it from the Rupee of other countries. Rupee is used to denote currencies of other countries, namely, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Mauritius; in Indonesia the unit of currency is known as the rupiah and in the Maldives the rufiyah. An Indian rupee is equivalent to one hundred new paise or pice (singular paisa). At the prevalent exchange rate (as of January 21, 2005, 1US dollar = INR 43.64)

\textsuperscript{157} It is common knowledge among slum dwellers that, very often, an entire slum is gutted by fires instigated by local goondas (thugs) working in cahoots with the state. Several slums are known to have been cleared using this method. The blame is then placed on the careless use of a kitchen stove or a faulty gas cylinder.
understanding. Then again in 1985, when residents began receiving individual notices from the Collector’s office, she led a group of slum residents to the Congress-1 MLA from Colaba. The MLA claimed that there was nothing he could do as he had received a ‘no objection’ for demolition including a nod from those in the opposition parties. Despite the presence of wealthy and influential benefactors, the slum had to face the doomsday of demolition.

The Demolition of 1986

On the 10th of November, 1985, a news item in The Times of India carried a statement that a fire brigade station was slated to be constructed on the site of the slum. In response to notices received, NHSS members got busy mobilizing residents to stall a likely demolition. By this time NHSS, still an unregistered entity, boasted a high profile group of about four leading enthusiasts. Its lead convener, a film-maker who hailed from a well-known family of Gandhians, was introduced to the slum by a social

158 Congress-I is the successor to the Indian National Congress (INC). The INC, a national political party formed in 1885, is credited with spearheading India’s struggle for freedom from the British. The party underwent several splits but the Congress-I is regarded as the INC’s political successor. The ‘I’ in Congress-I stands for Indira (Indira Gandhi) who was Prime Minister of India from 1966-1977 and then again from 1970-1984.

159 MLA stands for Member of the Legislative Assembly (of the State government).

160 The Cuffe Parade Residents Association describes itself as “a social organisation registered with the Registrar of Societies and a Public Trust with the Bombay Charity Commission since 1976.” It highlights its objective as one of “providing social and civic amenities and to secure clean, neat and healthy environments to the Residents of Cuffe Parade” (http://www.mycuffeparade.com/cpra/index.htm accessed on October 31, 2004).

161 These included an activist in his spare time and a full-time journalist with the Economic Times; an advocate and human-rights lawyer in the Bombay High Court; a widely-known film-maker; and, its newest entrant, the trained social worker with the Shaila Welfare Trust.

162 He received a Bachelors degree in English Literature from Bombay University in 1970 and earned a Masters degree in Communications from McGill University in 1982. An activist since is days as a student, NHSS’s Convener had participated in the anti-Vietnam War movement; was a volunteer in Caesar Chavez United Farm Worker’s Union; worked in Kishore Bharati, a rural development and education project in
worker. He entered the slum wanting to film the lives of the urban poor in Bombay. The resulting film titled *Bombay, Hamara Shehar* (*Bombay, Our City* released in 1985), evoked the rigors of daily life of its slum dwellers and hardships faced on account of frequent demolitions by the city’s municipal corporation. The one slum that received substantial coverage in the film is the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum.

Curiously, a massive fire struck the slum on the same day as the publication of the newspaper article.\(^\text{163}\) Fears that a demolition would follow suit loomed large in the minds of many dwellers whose fear (combined with lack of resources) kept them from fully reconstructing their now burnt-down homes. Talk among the residents of exploring means to get the government to deliver on its promise of an alternate accommodation began taking stronger roots. Commenting on interactions with members of the community, NHSS’s Singh (1985) wrote: “After agitated arguments they reached the conclusion that alternative accommodation could only be considered if the site offered by the government was in the immediate vicinity of the slum.” Traveling from far-flung sites to get to work was ruled out as it was far beyond the budget afforded by their meager salaries.\(^\text{164}\)
The day after the fire, NHSS again knocked on the doors of the Housing Minister regarding relief measures for fire-victims and reminded him of his promise to resettle slum dwellers. The government did not respond. It was in hopes to press for a reply that a _morcha_ (protest march) of nearly a thousand residents headed to the State secretariat, the _Mantralaya_. They marched with slogans such as, “Give us toilets and water connections or let us pay for them ourselves!” and, “Cancel demolition notices and regularize our homes!” The Housing Minister simply stated that the slum dwellers had to leave the site at some point because the slum land was earmarked for a fire brigade center. They came away realizing that there was no way that the government, at this late stage, would oblige them with any kind of improvement works and, least of all, with efforts to regularize their homes.

At the time the demolition squad marched into the slum, in the morning hours of March 12\(^{th}\) 1986, most of the men folk were away at work. The remaining womenfolk tried to stop the convoy of men from raiding their settlements, but to no avail. The people were allowed to take away their essential belongings and their huts were torn down. The sole building that was unscathed by the demolition was the Shaila Welfare Centre. Despite a persistent fear of demolition, the actual process of demolition came as a shock to the slum

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165 Interview with NHSS’s social-worker on 4\(^{th}\) July 2003 at her residence in Colaba.
166 The government typically shies away from declaring a settlement a ‘slum’ as this, according to the Slums Act of 1971, means that the government is obliged to ‘redevelop’ by way of providing basic amenities (maintenance and repair, collecting service charges, and other works). Improvements are denied to those areas where the land is slated for use towards a public purpose project. In the event that relocation becomes imperative, it was also deemed that as far as practicable secure accommodation be provided in advance for housing those who may be dishoused as a result of the demolition. Proximity to the existing place of residence (and therefore of employment) was not factored in, in selection of the final relocation site.
167 Interview with the President of the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar Rahivasi Sangathan – a cooperative housing society – formed by those who were resettled by the NHSS in Goregaon, Mumbai after the demolition of their settlement in 1986.
residents. The choice of carrying out the demolition was strategic. There was, at the time, a short-lived political vacuum with dissolution of the State government.\textsuperscript{168} Just before the demolition, the ministry fell and there followed a ten-day gap before a new Ministry could take charge.\textsuperscript{169} The move was also provoked by the Supreme Court Order of July 10\textsuperscript{th}, 1985.\textsuperscript{170}

As soon as news of the demolition spread, the independent Corporator\textsuperscript{171} of the area along with NHSS’s member (the teacher and social worker at the preschool) came to the scene to try and stop the squad from carrying out the demolition. Their efforts failed. The area was fenced and a barbed wire gate installed to permit entry and exit of students

\textsuperscript{168} A State government may ‘fall’ or be dissolved when it loses majority in the State assembly (or the Central Ministry in the Parliament). This may be a result of: a) losing a vote of confidence in the floor of the house; or, b) when the supporting parties withdraw their support to a coalition government. In such an event, the Governor of the State or President of India (as the case maybe) asks the ruling party to seek a vote of confidence in the floor of the House.

\textsuperscript{169} Congressman, S.B. Chavan took over as Chief Minister a day after the demolition of the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum on the 13\textsuperscript{th} of March 1986. He took over the reigns from another Congressman, Shivajirao Nilangekar, who was forced to resign on charges of corruption involving getting grades adjusted on the state medical exams so that his twice-failed daughter could pass (Interview with NHSS member and social worker at her residence in Mumbai on 4\textsuperscript{th} July 2003). Upon verification, I found that there was a six day gap between the overthrow of the Nilangekar Ministry and the assumption of power by the Chavan Ministry (http://www.maharashtra.gov.in accessed on October 19, 2004).

\textsuperscript{170} This is corroborated by the fact that soon after the end of the monsoons, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum was flooded with notices issued to each hutment dweller from the Collector’s office. The notice stated that lest they vacate within a week, their homes would be demolished. I reiterate the Supreme Court Judgment of 1985 which stated: “We hold that no person has the right to encroach, by erecting a structure or otherwise, on footpaths, pavements or any other place reserved or ear-marked for a public purpose like, for example, a garden or a playground; that the provision contained in section 314 of the Bombay Municipal Corporation Act is not unreasonable in the circumstances of the case...”

\textsuperscript{171} There are 24 electoral wards within the city of Mumbai (http://www.mcgm.gov.in accessed on October 19, 2004). To facilitate administrative decentralization, each ward has its own ward office headed by a Ward Officer who is responsible for the municipal services to the geographical area falling within the wards’ purview. The Corporator is the elected counterpart to the Ward Officer. So unlike the Ward Official who comes from within the ranks of the Municipal Corporation (the BMC), the Corporator is an elected representative. Each ward elects a corporator through direct elections once in every five years to represent it. In all, there are 221 corporator election wards in the city of Mumbai. The Corporators have decision-making power in policies and programs undertaken by the City’s Municipal Corporation, the BMC. Most corporators belong to some political party, but there are a few independent ones as well. Each corporator is allocated a budget of INR 200,000 to undertake developmental work in his/her constituency (Navtej 2001, 38).
to the Welfare Centre. With families now on the adjoining pavement, a more immediate concern of the ousted slum dwellers was not of access to alternate accommodation, but that of putting off any attempts by the government to further evict them from pavements that they now occupied. In an attempt to thwart any such possibility, NHSS’s lead members led the slum dwellers on a massive *morcha* (protest march) to the Collector’s office as well as to the municipal Ward Office to get assurance that their pavement homes will not be demolished until completion of the final examination of the students.

Provision of an alternate relocation site was denied despite the fact that during this time, a large number of other slum and pavement dwellers were being evicted from densely populated pockets in this south end of the city and were forced to go to poorly developed ‘resettlement colonies’ in far flung suburbs to the north. There are three arguments suggested by NHSS for why Sanjay Gandhi Nagar residents were denied alternate accommodation. First, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum was not a declared (certified) slum and therefore did not fulfill the necessary criteria for alternative site allocation and/or accommodation.172 Secondly, the denial was likely also related to another caveat in State policy which requires that to be eligible for “alternative accommodation” or “alternative sites”, residents are to individually produce proof of residence on or prior to 1980.173 Their individual names had to appear in the 1980 voter’s list. Residents of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar had various evidence of residence including the 1979 demolition notices,

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172 According to the amended guidelines of the Environmental Improvement of Slum Areas (issued vide Circular No. MH/PCC/58983 on 18th July 1983), grants-in-aid were to be made available for declared slum that were to be shifted from their original location. The grants-in-aid were to be made available to declared slums and verification to be carried out by the competent governmental authority under whose jurisdiction the slum land falls.

173 At the time, the cut off date for eligibility was revised from 1976 to 1980.
correspondence of 1979 with the then Chief Minister and pay slips of those formally employed. But such evidence was insufficient and therefore, ‘negotiation’ at the highest level was an option that NHSS actively considered. A third cause was the slum’s highly public profile. This is affirmed by NHSS’s social worker who remarked that, “Even if the government wanted to respond to political pressures and offer the slum dwellers with alternate accommodation, it shied away from doing so fearing that this would set a precedent and the government would then have to mete out the same treatment to all other cases of unrecognized slums.” As a course of action, courts were never considered and what was actively pursued was to knock determinedly at the doors of the highest State authorities.

In an effort to begin negotiations, a delegation of NHSS members and slum dwellers visited the Housing Minister on March 25th, and asked that their footpath homes be spared until the 1st of April, the last day of their children’s final exams. The government agreed. It was on the 1st of April that NHSS, under the direction of a member-journalist, decided to reoccupy the land fenced on all sides and to construct a single make-shift hut as a symbol of what they wanted from the government. However, plans nearly failed when the police arrived. Someone reportedly tipped off the police about NHSS’s plans of forcefully entering the site. By day-break, the day of the proposed reoccupation, the site was surrounded by police men wielding lathis (truncheons) and some even carrying guns. With banners that said: ‘No Evictions and no Demolitions’, ‘Our homes are here’, a crowd of roughly 200 people assembled.
The presence of the police did not deter plans to continue with the symbolic entry and squatting in the fenced site of their former slum. NHSS’s Convener decided to invite a popular film actress to join the demonstration. The decision to get her to join the coterie was a critical turning point in NHSS’s history – one that gave the group a remarkable new public face. The NHSS social worker recalled that “We were all a little skeptical. What would her entry do to our plans and to our broader struggle? We did not know and in the heat of the moment, did not care.”

Under the pretext of fetching a typewriter from the school, NHSS’s social worker along with those assembled forced their way into the fenced compound. The police lathicharged\textsuperscript{174} but could not keep the crowds from squatting on the fenced ground next to the school. It was a victory! The site sported a huge banner that said: “The right to life includes the right to a roof” (Singh 1986, 687). Those that had trespassed on what was now ‘cleared’ government property had to be arrested. The crowds willingly entered police vehicles and filled up four such vans. Among those arrested was the famed film-actress. Her arrest was a critical move as it had the potential instantaneously to raise the profile of the case and to increase NHSS’s negotiating power. At the police station, none of the protestors was arrested and the group was offered \textit{chai} and snacks, instead. They informed the police that such acts of protest would not stop until a direct face to face meeting was set up between the housing minister and the slum dwellers. The Deputy Commissioner of Police assured them that he would arrange such a meeting, but the meeting never occurred.

\textsuperscript{174} Hitting with a truncheon typically used by the police to disperse an unruly crowd or mob.
The situation was lent a new sense of urgency when on the evening of the 1st of May, the twelve year old son of a slum resident collided with a speeding car and died near his home on the pavement. His parents were away attending a program organized by NHSS’s convener on the occasion of Labor Day. After the funeral of the child the following day, an angry mob of slum dwellers entered the Collector’s office. A slum resident recalls that they “were so angry and upset that we went into the Collector’s office. He was not in his office at the time so the boys sat on his chair!” This was followed soon by a gherao\textsuperscript{175} of the Housing Minister’s residence. The only concession that followed was from the Municipality that stated that all those who could verify residence prior to 1980 would be accommodated suitably. However, to a majority in the Slum Resident’s Association, this was a concession they were not willing to accept on grounds that “Ours is a collective case, we do not recognize cut-off dates. It is all of us or none!” (Singh 1986, 687). Few of the residents, however, had any individual proof of residence. This offer was, for many, an “empty concession” for most had lost all proof of residence including the quintessential ration card records (Seabrook 1997). Many had now been out on the pavements for over a month with no assurance of an alternate site or alternate accommodations from the government.

It was at this juncture that a decision to hold an indefinite fast was taken as the last resort in a struggle that had thus far yielded few results\textsuperscript{176}. The fast was to be a symbolic

\textsuperscript{175} Blockade or encirclement, in Hindi.
\textsuperscript{176} Prior to a decision to sit on an indefinite fast, there was, according to NHSS’s social worker, a meeting between NHSS and the Chief Minister which yielded nothing. There was also a meeting with the Housing Minister. They informed him of their intention to go on a fast. The Housing Minister said that he would try and do something about the situation but NHSS’s Convener had, by this time, firmed up his mind about going on a fast unto death.
gesture and for the Convener of the NHSS, it was important that it be a highly publicized one. This was apparent when he chose to call none other than the film actress to join him and three slum dwellers. For the actress, whose off-beat (“New Indian Cinema or Arthouse Cinema”) films were helping her climb the popularity charts,

It was going to be a big risk. I was on my way to attend the Cannes film festival for my film Genesis … joining the fast-unto-death might mean the end of my film career. They had knocked [on] every single government door but it [state government] was not willing to listen. I felt guilty about going off to Cannes, leaving the situation as it was. Joining a hunger strike also meant that I was taking a strong public position on the issue of housing rights and against the government. People would criticize [me] and there will be speculation about my motives for involvement. I had to consult my husband and it was he who prepared me emotionally. I went ahead.177

The fast, a well-known Gandhian tactic,178 received considerable media coverage. As a result, there emerged a host of those who wanted to offer money for the purchase of an alternate site. A popular film director was willing to give money for the purchase of land but NHSS denied the offer on grounds that the “government must do it.” NHSS’s social worker also added that, “by the end of the week, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar had money in the bank!” The wide media publicity also meant that there was some element of pressure upon the government to respond. She excitedly recalled that, “by Wednesday we were

177 Telephone interview with President, NHSS on the 17th of August 2003 in Mumbai. She was in New Delhi at the time I interviewed her.
178 The Gandhian repertoire emerged in the midst of collective experiments with nonviolent direct action during the Indian minority’s struggle for civil rights in South Africa (in the early 1900s). It evolved in the course of India’s independence movement and comprised “boycotts, strikes, noncooperation, and civil disobedience. Ashrams (i.e., self-sufficient communes), temporary satyagraha committees, loose associations with permanent organizations, community service community service, purification, and strict guidelines for behavior and strategy were essential elements of the Gandhian organizational style.” (Chabot and Duyvendak 2002, 710).

Among the action forms/tactics that is associated with Gandhi is the use of fasts. He went on fasts on nearly 30 occasions for various reasons but primarily when other persuasive tactics did not yield expected results (M.K.Gandhi Institute for NonViolence 2004). The act of fasting, according to Gandhi, symbolized voluntary espousal of suffering to one’s body “to open the eyes of the person who is determined to see no light” (M.K. Gandhi Institute for NonViolence 2004).
flooded with telegrams and messages from all over the world. A Member of Parliament from England sent a message to the Chief Minister that India is the land of Gandhi and that the government must do something about the plight of the poor!"\(^{179}\)

While the fast may have influenced the government, there was also considerable pressure on the government to restore this critical business district to normalcy at the start of another workweek. Owing to the presence of the press and the constant stream of high profile visitors to the site, surrounding roads were blocked and traffic redirected. This was sufficient cause for the government to concede to meet with a delegation from the NHSS. The Housing Minister and the Housing Secretary personally visited the site of the fast and invited members of the NHSS for a meeting to discuss plans for rehabilitation. This is a standard gesture when, under pressure from a highly publicized protest, the government wishes publicly to appease high-profile activists.

Much against NHSS’s position that the government ought to resettle evicted residents on a site close to their original residence, NHSS (and the slum dwellers) had to accept the government’s offer of a land parcel in a distant city suburb. Eventually, a site in the suburbs of a locality called Malad, with local trains running between the original and new site and the hope of a bus terminus under construction, was selected for resettlement of the evicted Sanjay Gandhi Nagar dwellers.

Most residents were on the pavements for nearly a year because the selected relocation site was an exhausted stone quarry with a pit as deep as 20 feet and a hostile

\(^{179}\) Interview with NHSS’s social-worker on 4\(^{th}\) July 2003 at her residence in Colaba, Mumbai.
neighborhood that made laying boundaries and constructing homes a difficult task that had to wait a full year. In the meantime, their temporary shacks on the pavements were demolished yet again and belongings stolen supposedly as an “act of revenge by the Additional Collector who could not take it that the slum dwellers had overridden him to gain access to another site”\textsuperscript{180}. A distant site was therefore preferred to the regular harassment from the authorities. On the advice of two of NHSS’s architect-members and original Trustees, Malad site was to be developed by the NHSS “into a good plan for slum dwellers with a garden, a welfare centre, and bathrooms.”\textsuperscript{181}

\textsuperscript{180} Interview with NHSS’s social-worker who is currently a member of NHSS’s general body and President of the Nivara Hakk Welfare Center. Interview on the 4\textsuperscript{th} of July 2003 at her residence in Colaba

\textsuperscript{181} Interview with two slum residents in their home in Sanjay Gandhi Nagar, Malad on July 8, 2003.
Table 4.1 Formative Events at Sanjay Gandhi Nagar Slum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 12, 1986</td>
<td>Demolition of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar Slum</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23, 1986</td>
<td>More than 200 women from the slum squat at the residence of the local Congress MLA. They gherao him and obtain assurance that he would join a delegation of slum dwellers to meet with the housing Minister the next day. Nothing comes of the meeting with the Housing Minister.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 25, 1986</td>
<td>A delegation of NHSS meets with Housing Minister. Delegation asks that their homes not be demolished until the end of the final examinations of the school children. That day is the 1st of April.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1, 1986</td>
<td>Forced entry and reoccupation of their former site. This is followed by a dharna (sit-in) that lasts two hours. NHSS is joined by a film-actress – an emerging icon of parallel Indian cinema, a popular film Director, a playwright, and Convener of the NHSS. They are all arrested along with 150 others and detainted for four hours in a local police station. They demand alternate accommodation and a stay on further demolitions until school examinations are over. They are assured of a meeting with the Housing Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 9, 1986</td>
<td>NHSS delegation meets with Maharashtra Chief Minister who says, “There is no land in Bombay for rehabilitation. We have to be selective.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st May 1986</td>
<td>A slum resident’s child is killed in a road accident while she is away at a Labor day rally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd May 1986</td>
<td>On the way back from the child’s funeral, an angry mob of slum dwellers forcibly occupy the office of the Additional Collector. The mob gatecrashes (an action called gherao, in Hindi) into the apartment and the building that houses the then Housing Minister. The Minister refuses to give in and says, “We have no place for your people.” NHSS takes decision to go on a “fast unto death.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of 12th May 1986</td>
<td>Three residents of the slum and NHSS’s Convener sit on a week-long fast unto death. Two days later, they are joined by the same film-actress (currently, Chairperson, NHSS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 16th, 1986</td>
<td>Secretary of the Housing Department, Government of Maharashtra visits the site of the fast and requests those assembled to break their fast. This is followed by a meeting between the NHSS delegation and the Housing Minister, the Minister of State for Urban Development, and the Secretary for Housing. Government does not offer its land for alternate accommodation. It does however agree to initiate efforts to secure private and/or trust land to resettle the evicted slum dwellers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In September 1986</td>
<td>Slum dwellers agree to accept land in Goregaon, Dindoshi - a suburb about 30 kilometers from the original site of the slum. The land is unlevled, without any basic amenities and the site of an exhausted and illegal stone quarry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 1987</td>
<td>Formal deed of conveyance was signed and the land, measuring 11,904 square meters, purchased by the Sanjay Gandhi Rahivasi Sangh (Residents’ Association) for sum of INR 50,000.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

With the above history as a basis, I now turn to a discussion of NHSS’s key tactics in its relationship with the government. A confrontational NGO-government relationship is likely to occur “when governmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations consider each other’s goals and strategies to be antithetical to their own – essentially, total divergence of preferred ends as well as means” (Najam 2000, 385). This characterization helps summarize the general tenor of interactions between NHSS and the government apparatus in NHSS’s formative years. NHSS’s mission and its activities suggest that expressing collective discontent over government practices was at the root of how it constituted and interpreted its work in the realm of housing the poor in the city. This was not an uncommon approach in the 1980s when the poor, led by middle class professionals and activists, challenged traditional authorities and rules. Collective expression of dissent was thus used as a tool to challenge the state apparatus, and it also served the additional purpose of organizing and mobilizing affected populations and their supporters towards a common cause.

NHSS was a coalition born in direct response to acts of frequent and often brutal demolition organized by the state; these acts were interpreted as failure on the part of government to uphold the rights of the poor to provide adequate, safe, and secure residence within the city. NHSS’s members were by-products of post-Emergency India who used the grievance created by the Supreme Court order towards “mobilization of consensus” (Klandermans 1988). Using a repertoire of tactics - which included mass mobilization, street protests, slogan shouting, film, and street plays - NHSS initiated a
new “framing” of the issue of slum and pavement housing. It marked an attempt to alter commonly held perceptions of slum dwellers as ‘criminals’ and a bane on the city to one of portraying them as ‘victims’ and necessary organs of a mismanaged city. However, the use of contentious tactics is only part explanation of how NHSS managed its relations with the state. I now move to explaining the multiple strategies and tactics deployed by NHSS in the course of its involvement in the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum.

Explaining Key Tactics

A majority of NHSS’s tactics in engaging with the state in its formative years were “confrontational.” Based on Najam’s (2000) Four Cs framework, confrontation was the primary strategy defining NGO-government interaction in NHSS’s first major intervention. The choice of tactics was informed by the past experiences of its leaders most of whom were active in social movements of the time. Not only was the use of a contentious strategy considered effective but was also deemed normal and exemplary. *Morchas, dharnas*, street plays, slogan shouting, mass mobilization, and public meetings were tactics that were consistently directed against the state. This repertoire of tactics dominated the language and practice of the NHSS, often giving the impression that displaying collective dissent was, in itself, a worthy mission. Informed by the failure of judicial activism in delivering justice on behalf of the poor of Bombay, members of the newly-formed NHSS quickly began mobilizing residents of slums and pavements with the goal of displaying collective opposition. Marching through the streets of Bombay was
a preferred tactic to achieve the goal of “struggling for a right and negotiating for a right.”

But, as I elaborate in greater detail in the section that follows, protest was more than a big and spectacular display of confrontation. It was a response to NHSS’s perception of the political opportunity structure\(^{182}\) which was considered relatively closed and difficult to penetrate. This perception was informed by its repeated efforts to convince government functionaries to consider resettling and rehabilitating slum dwellers of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar. Badgering and negotiating with bureaucrats on a one to one basis, helped delay demolition, but did not rule out its possibility. A shift in strategies and tactics followed.

I further analyze the strategies and related tactics used by NHSS in the course of its work in the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum. Table 4.2 describes the tactics and strategies used by NHSS during its formative years. I discuss each strategy in turn:

\(^{182}\) Political opportunity structure is defined as “the degree of access that individuals and groups have to the political process, with access influenced by conditions such as access to elites and the presence or absence of political cleavages” (Tarrow 1998).
Table 4.2: Repertoire of Tactics in NHSS’s Formative Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Confrontation (Primary Strategy) | - Mass Mobilization  
- Street Protest  
- Street Plays  
- Forced Entry  
- Gate crashing  
- Media Publicity (Print & Film media)  
- Badgering government officials | - Exerting Moral Pressure  
- Awareness Generation  
- Gather enthusiasts and clientele  
- Generate Nuisance  
- Safeguard Community Interests  
- Demand commitment from government | - Defining strategy in early stages of NHSS’s activities  
- Mimicks prevailing norms associated with ‘activist’ ideology of the 1970s and 1980s  
- Raises public and community awareness of issue  
- Creates room for negotiation  
- Increases visibility for the NHSS |
| Co-optation (Sub-strategy) | - Badgering government officials  
- Pulling-in influential constituents | - Put pressure  
- Create new negotiating power | - Yields quick and tangible results  
- Generates suspicion over NHSS’s ‘true’ agenda in defending the rights of the poor. |
| Complementarity* (Sub-strategy) | - Obeying terms  
- Taking responsibility | - Appease slum dwellers  
- Public Legitimacy | - Avoids alienation  
- Wins favors  
- Stays on agenda |

* The Four Cs framework frames cooperation and complementarity as distinct strategies. I did not find the distinction of much utility in explaining interactions between NHSS and the state. On the part of the NHSS, there was a willingness to complement the government – it wanted government to take responsibility for resettling and rehabilitating the evicted residents. However, what emerged was a compromise in which not only were residents forced to accede to moving to a distant site but the government chose to disassociate itself from any formal responsibility in dealings over allocation of land and the process of rehabilitation.
Confrontation

Members rated NHSS’s past experience of using tactics of open, albeit nonviolent defiance, ‘successful.’ During NHSS’s formative years, its housing tactics focused on open, widely publicized expression of discontent towards the state. As a stand-alone activity, protests help display collective and consensual identity and generate public awareness around an issue of concern. A range of activities went hand in hand during a display of protest. Large scale assemblage of slum dwellers and their supporters was used as a platform to raise awareness and consciousness around the issue of demolitions. It was commonplace to see a demonstration culminate in the performance of a street play along with slogan shouting, storming or the burning of an effigy of a government official. Whether marches or gheraos or the indefinite fast, the tactics were all driven by the desire that the display of discontent should be big and spectacular. This is evidenced by the fact that more often than not, it was the size of the crowd that gathered and the concomitant show of strength and support that defined ‘success.’ Expressions such as, “it was a massive morcha,” “so many people participated”, “it was a massive show of discontent,” “we forced the government to accept . . .” are examples of some of the ways these incidents are typically evoked by those who participated in them.

183 NHSS’s member-journalist recalls, with pride, the organization’s success in symbolically erecting a hut in the midst of the city’s Race Course in 1983. This took place under the banner of the Footpathvasi Kruti Samiti and was deemed as an expression of the collective grief of pavement dwellers who suffered repeat demolitions (Source: Interview at with member-journalist at his residence in Churchgate on 13th January 2003).

184 Repeat interviews with member-journalist of NHSS; with the Vice-President of NHSS; the social worker/President of NHWC; and, with a dozen community members associated with NHSS since the 1980s.
Collective protests are analyzed to communicate: worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment (WUNC) (Tilly 2003, 201). It is possible, for instance, to view NHSS-organized *morchas* as singular acts of big confrontations. They were indeed designed to be dramatic shows of discontent but a closer look at conditions surrounding the use of *morchas* shows that during its formative years, protests were of equal importance as a means to attract volunteers, demonstrate legitimacy among slum dwellers, and to gain access to the state apparatus. *Morchas* and protests followed prolonged and frustrated negotiations with government officials. The intention was therefore to create room for negotiation by exerting pressure through show of numbers. Continuing the course of one-to-one negotiations with no tangible results in sight is a tactic that risks losing legitimacy among slum dwellers who await quick, remedial measures. Moreover, public expression of discontent was a natural and exemplary act, one that gained popularity in the 1970s which is held as a decade that saw rapid and widespread upsurge in agitations for change and regional autonomy (reviewed in Chapter 3).

The one common characteristic that pervades all protest activities in the NHSS is that the state was viewed as the lead architect of injustice and exploitation. Not only was the blame squarely placed on the shoulders of the state but the search for alternative solutions also placed there. Speaking of the plight of the poor who come to Bombay in search of a livelihood, NHSS’s Convener mentioned: “They come seeking opportunities which they feel Bombay offers them. It is the responsibility of the government to solve their housing problems. … What is needed is a system which includes basic working rights of the poor” (Bulletin 1987).
The government functionaries that I interviewed did not credit acts of collective protest with the complexity and utility outlined above. This skepticism was held despite the fact that during this time, government perception did not particularly favor participation from non-state actors in slum housing. The Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer of the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority, the State level housing authority, commented that,

Groups like the NHSS were unhappy with the government – they disagreed with virtually everything that the government proposed. It is true that the government did not have the machinery, and still does not, to work with the poor entirely on its own. We do not know what their problems are, what their issues are, and they know better because they are with them all the time. But the problem is mounted by the fact the no one in government saw these activists in good light. The government perceived them as engaging in these bizarre protests merely as a means to gain political mileage among slum dwellers.  

Somewhat dissimilar opinions were expressed by a former Chief Executive Officer of Mumbai’s Slum Rehabilitation Authority who recalled his interactions with slum activists during the course of his work in Bombay. He disagreed with my use of the term confrontation as a means to describe NGO-governement relations of the 1980s on grounds that it has hostile connotations. He preferred to refer to it as a mere ‘difference of opinion.’ He entered the Bombay scene as an officer of the Indian Administrative Services in the mid 1980s, a time which he relates to the beginnings of an effort on the

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185 Interview on December 16th, 2002 at the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority, Bandra (East), Mumbai.
186 He was the Director of Bombay’s Prime Minister’s Grant Program (explained later under discussion of SPARC in Chapter 5) from 1988-1991 and was appointed the CEO of the SRA in 1997. At the time I interviewed him on the 27th of January 2003, in New Delhi, he held the position of Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Defence of the Government of India.
part of government to begin scouting for partners among nongovernmental actors. To him groups like the NHSS, were not NGOs but were akin to movements and associations, which “are waiting for the government to do something oppressive… they did not keep their eyes open for the opportunities that the government had available.” He qualified his statement with reference to the Slum Improvement and Upgradation Programs that the government of Maharashtra had initiated during the same time period. He further pointed out that the problem was not just with groups like the NHSS but also with the government: “those down the line in government are unable and unwilling to look at slums favorably as a solution to the problem of housing in cities. The government, like these NGOs, are stuck in the mould of the 1960s and the 1970s.” The waning relevance of the activist ideology of the 1960s and the 1970s in fulfilling the housing interests of the poor finds frequent reference in my conversations with government officials.

_Cooptation_

Members of the former Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum remarked that but for the intervention of high profile activists such as those at NHSS, they did not stand a chance of getting access to alternate accommodation. Seabrook (1986, 84-104) who has devoted an entire chapter to analyzing the slum’s history and NHSS’s work concluded that “in less publicized evictions in less affluent parts of the city, the people have not been the focus of such attention, and demolitions have proceeded without protest.” NHSS was able to capitalize on its ability to use its clout to access the highest governmental authorities – a key strength reserved for those who understand and are willing to cash in on the ‘particularistic’ character of the Indian state. Blomkvist (1989, 135) argues that unlike
countries in Europe, where a rule governed, ‘universalistic’ state exists (i.e., a state
governed by formal rules and laws), such a state never developed in India. Instead what
does prevail is a state whose actions are governed by something other than rules. These
other factors include the “whims of the ruler, friendship or family relations, esteem or
political connections or money (bribes)” (Blomkvist 1989, 135).

The high profile character of NHSS members not only meant that the communities
gained a sense of security over their tentative housing conditions but also that the NHSS,
sooner than later, was expected to resolve its housing problems by working its way
through the government machinery. Despite the powerful networks that each of its
members already signified, the ice with the government was not broken to any significant
extent until a film-actress stepped on to the scene. Capitalizing on the charisma and
commotion that only a film actress from Bollywood187 can generate was a strategic
decision – one that yielded quick and tangible results even though the final outcome was
deemed a ‘compromise’ by some of NHSS members. With her entry, the relationship
shifted from direct confrontation to aggressive control and co-optation of government
agendas (see Table 1). In a country where political parties compete to get Bollywood
stars on their side at the time of elections, it may not be far from the truth to argue that
NHSS cleverly used the ‘star power’ commanded by its Bollywood friend to influence the
state machinery – a strategy that I interpret as co-optation, i.e. influencing government
policy to reflect their interests (Hall 1992; Sands 1992).

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187 Bollywood (derived from Hollywood) is the name given for the Hindi-language film industry in India
and is headquartered in Mumbai.
This analysis of the range of tactics deployed brings to light shifts in strategies within the framework of a single intervention. These shifts are observable upon delving into project-scale actions. The nature and conditions under which such swift shifts in strategies take place, indicate not merely the “schizophrenic” (Fisher 1998) nature of NGO-government interactions but also display the institutional pressures upon an NGO to realign its strategies to respond to client exigencies and its own need to gain legitimacy e.g. in “fighting for the rights of the poor.”

Confrontation in the form of mass protests and demonstrations, was used as a dominant means to engage with the state and achieve NHSS’s strategic aim of raising public awareness, gaining legitimacy and exerting pressure upon government to respond in favor of the interests of the slum residents that NHSS sought to represent. In a relationship crowded with the use of contentious tactics, one is tempted to locate NHSS’s interactions, with the government, neatly and squarely in the box Najam labels ‘confrontation’. However, this case challenges such a simplistic classification and calls for relationships to be viewed as evolving processes rather than as interactions with clear and consistent characterizations. Organizations with high-profile members, like the NHSS, are under constant pressure to prove their mettle, to translate their highly publicized agendas into deliverables. Faced with a government that was unwilling to concede to its demands, NHSS reconsidered its tactical position and chose the next best option of compromise. This is not to say that one choice clearly followed the other but instead implies a willingness among its members to change course of action in the face of failed strategies,
even if this amounted to compromising on its own steadfast ideals of resettling and
rehabilitating the poor near their original place of residence. This set the stage for
emerging strategies of cooptation and complementarity to become increasingly common
at NHSS in the future.
4.4 FORMATION OF THE YOUTH FOR UNITY AND VOLUNTARY ACTION (YUVA)

YUVA was founded when a group of students and lecturers from Nirmala Niketan, College of Social Work got together with other like-minded people. Our very first project, the training of youth from underprivileged sectors in Jogeshwari, a large and neglected slum area, consisted of finding a creative and local solution to the many problems faced by the community. In the earliest days the genesis of many of our projects lay in our immediate and often emotional responses to visible acts of injustice. In the first six years of our existence we used the collective, mass-based approach and direct action to launch a series of interventions with the disadvantaged who included women, street children and pavement dwellers.

Source: YUVA, 2002a

YUVA’s web-site describes its origins as part of an “age of confrontation” between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” Developmental solutions were seen to reside in the inherent capacities of the disadvantaged poor to “struggle” and the ability of the trained social worker to intervene and direct the energies of the “underprivileged” to demand from the system what is “rightfully” theirs. Organizing, mobilizing and conscientizing skills of a professional social worker permeates the language of most of YUVA’s early project reports and its brochures. Much of this is also evident in the narratives of interviews and informal conversations with YUVA’s founding members and slum and squatter communities that YUVA worked with in these early years. I therefore devote this section to explore YUVA’s articulation of its role during its formative years -- a time span that roughly covers a period of six years between 1984 and 1990. I further focus my analysis upon its work in the area of housing among slums and pavement communities in the city of Bombay.
YUVA, the result of Dissatisfaction with Social Work Practice

Using ongoing projects as training grounds for budding social workers is relatively common mode of instruction among schools of social work in India. One such action research project, undertaken at the behest of a German funding agency in 1978, took the form of an NGO called the Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA). YUVA’s earliest employees and acquaintances in communities\textsuperscript{188} trace its formation to a “youth placement” project at Bombay’s College of Social Work, the Nirmala Niketan Institute which was funded by Terres des Hommes Germany (TDH).\textsuperscript{189} The project sought to “harness the potential of underprivileged youth so that they were capacitated to be a part of the problem solving process” (YUVA 1990, 2). The key philosophy guiding the project was a belief that “people are a productive force who themselves could tackle issues affecting them. Through a training process, they could be equipped to handle their own problems” (YUVA 1990, 2). Directed by a faculty member\textsuperscript{190} at the College of Social Work, the project employed a fresh graduate who was to become Founding Executive Director of YUVA.\textsuperscript{191} Among the activities undertaken as part of the Youth

\textsuperscript{188} Interviews with YUVA’s employees, its Founder/Executive Director (on April 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2003) as well as conversations with residents of slums in Jogeshwari (East). Also noted in YUVA’s review report (YUVA 1990, 1).

\textsuperscript{189} Terre des Hommes (TDH), Germany was registered as a charity in January 1967. Terre des Hommes translates as ‘earth of humanity’, in French. It began work when some 40 women and men met in Stuttgart, Germany in 1966-67 to organize relief flights and medical treatment for child war victims of Vietnam. TDH Germany is a part of a larger ‘movement’ founded in 1959 in Lausanne, Switzerland. What began as an attempt to provide services to child victims of war gradually became more inclusive. By about 1982, the movement spread to 26 countries and functions with the objective to explore underlying causes of poverty and oppression – an objective mirrored in the growth and evolution of TDH Germany as well (Source: my perusal of their web-site [www.oneworldweb.de/tdh/englisch.html#history] accessed on 24\textsuperscript{th} May 2004).

\textsuperscript{190} This former faculty member of NN was one of YUVA’s three founding members. She is currently a member of YUVA’s General Body.

\textsuperscript{191} At the time I was in Mumbai, he was member of YUVA’s Governing Board and held the position of Secretary and Chair of YUVA Consulting, a constituent organization working under the aegis of YUVA.
Placement Project was a paraprofessional training program for youth in slums. This brought the young graduate in touch with a host of slum dwellers, a large proportion of whom resided in what is arguably Bombay’s second largest slum, an area called Jogeshwari in northeast Bombay.\textsuperscript{192} Besides the camaraderie he developed with youth from Jogeshwari, he also became a familiar face amongst student and youth organizations in the city.

After a dispute with the management of the College of Social Work, the yet-to-be Founding Executive Director of YUVA ended his association with the college project in July 1984 and met with the project’s funder along with two faculties from the College. To their surprise, the funder not only expressed interest in continuing to fund the project but offered to disconnect the project from the College of Social Work to allow for their continued participation. It was at this juncture that decision was taken to form YUVA. The NGO was formed with a “… one line mandate that we will intervene in any issue of social justice.”\textsuperscript{193} This parallels its earliest vision statement\textsuperscript{194} (YUVA, n.d.1):

\begin{quote}
We at YUVA have a vision. The vision of a society where each individual, woman and man, lives in dignity. Where each can participate in the
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{192} Dharavi is Mumbai’s largest slum and is the largest slum in Asia. Jogeshwari is considered the second largest slum in Mumbai and is situated about 30 kilometers north of the commercial and political center of the city. The slum is spread over an area of six square kilometers, with a population of approximately 300,000 (Committee for the Right to Housing [CRH] 1988). Please see map in Appendix AC for the location of Dharavi and Jogeshwari.

\textsuperscript{193} Interview with Founding Executive Director on the 1st of July 2003 in YUVA’s Khargar office in Mumbai.

\textsuperscript{194} A more recent vision statement of YUVA reads thus (YUVA Urban n.d.):

\begin{quote}
We believe that development is a continuous struggle to create a humane society, which sustains all human beings, as well as nature, where women, men and children enjoy universal human rights. A humane society based on the values of equality, distributive justice and secularism is liberated from oppression on the basis of caste, class, creed, gender, age, ethnicity, language; is free from all forms of exploitation and violence; and demonstrates integrity and respect for democratic polity and processes.
\end{quote}
social, cultural, economic and political decisions that affect their lives. Where woman/man is a controller of her/his environment – a subject of development rather than an object. A society where all individuals live in justice, equality and peace.

Youth as Agents of Change

In Hindi and Marathi, the word YUVA, besides being an acronym for Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action also translates as ‘Youth’. Its Founding Executive Director did not wish YUVA’s agenda to be limited to the concerns of the youth or to that of the city of Bombay or cities in general. The ‘youth’ in cities were, however, a focal point of YUVA’s attention. They were understood to be at a stage in life “when ideals, aspirations and ambitions are at their highest” (YUVA n.d.1). The Founding Director’s involvement with the paraprofessional training program for slum youth, most of who, were from the slums of Jogeshwari, helped lay the ground for building more regular and broad-based contacts with the slum community. In its initial years, it was relatively clear that YUVA would work “with and through the youth for change.”195 Part of the emphasis accorded to the youth as “agents of change”, is likely related to the age profile of the early members of the YUVA, most of whom averaged 20-21 years of age and were students in the College of Social Work.

In practical terms, YUVA’s mission and vision led it to adopt a rights-based approach to development wherein youth in slums assumed the role of a medium through which the goal of societal transformation was to begin. For this reason, YUVA spent much of its initial years organizing youth from different slum and pavement communities in order “to

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195 Interview with Director of YUVA’s Child Rights team on April 3rd, 2003, at Andheri, Mumbai, Interview notes.
form a movement that would involve itself in development issues” (YUVA 1990, 9). YUVA registered as a voluntary development organization in 1984.

By virtue of its roots in the College of Social Work’s interventions in Jogeshwari, YUVA expanded on its work with youth in the slums of Jogeshwari. By May of 1985, contacts were established with nearly 25 youth groups in the area, comprising 110 individuals. All of this culminated in a shibir or youth camp whose purpose was collectively to seek ways and means by which YUVA could work with the youth towards development in the area. Having received inputs from the youth who attended the camp, YUVA launched its first project with the community at Jogeshwari called the “Intervention with Youth in Jogeshwari.” Visible outcomes comprised formation of area level groups of women and youth -- Mahila Mandals and Yuvak Mandals. A resident of a slum in Jogeshwari, remembered his first contact with the YUVA Founder and Executive Director:

He would come from his college [by 1985, YUVA’s founder/Executive Director had begun work on his Masters in Social Work at the Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work, Mumbai] in the evenings and would just stand somewhere in the slum, waiting for people. YUVA was the only NGO in Jogeshwari at the time and there was absolutely no dearth of issues to address – from water to communal tensions to electricity and ration cards to goondaism [hooliganism or other rough, violent behavior in Hindi]. Before YUVA came on the scene, we were not without solutions…we had formed into Mandals [groups] and even tackled issues such as water and electricity by soliciting the help of say, a local politician like an MLA or a corporator. But with YUVA, we got to know one another, overcame our fears, and learnt a range of other collective strategies to help address our concerns.

196 I interviewed nearly ten residents of Jogeshwari (East) – particularly those who were closely allied with YUVA’s interests in the slum. The resident referred to here actively worked in the slum during YUVA’s formative years and is a member of Omkar Cooperative Housing Society in Jogeshwari (East).
For over a year, work was almost entirely carried out with the help of student volunteers from the College of Social Work. This was true of work with pavements, which began in April 1985 with the help of two social work student volunteers who started an open school for pavement children on a pavement stretch in South Bombay’s (central business district). Like work with the youth in Jogeshwari, educational and recreational activities with children was used as an entry point to extend work to problems concerning the pavement community as a whole. The announcement of the Supreme Court Judgment made intervention in housing a necessity and an intervention that the organization felt prepared to address.

*YUVA and the Supreme Court Judgment*

YUVA had barely begun work in the areas of education among children in pavements, bootlegging in slums, and a host of other community-level issues, when the Supreme Court announced its judgment on the pavement dweller’s case (the Olga Tellis case). YUVA’s Founding Executive Director recollected being in Holland at the time that the judgment was announced:

I returned to India on the 16th of July, 1985 with the plan that the time was ripe for another experiment... a collective of NGOs. Seva Niketan, Vikas Samiti, Terres des Hommes – I called for a meeting on 23rd July and we decided to form a collective at the Bombay level. Sixty organizations including SPARC came. CRH [i.e., the Committee for the Right to Housing] was formed as a network of NGOs working on housing issues. Our agenda very clearly was to resist demolitions, to monitor demolitions, and create alternatives for demolitions. Alternatives to demolitions needed to be looked at!
YUVA called for the first meeting of the CRH and held the position as a coordinating organization for five continuous years. The initial coordinating committee, finalized on the 10th of August, comprised a sizable number of interested Bombay-based NGOs and individuals. The idea was to constitute a collective representing similar organizations, preferably NGOs to develop strategies to oppose the Supreme Court judgment and suggest alternatives to the government. Interestingly, SPARC was a participant in the first few meetings but dropped out once CRH’s coordinating committee was formalized. By this time, NHSS was already an umbrella group with a wide network comprising slum and youth groups across the city. YUVA was an active member of the NHSS but, as claimed by the NHSS, dropped out some time around 1986 on grounds that “NHSS had become ‘left wing’ and that it was being maneuvered by ‘revolutionaries’” (Singh 1994).

Within two years, the work of the CRH graduated from anti-demolition mobilization and strategizing to demanding that housing be recognized as a fundamental right in the Constitution of India. The work of the CRH while articulated in different terms across documents, centered on the following three areas:

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197 These included, Seva Niketan, Balmiki Dalit Vikas Samiti, Bandra East Community Centre, Bombay Slum Citizens Development Project, Samaj Seva Niketan, Seva Niketan, Slum Rehabilitation Society, St. Pius College, Social Justice Cell – Bombay, Urban Community Development Centre, and several interested individuals (YUVA n.d.1); Telephone conversation to New York with Founding Executive Director of YUVA on September 8, 2004.

198 The report of a study conducted by YUVA on behalf of the CRH introduces the activities of the CRH as follows (Committee for the Right to Housing, 1988):

- Responding to demolitions and development displacements in the city through rehabilitation and litigation.
- Training of animators to work effectively on housing issues.
- Networking with other organizations in the city and country to promote pro-people housing policies.
- Undertaking studies to understand and work on the housing issues affecting the city’s poor.
a) *Building public opinion*: CRH published leaflets, handouts, and other reading material to raise public awareness about slum and pavement dwellers. Slide shows, posters, a journal (‘Right to Housing’, a quarterly journal from the CRH) and a film (‘Fighting for a Foothold’ filmed from 1984-1985) were prepared with the objective to “expose myths related to pavement and slum dwellers” (YUVA n.d.1). In addition, memoranda and postcards (7,000 of them) signed by concerned citizens were sent with demands, to stop demolitions and consider rehabilitation, addressed to the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister, Municipal Commissioner, and the Mayor. The activities undertaken included staging of demonstrations and street plays on public thoroughfares. A token day-long hunger strike was also organized. A ‘mock’ funeral of pavement dwellers entitled ‘burial of justice’ was enacted through songs depicting the unconstitutional nature of the Judgment and the manner in which the poor were being victimized. The film “Fighting for a Foothold” produced by the CRH contains footage of a majority of these activities.

b) *Working with public officials*: Meetings were held with the State Housing Minister, the Municipal Commissioner, and others to work out feasible alternatives and arrive at a more comprehensive and humane solution to the problem of housing for slum and pavement dwellers of the city. YUVA’s Founder/Executive Director, a lead coordinator of the CRH, asserts that:

> Ours was not a totally confrontational position – in fact we were looking for alternatives with the government … we wanted rehabilitation to be seriously thought about before resorting to demolition. Government should be held responsible. People will buy land at the government rate . . . [which] stipulated a maximum
compensation for those displaced so that they could buy the land and then, it would only be ideal that people be allowed to build their own housing.199

The CRH believed that the government of Maharashtra must implement the Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act (ULCRA) of 1976. The ULCRA, as explained earlier, was enacted in February 1976 with the intent of preventing “concentration of urban land in the hands of a few persons and speculation and profiteering therewith and with a view to bringing about an equitable distribution of land in urban agglomerations to subserve the common good” (Government of India 1976). The CRH pointed out to the government that there was a loophole in the Act which was conveniently utilized by landowners to override the requirements of the ULCRA. Sections 20 and 21 of the ULCRA provided a host of escape routes for the landed who were loathe to part with their land. These sections empowered the State Government to grant discretionary exemptions for a variety of reasons, prompting almost all landowners with excess land to claim them. The ULCRA thus became a vehicle for corruption. Those who could not or would not bribe their way to get an exemption went to court, and the acquisition process became an agonizing legal battle. The CRH asserted in its communiqué with the Government that if the ULCRA were not left to languish in the statute books, some 8,000 hectares of vacant land could be declared surplus and acquired to house all of the city’s slum and pavement dwellers. For the CRH, much like other groups such as the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), the claim of scarcity of land was understood as a falsehood propagated by those who actively

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199 Interview with Founding Director on 1st of July 2003 at YUVA’s Training Center in Khargar, Mumbai.
sought to keep land vacant much like “the food hoarder in times of famine” (Heredia 1985, 12).

c)  *Mobilizing slum and pavement dwellers:* Through the medium of community meetings, songs, and street plays, CRH discussed legal issues and rights with affected communities. Protest marches organized by different parties and united fronts were used as points for mobilizing people to generate feelings of solidarity among what were described as “victim groups” (YUVA n.d.1). This was a time when NHSS and YUVA among many other groups worked together to sensitize communities of their rights and to lead protest marches as a show of collective identity and discontent.

The fervor caused by the Supreme Court Judgment lived on until December 1985. While the stay order against demolitions was valid until the 15th of October 1985, this was also the year when the Congress Party celebrated its centenary year, meaning that the government drastically cut back on demolitions over fear of inviting the ire of the voting public. As a result, demolitions did not take place and there was little to which to respond. Much of CRH activity, particularly the use of protest movements, came to a halt. According to YUVA (1990, 15), 1986 was utilized to provide legal aid to settlements that were demolished and to help with rehabilitation of a host of pavement dwellers who were forcibly relocated from South Bombay to a resettlement colony in Dindoshi (the same area in the northwestern suburb of Bombay where Sanjay Gandhi Nagar residents were relocated).
The lull in the activity in the CRH got a sudden boost when in 1987, the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, the CRH decided to affiliate itself with the National Campaign for Housing Rights (NCHR). The NCHR was launched in 1986 as a network of people’s organizations, development organizations, trade unions, academic institutions, lawyers and other civil rights groups. The role assigned to the government was not one of ‘welfare’ or mere ‘facilitation’ but to be a guarantor of rights. That such a right to housing must be guaranteed alongside the right to health, safe environment, and livelihood was the core requirement of the NCHR. On the role of the government it elaborated that, “the State’s most constructive role in housing is not to build directly for all sections, but rather to create and guarantee the preconditions by which all women and men can gain adequate housing. It is to empower and enable people to build for themselves, to control excessive consumption and profiteering and to build directly only for the very poor or otherwise handicapped” (YUVA 2004, 4). The NCHR also emphasized the relationship between gender and housing.

By 1987, the central thrust of the nationwide campaign shifted to drafting and campaigning around the issue of formulating a People’s Bill of Housing Rights. The preparation of the Bill through a process of consultation was a first in a country “where policy making was seen as the exclusive preserve of the bureaucratic or legal elite” (YUVA 2004, 4). The Bill was drafted by a Legal Working Group constituted by the NCHR that comprised persons with expertise in law and women’s rights and involved four revisions based on inputs received from sectors/groups across the country. The final
draft of the Housing Rights Bill was completed in 1992, after six years of national discussion, and was followed by a yearlong advocacy campaign for its adoption in the Parliament. Although the passage of a constitutional amendment was not achieved, the NCHR accomplished many important outcomes aimed at establishing a right to housing. As a result of the momentum it created across the country, the issue of housing became part of the national public and political discourse. Most notably, it effected the introduction of housing rights in the political manifestos and state policies in the 1990s.

For YUVA’s Founding Executive Director, the NCHR became a platform for the “articulation of all the experiences I had on demolitions, basic amenities.” CRH, on the other hand, receded in importance when YUVA’s position as the coordinating body (Secretariat) moved to another NGO in the city in 1990. The Founder/Executive Director attributes the decline in YUVA’s interest with the CRH to the internal politicking that, according to him, plagued the coalition within a few years of its operations in Bombay. Attention shifted to the NCHR and with it, YUVA jumped into international housing advocacy coalitions. These include the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and the Habitat International Coalition.201

200 Interview with Founding Director on 1st of July 2003 at YUVA’s Training Center in Khargar, Mumbai.
201 The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights was formed in 1988, as a common forum or facility for NGOs, professionals and grassroots groups working in Asian cities to exchange ideas and tackle the problem of forced evictions in the regions cities, develop opportunities for organizations of the poor and consider their place in city planning (Asian Coalition for Housing Rights 2001). It was formed as the Asian arm of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC). The ACHR Secretariat is located in Bangkok. The HIC was organized in 1976 as a nongovernmental counterpart to the UN Commission on Human Settlements, and both emerged from the process of convening the first UN Habitat conference at Vancouver (Canada), in 1976. HIC members include some 450 NGOs, CBOs, academic and research institutions, civil society organizations and like-minded individuals, from 80 countries in both the North and the South. The binding factor is a shared set of objectives that “shape HIC’s commitment to communities working to secure housing and improve their habitat conditions” (Habitat International Coalition 2005).
I now analyze YUVA’s repertoires in its formative years. The key events in its formative years are summarized in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3 Key Events in YUVA’s Formative Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30th of August 1984</td>
<td>YUVA’s first General Body Meeting – celebrated as YUVA’s founding day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th December 1984</td>
<td>Work begins with youth in the slum area of Jogeshwari.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1985</td>
<td>Work begins with children on the pavements of Cross Maidan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th July 1985</td>
<td>Supreme Court judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23rd July 1985</td>
<td>Meeting of voluntary agencies and concerned individuals conducted under YUVA’s coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th August 1985</td>
<td>The Committee for the Right to Housing formed with YUVA as the Secretariat (the coordinating organization).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1985 to December 1985</td>
<td>Film, protest marches, a one day hunger strike, slide shows, posters, postcard and letter campaign, songs and street plays – all with the aim of building support and awareness for a judgment that granted legal sanction to authorities to carry out demolitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>CRH joins hands with the National Campaign for Housing Rights, which presses for the inclusion of housing as a fundamental right in the Indian constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>YUVA joins hands at the Asian and Global levels – these include the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and the Habitat International Coalition (HIC).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Discussion

YUVA summarizes its work from 1984-1990 using the following diagrammatic representation (YUVA 1990):

Figure 4.1 Focus of Work: 1984-1990 (YUVA)202

City, National and International Collectives of which YUVA is a part

- Anti-Eviction Work
  - Protest
  - Litigation
  - Awareness
  - Solidarity
- Advocacy for Housing as a Fundamental Right
- Research and Documentation on Displacements
- Education to Support and Strengthen CBO’s and NGO’s

Built almost entirely on the credibility of one of its founding members (and Executive Director), the initial years of YUVA’s intervention reflected the youthful zeal that he personified. He along with two other of YUVA’s founding members wanted YUVA to “intervene in any issue of social justice.”203 Faith in a rights-based, empowerment framework translated into activities that focused almost entirely on conscientizing the masses of their rights as citizens. YUVA therefore eagerly sought to extend the definition of advocacy beyond actions geared to influencing housing policy, to the “act of organizing the strategic use of information to democratize unequal power relations” (Jordan and van Tujial 2003, 201). Institutional tactics of lawsuits, lobbying through

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203 Interview with Founding Executive Director on the 1st of July 2003 at YUVA’s training center in Khargar, Mumbai.
campaigns, releasing documentary films, circulating awareness materials and others were carried out alongside organizing youth training camps and leadership training programs among the youth. Work towards education and awareness building were important means to achieve the end of enhancing self-respect, improving self-confidence, creating a sense of community, and promoting mutual trust.

Empowerment-oriented NGOs such as YUVA opposed the state in direct and indirect ways while also aiming to see government assume ultimate responsibility for its actions. The task of delivering housing, according to a former Director of its Housing Unit, “is the job of the government, not YUVA; YUVA always saw its role as providing suggestions and alternatives to the government. It will organize the communities and safeguard communities against excesses initiated or tolerated by the state but no further.” YUVA therefore saw its work in housing as broadly comprising, “resisting demolitions, monitoring demolitions and searching for alternatives to demolitions.”204 And more significantly, the responsibility to implement an improved policy was predominantly placed upon government’s shoulders, with YUVA complementing the government by suggesting more “humane” solutions than those being practiced.

Explaining Key Tactics

YUVA emphasized two main tactics in its work - that of organizing and mobilizing communities and initiating and participating in city and nation-wide advocacy.

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204 Ibid.
campaigns. The following table (Table 4.4) summarizes some of the key strategies and tactics deployed by YUVA in its formative years. The table also outlines key features against each strategy and accompanying tactics. I follow this with an analysis of the strategies used by YUVA and the various strategies are discussed together.

Table 4.4: Repertoire of Tactics in YUVA’s Formative Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Confrontation (Primary Strategy) | - City level Campaigns and Networks  
- National and international coalitions  
- Film  
- Community training (leadership)  
- Litigation | - Collective strength  
- Movement  
- Education and Awareness Generation  
- Representing client interests | - Policy advocacy through campaigns and coalitions, high on agenda  
- Failed to sustain collective, city-level cohesion  
- Found it easier to shift to national level campaigns |
| Complementarity (Sub-strategy) | - Assisting in government resettlement colonies  
- Willingness to support government programs | - Finding solutions  
- Suggesting alternatives | - Search for alternatives with government unsuccessful |

YUVA’s initial work with housing centered on forming collectives across organizations working in housing issues for the urban poor in the city of Bombay. The collective strength was utilized to express dissent, to form a ready ‘army’ of believers who would, when necessary, come upstage and carry out anti-demolition work and post-demolition relief. However, most accounts of events recorded in YUVA demonstrate that preventing acts of demolition was less well achieved than post-demolition intervention. A project review report by YUVA, points out that despite efforts, a search for alternatives had not yielded results (YUVA 1990). Lobbying government officials and politicians had not been pursued with the earnestness that the situation demanded. The collective strength
displayed in protest marches lasted as long as demolitions were high on the governmental agenda. “It is easier,” observed a Professor at the TISS, “to retain a mass base and to carry out advocacy work at the local level when there are demolitions – when the government is viewed popularly as a violator of human rights and dignity. Once the intensity of the demolitions somewhat decreased, most NGOs that were part of the CRH were left wondering at what level and what scale to advocate, when on a day-to-day basis there was little else to do.”

Once incidents of localized demolitions came down, YUVA moved from city-level advocacy to also supporting a national level campaign. For YUVA, participation in the NCHR enhanced its profile nationally. NCHR also represented the first campaign of its kind on the issue of housing rights. Internationally, YUVA secured membership in the Habitat International Coalition and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights. Its connections at the larger national and international level were to come to good use in its future campaigns.

More so than SPARC and the NHSS, YUVA aspired to be an organization equipped to serve the diverse needs of slum and pavement communities. Although housing was a prominent issue for YUVA in 1984, it stood alongside other concerns of slum and pavement communities. All of YUVA’s work with slums and pavements was grounded in a rights-based framework that prioritized education and conscientization as necessary for realizing the goal of ‘rendering justice to all’ and achieving societal transformation.

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205 Conversation with researcher at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai on July 20th, 2004.
The Supreme Court order created a new platform to display YUVA’s capacities as a young NGO attempting to bring about change in housing discourse in urban India.

YUVA capitalized on the opportunity afforded by the Supreme Court order to integrate its grassroots advocacy efforts with the formation of a policy advocacy network with like-minded organizations. Unlike the strong and the direct action flavor of NHSS’s contentious tactics, confrontation assumed different manifestation in YUVA in the form of the Committee for the Right to Housing (CRH). CRH originated as a city-level response to an anticipated crisis of widespread demolitions. The Committee was formed with the intent of getting NGOs to collaborate with one another. The aim of the committee was therefore not only the expression of opposition to the Supreme Court order but also the deliberate creation of a new and institutionalized platform for joint exploration of solutions. Besides generating awareness through mass mobilization, street protests, slogan shouting, film, and street plays, CRH solicited the participation of government officials and looked for potential collaborators within government. The CRH was less successful than anticipated in getting government functionaries to lend a sympathetic ear to its recommendations. However, in YUVA’s view, the NCHR gave it an early opportunity to jump on the advocacy bandwagon with other prominent NGOs and groups at the national level, thus later providing a springboard to participating in international advocacy coalitions.

In sum, YUVA’s early housing interventions covered a large range of activities. It undertook grassroots mobilization and organizing, generated awareness and debate using
films and other print media, lobbied with government officials, participated in post-demolition relief efforts, and initiated campaigns and coalitions at the city, national, and international levels. Its work with housing was, enmeshed in a variety of other community-level interventions with youth, women, and children. Unlike the NHSS, YUVA was yet to confront or assume the responsibility of resettling and rehabilitating a community. YUVA’s early relations with the government were not the product of a singular engagement with a government functionary or department (i.e., a specific slum or a community), but were based on a broader vision of participation in campaigns and coalitions as a primary means of engaging with the state.

4.5 FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF AREA RESOURCE CENTRES (SPARC)

Two lead founding members of the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC) began their professional careers in a welfare-oriented agency called the Nagpada Neighborhood House in the early 1980s.206 These individuals, who now serve as the Director and Associate Director of SPARC, recall being involved in wide-ranging activities from sports and day care for children, to assistance in health and family welfare for those living in Bombay’s slums and pavements. These were their first steps towards understanding the lives led by pavement dwellers and more so, the women among them.

In interacting with pavement women, they found their work at the welfare agency inadequate for addressing hardships resulting from the State’s policy of forced demolitions. Forced to “seriously rethink the manner in which we worked with the poor,”

206 The current Director of SPARC is a postgraduate of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and its Associate Director is a graduate from the Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work who attended Nirmala Niketan at the same time that YUVA’s Founding Executive Director attended the College.
this experience sparked a keen desire in these two individuals to address issues facing the poor that they perceived to be more “real”.

Charged with a sense of disquiet, they left the area for roughly two years to re-enter as SPARC in December 1984. They came with a philosophy dramatically contrary to the welfare-model of development in which they had previously worked. \(^{207}\) This new philosophy called for the “central participation of women/small slum communities” in working out their own solutions; emphasizing processes, such as creation of movements for change, to address shelter-related problems; and, empowering communities so that they can make an “informed choice of options” (Mitlin 1990, 95).

I devote the following section to elucidating SPARC’s work with the pavement dwellers of Byculla, a locality in Central Bombay. The section begins by detailing SPARC’s work with the pavement communities in the years surrounding the announcement of the Supreme Court judgment, including a detailed analysis of a range of activities subsequent to the Supreme Court judgment.

\(^{207}\) Source: Conversation with Associate Director of SPARC on the 17th of February 2003 in Colaba. The role played by the Director of SPARC in defining the activities and philosophy of work is widely held as being critical in shaping the course of events that followed. This was evident in my conversations with members of SPARC’s Governing Board as also with women in the pavement communities. This opinion that I hold was contested by the Associate Director. In reaction to a case study I wrote for SPARC, the Associate Director was of the opinion that I accord excessive attention to the opinions and recollections of the Director as opposed to those of the women themselves. Based on my extensive interviews with members of the ‘Alliance’ (explained later) and officials in government, I hold the Director’s experiences with the welfare agency discussed above, other NGOs, and her own developmental philosophy, in general, to be of critical significance in shaping the choice of strategies. This does not imply that the strategies of SPARC are not influenced by others within and without SPARC but only implies that her experiences significantly shaped its formative years.
SPARC and its First Intervention

SPARC’s work with pavement women began under the basic premise that women are the poorest among the urban poor, and interventions that yield success with them could “be adapted for the less deprived because of its built-in flexibility” (Bapat and Patel 1992, 3). For SPARC “it was not possible to plan without women” and it also held that “that unless solutions work for women, they are not valid for the community” (Mitlin 1990, 93). The choice of working with women was one that was likely made easy by the fact that all of SPARC’s five initial workers were women, albeit upper and upper middle class professionals. In hindsight, SPARC’s founding members pride themselves on making a decision to start with women on pavements as contrasted to residents of a slum. 208

SPARC distinguishes among three broad categories of urban “squatters.” a) Those who squatted on private lands. These groups of slum dwellers were the earliest victims of eviction by state authorities. They were also among the first to get protection against forced evictions; b) Those who squatted on municipal and State government lands. They not only got a degree of protection against eviction, but also gradually gained access to basic services under various government schemes of slum improvement and upgradation; and, c) Pavement dwellers and those who lived on and along railway tracks and other Central Government owned lands such as land belonging to the Airport Authority of India. It was not until 1995 that this third category was included in the ‘list’ of protected dwellers. SPARC began work with the last category -- those it considered the most vulnerable.

208 Personal communication via email with Director, SPARC on Saturday, the 25th of October 2003.
Pavement Women and the Supreme Court Judgment

Shortly after SPARC entered the community, the infamous Supreme Court judgment was announced. Like in the other case NGOs, the announcement of the judgment was the cause of a great deal of anxiety within SPARC. News spread that demolition squads of the city’s Municipal Corporation (called the Bombay Municipal Corporation, the BMC) would be on the streets on the 1st of November, 1985. SPARC attributes the high levels of anxiety to the fact that a majority of other NGOs responded to the judgment by conducting mass protests. SPARC’s founding members confess to not knowing how best to respond to the situation. Part of their disinterest in such mass events was related to a discomfort with direct confrontation as a means of ‘solving’ the problems of the poor. SPARC’s Director pointedly asked,

What comes out of confronting the demolition squads? Most of the men who protest get arrested, lose a day’s wage while their wives lament at home wondering when their men folk would return . . . It is just not worth the pains they go through.

Moreover, from its interactions with pavement dwellers, SPARC understood that pavement dwellers were afraid to confront the police during demolitions. As such, the organization’s leadership was “keen on making peace with the devil and begin a dialogue

209 Details presented in this section are largely drawn from individual and group interviews with residents of the pavements of Byculla over the entire period of my data collection. Examples include interviews with pavement women held on 11th December 2002 (Mankhurd), 3rd April 2003 (Byculla), 7th April 2003 (Byculla), 9th of May 2003 (Byculla) and the 1st of May 2003 (Dharavi) among many other rounds of informal interviews and group discussions in Byculla and during visits to other slum settlements in the city where these women were managing and monitoring construction of toilets (under World Bank sponsored Slum Sanitation Programme) and redevelopment of slums.
with the city to accommodate them.\footnote{210} SPARC concluded that there was an urgent need to understand the migration history of pavement dwellers, the circumstances that led to their pavement dwelling, and their occupational patterns. Despite the presence of a host of studies sponsored by the government, SPARC decided to conduct its own survey.\footnote{211} It justified the exercise on grounds that none of the previous surveys had covered a significantly large sample size; had directed their results to officials, planners and the media but ignored sharing results with the community; and, finally, it felt that a comprehensive survey would prove that it is possible for a small NGO with limited resources to do such a census.

Thus, began a series of activities that, in due course, created a new niche for SPARC and set off, as SPARC notes, “a long process of questioning, planning and solution-crafting” (Patel 2003b, 6). I devote the following few pages to discussing these rapidly emerging routines: challenging State’s database (of the urban poor); enabling community-government linkages; building alliances with a federation of slum dwellers; and, preparing to deliver housing solutions.

*Challenging State’s Database*

\footnote{210} Conversation with Associate Director of SPARC, at her residence in Prabhadevi, a locality, in Mumbai on the 12th of April 2003.

\footnote{211} The first major study was undertaken in 1959 at the behest of the BMC. Other studies included: a study conducted by the TISS on behalf of the BMC and Bombay Civil Trust in 1969; and, a study conducted by the Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work from November 1981 and January 1982.
Between July and October that year, SPARC organized a survey of pavement slums in the E Ward\textsuperscript{212} and in several main arterial roads that connect the central business district to the city’s airport. The BMC had announced that these roads were primary targets for demolition. Employees of a market research agency were recruited, trained, and sent to the field to conduct this survey which was to cover 6,000 households comprising nearly 27,000 individuals and was completed within a month’s time. The strict time-frame was set so as to gather information at least two weeks prior to the 1\textsuperscript{st} of November – the date when the impending demolitions were slated to begin. This preliminary and rapid-fire fact finding did not yield any dramatically different results from those already presented in other surveys conducted by the TISS or the city’s College of Social Work but it helped SPARC demonstrate the importance of sharing the results of a survey with members of the community and it also, as planned, helped to demonstrate the feasibility of conducting a census of pavement dwellers in a short time-frame with limited resources (SPARC 1985, 22).

No mass demolitions took place that year. SPARC used this time to present the results of the census to achieve two goals. The first goal was to negotiate on behalf of pavement dwellers. SPARC aggressively presented the results of the survey to several organs of the State and the city. These included the Municipal Commissioner, Secretary of the Urban Development Department, Secretary to the Housing Department, the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA), and the Chief Secretary of the State of Maharashtra (the highest State level bureaucrat). SPARC also discussed this

\textsuperscript{212} The Municipal Corporation divides the city into ‘Wards’ each of which contains two to five hundred thousand people. The ‘E’ Ward is arguably the densest ward in the city.
with the Government of India at the level of the Planning Commission and with the Urban Development Ministry. SPARC’s Associate Director remarked that SPARC went knocking to government offices saying, “Here is a report that gives you all the facts you need. Now, tell us what we should do so they get a secure tenure?” In hindsight, remarks SPARC’s Associate Director, the novelty of the strategy lay in its simplicity:

We went to the government offices not with complaints about what they weren’t doing or ought to be doing but, instead, went to them asking for a solution. This, we now realize, made a huge difference in how we were received by the state. For many bureaucrats, it was the first time that someone came to them to jointly explore a solution.\textsuperscript{213}

The Associate Director SPARC also added that relating to bureaucrats and all government officials in this fashion was critical to SPARC’s general approach.

Often as activists, we forget that the state is populated by those like us, mostly middle class men, who need to feel good about who they are and what they do. So beginning by attacking or accusing them may not open doors to future negotiations.\textsuperscript{214}

The Director of SPARC further clarifies that,

This is not to be interpreted as an easy task. This did not, for instance, mean that government officials had their doors wide open for we women activists. We just persisted – we kept sending the report, kept sending letters, and making sure that we were able to meet them face to face.\textsuperscript{215}

SPARC’s second major activity during this period was to gain the trust, friendship and, a working relationship with several pavement communities. SPARC’s Director analyzed it as a time when,

\begin{flushright}
213 Conversation with Associate Director of SPARC at her residence in Prabhadevi area of Mumbai on the 12\textsuperscript{th} of April 2003.\protect \\
214 Ibid.\protect \\
215 Interview with Director, SPARC on the 9\textsuperscript{th} of August 2003 at her residence in Worli, Mumbai.
\end{flushright}
Participatory tools, especially participatory research were areas of hot debate and discussion in international development. The census provided a means to explore how best to develop this in practice at a scale and with a population whose lives were in deep crisis owing to an impending threat of eviction.  

The survey soon developed into a powerful tool to initiate work in several different slums and pavements -- a tool that acquired the status of a ritual in SPARC’s work, as seen in its work in the Dharavi slum of Mumbai (Chapter 5) and among those residing on land belonging to the federal authority, the Indian Railways (Chapter 6). Challenging government data, and presenting its own directory of households that constitute a slum or a pavement, therefore became a mobilizing and organizing tool and also helped sell credibility and superiority in several government-led housing programs in the years ahead.

*Enabling Community-Government Collaborations*

Almost a year had passed since SPARC’s rapid-fire ‘census’ of pavements. By this time, the pavement women had developed a healthy rapport with one another and formed a collective called Mahila Milan (which translates as the “Collective of Women”, in Hindi) which was especially concerned about forced evictions. Demolition squads were typically known to plunge people into mayhem, as they sought to salvage their belongings and to protect their children and themselves from physical harm. At a particular pavement stretch called *Apna Zopadpatti*, the response was different. When the squad arrived, women and children encircled the police. The police were evidently

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216 Personal communication with the Director of SPARC via email on 25th October 2003.
caught unawares by the show of numbers. They were further taken aback when the women offered to tear down their own homes. What followed was unique in that the women and children carefully dismantled their homes to the extent that the squad could fill the municipal vans and return to their officers to report that the demolition was carried out. Once the squad left, they set up their homes again.

This was followed by another demolition at *Sophia Zubair*, a pavement settlement in the same municipal ward as *Apna Zopadpatti*. On this occasion, the community decided to go to court as the demolition was accompanied by the squad taking away their personal belongings that they refused to return. They were able to prove in court, through photographs taken in the course of the demolition that the Municipal Corporation owed the community INR 14,500 for its belongings. In an uncharacteristic move, the community then invited the ward officer (the official in-charge of a demolition operation) to come and give them the money at Byculla and even extended an arm in friendship. This was to be the last time that pavements in E Ward faced the squads, despite notices of impending demolitions. The primary reason, according to the women, is the rapport they had built with the police officers and their area’s Ward Office. Members in the area entered into a tacit agreement with the local Ward Office that they would report any new structures built on the pavements. This process has not merely helped to contain the number of pavement dwellers to be resettled (at a stable 536), but it has also facilitated a growth of trust between the two entities. SPARC has formalized this strategy, calling it “do your homework” and “your trump cards in negotiations,” in which it encourages pavement (and slum) communities to save money together, number all their homes, keep
a detailed list of all evidence of residence, and make a deliberate effort to get to know the police and municipal hierarchies (SPARC 1998, 3).

Creating and building an Alliance with the National Slum Dwellers Federation

Within five years of existence, SPARC had established contacts and built relationships with slums and pavement settlements in Bombay and cities across a large part of urban India. This spread in SPARC’s outreach was the result of its association with a slum dweller, the President of the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF). He was a much sought-after ‘savior’ for slum dwellers and in his own words, was “also approached by many NGO leaders who wanted to use me to build and maintain credibility in their communities.”

In 1986, SPARC established an alliance with the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF). The Federation represents a savvy pool of community leaders, a good number of whom are affiliated with political parties. SPARC, Mahila Milan and the NSDF

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217 Interview with Founder-President of the NSDF on the 1st of May 2003 in Dharavi, Mumbai. NSDF elected a new President in about 2000 but its founder continues to be identified and recognized as its leader by all those associated with the Alliance.

218 He established NSDF in 1974 and was well-known in the city as a fire-brand activist who had worked to prevent forced evictions, including the demolition of his own slum settlement, the Janata Colony (covered in Chapter 3). Under his leadership, NSDF had organized mass demonstrations, secured stay orders and contested the eviction order of Janata Colony in the Supreme Court. In the end, the residents lost Janata Colony and their leader-activist (NSDF President) decided that he needed a better means than overtly contest the state. He admittedly switched away from resistance and adopted a more constructive approach to development (Source: Ibid.).

219 Speaking about the “values” that guide SPARC’s work among slums and pavement dwellers, a former government bureaucrat who joined as advisor to SPARC mentioned that SPARC and its affiliates make a conscious effort to initiate community members by stating that “do not join us if you want to serve your own political interests. You are free to affiliate yourself to any political party but do not bring it into the work of the Alliance. So, people from all parties are part of the Alliance.” Interview held on the 10th of May 2003 at SPARC’s Khetwadi office in Mumbai.
began collectively to label themselves the ‘Alliance.’ Each brought complimentary skills and capacities to the three way network - NSDF provided the Alliance with a steady backbone comprised of an active presence in slums across a large part of urban India; Mahila Milan is the female face of the Alliance, a face that among other activities primarily catered to the community’s economic needs of savings and credit; and, SPARC, the sole legally registered entity of the Alliance, gradually receded from playing an active day to day role in activities of the Alliance to concentrating on research, documentation, and funds mobilization.

*Preparing to Deliver Housing Solutions*

Housing gradually emerged as high on SPARC’s agenda for its work in slums and pavements. The following statement alludes to its housing philosophy:

Rather than waiting for the governments to do something about the poor, the communities of the poor in these countries have got together and formed national federations and begun to save money, collect information about themselves and create solutions to their problems. They have begun seeking solutions for housing and infrastructure, the two most vital requirements for survival in the city. Cities are going to face huge immigration as more and more people migrate to the city. Since many of the migrants will be poor, the usual responses of evictions, demolitions, denying communities the right to live in cities will become a very dysfunctional response.\(^{220}\)

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\(^{220}\) Presentation made by the Director of SPARC at the Special session on Habitat II in New York in June 2001. This presentation was also made on behalf of the Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI). The SDI is a network of community based federations in urban poor settlements and partner NGOs in 12 countries in Asia and Africa.
SPARC began working on this emerging housing philosophy with communities on the city’s pavements and more particularly with residents of Byculla, in 1985. SPARC refers to this as its “house training programme.” The first outcome of this training program was an exhibition organized in Byculla in 1987. The exhibit displayed four different life-size models put together by pavement dwellers using cardboard, wood, and some with their sarees. Visitors from other pavements and slums were invited to vote for their favored design and the highest count of votes went to a 14 feet high model home with an internal loft. Besides several pavement and slum dwellers, the event was attended by high-ranking State bureaucrats who discussed options for alternate housing for pavement dwellers. The event was a critical milestone. The model exhibition became a popular initiating ritual when, later in 1990-91, such exhibitions were replicated internationally through exchange programs funded by the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) and the Homeless International of the UK. Community exchange programs with Asian

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221 The training program included community-level discussion on existing public housing schemes for the poor; inviting officials from the State housing authority to make presentations before groups of women, visits to public housing projects in Bombay and other cities, distributing pamphlets about various housing schemes that were translated and distributed among slum and pavement dwellers (Bapat and Patel 1992, 19-20).

222 This is a typical design of homes on the city’s pavements. The mezzanine is used either to house a young couple of the family (usually the son and the daughter-in-law) or is rented out. The municipal corporation had proposed a change in the Development Control Regulations to allow for 14 feet (3.9 meters) high floors, but the proposed changes were yet to be approved by the State government. These changes were approved in 1991. SPARC challenged the regulations and this became cause of considerable tension between the government and SPARC (see the case of Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society of Dharavi, elaborated in the next chapter). SPARC had to engage in intensive lobbying with the government to get approval for 14 foot high ceilings.

223 A visiting bureaucrat, the Secretary of the State’s housing department, is known to have offered a plot of land in a far-off northern suburb of the city to resettle the pavement women of Byculla permanently. The offer was admittedly rejected because of the absence of adequate transport connecting the site to the nearest railway station and also because “we did not want to be gifted land in this fashion, as accepting gifts does not set a precedent for the several other pavement dwellers across the city who [also] have a right to be housed” (Interview with Associate Director, SPARC on the 14th of November 2002 in NSDF’s office at Byculla, Mumbai).

224 The first community exchange supported by Homeless International in 1990 was an exchange trip between slum dwellers from Bogota, Colombia, and pavement and slum dwellers from four cities in India. The exchange took place over an eighteen month period with teams from India and Bogota visiting each
countries of Seoul Thailand, Bangladesh, Nepal, and other countries such as Colombia started in full fervor with Mahila Milan members taking turns traveling abroad training communities in these countries to use exhibitions and community enumerations as a means to communicate their housing aspirations to the state and display their resolve to get secure tenure. In the words of the Associate Director of SPARC, such exchanges have not only become a public forum to bring communities from across borders to get to know one another but also to achieve the following:

We [members of the Alliance] use exchanges not only between communities but between governments and communities. Over the years, we’ve learned how to identify people within government who are ready and willing to become partners in this process, and we start inviting them along, to visit work around Mumbai, to attend events in other cities, and sometimes we take them abroad. We’ve also learned to pick out officials who may not be so convinced yet, but may be strategically useful to the federation in the long run and worth investing in.225

The rituals aside, a critical requirement of all housing interventions, is access to affordable land. The opportunity to resettle pavement dwellers of Byculla permanently emerged in a rather interesting course of events, which unfolded in 1988, when SPARC offered to assist the State in enumerating slum dwellers living on land beside the city’s suburban rail tracks. Several thousand slum dwellers were counted, mapped, and interviewed in partnership with the office of the Collector of Encroachments (a division of the State government). 226 The land occupied by these slum dwellers was urgently required to lay additional tracks. SPARC not only offered to survey the 18,000

other. Starting with this first association, Homeless International became a steady partner supporting SPARC through many of its crucial housing interventions in the years ahead.


226 The Collector of Encroachments became a close friend of SPARC, supporting them in the years to follow when he assumed charge as the first Project Director of MUTP II (see Chapter 6) and later on the Vice-President and CEO of MHADA.
households that lived beside these tracks but also challenged State plans by drawing on a design proposed by pavement dwellers. SPARC offered to construct single-storey homes for about 200 slum dwellers.\textsuperscript{227} In preparation for construction and to demonstrate its capacity, SPARC organized yet another house model exhibition and this time it was a concrete home with a 14 foot high ceiling with a mezzanine floor.\textsuperscript{228}

The State and the Railways agreed to let SPARC carry out its first housing experiment for 200 slum dwellers. Until such time that these slum dwellers could be resettled in fully-constructed homes, the State also agreed to the temporary use of a neighboring vacant plot of land, belonging to the State housing authority, as a transit camp. This plot of land was later used to construct high-rise homes for pavement dwellers of Byculla.\textsuperscript{229}

The President of NSDF referred to the allotment of land as a tactic of sorts which eventually helped pavement dwellers obtain access to valuable urban land:

\textsuperscript{227} Railways wanted to clear some 1,320 huts along the railway tracks to lay a new line connecting New Bombay (see Map A B: New Mumbai is a proposed alternate maguate for offices, businesses and residence) to Bombay. Each evicted slum family was offered alternate accommodation in one-room, walk-up apartments for INR 58,000 built by the State housing authority. The State offered evictees with loans and subsidy to help cover the housing costs. Thirty-five buildings (five-storey in height) were built on land a few kilometers away from the railway tracks to resettle these evictees. Even at these subsidized rates, a group of 200 slum dwellers, according to SPARC, found the housing costs unaffordable. SPARC assured these slum dwellers of cheaper, low-rise homes and negotiated with the Railways and State authorities demanding that the State need only provide land and infrastructure and SPARC would arrange the rest including design details, actual construction and loan finance. The State government accepted the arrangement.

\textsuperscript{228} I visited this home (in Bharat Nagar in the northeastern suburb of Mumbai) on the 14th of April 2003.

\textsuperscript{229} Land allocated by the State was only sufficient to accommodate about 115 of the 200 Railway families. 115 of the residents were permanently resettled by SPARC on land provided by the BMC and with housing finance assistance from a private sector housing finance company, the Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC). This first SPARC-coordinated experiment in housing is known as “Jan Kalyan.” The construction on this site began in 1990 and is a settlement of 115 single-storey homes with common open spaces and common external toilets.

The remainder of the Railway families continued to reside on land approved for makeshift accommodation. This portion of land was to be later redeveloped for housing pavement dwellers of Byculla. When I last visited the site in August 2003, make shift homes of 64 railway slum dwellers stood on the site and construction of a high-rise for Byculla pavement dwellers was in progress.
When in 1995, the pavement dwellers were [for the first time] recognized [on par with slum dwellers] as those eligible for secure tenure, we were ready with land! We successfully convinced the state to gift us this land for the rehabilitation of pavement dwellers of Byculla. The land may have slipped out and been used for other purposes had those 35 hutments [the number of residents has now swelled to 64] not stayed on in that location.

Table 4.5 Key Events in SPARC’s Formative Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>- SPARC is registered under the Societies Registration Act and the Bombay Public Trust Act.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1985 | - SPARC publishes *We, the Invisible: A Census of Pavement Dwellers* which it distributes widely among government officials.  
- Exposure trip to South India: Mahila Milan visits Kerala and Tamilandu to look at building materials and housing projects that “work and don’t work.” The visit is funded by a Belgian NGO, SELAVIP. |
| 1986 | - SPARC develops friendly relations with the demolition squad.  
- An alliance initiated with the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF).  
- *Mahila Milan* (Collective of women) is formed. The three, SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan resolve to work together as the “Alliance.” |
| 1987 | - First house model exhibition – invitation extended to government officials.  
- Formation of the first savings group among pavement women.  
- Formation of the first housing cooperatives among slum dwellers. |
| 1988 | - SPARC offers to enumerate slum dwellers living beside Bombay’s suburban rail tracks.  
- Housing, Urban Development and the Collector’s Department of the State officially request SPARC’s participation in enumeration of Railway-land squatters. |
| 1989 | - SPARC along with the State complete a report titled “*Beyond the Beaten tack: Census of Slums on Railway Tracks.*”  
- Ties established with a bureaucrat in the Collector’s department of the State government. The Collector of Encroachment becomes SPARC’s link to the Housing Department and is often described as the official who “walked the tracks with us.” |

230 I list SPARC’s work with railway settlers to demonstrate that unlike YUVA and NHSS, SPARC actively sought room to participate in state-led housing solutions. During this phase, SPARC enumerated the households. In less than five years after the enumeration was complete, SPARC got involved in other aspects of the project (see Chapter 6). Involvement in the project helped guarantee land for the 536 pavement dwellers of Byculla with whom SPARC began work in Bombay.
- Involvement with the railway resettlement helps make room to later negotiate for land for pavement dwellers. Also results in the formation of a federation among railway slum dwellers called the Railway Slum Dwellers Federation (RSDF) which affiliates itself with the NSDF.
- SPARC organizes another house model exhibition among railway slum dwellers.
- Women leaders from ten Asian countries and eight Indian cities gather for a week in March, 1989, and form a grassroots women’s network. The meeting is organized by SPARC. It is the first regional acknowledgment of savings and credit as one of the most important community mobilizing tools.
- The Alliance attends the Asian People’s Dialogue in Seoul, Korea. Community leaders and NGO representatives (including YUVA) from 11 countries take part in the dialogue. The dialogue is held in conjunction with a fact-finding mission focusing on evictions in Seoul for the Olympic Games. Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) is “officially” formed after the Seoul meeting. SPARC joins the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights.

1990
- Bombay-Bogota exchange (helps strengthen the Alliance). The brief exchange is funded by the Homeless International (HI), a UK based NGO. Later on, HI funds exchange programs between India, Thailand, South Africa and Cambodia.

Discussion

I selected SPARC for this research because, in my preliminary analysis, it came across as a “negative case” among the pool of NGOs that began working with the agenda to “advocate for the housing rights of the urban poor.” Early in its life cycle, SPARC chose to digress from the much-acknowledged path of protest and marches or any other form of direct and open confrontation, on the premise that it was ineffective in achieving any substantial improvements in the lives of the poor. According to SPARC’s management, its surveys corroborated the conclusion that the contentious repertoires that crowded non-state action were not much in favor amongst its intended beneficiaries (i.e., the slum and pavement dwellers).

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231 Maxwell (2005, 112) describes the utility of including a “negative case” as follows: “Identifying and analyzing discrepant data and negative cases is a key part of the logic of validity testing in qualitative research. Instances that cannot be accounted for by a particular interpretation or explanation can point up important defend[s] in that account.”
What makes SPARC’s repertoire of confrontation distinct from those of the other two is a widespread recognition of the need to balance confrontation with more amicable tactics where balance is the “organizational attempt to achieve parity among or between multiple stakeholders and internal interests” (Oliver 1991, 153). Unlike NHSS and YUVA, SPARC’s interpretation of confrontation was not synonymous with ‘attack’ or ‘assault’ but associated with use of such guarded tactics as ‘challenging’ and ‘balancing’ its interests against those of government housing agencies. Use of such tactics resembles cooperation and compromise more than it does confrontation (Oliver 1991, 152). This is posited as distinct from those deployed in YUVA and the NHSS because, more so than the other two, SPARC willingly launched a relatively minor level of resistance to pressures exerted by a constraining housing policy environment. Table 4.6 summarizes some of the key strategies and tactics deployed by SPARC in the course of its work with pavement women. The table also outlines key features against each strategy and accompanying tactics. This is followed by an analysis of each strategy.
Table 4.6: Repertoire of Tactics in SPARC’s Formative Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Complementarity\(^{232}\) (Primary Strategy) | - Displaying alternate housing solutions  
- Challenging rules and regulations  
- Challenging statistics  
- Gathering ‘new’ data  
- Linking with federations of slum and pavement dwellers in India and in other Asian countries | - Appeasing slum and pavement dwellers through delivery of solutions  
- Gaining credibility in government  
- Creating a unique niche in a population of ‘dissenting’ NGOs  
- Creating new type of negotiating power (through possession of unique data sets)  
- Creating critical mass of slum and pavement dwellers | - Searching for venues to participate in government programs  
- Starting to engage in projects of “mutual benefit” where the poor stood to get housing and the government, a cleared stretch of pavement or railway land.  
- Demonstrating the possibility of ‘better’ housing alternatives  
- Establishing credibility as a likely partner with broad-based legitimacy |
| Co-optation (Sub-strategy) | - Befriending government officials  
- Inviting government officials to convene events | - Gaining legitimacy among clientele  
- Influencing the opinions of government officials | - Winning friends in government |

\(^{232}\) The line dividing confrontation and complementarity in SPARC repertoire of housing tactics with the state is particularly blurred making it difficult to organize SPARC’s activities under one or the other. Confrontation appears as a lever to open doors to complement the state in its efforts to rehabilitate slum and squatter dwellers. Moreover, confrontation takes a distinct hue when applied to SPARC because it did not, at this stage of its lifetime, openly express discontent with state policy. Briefly restated, complimentarity, according to Najam’s (2000) framework, is a relationship type wherein the government and the NGO want to achieve the same end but do not share the same strategies or means to achieve the goal. I therefore choose complementarity as a more appropriate analytical category to describe SPARC’s emerging relations with the state. I explore this in some detail in the analysis below.
Explaining Key Tactics

Complementarity

The President of SPARC’s Governing Board describes SPARC’s strategy of work with the poor simply:

Since genesis, SPARC’s strategy has been two-fold: It will always talk and deal with the government . . . It will serve as an intermediary between the government and the poor. So it will hold meetings and dialogues but also project that it is not alone – it will take the poor along with it. 233

Whilst most NGOs, including NHSS and YUVA, were busy organizing and mobilizing communities of the poor to participate in protest marches and demonstrations, SPARC was busy finding out, “what do the poor really need?” Housing soon emerged as a primary concern for the pavement dwellers. SPARC and members of the Alliance refer to community-activism as the “old” style of confrontation that does not deliver what the poor “really” want namely, access to land, housing and basic services (SPARC 1998, 1). Belief that “mutual benefit” is a strategy that government willingly responds to pervades most of its early activities. Be it stalling an impending demolition, or offering to conduct a census of squatters on railway land and furthermore rehabilitate some of those affected – were all embraced by SPARC as an opportunity to enter government doors and offer tangible results to its clientele. SPARC even goes to the extent of stating that governments are not used to altruism and those holding power and resources will not let

233 I interviewed him at his office in New Delhi on 29th January 2003. Besides holding the position of the President of SPARC’s Governing Board, he is also Founder and Executive Director of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia, President, Asian South-Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, a regional non-governmental organization in Asia - Pacific and had held position as Chair of CIVICUS, an international organization for the promotion of civil society.
go of them and for that reason, it defines “mutual benefit” as the “first rule of negotiation” (SPARC 1998, 1).

This give (data) and take (an opportunity to deliver) strategy is of considerable import for it highlights how SPARC and members of the Alliance began envisioning their role from within the broad parameters laid down by the government machinery. Challenging details such as the numbers of the poor residing in a pavement or the height of their proposed homes were critical components of its proposed mechanism to house the poor but were also utilized as tools by SPARC to begin nurturing a long-term relationship with the state. In other words, gaining entry into governmental programs (by mobilizing data that few others possessed and displaying an ability to deliver ‘better’ housing) was considered a necessary precondition to achieving the goal of community-led and community-managed solutions. This acquired the status of a ritual in several interventions to follow, some of which receive attention in forthcoming case studies on SPARC.

The strategy to work with the state through complementary arrangements was strengthened by its partnership with NSDF. With the formation of an Alliance, SPARC could choose to withdraw from direct involvement with the community and concentrate on raising funds, undertaking research, organizing community exchange programs, and documentation and most importantly, handling day to day financial management and accounting; a task that in the Director’s words, “requires excessive organizational energy
and we saw in it the potential to erode our grassroots contacts.”234 By this time, the NSDF had a substantial presence in several slum settlements across the country. It is probable that SPARC’s relations with the NSDF (that works with the mandate to advocate for the rights of the poor in slums and pavements) gave it the confidence to ease itself out of local, city-level networks of NGOs (such as the CRH explained earlier). In a local milieu characterized by NGOs who SPARC claims did not fit its development philosophy, finding a strong and politically astute partner in the NSDF who shared SPARC’s vision of a complementary strategy, were reasons enough to reject a predominantly confrontational strategy practiced by others.

_Cooptation_

Co-optation is defined as “a mechanism by which external elements are incorporated into the decision-making structures of an organization” (Scott 1998, 71). SPARC, very early in its housing routines, began aggressively “co-opting” what it interpreted as a critical source of uncertainty in realizing its housing agendas -- the state. I elaborate in greater detail below:

Few things, if any, in the public policy arena in India come to fruition without the patronage of a high-ranking government bureaucrat who is both willing and able to be influenced. Advisor235 to SPARC alluded to the famed British television comedy, “Yes,
Minister and stated there are those archetypal tussles between the bureaucrat and the politician, each attempting to assert power over the other but the bureaucrat is beyond doubt the chief architect and executor of government policy. This is true of housing much like other arenas of public policy. This is a feature of India’s administrative system well understood in SPARC. The primacy of the bureaucracy in “getting things done” frequently appears in the language and practices of the Alliance. Advisor to SPARC mentions that it is no longer surprising to hear a government official refer to a Mahila Milan woman by name and inquire about her well-being. He or she may have met with the woman in an international conference or met at a function organized by the Alliance. These interactions besides providing the poor with a face to an otherwise nebulous government office, also serve intangible benefits in fostering SPARC’s legitimacy among slum dwellers. Says, a member of the NSDF:

If the Alliance can get a senior bureaucrat or foreign dignitary to visit us in our very homes, we know that something will come of their efforts. We know we can get the government to listen to us and that the government is not all about callous officials.

SPARC’s advisor, himself, was an officer with the Indian Administrative Services (IAS). As an IAS officer, he served as Director of the World Bank funded Low Income Shelter Programme and the Slum Upgradation Programme (both under the purview of the Bombay Urban Development Project) from 1989-1990 and also briefly served as Director, Prime Minister’s Grant Programme (PMGP) explained in a forthcoming chapter 5. He then took permanent retirement from the services to join SPARC in April 1993. He now serves as full-time advisor to SPARC.

Much of the humor of the show derives from the conflict between Cabinet ministers who believe they are in charge, and the members of the British Civil Service who are really running the country.

Conversation held with a member of the Railway Slum Dwellers Federation in Kanjur Marg transit site on the 11th of August 2003.
chapter. He then took permanent retirement from the services to join SPARC in April 1993. He now serves as full-time advisor to SPARC.

SPARC’s advisor adds that SPARC has consciously sought to work with bureaucrats who they know to be honest and willing to go an extra mile to respond to the needs of the community as expressed by the Alliance. The Alliance has developed an intricate network of political affiliations with the various levels and forms of the State bureaucracy. This network, as I shall elaborate in following chapters, includes bureaucrats who execute state policy at the highest levels in the State of Maharashtra and run major bodies responsible for slum resettlement and rehabilitation, and land development and regulation.

**4.6 CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS**

Understanding the ways and nature of the state is crucial to NGO effectiveness in any sphere. As a regulator the state seeks to control NGOs and make them accountable to it; as a funder it seeks to selectively collaborate with groups that can elicit people’s participation and make government programs more efficient and effective. In political space, however, a strong community-based NGO is a potential threat to the local power structure and can expect to have a contentious relationship with both a cadre-based political party and other state functionaries.

- Kudva (2004, 3-4)

The three NGOs that participated in this research all began work on a platform to defend the rights of the poor to retain their residences with the city. Each NGO sought to advocate for change in what they described as an oppressive policy environment. Each of their first key housing interventions was triggered by the Supreme Court order of 1985 that reinforced the power of the state to proceed with demolishing pavement dwellings
and slums on public lands. This was an order of considerable import for it dictated the future of slum and squatter dwellers across the country and outraged many activities. Over time, however, each NGO developed a distinct repertoire of tactics to addressing the problem of urban housing for its clients. I devote the remainder of this chapter to analyzing a) the factors influencing the initial selection of NGO housing strategy; and, b) developing an argument for the inadequacy of prevailing taxonomies in explaining NGO-government interactions.

Factors Influencing the Origins of NGO Housing Strategy

This chapter covers an average of five years surrounding the formation of the three housing NGOs. New organizations, like the three that participated in this study, seek institutional legitimacy. To achieve legitimacy, they scan their field (comprising similar organizations) to identify forms and routines that appear successful in other organizations (Meyer and Rowan 1977). In the early 1980s, few such ‘housing specific’ routines existed. It was only in the late 1970s that housing emerged as a primary concern for urban NGOs. The late 1970s signified “a growing radicalization and politicization of groups which so far had approached housing like any other welfare activity” (Bhide 1998, 349). Examples of NGOs born during the 1970s include the Bandra East Community Centre (BECC), an NGO that began work in Bombay in 1974 with provision of health care and related services to slum dwellers and moved to work in the area of housing in 1979. Other NGOs in Bombay included the Slum Rehabilitation Society
(SRS)\textsuperscript{238} formed in 1972 with the explicit aim to provide “better housing for slum dwellers, who were keen on getting better homes” (Slum Rehabilitation Society 2001, 5).\textsuperscript{239} Like the BECC, the Slum Rehabilitation Society too began work in 1970 as a welfare agency providing such services as training in typing and shorthand, and medical care to slum dwellers.

The Supreme Court Judgment was the common trigger event that compelled the three novice NGOs to formulate ways and means to address the immediate threat to demolition of their client communities. For reasons related to the similarity of their goals (of defending the housing rights of the poor) and their formative conditions, one could expect similarity in form and purpose in their early years. YUVA’s and NHSS’s founding members had worked together as student activists; all three NGOs had mobilized communities at nearly the same time; they had begun work within the same local power structure; and, they all had carried similar baggage with respect to their education. However, in their formative years, they were far from similar to one another. Besides some cursory collaboration between them (for instance, SPARC’s short-lived participation with YUVA in the Committee for the Right to Housing and also YUVA’s affiliation with the NHSS), the participating NGOs developed distinct means of

\textsuperscript{238} Like the BECC, SRS too began work on a welfare-based model of social work. SRS was formerly the UCDC (Urban Community Development Centre) which was formed in 1970. UCDC’s work centered on providing a number of community services such as typing, shorthand, medical care, a preschool center, to slum dwellers. With further contacts with the slum community, UCDC’s founder member gathered that organizational priorities lay elsewhere. Better amenities including better homes were deduced as a primary need and it was in response to this need that the SRS was formed in 1972.

\textsuperscript{239} Some others include the People’s Responsible Organization of United Dharavi (PROUD) formed in 1979 and the Bombay Slum Colonies Development Project formed in 1980. Examples from other parts of India include the Ahmedabad Study Action Group in Gujarat, the Association for Voluntary Action and Services in Bangalore along with Unnayan in Calcutta (now called Kolkata). A few others that concentrated their work in rural India were predominantly NGOs with emphasis on delivering low-cost housing solutions and providing disaster relief (Bhide 1998, 349).
responding to the crisis of the Supreme Court order. The distinctness in their housing tactics is summarized in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Key Strategies of NGO-Government Collaborative Networks in Formative Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Preferred Strategy</th>
<th>Dominant Tactics</th>
<th>Preferred End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHSS</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Collective protest</td>
<td>Pressure and collective identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YUVA</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Organizing advocacy campaigns; Training communities</td>
<td>Collective, city-level response to a problem situation; search for alternatives to demolitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPARC</td>
<td>Complementarity</td>
<td>Challenging government statistics; Building alliances with government and CBOs</td>
<td>Broad-based legitimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dominant preferred strategy, in a majority of the NGOs, was confrontation. Even though confrontation characterized NGO-government interactions in the early 1980s, each participating NGO deployed a distinct set of contentious tactics to defend housing rights of the poor. NHSS is best identified with collective protest; YUVA with community conscientization and national and city-level campaigns; and, the third NGO SPARC with challenging government statistics while also seeking alliances within select organs of the government. The difference in the forms and approaches of the three participating NGOs in their formative years is more fully explained by four critical and interrelated factors organized in Table 4.8 below.
Table 4.8: Key Factors Influencing Early NGO-Government Interaction Strategies in Three housing NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key factors influencing the nature of interaction</th>
<th>NHSS</th>
<th>YUVA</th>
<th>SPARC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past Experiences</td>
<td>Distrusted the state and its institutional apparatus including courts to render justice</td>
<td>Dissatisfaction with utility of social work education</td>
<td>Anti-welfare, driven by desire to do ‘something’ for the pavement dwellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core values and beliefs</td>
<td>Demand for a Right, Struggle for a Right. “Rights can only be won, when the people unite”</td>
<td>Social justice for all</td>
<td>Community-driven solutions, government-led agendas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of client needs</td>
<td>Faced actual demolition which demanded solutions</td>
<td>YUVA entered after the actual demolition – provided relief</td>
<td>Faced a threat to demolition but did not want to confront. Security of tenure and therefore housing is prioritized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Philosophy</td>
<td>Rights-based: Fire fighter for the poor; State must take full responsibility for its actions</td>
<td>Rights based: Fire fighter for the poor; State must take full responsibility but I can work with it</td>
<td>Partnerships with the poor and government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The past experiences of members, their core values and beliefs, the housing philosophy of the NGO, and needs of their clientele are understood as key determinants of the choice of strategies and tactics used by NGOs in engaging with local government housing agencies. In analyzing the factors that influence an NGO’s choice of strategy and tactic, I pay particular attention to interpretative, sensemaking processes in NGOs (Carmin and

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Balser 2002). Wherever possible, the retrospective interview data on NGOs’ event-related history is triangulated using interviews with members of government housing agencies, with members of the communities and furthermore, corroborated with archival data.

1. Past Experiences

Organizations select action forms “that they believe would be effective based on their personal experience and knowledge” (Carmin and Balser 2002, 368). NHSS’s leaders recall with glee their success with organizing street protests and demonstrations – most of which, as noted earlier, were directed against the ‘haves.’ The lead-strategist and Convener in NHSS’s formative years came with a history of active involvement in a variety of civil liberties and democratic rights movements in India and abroad. This experience along with those of other lead members of the NHSS, some of whom had lent support to striking textile-mill worker unions in Bombay and been a part of revolutionary youth organizations and college unions, guided the choice of collective protest as an effective means to realize the goal of defending the rights of the poor. NHSS’s dominant repertoire of tactics in the case of the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum drew its power and

241 Carmin and Balser (2002) use an interpretive lens to examine factors that influence an environmental movement organizations’ (EMO) selection of a repertoire of action. Borrowing from the works of such organizational theorists as Berger and Luckmann (1966); North (1990); and, Weick (1995), they argue that besides structural factors and sociopolitical conditions, EMOs also draw on different cognitive filters to determine the acceptability or otherwise of a form of action. Cognitive filters comprising experience, core values and beliefs, political ideology, and environmental philosophy together shape interpretation of what an EMO considers acceptable behavior, and of what actions it deems to be effective.

242 This draws on the concept of “sensemaking” developed by Karl Weick (1979; 1995). Sensemaking is used to describe an organizational attempt to integrate a new event into a plot, by which it becomes understandable in relation to the context in which it happened. Weick (1995) identifies seven properties of organizational sensemaking: identity, retrospect, enactment, social contact, ongoing events, cues, and plausibility. “In short, what is necessary in sensemaking is a good story” (Weick 1995, 60-61).
legitimacy from ongoing movements towards expression of ‘antagonism’ – a term commonly used to describe NGO-state relations during the 1970s and the early 1980s in India. The failure of courts to render justice to the poor boosted the view that creation of a mass base of collective interests was the only means of getting the government to pay attention to the interests of the poor.

Like the NHSS, YUVA’s lead member was active in more than one city-level collective. For a brief period, YUVA was also one among other groups affiliated with the NHSS. While YUVA and NHSS share some similarities relative to the experiences of their lead members and their joint participation under the NHSS collective, their resemblance ends there. NHSS chose not to register itself as an ‘NGO’ maintaining that its purposes are best served by retaining its character as a loose federation of committed groups and individuals. YUVA, on the other hand, was more structured and reserved with the use of contentious tactics. YUVA spent a considerable proportion of its early energies in leadership training, awareness generation, and rights education among youth groups across slums. Within a year of beginning field work in Bombay, YUVA’s grassroots advocacy (though community organization and mobilization) was combined with policy advocacy (through affiliation to the CRH and the National Campaign for Housing Rights). YUVA’s leader envisioned a scenario where the two forms of advocacy could effectively inform one another and help broaden YUVA’s legitimacy among city and national level players, including the government.
SPARC grew as an interesting anomaly. Words such as ‘struggle,’ ‘battle,’ ‘fight’ and ‘justice’ rarely appear in its archival materials or in the vocabulary of those with whom I spoke. Its founders were disgruntled with their decade long association with a welfare-based agency, and thus created a new organization and sought to build more participatory relationships with pavement dwellers. Safety and security of tenure emerged relatively quickly as a dominant concern among those living on the pavements. SPARC was skeptical about confrontation with the state as a means of achieving its goal of community-led solutions. Instead, it eagerly pursued the path of seeking institutional support and legitimacy and aggressively advertised its competencies to the government, challenged the government’s own ability to gather and interpret data on the lives of the poor, and went even further by offering its skills to the government. SPARC did so on grounds that it could deliver better and more useful results than the government machinery. Its experiences with a welfare-based model of social work intervention combined with its disdain for the work of other NGOs translated into a rigorous desire to scale up its activities beyond a few pavement stretches to slums that were spread across a larger part of Bombay and elsewhere. SPARC’s tactics were both different and unique among those studied -- a uniqueness and anomaly that Najam’s (2000) Four Cs typology does not accommodate.

2. **Core values and beliefs**

Rokeach (1973) defined values as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode
of conduct or end-state of existence.” At the level of an organization, values are used as standards of importance. They serve the criteria for selecting the goals of behavior, making decisions and setting priorities (Davis 1949; Hultman 2001, 4). They lie behind the explanations and justifications offered for actions taken. They are, as Davis (1949) points out, a normative system embodying what ought to be rather than what is. Despite an understanding that the factual order of what is and the normative order of what ought to be are never completely divorced nor are they entirely identical, core values and beliefs have substantial power in explaining the choice of strategies and tactics in each participating NGO.

Among the NGOs described above, NHSS and YUVA valued the creation of collective identity as the first-order means to preserve and defend the rights of the poor. The lead Convener of the NHSS idealized the power of tactics of street protest, films and street plays and songs in stirring public participation and awareness. The activities shared a common characteristic in that they were all directed towards mobilizing support by creating awareness of the injustices perpetrated upon the poor by the actions of the state. Being a direct response to the demolition drive led by the then Chief Minister of the State, NHSS’s mission and the dominant strategies used was exclusively informed by the desire to generate collective response towards the State’s policy of slum clearance.

Founded by professional social workers and guided largely by the vision of its Founding Executive Director, YUVA adopted a rights-based framework towards its interventions. Many of its early interventions reflect a Freirian ideology of attention to education,
awareness building and conscientization as tools for social transformation (Freire 1972; 1995). YUVA wanted to create new relevance for social work practice among communities of the poor. Its founding members valued the creation of mass organizations among the poor. Broadly stated, YUVA’s choice of strategies and tactics of mass mobilization and participation in advocacy campaigns was guided by a belief in its ability to serve as the voice of the poor, albeit in cooperation with other NGOs. It was aware that a substantial response to a potential crisis of the proportions created by a Supreme Court order would not be dealt with independently. YUVA also expressed fears over duplicating the efforts of other organizations (YUVA 1990, 2).

SPARC saw itself as an NGO that, unlike the others which got embroiled in the fervor of protests, was willing to make time and listen to the poor prior to determining a methodology of intervention. SPARC therefore enlisted the creation of community managed and community-led solutions as an important value guiding its choice of strategies and tactics to relate to the government. According to SPARC, the women on the pavements did not wish to participate in mass demonstrations and protest marches and other acts of resistance to the state’s policy of demolition and forced evictions. The actualization of this vision was characterized by a concerted effort on the part of SPARC’s founding members to “undermine the legitimacy of prevalent conventional wisdom” regarding work among the poor (Argyris and Schön 1996, 253).

Protests and demonstrations and participation in advocacy campaigns and joint lobbying were primarily used by NHSS and YUVA as a means of creating collective identity and
thus to pressure the state to take responsibility for its actions. As a tactic, these sets of activities did not come with any promise of tangible solutions to the problem of insecure and unsafe housing for slums and pavement settlements. SPARC however pursued what it called the “win-win solutions that work for the city and for its different populations” (SPARC 1998). The distinctness of its housing routines will be covered in the next section on housing philosophy.

3. Nature of client needs

Client needs and circumstances also shape the choice of strategies and tactics used to engage with the state. NHSS’s first key intervention was its work with the residents of the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum. By virtue of its location in a high profile business and residential district of Bombay, the slum faced constant threats of demolition. The land was slated to be used for the construction of a fire station. At the time that the NHSS initiated work in the slum, the frequency and the urgency of the threats increased, thus requiring responses on an emergency footing. By NHSS’s own admission, some of this threat was heightened by the involvement of its own high-profile group of activists. The urgency of the housing situation of the evicted slum dwellers created conditions for the use of mass protest, followed by elite intervention and acceptance of an offer of distant land from the government.

Unlike the NHSS, YUVA was yet to confront or assume responsibility of resettling and rehabilitating a community. YUVA’s work in housing at the community level was
restricted to rendering relief to those who suffered demolitions and solving a host of other problems regarding access to basic services such as electricity, water, subsidized groceries, and the like. Contacts with pavement communities had begun. The contacts were typically established when YUVA’s members rushed to the scene of a pavement demolition and helped communities salvage their belongings from the Municipality or offer legal advice in instances when adequate proof of residence was available. This, according to the Director, frequently frustrated many members in YUVA who wanted to engage with communities on a sustained basis and be able to influence their rights to housing instead of merely stepping on to the scene after the rights had been violated. YUVA’s involvement with the Committee for the Right to Housing and the National Campaign for Housing Rights and subsequently its role in setting up of a pavement dwellers’ organization was prompted by this collective frustration and vision to intervene in a more substantial way. YUVA also underwent some critical internal reorganization from a project/issue based focus to a rights-based one.

SPARC wanted to establish critical mass among slums and pavement dwellers such that it could stand before government offices, donor agencies, national housing finance institutions, and in international advocacy forums as a legitimate voice of the poor. It defends its choice on strategies and tactics by stating that its interactions with the community helped its members conclude that women on the pavements and the poor in general, did not favor direct confrontation with the government and were keen to work towards a solution. Consequently, SPARC launched a relatively minor level of resistance to pressures exerted by a constraining housing policy environment.
4. Housing Philosophy

The need for provision of secure tenure to the urban poor was a notion made popular by the works of John Turner (1972), Charles Abrams (1964), Mangin and Turner (1969); and, Turner and Fichter (1972). Their recommendations were forwarded at a time when governments were addressing the problem of housing the urban poor by following a policy of slum clearance. Clearance, it was hoped, would eliminate inferior urban housing stock and former slum dwellers could then be provided with new public housing (Mukhiya 2003, 5). Developing countries across the world were, however, more successful with clearing slums than they were with the creation of alternate housing. Through their prescriptions, Turner and Abrams, among others, wanted governments to step back from their role as providers of housing and instead let people make decisions regarding how and where to reside. The government’s primary role within the Turner-Abrams school was that of providing security of tenure. This, it was believed, would gradually but surely cause an increase in housing investment and would, in due course, pull the poor out of their poverty. This proposal represented a significant departure from past policy recommendations for it called for recognizing the slum and squatter dwellers
as individuals with a right to reside in the city. Control over housing decisions by the poor was held as a way of empowering communities.  

An NGO’s housing philosophy contributes to diagnostic framing by helping to identify and define housing problems faced by communities, and by assigning responsibility to various stakeholders, including itself. NHSS and YUVA looked to housing as a right that must be preserved and defended by collective means. To them, provision of safe, secure, and affordable housing was the prerogative of the state, with NGOs taking up such roles as that of an educator, a community organizer, and a watchdog in the housing process. It was further desirable that communities construct their own homes, but this did not receive much attention of the founding members in the formative years of these two NGOs. For NHSS and YUVA, the crisis created by the Supreme Court order restricted organizational attention to the formation of collectives among the poor and the need to advocate for change in policy; delivery or a search for concrete housing solutions were a small part of their programmatic agenda. SPARC, on the other hand, was keen on exploring the possibility of sharing an equal footing with the state. In its first five years, not only did SPARC challenge government’s ability to enumerate the poor adequately but also offered its novice expertise to gain entry into government programs. The strategy met with success. By 1988-1989, less than four years after the date of its formation, SPARC was even seriously considering engaging in actual housing delivery.

243 The notion of self-help housing was challenged by those of the Marxist tradition (Burgess 1978, 1982; Doebele 1975). They argued that Turner’s portrayal of self-help housing was as an optimistic, clever veil beneath which lay forces that perpetuated the growth of capitalistic interests. They further argued against Turner’s conception of the use value of housing and instead argued that housing was “petty commodity production” and primarily driven by market values.
Blurred Boundaries

Even though confrontation (in all its hues as observed and explained above) was an overarching strategy defining NGO-government interaction in the 1980s, my analysis of program-level tactics deployed by each NGO, brings to light the simultaneous and sequential prevalence of other relationship types. Tactics used were therefore not just different across participating NGOs but were deployed alongside other strategies which reflect a willingness to cooperate, a tendency to co-opt, and to complement the strategic interests of the state.

Typologies, by their very definition, are constructed with the intent to organize different forms of a single phenomenon. They are a necessity for analytical clarity. I found Najam’s “Four Cs” framework (2000) a useful tool to categorize various interaction styles and used the model presented by him to develop a more nuanced and detailed description of NGO-GO interactions:

NGOs that are part of a “strategic conversation” with the state are compelled to make moves in real time in response to changing interests which turn out to be inconsistent with the strategic intent in a way that typologies are not intended to capture (Argyris and Schön 1996, 257). Through the use of strategies and tactics I demonstrate that in

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244 With reference to the question of how a practicing manger of a firm should think about a process of strategy making that encompasses realization as well as intent, Argyris and Schon (1996, 256-257) identify seven answers. One of the seven is ‘strategic conversation’ which is defined as follows: “It makes sense to think of a firm as engaging in a reciprocal transaction with its environment through which it takes stock of
their efforts to gain legitimacy among their constituent communities, *NGOs are likely to shift strategies in succession*. Multiple strategies are deployed sequentially and, oftentimes, simultaneously (depicted in Table 4.2, 4.4, 4.6 against description of each NGO). The shifts in strategies, within the framework of selected interventions, are not ‘dramatic’ or ‘radical’ but are characterized by incremental efforts on the part of participating NGOs to nudge at the strategic interests of the state. Failures in negotiations to render ‘justice’ to the poor compel confrontational tactics to be replaced by efforts to co-opt government officials (NHSS). Informed by a belief in efficacy of partnerships, others choose to complement the state while at the same time challenging its premises (SPARC). These shifts are observable only upon delving into project-level interactions and relationships.

The nature and conditions under which such swift shifts in strategies take place indicate not merely the “schizophrenic” (Fisher 1998) nature of NGO-government interactions but, furthermore, display the institutional pressures upon an NGO to realign its strategies to respond to client exigencies and its own in-built need to gain legitimacy. The tendencies observed in the NGO’s early years seems to suggest that analyzing NGO-government relations from within the framework of a selected intervention (the nested unit of analysis) helps provide a more robust explanation of interactions, thus building on simpler classifications necessary in taxonomies.

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a new environmental situation, “speaks” to that situation through the design and implementation of new strategic moves, and receives (at times) surprising “back talk” from the environment, in response to which it is led to rethink its appreciation of the environment and to restructure its strategy.”
The following chapter moves further into the lifetimes of the three participating NGOs. The period of the 1990s is characterized by significant changes in the economic and political context in India resulting, in turn, in a major evolution in government housing policies. I analyze the three NGOs as they deal with and/or actively participate in shaping this evolution.
CHAPTER 5
GROWING PAINS: NGO RESPONSES TO SHIFTS IN STATE HOUSING POLICY, 1991-1999

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Most accounts of the history of state led housing policy initiatives\footnote{245} in Mumbai start with the Slum Clearance and Improvement Scheme of 1956 (Panwalkar 1995, 123; Government of Maharashtra 1997b, 1; Bhide 1998, 345; Mukhija 2003, 24; Tata Institute of Social Sciences 2003, 4). The scheme was sponsored by the Central government with Bombay as one among the six chosen pilot cities. By the early 1990s, Bombay was a testing ground for many different housing policy initiatives including a Slum Improvement Scheme and a World Bank funded Slum Upgradation Programme. During most of these programs, NGOs exhibited little or no enthusiasm for “the nitty-gritty of programme execution under government auspices” (Panwalkar 1995, 139).\footnote{246} Panwalkar attributes the lack of interest to “ideological convictions and their [i.e. NGO] propensity to mobilize international funding for their actions.” There are very few NGOs engaged in housing and, until the 1990s, most hesitated to engage in delivery on account of the “complications and resources” involved (Bhide 1998, 349).

\footnote{245}{This is with particular reference to policies in post-independence (post-1947) India. See Appendix H for a brief history of housing policy initiatives in Bombay/Mumbai since the 1940s to present.}

\footnote{246}{Panwalkar’s comment is specific to NGO ambivalence towards the World Bank funded Slum Upgradation Programme. Panwalkar (ibid. 139) also attributes the disinterest of NGOs to the “aggressive reaching-out strategies adopted by the [state run and managed] project” rendering contributions made by NGOs redundant. The slum upgradation program was initiated in 1995 and came to an abrupt halt in September 1993.}
My analysis of three housing NGOs operating during the 1980s reveals that NGOs, for reasons summarized in the last chapter, were strategically inclined to confront the state. Their work therefore centered on sensitizing public opinion towards state action and exerting pressure upon Central and State authorities to reform housing policy. Their housing strategies included mobilizing and organizing communities, educating and conscientizing them of their rights to housing, influencing housing policy through participation in city, national and international advocacy coalitions, helping communities gain entitlements to such amenities as subsidized food, water, sanitation and electricity, and stalling demolitions. NGOs were yet to engage directly in housing delivery with the state.

Did developments of the 1990s, when state policy explicitly made room for NGO participation, elicit a different response? This chapter describes changes in the housing policy environment governing slum and squatter housing in Bombay—a change that was characterized by two successive policy announcements—the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) in 1991 and a further change in 1995 with inauguration of the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS). Second, the chapter analyzes NGO activities just before, during and immediately after each policy announcement. Both SRD and SRS policies elicited uncharacteristically detailed and meticulous responses from participating NGOs. In a format similar to the last chapter, I describe the political-economic context during the 1990s, describe some critical elements of the SRD and SRS policies, and then travel one NGO at a time focusing on a key event across each of the three participating NGOs.
The cases covered in this chapter draw attention to the following: As in their formative years, NGO housing interventions use a variety of NGO-government strategies and tactics and also shift from one to the other, in simultaneous and sequential succession. However, more interestingly, some NGOs (YUVA and SPARC) deviated from their established paths of state-confrontation to state-cooperation and complementarity in the housing policy environment. YUVA experimented with state delivery, but then reverted to distancing itself from the state. SPARC, realizing the need for strong and active state support, not only secured a place in the State Slum Rehabilitation Authority (a State planning authority formed to sanction and implement schemes under SRS) but also initiated a distinct sister agency which could act as an independent housing developer. Unlike YUVA and SPARC, NHSS continued along the path of strong dissent against state policies. At this stage of their lifetimes (in the early 1990s), the three NGOs appear to be taking distinct paths of engagement with the state -- an active dissenter (NHSS), a cautious deliverer (YUVA), and a willing partner (SPARC).

5.2 MUMBAI AND ITS HOUSING POLICY IN THE 1990s

India launched a major series of economic reforms in 1991.247 The adoption of a structural reform package and the accompanying push towards privatization ushered significant developments into several policy arenas including housing policy

247 Structural adjustment refers to a set of policies propelled by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank with the explicit aim “to achieve macroeconomic stabilization and structural reform through government expenditure cuts, a tight monetary policy and strengthening of capital markets, the removal of distortion-inducing controls on private sector activity, greater reliance on foreign capital and technology and an effective “exit policy” for closure or restructuring of loss-making firms in either the private or the public sector” (Mathur 1993, 334).
implementation. In housing, the change was fundamentally shaped by a new policy thrust advocated by the World Bank.

This new thrust of the 1990s was called the “enabling strategy” to housing. It constitutes the third phase in the history of World Bank’s housing policy focus for the urban poor. When conceived, the strategy contained policy prescriptions of decentralization in decision-making, privatization of delivery, demand-driven responses, and deregulation (World Bank 1999). In essence, the Bank, with support from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, deemed it essential to withdraw governments from their role as providers of housing and instead to redirect their function as “enablers” by supporting and facilitating the provision of housing through the private, for-profit sector (World Bank 1993). To allow market delivery of housing, the strategy recommended removal of demand-side and supply-side distortions, and maintained that markets could be made to work for all, including those residing in slums and squatter settlements (World Bank 1993, 2; Pugh 1994, 358).

The 1980s also witnessed the emergence of ‘democratization’ as a key theme in development discourse worldwide (Clark 1991; UNDP 2002; World Bank 2000b).

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248 The details of the strategy are part of an influential World Bank paper titled “Housing: Enabling Markets to Work” (World Bank 1993).
249 The enabling approach to housing appears in the “Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000” adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1988 and in chapter seven of Agenda 21 at UN “Earth Summit” in Rio in 1992 (Moor 1997, 10-12). The World Bank took up the task of providing the enabling strategy with significant funding in 1993 (Pugh 1994, 358). 171 Member States later endorsed it during the Habitat II conference held at Istanbul, Turkey in June 1996.
250 Among the seven components of an enabling housing strategy, three interventions on the demand side include: developing property rights (private property rights), developing mortgage finance, and targeting subsidies. Supply side interventions include: providing infrastructure for residential land development, regulating land and housing development, and organizing the building industry. A seventh component of the strategy is managing the housing sector by developing a policy and institutional framework that ensures that markets provide adequate and affordable housing for all (World Bank 1993, 114-115).
Building on this discourse, the enabling strategy supported involvement of a range of different stakeholders as a necessary prerequisite for realizing the strategy’s goal of reducing “institutional monopoly of government over the lives of the urban poor” (Sanyal and Mukhija 2001, 2043). The strategy was anticipated to lead to partnerships among public agencies, the private for-profit sector, NGOs, and CBOs (Adusumilli 1999, 17). Broadly stated, public agencies were expected to make land available for housing; the private sector, motivated by the promise of profits, was expected to contribute by way of financial equity; and, NGOs were to “mediate between communities, governments and private sector actors” (Payne 1999, 5).

As early as 1991, most countries began integrating the goals of the enabling strategy in their respective national housing policies. The National Housing Policy of India encouraged private sector participation and stressed that the role of government agencies was to create conditions for expansion of housing supply through removal of legal and regulatory constraints and to support appropriate infrastructure investments. It also aimed at increasing access of poorer households to housing and other basic services (water supply and sanitation), and mobilizing additional financial resources by establishing linkages between the formal sector, non-government organizations, and community-based financing institutions (Government of India 1994).

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251 Under the enabling strategy the government’s role is described as one that entails the provision of the right incentives and controls and “to intervene where necessary to preserve equity and coherence” (UNCHS 1997).

252 The National Housing Policy of Nigeria (UNCHS 1991, 7) restated the role of government as a facilitator and placed future shelter production on the shoulders of the private and household sectors. Additional examples of countries adopting the enabling strategy include the housing policies of Colombia and Thailand (ibid. 7-8).
Echoing changes in the international and national policy context, which called for a reduction in controls impeding private investment in housing, the ruling Congress Party of the State of Maharashtra inaugurated the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) for the Greater Bombay region in March 1991. The scheme was markedly different from earlier ones in that it introduced the concept of enhanced Floor Area Ratio (FAR) on slum encumbered land. The scheme was designed expressly to attract private developers who could provide cross-subsidized, on-site housing to slum dwellers and also earn profits from redevelopment by selling the extra allowable floor space at market rates.

In short, SRD provided an attractive, new incentive in the form of an enhanced total FAR of up to 2.5 for redevelopment of slums. The scheme envisaged provision of tenements of 180 square feet (16.75 square meters) carpet area for those living on slum land and whose names were recorded in the 1985 State electoral rolls. It allowed private

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253 The MCGM, the planning authority for implementation of regulatory controls (referred to as Development Control Regulations or DCR), issued implementation guidelines for the SRD scheme in April 1992. A policy to pursue slum redevelopment for Mumbai, by increasing the maximum allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) on the site of the proposed redevelopment, had been in the making since about the early 1980s. Such proposals ran against the tide of recommended decongestion in cities and also suffered strong objections from social activists and original owners of old and dilapidated buildings. The most immediate predecessor of the SRD scheme was a slum reconstruction program designed exclusively to redevelop Mumbai’s largest slum, Dharavi, and was called the Prime Minister’s Grant Project. The idea to make this a city-wide program received a shot in the arm when, the chief of the Shiv Sena party, Bal Thackrey, announced that if brought to power, his party would provide houses to millions of slum dwellers (Sharma and Narendar 1993, 19; Mukhija 2003, 29). Fearing political fallout on account of this propaganda, the Congress Party leaders announced an equally ambitious scheme, the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) in the DCR of 1991.

254 The FAR is commonly also referred to as the Floor Space Index (FSI) in India and is measured as the quotient of the ratio of combined gross floor area to the total area of the plot. An FSI of 2.5, for instance, allows building a total floor area equal to 2.5 times the area of the plot on which it is built. An FSI of 2.5 therefore would allow 2,500 square meters of floor space to be built on a 1,000 square meter plot. In India, FSI is prescribed by local authorities and is generally different for different land uses and locations.

255 Normally the FAR in Mumbai, depending on the location within the city, ranges from .75 to 1.33. Prior to 1991 it was fixed at 1.33 for the island city and 1.00 for suburbs. The SRD scheme therefore hiked the permitted FAR on slum land by 150 percent.
developers and cooperative societies of slum dwellers to serve as promoters of slum redevelopment provided each eligible slum family would get a fully-built tenement at a total cost burden of no more than INR 15,000. Developers were allowed to earn a profit of up to 25 percent on their investment in the scheme by building additional units to sell at market rates. This would help compensate the developer for his investment in slum redevelopment and, if the real estate prices are favorable, also earn substantial profits.

The scheme did not take off in any significant manner. By the time implementation commenced in 1993, the composition of Bombay’s slum population had substantially changed to include many more slum dwellers, thus rendering the 1985 list of eligible families obsolete. Furthermore, developers perceived that those outside the slum would be reluctant to purchase property, reside and/or conduct business next to slum dwellers. The purchase price of INR 15,000 payable against each tenement also proved unaffordable for many slum families.

The SRD scheme faced sure death when, in preparation for a new round of State elections in 1995, the opposition party, the Shiv Sena, launched a massive propaganda campaign

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256 The total cost of a 180 square foot carpet area tenement at 1991 rates was estimated at INR 65,000. This included the cost of infrastructure. Out of this, INR 5,000 was to be raised as down payment from eligible slum dwellers and INR 10,000 was expected to be raised as a loan from the public housing finance agency, HUDCO, or the private housing finance agency, HDFC, or from banks at a discount rate of interest. The remainder, INR 50,000, was to be raised by the developer from surplus FAR sold on a commercial basis (Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay 1992, 10).

257 Its 1995 victory in the State elections was the first such victory for the party. Even though it is popularly known for its anti-immigrant and anti-slum position, it could not afford to ignore the slum population of the city who made up more than half of the city’s population in 1991.
promising “free housing” for slum dwellers. The party promised 800,000 new and free homes to 400,000 slum and pavement dwellers in Mumbai within five years. The Shiv Sena successfully ousted the Congress Party to win the State elections in March 1995 and immediately prepared to fulfill its promise. On orders of the new Chief Minister, a “high powered study group” (Government of Maharashtra 1997b, 2) was put together to recommend ways to “evolve a suitable, fair and objective scheme so that the finances of the Government are not unduly burdened and judicious utilization of land values is realized, at the same time due benefits are passed on for subsidizing the cost of tenements on slum dwellers” (Afzulpurkar 1995, 2). These goals had to be realized within the stringent, politically-dictated parameters of keeping homes entirely free of cost for all slum dwellers. The eighteen member group, formed in April 1995, comprised twelve government representatives, two private developers, two architects, a representative from HDFC, and one NGO representative (the Director of SPARC).

258 The term ‘free housing’ is a political gimmick because, for all practical purposes, even though the scheme does not demand a financial contribution from participating slum dwellers, it requires them to sacrifice their original homes (and the investments made therein) for a new home. “Thus effectively, they were to contribute their existing housing assets as equity to the redevelopment projects and become development partners in the slum redevelopment projects” (Mukhija 2003, 2). In an evaluation study titled “Utilization of Slum Rehabilitation Scheme”, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (2003, 114) notes that “the slum dwellers have made a considerable amount of investment in their past housing, i.e. about Rs. [INR] 50,000 in their dwellings even prior to the SRS. They also share the costs of maintenance [of their completed buildings] in SRS.” The study points out that the portrayal of the SRS as a ‘free housing scheme’ has helped to “create an atmosphere among officials, developers and the larger community which vitiates patronization and manipulation than an acknowledgement of the slum dweller’s place in the city.”

259 A former Managing Director of HDFC, who was a member of the study group, recalls being among the few voices to oppose provision of free homes for slum dwellers arguing that such heavy reliance on high real estate prices (which allowed a full cross-subsidization of tenements for slum dwellers) would render the scheme unsustainable under weak market conditions. He also stated that such a solution “ignores the root cause of why these people [slum dwellers] come to cities in the first place – we need alternate growth centers, alternate growth magnets” (Interview held at the office of the Managing Director and CEO, HDFC Standard Life and formerly, Managing Director, HDFC (from 1979-2000) in Bandra, Mumbai on the 7th of May 2003).
Within the rigid time frame of a little over two months, the group prepared a report offering detailed recommendations on how to implement a new scheme for reconstruction of slums and pavement tenements.\textsuperscript{260} The scheme was a significantly modified and an astonishingly grand version of its predecessor, the SRD of 1991. There were some similarities. Like the SRD, SRS was framed with the objective to use slum land as a resource by allowing incentive FAR in the form of tenements for sale in the open market. On-site utilization of FAR, as before, was restricted to 2.5. But unlike SRD, the SRS removed limits on the profits that a developer could make on investments in the scheme. It also introduced the concept of Transferable Development Rights (TDR). Any FAR over and above 2.5 which could not be used on the same plot, could now be transferred elsewhere in the city.\textsuperscript{261} The scheme assured a 225 (20.9 square meters) square foot home for each family listed on the States’ electoral rolls taken on or prior to the 1\textsuperscript{st} of January 1995. Seventy percent of the residents in the slum had to submit their approval to join the scheme, to allow a builder/developer to submit the scheme for acceptance to the Slum Rehabilitation Authority.

\textsuperscript{260} According to many of the members that I spoke with in SPARC, it was SPARC’s participation in the study group that pushed the state to include pavement dwellers along with slum dwellers as those eligible for secure tenure under the SRS.

\textsuperscript{261} A plot of land that is accepted for redevelopment under the SRS scheme, serves as the “originating plot” of FAR. The FAR on these sites, can be transferred to a “receiving plot/s” elsewhere in the city where they may be utilized towards construction. This transfer is achieved using a Development Rights Certificate which is a negotiable instrument that can be purchased and sold with an endorsement, on each occasion, by the Commissioner of the city’s Municipal Corporation. The Island city (South Mumbai) where further development is restricted, cannot “receive” TDR. TDR can be consumed only in the suburbs where SRS sites act as “origin-sites” transferring development potential to a “receiving-site.” In the suburbs the maximum allowed FAR is 1.33, but with TDR, sites can develop up to 2.0 (Government of Maharashtra, 1997b).
This grandiose and ostensibly “most conceptually advanced policy”\textsuperscript{262} was framed by a vigorous housing market in Mumbai where real estate prices reached a historical peak during 1995. In fact, during this year, Mumbai experienced the most expensive real estate transactions in the world.\textsuperscript{263} The market buoyancy aside, the scheme invited substantial criticism from NGOs, environmental groups and the media.\textsuperscript{264} Even though SRS program was implemented, the criticism towards the scheme continued. NHSS was among the most vocal of its critics. I begin analyzing NGO activities during this phase with NHSS.

\textsuperscript{262} These words appear in a draft paper titled “Rajiv Indira-Suryodaya Project in Dharavi’ shared with me by an employee of SPARC on the 17\textsuperscript{th} of February 2003.

\textsuperscript{263} In 1993-1994, real estate prices in the south Mumbai (the city’s central business district) were “higher than in down-town Tokyo and Manhattan, New York” (Patel 2003a, 21). Cushman and Wakefield (2003) note that the city experienced the highest real estate transactions in the world. Shaped as an isthmus, Mumbai’s unique geography naturally limits the extent of land available for development and has routinely kept real estate prices in the city high. During the mid 1990s, a phenomenal rise in real estate prices was spurred by liberalization policies of the government of India. Holding the coveted status of India’s financial and commercial capital, Mumbai was eagerly sought by international financial groups and other multinational corporations wanting to establish base in the city. After comparing Mumbai to other metropolises in Asia, Bertaud (2004) lists four supply bottlenecks that make Mumbai’s real estate particularly expensive: a) the exceptional topography of the city; b) its land use policy which restricts the area of floor space which can be built on the little eland available; c) the muddled nature of property rights which prevent households and firms to freely trade land and floor space as a commodity; and, d) failure to develop major infrastructure networks which prevent the city from overcoming its topographical constraints.

\textsuperscript{264} In May 1996, in a spirit of public consultation, the SRA formally invited groups and concerned citizens to submit their inputs and concerns about the scheme. The process elicited comments from several different stakeholders including the three participating NGOs. The CEO of SRA personally responded to each such suggestion and/or objection.
5.3 NHSS and the SRD and SRS


Under the guise of privatization, it was convenient for the government to answer this string of failures [i.e., state-led slum development schemes] not with greater involvement, but by withdrawing and leaving the field to private builders and developers. . . . The scheme was a non-starter from the very outset. 265

For NHSS, dissent was a necessary means for drawing attention to the end of housing rights of slum dwellers in the city. This dissent routinely took the form of pre-demolition protests and, if demolitions did occur, NHSS demanded that the state offer alternative accommodation. 266 NHSS also expressed dissatisfaction over most other state led approaches to slum and squatter housing.

The sole exception was its approval of the “sites and services” scheme initiated in the late 1980s in Bombay. 267 NHSS supported the scheme because it felt that “in this scheme the government is totally responsible for providing all the services such as water, electricity,

265 Das (2003, 213).
266 Some examples include NHSS’s work with a slum under a fly-over in South Mumbai. The slum was demolished and NHSS intervened by pressing the state for an alternate site (in 1986); work with another slum colony (Sangharsh Nagar) in north Mumbai which survived repeat demolitions. With NHSS’s support, the residents “forcibly occupied a strip of swamp land and were determined to fight it out to secure the right to live and exist” (Singh 1987, 66).
267 Inspired by the “assisted self help theories of John F.C. Turner,” (Pugh 2001, 404), the World Bank (1972, 1974, 1975) advocated adoption of sites and services and in-situ slum upgrading programs. Both these programs, which held sway from 1972-82, were based on principles of cost recovery, affordability and replicability. In the sites and services projects, the government typically contributed by acquiring land in urban peripheries, laying infrastructure and then subdividing land into lots. The lots were then either leased or sold to eligible slum dwellers. The ‘beneficiaries’ on their part could construct their own homes or contract for construction with developers/builders. Aside from isolated successes at the project level in cities, implementation in many developing nations was rife with problems ranging from poor cost recovery, sloppy administration, corruption, poor site selection, exclusion of the poorest to inadequacies in land and housing finance policies (Laquian 1977; Skinner & Rodell 1983; Nientied & Van der Linden 1988; Peattie 1987; Pugh 1990). According to NHSS, “the World bank officials and the government cleverly turned it into a project for the rich. Instead of giving plots to workers, only one fourth was reserved for them and the rest for upper classes” (Das and Gonsalves 1987, 49).
sewage, drainage and toilets, for providing technical knowhow and skills, interest-free loans and also for providing building materials at highly subsidised rates” (Das and Gonsalves 1987, 48). Another reason for its endorsement of the sites and services alternative was that, if implemented:

> Our cities will allow for individual freedom and expression in housing, resulting in tremendous variety of form, structures, colours and framework of an ever-evolving and living aesthetic. We could overcome the ugliness of apartment buildings and eliminate the exploitation by developers and financiers who today control housing, who have turned it into a commodity where design is irrelevant and has no reference to the cultural and living pattern of our people.  

Therefore, when the state announced its intent to release slum land to private developers in the 1990s, NHSS was up in arms against the announcement and summarily rejected the SRD and SRS schemes. Through the 1990s, NHSS actively dissuaded interested slum dwellers from endorsing the scheme, arguing that the scheme was “builder propelled” and that “slum dwellers must be educated to throw out corrupt committee members who try [colluding with builders] and behave like rajas [kings].” NHSS was also “successful in thwarting the designs of builders to take over slums.” I analyze NHSS’s reactions to the policy in further detail using the post-eviction developments at the rehabilitation site of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar evictees.

Succumbing to enormous pressure exerted by a hunger strike led by NHSS, and in which many celebrities participated, the State government agreed to allocate land for the

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268 Source: Das and Gonsalves (1987, 49).
269 Source: Singh and Das (1995, 2478).
270 Source: Minutes of a General Body Meeting of the NHSS held on the 19th of October 1997.
271 Ibid.
272 The new site, located at a distance of about 30 kilometers from their original slum in South Mumbai, was initially named Sangharsh Nagar (meaning city of ‘city of struggle’ in Hindi) but was later renamed Sanjay Gandhi Nagar by the residents. The slum therefore retained its original name.
resettlement of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum evictees.\textsuperscript{273} In 1986, within a few months of the demolition, the State government requested one of the city’s leading landlords to lease a stretch of its land for the rehabilitation of evictees.\textsuperscript{274} NHSS decided to use the bulk of this land\textsuperscript{275} to house the evictees and the remainder for activities that it wished to carry out under the aegis of a new organization, the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre (NHWC).

NHWC was an interesting new development prompted by receipt of a generous contribution of INR 500,000 from the Indian Red Cross Society in 1986. The donation was mobilized by the film-actress/President\textsuperscript{276} of NHSS for the “welfare of the slum dwellers.”\textsuperscript{277} As a non-registered entity, NHSS was not in a position to accept the donation. Hence the money was credited to the account of the residents’ association of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar dwellers.\textsuperscript{278} In less than a week of receipt of the contribution, the money was admittedly transferred out of the account of the residents’ association to NHSS’s and later in 1988 to the NHWC.\textsuperscript{279} The movement of funds set the ball of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item The previous chapter described the slum, its demolition, and NHSS’s work in pressing the state for an alternate site for those evicted.
\item The land measured 13,928 square meters.
\item This portion measured 11,904 square meters.
\item After her support to the NHSS during the hunger strike, the film-actress/activist joined NHSS supporting it in many publicized interventions in slums across the city. She assumed the position of President, NHSS in 1997 and also holds position as Chairperson of the NHWC.
\item Source: Weekly newspaper, Sunday Observer, February 11-17, 1996.
\item The members of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar were registered as a public charitable trust under the Bombay Public Trust Act and refer to themselves as the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar Rahivasi Sangathana (which means Sanjay Gandhi Nagar Residents’ Association in Hindi). Source: Copy of the sale deed signed between the residents’ association and the F.E. Dinshaw Trust (the private land trust which leased its land to the slum dwellers) on the 24\textsuperscript{th} of October 1991. This document was shared with me by a resident-couple of the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar in Malad (East) during my conversation with them on the 8\textsuperscript{th} of July 2003.
\item Interview with three residents of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar in their homes on the 8\textsuperscript{th} of July 2003 in Malad (East), Mumbai. It is also to be noted that from 1984 until 1997, the Treasurer of the residents’ association was a member of the NHSS who later assumed position as the President, NHWC. So effectively, management of the finances of the residents’ association of slum dwellers was, in large part, under the control of NHSS.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
distrust rolling among the more vocal of slum dwellers who wanted to manage the funds themselves and use it exclusively for the resettlement of their slum. This precipitated to a dispute with the NHSS in 1996.

The Municipal Corporation marked the relocation site to allow nearly 325 Sanjay Gandhi residents to build their own structures.\textsuperscript{280} Most started by building makeshift structures of bamboo and aluminum sheets but not without considerable resistance from local goons. According to one current resident,

\begin{quote}
Nobody was prepared to come here. The site was of course far away from our original homes and place of work but many were also actually scared to come. The area was full of dadagiri [goon power]. Men wielding knives and threatening NHSS workers [including NHWC President-social worker] and what not.\textsuperscript{281} It was in the midst of all this that we managed to construct the toilets and all. Only then did most [of us] really start investing in our homes.
\end{quote}

Between 1986 and 1992, NHSS invested the donated funds\textsuperscript{282} towards leveling the ground in preparation for construction work on the resettlement site. Money was also spent on building a temporary fence around the site, construction of a common toilet block, and laying water pipes for the settlement.\textsuperscript{283} By about 1992, when construction of the toilet block was complete, the site was fully occupied.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{280}] Each plot area on the site measures 14 feet by 17 feet.
\item[\textsuperscript{281}] When allotted, this relocation site was surrounded by a few other slum hutments whose residents took issue with a new settlement coming to their area. Source: Interview with social worker-President of NHWC on the 4th of July 2003 at her residence in Colaba, Mumbai.
\item[\textsuperscript{282}] According to a weekly report in the Sunday Observer (February 11-17, 1996), between January 1, 1986 and November 20, 1995, the total funds donated to the Residents’ Association amounted to nearly INR 4,550,000.
\item[\textsuperscript{283}] Residents stated that nearly INR 75,000-100,000 was spent towards constructing ten toilets and this amount was offered as a loan from NHSS to the residents’ association. Another INR 55,000 was spent to lay water pipes.
\end{footnotes}
According to the residents, a period of contention began when one of the members of NHSS committee, an architect, urban planner and President of an NGO called the ‘People’s Participation Programme,’ suggested that the settlement be redeveloped under the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) of 1991. He was an active proponent of slum redevelopment and held that “such an option alone can eradicate slums in Bombay.”\textsuperscript{284}

Such was his faith in high-rise development that as early as 1988, he wrote:\textsuperscript{285}

\begin{quote}
The economic and optimum heights of the buildings should be ground and four upper floors by Bombay’s standards (where provision of lifts are not required). Any building project less than this height cannot be economically worked out and can never accommodate all the existing tenements. . . . The romantic idea of horizontal developments [is] not only suicidal but un-economical, unheigenic [sic] and results into [sic] under use of the potentialities of land and services.
\end{quote}

The idea of redeveloping the settlement under the SRD scheme was entertained by a vocal faction of slum residents who saw it as an attractive opportunity to own valuable real estate in Mumbai.\textsuperscript{286} The possibility grew increasingly attractive when the new State government announced its “free housing” scheme in 1995. Some of the residents, who held positions in the managing committee of the resident’s association of the slum, stated that the architects’ plans were convincing and a many were enthusiastic about the prospect of redeveloping their slum.

\textsuperscript{284} Source: Naik (n.d.1). The cited statement is an extract from a letter written by the President of the People’s Participation Programme and former member of the NHSS to the Minister of Urban Development, New Delhi and to the Chief Minister, Sharad Pawar. Sharad Pawar was Chief Minister of Maharashtra between March 1993 and March 1995. The letter was thus addressed some time between 1993 and 1995.

\textsuperscript{285} Source: Naik (1998). This was a letter (a press release) written by the architect-member of the NHSS to the Chairman of a Cabinet sub-committee set up in November 1988 to offer recommendations on the city’s “slum problems.” The committee was chaired by Ramrao Adik, a senior Congress leader and former Advocate General of Maharashtra.

\textsuperscript{286} According to the slum dwellers, some of them were taken to an ongoing slum redevelopment scheme in the northwestern suburb of Mumbai. Here, the People’s Participation Programme was implementing a redevelopment project with a cooperative housing society of 550 slum dwellers called ‘Roma Banjara Tandara Cooperative Housing Colony, Ltd.’
However, the plan was vociferously opposed by another member-architect (later Vice-President, NHSS) who joined NHSS in the early 1990s and expressed intentions to develop Sanjay Gandhi Nagar into a model resettlement area with community gardens, common external toilets, and ample open space. The model reflected NHSS’s notion expressed as follows:

Architecturally, the cheapest and most environment-friendly model would be the Ground + one or Ground + two, if necessary. The horizontal approach rather than multi-storey constructions would be most in keeping with the environment slum-dwellers are used to in close neighbourhood; and at the same it would avoid the high construction and maintenance costs that high-rise buildings involve.287

Decision about the future design of the settlement led to a heated and prolonged squabble that soured relations between NHSS and the managing committee representing slum dwellers. The distrust and outright revulsion for NHSS became a publicized source of contention in 1996 when a disgruntled resident filed a complaint in the local police station and also filed a writ in the Court accusing NHSS of misappropriating funds that were, according to him, meant exclusively for the welfare of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar dwellers.288 He also accused NHSS of usurping the front-end of the property under the guise of using it to undertake its proposed welfare activities. A commercial building at the front end could, according to some residents, fetch a commercially attractive price high enough to cross-subsidize their homes completely while also leaving an attractive margin of profit for an interested builder.

287 Singh and Das (1995, 2481).
288 Sunday Observer (February 11-17, 1996). Also verified in conversation with residents of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar residents on the 8th of July 2003.
NHSS justified transferring funds to the well-intentioned move to set up a medical centre and a school under NHWC. It further argued that the slum dweller was a Congress Party worker and a corrupt member of the committee. This one member wanted NHSS to leave the site so that he could offer the land to a builder to develop commercial buildings in the front end. The battle between NHSS and the resident was a bitter one and was aggravated by the fact that NHSS’s plans to utilize its land to construct a health center and a school remained dormant for several years.\(^{289}\) NHSS did, however, coordinate construction of a small pathology lab along with a tiny room that serves as an office for a visiting doctor. This small structure was adjacent to a room that served as a pre-school center by day and a community meeting room by night. A large part of the NHWC-purchased land remained unutilized for a long while, causing a few slum dwellers to believe that NHSS deliberately took away a viable portion of land to keep the community from benefiting from the scheme.

Today, the settlement, like many well-established slums in the city, is largely horizontal and is home to about 313 residents (not all of whom are original evictees). The area does not, as planned by the NHSS architect-Vice-President, boast a community garden or common community spaces. Some of the better-off residents have constructed toilets within their own homes, have paved roads, and have added another storey to rent to others. Direct and regular access to water is an issue in several homes. The treasurer of the residents’ association of slum dwellers (also social worker-President of NHWC) since 1984, resigned from her post after a bitter exchange of words with an angry resident in

\(^{289}\) It was only in early 2004 that construction of a much larger health center commenced. The space is also proposed for use as a “Civil Liberties Center,” a school, and as an office space for the NHSS. I visited the site of construction during my visit to Mumbai in July 2004.
October 1997. Incidents such as these have repeated themselves often, with the result that NHSS, despite operating from an adjacent premise, maintains an arms-length from community affairs.

Discussion

In the political game being played in the name of housing for the poor and low-cost housing, numerous voluntary agencies, often termed Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), some receiving foreign funds, are being used to divide and weaken the people and render them incapable of launching united people’s struggles for quality and dignity. Their constant effort is to subvert, dis-inform and de-idealize people so as to keep them away from class struggles.

- Das (1995, 179)

The excerpt above is taken from a report written by NHSS’s Vice-President, who was critical of NGO involvement in state-led housing schemes. NHSS disapproved of private sector involvement in housing on grounds that “instead of going to the root of the problem and socializing the housing sector, the government seeks ways and means of lessening its responsibilities” (Das 1995, 175). In the course of its criticism of the scheme, NHSS launched an equally vociferous attack on NGOs that approved of the scheme. Two of NHSS’s members – the member journalist and the Vice-President – are particularly well known for their staunch opposition of the scheme (Das 1995, 180). NHSS was not alone in its criticism. Many others expressed skepticism over several different aspects of the slum redevelopment and rehabilitation schemes. YUVA, for instance, doubted the durability of the solution in light of “natural population growth and migration . . . [which it held] will necessarily call for broader systems [sic] wide and systemic changes such as, creation of rural employment, drought proofing etc. . .” (YUVA 1995, 3). Environmental groups, such as the Bombay Environmental Action
Group, questioned the wisdom of enhancing allowable FAR and congesting the city more than it already was. NHSS however stood out in its criticism largely on account of the high public profile of its members and also on account of its participation in some notable discussion forums\textsuperscript{290} and publications (Singh and Das 1995, 2477-2481; Das 1995, 170-182; Das 2003, 207-234). The pervasiveness of confrontation NHSS’s with the state over the new policy environment precludes efforts at classifying NHSS’s strategies with the state in a tabular form.

What was curious about NHSS’s tactics during these years was its resolve to dissuade slum dwellers from investing in the scheme. Formed with the conviction that NGOs ought to stay on an “agitational path” to win their demands, NHSS rejected community aspirations to work within state-defined parameters of slum redevelopment. In the process, NHSS strained relations with long-standing adherents of its housing agenda (Das 1995, 180).\textsuperscript{291} In a flourishing real estate market, even a much favored community group turned against its primary benefactor. Commercial interests clearly superseded any sense of gratitude or adherence to architectural ideals upheld in plans to rehabilitate slum dwellers of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar. To date, the community has not succeeded in

\textsuperscript{290} NHSS played a leading role in the formation of a ten member group of NGOs and citizen groups called the “Mumbai Nagrik Vikas Manch” (Forum for the development of citizens of Mumbai). The forum organized meetings across the city “campaigning against the very notion of ‘Incentive FSI’ being gravely against the city’s interest, particularly in a situation where the city’s amenities, services, and infrastructure are inadequate and fragile” (Das 2003, 225). One example of such a discussion forum includes a 23rd-24th October 1996 meeting held with the title “Citizens Response to MMRDA Plan for Mumbai” at the Bombay University Convocation Hall in the Fort area of South Mumbai.

\textsuperscript{291} It is however to be noted that even though relations with members of the managing committee of the Resident’s Association are strained, NHSS does entertain a fair degree of respect from others in the settlement who believe that securing an alternate relocation site after their demolition in 1986 would not have been possible without NHSS’s determination.
converting its settlement to a slum redevelopment area, and relations between members of the resident association and NHSS continue to be tenuous.

Taking a strong position against government policy, and particularly one that that was under strong favor amongst slum dwellers, was a high-risk strategy. NHSS professed to speak on behalf of slum dwellers when it stated that slum dwellers preferred low-rise homes and in-situ rehabilitation as opposed to reconstruction/redevelopment of their slums. Such a lifestyle, it held, is in keeping with what they are most accustomed to. However, much to its distaste, no sooner was the policy announced than slum leaders (and arguably other members) grew anxious to capture increase in land values. However, NHSS’s position on the issue of staying away from housing delivery was resolute.

Another interesting development during this phase of NHSS’s lifetime was the strategic use of the hunger strike. NHSS’s highly publicized hunger strike helped mobilize an impressive volume of donations. The acceptance and utilization of the money spurred creation of a state recognized institution and NHWC was therefore created as a charitable trust in 1988. Work under NHWC was described “as a necessary complement that allows NHSS to combine its rights-based work with medical and educational programs

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292 This inference is drawn from my analysis of not merely Sanjay Gandhi Nagar but opinions of communities that both YUVA and SPARC were working with during the same time. Some members in Sanjay Gandhi Nagar echoed NHSS’s fears in associating with a builder/developer but, as observed by Seabrook (1997), “the prospect of being given an apartment, for occupation or sale, is very tempting. And hope [among Sanjay Gandhi Nagar residents] remains extraordinarily tenacious, even among those who over 20 years have been repeatedly cheated, worsted and swindled by more powerful social and economic forces.”

293 NHWC was registered as a charitable trust with the Charity Commissioner in Mumbai on the 8th of August 1988. To accept overseas donations, NHWC has also sought clearance under the Foreign Regulations Control Act (FCRA) of the Government of India.
for slum dwellers.” 294 The journalist member of the NHSS echoed these sentiments when he said that “NHSS today was combining struggle as its leading weapon with services for the poor like the medical centre and balwadis [pre-school center].” 295 Later on the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre (NHWC) was to become a vehicle to justify engagement in a cooperative arrangement with the state and a private developer. I analyze this phase of its lifetime in the following chapter.

NHSS thus began the decade of the 1990s with a loud tirade against the new housing policy environment. The protest helped establish NHSS as among the leading opponents of both the SRD and SRS policies. Further into the 1990s, when the ‘free’ housing policy, showed so signs of flagging, NHSS faced enormous internal and external pressure to reconsider its strategic position. This shift in position is the subject of the following chapter.

5.4 YUVA and the SRD and SRS (1991-1999)

1991 will be the first year of YUVA as it metamorphises from the project based approach to the issue based structure under the City Project establishing its proactive stand in addressing itself to issues in a scientific and professional manner.

- YUVA (1990, 28)

Six years after working in the city of Mumbai, YUVA undertook a formal, organization-wide evaluation of its “strategies”, its “approach”, and its “organization structure” (YUVA 1992, 1). The evaluation took the shape of a series of review sessions

294 Phone interview with President of NHSS (who is also Chairperson of NHWC) on the 17th of August 2003.
295 Source: From the minutes of a General Council meeting of the NHSS held on October 19, 1997.
coordinated by two external consultants.\textsuperscript{296} The organization-wide evaluation and consequent redefinition of work began in 1989 and lasted until the altered organizational structure was inaugurated in January 1991 under the banner ‘Bombay City Project.’\textsuperscript{297}

The philosophy guiding work under the City Project (Phase I) remained the same, i.e., adherence to a rights-based framework. However, there was a shift in emphasis from isolated projects to a more comprehensive conceptualization of city-level concerns. YUVA thus developed a process that it called the “seven levels of intervention”\textsuperscript{298} with a particular focus on “advocacy, lobbying, networking and policy work” (YUVA 2000, 2). In practice, the reorganization led to greater formalization of procedures within YUVA and a gradual effort to regroup professionally qualified members into a team designated the “Professional Support Group” (YUVA 1994, 35). Before I describe a key intervention in the years immediately following the internal review process, I devote some time to analyzing the factors, identified by staff to make sense of the changes. I look at both external and internal factors.

\textsuperscript{296}Interview held on the 4\textsuperscript{th} of December 2003 at the residence of a former coordinator of YUVA’s housing rights team (in Mahim, Mumbai). The review sessions were coordinated by a former member of YUVA’s General Body and currently, President of YUVA’s Governing Board. He is the Managing Trustee of \textit{Jan Vikas} (People’s Development in Hindi), an NGO based in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in western India. \textit{Jan Vikas} provides training in organizational development and capacity building to other NGOs.

\textsuperscript{297} The first phase (1991-1994) and the second phase (1996-1999) of the City Project were both funded by way of grants received from a development funding agency, called MISEREOR which is mandated by the Catholic Church in Germany. The gap in the City Project 1994-1996, labeled the transition phase, was also funded by MISEREOR.

\textsuperscript{298} YUVA envisioned realizing each “right”—housing, child, women, and youth—by engaging in “seven levels of intervention”. These levels of intervention comprised education, awareness and training; action/organization; documentation/publication; research/policy intervention; advocacy/network/lobbying; experiments towards alternatives; and, support/solidarity. Each rights-based team was organized as a distinct unit with its own management level staff and community workers.
One “objective factor” identified by YUVA’s Founding Director was the demolition of a pavement settlement in South Mumbai where YUVA ran a school program for pavement children.299 “In six months during 1989”, he recalled, “their homes were demolished 90 times! Clearly, what we were doing was not enough.”300 The experience, he added, created the need to extend work to a “broader, more meaningful level.” YUVA identified a series of other external variables including: the policies of liberalization under the recently initiated Structural Adjustment Programs,301 rise in communalism and caste related violence, among many others. These external factors, YUVA theorized, would result in NGOs being sought “as partners and implementors of programmes” to serve the interests of the state and international aid agencies (YUVA 1992, 1).

A former coordinator302 of YUVA’s Housing Rights team attributed the strategic rethinking to a growing internal need to identify “what we were very good at.”303 The process invariably brought up discussion about several limitations. In housing, for example, YUVA was dissatisfied with its ad hoc involvement with slums and pavement communities (hitherto focused on resisting and responding to demolitions) and identified the need to more aggressively lobby state officials and politicians for concrete policy and legislative changes (YUVA 1990, 16). YUVA was also concerned about high turnover

299 Telephone interview to New York with Founding Executive Director on September 8, 2004.
300 Ibid.
301 YUVA articulated it as follows: “Governments [sic] acceptance of the IMF [International Monetary Fund] loan has meant the complete opening up of the market and economy to forces of privatisation, increased urbanisation, increased interference and control by outside forces; implying ramifications on all aspects of peoples lives. The cuts in social securities and welfare programmes such as in education, health, public distribution system, the impact on unemployment, retrenchment of workers, the women work force etc.” (YUVA 1992, 1).
302 She currently is a member of YUVA’s General Body.
303 Interview held on the 4th of December 2003 at her residence in Mahim, Mumbai.
among its professional staff, uneasiness over vesting exclusive responsibility for a project in a single person, and the administrative bureaucratization of project-related work.

Before I present details on YUVA’s housing-related work from 1991 to 1999 (specifically in SRD and SRS schemes), it is critical to note that my efforts to retrieve archival material including project-specific details, minutes of meetings, etc. yielded no results. This was a serious limitation that I desperately sought to overcome during the months of my stay in Mumbai. I interviewed former members of YUVA along with others, such as external architects hired to work out details of the housing schemes. With the informed consent of YUVA’s Founding Executive Director, I gathered some of the written archives still in the possession of former employees. I also held extended conversations with slum and pavement dwellers involved with the projects. The not-so-favorable outcome of YUVA’s efforts, a possible lapse in memory of former employees, a somewhat disappointed set of community members, and the futility of my search for documentary evidence should be kept in mind while reviewing the project-specific details presented.

304 I was told that case files are safely stored but recurrent searches by YUVA employees to help me gain access to these files yielded nothing. Much later (two days after my dissertation defense), the former coordinator of the HID team of YUVA, emailed me a series of electronically stored files related to the projects. The details in these files match the content of this case study and hence, help corroborate the data presented in this case study.
After the evaluation, YUVA felt that it began the 1990s “on a much clearer note regarding understanding of issues” (YUVA 1992, 1).\textsuperscript{305} In the Development Control Regulations (building codes and regulations) announced in March 1991, the state of Maharashtra announced its intent to attract private developers as well as housing cooperatives of slum dwellers to undertake redevelopment of slums. Soon after the scheme’s announcement, YUVA expressed its “principal” disapproval (YUVA 1994, 25):

The Development Control Rules proposed by the State Government are going to drastically affect the lives of the poor. These rules are blatantly anti-poor and broaden the space for builders and real estate agents. … Builders would only use this clause to further maximize their profits, escalating the land price and eventually forcing the current residents out of the area.

However, in a tone of surrender and conciliation with the housing policy environment, YUVA also noted that “since it [the SRD scheme] will not be scrapped, our attempt is to mitigate its fallout” (YUVA 1994, 25). YUVA adopted select slums Jogeshwari as pilot, experimental areas hoping that slum dwellers could be encouraged to take up redevelopment on their own.\textsuperscript{306} As a first step, slum dwellers were encouraged to form cooperative housing societies\textsuperscript{307} and, to do so, YUVA tried reorganizing its

\textsuperscript{305} To restate a point made in the last section, YUVA altered its orientation from isolated projects to a more comprehensive conceptualization of city-level concerns. YUVA refers to it as “establishing its proactive stand in addressing itself to issues in a scientific and professional manner” (YUVA 1990, 28).

\textsuperscript{306} It may be recalled that Jogeshwari is an area located in the northeastern suburb of Mumbai. It was in the slums of Jogeshwari that YUVA first began work in Mumbai. See Chapter 4 for details of how YUVA’s Founding Executive Director began work among youth in this locality.

\textsuperscript{307} To obtain a sanction from the “SRD Committee” the eligible slum dwellers were required to form into a cooperative housing society. They first register themselves as a “proposed” Cooperative Housing Society (at this stage, the name of the society is registered with the Registrar of Cooperative Societies of the State).
professionally qualified staff into a “Professional Support Group.” It also tried hiring specialists but neither of these efforts yielded expected results (YUVA 1994, 44). YUVA therefore initiated formation of personal networks with external “specialists” such as those familiar with the formation of cooperative housing societies and architects. The professionals visited Jogeshwari (and gradually other slums across the city) to convene meetings informing slum residents to be watchful of the machinations of profiteering builders, local politicians and corrupt community leaders wanting to take unlawful advantage of the scheme. 

Towards this end, YUVA distributed booklets and dossiers in regional languages familiarizing slum dwellers, across ten different areas of the city, with the Development Control Regulations. YUVA set up information centers in slums, trained barefoot councilors in the communities, and produced and screened two documentary films on SRD. It also organized a State-level “Development Control Regulation (DCR) Seminar” to generate discussion on the subject. By and large, however, its work from 1991-1994 with SRD primarily served to reinforce its reservations about the scheme. This sense of gloom discernibly changed in 1995 with announcement of the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme.

The society is then officially registered only after the SRD Committee issues a letter of intent expressing its approval of the scheme.

308 The Professional Support Group was made up of various units such as media, design, library, electronic data processing, documentation, research and training.

309 Interview with a Mumbai-based architect associated with YUVA since 1993-94. I interviewed him in his office in Khar, Mumbai on the 5th of August, 2003. He was part of the support group and later served as architect for two YUVA-coordinated SRS schemes in Jogeshwari (explained later).

310 Work in Jogeshwari informed YUVA’s apprehensions. YUVA petitioned in the High Court against a builder, an architect, two slum leaders and a Ward Officer of the Municipality charging them with several violations, including deliberately excluding a large chunk of eligible Muslim slum dwellers from the project but including their land as part of the scheme.
In December 1995, when the Government of Maharashtra amended the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act to provide for the creation of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), YUVA was in the thick of yet another round of internal reorganization. In the second phase of its City Project, YUVA adopted a strategy of “convergence” – of balancing its work of securing rights with building assets for the poor – which it labeled the People’s Organization-People’s Institution (PO-PI) model. In practical terms, a PO was advocacy-oriented and was equivalent, for instance, to a federation of pavement dwellers who could be equipped to negotiate with the state to assert their rights to housing. A PI, on the other hand, was implementation-oriented and could be a housing cooperative, a construction company, or a project management company which could negotiate with the “market to protect and control existing assets and create new assets” (YUVA 2000, Annexure I).

Ironically, the PO-PI framework led the organization back to its former project-focus. It nevertheless helped YUVA rationalize its decision to plunge into implementing the

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311 In an evaluation of work under Phase I (YUVA 1999b, 5), YUVA questioned its ability to sustain the multi-issue, multi-level approach to its interventions. In housing, YUVA admitted to a) being unable to follow-up work towards creation of a comprehensive slum legislation, and b) referred to its attempts at setting up a Professional Support Group, a failure.

312 This does not imply a complete absence in such primary organizational tactics as policy advocacy, networking, lobbying and mobilizing/organizing work but a conscious shift in focus from solely critiquing prevailing socio-economic-political processes to a search for tangible outcomes/deliverables within the framework of existing policy processes.
Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS). Ten slum communities were chosen\(^{313}\) from among nearly 70 where YUVA had established contacts since the launch of the SRD scheme. YUVA’s Founding Executive Director insisted that since “making a profit” was not important, it did not intentionally set out looking for schemes that would “easily” succeed.\(^ {314}\) Instead, ten schemes were identified based on such criteria as community interest, cohesiveness, leadership skills, and overall credibility of slum dwellers.\(^ {315}\) If the slum dwellers met the above criteria, YUVA would assist them with construction. YUVA also offered to help slum dwellers sort their relations with a private developer of their choice by offering such technical services as contract preparation, helping with formation of a housing cooperative and all other procedural inputs, presumably for a fee.

**Housing and Infrastructure Development Unit**

Between 1996 and 1998, YUVA hired three professionals -- a management graduate as a project coordinator, a financial analyst, and an architect -- for a new unit called Housing and Infrastructure Development (HID).\(^ {316}\) The unit was to assist the long established Housing Rights team with financial and marketing strategies for making the chosen SRS projects viable, with evaluating various technical options (e.g. design and plan

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\(^{313}\) Two localities, Dharavi and Ghatkopar, were initially chosen for rehabilitation but YUVA abandoned them early in the negotiation process. Dharavi, according to YUVA, was flooded with NGOs wanting to work with slum dwellers and in Ghatkopar, “feasibility was a big issue” (Interview with former Project Coordinator of HID who is also member of YUVA’s General Body on the 17th of June 2003 at her residence in Chennai).

\(^{314}\) Interview with Founding Executive Director of YUVA in YUVA’s Khargar office in Mumbai on the 1st of July 2003.

\(^{315}\) Interview with former Project Coordinator of the HID team on the 17th of June 2003 at her residence in Chennai and with the Founding Executive Director of YUVA on the 1st of July 2003 at YUVA’s Khargar office, Mumbai.

\(^{316}\) Initially, the group was called the “Gaining Housing and Access to Related Rights” (or GHAR meaning “Home” in Hindi) team. It was in 1997 that the team was renamed HID.
modifications), and with obtaining concessions and other permissions from governmental authorities towards construction. Despite its professed community-centered criterion of selection, the HID unit eventually selected six cooperative housing societies of slum dwellers where there also seemed good potential to earn revenues from sale of tenements at market rates (to help fully cross-subsidize tenements for participating slum dwellers).\textsuperscript{317}

However, each of the housing projects was riddled with a host of serious concerns outlined below:

a) Trimurti Cooperative Housing Society: The slums in this area were of exceedingly high density\textsuperscript{318} making it impossible to accommodate all slum dwellers in proposed buildings without adding to the number of floors.\textsuperscript{319} In fact, so high was the density of the settlement that the HID team had to rule out the possibility of constructing market sale tenements on the same site to cross subsidize homes for slum dwellers.\textsuperscript{320} This locality was subject, moreover, to building height restrictions requiring clearance from the civil aviation authorities.

In addition to the problem of high density were two further issues of i) determining suitable access to the site from the nearest road and ii) the issue of

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{317} The six selected societies included three in the prime locality of Worli and another two in YUVA’s old hang-out in the northeastern suburb of Jogeshwari (see Appendix A C for location). Unlike Jogeshwari which is located in the northeast suburbs of Mumbai, Worli is located in the island city and had excellent potential to fetch good revenues from its market-sale tenements. In the island city, where property values are the highest, the ratio between rehabilitation area and free-sale area is 1:0.75. For Jogeshwari, located in the suburbs, the recommended rehabilitation to free-sale area is 1:1.\textsuperscript{318} The density ranged from 932-1,012 dwellings per hectare.\textsuperscript{319} Sixteen such buildings, six floors in height were proposed. Source: an undated draft proposal (possibly written in 1999) format titled “Proposal to a contractor/developer for the development of the Trimurti Housing Co-operative Society under the Slum Redevelopment Scheme.”\textsuperscript{320} The SPPL, later on in August 1998, suggested that the basement of the buildings could be sold as a warehouse since basement usage is free of FSI. However, vehicular access was so difficult that this possibility was ruled out. Because of difficult access and on suggestions of the CEO of SRA, YUVA began negotiations with the MCGM to permit use of a nearby land reserved as a cemetery either for construction of transit homes or swap it with the Trimurti site and use for construction of the entire project.}
selecting a site to accommodate slum dwellers temporarily whilst construction was in progress.

b) Omkar Cooperative Housing Society: The site did not offer particular spatial advantages for a potential market (for residential housing and commercial sale). It also needed an electric transformer belonging to the MCGM shifted to allow access to the proposed buildings.

c) Prem Nagar Cooperative Housing Society: This, according to YUVA, was the least “troublesome” of all sites. Roughly a third of the site was reserved for use (under Municipal Corporation’s development plans) as a maternity hospital and also had a road reservation running through it. However, the remainder was sufficient to accommodate the entire community on the site.321

Each of the above hurdles was minor in the face of financial bottlenecks. A depressed real estate market and a reluctant institutional finance environment for slum redevelopment did not make things easier for the young team. Neither the Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited (HUDCO)322 nor the Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC) was prepared to lend towards slum redevelopment

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321 In a personal communication via email on Sunday, the 3rd of April 2005, the former coordinator of the HID team wrote: “The real issue was financial feasibility because by the time we got around to submission the prices had dropped rock bottom. . . . We had no saleable area except a small strip of commercial construction on the ground floor. The site had mostly TDR [transferable development rights] and because of the SRD glut of TDR released into the market the sale of TDR would generate about Rs. [INR] 250 – 300 per sft [square feet] whereas a built up would generate revenue of Rs. [INR] 1,500 and profit of Rs [INR] 700 per sft. - making all of our schemes infeasible. It was in this context that we thought maybe getting the reservation lifted might solve this problem.”

322 HUDCO is a public sector housing finance provider. YUVA was a part of a team of NGOs formed to “finalise the terms of financing for NGOs under the SRS [Slum Rehabilitation Scheme] with the Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited (HUDCO)” (YUVA 1997, 6). The experience, noted HID’s Project Coordinator informed us “that funding was going to be almost impossible” (Personal communication via email in July 2003).
without suitable collateral. The Senior General Manager of HDFC enlisted two further reasons for skepticism over lending for SRS projects:

HFI\[s Housing Finance Institutions\] were reluctant to finance the schemes for fear of not getting their funds back if the projects were to get stuck. The legal framework required for the scheme was weak to the extent that a stay order placed could lead to non-completion of the project. Also, at the time of formation of the scheme, the real estate market was down and prices had crashed.

In search of a suitable guarantee, YUVA also sent proposals to various bilateral aid agencies requesting seed capital, but to no avail.

Recognizing the difficulty faced by developers in raising construction finance, the State government kick-started the ShivShahi Punarvasan Prakalp Limited (SPPL) in May 1998. The fully owned government company was to take over the task of implementing the SRS, with an ambitious target of providing 200,000 homes for slum dwellers by January 2000. YUVA commenced extensive negotiations with SPPL in an effort to convince it of the merits of YUVA’s projects. YUVA proposed that SPPL cooperate with a private developer and share project costs at the rate of 70\% and 30\%.

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323 The State government was willing to lease slum land to a cooperative society of slum dwellers but not to the developers directly. Developers could not therefore offer land as collateral to borrow construction finance. In addition, developers were disallowed from taking a lease on the free sale portion of construction (and offer it as collateral) without first completing the rehabilitation building.

324 Interview held on the 9th of July 2003 at HDFC’s head office in Churchgate, Mumbai.

325 Developers, who had hitherto funded their projects through advance booking of “free sale” apartments, found themselves stranded for finance as they could not find buyers in a depressed real estate market. Coming under enormous pressure from developers, the state government was compelled to respond and alter its position as a “mere facilitator to that of an active participant” (Shivshahi Punarvasan Prakalp n.d.). SPPL was formed amidst a great deal of controversy between the two ruling coalition partners of the state namely, the Shiv Sena and the BJP. The latter accused the formers’ grandiose plans “questioning the practicability, financial wisdom and perhaps the *bona fides* of the revised scheme” (Frontline 1998).

326 In September 1998, SPPL contracted YUVA (for a sum of INR 190,000 or thereabouts) to undertake an assessment survey within eight days. The survey was conducted to assess the general opinion of slum dwellers to shift to permanent alternate accommodation that SPPL proposed constructing on vacant plots of land in the vicinity of these slums. YUVA interviewed slum residents in three such areas and submitted a report.
respectively.\textsuperscript{327} YUVA also tried, through several rounds of discussions, to convince HDFC to finance a well-known private developer, or at least to appraise the projects.\textsuperscript{328} This was deemed necessary to enhance the legitimacy of the scheme, particularly among government officials who were likely to pay greater heed to the scheme with involvement of a reputed housing finance agency. For the first time, things seemed to be coming together for the three schemes.

However, organizational attention and perseverance with the scheme waned in late 1999. State elections brought in a new government in Maharashtra State which declared that the SPPL would not finance any new projects and would have to “carry on with projects already started.”\textsuperscript{329} In YUVA, the HID team disintegrated.\textsuperscript{330} The team’s financial analyst and its architect left YUVA in about mid-1999. YUVA also lost its energetic community development worker who had developed strong ties with members of one of

\textsuperscript{327} Headed by an energetic bureaucrat, SPPL agreed to discuss the possibility of financing the scheme to the extent of 70% if YUVA could mobilize finance to the extent of 30% of the total project costs (Interview with former architect, HID team, YUVA at her residence in Malad, Mumbai on the 23\textsuperscript{rd} of May 2003).

\textsuperscript{328} The objective of convening this “resource group” was to evaluate various technical options such as design and plan modifications, obtain special concessions from governmental authorities, and utilize innovative financial and marketing strategies. These were to serve the ulterior motive of making the three proposed projects financially feasible and thereby attract SPPL’s participation as a joint developer.

\textsuperscript{329} By this time SPPL had commenced financing 30 redevelopment projects across the city. Source: Interview with Assistant Engineer, SPPL on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of August 2003 at the SPPL’s office in Bandra, Mumbai.

\textsuperscript{330} In April 1998, the Project Coordinator of the HID team, for personal reasons, left Mumbai and until 1999, directed and coordinated activities of the team from Kolkata (formerly Calcutta). YUVA raised concern over the statement “the HID team disintegrated.” The coordinator, HID team insisted that while work on the SRD and SRS schemes came to an abrupt halt, “HID evolved into YUVA Consulting . . . and we took these lessons into Consulting – we built partnerships with technical firms to undertake projects such as the World Bank SSP [Slum Sanitation Project] design, how we hired, fully utilized and retained technical staff (engineers, architects). Also we started Bhabrekar Nagar site [see Chapter 6] and finished the first patch, work in Nagpur’s [another city in Maharashtra where YUVA runs a parallel office] Community Action Planning process. We also made headway on the Building Center and developed a high strength brick. Many of these lessons were implemented in our work in post-disaster scenarios . . . The point I’m trying to make . . . is there were no buildings but community and YUVA’s capacities to deal with housing issues was enhanced, and it wasn’t the end of the HID” (Communication via email received on Tuesday, the 12\textsuperscript{th} of April 2005).
the settlements. His departure came as a shock to the settlement whose members felt that the project could not move forward without his involvement. The Founding Executive Director personally visited each community informing them of YUVA’s intent to withdraw from the scheme explaining “that the scheme was so heavily dependent on the market, that it has fallen prey to its own formula for success.”

Discussion

I begin the discussion with a summary of the strategies and tactics used by YUVA in the policy environment of the early 1990s (Table 5.1). Confrontational tactics were deployed alongside a growing organizational intent to work with the housing policy environment and are therefore discussed in combination in the following analysis:

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331 Internally, YUVA faced the rather delicate issue of mobilizing and retaining interest among its field workers towards the scheme. I address this aspect in detail in the following section.

332 Interview with Founding Director, YUVA at YUVA’s Khargar office on the 1st of July 2003.
In YUVA’s reflections on the 1990s, it claims that for the very first and only time, it was compelled to work with the state in a policy framework that it fundamentally opposed. Running against the tide of its own principles, it tried briefly but failed. No one in YUVA was embarrassed about the unfavorable outcome of its work under the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme and of its negotiations with the state. YUVA fell back upon its primary organizational strategy of expressing discontent with the policy and suggested that the scheme was fundamentally flawed in its reliance upon the market. The Founding
Executive Director insisted that the best way ahead was to offer land to slum dwellers at governmental rates, as entailed in the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act, and let people construct their own homes. In particular reference to experience with the schemes in the localities of Worli and Jogeshwari he stated:

We had to abandon it because it was technically and financially unfeasible. Our learnings from it were immense. What had happened was that this whole issue of free, free, free – people didn’t put money. You see, the project was doomed from its very start. We have always stated that the scheme relies too heavily upon the market.

But this rendition sidelines some important organizational constraints related to: a) the selection of projects; and, b) the extent of commitment of its leadership towards seeing the projects to their stated end namely, construction of homes. A former CEO of the SRA, the State government authority that sanctions and monitors all SRS projects, said:

YUVA came up with a scheme but the whole idea was full of problems. . . I requested them to avoid difficult cases – trying to rehabilitate so many people at one go, is not going to work – the pilot project has to succeed – it cannot be so big. Try to develop an area that is small and free of all these hassles – it should have some locational advantages. But I don’t understand why they didn’t follow-up on my advice. I just don’t understand.

YUVA’s Founding Executive Director, strongly disagreed:

I had not selected the projects. If I were a developer, I would have selected a project that was easy and feasible. I am not interested in showing projects. We never thought of being a developer, a promoter. Our purpose was to get the policy implemented, operationalize it for the people so they don’t get cheated by builders … to get the people ready and prepared. Not implement.
The above narrative is hard to digest for some others who were part of the team. One of its former employees stated:

People did not come to YUVA; YUVA went to people educating them about the scheme, telling them that the homes are for free again and again. This was all carefully planned. How can you play with the lives and the hopes of so many people?  

There is substantial credence to the claim that YUVA did indeed initiate and plan its intervention in the new policy environment. From 1989 until 1991, and then again between 1994 and 1996, YUVA underwent an elaborate process of reflection and dialogue in an effort to prepare its employees and its “internal systems” for a change in the external environment (YUVA 1992, 1). More importantly, it wanted to institute internal changes to avoid what is referred to as a “strategic drift” (Johnson 1987, 244-247). YUVA’s new framework in the mid-1990s, which it called the “PO-PI model of intervention” deliberately coupled advocacy work with housing delivery in cooperation with the state and market.

This fundamental change in thinking and behavior emerged slowly. YUVA initially deployed its familiar tactics of community organizing, education, awareness building and even petitioned the High Court to note the violations in policy implementation. However, compelled by pressures from slum dwellers and, in keeping with its plans to extend

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337 Interview with former employee of YUVA (a member of its HID team) at her residence on the 23rd of May 2003 in Mumbai.
338 A ‘strategic drift’ is a concept referring to situations in which the environment changes gradually, but the organization’s strategy fails to keep in line with it. In business speak, “the long term consequence of cognitive inertia and strategic drift is business failure” (Hodgkinson and Wright 2002, 952) and this is something YUVA wanted to avoid.
beyond its own prevailing repertoire of tactics, YUVA plunged into implementation. This new activity soon required exclusive space in the organization – a process referred to as ‘differentiation’ of function and task (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967). The Housing and Infrastructure Development (HID) Unit was designed to handle the technical-financial and networking demands of the policy. In essence, it required new skills to handle operational details. Balancing the operational rigors of the scheme with “the value-laden nature of nonprofit work” (Frumkin and Andre-Clark 2000, 159) however proved to be a delicate effort for YUVA.

In summary, the period saw YUVA make critical adjustments to its organizational structure and procedures in preparation for work under new housing policy environment. These adjustments were a deliberate attempt to combine rights-based empowerment and mobilization with new housing delivery routines. Hiring of new technically and financially competent personnel and starting a new unit that could devote exclusive attention to working through the details of its project related work in three slum settlements, were the two housing-related developments in YUVA during this period. However, these efforts became embroiled in a host of uncertainties arising from poor site-selection, the inability to raise financial resources towards the projects, a depression in the real estate market and its continued embeddedness in founding values of organizing, mobilizing and empowering communities towards their rights in contrast with a less forceful zeal to delivery tangible outputs. I revisit these factors in the concluding discussions to this chapter.
5.5 SPARC and the SRD and SRS
(1990-1998)

While NHSS was opposing the new state housing policies tooth and nail and YUVA was grudgingly engaged in their implementation, SPARC was fighting its way through the implementation rigors of housing delivery. The Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society (MCHS) is the one slum redevelopment project that consumed a large portion of SPARC’s housing energies from 1986 through 1998. My interest in SPARC for this dissertation arose from its involvement in MCHS. MCHS is the subject of a single-case study dissertation titled “Squatters as Developers? Mumbai’s Slum Dwellers as Equity Partners in Redevelopment” by Mukhija (2000). SPARC rarely speaks of its work with MCHS but, when probed, identifies MCHS as a critical first project because it struggled through it in difficult and unexpected ways. The experience had a significant impact on how SPARC began to perceive the state, communities of the poor, local housing finance institutions, and in general, affected how it chose to conduct its housing interventions in the years to follow. SPARC therefore “learned” from its involvement in MCHS. Among the projects that reflect many of its learnings is the Rajiv-Indira Cooperative Housing Society (RICHIS), also briefly covered below.

Despite a ready resource in an entire dissertation focused on this one single case, I visited the redeveloped building (MCHS) and spoke with some of the members of its

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339 I met with the dissertation advisor as well as the dissertation’s author at the annual American Collegiate Schools of Planning conference in Cleveland, Ohio in November 2001. It was this chance meeting that led to the author sharing his dissertation with me via email in March 2002.

340 Some of the importance accorded to the case is likely also the result of the dissertation which was subsequently published as a book (Mukhija 2003).

341 I rely upon the dissertation (Mukhija 2000) and the book (Mukhija 2003) to reiterate many of the project’s intricate details, all of which are suitably cited in the case narrative.
managing committee and a few other residents. I also interviewed members of SPARC and the NSDF, the concerned architect and builder, officials in HUDCO (the financer), and perused the project files on MCHS with HUDCO. With RICHS, on the other hand, the primary financer (Citibank) was reluctant to share project related details with me for reasons that were never made clear.\textsuperscript{342} I had repeat conversations, however, with all others involved including SPARC, the architect, site contractor, present and potential residents, and a brief conversation with Homeless International, the financial guarantor for Citibank’s construction loan to SPARC’s project with the Rajiv-Indira Cooperative Housing Society.

\textit{Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society (MCHS) and SPARC}

In 1986, the Government of Maharashtra set up a special project cell under the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to coordinate a new Central government grant for slum development in Mumbai. The cell was called the Prime Minister’s Grant Project (PMGP). In 1987, the PMGP, following recommendations of a special committee,\textsuperscript{343} offered slum dwellers with two distinct housing options: a) tenure legalization or b) slum redevelopment. The latter was referred to as the Slum Reconstruction Programme which envisaged temporarily moving slum dwellers into transit camps, then demolishing the slums, and constructing medium-rise

\textsuperscript{342} That the project had appeared as a short story in a newspaper daily (Economic Times April 5, 2003) and also because relations between SPARC and Citibank staff was in the midst of a difficult phase, may have had something to do with the reluctance to discuss it.

\textsuperscript{343} PMGP, working under the aegis of a State housing authority (MHADA), followed recommendations forwarded by the Charles Correa committee headed by a well known architect, Charles Correa. Among many recommendations, the committee stressed the need to do a thorough survey of Dharavi, follow a community centered approach to planning, and advocated in-situ improvement in housing conditions and provision of land-tenure to slum dwellers.
apartments (four or five floors) on the same site to resettle the slum dwellers. The project proposed offering tenure in the form of 30 year renewable leaseholds to cooperative societies of slum dwellers. The leaseholds could then be utilized as collateral by the cooperative societies to mobilize funds from housing finance agencies. In accordance with the prevailing housing policy paradigm, it was planned that slum dwellers would contribute towards the costs of their own housing.  

In 1986 when SPARC, relying on the National Slum Dwellers Federations’ (NSDF) few influential contacts, landed in Dharavi, the PMGP had just commenced enumerating eligible slum dwellers. The survey determined that Dharavi was home to 55,000 families but only 35,000 families were found eligible for in-situ rehabilitation. This meant that the remaining 20,000 families had to be accommodated elsewhere. In a tone characteristic of its early years, SPARC (n.d.) openly raised its arms against State proposed plans and spoke on behalf of anxious residents:

There are plans to relocate industries, to relocate people to construct buildings. Markets, commercial zones to make parks, play grounds, in short to create a Dharavi plan which will look beautiful if the planners have their way. Very concerned, somewhat puzzled and generally excluded from this process of planning are the residents of Dharavi. … The gentrification of Dharavi seems inevitable in the near future.

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344 According to Mukhija (2000), PMGP’s 1987 plan envisaged that 15% of the total cost of housing would be met from grant funds of PMGP. The remainder would be mobilized from beneficiary contribution (15%), loans for housing finance institutions (50%), and an interest free loan from PMGP funds (20%).

345 The National Slum Dwellers Federation became a key lever utilized by SPARC to jump into a range of different settlements across the city and the rest of the country (see Chapter 4).

346 For a history of how Dharavi developed from a large stretch of marshy land and Mumbai’s garbage dump to an “amazing mosaic of villages and townships from all over India,” read Sharma (2001).


347 SPARC (n.d.) states that in conversations with a “very small minority” of slum leaders (associated with the NSDF), questions were raised about “who will decide how this money is to be used”? “What will be the basis of this decision making”? Who will determine “betterment”? Mukhija (2000) also cites a statement by the Chief Minister who inaugurated the plans with much fanfare stating that “Dharavi would soon look like Singapore, with modern, high-rise apartment blocks!” The statement triggered unrest about the possibility of massive demolitions.
SPARC decided that “the strategic choice would be an intensive survey in Dharavi” (SPARC n.d.). As before, SPARC used the survey as a means to mobilize residents of Dharavi. The intent very early in the process was to utilize Dharavi as a “crucible, where [it] we could actually have these precedent setting projects for the city to have a look” (removingunfreedoms.org). The result of the survey was the “People’s Plan” of Dharavi and creation of a community based organization called the Dharavi Vikas Samiti (Committee for the Development of Dharavi in Hindi). The plan, significantly different from that of PMGP’s, asserted that Dharavi was home to 85,000 families and that nearly 65,000 families (as opposed to PMGP’s estimate of 20,000) stood to be displaced. Furthermore, SPARC ridiculed PMGP’s proposal to rehabilitate slum dwellers in medium-rise apartment blocks with units of 160, 180 or 220 square feet and demanded that they all be rehabilitated in a standard home of 280 square feet with no more than one or two floors. Furthermore, SPARC insisted that the favored design for slum families is a home with a 14 foot high ceiling. SPARC suggested that its proposed design along with low-interest loans from the public housing finance agency, the Housing and Urban

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349 In 1987, the Samiti (then called the Akhil DVS – Akhil means ‘all’ in Hindi) had membership of nearly 200 slum leaders, mostly political party workers, who simultaneously allied themselves with NSDF.
350 Members of the DVS I spoke to referred to three types of homes offered to them based on the size of their original homes (Interview in SPARC-NSDF office in Dharavi on the 17th of February 2003). From interviews with SPARC, NSDF and PMGP officials, Mukhija (2000) identified that PMGP proposed constructing 165 square feet, 180 square feet, and 181-430 square feet units.
351 Through many of its early housing projects, SPARC pushed for construction of low-rise structures and community-built and managed housing. It idealized Jan Kalyan (a settlement with 115 single-storey homes and common open spaces and common external toilets – see Chapter 4) but also added that “we know that [high rise] buildings are not good but we can’t help it” (Interview with SPARC Board member/journalist on the 4th of March 2003 at her office in Churchgate, Mumbai).
352 Like in its first completed housing project in Jan Kalyan, 180 square feet of main space and 100 square feet of mezzanine space together make for a 280 square feet home. This was a design inspired by the model exhibition organized in 1987 for pavement dwellers. The mezzanine, in slums and pavements, is used by the family or is rented out. The municipal corporation had proposed a change in the Development Control Regulations to allow for 14 feet (3.9 meters) high floors, but the proposed changes were still to be approved by the State government. The DCR was modified in 1991.
Development Corporation Limited (HUDCO), and interest-free loans from PMGP would collectively result in low-cost homes for the residents. These ideas were summarily rejected by PMGP officials as being unmindful of prevailing norms and building regulations.

SPARC however persisted and decided to put its plans into action with one cooperative housing society of 92 slum families called the Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society (MCHS). The Chief Promoter of the Society was a local politician, well-known to the NSDF President, who successfully exhorted families in Markandeya to accept undertaking the project with SPARC:

Our leader had full faith in SPARC. He assured us that SPARC is cash-rich and that we would ultimately get our homes free of cost. He said this to please the people -- a way to get the people to agree.

The proposal was accepted by MCHS not only because SPARC assured larger homes at cheaper rates than those offered by PMGP but also because a majority of MCHS’s lead members themselves felt that “buildings when constructed by the government are not too good—poor materials and corruption. We decided to hire our own contractor to do the

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353 The estimated total cost of the home was INR 7,500 less than PMGP’s estimate of INR 37,500.
354 At the time SPARC established contacts with the Society in 1987; it was a ‘proposed society’ and was chaired by a local politician (the founder of the Mumbai chapter of a regional party popular in the State of Tamilnadu in Southern India). PMGP’s social workers (Community Development Officers) had visited the site and held nearly four meetings with MCHS residents educating them about how to register a society. The society was located right beside a newly widened road, 60 feet in width. By 1987, PMGP had scaled down the project from 35,000 families to 3,800 families noting that the “allocated funds were just not enough for the whole of Dharavi” (Interview with former architect with PMGP held on the 2nd of August 2003 at SPPL’s office in Bandra East, Mumbai). Instead, PMGP decided to develop just 12 areas located on the periphery of major arterial roads of Dharavi. One of these was the Rajendra Prasad Nagar consisting of a total of 12 sites and Markandeya CHS was one of them (Mukhija 2003).
355 Conversation with member of the MCHS managing committee on the 23rd of June, 2003 in MCHS building in Dharavi, Mumbai.
356 Mukhija (2000, 114) notes that “contrary to SPARC’s assurances, the units in Markandeya were more expensive than the units in the projects implemented by the PMGP.” Despite this discrepancy, SPARC assured residents that it would provide larger homes (100 square feet larger than units offered by PMGP).
work.”\textsuperscript{357} MCHS hired a contractor to do foundation work and also an architect well-known to the President of NSDF.\textsuperscript{358} The State government authority, the PMGP, accepted MCHS’s proposal to carry out redevelopment on its own but insisted that SPARC ensure compliance with building rules and regulations including sticking to the standard height. Much to the chagrin of PMGP officials, SPARC forwarded its own version of plans resulting in a severe turf battle.\textsuperscript{359} A former architect of PMGP said,\textsuperscript{360}

We were not opposed to an NGO participating in the scheme or anything of the sort but we didn’t see any value in it for we had 20-25 of our own group of good, established social workers. It was impossible to accept SPARC’s plans. They wanted to build a loft inside the house so that families could rent them out to others. This would increase the density in the area. You must think comprehensively. You cannot think just about your building [MCHS]. We have to keep density in mind while we plan for open space, for roads, make sure there is sufficient water, and give allowance between buildings.

NSDF and DVS members vividly recall their meeting with the Vice-President of MHADA and also with the Project Director of PMGP who categorically denied approval to SPARC’s plans for MCHS. This was not the only bone of contention. PMGP ordered a halt to construction when the hired private contractor had barely completed laying the building foundation.\textsuperscript{361} PMGP disapproved the less than optimum utilization of

\textsuperscript{357} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{358} The architect’s wife and the President of NSDF had worked together for another city-based NGO. “I associated with them because I was very impressed by the enthusiasm of the people at Markandeya – their energy was infectious” (Interview with architect of MCHS on the 25\textsuperscript{th} of July 2003 in his office in the city of Pune, Maharashtra).
\textsuperscript{359} In 1989, the architect submitted plans to PMGP for a three floor high building with a courtyard in the center and common external toilets. The third floor of the building was to be partially used for housing units and partly as a community terrace for social functions and gatherings. SPARC also submitted its intent to construct a 14 foot high ceiling in each of the proposed 92 housing units.
\textsuperscript{360} Interview held on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of August 2003 at SPPL’s office in Bandra East, Mumbai.
\textsuperscript{361} From 1989 when construction commenced, the MCGM ordered a stop-work notice on the project because, as is required, the MCHS had not applied for and obtained the necessary “commencement certificate.” “This was”, according to MCHS members I spoke with, “required but rarely do projects follow such paper requirements . . . the PMGP was mad with SPARC and the anger was shown in all aspects.”
prescribed FAR, commenting that “92 families was a small number; it [the building] could easily accommodate at least 60 more units by adding two more floors but they [SPARC] did not want to.” The battles stalled the project for another seven months until it was resolved through a reluctant compromise between the two in 1991.

Markandeya’s plan was approved and permission for construction granted in December 1991, two years after the initial proposal was submitted to PMGP. After a prolonged campaign led by SPARC, which included letters and visits to high level State and Central government officials, politicians, and media exposure, the MCGM finally gave its nod to construct 14 feet high ceilings in the form of a “special permission” in October 1991. All in all, the disputes left a sour taste among PMGP employees. A former PMGP official said,

I do not mind following orders from the top. It is part of my job but you know how it is -- it leaves a bad taste. After this episode, we let them develop isolatedly [sic].

The isolation came at a heavy price for MCHS. In 1991, PMGP nearly washed its hands of the project stating that, not being the promoter of the scheme, it was neither obliged

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362 Interview held on the 2nd of August 2003 at SPPL’s office in Bandra East, Mumbai.
363 According to Mukhija (2003, 84) SPARC argued for its right to conduct the project with its own design but the two finally struck middle-ground on the FAR to be used on the site. Upon completion, MCHS was to hand over 37 units to PMGP for rehabilitation by other Dharavi residents. It was on this assurance that plans were approved and sanction given to proceed with construction in December 1991.
364 Interview with Founding Director of the Slum Rehabilitation Society, a housing NGO with office in Bandra, Mumbai on the 12th of June of 2003. PMGP invited the SRS to mobilize slum dwellers for its work in Dharavi.
365 Interview held on the 2nd of August 2003 at SPPL’s office in Bandra East, Mumbai.
366 The official added that since SPARC could not convince their immediate boss to grant approval, it overshot hierarchy to put pressure through bureaucratic and political elite.
367 Despite the many contentious issues, PMGP offered MHADA-built transit camps to MCHS families on a rental basis and also offered its subsidy to the extent of INR 5,400 against each unit. MCHS members stayed in the camp from June 1989 to December 1998 and some of them recall it as a harrowing experience. They claim to have spent INR 35,000 to INR 40,000 towards rent, water and electricity in the
to provide its interest-free loan to MCHS families nor to deal with its parent authority (MHADA) in providing a State guarantee for a housing loan from HUDCO. Concerned over loss of credibility in Dharavi in general and with MCHS members in particular, SPARC came to the project’s rescue by using its own funds to feed a bank guarantee that served as partial collateral to HUDCO. SPARC also succeeded in mobilizing grant money from a Belgian NGO called SELAVIP (Servicio Latinoamericano y Asiatico de Vivienda Popular). The grant more than covered HUDCO’s demand for collateral. Using this money, HUDCO released all of the money in the first installment. Despite release of HUDCO’s first loan installment, the pace of construction was very slow. Commenting on the utilization of loan money, Mukhija (2003, 114) wrote:

The cooperative consumed more than a third of the loan to repay SPARC. The rest was paid to the foundation-contractor. By early 1992, the only progress on the project was a complete foundation. To help construction work progress, SPARC extended another interest-free bridge-loan of Rs. [INR] 200,000 to the MCHS.

In 1993, on advice from the project’s architect, MCHS entertained a new contractor belonging to a private firm called Parth Constructions. The contractor wished to break

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368 Source: Mukhija (2003). That SPARC came to the project’s rescue was corroborated by a lead member of the DVS (Interview on the 17th of February 2003 in Dharavi, Mumbai).

369 SELAVIP offered the scheme with a $100,000 guarantee. During 1985-1987, SELAVIP, a member and funder of the advocacy coalition, the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (covered in the last chapter), had begun supporting Mahila Milan and members of NSDF in their travels within India and internationally to attend exchange programs (Patel and Mitlin 2001, 4). SPARC’s contacts with SELAVIP had therefore been established and nurtured over the years.

370 Despite presence of sufficient collateral, HUDCO did not release future loan installments without first ensuring satisfactory progress of construction work at Markandeya. Disbursement of installments is strictly linked to demonstration of progress in construction. This is done to ensure that the disbursed money is utilized for the agreed purpose and to avoid financing projects that appear to be making little or no progress.

371 To speed up construction, SPARC had lent INR 250,000 from funds of another housing cooperative called Jan Kalyan. Like SPARC with MCHS, Jan Kalyan too is the sole NGO (SPARC)-coordinated housing in a PMGP-coordinated slum redevelopment area.
into a lucrative Dharavi market where other builders had begun redeveloping slums to reap substantial profits in a flourishing real estate market. The contractor’s decision to engage in MCHS was therefore a calculated move to realize profits (restricted to maximum of 25% of his investment) accruing from the just announced SRD scheme.\footnote{372} He offered to invest in the project\footnote{373} and complete construction and also offered to repay HUDCO’s loan,\footnote{374} SPARC’s bridge-loan to MCHS, and payments due to PMGP for the subsidy given to the members. This was a tempting offer particularly at a time when MCHS members were loathe to increasing their direct contribution to construction or add to their repayment obligation by seeking a higher loan amount from HUDCO. Trusting his offer, MCHS committee gave its consent to the contractor to submit an application to develop their building as an SRD project.\footnote{375} According to SPARC,\footnote{376} all dealings

\begin{quote}
372 The additional units could be sold in the market and the profits realized from the sale could help subsidize housing for MCHS dwellers and also allow the developer to earn profits. From discussions with MCHS residents, Mukhija (2003, 117) noted that the “additional units had a market value of around half a million Rupees and a construction cost less than a quarter of that. This suggests a profit of Rs. [INR] six million rupees.” The profits were likely sufficient to finance housing of over 50 MCHS members.

373 He justified his entry by stating that it was part of what he does for a living: “I put in INR 300,000-400,000 of my own money to start with. I took the risk – that is my business” (Interview held with the private contractor in Dharavi on the 26th of August 2003).

374 By July 1993, the estimated total project cost had gone up from INR 3,729,000 to INR 5,769,000 (letter from HUDCO to MCHS dated 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1993). Delay in transfer of land from the MCGM (as mortgage to HUDCO); increase in material cost, labor charges and other overhead expenses; and, time overrun due to stop-work notice from the MCGM and PMGP’s refusal to release its interest-free loan to MCHS were all cited as reasons for increase in project cost. SPARC suggested that to overcome the shortfall, members of MCHS should increase their direct contribution from initial INR 20,000 to INR 40,000 and SPARC also approached HUDCO for an increase in the loan released per unit from INR 20,000 to INR 35,000. HUDCO sanctioned the additional loan amount of INR 1,380,000 (total loan amount being INR 3,220,000) to MCHS at a gross interest rate of 12.5%. However, despite repeated efforts from SPARC, MCHS refused to mortgage its land and building to HUDCO. SPARC too was unwilling to stand guarantee for the additional loan amount. This meant a higher obligation for repayment; a repayment obligation that MCHS members were reluctant to absorb. Members of MCHS considered the entry of a cash-rich private contractor as a much-awaited relief!

375 In the application, the contractor (who was now officially, the developer of the MCHS scheme) submitted his intent to add two more floors to the building. He proposed selling the units constructed on these extra floors in the open market. 68 of the units were to be sold in the open market and another 18 were to be handed to the PMGP (the State housing authority). Structurally, the units on the two topmost floors could not be built at the proposed 14 feet height and were instead proposed to be ten feet in height. In May 1996, the developer received governmental consent to construct two additional floors to the Markandeya building.
\end{quote}
between the developer and MCHS committee members occurred surreptitiously for it had no inkling that MCHS had converted Markandeya to an SRD scheme and had, in the process, given its approval to construct additional floors. This jeopardized the credibility of SPARC’s earlier claim to make construction of low-rise buildings a real possibility for a dense settlement like Dharavi.

His entry, according to SPARC’s Director, was a tactical mistake which, even if timely and required, “compromised the process.” The private contractor, claimed SPARC, “took the land-lease papers from Markandeya members and went behind our backs . . . behind everyone’s back to convert the scheme into an SRD scheme.”

We were naïve; yes we were naïve in that we thought that people could manage it. There was rampant corruption – you give community control and corruption creeps in. From a position of no power to be given so much power – people misuse it. You have to stay on top of them [community members].

No sooner had the private contractor received consent from the Slum Redevelopment Committee, than he submitted yet another application to convert the scheme from Slum Redevelopment (SRD) to the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS). Converting the scheme to the SRS came with the promise to make further profits by removing the previous cap of 25% on the projects. However, because the building’s foundation could not take more floors, the developer could realize his projects by transferring “that right to build to other parts of the city with higher property values. For the developer this was an extremely lucrative opportunity” (Mukhija 2003, 55).

376 Interview with Director of SPARC on the 6th of June 2003 at SPARC’s office in Khetwadi, Mumbai.
377 Ibid.
378 The private contractor was now the new ‘developer/promoter’ hired by MCHS.
The developer’s participation threatened to rob SPARC of its control over the future of the building and, in particular, over members of Markandeya who increasingly favored moving out of their ten year long stay in the transit camp than adhere to the architectural details arranged by SPARC. To accommodate the higher construction quality demanded of the sale units, the developer now added self-contained toilets to the ten feet high units that he constructed on the top two floors. This required alternate plumbing lines. Taking advantage of new plumbing lines, members of MCHS, much to SPARC’s surprise, chose to pay the developer to construct toilets inside their units. Despite the series of letdowns, SPARC also saw in the developer the very real potential to help relieve its financial obligations towards the scheme. SPARC tried to press upon the developer that, as per the SRS policy, he was bound to provide MCHS dwellers with “free housing.” The developer refused to repay direct financial contributions made by MCHS members and also refused to fulfill their loan obligations to HUDCO. In September 1997, after a series of letters to MCHS and SPARC, and exhausted with piece-

379 SPARC was convinced that the reason the managing committee had accepted the proposal to add two extra floors (and was willing to forego their right to ‘free housing’) was because the developer had bribed the managing committee members by offering them a share in the profits that he was to make from the sale of market-sale tenements.

380 The building now comprises five floors instead of the originally planned, low-rise structure of three floors.

381 Unlike PMGP buildings which offered a toilet within each unit, SPARC had advocated for common, external toilets believing that not only would it keep the inside of the homes from stinking but also save living space, reduce construction costs, and discourage gentrification.

382 From 1995 through 1997, HUDCO had been pounding SPARC with a series of letters threatening to evoke the international bank guarantee (with funds from SELAVIP) lest MCHS not repay the full amount due with interest. MCHS had stopped all repayments since September 1994, ever since the developer dawned on the Markandeya scene.

383 Again to SPARC’s surprise, members of MCHS acknowledging the developer’s generous contributions and speedy construction work, did not pressure him to provide them homes for free. Instead, they paid their dues of INR 35,000 demanded of their direct contribution towards their respective housing units.
meal requests for extension\textsuperscript{384} of validity period of the bank guarantee, HUDCO threatened to invoke the guarantee SPARC had provided with the Belgian NGO’s funds.

SPARC panicked\textsuperscript{385} and, in immediate response to the threat of invocation, requested more time (until November 1997) from HUDCO to settle all outstanding payments.\textsuperscript{386} In an effort to regain control over MCHS, SPARC also took custody of the land-lease papers from MCHS members.\textsuperscript{387} SPARC had actively participated in the formulation of the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme and became a full-time member of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA). It therefore adopted a third recourse to the crisis in that it requested intervention of the CEO of SRA. In 1997, SRA came to be headed by the same bureaucrat who, as Director of PMGP from 1988-1991, had vehemently disapproved several aspects of the People’s Plan including SPARC’s campaign to construct 14 feet high ceilings for MCHS homes. Evidently a changed man from his days with PMGP, the CEO of SRA instructed the developer to pay HUDCO’s pending arrears.\textsuperscript{388} The CEO also pointed out that MCHS members were not entitled to free homes that had 14 feet high units when the allowable limit was only ten feet. The

\textsuperscript{384} In a letter to the Regional Office of HUDCO at Mumbai, the head office (at New Delhi) wrote stating that “the regional office has accepted extension of bank guarantee from the bank ranging from a period of one month to six months in more than ten occasions. … However, in view of the hassle and the risk involved for future you may advice the agency [SPARC] either to get the bank guarantee renewed for a minimum period of six months to one year or create the mortgage of the project land and building as security immediately” (Letter dated 11\textsuperscript{th} January 1996).

\textsuperscript{385} If the guarantee was invoked, SPARC would be obliged to compensate SELAVIP and this could tarnish its long-standing relations with the agency.

\textsuperscript{386} Source: Letter from President of NSDF to the Chairman and Managing Director of HUDCO dated the 14\textsuperscript{th} of November 1997. On the 15\textsuperscript{th} of September, 1997 HUDCO wrote to the borrower, MCHS, stating that the society was liable to pay INR 2,422,577.

\textsuperscript{387} Interview with the Director of SPARC on the 6\textsuperscript{th} of June 2003 at SPARC’s office in Khetwadi, Mumbai.

\textsuperscript{388} The pending arrears were Rs.1,260,000 (Source: Letter from SPARC to HUDCO dated December 17, 1997).
members were therefore instructed to pay the developer the cost of providing homes with an additional height.  

Despite the instructions, none of the stakeholders—SPARC, the developer and the MCHS—could reach a consensus. The CEO of SRA suggested that MCHS be labeled a “joint-venture” between SPARC, the developer and the co-operative society. The developer was instructed to surrender ten market sale units to MCHS and SPARC as their share in the project. MCHS and SPARC agreed to use the money realized from the sale of the units towards repaying HUDCO’s dues, SPARC’s bridge loan, and also to reimburse financial contributions made by participating families.

Discussion

SPARC’s work with the Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society traveled a long and intricate course starting with confrontation with a centralized unit of the State government to a journey culminating in SPARC favoring the formation of and subsequent participation in a centralized State housing agency to administer and monitor slum development projects. I summarize the strategies and tactics used by SPARC in Table 5.2 below and explain them in the analysis that follows.

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389 This meeting was held at the CEO’s office on February 17, 1998.
Like in its formative years, the line dividing confrontation and complementarity in SPARC’s repertoire of tactics with the state is uniquely blurred making it difficult to organize SPARC’s activities under one or the other. However, since open, highly-publicized confrontation with the State’s housing authority was particularly apparent in the early phases of this intervention, I have placed confrontation and complementarity alongside one another.

Table 5.2: Repertoire of Tactics in SPARC’s Work with the Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confrontation/Complementarity (Primary Strategy)</td>
<td>- Challenging State’s enumeration of slum dwellers - Gathering ‘new’ data - Challenging government plans - Media campaigns and letters</td>
<td>- Demonstrating the feasibility of superior, low-cost, community-centered housing solution - Creating credibility in a large and central slum community - Scaling-up activity at the city-level - Putting pressure upon municipal authorities to accept its design solutions</td>
<td>- Results of SPARC’s survey helps avert displacement - Generates a series of conflicts with the State housing authority - Causes significant project delay - Forces SPARC to mobilize funds including an international guarantee on its own - Project delays cause conflicts with clients and subsequently with the national housing finance agency - Jeopardizes SPARC’s original plans for the project - SPARC (and community) learns several lessons in possibility of corruption and need for a centralized state agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation (Sub-strategy)</td>
<td>- Endorsing creation of a State policy - Joining a State policy-making body - Sets up a new sister agency</td>
<td>- Protecting its financial interests in the project - Maintain credibility among clientele and the slum - Scaling-up delivery work in the city</td>
<td>- Requests the State to help resolve conflict - Expands delivery work to other slums and squatter communities - Begins centralizing decision making with respect to key aspects of the projects - Participation in policy-making body helps put squatter (pavement) dwellers on par with slum dwellers for a right to secure tenure in the city</td>
</tr>
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</table>
We really thought that using this [MCHS] we could demonstrate that an NGO can facilitate the process from the outside. The loan [from HUDCO, the public housing finance agency] was to the cooperative and not to SPARC. So we really thought that if this works then there existed a real chance of scaling up. 391

SPARC was very keen to make MCHS a centerpiece of its work in order to demonstrate that it was indeed possible to offer alternatives to state-formulated plans through people-centered solutions to housing. It began its interventions by challenging the state and ended by actively endorsing state solutions to housing. The change in strategies—from open confrontation to eager cooperation—with respect to the state was prompted by an unanticipated turn of events in helping a cooperative housing society of slum dwellers get secure tenure.

My analysis parallels conclusions drawn by Mukhija (2003) in that SPARC may have committed serious errors in assessing community priorities. SPARC contests this analysis. Its Director commented that “had SPARC had access to sufficient resources, the construction would not have been delayed, community members not corrupted, and the project design may still have stayed in favor with slum dwellers—things [may] not [have] reached a point of crisis.” 392

Interestingly, the struggle caused SPARC to actively endorse creation of a centralized State government authority and therefore re-evaluate its position on the need for a centralized State agency:

391 Interview with the Director of SPARC on the 6th of June 2003 at SPARC’s office in Khetwadi, Mumbai.
392 Ibid.
In the absence of a structure, a system even the most oriented groups collapse. I agree with Mukhija’s analysis that in a decentralized approach to housing delivery, when things collapse, there is need for a centralized agency of the state. At the time of PMGP and SRD, there was no such accessible institution. We had to take back land-lease papers from MCHS and also went to him [CEO of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority] to enforce a solution.393

SPARC adds, however, that Mukhija’s (2000) dissertation was unfairly critical of SPARC for it did not “take into account the full trajectory of our housing interventions.”394 The President of NSDF said:395

There were no mistakes in Markandeya - this was after all a first experiment in slum redevelopment. Do you know how difficult it is for an NGO with its meager financial resources to break into real estate? See what we’ve done with Rajiv-Indira – we finished it in just three years!

Even as work with MCHS was in the thick of a financial impasse, SPARC positively responded to a request from the Rajiv-Indira Cooperative Housing Society (RICHS)—a small group of 54 slum families in another well-situated, peripheral section of Dharavi—to redevelop their slum. Drawing on its bitter lessons with Markandeya, SPARC entered negotiations with RICHS with near vengeance to prove its ability to deliver fast and self-governed housing solutions.396 Towards this end, SPARC assumed a more central role of a housing developer397 and entered what SPARC’s Director refers to as “a much more

393 Interview with the Director of SPARC on the 6th of June 2003 at SPARC’s office in Khetwadi, Mumbai.
394 Ibid.
395 Interview with the President of NSDF at the residence of the Associate Director of SPARC on the 12th of April 2003 in Prabhadevi, Mumbai.
396 Interaction with the cooperative housing society is managed by and is limited to an austere Chairman of the society, a long-time resident of Dharavi who is well-known to the President of NSDF. The architect hired for the scheme in 1996, said that “there was no stinginess in this project. I was told that there should be larger passages [than those in Markandeya], more open community spaces so that people can spill out of their homes and even put a khatiyaa [a cot/bed] outside and sleep if they want. Wide staircases with no lifts [elevators], with no more than three floors of 14 foot high homes” (Interview with architect at her residence on the 13th of August 2003, Mumbai).
397 SPARC’s members preferred to label their role as “Joint Community Development Contractor.”
The generous expenditure towards rehabilitating 54 residents free of cost to the slum dwellers was made possible by a successfully negotiated loan of INR 35 million from the American multinational bank, Citibank, as part of the bank’s corporate social responsibility activities. The loan to SPARC was secured by means of a guarantee from a UK-based NGO, Homeless International. Citibank’s loan was also guaranteed by bridge funds mobilized from a Dutch agency, Bilance, through a pre-sale commitment equivalent to INR 400,000. Work on the site began in 1998 with SPARC’s bridge funds and the first complete building of Rajiv-Indira was inaugurated amidst much fanfare in February 2002.

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398 Interview with the Director of SPARC on the 6th of June 2003 at SPARC’s office in Khetwadi, Mumbai.
399 Since 1995 when the project first came up for discussion with SPARC, the number of those to be rehabilitated as part of the Rajiv-Indira scheme has gone up to a total 209 families with the addition of two contiguous cooperative housing societies (these include: Suryodaya CHS of 133 families and a CHS of 22 families of an adjacent pavement called Ganga CHS). As a result, the number of buildings to be constructed also increased from two to five (two for rehabilitation and three for commercial sale). The scheme is now referred to as the Rajiv-Indira-Suryodaya Project.
400 The loan was made as part of Citibank India’s six-city initiative called the “Community Support Programme.” Relations between SPARC and Citibank began when, in 1997, members of the Citibank staff began frequenting SPARC’s savings and credit activities with slum and pavement women. “The Bank’s staff,” according to the Director of Corporate Affairs of Citigroup India, “was slowly convinced, thanks to SPARC’s Director, about working on a commercial loan arrangement. This would never have happened but for the optimism of our staff and the confidence in her [the Director, SPARC]” (Interview with Corporate Head of Citibank in Mumbai’s Bandra-Kurla complex on the 5th of May 2003). The arrangement with Citibank has run into a series of problems particularly as a result of turnover of staff in Citibank’s Mumbai office. Each new set of Bank staff, “need to be reoriented and convinced of the importance of our work and the wisdom of our strategies. It is a struggle but one that we will win slowly” (Interview with Finance Manager of SPARC in Khetwadi office of SPARC on the 27th of March 2003).
401 Homeless International supports community housing initiatives in Asia, Africa and Latin America. HI set up an International Guarantee Fund in 1994 with cash deposits from UK Housing Associations. The fund is used to secure loan finance for communities who would otherwise have difficulties obtaining bank loans. HI’s guarantee to Rajiv-Indira is provided by the Airways Charitable Trust and Waterloo Housing Association. This was the first such guarantee offered under its Guarantee Fund. The guarantee was in the form of pre-purchase agreement of six apartment units in the Rajiv-Indira project.
402 The cost of the project has gone up from an initial estimated INR 50 million to INR 97 million (as on the 17th of July 2003). All of the bridge funds and guarantees as well as the loan from Citibank are now channeled through the “SPARC Sumudaya Nirman Sahayak” (this translates as SPARC’s Assistance to Collective Community Construction, in Hindi) or Nirman as it is known for short. Founded in 1998 by SPARC, Nirman is to serve as a “special purpose vehicle” and is registered as a not-for-profit company. Currently, the Director of SPARC is also the Chief Executive of Nirman. SPARC explains the formation of a separate entity stating that “construction requires different specializations and legal arrangements” (Source: SPARC and Nirman 2003).
5.6 CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS

Unlike in the formative years, the years described in this chapter were characterized by critical struggles in the participating NGOs. Majority of the NGO leaders aspired to broaden their organizational capacities beyond founding objectives of rights-based advocacy to also engage in service-delivery. There were also other changes afoot: their core values began to incorporate elements more supportive of close engagement with the state; and client perceptions moved from an emphasis on self-managed solutions to a focus on the high exchange-value of their housing assets.403 The 1990s can be seen as the beginning of a transition in NGO-GO relations -- from confrontation to one of cooperation and complementarity.

These early transitions in NGO-GO relations did not take place without a fair share of pain. I organize the discussion below around three key themes: the evolving role of the state in the housing process; shifts in the predominant nature of NGO-GO interactions; and, NGO interpretations of the developments of the housing field in Mumbai in the early 1990s. In other words, this discussion primarily addresses the question: How did the NGOs make sense of what was “out there”? (Weick 1995, 79).

The organizational events described in this chapter represent a period of considerable commotion around the policy framework governing slum and squatter housing in

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403 I covered this aspect in my review of literature (see under NGO-GO relations) when I stated the following: In Turner’s view, self-help housing was a productive activity with potential for extensive long-term benefits to the poor and could function as a critical ingredient in a much broader developmental agenda to empower communities. In Turner’s school, therefore, the full value of a house was to be ascertained not just by its exchange value in the market but by including the use-value comprising its ability to generate satisfaction, a sense of pride and belonging for the household.
Mumbai. Two new and successive policy announcements dawned in the 1990s in Mumbai: one that promised slum dwellers across the city new subsidized homes in place of their old ones, and another that offered such an enormous cross-subsidy that the State pompously declared it a ‘free housing’ scheme. Both policies emerged as grandiose political party commitments at a time of state retrenchment, privatization, and decentralization in housing delivery. Attracted by the promise of handsome profits in a booming real estate market of Mumbai, the for-profit sector was expected to take the lead in housing delivery including cross-subsidizing the cost of slum redevelopment. The origins of this housing paradigm, referred to as the enabling housing strategy, is traceable to the 1970s and 1980s when not only was public housing provision viewed as a failure, but government controls and regulations were criticized for inhibiting the scale and vitality of individual, family, and community investments in housing.

In this general milieu, NGOs emerged as essential vehicles for instilling the housing process with greater local democratic decision-making, less bureaucratic procedures, innovative practices, and respite from private profit-seeking and corrupt political interests (Sanyal 1998, 75). NGOs were also expected to “reduce the possibility of conflicts” inherent in what had long been a highly centralized process of state-led housing delivery with little or no room for participation, in planning and implementation, by other institutional stakeholders (Mukhija 2003, 40). In sum, the policy prescriptions encouraged NGO participation in housing delivery because NGOs were perceived as

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I have covered the origins and development of the enabling strategy to housing and accompanying rise of ‘democratization’ as a key theme in development discourse under the section ‘Mumbai and its Housing Policy in the 1990s’ earlier in this chapter.
bestowed with “comparative advantages” distinct from those of private for-profit agents and the state (Cernea 1988, 17-18).

What did these shifts in the housing policy paradigm of the 1990s herald for the largely confrontational repertoire of NGO tactics? This chapter documents a change in overall state housing policy focus, from one of state led clearance and in-situ improvements, to one favoring private sector led slum redevelopment, which had been in the making for nearly a decade. In 1992 this approach was elevated to a city-wide program. Slums and pavement dwellers—who constituted more than 55% of Greater Mumbai’s total population—became targets of a contentious electoral battle between the state’s two key political parties, the Congress and the Shiv Sena. The parties fought hard, with competing offers of higher cross-subsidies for slum redevelopment. Shiv Sena’s promise of a full cross-subsidy (‘free housing’) to house all Mumbai’s slum dwellers helped the party win its first ever victory in the State assembly elections of 1995. Both the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) and the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS) generated keen interest among slum communities and elicited an interesting assortment of strategic responses from their benefactors, the NGOs.

From a period when state control of the housing process was identified as the central problem in the diagnostic frames of participating NGOs, the 1990s witnessed the

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405 The SRD scheme announced in 1991 offered between 70-80% cross subsidy and was replaced by the SRS in 1995 which offered over 100% cross subsidy to slum dwellers (and under SRS to pavement dwellers as well). 406 Citing Snow and Benford (1988), Carmin and Balser (2002, 368) describe the process of diagnostic framing as one of “identifying a problem and making attributions about its source.” Carmin and Balser (ibid, 368) add that “understanding of the nature of the problem and its causes contributes to prognostic framing or view of possible solutions.”
beginsnings of a shift in the nature of NGO-GO relations. During this time, confrontation waned as the defining NGO-GO housing strategy: it was called into question, not just by the dwellers who were keen to acquire tenure as promised by the altered policy environment, but also by internal (NGO) demands to experiment with alternative housing strategies (e.g. in YUVA).

NGO plans to engage in delivery demanded developing and nurturing closer ties with the state (its bureaucratic machinery) and an equally critical requirement to pay greater heed to market trends and preferences. For instance, YUVA hired new professionals who could decode the technical-financial requirements of the public housing scheme and who could negotiate for key project-related concessions from the state. YUVA also sought to institutionalize ties with a leading private housing finance provider to enhance legitimacy of the scheme, particularly among State officials. YUVA felt that the state was more likely to act on project sanctions and necessary concessions knowing that a leading private sector housing finance agency was involved.

However, despite this strong “pull,” from the clientele and by internal (NGO) pressures to establish ‘new’ worth in delivery, each NGO made sense of the urban political economy in distinct ways. This is observed in the variety of different tactics used by each to realize its respective housing agenda. The distinctness in their housing tactics used is summarized in Table 5.3 below:
Table 5.3: Key Strategies of NGO-Government Collaborative Networks in the early 1990s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Preferred Strategy</th>
<th>Dominant Tactics</th>
<th>Preferred End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHSS</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Media Campaigns; Active dissuasion</td>
<td>Promoting community-managed, horizontal, low-rise development; more state involvement; and, eliminating private sector involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YUVA</td>
<td>Confrontation/Complementarity</td>
<td>Education and awareness generation; Legal intervention; Professionalizing internal capacities; Coordinating delivery details</td>
<td>Balancing community empowerment with delivery; Facilitating high-rise housing solutions with the State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPARC</td>
<td>Complementarity</td>
<td>Challenging government plans and statistics; Setting precedents; Mobilizing delivery finance; Influencing state housing solutions from the inside</td>
<td>Controlling and managing high-rise housing solutions with the State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences in the forms and approaches of the three participating NGOs in these middling years is more fully explained by four critical and interrelated factors organized in Table 5.4 below. Like in their formative years, the perceptions of NGO leaders, their core values and beliefs, the nature of client needs, and the housing philosophy are understood as key determinants of the choice of strategies and tactics used by NGOs in engaging with the state. I summarize these in Table 5.4 below:
Table 5.4: Key Factors Influencing NGO-Government Interaction Strategies in Three Housing NGOs in the 1990s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key factors influencing the nature of interaction&lt;sup&gt;407&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>NHSS</th>
<th>YUVA</th>
<th>SPARC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Distrusts the new policy environment to manage housing delivery</td>
<td>Grudgingly accepts the new housing policy environment and begins to set stage for delivery</td>
<td>Shapes and endorses the policy environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core values and beliefs</td>
<td>Demand for a right; Struggle for a right</td>
<td>Balancing delivery with rights-based advocacy (i.e. product delivery with community development and empowerment)</td>
<td>Government-led policy framework; NGO-led delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of client needs</td>
<td>Divided between acceptance of policy framework and distrust in its efficacy</td>
<td>Community keen to acquire ‘free’ homes</td>
<td>Community keen to acquire ‘free’ homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing philosophy</td>
<td>Rights-based; Principal opposition to state withdrawal and private sector involvement</td>
<td>Rights-based; “Principal opposition yet can work with state and the market to implement solutions”</td>
<td>Partnerships with communities and the government; Acceptance – “I can deliver superior housing solutions”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I address the factors outlined in the table above by traveling one NGO at a time:

In a voice typical of its formative years, NHSS’s leaders launched a tirade against the new slum redevelopment approaches, declaring them a clever veil to hide the state’s true intent of releasing valuable land to private developers. Furthermore, NHSS was convinced that under the guise of redeveloping slums, private developers would do little more than “sell off the commercial units, grab the proceeds, and make off leaving the

slum-dwellers high and dry” (Singh and Das 1995, 2481). Through all these years (1991-1999), NHSS did little with respect to State policy of slum redevelopment other than dissuade slum dwellers from exploitation and deceit in the hands of private developers/builders. The strength of its resolve was evident in the case of Sanjay Gandhi Nagar slum where, in spite of the eagerness expressed by committee members (and arguably by other slum residents), NHSS discouraged the community from entertaining the scheme arguing that communities prefer in-situ upgradation of their homes.

YUVA’s most immediate response to the policy was also one of routine distrust. However, the distrust was enmeshed with a growing interest by its leadership to combine “rights based advocacy” with tangible housing provision in cooperation with the state and the market. In keeping with its rights-based orientation to housing, YUVA spent the years between 1991 and 1999 educating slum and pavement communities about the nitty-gritty of involvement in slum redevelopment. By its own admission, a considerable proportion of organizational resources were spent developing “community capacities to negotiate and enter into contracts [with interested developers]”; instilling values of transparency and accountability on the part of co-op leadership; encouraging participation of women in housing decisions; and, in organizing savings and credit groups among them.408 Engagement at this level also implied that the community desired YUVA’s involvement in seeing the process through its “end” namely, provision of completed high-rise structures.

408 Personal communication via email with former coordinator of the HID Unit of YUVA on Tuesday, the 12th of April 2005.
SPARC was gung-ho about the slum redevelopment policy of the State. It began dirtying its hands with implementation, much earlier than the others, as far back as 1985. Grounded in the belief that “unless you go in the midst of something that is already happening and you negotiate for some space over there, you can do little,” SPARC entered slum redevelopment with the premeditated objective of setting a workable precedent. As with pavement dwellers, SPARC openly challenged the state’s ability to enumerate and even assess the housing preferences of the poor. SPARC went a step further in demanding that the State give it a chance to redevelop part of a slum with a cooperative society of slum dwellers. It argued that unlike the high-rise buildings proposed by the State, it could rehabilitate slum dwellers in low-rise buildings and also offer them bigger, better homes at significantly lower costs. The State agreed but denied help on many crucial counts including a standing guarantee for a public housing finance loan that the project needed towards construction.

Despite SPARC’s success in raising funds internationally, the cooperative and the private developer chose to collude to convert their project to an SRD project in 1993 and SRS in 1996. The change robbed SPARC of its control over the project, for it implied among other design alterations, an increase in the height of the building and an unpredicted stop in community’s loan repayments. In an interesting turn of events, SPARC secured a coveted seat as the sole nongovernmental agency in the high-profile group that formulated the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme. SPARC along with others endorsed formation of a central monitoring organization that could oversee implementation of the program and “do all such other acts and things as may be necessary for achieving the

409 Interview with Director of SPARC at her residence in Worli, Mumbai on the 8th of August 2003.
objective of rehabilitation of slums” (Government of Maharashtra 1997b, 3). SPARC is also one among the fifteen members that head the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA). In a move akin to surrender, SPARC approached the government for a resolution to the financial impasse. The government settled the conflict by declaring the project a “joint venture.” SPARC’s strategies in relation to State government agencies traversed a long and intricate path beginning with defiance (including dismissing, challenging and attacking the state) to one of active control and domination of the housing process in close cooperation with the state.

In sum, each of the three participating NGOs was at a distinct stage in its willingness and ability to work through the details of the new housing policy environment. Except for NHSS which took a position of extreme distaste for anything to do with private sector involvement in service delivery, both YUVA and SPARC took a stab at the policy. YUVA appeared to be hedging its bets and decoupling rhetoric from action—a common process among organizations in complex environments, and described in the literature as “organization of hypocrisy” (Brunsson 1989). In one sense, YUVA was highly responsive—reordering its strategic housing focus by incorporating new personnel, setting up a specialized unit to handle details of delivery, and preparing communities—but in another sense, its field-level activities stayed wedded to its ideals of concentrating on process details more than the outcome. Arguably, its emphasis on process details—of preparing and empowering communities to handle the pros and cons of a new housing policy—helped assuage an overly negative reaction when things did not materialize in terms of finished housing units. SPARC on the other hand, realizing the need to control a
tenuous environment of slum redevelopment, secured a permanent position in the State’s policy making body and also created a distinct organizational identity to support its vision to scale-up involvement in slum housing delivery.

During this phase, many of the formative assumptions of community preferences and state action were thrown out of gear. NHSS, which believed that communities did not desire reconstruction and rehabilitation in high-rises, had to fight community interest in redeveloping their slum. SPARC, which vested considerable faith in the ability of slum dwellers to manage their own redevelopment, learnt a bitter lesson when “decentralized corruption” unsettled an idealized housing process (Mukhija 2003, 38). In response, SPARC took control over the scheme in close cooperation with the state. Even though the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme prevails to this day, YUVA is yet to entertain delivery under the scheme and continues to hold on to the belief that the policy is fundamentally flawed in its reliance on high real-estate prices.

In all, the three NGOs appeared to be on distinct courses with respect to their strategic position on how, if at all, to deal with the new housing policy environment. Nevertheless, the changing housing policy context of the 1990s made it possible and, to a great extent, even desirable, for NGOs to seek more cooperative relations with the state. Up to this point in their lifetimes, the pull of formative conditions, particularly their entrenchment in founding values of opposition to state-subscribed solutions and support for community-led and community-managed housing solutions, appeared to determine
the outcome of NGO-GO relations in YUVA and NHSS. This is eloquently described by Levi (1997, 28) in her definition of the notion of “path dependence”:

Path dependence has to mean, if it is to mean anything that once a country or region [or organization] has started down a track, the costs of reversal are very high. There will be other choice points, but the entrenchments of certain institutional arrangements obstruct an easy reversal of the initial choice. Perhaps the better metaphor is a tree, rather than a path. From the same trunk, there are many different branches and smaller branches. Although it possible to turnaround or to clamber from one to the other—and essential if the chosen branch dies—the branch on which a climber begins is the one she tends to follow.

In summary, this chapter demonstrates that NGO behavior is shaped both by the state policy orientation as well as by the internal strategies and decisions of the NGOs. It has attempted to address the first research question: How do shifts in state housing policies influence the strategies pursued by advocacy NGOs in housing the poor? If slum clearance evolved into slum redevelopment and rehabilitation, NGO-GO relations could be expected to correspondingly evolve into cooperation. However, an analysis of state policy shifts alone would be inadequate for explaining the diverse nature of NGO responses. Even though evolution in state policy made it possible and even financially attractive for NGOs to engage in delivery in cooperation with the state, not all NGOs implemented corresponding shifts or realized delivery-related goals. This was a result of their embeddedness in founding values, as explained with the notion of path dependence. In sum, analyzing NGO-GO relations from within the framework of a selected housing intervention (the nested unit of analysis) helps provide a more complete explanation of how shifts in state policies influence the strategies pursued by advocacy NGOs.
The following chapter examines the three NGOs as they moved from these established ‘paths.’ The period described in the chapter is a phase of implementing and stabilizing strategic changes in NGO-government interactions. Additionally, the chapter addresses the many new challenges that the participating NGOs faced as they implemented this strategic shift in their housing strategies with the state.
CHAPTER 6
ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION: ENTRY INTO PRODUCTION, 1997-2003

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described how participating NGOs responded to and actively engaged in determining the course of a new slum housing policy for Mumbai. For the three housing NGOs that participated in this study, the change in State policy elicited a variety of immediate responses. During the years 1991-1999, both NHSS and YUVA were principally opposed to the new public housing policy. Despite its fundamental opposition, YUVA briefly and unsuccessfully dabbled with the scheme on grounds that it wanted to safeguard the poor from “unscrupulous builders” (YUVA 1994, 26). NHSS, on the other hand, stuck to its “strong” opposition believing that NGOs must exclusively engage people in class struggles instead of always working “within the parameters set by the government” (Das 1995, 170-182). For SPARC, which fully endorsed and actively engaged in formulating the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS), the scheme represented “the only way for the urban poor to get access to land and a subsidy from the market.” (Burra 2003, 8). By the late 1990s, SPARC was well into implementing SRS schemes in the capacity of a housing “developer.”

What happened next? The period described in this chapter is a phase of implementing and stabilizing strategic changes in NGO-government interactions. In describing the process of transition from a predominantly confrontational to a cooperative NGO-GO relationship, the chapter focuses on the many new challenges the NGOs faced as they implemented this strategic shift. I anchor my narration by discussing one key housing
intervention in each of the three NGOs. The chapter dives into the last six observed years of the NGOs’ housing history -- a time frame that roughly corresponds to the years 1997-2003. Before delving into the latter half of each NGO’s observed lifetime, the following paragraphs provide a brief outline the chapter’s key theoretical and empirical contributions.

Korten (1987, 145-159) popularized the notion that as NGOs become more mature in their understanding of, for instance, poverty, health or environmental issues, they evolve from simple service delivery related activities to engaging in sophisticated policy activism; from a “first generation” strategy to a “third generation” strategy. My appraisal of Korten’s (1987) thesis is summarized in three findings which do not support this normative direction of evolution:

a) In contrast to Korten’s thesis, the participating NGOs appear to evolve in the opposite direction, from policy activism to engagement in service delivery in cooperation with state housing apparatus.

b) My analysis of NGOs also reveals that service delivery is a more complex activity than is assumed. It demands adding new tools to an existing repertoire of NGO advocacy tactics and is likely to include balancing of programmatic and developmental objectives; cajoling bureaucratic and political elite; creating and sustaining internal consensus for change; and, mobilizing sufficient financial resources.
c) Engagement in service delivery with the state appears to limit advocacy to individual project level advocacy in contrast to the broader, mass-based and systemic change advocacy evidenced earlier in their lifetimes.

The events described in this chapter also provide insights into the current debate on the concept of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 147-160). As a result of the shift from confrontation towards cooperation, the interorganizational diversity apparent in the formative years (Chapter 4) of the participating NGOs began to fade with a majority of NGOs beginning to look more alike vis-à-vis their tactics of engagement with the state. Uniformity or isomorphism, as was also noted by Smith and Lipsky (1998, 135-138), is problematic for it has the effect of diminishing the sector’s inventiveness. What is new in this set of findings, however, is a set of factors that limit the predicted isomorphism. These factors include: path dependency and variability in resource environments. Therefore, while there may be a trend towards uniformity in structures and processes across NGOs, it is possible that pervasive uniformity is forestalled by variability in NGO in NGO preparedness to make such a shift.

6.2 NHSS and Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP), 1997-2003

Few other events covered in this dissertation received as much media attention and acrimony as NHSS’s actions in the slums of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP). The history of NHSS’s work with residents of slums in the Park span a wide range of NGO-government tactics. Its work was embroiled in a host of highly publicized controversies, a majority of which were the consequence of a shift in NHSS’s strategies
from open defiance to closed door negotiation and compromises. NHSS was widely known as a vocal opponent of private sector involvement in slum housing (see Chapter 5). Yet the SGNP effort saw NHSS shift gears to resettle slum dwellers in close cooperation with a private for-profit builder.

Before delving into the case, I describe NHSS’s first steps into the slums of SGNP. The slums are spread over a large part of the Park’s peripheral areas, also called its buffer zone. NHSS did not have a strong, everyday presence in the slums of SGNP.\(^\text{410}\) It was only through mass meetings, rallies, and subsequently through its offer to resettle and rehabilitate\(^\text{411}\) slum dwellers, that the NGO made a particular effort to reach out to slum dwellers across the “encroached” areas of the Park.\(^\text{412}\) Even though NHSS continued to work in other slums in the city, it was work with the SGNP that occupied almost all its energies from 1997 until 2003.

The Park lies on the northern fringes of suburban Mumbai at a distance of about 40 kilometers from Mumbai’s Central Business District. Since the early 1970s, with rapid

\(^{410}\) Members of NHSS attribute the beginnings of their work in SGNP slums to the communal riots of 1992-93. Since then, contacts were maintained with some of the slum pockets. NHSS also helped SGNP dwellers get ration cards and their names entered into the State’s electoral rolls.

\(^{411}\) Resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) are two distinct though closely linked processes and are often distinguished in large-scale development projects such as those sponsored by the World Bank and other international development funding agencies. Resettlement implies physically shifting, for instance, evicted slum dwellers from their original location to a new site. Rehabilitation involves the process of rebuilding their lives in the new location. It, for instance, involves adequately compensating households for the assets lost, “[providing them with] the necessary means to restore subsistence and income, to reconstruct the social networks that support production, services and mutual assistance, and to compensate for transitional hardships (such as crop losses, moving costs, interruption or loss of employment, lost income, among others)” (Inter-American Development Bank 2005).

\(^{412}\) I was part of three such visits (7th January 2003; 9th February 2003; and 16th February 2003) to the Park when volunteers (typically youth from other slums where NHSS had a presence) and members of the NHSS spent many hours spreading word about the details of the scheme and, more importantly, clearing suspicions in the minds of slum dwellers over the genuineness of NHSS’s intentions in the R & R work with a builder.
urban sprawl, a large part of the Park began to sit well within the precincts of Greater Mumbai. For this reason, environmentalists publicize it as “perhaps the only National Park in protected forest area within an urban metropolis.”

The forest, of which the Park is a part, extends over an area of 10,309 hectares of which 8,696 hectares were declared a “National Park” in 1996. The notice of national park status came a year after filing of a landmark petition (public interest litigation) by an NGO called the Bombay Environmental Action Group (BEAG). Pleading on behalf of all citizens “interested in environment and environmental protection,” the BEAG contended that “illegal encroachments and unauthorised constructions had ecologically disastrous effect which had led to massive deforestation. It had been proved a threat to the green oasis to prevent it from performing its dual role as ‘lungs and the watersource of the teeming metropolis of Bombay.’”

After the BEAG filed the public interest litigation on the 8th of February 1995 and even before the Court could give a ruling, the Conservator of Forests filed an affidavit conceding to the problem of encroachments in SGNP. Based on a “rough eye estimate” by the Forest Department, there were around 78,000 to 86,000 huts in the

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413 As explained in Chapter 2, Greater Mumbai includes the Island City, the suburbs and the extended suburbs on the Salsette Island. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) is an area ten times as large as Greater Mumbai and includes the municipalities of Thane, Kalyan and New Mumbai. Hence, parts of the Park are also located in the MMR.
414 Bombay Environmental Action Group vs. the State of Maharashtra & others (7th May 1997, 2).
416 The Deputy Conservator of Forests of the SGNP admitted to having encouraged and supported the BEAG to file a petition against his own office (Source: Interview held on the 10th of June 2003 at his office in SGNP).
417 Bombay Environmental Action Group vs. the State of Maharashtra & others (7th May 1997, 2-3).
Park (an estimated 390,000 to 430,000 people) in 1995. A satellite survey report showed inhabitants residing on 772.82 hectares of the Park.\footnote{The Satellite Survey Report was prepared by the Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad and was submitted as part of the petition in the High Court on the 8th of February 1995.} The bulk of these encroachments (of 511.65 hectares) were hutments and the remainder were stone quarries within the boundaries of the National Park Division.

In response to the public interest litigation, the Court delivered its first\footnote{Between the 8th of February 1995 and the 7th of May 1997, the Court issued two interim orders (on the 15th of January and the 12th of February). In the 15th January order, the High Court requested the MCGM to prevent further encroachments. On the 12th of February 1997, the High Court ordered the formation of a Committee headed by the CEO Of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA). The Committee was formed with the intent to suggest short-term measures for preventing the encroachment and destruction of forest area in the National Park.} most significant order on the 7th of May 1997. The order was long and controversial comprising 26 separate directives to various governmental authorities. It was the direct consequence of a report submitted by an “expert” committee of government officials appointed to suggest short-term measures to halt encroachments and destruction of forest area in the Park. Briefly summarized, the order required that authorities conduct a survey of all inhabitants living within the National Park Division within a time frame of two months. The homes of those not found in possession of the quintessential “photopass”\footnote{These are identity cards issued by the MCGM and can be used as proof of residence to claim a right to resettlement in the wake of displacement.} were to be demolished and their belongings confiscated so that they would not reconstruct their homes on the same location within the Park. Also, for those whose names appeared on the electoral rolls, the State government was directed to relocate them outside the boundaries of the Park within a period of 18 months and subsequently to demolish their structures. Residents were given a time limit of six weeks to satisfy the government that...
their names appeared on the electoral roll of 1st January 1995 or a roll taken prior to that date.

The expert committee, on whose recommendations the above directives were issued by the court, also submitted a note to the Court in February 1997 recommending that slum dwellers be accommodated on exhausted quarry land on the periphery of the Park. The officials suggested that this portion of the Forest Division land could be “denotified” so as to allow for proximate resettlement. The proposal was supported by other groups including the NHSS. However, the Committee’s recommendations, based on a dissent note filed by Forest officials, did not receive discussion in the High Court.

Accepting the inevitability of mass demolitions that were to follow, NHSS and other NGOs (including SPARC and YUVA) along with State and forest officials chose to work collectively on issues relating to resettling and rehabilitating potential evictees. However, after a two year period of little progress, relations between participating members quickly broke down. The Court finally passed an order on the 17th of July 1999 ordering allotment of marked plots of land, measuring 10 feet by 15 feet in five

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421 On February 12 1997, NHSS filed a submission in the High Court requesting that peripheral land be desrezved and used to rehabilitate people. Then again in March 2000, NHSS filed a petition in the Supreme Court requesting that forest officials conduct another survey to determine the boundaries of the Park. Both pleas were dismissed.

422 In a 2003 report (Sushil & George 2003), NHSS divided the demolitions into three phases: The first phase began on the 20th of May 1997 and lasted until December; the second was from 1998-1999; and, a third in 2000 which NHSS described as the severest among all.

423 This voluntary group met six times between May and October 1997 exchanging ideas as regards a possible site for rehabilitation. Among these was a site not far from the New Bhabrekar Nagar (see case of YUVA in this chapter). NHSS’s Vice-President, also a practicing architect, assisted in preparing a site plan but BEAG turned down the selected site because it fell under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), a Central government regulation which restricts activities on coastal stretches within 500 meters of high tide line on the landward side. Source: Interview with a lead member of the BEAG on the 21st of May 2003 in his residence in Powai, Mumbai. Also, interview with Vice-President of NHSS on the 30th of July 2003 at his residence in Juhu, Mumbai.
villages, 60 kilometers away for resettling SGNP dwellers. Each eligible family was to pay a sum of INR 7,000\textsuperscript{424} in four installments to the Deputy Conservator of Forests. Given the remoteness of the allotted sites, which were 15-20 kilometers away from the nearest railway station, the slum dwellers response was lukewarm.\textsuperscript{425} The pessimism was heightened by strong opposition from nearby villagers who contested that part of the land allocated for relocation was demarcated “grazing land” in the Development Plan.\textsuperscript{426} However, fear of suffering demolitions in the hands of forest officials caused nearly 15,000 families still residing in the forest to deposit money, totaling nearly INR 88 million,\textsuperscript{427} with the Conservator of Forests.\textsuperscript{428}

The State government’s refusal\textsuperscript{429} to come up with an alternate site kept the R & R process dormant until about 2001. In the meantime, demolitions continued. NHSS described it as “the largest ever eviction operations in the history of urban India and

\textsuperscript{424} According to the affidavit filed by the State government on 15\textsuperscript{th} July 1999, this contribution was needed to level the site and provide water and electricity (and other basic amenities) for eligible dwellers. In consideration of their meager payment capacities, the Court reduced the amount payable from INR 10,000 to INR 7,000 and also divided the required sum into installments payable within a stipulated time frame. The sites were located in five villages in the neighboring municipality of Kalyan located to the north east of Greater Mumbai (see map of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Appendix A B).

\textsuperscript{425} To the best of my knowledge and based on court proceedings that I perused, the last official deadline for payment of the stipulated sum was pushed nearly six different times by the High Court with the latest deadline being the 14\textsuperscript{th} of November 2002. Out of 33,000 found eligible, merely 1,089 families had been allotted sites at Kalyan and a negligible number of them (11 families, according to NHSS members) had moved to the site.

\textsuperscript{426} The Times of India (September 4, 2000).

\textsuperscript{427} This was highlighted in a presentation made by the NHSS to a newly appointed Chief Minister of Maharashtra on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} of February 2003. Also mentioned by NHSS’s Vice-President in a press conference organized for the media (The Times of India March 27 2002).

\textsuperscript{428} The receipt of payment was used as a proof of intent to move but nearly no one, on account of the remoteness of the site, shifted residence to the alternate site.

\textsuperscript{429} Sources in MHADA, the State housing authority, claimed to have invested nearly INR 13 million towards providing roads and pitches on the site at Kalyan (The Times of India, May 16 2001) and were consequently reluctant to search for an alternate R&R site.
perhaps the largest in the world” (Sushil and George 2003, 14). Between 1997 and 2001, nearly 48,000 hutments had been demolished, rendering nearly 300,000 people homeless. But NHSS persistently tried keeping the issue of ongoing demolitions on the media’s front burners. It invited the support of a former Prime Minister of India (1989-1990), V.P. Singh. Through much of 2000, the former Prime Minister extended his support to the NHSS. In August 2000, NHSS was also instrumental in inviting three retired Judges of the Bombay High Court, working under the aegis of the Indian People’s Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), to record “the goings on at the Sanjay Gandhi National Park” (Indian People’s Human Rights Commission 2000, 2). The inquiry received substantial newspaper coverage. The IPHRC, in its report, dated October 30, 2000, put forth a series of recommendations concluding that “the Court should reconsider its orders in light of the fact that when the orders were passed the slum dwellers were not a party of the said order” (Indian People’s Human Rights Commission 2000, 69).

The inquiry mission, the protests and rallies achieved little in the face of the steadfastness of the State and forest officials to carry out the court-sanctioned demolitions. Even those found eligible for the alternate site had periodically to suffer demolitions or threats to demolition. But overall, the frequency and intensity of demolitions waned during 2001. By this time, the government appeared to have given up on the idea of getting the slum dwellers to leave the Park. According to NHSS workers, some 40,000 families still lived in the Park in the demolished ruins of their previously *pucca* homes.

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430 This was corroborated by many slum dwellers I spoke with. Comparing the demolition operations to a “war-like scene”; an “invasion”, or a “riot” was commonplace. Also see the November 13th 2000 article in the national daily, The Hindu.

431 NHSS’s President was instrumental in getting the former Prime Minister to join its crusade against demolitions.

432 The Times of India, August 7 2000; The Indian Express, August 5 2000; The Hindu, November 13 2000; The Hindu, November 14 2000.
A shift in NHSS’s dominant strategies - from confrontation to cooperation with the state - began in November 2001, when the State Housing Minister invited NHSS to meet with a private developer. The developer, who owned a construction firm called Sumer Corporation, wanted to use 80 acres of land under his ownership, towards housing slum dwellers. The land, formerly a series of stone quarries in the city’s northeastern suburbs, seemed impossible to redevelop.

At a meeting, NHSS, the builder, and the Chief Minister (who is also Chairperson of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority, the SRA), agreed to have the scheme assessed for “viability” by a committee of high-ranking bureaucrats before issuing a sanction letter (called a letter of intent). Nearby property owners, however, filed an appeal to the Chief Minister requesting that the development of the site be disallowed due to anticipated strain on existing infrastructure, potential noise and turbulence from blasting of hills, and the poor condition of nearby roadways.

433 Group interview with developer and other members of his family on the site of the proposed rehabilitation scheme in Chandivali on the 15th of May 2003.
434 Sumer Corporation was set up in 1969. Work at Chandivali was the developer’s first slum-related project.
435 He had come to acquire this vast stretch of land as settlement for a business deal with two other commercial developers that had, much to his regret and resentment, turned sour. He reportedly lost INR 1.5 billion in the business deal. Under clause 3.11 of the Development Control Regulations, a landowner can offer his land to the State government to resettle slum dwellers free of cost and in return, receive compensation in the form of transferable development rights (TDR).
436 I visited the site for the first time in mid-December 2002, just before the blasting and leveling began. This site was previously rejected for R&R purposes for a World Bank financed urban transportation project (The Times of India, December 17th 2002).
437 As noted in the previous chapter, SRA is vested with powers to declare any area as slum rehabilitation area. All such areas where schemes are proposed and are being implemented come under its jurisdiction.
438 The Indian Express, May 7th 2002; The Times of India, May 7th 2002; The Times of India, June 24th 2002.
From December 2001 through August 2002, NHSS heavily lobbied for governmental acceptance of the contentious proposal. The most public display of its efforts came on the 6th of May 2002 when, according to the NHSS, its President met with the Chief Minister and submitted a formal proposal. In a remarkably short span of time, less than a year since the denuded quarry land was first offered, NHSS received a letter of approval from the State government’s Housing and Special Assistance Department in August 2002. The letter expressed the government’s willingness to appoint NHSS to serve as a “developer” for the proposed rehabilitation scheme.

Finally, on the 26th of November 2002, the SRA issued a sanction letter, in principle, approving use of the land for resettlement and rehabilitation of 11,598 slum dwellers/project affected persons/encroachers of forest lands. NHSS was appointed to “facilitate” and do “ground work” towards shifting of “encroachers of forest land” from the forest to the proposed rehabilitation site. In the letter, NHSS went a step further to institutionalize its leverage upon the conduct of the project. It was appointed the architect for the scheme. NHSS’s Vice-President, a well-known architect, worked out detailed site layout and building plans for the project without any apparent consultation with

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439 As covered in The Times of India report of March 20th 2002. According to the newspaper report, “the concessions sought—waiver of the development charges of Rs. [INR] 840 per square metre and the Rs. [INR] 20,000 per tenement that the builder has to contribute towards a corpus fund.” According to the same report, both these requests were rejected.
440 This was mentioned in a notice issued and circulated by NHSS to SGNP dwellers on the 27th of September 2002.
441 With the density and FAR consumption proposed on the ‘residential zone’ portion of the plot, all of the 33,000 eligible families could not be accommodated on this stretch of land.
442 Group interview with officials of the SRA on the 29th of March 2003 at their office in Bandra (East), Mumbai.
443 Even though the sanction letter of 26th November 2002 mentions another city-based architect, it was NHSS’s Vice-President who held control over all architectural and design details of the scheme. As architect of the R&R scheme, the Vice-President of the NHSS (his architectural firm), was receiving a substantial architectural fee from Sumer Corporation.
potential occupants of the buildings (i.e., SGNP residents). The project was to follow a
low-rise, high-density design.\textsuperscript{444} It was to be the “biggest”\textsuperscript{445} and “most
comprehensive”\textsuperscript{446} slum redevelopment project in Asia, armed with such social amenities
as schools, playgrounds, medical centers, shopping areas, religious institutions, open
spaces, hospitals, and community halls – all of which, according to the NHSS, was never
previously conceived as an integral part of slum redevelopment schemes undertaken in
the city.

The SRA’s approval was subject to compliance with 52 conditions, including
rehabilitation of forest dwellers and clearing the land of all disputes, claims, rights and
interests related to its ownership. The SRA attempted to release the land to the builder
without ensuring compliance with the conditions. But this move was forestalled by sirens
blown by the media.\textsuperscript{447} Furthermore, between November 2002 and July 2003, three
different sanction letters were issued by the SRA. Each cancelled the previous one and
reflected power struggles between NHSS and the private developer, each trying to control
minutiae related to delivery. For fear of negative publicity, none of the issues were
plainly spelled out (to the media or to me). However, based on site visits and repeated
interviews with NHSS members, SRA officials, and the developer, turf-battles between

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{444} Source: In a presentation made by NHSS to the Chief Minister on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} of February 2003. NHSS was
determined that its scheme would be “different” from all typical Slum Rehabilitation Schemes which are
made of residential buildings with ground plus five or seven floors (and elevators which the ex-slum
residents find difficult to pay for and maintain). NHSS therefore wanted the buildings to be no more than
five floors in height.
\textsuperscript{445} Mid-day, September 17 2003.
\textsuperscript{446} The Times of India, December 17 2002.
\textsuperscript{447} There was considerable dilly-dallying by the state in approving release of tradable land rights to the
developer and NHSS persisted in its efforts at assuaging the state’s political machinery. See The Times of
India December 5\textsuperscript{th} 2002; The Times of India January 21\textsuperscript{st} 2003; The Times of India January 23\textsuperscript{rd} 2003; The
Times of India January 29\textsuperscript{th} 2003; The Times of India February 1\textsuperscript{st} 2003; The Times of India February 5\textsuperscript{th}
2003; Navbharat Times 5\textsuperscript{th} February 2003; The Times of India March 24\textsuperscript{th} 2003.
\end{flushright}
the developer and NHSS were evident and are summarized in the case discussion that follows.

**Discussion**

Around 1997, NHSS felt the need to formalize and departmentalize its hitherto “ad hoc”\(^ {448}\) structure. In practice, this ‘ad hocism’ translated into work as a “fire fighter” for slum dwellers and as a loosely organized federation where “struggle is a means of achieving the aims of organizing slum dwellers”.\(^ {449}\) Many of those associated with NHSS over the years identify its ability to mobilize and organize residents to “struggle for their rights” as a core competency of the organization.

For NHSS, the shift away from its core competency to product delivery was precipitated when, in the early 1990s, two NHSS members attempted to move NHSS beyond a mass advocacy organization to one capable of delivering housing solutions. The two members were its current President (also a popular Bollywood film actress and a Member of Parliament)\(^ {450}\) and its Vice-President (also a well-known Mumbai-based architect). The President described the transition in the following words,\(^ {451}\)

> When [we] joined the NHSS, we took up the position that we have to move beyond [the street advocacy approach]. The transition happened

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\(^{448}\) Minutes of the General Body Meeting held on the 19\(^{th}\) of October 1997 at St. Pious College Hall, Goregaon East.

\(^{449}\) Interview with Vice-President, NHSS on 11\(^{th}\) September 2002 in his Prabhadevi office, Mumbai.

\(^{450}\) The Parliament of India is bicameral (the practice of having two legislative or parliamentary chambers). The lower house is called the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and is made up of 552 elected members. The upper house is called the Rajya Sabha (Council of the States), a majority of whose members are elected by the State and territorial legislatures. Twelve of the 250 members of the Rajya Sabha are chosen by the President of India for their expertise in specific fields of art, literature, science, and social services. The President of the NHSS was nominated by the President of India to serve as one of the 12 nominated members in 1997. Like other nominated members of the Rajya Sabha, NHSS President’s tenure as a Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (referred to as Rajya Sabha M.P) ended after six years, in August 2003.

\(^{451}\) Telephone interview with the President of NHSS on the 17\(^{th}\) of August 2003.
over time. We had to persuade others … there was a lot of static but we kept pressing and asking “Beyond agitation, what do you do?”

I devote the following section to analyzing the range of tactics “beyond agitation” that NHSS deployed in the course of its work with the slums of SGNP. I describe the process of transformation in NHSS by analyzing its work in SGNP from 1997 until 2003. Table 6.2 describes the tactics and strategies used by NHSS during this period. I discuss each strategy in turn.
Table 6.1: NHSS’s Repertoire of Tactics in Sanjay Gandhi National Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Confrontation (Sub-strategy) | - Litigation  
- Anti-demolition demonstrations  
- Legal aid to evicted slum dwellers  
- Contesting government relocation proposal | - Establishing the primacy of housing rights | - Strategy fails to influence government and court decisions  
- Instances of open confrontation die down in significance once frequency of demolitions wane |
| Cooperation/Complementarity (Primary Strategy)<sup>452</sup> | - Supporting government solutions (peripheral land and later land designated CRZ land)  
- Agrees to partner with a developer with prodding from the State  
- Serves as the scheme’s architect | - Building “new” legitimacy as a housing provider  
- Capitalizing on a favorable real estate market to speedily deliver housing | - Accused of sleeping with its chief enemy, a private developer  
- Delivery, a new “routine”  
- Finds itself fighting with the developer to control the scheme  
- Demands developing defensive strategies to retain its housing clients  
- Results in a perceptible demarcation of responsibilities within NHSS |
| Co-optation (Sub-strategy) | - Garnering political (state bureaucrats and political elite) acceptability of its solution | - Gaining project-related waivers and concessions  
- Gaining and retaining control over slum dwellers | - Takes over task as bargaining agent for the developer and for the scheme |

<sup>452</sup> NHSS prefers to refer to its strategy as one of “tactical interim adjustment.” Conversation with the Vice-President of NHSS on the 7th of February 2003 at his office in Prabhadevi, Mumbai.
Confrontation

NHSS members claim to have been disappointed by the tone of the Court’s May 7th order\textsuperscript{453} which they attribute to an overall anti-slum sentiment that consumed the city since 1991.\textsuperscript{454} As the Vice-President of NHSS noted,\textsuperscript{455}

\begin{quote}
Since the 1990s the slums and their activists have consistently lost all court battles. There has been a widespread citizen’s movement to oppose slum dwellers. The ruling elite want the city cleared of slums. The Court is not shielded from the thrust, the biases, the influences of the time. This was not the case in the 1960s and the 1970s.\textsuperscript{456}
\end{quote}

The strategy of contesting court and governmental decisions and going so far as to invite the Human Rights Commission, helped gain some delays in demolition. It also brought media attention to the issue and averted displacement of slum dwellers of SGNP to undesirable far-off sites.\textsuperscript{457} But, overall, the strategy of protests, litigation, demonstrations and collective mobilization did not deter forest officials and other State functionaries from proceeding with demolitions as ordered by the Court. NHSS staff found the forest and environmental activists to be dogmatic over preserving the ‘sanctity’ of the Park and unwilling to compromise. This dogmatism was clearly not absorbed well by those who purported to work for the housing rights of the poor. A bitter battle over

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\textsuperscript{453} NHSS believed that the May 7th order “enforced class division in urban cities” (Sushil and George 2003, 16). According to NHSS, the order to clear the Park (of slum dwellers) with the declared intent to conserve environmental resources was a “big public hoax” because land just outside of the Park which had just been cleared of slums “has since been developed by builders as prime residential housing complexes for the rich with a magnificent [sic] view of nature” (ibid.). Similar sentiments were expressed by NHSS in Das (2003, 207-234).

\textsuperscript{454} In 1991, the State government of Maharashtra announced the new Development Control Rules and alongside announced the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) explained in Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{455} Interview held on the 11th of September 2002 at the Vice-Presidents’ office in the Prabhadevi area of Mumbai.

\textsuperscript{456} Similar sentiments were expressed by two other members of NHSS which included the member-journalist and a practicing advocate/human rights lawyer.

\textsuperscript{457} It is unclear if these interim successes were the result of NHSS’s interventions or were also attributable to political-party led campaigns and litigation.
who champions the more critical cause -- rights to housing or norms of environmental protection -- began with NHSS and the BEAG occupying center-stage.

**Cooperation**

“Crises,” writes Gorges (2001, 138), “can bring about abrupt institutional change, because they present leaders with an opportunity to enact new plans and realize new ideas by embedding them in the institutions they establish,” NHSS prefers to frame its involvement in R&R work for SGNP dwellers to a crisis in housing options for SGNP evictees. After a three-year State-led effort to find a housing solution, NHSS decided to take the plunge into delivery.

We could no longer gather the critical mass necessary to protest and stop demolitions. The people [whose homes were demolished] were disappearing and settling in other areas. It was time for something concrete … How could we as an NGO ignore the plight of 33,000 eligible families? Besides, you must understand… she [President, NHSS] had to move beyond her image from an agitationist [sic] to someone doing a concrete intervention in development.458

When NHSS entered into dealings with a private developer, its worst enemy, the shift was carefully justified by its Vice-President as a “tactical interim adjustment.”459 Involvement was repeatedly couched in such terms as, “how could we leave so many people on the streets?” However, the scale of the project (16,000 units) and the extent of transferable development rights likely to be generated (valued at over INR 120 billion as of July 2003) did not guarantee smooth-sailing for the NGO.

458 The above were a series of reasons given by the member-journalist of the NHSS to my question as regards NHSS’s interests in offering a resettlement and rehabilitation option to the people (Source: conversation on the 25th of May 2003 in Mumbai en route from the Malad office of NHSS to my residence (women’s hostel/dormitory) in Andheri).

459 Interview held on the 11th of September 2002 at the NHSS Vice-Presidents’ office in the Prabhadevi area of Mumbai.
NHSS’s members had all along, from 1991 to 2001, chided the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme of the government of Maharashtra for “institutionalizing private profiteering from public funds” and promoting business interests in real-estate (Das 1995, 174). There did not seem any community-prompted pressure upon NHSS to offer a housing solution. However, pressures internal to the NHSS to maintain relevance, in a city housing environment of delivering tangible outcomes, had grown enormously.

Cooptation

The film-actress and activist became President of the NHSS in November 1997, the same year that NHSS convened its first General Council meeting. This was also the year she was nominated a Member of Parliament. Her multi-faceted persona raised the profile of the organization’s activities. When still in its confrontational mode (1997-2001), the new President of NHSS gathered the support of well-known personalities who supported NHSS’s stand on the issue namely, one of halting demolitions and also pressing the government and the Court to accept resurveying the boundaries of the Park.

Even though her engagement meant that NHSS had access to a personality who could “move and shake” those in the highest political and bureaucratic echelons of the Central and State government, it also meant that every organizational intervention would come under close and constant media and public scrutiny. When the privately owned land was offered as a site to resettle and rehabilitate SGNP dwellers, NHSS’s President invited the support of the Chief Minister, who is also Chairperson of the Slum Rehabilitation
Authority. The highly visible involvement of the government was necessary to legitimize NHSS’s partnership with a private developer. NHSS also required this stamp of legitimacy to assert that “TDR [transferable development rights] is being given as per government policy and there is no illegality involved.”

Table 6.1.1 below focuses on the challenges faced by NHSS in the course of making a strategic change in its housing strategies.

Table 6.1.1: Challenges Faced by NHSS in R&R work in SGNP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges Faced</th>
<th>Tactics used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing Community Perceptions</td>
<td>- Selling the scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pressing for a public display of State seal on the scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increasing extent and frequency of NGO-community interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling Delivery</td>
<td>- Seeking appointment as the scheme’s architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing programmatic with organizational objectives</td>
<td>- Consciously creating structures to preserve and institutionalize dissent (a proposed Civil Liberties Center)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a) Managing community perceptions of the scheme:* Starting the 9th of March 2003, NHSS began inviting slum dwellers to submit their approval for participation in the proposed scheme. On payment of INR 100, they were given a stamped paper which guaranteed their right to a 225 square foot home in the proposed scheme. 16,000 such

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460 The Times of India, February 7th 2003. In another Times of India report dated February 6th 2003, the Vice-President of NHSS is reported to have stated: “The important thing to note is that there is total transparency in the project.” This was stated in response to media concerns about the huge profits that the developer was likely to make through sale of development rights arising from this scheme.
entries were required. By the time that I left the city in July 2003, less than 5,000\textsuperscript{461} forms were filed by aspiring homeowners. The trickling-in of willing slum dwellers could be partly attributed to the influence by political party workers in the area. Realizing the threat of losing out on a massive voting population, political aspirants in the area had begun a relentless campaign to deride the resettlement option offered by NHSS. Notices “warning” people against signing up for NHSS’s scheme were circulated in April 2002. One notice, for instance, stated,\textsuperscript{462}

\begin{quote}
No Chandivali.\textsuperscript{463} We shall stay in Malad-Kandivali [about 220 acres of land located in the periphery of the Park]. Do not fill the Chandivali form. If you have filled it out, then contact us and get it cancelled! If you fill the Chandivali form then you will lose your rights over land in Malad-Kandivali.
\end{quote}

The campaign also resulted in the organization of a “human chain” protesting the Chandivali scheme with placards that said, “Chandivali scheme is a plot of the NGO. Our demand is the Malad-Kandivali scheme.”\textsuperscript{464} The former Prime Minister who had briefly supported NHSS, changed camps to support his political party cronies and petitioned the High Court requesting a repeat survey of the boundaries of the Park.

\textsuperscript{461} In an effort to gather as much information as possible about those who signed up for its scheme, NHSS put together a detailed questionnaire comprising 30 questions. In May 2003, NHSS proclaimed to have more than 5,000 applicants logged in for its scheme. However, in my conversations with paid volunteers (slum youth) who helped out with filling up application forms, the numbers stood at about 3,500.

\textsuperscript{462} In reply to this notice, NHSS issued a counter-notice among slum dwellers on the 24\textsuperscript{th} of May 2003 titled “More than 5,000 people have submitted their requests to be included in the Chandivali housing scheme. Bombay High Court has rejected appeal to rehabilitate slum dwellers in 200 acres of peripheral land”. Much to NHSS’s glee, the political party’s petition to the Bombay High Court requesting a repeat survey of SGNP boundaries was dismissed by the High Court.

\textsuperscript{463} Located in the northeastern suburbs of the city, Chandivali is the locality where the NHSS-coordinated slum rehabilitation work for SGNP dwellers was in progress with the private developer. Please see Appendix AC for the location of the site.

\textsuperscript{464} This was a demonstration march that I attended on the 27\textsuperscript{th} of March 2003 in Mumbai on the invitation of the President of the Janata-Dal (Secular). She is the political party leader who led the campaign in favor of land on the Park’s periphery and against NHSS’s proposal.
NHSS had to use a variety of tactics to defend its interests to serve as a delivery agent for slum dwellers and “sell” its scheme to them and to the general public. Not only did it post notices informing people about the scheme but NHSS’s senior members and staff organized meetings in the slum to display a plan of the proposed rehabilitation scheme and to clarify doubts raised by slum dwellers and thus asked them to disbelieve rumors regarding NHSS’s profiteering motives.\footnote{Most of the rumors originated from irate political party workers. In response, NHSS issued two notices to help dispel rumors: One of these was dated the 27\textsuperscript{th} of September 2002 and titled “An alternative housing in Chandivali, Powai.” This notice was posted across different parts of the SGNP. In the notice, NHSS stated that State’s approval of its scheme, is a clear signal that the SGNP dwellers do not have to accept the Kalyan and Shirdon (the resettlement sites designated by the State) sites and shall, instead, be resettled by NHSS well within Mumbai’s suburbs. I have described the content of yet another notice issued on the 24\textsuperscript{th} of May 2003, earlier in the case study.} It made additional efforts to exhort its own cadre of supporters (slum youth) to cover the length and breadth of the Park to communicate the benefits of the scheme among slum dwellers and to bring back news from the field about “new” rumors and doubts. NHSS even organized a press conference to announce the scheme and to explain “a reversal of stand on slum rehab scheme.”\footnote{In this conference, attended by the President and Vice-President of the NHSS, the latter is reported to have said that: “In the past, the NHSS has always fought on certain principles. But we have realised that if we do not operate within the prevailing laws, the slumdwellers will be totally marginalized.” He also justified NHSS’s change of position by adding that “those thrown out of the national park following a High Court order had been languishing for the past seven years as the government had failed to rehabilitate them” (The Times of India issue of March 27\textsuperscript{th}, 2002).}

\textit{b) Controlling delivery:} NHSS wanted the scheme to be a model resettlement project with all necessary amenities including low-rise buildings (not more than four floors) with ample open spaces, playgrounds, and the like. For this reason, even though the scheme permitted on-site utilization of FAR to the extent of 2.5, NHSS’s architect repeatedly highlighted that the scheme was using a FAR of merely 1.65. Ensuring that the developer follows this vision was critical to NHSS’s legitimacy. Although NHSS was the official architect, this did not guarantee much leverage since the developer was hell-bent upon...
getting the land cleared to capitalize on the transferable development rights which he was entitled to get in exchange for both the land that he surrendered towards the scheme, and for construction of buildings for slum dwellers.

Mukhija (2003, 66) notes that “in high-value property markets time is of the essence.” During December 2002 until June-July 2003, slum TDR prices were at an all time high (ranging from INR 800-850 a square foot). In the event of a drop, there was the very real possibility that the developer would wash his hands of the project or would put immense pressure upon NHSS to allow use of as much available land as possible for construction.467

c) Balancing programmatic and developmental objectives: While in the midst of all the chaos over delivery, some members within NHSS wanted to preserve its “original” voice of dissenting state norms and practices by expressing dissatisfaction over corruption and delays in other slum rehabilitation schemes across the city. NHSS’s structure periodically displayed dual characteristics -- a feature referred to as “decoupling” in institutional theory (Meyer and Rowan 1977). On one hand, is NHSS’s relatively “new” operational structure made up of those that are able to mobilize political willingness (President), decode the technical-financial language of the resettlement and rehabilitation scheme of

467 There exists no limit to the extent of FAR sanctioned for a slum rehabilitation scheme. All that the scheme stipulates is that the on-site consumption should not exceed 2.5. The unutilized FAR can be sold as transferable development rights (TDR) in the market or may be utilized, in this case, by the builder to undertake other constructions in the city. Since the extent of TDR arising from a rehabilitation scheme is directly proportional to the extent of rehabilitation tenements built, it was very likely that in a depressed real estate market, a builder would want to construct more (horizontally and/or vertically) which, in its turn, was likely to affect the quality of the living environment in the area by causing congestion.
SGNP dwellers (Vice-President) and, negotiate with technocrats and private developers and on the other, is the normative, prescriptive face.

The normative voice, increasingly endangered by its involvement in R&R work, is represented by its member-journalist and a small band of slum youth who volunteer their weekend time for NHSS. This time is typically coordinated by the member-journalist who spends an average of two to three hours to review the goings-on of the week. Besides reviewing work on the SGNP front, time is also spent listening to grievances of slum dwellers from across the city and strategizing ways and means to address them. Ironically, a majority of the grievances brought to the NHSS originate from builder-led slum redevelopment and rehabilitation schemes where some builders were violently forcing slum dwellers to vacate slum land or had indefinitely delayed delivery while leaving slum dwellers in poorly constructed transit camps. The lists of complaints against the scheme were long and growing. In an effort not to lose identity of an “ad hoc” federation capable of taking a radical position on what are still believed to be “flawed” government policies, select members of the NHSS have initiated work towards setting up of a Civil Liberties Center.\(^{468}\)

NHSS’s decision to work with a private developer was a dramatic shift in strategies and one that received unforgiving criticism from the media and the competitive ire of political parties. NHSS had taken upon itself the task of coordinating the delivery of a housing solution and referred to it as a “tactical interim arrangement” with the State and the

\(^{468}\) On my visit to NHSS in July 2004, the structure that is to house this Center was under construction on land adjacent to Sanjay Gandhi Nagar. This land was acquired in 1991 by the Nivara Hakk Welfare Centre.
private developer. NHSS hoped that the end would justify the means. In a city-wide climate in which public-private partnerships were being denounced, it was important for the state to buffer the impact of approving a builder-led scheme by involving an NGO. On its own, NHSS was keen to move beyond its image as a street-level agitator to one capable of delivering tangible benefits to its clientele. It thus took up the task with the vision to develop a comprehensive scheme for slum dwellers -- one that resembled a township and what it proudly proclaimed to be the biggest ever in Asia. The change in voice and position was dramatic. The scale of the scheme had potential to make or break NHSS’s profile. As implementation of the scheme commenced, NHSS faced a host of different challenges emerging from the community, from among its own members and supporters, and from its new builder-partner.

6.3 YUVA and New Bhabrekar Nagar, 1997-2003

As detailed in Chapter 5, YUVA’s efforts in finding its way through the technical-financial intricacy of the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme although ongoing, was yet to yield success. By the year 1999, YUVA eased itself out of involvement in the scheme partly as a result of a downward trend in real estate prices (which started in about 1996) and partly also because of YUVA’s lack of success with raising funds from national and international sources. Work in the slum of New Bhabrekar Nagar, explained in the following pages, was among the last few straws in YUVA’s housing basket in the city.

\[469\] Source: The Times of India October 3rd 2002; The Times of India December 29th 2002; The Times of India 23rd January 2003; The Times of India 10th January 2003; The Times of India 12th February 2003.
Many in YUVA suggested that, as part of this research, I concentrate exclusively on its work in a resettlement and rehabilitation site in a distant northwestern suburb of Kandivali of Mumbai called the New Bhabrekar Nagar (see Appendix AC for the location of the resettlement site). Their perception was informed by the fact that, over the years since 1997, the settlement solicited interventions from all of YUVA’s existing teams (in YUVA Urban)\(^{470}\) – the livelihood and employment team, the health team, child rights team, the housing and infrastructure development team, the youth rights team and also its women’s rights team.

I identified it as a key event for a more significant reason: In and of itself, the history of YUVA’s work in Bhabrekar Nagar displays how it manages its work as an implementing agency for the State. I begin by introducing the slum and its demolition. I then describe YUVA’s entry into the slum. As a brief preview, this intervention began with YUVA deploying tactics that it is most comfortable using, namely, that of building pressure through city-based and national advocacy networks. The tactics yielded substantial results but also paved the way for YUVA’s entry into a demanding array of “tasks” in working through and with the government machinery. Bernstein (1991, 178) described it as “this ongoing, messy process of accommodation and affirmation”.

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\(^{470}\) YUVA Urban is one among five legally independent units created in YUVA. It is a product of yet another round of internal restructuring in YUVA which was completed in the year 2001 and was the outcome of a need to “simplify and reduce the energy expended on organisational maintenance” (Pimple 2002, 3). The four other units include YUVA Rural, YUVA Consulting, YUVA Central office, and YUVA Bank.
A sprawling well-consolidated settlement, Bhabrekar Nagar resembled many other slums across the city. First settled in the early 1970s, it was home to over 12,000 families that had migrated from several different parts of India. Thirty hectares of the slum land belonged to the Collector, Mumbai Suburban District (MSD) and Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA), a public agency, owned the remaining ten hectares upon which the slum stood. Other than a few demolitions, the slum had largely been unscathed for nearly 20 years with the result that its residents had acquired a sense of security; security that comes with having endured in a location unthreatened for a long period of time.

A Marathi daily called Saamna (meaning ‘confrontation’ in Marathi and Hindi), initiated and edited by the ruling Shiv Sena’s chief, carried two articles on the 11th and the 14th of June, 1997 labeling the slum, a haven for illegal Bangladeshi immigrants (Habitat International Coalition 1997, 6). The Saamna claimed that the slums were set up in the last two years by illegal Bangladeshi migrants and occupied many acres of prime land. Eight days prior to the actual demolition, some of the residents stated that they received a notice from the Collector’s office. According to the residents, the notice requested them to submit proofs of residence but did not make any reference to a likely date of

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471 Form July 2002 until July 2003, I met with several residents of the New Bhabrekar Nagar (who were former residents of the slum) on many different occasions. I conducted individual and group interviews with elected members of the CBO called the Bhabrekar Nagar Sangharsh Samiti as well as with other residents of the settlement.

472 Shiv-Sena’s chief founded the ShivSena party in 1966. He had never held an elected office but is popularly regarded as the “the uncrowned monarch of the western Indian state of Maharashtra” (BBC July 15, 2000). Even though the party inaugurated the “free housing” for slum dwellers in 1995, it has a notorious reputation for its anti-slum, anti-immigrant stand.

473 Spread over 40 hectares of land, (old) Bhabrekar Nagar comprised several smaller groups of dwellings – each designated a slum. It is also to be noted that none of these slums had been regularized by the state government.
demolition or the promise of alternate accommodation in the event of one (as required by prevailing laws on slum rehabilitation).

Between the 13th and 19th of June 1997, at the peak of the monsoons, Bhabrekar Nagar suffered what was widely described as one of the most brutal demolitions in the history of Mumbai. The demolition itself was analyzed as a “political act” prompted by what seemed like an oft stated resolve of the Shiv Sena government to rid Mumbai of its migrants (YUVA 2002b, 10). There was also speculation that the demolition was a deliberate move to rid the city of a sizeable number of north Indians particularly those hailing from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (Jansatta, 24th June 1997).

The demolition’s media coverage caught YUVA’s attention. The choice of intervening in a slum that YUVA had no previous contact with, was justified on grounds YUVA must intervene “on behalf of the evicted persons” who had suffered a “violation of housing and human rights” (YUVA 2002b, 10). The choice of working with the evictees ran against trends characteristic of YUVA which claims to “typically work by building trust in the community over several years and then take on projects that they identify.”

YUVA began work in Bhabrekar Nagar by assisting two other NGOs, with an established presence in the area, to collect proofs of residence from the evictees. The three NGOs

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474 Source: Free Press Journal, June 20, 1997; Jansatta June 24, 1997; The Indian Express June 14, 1997; The Indian Express June 21, 1997.
475 A more probable cause for the severity and timing of the demolition was pressure upon MHADA, the state housing authority, to utilize the land for its “reserved” purpose as designated in the city’s Development Plan. Fifteen acres of the encroached land was reserved “several years ago” for a hospital and residential quarters for police personnel (The Indian Express June 18, 1997). Today, in place of the (old) Bhabrekar Nagar slum, there is a vast colony of commercial housing projects comprising high rise towers targeted to house middle income groups.
476 Interview with Founding Executive Director of YUVA on the 21st of February, 2003 in Mumbai.
also conducted a “simple” census of the community and verified boundaries of the slum. YUVA then made the strategic decision to draw upon its well-established contacts with national and international advocacy groups. It invited the Habitat International Coalition (HIC – explained in Chapter 4) to intervene in the process.

The HIC arrived in Mumbai as a “fact finding mission.” YUVA convened a public hearing (a Jan Sunvai) to gather personal commentaries from those affected by the demolition. The three NGOs presented the mission with the results of their census. Armed with the data, the mission prepared a public report and submitted this to the Chief Minister. The report was also submitted as a petition to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) which responded by sending an investigating team. The team convened a meeting between the Collector, MHADA officials and concerned NGOs. MHADA committed to allocating 10 x 15 feet plots of land to the 346 families identified as eligible by the Collector. NGOs were to assist the Collector’s office in verifying all further submissions of proofs and in establishing eligibility of the families.

YUVA further capitalized on its networks in the city to build pressure upon the government. Several groups including NGOs such as YUVA got together a forum which organized meetings across the city and also led a march of 30,000 people up to the State secretariat. YUVA then targeted politicians of the opposition party to carry its concerns about the future of Bhabrekar Nagar for discussion in the monsoon session of the State assembly. The uproar staged by the opposition leaders caused the ruling government to

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477 Stationed in New Delhi and set up in October 1993, under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has its own investigating staff headed by the Director General of Police. The Commission has associated, in a number of cases, NGOs in its investigation work (Source: http://nhrc.nic.in/ accessed on April 29, 2005).
accept the task of implementing a resettlement plan that “it would route through YUVA” (YUVA 2002b, 16).

Based on orders of the NHRC, the Urban Development and the Revenue and Forest department of the State of Maharashtra allocated a resettlement site for those evicted. The site measured 3.5 hectares and was located at a distance of four kilometers from their original residence. Situated right by the Arabian Sea, the site was partly marshy, partly hilly and possessed no infrastructure – no water lines, sewer lines, electricity, or roadways. Upon inspection by the NGOs and the slum dwellers, a decision to proceed with leveling the land and extending infrastructure from adjoining areas to this site was taken.

YUVA’s first major achievement, albeit through NHRC’s intervention, was its success in pressing the government to allocate land and funds for infrastructure provision. A sum of INR\textsuperscript{478} 9,894,000\textsuperscript{479} was sanctioned by the State government’s Housing and Special Assistance Department for provision of infrastructure (civic) amenities on the resettlement site. Funds were sanctioned to MHADA, the State government housing authority, and were to be routed to the community through YUVA. YUVA plunged into the resettlement process soon after communication of the State’s intent to allot land for

\footnote{\textsuperscript{478} At the prevalent exchange rate (as of January 21, 2005, 1US dollar = INR 43.64), INR 9,894,000 was equivalent to approximately US $ 226,719.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{479} The amount was sanctioned from MHADA’s annual budget for the year 1997-98. The allocated sum is split into onsite and off site infrastructure components. A total amount of INR 574,000 is allocated for on site infrastructure and the remainder for offsite infrastructure provision.}
I devote the following section to delineating the many entanglements encountered by YUVA in the process of its efforts to implement the resettlement and rehabilitation plan for New Bhabrekar Nagar.

Owing to the absence of any infrastructure on the site, evicted families trickled in. They began constructing homes made of tin sheets or plastic on their ten by fifteen plots allocated by the State. They chose to call their 3.5 hectares of land, “New Bhabrekar Nagar”. YUVA was to be their immediate caretaker. YUVA unquestioningly accepted the role of a “key implementing agency” (YUVA 2002b, 17). Paper work appointing YUVA as an executing agency was yet to be complete but there seemed consensus among all agencies involved that YUVA would be responsible for undertaking the construction of infrastructure on the site and ensuring their integration with city networks.

Procedurally, none of the proposed housing and infrastructure work could begin without getting a clearance (also called a No Objection Certificate) from the city’s civic government, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM). 2.24 hectares of the 3.5 hectare site fell under a zoning regulation called the No Development Zone (NDZ) where “no services of any kind will be provided by the Corporation” (Urban Development Department 1991, 76). To facilitate implementation of infrastructure works, the land had to be converted to a Residential Zone. The process of converting land use is

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480 The 3.5 hectares of land originally belonged to the Government’s Revenue and Forest Department. It was allotted to the MHADA vide order no. J-2697/923/CR-7170/J-3, dated the 5th of May 1998 for rehabilitation of residents of the old Bhabrekar Nagar.
a drawn-out procedure which YUVA’s architect was warned “is not an easy task”\textsuperscript{481}. YUVA repeatedly tried to press upon the government that because the land was under ownership of MHADA (the State housing authority), it was MHADA’s responsibility to obtain all necessary clearances. On more occasions than one, MHADA refused to take responsibility to get necessary clearances stating that because land was not officially transferred to MHADA, it cannot forward suggestions for a change in zoning regulations.\textsuperscript{482}

With knowledge that the site fell under a No Development Zone ruling, YUVA began work on creating an alternate plan for rehabilitating the community. YUVA approached an engineering consulting firm headed by a structural engineer who pioneered the concept of “slum networking.”\textsuperscript{483} In brief, slum networking is a comprehensive means to improve the infrastructure of an entire city by using a slum as part of the urban network and not an isolated area. In it, NGOs play the role of motivating the communities, mobilizing resources from them, and integrating their efforts with inputs from local government and other city-level stakeholders. At New Bhabrekar Nagar, the idea was to reorganize the settlement into clusters of 13-19 homes. Each such cluster was to be registered as a cooperative housing society. Using the popularity of the concept, YUVA

\textsuperscript{481} This was recorded in the minutes of a meeting held between YUVA and the Mumbai Suburban District Collector on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of February 1999. The Collector told YUVA’s Architect that that “dereservation of NDZ is not an easy task” and moreover expressed that it may not be possible to convert.

\textsuperscript{482} YUVA exhorted MHADA officials to pursue conversion of land from to NDZ to RZ, on several different occasions. For instance, this aspect is recorded in meetings held between YUVA-MHADA meetings held on the 11\textsuperscript{th} May 1999, 2\textsuperscript{nd} August 1999, 30\textsuperscript{th} December 1999, 5\textsuperscript{th} January 2000, and 14\textsuperscript{th} January 2000 (Source: Minutes of meetings in YUVA’s Parel office).

\textsuperscript{483} The concept of “slum networking” secured the engineer such awards as the United Nations World Habitat Award for Urban Development in 1993 and the Habitat II Best Practice recognition for Slum Networking in 1996.
made plans to forward the proposal for funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Among its first tasks at New Bhabrekar Nagar was helping members organize an elected representative committee amongst themselves.\textsuperscript{484} The election process, in itself, got YUVA embroiled in the thick of a piquant controversy. A majority of those who formed the elected committee were natives of Maharashtra, a fact that was not digested well by non-Maharashtrian Brahmins in the community. This acrimony became aggravated by a drawn-out process in gaining access to water, electricity, road, and sanitation – a responsibility that the Brahmins and others in the settlement vested upon the negotiating powers of the elected committee and consequently upon YUVA.

MHADA, the State authority funding the infrastructure, provided the settlement with water as late as November 1998. Out of its budget, MHADA spent INR 3,125,000 towards water and toilet blocks and stated that it had no more funds to install entire sewer lines. YUVA was also informed that the MCGM would not clear its ‘reclustered’ plans without ensuring that the site had an access road. The existing plot of land was not conducive to constructing a road – the land was marshy making it financially difficult to refill the land to make it usable. The marshy land had to be replaced by requesting for more land from an adjacent plot. All of these hurdles meant that YUVA had to shoulder

\textsuperscript{484} This forum is also complemented by a women’s group (Stree Manch), a children’s group (Bal Adhikar Sangharsh Samiti) and a youth group – all of which were initiated and work under YUVA’s guidance. YUVA also initiated a ration shop to be run and managed by women, started a programme on solid waste management (for garbage collection and subsequent decomposing), set up self help groups among women in the settlement (for collective savings and credit), established water user groups and livelihood generation programme involving pickle making.
responsibility to get all necessary clearances to realize its plans to “recluster” the community and request more land.

But little could be “legitimately” realized without help from a just retired official of the Indian Administrative Services (IAS) who joined YUVA in early 1999. The retired IAS official approached YUVA wanting to volunteer his services.\(^{485}\) He had held such high-ranking positions as Deputy Municipal Commissioner (1982-94), the Additional Municipal Commissioner (1993-96), and had retired in 1999 as Vice-President of MHADA.\(^{486}\) He took position as YUVA’s “Senior Advisor” with the primary role of giving “a push to the selected slum relocation project” and request “for all help from public authorities.”\(^{487}\) Despite his personalized intervention, the procedure of getting land converted took three years of his tenure in YUVA. The land was finally converted from a No Development Zone to a Residential Zone vide a government notification on 30\(^{\text{th}}\) March 2002. Acquisition of the .40 hectares of land from an adjacent plot came through vide a notice issued by the Revenue and Forest Department on the 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) of August 2001.

YUVA’s frustrations reached a peak when a formal letter appointing YUVA as an implementing agency, issued on the 20\(^{\text{th}}\) March 2002, mentioned that YUVA was responsible for obtaining all approvals necessary to proceed with infrastructure work. This task was particularly irksome because it meant that YUVA had to shoulder the

\(^{485}\) Interview with Senior Advisor in YUVA’s Parel office on the 28\(^{\text{th}}\) of November 2002; and interview with Founding Executive Director on the 1\(^{\text{st}}\) of July 2003 in YUVA’s Khargar office.

\(^{486}\) MHADA consists of a part-time President (an elected representative), a Vice-President and other members appointed by the State Government. The Vice-President is a Chief Executive Officer and also ex-officio (meaning service by provision) Secretary to the Government of Maharashtra.

\(^{487}\) From the minutes of a meeting between MHADA and YUVA held on 11\(^{\text{th}}\) May 1999.
responsibility of pushing to get yet another clearance, namely a coastal zoning regulation on the land. Coming under enormous pressure from members of the community and disregarding bureaucratic clearances, YUVA decided to initiate housing and infrastructure work under the sponsorship of its arrangement with the Department of Science and Technology (with funding from the UNDP). The reclustered plan and related infrastructure works in New Bhabrekar Nagar were inaugurated by the Minister of State for Housing. YUVA coordinated land filling work, laying of sewage pipes, gully traps and chambers, laying of internal roads and water pipelines.

However, work to construct permanent housing was prematurely stalled when, after a series of confusing information, news arrived that no development could be carried out since large parts of the allocated land (2.21 hectares out of the 3.51 hectares), fell under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ). The CRZ is a central government regulation which restricts activities on coastal stretches within 500 meters of the high tide line on the landward side. Until it is revoked, no construction could be carried out. Much of the development work already carried out was illegitimate on account of this regulation. The approach road proposed by YUVA fell under CRZ I; .4 hectares of land upon which YUVA had already done work fell under CRZ III; and, the remainder of the land fell under CRZ II.489

488 At the time I left Mumbai in July 2003, actual construction of homes as part of the ‘reclustering’ plan had just begun. Work up till plinth is complete for the two clusters but was stalled owing to CRZ clearance issues.
489 CRZ I refers to area between low tide line and high tide line where no development is permitted. CRZ II refers to land wherein substantial development has taken place but further development is controlled. Developed areas are those within municipal limits or in legally designated urban areas which are already substantially built up and which have been provided with drainage and approach roads and other infrastructure facilities, such as water supply and sewerage mains. CRZ III land, on the other hand, refers to land on the coastal regulation zone where sporadic development has already occurred and only repair
YUVA’s Senior Advisor expressed the news as a “bolt from the blue”\textsuperscript{490} for it meant that YUVA could not use money sanctioned by the UNDP to begin constructing homes or even start work on any of the other proposed infrastructure works such as connecting the site to the city’s main water and sewerage lines. As I was exiting Mumbai, YUVA had just appealed the case of New Bhabrekar Nagar to the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA).\textsuperscript{491} The appeal was accepted but this process threatened to occupy several more years of YUVA’s work with the slum.\textsuperscript{492}

I devote the following section to analyzing the range of tactics used by YUVA in its interaction with government agencies and furthermore, point to some of the challenges faced in managing its shift in relations vis-à-vis the state apparatus.

\textit{Discussion}

YUVA’s entry into Bhabrekar Nagar, in June 1997, sits squarely within the timeframe of Phase II of its City Project (June 1996 – March 1999). The City project, as mentioned and reconstruction work is allowed. CRZ IV covers areas in islands except those designated in CRZ I, II and III. Here, no buildings are allowed to come up within 200 meters and after that no building with more than two floors is allowed to be constructed. Besides, use of corals and sands, dredging and underwater blasting are also prohibited (Ministry of Environment and Forests 2001).

\textsuperscript{490} From a letter written by the Senior Advisor of YUVA to the VP and CEO of MHADA dated 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 2001.

\textsuperscript{491} The MCZMA was constituted in November 1998 under the Environment (Protection) Act of the government of India in 1986. Among other tasks, the MCZMA examines proposals for changes or modifications in classification of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) areas and in the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) received from the Maharashtra State Government and makes specific recommendations to the National Coastal Zone Management Authority.

\textsuperscript{492} In the duration of my stay in Mumbai, YUVA along with members of the New Bhabrekar Nagar committee met with many political leaders and bureaucrats in efforts to push for the clearance of CRZ from the site. YUVA also began sending direct appeals to the Central government (Ministry of Environment and Forests based in New Delhi). On the 15\textsuperscript{th} of July 2003, the case of New Bhabrekar Nagar came up for discussion with the MCZMA. Till the time I left Mumbai in August 2003, there was no news of a final decision.
earlier, was inaugurated in the early 1990s and represented YUVA’s efforts to move away from disparate, locality based interventions to “a more issue based one” (YUVA 1990, 1). YUVA therefore began the decade of the 1990s with an elaborate process of evaluating its “strategies,” its “approach,” and “organization structure” (YUVA 1990, 1). In City Project Phase I (1991-1994) was an outcome of the evaluation and represented “a shift from being responsive to issues to being pro-active” (YUVA 1990, 1). During this phase all of YUVA’s competencies were divided into various departments and each department was suffixed with the word “rights.” The departments therefore comprised children’s rights, housing rights, women’s rights, and youth rights. Overall, the work focused on advocacy, lobbying, networking and policy work.

Phase II of the City Project represented a further evolution into work within the People’s Organization-People’s Institution (PO-PI) model of intervention. In New Bhabrekar Nagar, the People’s Organizations were to consist of local groups such as the elected CBO, youth group, children’s group and women’s groups. People’s Institutions created in New Bhabrekar Nagar include co-operative housing societies of New Bhabrekar Nagar dwellers, along with Self Help Groups (savings and credit groups) of women. In practical terms, the shift from City Phase I to City Phase II meant a return to the older model of “project” based work. But YUVA believed that the further it moved away from promoting people’s organizations to building people’s institutions, from conflict with the state to serving as its contractor, the greater would be the likelihood of being co-

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493 This does not imply a complete absence of policy advocacy, networking, lobbying and mobilizing/organizing work but a perceptible shift in focus from critiquing prevailing socio-economic-political processes to a search for tangible outcomes/deliverables within the framework of existing policy processes.
opted. YUVA’s involvement in Bhabrekar Nagar as an “executing and implementing authority” represents an interesting anomaly particularly in the face of professed convictions to steer away from work as an implementer and contractor of the state, and belief in working only with those communities with which it was comfortable.\textsuperscript{494}

Work at New Bhabrekar Nagar was handled by YUVA’s Housing and Infrastructure Development unit and later christened the Slums and Pavement unit. The unit was formed in about 1996 to complement the community organizing and training skills of the existing Housing Rights team. Those in the Slums and Pavement unit that worked with New Bhabrekar Nagar (during the period from July 2002-August 2003) comprised a project coordinator, a civil engineer, and two community development workers. Since work began in New Bhabrekar Nagar, in 1997, the project has seen eight different project coordinators most of whom have been young architects, urban planners, engineers and other professionals. The project has therefore changed several hands over the years. The community development workers, on the other hand, who are typically residents of other slums in the city, have stuck with YUVA for longer durations.

Drawing on the details of the case description, I devote the following section to exploring the range of tactics used, which covered the span from strategic advocacy to service delivery. Table 6.2 below summarizes the range of strategies and tactics deployed. Like its earliest interventions, a variety of strategies are used in the framework of a single intervention. However, the dominant strategy deployed by YUVA to interact with government agencies shifted from confrontation to cooperation (and complementarity).

\textsuperscript{494} Interview with the Founding Executive Director of YUVA on the 21st of February 2003 in Mumbai.
Table 6.2 YUVA’s Repertoire of Tactics in New Bhabrekar Nagar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confrontation (sub-strategy)</td>
<td>- Advocacy Campaign - Challenged governmental conditions related to YUVA having to get land cleared of all reservations - Proceeded with construction in response to community pressure</td>
<td>- Pressure upon government - Force government to allocate land and funds for infrastructure provision - Seek appointment as implementing agency</td>
<td>- Tactics honed over YUVA’s 13 years of existence - Forced the government to respond ‘favorably’ - Takes a back seat once YUVA begins engaging in delivery with the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation/Complementarity (Primary Strategy)</td>
<td>- Volunteered to assist government (verifying eligibility of those evicted) - Lobbied for and accepted government offer to serve as implementing agency - Accepted a ‘substandard’ site offered by State - Suggested alternatives to existing delivery options - Actively sought alternate sources of funds - Assumed near full delivery responsibility to get paper work cleared - Accepted and carried out responsibility to create and maintain consensus within community - Coordinated activities between agencies involved (served as a bridge)</td>
<td>- Cater to organizational vision to set up people's institutions (PO-PI model of intervention) - Establish credibility as a partner-implementer with the state - Build image as an organization capable of delivering “comprehensive solutions”</td>
<td>- The first time that YUVA has come this far with a scheme of slum resettlement and rehabilitation - Scheme enmeshed in legal entanglements - Struggling with timely release of funds - Paper work delaying work for long periods - Delays disrupting its relations with community members and also beginning to generate tensions within YUVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-optation (Sub-strategy)</td>
<td>- Influencing the state through an ex-state official - Increasing bargaining power by inviting the participation of a well-known consulting engineer</td>
<td>- Speed up clearance of land related clearances required of the project - Bring in an aura of authority - Seek concessions - Bring “state” like legitimacy/credibility - Create room for informal renegotiation - Enhance state interest in the project</td>
<td>- A new bridge between YUVA and the government - Yields results - Introduces YUVA to a new set of values – one of “quiet” acquiescence instead of open defiance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Confrontation**

YUVA began work in Bhabrekar Nagar deploying a familiar pool of tactics. Honed over 13 years of its existence, gathering proofs of residence from eligible residents, convening critical mass of supporters (other NGOs and CBOs) to protest against a human rights violation, convening members of a distressed community – are all activities that come easily to YUVA. It is a routine that it, for instance, has applied in its work with pavement dwellers (YUVA 1996).

YUVA took a quick leap forward in internationalizing a local event – a process that Robert Cox (1992) refers to as “internationalization of government.” Capitalizing on the media coverage of the event, YUVA invited the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) to survey the site and record the human rights violations committed by the state. The resulting report was forwarded to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) as a petition. The NHRC declared that the State must resettle and rehabilitate all those found eligible as per government’s current norms. YUVA then led a much publicized exercise in “mobilization of shame” – a process wherein human rights activists are known “to display or publicize norm-breaking behavior to embarrass public authorities … so they will conform to norms” (Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink 2002, 16). The intervention of the NHRC and to some extent, the public uproar orchestrated by YUVA and other groups, helped push the case of Bhabrekar Nagar high on governmental agenda. Demands were met with remarkable speed.

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495 The media coverage was primarily centered on depicting the slum as a haven for illegal Bangladeshi immigrants.
496 YUVA had been a member of the HIC since its formative years (see chapter 4).
According to YUVA, it was for the very first time in Mumbai that the government had taken responsibility for its own actions and was successfully lobbied to allocate a piece of land and demarcate funds for infrastructure provision on the site. The developments while noteworthy merit a critical eye. The government allocated the evicted slum dwellers with a swampy stretch of land that had absolutely no infrastructure and furthermore, sanctioned a sum of INR 9,894,000 that fairly soon was found to be grossly insufficient to meet the provision of adequate amenities for the area. The euphoria therefore did not last very long. YUVA had to engage in a prolonged process of “advocating” albeit with a different, less antagonistic tone. I shall dwell on this aspect in a subsequent section devoted to challenges faced by YUVA.

Cooperation

According to YUVA’s staff, it was only natural that YUVA got involved in the delivery process. Some even contended that it was pressure from the community that led to the decision to intervene on a sustained basis. The Founding Executive Director’s reputation in government circles was another reason forwarded for why the organization undertook implementation responsibilities. My analysis of YUVA’s history and past practices indicate reasons beyond just a natural or community pressure related compulsion upon YUVA. I contend that it was also pressure from within to engage in and support experiments towards “people-centered and sustainable alternatives” that precipitated YUVA’s decision to accept the role of an implementing agency (YUVA 1998, 4). Phase

497 Source: A paper titled “Resettlement and Rehabilitation: Bhabrekar Nagar” (YUVA n.d.2). Also described as “the state’s government’s unprecedented offer to rehabilitate the residents [of Bhabrekar Nagar]” (YUVA 2000, 20).
II of the City Project was launched in 1996 with the purpose to combine “high decibel tools of advocacy” with creating community-level assets. This was labeled the PO-PI model of intervention (YUVA 2000, 18). YUVA wanted to realize this objective with and through Bhabrekar Nagar residents.

At a more pragmatic level, handing over delivery of infrastructure and housing for New Bhabrekar Nagar to YUVA came at no extra cost to the government. YUVA was to be the implementing agency and could not claim any “consultancy fees or any other fees or charges” from the government.498 Located in a No Development Zone (NDZ) of a highly unattractive locality, government investment on the site was unlikely to increase real estate values in the area. Given the above, it was doubtful that the government would have any reservations over relinquishing implementation of this scheme to an NGO.

Given that YUVA had undertaken no such project in any earlier instance, work at New Bhabrekar Nagar was a new challenge. By its own admission, YUVA was made responsible to execute “an ambitious infrastructure development plan” (YUVA 2002b, 17). Realizing the need for technical inputs and funds, YUVA’s Founding Executive Director wasted no time in inviting a popular consulting engineer to the site. The engineer, widely known for his concept of ‘slum networking’, brought with him the assurance of funds from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).499 His

498 Source: Letter dated 24th March 2000 from the Maharashtra Slum Improvement Board, appointing YUVA as the “executing agency for implementation.”
499 YUVA, MHADA and the Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (an autonomous organization under the Government of India’s Department of Science and Technology which was to route funds from UNDP to YUVA) entered a tripartite agreement appointing YUVA as a sub-contracting agency responsible to “implement the project” (as in the draft agreement between the three parties). YUVA had also begun attempts to mobilize state acceptance over inclusion of Bhabrekar Nagar under two schemes announced by the Central Government’s Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty
responsibility comprised a) physically surveying the site, b) preparing a master plan for the resettlement colony giving appropriate land uses and areas, and c) preparing a large scale plan of typical clusters showing plot dimensions and proposed location of toilets, etc. When completed, he was to hand over the plans to YUVA for execution.

This prospect of being involved as an implementing agency fitted, at least conceptually, rather well within YUVA’s vision to create Peoples Institutions. YUVA was keen “to exhibit a case supporting that sustainable solutions could exist, if planned and executed with community participation” (YUVA n.d.2). Since YUVA championed the idea of reclustering the slum, the process had potential to give YUVA greater room to “innovate” (flexibility) and “maneuver” (do things that government cannot) with project and process related details. It is these “values” that are often cited when describing the sector’s unique qualities and configurations (Smith and Lipsky 1998, 12).

But, as Bernstein (1991, 61) noted, as a nonprofit agency, “the effort to comply is hampered by the contradictions and inefficiencies that characterize contracting.” In the case of New Bhabrekar Nagar, the “hindrances” were more fundamental and were related to aspects that even preceded actual delivery. YUVA had to painstakingly maneuver its way through the government machinery and acquire knowledge of the institutional map that governs getting clearances and concessions. Work as a “subcontractor” to the Government of India (under UNDP funding) and as an “executing and implementing agency” for MHADA (State funding) amounted to more than just delivering results. It

Alleviation (one is a scheme for environmental improvement of urban slums and the other is a scheme for providing housing to slum dwellers).
also meant having to get the land freed of all encumbrances before work could begin -- a responsibility that neither MHADA nor any of the other agencies was willing to shoulder.

The land had to be cleared of new encroachments, of a No Development Zone regulation, and was later also found wanting of concessions from the federal government’s coastal regulation zone rules. All requirements of clearances were at the cost of the convenience of nearly 534 families who began living in their makeshift homes on the site awaiting delivery of all necessary services. Managing community relations in the meantime became critical.

This was a tough task for YUVA for it meant that it had continually to deal with balancing its programmatic interests with its institutional interests. Activities of empowering and conscientizing communities come naturally to YUVA and had acquired the status of a ‘routine.’ YUVA engaged in a host of “social interventions” in New Bhabrekar Nagar. Between 1997 and 2003, YUVA not only organized the community into an elected group of representatives but also set up a balwadi (a preschool center); lobbied to get a separate plot in New Bhabrekar Nagar approved to be run as a consumer cooperative managed by women; initiated Self Help Groups (for savings and credit) among women; started a women-centered livelihood program; mobilized a youth group; initiated a solid waste management program; set up water users groups; and, so on. In the face of extreme anxiety among slum residents over getting permanent housing and infrastructure services for their settlement, many of these interventions met with variable levels of success.

\[500\] Assertions of actual number of total families varied during the course of my data collection.
Assuming a role of a delivery agent for the government required YUVA to handle a new array of relations with members of the community. Delays in actual implementation resulted in many members resorting to investing their own resources to construct homes on their allotted 10 by 15 plots. According to one community member,

I decided that the amount I spend in repairing my home after each monsoon can be usefully invested in putting up a somewhat permanent structure instead. Who knows when our homes will be constructed?

Several members expressed eagerness to invest their own funds to improve their sanitation conditions,\footnote{MHADA-provided latrines (common) were both inadequate and improperly maintained. Most of the residents defecated in the open.} in building new housing,\footnote{Out of a total estimated cost of INR 50,000 per home, INR 10,000 (50\%) was to be met by a Central government housing subsidy. The remainder INR 50,000 was to be shared by the community and YUVA. The community had agreed to contribute INR 10,000 per family towards construction of their homes (INR 3,500 was to be an individual family’s contribution and the remainder INR 6,500 was to be reimbursed by the MCGM and MHADA as their share in project costs). 26 members had paid up INR 3,500 as their contribution and work was complete up to the plinth level when news of CRZ regulation arrived.} and, commence what many refer to as a “more civilized life.” YUVA had to continually inform the community of the many encumbrances that hindered full-scale, legitimate provision of these facilities.\footnote{By late 2002, when pressure mounted, YUVA decided to engage a community contractor to construct a legitimate ‘model home’ in the CRZ affected area. INR 80,000 was spent towards construction of this house. The work invariably created expectations that full-scale work towards provision of cluster housing would begin soon.}

Unfortunately, for YUVA, much of this community’s rancor was shouldered by its community development worker who worked largely with the elected CBO. Smillie and Hailey (2001, 94) describe the struggle in the following words:

Organizations are often caught in a struggle between development objectives and organizational objectives. They may have programming strategies aimed at beneficiaries or participants, but they also have institutional strategies that may relate to donors, government and others in
the external environment. How does the organization balance strategies that may be at odds with one another?

*Cooptation*

The scheme was ridden with a host of land related encumbrances. To begin with, the hurdles seemed surmountable since the Collector gave assurance to potential dwellers that they shall be provided with all necessary infrastructure services at the earliest. Proximity of the allocated site to their original site of residence seemed a boon — an ideal circumstance for displaced communities particularly when resettlement efforts are criticized for the long distance between the original site and the new relocation site. However, for all other reasons including access to basic amenities, transportation, school, health services, etc., the site was a nightmare. The site was allocated by the Revenue and Forest Department to MHADA. MHADA had in its turn expressed its intent to utilize services of YUVA in implementing the scheme. Being the landowning authority, the task of getting clearances to facilitate commencement of infrastructure works, was MHADA’s responsibility. But MHADA and reluctant to assume this responsibility and later, categorically refused.

New Bhabrekar Nagar was in critical need of personnel to devote ample time to badgering officials to obtain land-related clearances. Unfortunately, at precisely this time, YUVA went through a phase of exit of many of its critical, senior staff. A majority of those who exited were familiar faces in government offices and had, over the course of their work in other projects of YUVA, developed a good “understanding of how the State
thinks and works”. Coordination and follow-up work at New Bhabrekar Nagar demanded help from someone with considerable clout in government circles.

It was at this time that YUVA was fortunate to receive the services of a senior bureaucrat who had just retired from the post of Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer of the MHADA, the land owner and part financier of efforts at New Bhabrekar Nagar. YUVA readily accepted him for reasons related to his “honesty” and “good reputation” but more importantly to take position in the boundary between YUVA and the state. As a just retired official he was familiar face in government circles. He sent out many personalized letters to bureaucrats (who are administrative heads of such offices as the MCGM, MHADA and also hold positions of the Collector and Secretaries in the State departments) requesting them to expedite the process of forwarding requests to other government officials/departments. Capitalizing on long-established networks is often used by officials of the Indian Administrative Services to facilitate clearing of papers and getting otherwise difficult interagency issues resolved or at the very least, bring them to the table for discussion. He justified his entry not merely on grounds that his services were needed to help push YUVA’s agenda through government offices but more so on

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504 Conversation with a former financial analyst in YUVA’s HID team who is currently Assistant Manager in HDFC’s Development Finance division. I interviewed him on the 23rd of June 2003. In preface to the 1999-2000 Annual Report of YUVA (YUVA 2000), its Founding Executive Director noted: “The challenge has also been in terms of senior staff leaving the organization to further their pursuits interlinked with development work.”

505 This was referred to in my conversation with YUVA’s Founding Executive Director on the 1st of July 2003 en route from YUVA’s training center at Khargar to my residence in Andheri, Mumbai.

506 At this juncture in its history, more than one project in YUVA could benefit from someone with substantial authority and clout in government circles. Examples include YUVA’s work with acquiring a new stretch land for a YUVA training center in north Mumbai (at Khargar) and work towards resettling and rehabilitating pavement dwellers.
grounds that a) the Founder/Executive Director\textsuperscript{507} just does not have the time to do that kind of work; and, b) work with government offices requires substantial energy.\textsuperscript{508}

He [YUVA’s Executive Director] has the credibility but does not have the time. Getting the land cleared of NDZ [no development zone regulation] took me so much time! A process that started in 1998 and ended in 2001. So many letters, so many meetings, phone calls and running around. Finally, the paperwork was done after three years... lots of patience required. And now there is the CRZ [coastal regulation zone]... But there is one more thing... young, top level people get excited about work with the poor and with NGOs but lower-level engineers are typically unhappy – if project had gone to a private contractor, they could’ve made money. In work with NGOs there is no money...

The table 6.2.1 below summarizes the challenges faced by YUVA in the course of its work in New Bhabrekar Nagar.

\footnote{507 By the year 2001-2002, his title changed from Executive Director to that of a Chief Executive Officer. The change in title was prompted by a change in YUVA’s structure. YUVA now, as mentioned earlier, comprises six independent entities. New Bhabrekar Nagar came under ‘YUVA Urban’ which was to have its own Executive Director. For much of my stay in Mumbai, its Executive Director was away on pregnancy-leave. Her role was taken over by another program coordinator.}

\footnote{508 Interview with Senior Advisor of YUVA on the 28\textsuperscript{th} of November 2002 at YUVA’s Parel office, Mumbai.}
Table 6.2.1: Challenges faced by YUVA in New Bhabrekar Nagar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges Faced</th>
<th>Tactics Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing Community Relations</td>
<td>- Engaging them in numerous development interventions (to build capacity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring timely release of sanctioned funds</td>
<td>- Exerting pressure using a retired government official who joined YUVA as Senior Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Arranging alternate finance (UNDP and other governmental subsidies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Collecting contributions from the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing state lethargy</td>
<td>- Persuading government response using an ex-bureaucrat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying Roles</td>
<td>- Doing most of the running around on its own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaining Professionals</td>
<td>Yet to be dealt with by YUVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing Developmental and Programmatic objectives</td>
<td>Yet to be dealt with by YUVA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have dealt with a majority of the challenges mentioned above in the case narrative as well as in explanation of repertoires used. I shall only briefly revisit some of these and devote most of this section to discussing YUVA’s fundamental challenge of striking a balance between its organizational and developmental objectives. This can be seen as a tension between institutional preservation and change.

The notion of ‘path-dependence’ (March and Olsen 1989; Levi 1990; North 1990; Krasner 1988; March et al. 2000; Pierson 2000) has considerable implication for studying YUVA’s interventions in New Bhabrekar Nagar. Past choices are known to affect subsequent events either by increasing the cost of path change or by precluding it altogether (Krasner 1984, 240). The normative order (March and Olsen 1989, 107) of NGO-GO conflict that prevailed at the time of YUVA’s formation, endures to this day.
Subsequent employees have infused the order with values that hinder change. The longer a rule subsists, the more embedded it becomes in the values of its actors (March et al 2000, 72-73). This is particularly evident in New Bhabrekar Nagar where YUVA’s assigned task of implementing housing and infrastructure works soon became secondary to work towards empowering and organizing different sections of the community. A former employee of YUVA, project coordinator for New Bhabrekar Nagar (June 2002-August 2003), had this to say:

> When I joined YUVA in June 2002, I understood its core competencies to lie in defending its rights to housing and empowering communities. They still are its core competencies. However, somewhere in its efforts to elicit participation, housing as a product was lost…. As a project coordinator [of New Bhabrekar Nagar] and urban planner I am struggling with understanding how best to balance these competencies in a single team – can you work to deliver a product with the government and also effectively work with the community?

It is possible to argue that YUVA’s organizing and mobilizing activities are critical to maintaining consensus towards the proposed reclustering process and therefore are a necessary means to realizing the end of providing an end-product namely, fully-constructed homes and related infrastructure services. However, the picture that emerges from conversations with residents portrays a dire need to realize their basic needs of housing as a product. In a casual conversation about progress with work at New Bhabrekar Nagar, one of YUVA’s employees associated with the organization for nearly 16 years said:

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509 Conversation on the 14th of January 2003 over dinner in Andheri, Mumbai. Verified over personal communication with the participant via email on the 13th of December 2004.

510 Conversation on the 6th of June 2003 at YUVA’s Community Resource Centre in Jogeshwari (East). Sentiments such as these were never expressed in formal conversations but surfaced in informal chats with me over chai or over lunches and dinners with various members of YUVA.
If MHADA [Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority] or the BMC [the Bombay Municipal Corporation, also called the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, MCGM] does not clear papers, YUVA as an organization must threaten the officer with a *dharna* [a protest] outside their office. Why is this not taking place? Yes, they [activists and the technical/professional staff] can go together but what matters is who has control/power in decision making. This is now being questioned within YUVA. … Value is that which keeps us in place. To oppose the system, fight the system. This is a value we hold dear. We will not and should not succumb to being a pawn of the government.

These questions and tensions would have likely not been raised had there been no delays in service delivery. No one I interacted with questioned YUVA’s role in the project but doubts were raised about ever seeing the project through to the actual construction of homes. The community was growing restless and as one YUVA employee put it,

> We [YUVA] were spreading [ourselves] too thin with our interventions and even community had started losing interest in core intervention [provision of housing] due to sheer number of events they were asked to participate in.

At first glance, most of the struggles seem to reside between different factions within the community and between the community and YUVA. However, a closer look revealed a somewhat different set of tensions to reside within YUVA itself. The struggles over balancing strategies -- open defiance and one of compliance -- began to emerge within YUVA’s own members. Among members in YUVA, most of whom included grassroots workers, advocacy tended to be rather tightly defined to mean “demanding for a right” through collective means. During its formative years, YUVA frequently framed its intervention in housing with a similar lens. The relatively new professional cadre
(including its advisor, a retired government official), on the other hand, wanted to play things by the letter.

In summary, New Bhabrekar Nagar’s future stands on uncertain grounds. High attrition rates among professional cadres in YUVA, who coordinate various aspects related to delivery, does not promise smooth progress. Also, in getting critical government clearances and concessions, YUVA relies almost exclusively upon the negotiating and networking skills of a single member. The paucity in personnel, the likely departure of the retired bureaucrat and the Founding Executive Director, and tensions between the ‘professional’ and the ‘activist’ cadre of the NGO point towards a host of internal organizational struggles and external constraints.

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511 It is also conceivable that high rates of staff turnover make it difficult for YUVA to retain knowledge. In an effort to store knowledge in repositories other than individuals, YUVA maintains detailed and standardized minutes of meetings particularly those with government officials and has been fortunate in retaining many of its senior community development staff. The latest round of restructuring into independent entities—YUVA Urban, YUVA Rural, YUVA Consulting, YUVA Central office and YUVA Bank—it is hoped, will “simplify and reduce the energy expended on organizational maintenance [including retaining professionals], with increased strategic focus. . .” (Pimple 2002, 3).
6.4 SPARC and the Kanjur Marg Experiment, 1997-2003

SPARC was included in the pool of NGOs studied in this dissertation because, unlike YUVA and NHSS, SPARC was always involved in “cooperative” interactions with the state. Members of SPARC and its partner organizations, Mahila Milan and the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF), pride themselves over having shaped and actively pursued the implementation of the government’s slum rehabilitation scheme.

Despite its struggles with the redevelopment scheme with Markandeya Society in Dharavi, by 1999, SPARC became involved with nearly seven projects\(^{512}\) across different parts of the city of Mumbai to house about 1,500 slum and pavement dwellers. Since about 2000, efforts were also underway to shift all housing related transactions of SPARC and NSDF to a new not-for-profit company. The company, called Nirman, is expected to take over the specialist role of construction development and marketing. SPARC had additionally built a diverse financial base (McLeod 2000) and boasted its presence in nearly 40 towns and cities in five States of India.

The Kanjur Marg experiment, described below, involved a contractual relationship between SPARC and the government of Maharashtra in one of the “biggest urban

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\(^{512}\) By January 1999, SPARC was involved with nearly eight cooperative housing societies of slum/pavement dwellers across different parts of Mumbai (SPARC 1998, 21). Some of these have been combined into one scheme because of their physical proximity to one another and hence sum up to six projects. All of the following listed here are at different levels of completion and do not include those that in the process of being resettled and rehabilitated by SPARC (and NSDF and Mahila Milan) as part of MUTP (II) and the Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Project (MUIP). The names of the cooperative housing societies (CHS): Milan Nagar CHS, Jan Kalyan CHS, Adarsh Nagar CHS, Rajiv-Indira CHS, Suryodaya CHS, Bharat Janata CHS, Ganga CHS, Sai Kripa CHS. These along with Markandeya constitute 1,500 tenements in about 20 buildings.
transportation projects undertaken with World Bank assistance”. The experiment, like all other SPARC-directed projects, contains its usual mix of “critical elements” of “building capacity at community level, investing in pilot demonstration projects, and then using these demonstrations to work in partnership with the state, usually at city-level, to scale up solutions” (McLeod 2000, 5). But more so than other housing projects, the experiment and developments thereafter, challenged standard norms for conduct of slum resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R). These events also display SPARC’s dogged determination to be recognized by the World Bank and the State government as the only NGO that had “the requisite experience” to select eligible slum dwellers as well as to plan and implement R&R for nearly 15,000 railway slum dwellers (Burra and Patel 2001).

The second Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP II) aims to ease traffic and transportation problems in Mumbai by improving suburban railway system, local bus transport, roads, bridges, pedestrian subways and traffic management activities. The project was expected to displace involuntarily 14,479 households living in insecure and unsafe shelters within inches of Mumbai’s railway tracks. These slums were designated ‘Railway slums’ because, unlike slums on land belonging to municipal and State

513 Telephone interview with Senior Social Development Specialist of the World Bank-India staff on the 11th of July 2003. It was with reference to the large number of those affected by the project (called project affected persons) that he used the phrase “biggest urban transportation project with World Bank assistance.”

514 The MUTP II was preceded by the First Bombay Urban Transport Project (BUTP I). This project (1977-1984) was completed with loan assistance from the World Bank and aimed to improve the city’s bus transport and consisted of procuring buses, construction of flyovers, installation of traffic signals, etc.
government authorities, they are situated on land belonging to the federally owned Indian Railways.\textsuperscript{515}

At the time the World Bank began discussions on MUTP II, in the early 1990s,\textsuperscript{516} the Bank was waging its “noisiest battle” with India’s Narmada Valley dam projects (Mallaby 2004, 58). Critics elsewhere in the developing world too began to sound loud horns of protest. Coming under unrelenting pressure to improve its resettlement operations and outcomes, the Bank undertook substantive policy review and changes, in 1994, by integrating NGO agendas - of resettlement, information disclosure, environmental impact assessments and poverty assessments (Nelson 1995). As a result, R&R was to be considered right from the outset of project identification and projects were to involve people’s participation in R&R preparation, planning and implementation (World Bank 1994).

Therefore in 1993-94 when talks about MUTP II began, the World Bank was resolute to address the R&R needs of nearly 15,000 households who stood to be displaced involuntarily.\textsuperscript{517} The project was the first time that the Bank was faced with such a large R&R operation in an urban setting.\textsuperscript{518} The need for expediting R&R of slums increased

\textsuperscript{515} That these slums were on land belonging to the Railways was critical to the conduct of MUTP II. Being under the jurisdiction of a Central government authority, slums on land belonging to the Indian Railways are not entitled to slum improvement and upgradation (and other) schemes applicable to State and municipal land slums. Any provision of amenities requires approval from the Railways.

\textsuperscript{516} Some officials I spoke with in government stated that negotiations concerning MUTP II were initiated as far back as 1983 but constantly ran into roadblocks for a host of different reasons.

\textsuperscript{517} MUTP II received a category A classification implying that the project’s rail (and road) components entailed “significant adverse environmental impacts that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented” (World Bank 2004). Furthermore, World Bank’s safeguard policy (Operational Policy 4.12 on involuntary resettlement) was also brought into gear because MUTP II entailed involuntary displacement i.e. displacement without the informed consent or the ability of affected persons to exercise choice.

\textsuperscript{518} Telephone interview with Senior Social Development Specialist of World Bank, India staff based in New Delhi on the 11\textsuperscript{th} of July 2003. It was with reference to the large number of those affected by the
in urgency when, in the early 1990s, Mumbai saw a spurt in incidents of violence involving burning of rail stations and destruction of rail property. The vandalism was a reaction to many train delays and cancellations. Slums located in dangerously close proximity to railway tracks were identified as cause for drastically reduced train speeds and thus an increase in commuter time. The Railways thus wanted the Bank loan sanctioned and engineering works to begin. They were reluctant to assume responsibility for R&R, fearing that this would set a precedent for all railway slum dwellers to claim their right to permanent housing.

The Urban Development Department, the State agency leading negotiations on MUTP approached the federal Railways in order to begin working together (Patel and Sharma 1997). The State invited SPARC to coordinate the task of a small yet critical precedent. SPARC/NSDF successfully persuaded 160 families to shift more than 30 feet away from the tracks, following which a 920 feet long wall was constructed at SPARC’s expense.

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519 See Masselos (2003, 39) for details about a series of “agitations and demonstrations which underscore the importance of the rail system in the extended space of city living.”

520 Owing to the proximity of slums to the railway tracks, the Commissioner of Rail Safety required that the trains travel at the rate of 10-15 kilometers per hour as opposed to stipulated speeds of 40 to 60 kilometers per hour.

521 The invitation was facilitated by SPARC’s work with enumerating nearly 18,000 households living within 80 feet of the railway tracks. This enumeration was carried out in 1988 in cooperation with the Railways and the state government. After this enumeration, SPARC negotiated for room to implement its first housing project in Mumbai for a group of 115 railway slum dwellers who to be relocated to make room for a additional railway tracks. This housing intervention is called the “Jan Kalyan Experiment” in SPARC mentioned in Chapter 5.
The feat was lauded by the Secretary, Urban Development Department and also received attention from the World Bank which was visiting Mumbai at the time (SPARC 2003). Bank directives however required an exhaustive R&R plan to be in place before funds could be sanctioned and any engineering works could commence. The Bank advised the State government to set up a task force comprised of an assortment of State government officials, NGOs, representatives from the Railways, legal advisors, architects and representatives from private sector institutions. The task force was to prepare a framework for an R&R policy and also assist the State in determining institutional arrangements and implementation strategies necessary for R&R. Not surprisingly, SPARC was one among the three city NGOs that participated in the task force. In fact, SPARC was the only NGO that was represented in two vital policy making committees at nearly the same time -- the R&R committee and the special committee appointed to frame the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme.

Simultaneously, the State government invited the NGOs to conduct a baseline survey of those likely to be affected by the proposed road and rail projects. Recognizing that “very few NGOs actively engaged in . . . shelter related activities” and also adding that “SPARC is outstanding amongst them,” the State government and the Indian Railways

522 Though, never stated in SPARC documents, the experience was only “somewhat successful” (Source: Minutes of a meeting held on the 27th of February 1997 between SPARC, officials of the Railways, the CEO of SRA and other state officials). In this meeting it was acknowledged that negligent inter-agency communication and coordination caused problems with relocation leading to the police questioning the legality of the exercise.

523 Also see video film titled “Beyond the Track” (1995).

524 The R&R policy was finally accepted vide a government resolution on 12th of March 1997 and was subsequently revised and updated to adhere to World Bank’s operational directives in 2001.

525 “Baseline surveys”, also called Baseline Socio Economic Surveys (BSES), are an important precursor to framing of entitlement policies, costs and budgets, institutional arrangements for implementation, and such other aspects of a project (World Bank 2004). Data collected through BSES in MUTP II covered demographic, social, economic data, housing, and environmental data.
contracted SPARC in June 1995 to conduct the survey (MMRDA 2002). Vesting responsibility of selecting project beneficiaries, a potentially sensitive and controversial act,\(^{526}\) upon a solitary NGO such as SPARC was a rarity. For SPARC, its selection was the natural and inevitable consequence of NSDF’s long-term presence among railway slum dwellers who had formed their own federation called the Railway Slum Dwellers Federation (SPARC 2003).\(^{527}\) SPARC however struggled through preparation of the baseline surveys. The MMRDA, upon feedback from the World Bank, returned the survey data on several occasions demanding revisions and addition. The survey data, said SPARC, was “often dismissed as being unprofessional” and it was often accused of being “incapable of managing the survey” (Patel and Sharma 1997). After adjusting its survey to comply with World Bank standards, the results of the survey were finally accepted in 1998.\(^{528}\)

The years 1997-1999 saw an interesting turn of events. World Bank sent a new Task Team leader (for MUTP II) to Mumbai. She began working on the idea that R&R be managed and operated by an independent, private company rather than by the government.\(^{529}\) Government agencies, according to her, were “not the right instruments to do resettlement”.\(^{530}\) Her suggestions created uproar among participating organizations,

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\(^{526}\) Interview with a former Secretary of the Housing Department of the Government of Maharashtra and currently advisor for SPARC. Interview held in July 2003 in Churchgate, Mumbai.

\(^{527}\) The Railway Slum Dwellers Federation (RSDF) is a constituent member of the NSDF and was formed when NSDF began work with railway settlements in 1988-1989 (with Jan Kalyan CHS). The NSDF has grouped households based on the land upon which they are located. For example, slum dwellers living on land owned by the Airport Authority of India are convened under the Airports Slum Dwellers Federation.

\(^{528}\) See video titled “Organizing… Urban Poor” (SPARC and Day 1996).

\(^{529}\) This private sector company was to be called the Urban Rehabilitation Corporation of Maharashtra (URCOM). Source: The Indian Express (May 27, 1998).

\(^{530}\) Interview with the Principal Chief, Town and Country Planning Division of MMRDA on the 27th of May 2003.
particularly SPARC and the MMRDA. As the World Bank and the R&R task force struggled to reach common ground over a delivery mechanism, SPARC, the Urban Development Department, and the Railways, began working together. Fear of jeopardizing the possibility of ever obtaining World Bank funds for MUTP II brought the reluctant twosome—Indian Railways and the State government—together. SPARC was a necessary instrument in realizing their mutual goals of securing funds for the transportation project.

In early 1996, the Railways urgently needed a piece of land cleared to lay two new rail tracks. A group of slum dwellers were the “last obstacle to the six-line expansion of the Kurla-Thane railway line.” A large plot of land in an area called Kanjur Marg (in Mumbai’s northeast suburbs) was identified by the President of NSDF as a likely site to relocate slum dwellers temporarily. In the baseline survey that SPARC was compiling, 1,440 slum families were found to fall within 30 feet of the railway tracks. A decision to use the yet to be approved R&R policy was taken so that retroactive

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531 The negotiations between the World Bank and the State government came to a standstill between 1997 and 1999. World Bank’s proposal to set up a private sector company to conduct R&R operations caused MMRDA, SPARC and some others to lead an “informal campaign” and lobby with top World Bank officials to get her removed as Task Manager. She was transferred and replaced by another official “sympathetic” to the cause of NGO-GO involvement in R&R operations. The negotiations between the World Bank and the State government came to a standstill between 1997 and 1999. SPARC, however, informed me that the delays in negotiations were caused by difficulties in procuring railway carriages and not due to the proposal to set up a private sector company (Personal communication via e-mail from SPARC on Saturday, July 2nd 2005).

532 Source: The Indian Express July 6, 1998. According to the same newspaper report, there were plans to devote approximately INR 10,000 million to add two more lines to the existing four (Kurla-Thane) lines. The project was slated to be completed in 2001.

533 Please see Appendix AC for the location of this site.

534 He was a member of the land sub-committee of the R&R task force. At this point in time, the R&R task force headed by a former Chief Secretary (the highest State level bureaucrat) was still debating a suitable policy framework.

535 The R&R framework for MUTP II, prepared by the task force, was approved by the Government of Maharashtra in March 1997.
financing could be arranged as and when MUTP-II was cleared. There was, according to SPARC (Burra 1999, 4), also a sense of apprehension amongst some officials that if R&R was not taken care of, “the MUTP-II sanction itself might be jeopardized”:

The success of this resettlement venture [in Kanjur Marg] will determine the outcome of a CR [Central Railway] proposal to relocate all the 25,000 hutments on its rail lines to railway land at Thakurl.\(^\text{536}\)

For all concerned, Kanjur Marg was a decisive showcase in a much larger case in R&R. SPARC suggested that if the State gave land (free of cost) and the Indian Railways arranged to pay for off-site infrastructure (water, electricity, and sewerage) and bear the cost of shifting people, SPARC would manage the relocation of slum dwellers in phases and also undertake construction of transit homes for slum dwellers.\(^\text{537}\) SPARC’s eager confidence, combined with the need to convince the World Bank of the State’s genuine interest in R&R and to avoid the long drawn out procedures of land acquisition, the CEO of the SRA took the proposal of using land at Kanjur Marg to the Chief Minister of the State who accepted the proposition.\(^\text{538}\) Plans were made to utilize the same plot of land to permanently resettle (under the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme) nearly 900 families who had been grouped by SPARC and NSDF into 27 cooperative housing societies.

\(^{536}\) Source: The Indian Express (July 6 1998). At this time, plans were made to resettle all railway squatters (placed at 25,000) on land belonging to the Railways in an area called Thakurl located in the northern municipality of Kalyan in the Greater Mumbai region. This offer was later turned down after slum dwellers refused to shift to this distant site.

\(^{537}\) The Secretary, Urban Development Department (the same ‘concerned bureaucrat’) took charge as CEO SRA in April 1996. In a meeting with the Chief Minister on 27\(^{\text{th}}\) April 1996, he convinced the Chief Minister (the Chairperson of SRA) to approve use of land for temporary relocation of slum dwellers.

\(^{538}\) The Chief Minister of the State is also the Chairperson of the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA).
A sum of INR 13,800,000 million\textsuperscript{539} was offered by the Indian Railways for provision of off-site infrastructure. SPARC utilized its own funds to the tune of INR 1,500,000\textsuperscript{540} and also directly approached the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, a government housing finance agency, for a loan of INR 14 million for construction of 700\textsuperscript{541} transit homes. The construction proceeded smoothly\textsuperscript{542} and the nearly 900 families were relocated. It was an impressive feat. The land beside the tracks that was encroached upon was returned to the Railways and work of laying new tracks began.

The Bank however found the size of the 120 square feet size transit homes too small and expressed its reluctance towards the two-stage resettlement option. Having invested a substantial proportion of their resources (with the hope of getting it reimbursed), both SPARC and the MMRDA persuasively sold the proposal of a “two stage resettlement” strategy on grounds that “had the project waited for buildings to be completed, there would have been a delay of 2 or 3 years and project costs would have escalated” (Burra and Patel 2001).

A second opportunity to demonstrate the utility of a two-stage resettlement process opened up in February-March 2000 when the Railways, acting on orders from the High Court, began demolishing what SPARC asserted were homes and structures it counted to

\textsuperscript{539} This money was routed to SPARC through the Slum Rehabilitation Authority.
\textsuperscript{540} The Kanjur Marg project relied heavily on bridge finance from two international donors: a) Bilance, a Dutch donor which had provided SPARC with a pre-sale commitment for Rajiv-Indira Suryodaya (explained in Chapter 5) and, b) A capacity building grant from Homeless International co-financed by DFID (Department for International Development). Both these helped SPARC finance administration and overhead costs associated with Kanjur Marg.
\textsuperscript{541} Currently, there are 814 families residing in the transit tenements of Kanjur Marg.
\textsuperscript{542} Interview with the construction contractor (Falak Constructions) on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of June 2003 at his office in Andheri, Mumbai. Falak Constructions is the same contractor hired by SPARC for Rajiv-Indira CHS at Dharavi (explained in Chapter 5).
be eligible for R&R. SPARC reacted by blocking trains, filing affidavits in the Court, intensively lobbying to get the Railways to halt the demolitions and, more interestingly, offering speedily to construct transit homes for nearly 2,000 homes evicted in the demolitions. The proposal to construct transit homes was endorsed by the Bank in a board level decision in Washington, D.C. Between April 2000 and June 2002, 6,000 families were resettled temporarily in transit camps and by October 2000, the Bank agreed to award SPARC with a sole source contract for US $ 939,000 to undertake all aspects of R&R for all project affected households on railway land.

**Discussion**

In 1996, even as the R&R policy for MUTP II was under discussion and SPARC was enumerating households, the President of the NSDF (SPARC’s CBO partner) said with characteristic poise and ambition:

> Our role in MUTP II is only not to do a survey and get out; not to give a number [to a project affected household] and get out; not to give a statistic [to the State and World Bank] and get out. We will go through till people are rehabilitated and the project is get [sic] completed.

The determination was grounded in SPARC’s near exclusive control over a vast population of potential evictees living on land belonging to the Railways. SPARC deployed the same set of tools that it always has, namely, mobilizing slum (and

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543 SPARC had to fight a legal battle with another NGO that filed a Public Interest Litigation in the Bombay High Court demanding removal of Railway slum dwellers. In response to subsequent demolitions, SPARC launched a mass demonstration to block trains and lobbied hard to halt the operation. Later on, SPARC offered to do all the R&R work for Railway slum dwellers.

544 The World Bank was persuaded to waive its rule not to provide more than $30,000 in contract to an NGO.

545 From video titled “Organizing…Urban Poor” (SPARC and Day 1996).
pavement) households by enumerating them, finding initial room through the medium of a (pilot) project and, navigating slowly and deliberately for ever greater room for participation in delivery.

The following table (Table 6.3) summarizes some of the key strategies and tactics deployed by SPARC in the course of its work with resettling and rehabilitating railway squatters in Kanjur Marg. The table also outlines key features against each strategy and accompanying tactics. This is followed by an analysis of each strategy. Included in the analysis, is reference to some of the challenges faced by SPARC and the tactics used to overcome each.
**Table 6.3: SPARC’s Repertoire of Tactics in the Kanjur Marg Experiment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Strategy (MEANS)</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Strategic Aim (END)</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cooperation/ Complementarity (Primary Strategy) | - Gathering data  
- Mobilizing alternate finance  
- Legal intervention on behalf of governmental/its own interests in the scheme  
- Endorsing governmental agendas by participation in high level policy making committees  
- Scouting for land  
- Undertaking actual construction | - Scaling up its housing portfolio  
- Securing legal entitlements for slum dwellers | - Finds itself repeatedly having to prove and defend the merit of its routines (e.g. enumeration) |
| Co-optation (Sub-strategy) | - Capitalizing on a favorable constellation of bureaucrats  
- Strong and stable ties with its partner (NSDF/RSDF) | - Demonstrate worthiness and capacity to the State and the World Bank | - The constellation is variable and shifting. Excessive reliance on the constellation suffers from the likelihood of a change in bureaucratic power and political climate |
| Confrontation (Sub-strategy) | - Litigation  
- Anti-demolition demonstrations  
- Challenging World Bank procurement policies | - Exerting mass pressure to halt demolitions  
- Establishing itself as the “sole” capable provider of all R&R related services | - Strategy of legal intervention successfully averts further demolition and expedites delivery  
- Anti-demolition demonstrations do not yield results  
- SPARC defends the use of the strategy by stating that it did not “scream” or “shout” but offered the State with a face-saving solution (see case analysis)  
- After intensive lobbying SPARC convinces the World Bank to make concessions in its policies |
SPARC refers to its strategy of working with the state as one of “critical engagement” (Burra 1999, 11) SPARC’s advisor, himself a former bureaucrat who left the Indian Administrative Services to join SPARC on voluntary deputation, explains:

I call it critical engagement because we are neither in bed with the state nor are we very critical of the state or the Bank. We evaluate situations on their merit and engage critically. The key to working with the State is to appreciate the Indian governance system. You have to unbundle the state - to do that, you must work with the bureaucracy and not with politicians. . . . You can get anything done if you have bureaucracy on your side.

The strategy, though “street-smart”, consumes a substantial proportion of SPARC’s resources. Officers in the Indian Administrative Services head various departments such as the Housing and Urban Development Departments and are typically circulated to other departments in the State. To help cope with the uncertainty inherent in such a tactic, SPARC has, over the years of its existence, attracted the support of several former bureaucrats and State officials who play a vital boundary spanning and bridging role for SPARC. Three such State officials are currently regularly and intensively engaged with SPARC. These include a former Deputy Director of Town Planning who retired from the Slum Rehabilitation Authority, a former Secretary of the State’s Housing Department, and another bureaucrat who serves in the full-time capacity of an advisor to SPARC. As with YUVA, these officials have offered their time to help push SPARC’s agendas through government offices, clarify governmental procedures and hierarchies, and also

546 Interview with the advisor of SPARC on the 27th of June 2003 at SPARC’s office in Khetwadi, Mumbai.
track the movement of papers and officials from one government department to the other.\textsuperscript{547}

While SPARC may have good relations with State and city level officials, it had to deal with the technocratic and sometimes dogmatic stand of the Indian Railways, in its R&R work. Even though the crisis caused by intergovernmental disputes was overcome, the task of having to deal with various branches and levels of the State is likely to require repeat and continual negotiations.

\textit{Cooptation}

In anticipation of and in response to institutional pressures, an organization may seek to co-opt the source of the pressure (Burt 1983; Pennings 1981). SPARC, early in its life cycle, began weaving an intricate web of relationships with a number of different stakeholders and, in doing so, brought a range of participants -- former State bureaucrats, members of the community, and donor agencies -- within its decision making structures. By doing so, as McLeod (2000) points out, SPARC has managed and mitigated its risks of involvement in housing and infrastructure activities. As with other housing projects reviewed earlier, SPARC utilized the depth and heterogeneity of its social ties ("whom it knows") to secure a prime contract. Some of the key ties that made Kanjur Marg possible were: SPARC/NSDF’s unique presence among railway squatters; funds from national funding agencies; substantial bridging funds from its international funding partners; and, the steadfast support of State bureaucrats.

\textsuperscript{547} SPARC’s advisor insisted that the strategy of developing personalized and good working relations prevailed even before he joined SPARC in 1993.
Confrontation

After a much-touted victory over relocating nearly 900 families to a transit site at Kanjur Marg, several other railway slum households were witness to an unanticipated act of demolition led by the Indian Railways. The incident came as a shock to SPARC. In a flurry of writing immediately following the demolitions, SPARC’s Director wrote (Patel 2000):

The Bank and the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) agreed in February that SPARC would be the sole agency to implement the R&R [resettlement and rehabilitation] component in Mumbai. It is expected that a Bank mission will visit [in] March and finalize matters so that from such date, finance will become retroactively available [for Kanjur Marg and other proposed relocation sites]. In spite of all these positive developments, the Indian Railways - controlled by the Central Government - began a major demolition exercise.

The demolition drive was endorsed by the High Court which had nearly accepted a petition filed by a consumer action group seeking an order from the Court to authorize demolition of “menacingly close slums on either side of the railway track” (Citizens for a Just Society vs. Union of India, Ministry of Railways and others, Petition No. 1791 of 1998, 24). In immediate response to the demolitions, NSDF decided to take the matter to the streets (the tracks). The task of voicing direct and open discontent using mass demonstrations is a rarity for SPARC (and its partners). SPARC’s community based partner, the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) led the demonstration by blocking Mumbai’s busy railway tracks. NSDF’s founder President had been a firebrand activist in his youth who had abandoned use of confrontational tactics believing that he wanted to persuade the government that “poor people can be competent and responsible collaborators” (Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation 2000). The circumstance of unanticipated demolitions caused him to recall an old tactic. The agitation to block the
trains did not, however, yield the expected results of halting the pulling down of nearly 2,000 homes.

SPARC then relied, as it had in previous instances, on its remarkably strong ties with high level State officials who swiftly and effectively intervened to put a stop to the demolitions. Not surprisingly, SPARC used the outcome as a means to decry the use of open confrontation and to turn the crisis into an opportunity to persuade the World Bank to accept its “two stage resettlement strategy” (i.e. relocation to a transit camp and then permanent resettlement in high rise apartments).^548

The demolition exposed that the State Government had breached its partnership commitment. But instead of screaming and shouting and accusing them of reneging on their commitment, the Railway Federation actually provided them with a face-saving a solution: “Buy these blocks of empty housing board flats and allot them to people, as compensation for their houses which you have destroyed, with ownership by their cooperative societies. For those who cannot be accommodated there, give us land and we will build housing for them, which you will pay for”. The state quickly agreed.

Satisfied with the State’s ability to live up to its time table, the Bombay High Court dismissed the petition. It is to be noted, however, that the real fear of jeopardizing the chance of securing World Bank funds was the one red flag that sprung the State into taking remedial measures. Nevertheless, SPARC swiftly convened a climate of grave concern and urgency. It has learnt well that wedding the choice of its projects to the needs of the State (and in this case, that of a mammoth multinational bank) is essential to ensuring that its opinions are heard and acted upon. SPARC describes this as using the core principle of “‘win-win solutions’”, mutual understanding and mutual gain” (Patel 2001, 12).

^548 Patel (2001, 12)
6.5 CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS

Neither the public nor private sectors on their own are able to address, let alone resolve, the problems of housing increasing urban populations. This recognition is the first step in paving the way for a wide range of innovative approaches by which roles and relationships of the two sectors, together with third sector groups, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), are being radically transformed.

- Payne (1999, 3)

I begin this chapter with a brief overview of the housing policy context shaping the evolution of NGO-GO housing strategies. The discussion then moves to a detailed analysis of the chapter’s two key theoretical and empirical contributions, namely, a discussion on the evolutionary nature of NGO development strategies and the concept of institutional isomorphism as applied to the three participating NGOs. An implicit objective of the discussion is to highlight the many new challenges that NGOs faced (and overcame) as they implemented a strategic shift in their relations with the state. The attempt therefore is to address the second research question on the factors that help explain the emergence and sustenance in NGO-GO housing partnerships. I draw attention to these factors at the end of this discussion.

The late 1980s witnessed a significant change in the direction of the housing policy embraced by the United Nations, the World Bank and other international funding agencies. The underlying impetus for this change was the hitherto exclusive focus on the public sector as the provider of housing and government’s failure in fulfilling this objective. Policy discussion thus moved away from promoting government as the provider of housing and instead redirected attention to government as an “enabler” of
housing by supporting and facilitating the provision of housing through the market sector
(World Bank 1993, 1). “The recommendation,” according to Mukhija (2003, 8), “paralleled the counsel bilateral and multilateral donors, western governments and NGOs were dispensing in other fields of development.” The official adoption of the enabling housing paradigm in India, in 1994, “proposed that activities of public agencies would be reoriented to enable and facilitate the shelter activities of the community at large and the legitimate private sector actors in particular” (Mukhija 2003, 24). In other words, the management and implementation of housing projects was opened up to slum dwellers, to NGOs and to private for-profit players.

It is therefore commonplace to attribute changes in the character of NGO housing approaches from “radical and political” action towards a “service delivery system,” as being the result of international, national, and State policy thrusts (Bhide 1998, 340-356; Payne 1999, 3; Sanyal and Mukhija 2001; Mukhija 2003).549 In a sector such as housing, which is inextricably linked with policy issues, the orientation of the state towards the housing concerns of the poor has undeniably played a key role in defining the overall character of the three participating NGOs. I have, however, argued in chapters 4, 5, and 6, that NGO-GO interactions are not only the outcome of such macro-level determinants but are also shaped by internal sense-making processes in the NGOs that affect their choice of strategies and tactics used in relation with the state. I briefly

549 It is important to note that even though the state housing policy focus during these years was ‘slum redevelopment,’ former state policies such as slum improvement and slum clearance did not cease to operate. Even incidents of state-led acts of forced evictions did not come to an end. This is demonstrated in my description of YUVA’s work in Bhabrekar Nagar as well as in SGNP (NHSS). Both the slums experienced forced evictions in the mid-1990s.
summarize how NGOs made sense of the housing policy context, before returning to the chapter’s key arguments.

The period covered in this chapter (1997-2003) is characterized as one of implementing and stabilizing strategic institutional change in NGO interactions with the state. NGO leaders appear to make “sense” of evolution in NGO-GO strategies by insisting that closer engagement with the state (and market players) was necessitated by the failure of the state to fulfill its delivery responsibilities and was therefore a “natural” NGO-response to the urgent housing needs of their clients (NHSS and YUVA). Various NGO leaders responded to my queries asserting: that “we took up the position that we have to move beyond [the street advocacy approach],”\(^{550}\) that “it is not a position by choice . . . tell me what you would have done as an [housing rights] activist?”\(^{551}\) or that “the communities wanted us to stay with them . . . we were responding to their demands.”\(^{552}\)

Such urgencies had emerged earlier in their lifetimes when the response was not one of directly assuming delivery-related responsibilities but of pressing the state to manage housing solutions or asserting that communities could self-construct. Evolution in leadership styles and vision, particularly their conceptualization of the range of activities that their organization could and should undertake appear to be a critical NGO factor shaping the choice of and implementation of cooperative NGO-GO strategies. This strategy is shaped both by the prevailing housing policy context as well as by the NGOs

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550 Telephone interview with the President of NHSS on the 17th of August 2003.
551 Personal communication via email with the member-journalist of NHSS on Thursday, 12th of May, 2005.
552 Interview with the Founding Executive Director of YUVA on the 1st of July 2003 at YUVA’s Training Center in Khargar, Mumbai.
who actively shaped the context to reflect this vision (for instance, SPARC and NHSS). To achieve scale and maintain or create legitimacy as housing providers, the NGOs and particularly their leaders have willingly sought and managed closer cooperative interactions with the state housing apparatus. Based on Najam’s (2000) four Cs typology, NGO-GO relations during this phase are understood to have evolved from one dominated by confrontation to a primary and pervasive interaction style of cooperation.

This evolution raises several interesting questions such as: How does a predominantly confrontational NGO, such as NHSS or YUVA, develop its core practices to work in cooperation with the state? Does such an evolution in routines, pose any internal struggles? Could such an evolution in housing strategy—from state confrontation to cooperation—imply erosion in an NGO’s ability to advocate for change in housing policy? Answers to these questions are organized under two broad themes literature: a) NGO development continuum; and, b) Institutional isomorphism. I discuss these in detail below.

**NGO Development Continuum**

This chapter puts forth two arguments. The first argument extends Korten’s (1987, 145-159; 1990, 113-132) thesis to apply to the arena of housing and, in doing so, critiques it in two respects. The first of these, speaks to the popular notion that most NGOs start

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553 In the literature review (Chapter 2) I point out that the dissertation’s findings support Korten’s thesis on two important counts: a) Like Korten (1987;1990), I found that the housing-specific activities of the participating NGOs to be analogous to the life-cycle of a human family where new generations begin to live alongside older ones (rather than replace older ones as suggested in the usage of the term ‘generation’
out as “charitable relief organizations, to deliver welfare services to the poor” and progressively evolve into engagement in broader, systemic change efforts (Korten 1987, 147). This evolution, it is believed, is related to a more complete and mature NGO understanding of their policy arena. Korten (1987, 147) described it as the three generational “programming strategy” in the NGO community and wrote:

Among those NGOs that work in development, it is possible to identify three distinctive orientations in programming strategy: (a) relief and welfare; (b) local self-reliance; and (c) sustainable systems development. . . . [T]here is an underlying direction of movement that makes it appropriate to label these orientations as first, second, and third generation.

In contrast, NGOs that participated in this research were found to evolve in the opposite direction, from broader systemic change efforts to engagement in service delivery in cooperation with the state apparatus. This evolution was precipitated by unavoidable internal and external pressures—from NGO client communities in slum and squatter settlements and from NGO management and staff—to invest in the new policy environment which favored NGO participation in a service delivery role with the state and the market. Therefore in efforts to retain legitimacy and relevance in an environment increasingly oriented to delivery, NGOs embedded in rights based policy advocacy (and system challenging work), have gradually steered towards also assuming responsibility in delivery.

In the computer field); b) Similar to Korten, I also found NGO interventions to grow in complexity and sophistication over time. NGOs were found to evolve from less to more complex levels of interactions not just with the state, but with a host of other actors in the housing field.

More recent works that make similar assumptions include the works of Brown et al (2002, 814-838); Goodhand (2002, 841); and, Hackenberg and Hackenberg (2004, 385-399).

Korten’s (1987) evolutionary model points to the possibility of simultaneous existence of such activities. What is found different in my case NGOs is the direction of the generational movement.
A second related argument speaks to another aspect of Korten’s thesis that first and second generation strategies—service delivery and community development type activities—demand “little in the way of strategic competence” and are therefore neither particularly difficult nor sophisticated tasks in many countries. My analysis of the work of three NGOs and especially those (NHSS and YUVA) implementing a shift in their strategic competence from predominantly confrontational to cooperative tactics tells a different story. The evolution to service delivery, I argue, requires much more nuanced sophistication than is typically assumed. Discussion of the range of NGO strategies and tactics used (Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) and the challenges faced in the context of each intervention (Tables 6.1.1, 6.2.1) suggest that delivery absorbs NGOs in new conversations with the state, with the market, as well as with their own staff and client communities. In their efforts to retain legitimacy with their clients and establish “new” capacities to deliver, NGOs shifted strategies in succession—a tendency also observed in their formative years (see Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of this aspect). What is new with NGO work with delivery is a gradual realization of the need to: a) think creatively about how to achieve project objectives that maximizes client needs while minimizing injury to institutional (NGO) connections with the state/market; b) buttress State level bureaucrats and political elite to gain critical concessions; c) invite and retain technical and governmental competency; d) create internal consensus for change; and, e) mobilize sufficient financial resources to sustain speedy realization of delivery efforts.

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556 Korten (1987, 155) uses the term “strategic competence” to refer to “a measure of the organization’s ability to position its resources to achieve its objectives within a complex and dynamic setting.”
A third finding builds on the first and questions Korten’s (1987, 149) assertion that as NGOs gain more understanding of their respective policy arenas, they move to “facilitating sustainable changes... on a regional or even national basis.” My analysis of key housing interventions among slum and pavement communities in Mumbai suggests a evolution in NGO housing strategies from broad-based policy advocacy towards much narrower policy change efforts. In general, the case NGOs moved from participation in interorganizational advocacy networks at the city or national levels towards pressing the state for changes from within a much reduced framework of their selected projects. I describe this evolution in the nature of NGO advocacy as a move from predominantly mass-based advocacy to technical, project-based advocacy and understand these as NGO attempts to improve institutional adaptiveness.

It could be argued that NGO involvement in building activities is equivalent to engagement in activities directed towards “sustainable change.” Korten (1987, 149) describes “sustainable” activities alongside the notions of “breath of impact,” and “recurrent cost recovery.” He adds that engagement in a third generation strategy of “sustainable systems development... will likely mean less direct involvement at village level for these particular NGOs, and more involvement with a variety of public and private organizations that control resources and policies that bear on local development” (Korten 1987, 149).

My cases do indicate a greater level of interaction with a variety of public and private agencies but I am unsure of the current level of impact of NGO activities upon local development policies. From a time when NGO efforts were directed towards pressing for changes in public policy framework governing slum housing (e.g. NHSS and YUVA), my analysis of key housing interventions indicates a paring down in the extent of organizational attention devoted to questioning the appropriateness of and the conduct of current policy framework in meeting the housing needs of their clientele. This lack of clarity is likely related to the fact that: a) I did not seek fiscal and other resource-related details (personnel, time, research) pertaining to policy advocacy in contrast with those directed to housing delivery; and, b) My research is not directed to understanding the “effectiveness” of various NGO housing strategies.

I do not imply an absence of rights-based advocacy comprising community organization and mobilization; networking and participation in advocacy coalitions; or, events displaying collective protest. Some of these activities are in progress, for example, with YUVA’s work with pavement communities. However, based on my historical analysis (comprising interviews with senior staff, archival research, and conversations with members of slums and pavement communities and government officials) of the work of the three NGOs, in slums and pavements, suggests a decline (in terms of frequency in acts of collective protests; extent of community participation elicited in events aimed at display of collective identity; and, the proportion of NGO management engaged in advocacy related work) in mass-based advocacy and movement towards technical, project-level advocacy. This is also evidenced in how, despite their continued principal opposition to the state housing policy environment and the obvious challenges and contradictions encountered between their project and institutional (NGO) objectives, NGOs do not appear to engage in policy and institutional change efforts as much as was evidenced in their formative years.
My critique of Korten’s work should be understood in fairly modest terms. My findings concur with Korten’s expectations that NGOs evolve towards increasing levels of sophistication over time, and that organizations combine service delivery with policy advocacy. However, my cases demonstrate evolution towards less policy advocacy rather than more, and suggest that service delivery is more complex than sometimes assumed. However, given that my cases are not a representative sample of the housing field, and that Korten did not specifically point to housing NGOs in his analysis, my critique should be viewed as modest.

**Limits to Institutional Isomorphism**

The chapter’s second argument builds on the well-established notion that “once disparate organizations in the same line of business are structured into an actual field . . . powerful forces emerge that lead them to become more similar to one another” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 148). I contend that despite their physical proximity to one another and operating within the same public policy environment, each NGO faces different internal and external forces that promote, prevent or otherwise shape its attempts to make a “major” shift in housing strategies. Path-dependency and variability in resource environments hinder or misdirect NGO efforts at service delivery. The constraints, as

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559 I have drawn the distinction in emphasis in the works of Meyer and Rowan (1977) and that of DiMaggio and Powell (1983): The two sets of institutional theorists appear to emphasize two distinct aspects of isomorphic change. Meyer and Rowan (1977) are analyzed to observe isomorphism in an organization’s formal structure and DiMaggio and Powell (1983) appear to focus on processes (coercive, mimetic and normative) that shape the origins of isomorphic change in organizations. My analysis of isomorphic change processes in NGOs pays attention to means or processes (strategies and tactics adopted by NGOs) as well as the structure of NGOs. Please see review of literature (Chapter 2) under the section ‘Limits of Isomorphism’ for details of this distinction.
discussed below, obstruct or delay a tendency towards greater uniformity across participating NGOs.

Observing a massive growth in government reliance on nonprofit organizations for service delivery, Smith & Lipsky (1998, 135-136) identified a tendency towards greater conformity among nonprofits. Such conformity to governmental priorities, they noted, threatens the inventiveness of the nonprofit sector including its “spontaneity”, “variety”, and even its “unpredictability.” Their concerns are not without more generic precedence. There is ample evidence in research in organizational theory that supports the claim that “organizations are structured by phenomena in their environments and tend to become isomorphic with them” (Meyer and Rowan 1992, 28). Over the past decade, as the reach of “new institutionalism in organizational analysis” has extended across a variety of topics, a substantial volume of research focusing on tendency of increasing homogeneity among nonprofits has developed (Riiskjaer and Nielsen 1987; Kanter and Summers 1987; Morrill and McKee 1993; Bidwell 2001). In keeping with the notion of isomorphic transformation, participating NGOs started to display uniformity in their tactics of engagement with the state. The tactics are summarized in the Table 6.4.
With slight variations, all participating NGOs actively sought and accepted appointment as delivery agents of the State; they hired new and/or used existing personnel to influence governmental decisions and priorities; they pacified and bargained with bureaucratic and political elites; and, they employed centralized decision making processes related to delivery (please see tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 for tactics used by each NGO).

Despite the isomorphism from the table above, a closer look at specific organizational interventions suggests a less uniform pattern of organizational adaptation. In implementing change, participating NGOs were found to face a variety of different challenges. *Path dependency* and *Variability in Resource Environments* were two primary factors found to obstruct pervasive NGO uniformity (see tables 6.1.1 and 6.2.1). Path dependent factors include: a) organizational commitment to founding values, and b) entrenchment in tried and tested housing routines. These are found to be complicated by

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Preferred Strategy (Primary strategy)</th>
<th>Dominant Tactics</th>
<th>Preferred End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHSS</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Capitalizing on an influential internal constituent; Negotiating for greater control over delivery</td>
<td>Establishing “new” legitimacy as a housing provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YUVA</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Importing influential constituents; Acceding to work as a delivery agent for the State</td>
<td>Offering comprehensive housing solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPARC</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Capitalizing on established network of relations with bureaucratic elite; Using its “monopoly” position to shape governmental &amp; donor criteria</td>
<td>Large scale provider of housing &amp; infrastructure services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
internal political struggles (between those in favor of a more or less confrontational strategy) and the extent of leadership commitment towards realizing delivery related goals. Variability in the resource environment of the NGOs, on the other hand, includes employee turnover and the variety of different mechanisms that NGOs deploy to overcome financial constraints. Both these constraints that limit the possibility of institutional isomorphism among participating NGOs, are explained below.

Path Dependency

The notion of “path dependence” has particular relevance in explaining constraints faced by NGOs in realizing a shift in their predominant housing strategies with the state (March and Olsen 1989; Levi 1990; North 1990; March et al 2000; Pierson 2000). Embedded in a confrontational mode of interaction, NGOs such as YUVA were concerned about state cooptation and therefore maintained a deliberate distance by resolving not to work as a delivery agent of the state. Others such as NHSS believed mass protests and rallies were a legitimate way to relate to the state and to community interests in housing.

Among the participating NGOs, NHSS and YUVA valued creation of collective identity as the first-order means to preserve and defend the rights of the poor. They had developed tried-and-tested routines: formation of and participation in housing advocacy coalitions (for example, Committee for the Right to Housing championed by YUVA in 1985 and the formation of NHSS as a loose city-wide federation of concerned groups and citizens); anti-demolition protests using street plays, slogan shouting, films; and, mobilizing large numbers of slum and squatter dwellers. Furthermore, they considered the provision of
safe, secure, and affordable housing to be a prerogative of the state. NGOs, according to YUVA and NHSS, should play the role of educators, community organizers, and watchdogs to ensure state accountability in the housing process. On a somewhat different formative note, SPARC was keen to explore the possibility of sharing an equal footing with the state. In its first five years, not only did SPARC challenge the government’s ability to enumerate the poor adequately but also offered its novice expertise to gain entry into government programs.

These founding values, along with distinct repositories of existing knowledge and the history of housing routines, influenced the “attention structures” of NGO leaders as they considered the option of implementing delivery with the state (Cyert and March 1963; March 1994, 10; Ocasio 1997). For example, NHSS took nearly a decade to champion a resettlement and rehabilitation alternative with the state. NHSS’s strong and seemingly unwavering dislike for the State formulated Slum Rehabilitation Scheme, and an equally vehement distaste for private for-profit involvement in slum and squatter housing, delayed its decision to engage in implementation. Its embeddedness in founding housing routines of collective protest and mobilizing communities to struggle and ‘fight’ for a right appears to have delayed its decision to choose delivery with the state. Therefore, when NHSS trod the path of working with a private developer in a grand Slum Rehabilitation Scheme, it suffered enormous public opprobrium (Table 6.1.1). Propelled by the desire to make a highly publicized and controversial project work, NHSS made an equally well publicized attempt to defend its decision by stating that its involvement would not only ensure housing to several thousand slum dwellers but that its participation
in a market-financed project would ensure the scheme develops into an outstanding housing solution for the poor.

YUVA faced a slightly different set of path-dependent constraints. Its ambivalence about delivery was evident when, despite principal opposition to the scheme’s rationale, it joined the emerging bandwagon of NGO-managed slum redevelopment. The process did not yield tangible results. In retrospect, YUVA’s founding Executive Director stated that the NGO was not keen to display tangible results. Instead, he argued, it sought to prove that if appropriately trained and empowered, communities could be sensitized about the pros and cons of redeveloping their slums. YUVA’s entrenchment in tried and test housing routines—of conscientizing communities of their rights and training them to help build capacities to self-manage their housing futures—appears to have precluded delivery of a tangible housing product. In New Bhabrekar Nagar where YUVA took up work as an agency of the State, responsible for housing and infrastructure works, it faced a similar path-dependent constraint. This constraining factor was however further complicated by internal political struggles caused by bureaucratic delays. These struggles emerged between those who valued YUVA’s work as a vocal street-level advocate and a relatively new breed of technical staff who wish to overcome delays by patiently negotiating with letters and repeat requests for bureaucratic clearances (see explanation of challenges faced by YUVA, Table 6.2.1).

Like the others, SPARC’s housing repertoires were identified by a series of tried-and-tested routines in housing delivery. Unlike the others, SPARC was at no point in its
lifetime averse to working within the framework of state-suggested solutions. In fact, SPARC’s formative philosophy included implementing solutions that work for the city and for slum dwellers. This philosophy dictated the choice of many of its interventions. With slight variations, subsequent interventions have followed a consistent pattern of challenging the state with competing statistics and asserting superiority of its own design rationale. Demonstration projects are then used as levers to elicit support for grander schemes, either as partners with or as contractors of the state. These extended, product-driven routines have found strong support among the State’s bureaucratic elite who see SPARC as a politically safe and savvy medium to clear valuable slum encumbered land and thus to meet the state’s housing objective of providing housing to all eligible slums and squatter dwellers, and to bring in a range of international financial donors.

Embeddedness in founding conditions (comprising such factors as their core values and beliefs, the past experiences of their leaders, their housing philosophies) have either delayed or forestalled the efforts of NGOs to make a complete shift towards service delivery roles with the state. These are complicated by extent of leadership commitment to delivery-related goals and internal political struggles. Thus, while new delivery routines do emerge and are implemented, the process of making a transition appears to be mired in path dependent constraints, particularly among NGOs implementing a shift from predominantly confrontational to cooperative strategies with the state. Thus variability in their founding conditions is likely to limit the possibility of overall uniformity in structures and processes across NGOs.
Variability in Resource Environments

Over the course of their housing interventions, participating NGOs have faced primarily two types of uncertainties: a) turnover in critical and senior staff; and, b) finding sufficient and timely funds for their housing endeavors. These efforts were further complicated by the extent of commitment of the leadership toward delivery-specific routines (an aspect covered above). Among the three NGOs, YUVA has encountered high attrition rates amongst its technical and professionally qualified staff. Senior staff is typically replaced by new, younger staff. Even among the new crop, the rate of attrition is disturbingly high. YUVA consoles itself by stating that for “any dynamic organization, change is inevitable” (Pimple 2000, 1). However, the attrition in human resources frequently surfaced as a critical issue in managing relations with the state as well as with client communities. Communities, like the government, equate consistency in leadership with NGO’s interest in achieving its project-related objectives. More interestingly, they understand NGO leadership to be the domain of a single, dedicated individual. The situation is likely to get more tenuous with the departure of the Founding Executive Director who stepped down as “YUVA’s Chief functionary” in 2002 (Pimple 2002, 5).560 Turnover in staff is yet to emerge as an issue in SPARC or NHSS but their heavy reliance on the networking, negotiating, and community mobilization skills of select organizational leaders is likely to pose similar challenges in the years ahead.

560 He has withdrawn from day to day administration and currently resides in New York and works as Executive Director, Peoples Movement for Human Rights Learning (PDHRE). He however holds position as Secretary and Chair of YUVA Consulting – one of the five independent YUVA entities formed in 2002.
The prevailing state housing policy of slum redevelopment is a high-risk strategy for all concerned, particularly the slum and pavement dwellers. “Redevelopment is capital intensive and the investors of financial capital . . . control the projects” (Mukhija 2003, 11). Paucity of funds has delayed or even precluded construction and has significantly added to uncertainties associated with NGO-engagement in implementation. Each of the participating NGOs has however coped with this uncertainty variably.

NHSS attributed its delay in choosing to engage with the state to its distaste for private for-profit sector involvement in housing delivery. Then, largely in response to the need to maintain legitimacy and relevance, NHSS made a “tactical interim adjustment” and partnered with a private developer. YUVA, on the other hand, could not raise financial resources for its projects under the same policy environment and abandoned the effort to work to improve and upgrade a slum in partnership with the state and an international development funding agency. SPARC managed the risks and uncertainties associated with slum housing by participating in formulation of and becoming a member of the very authority that administers and monitors the same policy. SPARC also created a sister agency to mobilize a variety of national and international funds. SPARC had also worked over the years and persistently negotiated to win a large contract for implementing slum resettlement and rehabilitation work under the World Bank financed urban transport project.

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561 Such shortages in funds could be the result of a downfall in real estate prices; a paucity in government funds; demands of substantial financial guarantees to mobilize local resources; the slow sanctioning processes among lending agencies; shortage of bridge funds; reluctance of the clients to contribute towards their own housing (caused by such political propagandas as the ‘free housing’ scheme) or, any combination thereof.
An examination of NGOs as they implement cooperative relations with the state does indicate a movement towards uniformity in routines and structures and hence the beginnings of isomorphic change among NGOs. However, minute examinations of how NGOs handle their delivery routines reveals that: a) each NGO has a unique set of constraints arising from path dependent factors; and, b) each NGO copes with uncertainties caused by variations in its resource environments, differently. This suggests that a heterogeneous landscape of NGO-government housing strategies and tactics found in their formative years will likely persist.

In summary, analyses of constraints faced by NHSS and YUVA in their ‘new’ cooperative role with the state and SPARC’s steady work in a cooperative capacity, helps address the second research question about factors influencing the emergence and sustenance of NGO-GO housing partnerships. It appears that there are six sets of interrelated factors that are critical to sustaining cooperative NGO-GO relations. These include: Political exigency of the housing situation being addressed, nurturing strong ties with political and bureaucratic elite, obtaining timely and sufficient access to financial resources, extent of leadership commitment to delivery-specific goals, ability to control community perceptions, and the ability to maintain internal consensus for change. All were found to be critical NGO factors contributing to the emergence and sustenance in NGO-government housing partnerships.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION: CONCEPTUALIZING THE EVOLUTION OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations – profit or non-profit – are embedded within state or market environments and thus are subject to the environment’s distinctive processes of social organization. . . . Organizations may change their degree of reliance on an environment, but they can be seen as situated along a continuum of relative embeddedness in the market or the state, with the norm being some combination of the two.


This dissertation has provided an in-depth examination of the emergence and evolution of three NGOs working to address the housing needs of slum and squatter residents living in the city of Mumbai. In particular, I have sought to elucidate the complexity of the environments of these NGOs through immersion in nine key housing interventions. I have attempted to show how NGO behavior is shaped both by public policy orientation and by internal strategies and decisions.

The objective of this conclusion is to take a step away from the three case study organizations and to examine, instead, their implications for understanding the broader landscape or ecosystem of NGO-GO interactions. In doing so, I first summarize my key findings in broad conceptual terms and use this as a basis for reflecting on their contribution to the literature.
Key Findings

The dissertation’s findings are specific to the three NGOs that participated in this research and may not be generalizable beyond them. Nonetheless, the research offers three conceptual contributions to the broader literature which can add to our understanding of how NGO-GO interactions emerge and develop over time:

1. *Typologies of NGO-GO interaction strategies.* My case studies demonstrate that NGO relations with the state are not simply confrontational or cooperative, but are complex combinations of such interactions. A look at the strategies and tactics used by NGOs in a series of key interventions helps provide a robust explanation of their interactions, thus building on simpler classifications necessary in taxonomies. NGO-GO relations are made up of complex and interdependent struggles that evolve over time.

2. *Limits to isomorphism.* Building on institutional theory, many NGO scholars inform us that as more and more NGOs cooperate with the state, they will become more homogeneous, more similar in their structure and processes. This is referred to as isomorphism. Such pervasive cooperation, they note, threatens the inventiveness of the NGO sector including its spontaneity, its variety, and even its unpredictability. My analysis suggests that each NGO uses different tactics in response to the same macro-level environment. In other words, variation in tactical response to a similar institutional environment can bring about differentiation rather than isomorphism or, at the very least, places limits on the extent of isomorphism. This variation is
revealed through the analysis of internal institutional processes in each NGO as it implements cooperative strategies with the state and is explained by two sets of constraints: a) path dependency; and, b) the variability in resource environments.

3. *Evolutionary models of NGO development strategies.* Commonly cited evolutionary models depict NGOs as traveling through a series of stages -- from service delivery to policy advocacy; from purportedly less towards more sophisticated development strategies. This research yields three findings which do not support this normative direction of evolution: that NGOs can shift from policy advocacy to delivery (rather than the other way around) and that engagement in delivery can be a highly complex endeavor in itself. Furthermore, evolution from advocacy to delivery with the state is likely to limit NGO attention to individual project level advocacy in contrast to the broader, mass-based and systemic change efforts evidenced earlier in their lifetimes.

These three findings suggest that NGO-GO interactions are shaped by changes in the broader political economy of housing and, more interestingly, are continually fashioned by the strategies and tactics of the NGOs. *In efforts to gain and retain legitimacy and relevance, NGOs are found to shift strategies in succession.* Multiple strategies are deployed sequentially and, oftentimes, simultaneously. This suggests that whilst in some policy arenas clear ‘battle lines’ are drawn, NGO interventions in housing are shifting and multifaceted. This dynamism has important implications for theories of NGO-
government relations and housing policy implementation: It indicates that while broader policy thrusts (the state, national and international policy context) are, without doubt, key factors determining the nature of NGO-GO interaction, they only account for the primary or dominant strategy (of confrontation or cooperation) prevailing between NGOs and GOs. Analyzing NGO-GO relations from within the framework of a selected housing intervention (the nested unit of analysis in this study) helps provide a more comprehensive explanation of how NGOs might interact with government agencies to fulfill their agendas. In efforts to respond to client exigencies and under pressure to establish and maintain legitimacy and relevance, even predominantly confrontational (or cooperative) NGOs deploy manifold strategies, many of which defy dominant NGO-GO orientations.

Additionally, an in-depth examination of how NGOs implement “major” shifts from predominantly confrontational to more cooperative strategies with the state reveals important path dependent constraints and uncertainties arising from the variability in their resource environments. These processes appear to obstruct or delay the homogenization of structures and processes across NGOs. Path dependence makes it difficult for NGOs to implement major shifts to cooperative NGO-GO strategies. Among the three NGOs examined for this research, path dependence was apparent in: a) NGO commitment to founding values, and b) entrenchment in tried and tested housing routines. These constraining factors are complicated by internal political struggles (between those who value a more or less confrontational strategy) and the extent of leadership commitment towards realizing delivery related goals. Furthermore, each NGO is found to face a
different set of resource constraints and responds to them differently. This variability in their resource environments are evidenced by: a) turnover in critical and senior staff who help maintain NGO-client relations and also play key bridging and boundary spanning roles for the NGOs; and, b) efforts to find sufficient and timely funds for their delivery endeavors. Turnover in staff and the access to resources are again complicated by the proclivity in NGO leadership to realizing delivery-specific routines. These constraints also explain how some NGOs are likely to sustain their cooperative relations with GOs.

In sum, this dissertation has focused on three key findings — about strategies and tactics in NGO-GO interactions, limits to isomorphism in the housing field, and the complex nature of organizational evolution in service delivery. Each of these findings is focused on the “organizational” level or scale.

At a broader level, however, this research is about the position of NGOs within a broader political economy dominated by the state. A critical but implicit finding of this dissertation is that NGO-GO interactions are, first and foremost, the product of the space created by the state. Instead of presuming a withdrawal of the state, as suggested by the evolving nature of development discourse, more generally, and housing policy discourse, in particular, my historical analysis of the housing interventions of three NGOs illustrates that the state has come to occupy a more decisive position in the ecosystem of NGO-GO interactions. The state has more than simply “enabled” the housing process for the market and the selected NGOs -- it provided the necessary preconditions for the
emergence and the institutionalization of NGO strategies. More significantly, the state has helped substantiate major shifts in NGO strategies.

In this broader setting, an in-depth analysis of NGO-GO relations as they evolve over time is important especially at a time when NGOs are regarded as key players in the development arena and arrangements such as NGO-GO partnerships are widely regarded by policymakers as being critical to effective social sector development. Understanding the factors shaping the rise of and evolution in NGO-GO strategies helps shed light on the willingness and ability of NGOs to respond to opportunities for collaboration created by policy shifts. This dissertation thus provides an empirical and theoretical basis for examining the evolution in NGO-GO relationships over time and, in doing so, links research on the urban political economy of housing to research on organizational life cycles and strategic institutional change.
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Appendix A

Maps

Appendix AA

Source: Maps of India,
Appendix AB

Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR)

Appendix AC

Map of Greater Mumbai with Sites of the Key NGO-Government Housing Interventions

Appendix B

Introductory letter to NGOs sent by mail in early June 2002

Subject: Request for participation of your organization in doctoral research study

Dear <name>,

I write to you from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia, USA. I am currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Urban Affairs and Planning. My research interest is in the area of relationships between nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental organizations in the arena of housing for the urban poor in the city of Mumbai. More specifically, my interests lie in exploring the growth and evolution in relations between NGOs engaged in housing rights advocacy and housing related government organizations in Mumbai. I propose identifying and analyzing the key forces that influence goals and activities in NGO-government housing networks.

My interest in the topic arose during my fieldwork training as a Masters’ student with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences where I obtained a Master’s degree in Urban and Rural Community Development in 1996. The interest was nurtured in my work in the private and the public housing finance and development sector in India from 1996 to 1999. I have ever since been working towards furthering my interests through my doctoral studies in the US.

My dissertation research will bring me to India for data collection in August 2002. This letter is a request to give me your time, experience and insights towards this proposed study. The study is currently envisaged as a case study analysis wherein I propose utilizing in-depth interviews with participants in your organization, perusal of documents in your organization, and participant observation of internal staff meetings and meetings with governmental organizations. I am seeking the participation of your organization subject to the following list of criteria: a) If your mission statements and activities since the time of your inception demonstrate pursuit of advocacy-related activities; b) that you have been in existence for at least five years; c) that you have cooperated with city government organizations in projects with the goal of delivering housing and related services to the urban poor, and d) last but not the least that your organization is willing and able to participate in the proposed study.

I would be happy to provide any clarifications or details pertaining to my proposed study. If your schedule permits, I would be extremely grateful if I could meet with you when I am in Mumbai in mid-August, 2002. I would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience and extend my best wishes to you and all others in your esteemed organization.

With warm regards,
Sincerely,

Ramya Ramanath
Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

Title of the project: Goal and Strategy Formulation in Collaborative Housing Networks in Mumbai, India

Investigator: Ramya Ramanath, Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim

Institutional Affiliation: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Environmental Design & Planning Doctoral Program, College of Architecture and Urban Studies
202, Cowgill Hall
Blacksburg
Virginia - 24061 (0205)
USA

Chair of doctoral research committee of Principal Investigator: Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim

I. Purpose of this Research project:

The purpose of this research is to analyse the growth and evolution in relations between government and nongovernment organisations (NGOs) working in the area of housing in the city of Mumbai. More specifically, the research centres on the growth and evolution in goals and activities pursued in collaborative networks between housing advocacy NGOs and city government organisations working in the area of housing the urban poor.

The two-fold objectives of this research are: a) To explore the strategies that NGOs use to balance their advocacy missions with the interests of governmental organisations and b) To provide details on the extent to which the growth in goals and activities can be attributed to 'learning processes' in collaborative housing networks between NGOs and government organisations.

562 Contact information provided at the end of this document
563 Interaction between NGOs and government organizations is posited as an arena that facilitates “learning” in NGOs and government organizations. Learning refers to the process of generating knowledge by processing information or events and using this knowledge to guide organizational routines. Routines consist of rules, roles, responsibilities, technologies, hierarchies, norms and practices.
II. Procedures:

In achieving the two objectives of this research, I (the Principal Investigator) will use a case study design. The case study design will comprise:

- In-depth interviews with key informants in NGO and government organisations
- Archival research of NGO and government documents
- Participant observation of meetings of NGO and its meetings with government agencies. Alternately, perusal of recorded minutes of such meetings or a discussion of the outcome of such meetings as part of interviews with members.
- Conversations with members of the community where NGO and/or government has worked/is currently working.

Key informants in NGO will likely include its employees comprising of the executive director of NGO; its founder or the founding team; NGO's board members; program director and his/her immediate supervisor; members of the housing team of the NGO; and members in the communities where the NGO has worked/is working. Key informants in government organisations will likely include employees comprising of department heads and officials who are/have been associated with a program or a project. You have been identified as a key informant and I will interview you for the following purposes related to this research:

a) To recapture your experience with respect to events related to your organisation's history in the area of housing. Of particular interest in the context of this research is NGO's history vis-à-vis city government housing agencies. The interview will be conducted for purposes beyond mere recollection of facts, incidents, dates and people. It will comprise of questions aimed at understanding relationships between events that are perceived to have influenced past activities, influence current course of action, and are expected to influence the future. The events will be identified by the interviewees and validated by way of interviews with other members and documents in your organisation.

b) To gather the perception of issues addressed in housing networks, strategies considered, and the goals and activities over which there was and is a divergence of interests with government organisations/NGOs.

I will interview each informant in your organisation individually at a time and place convenient to him or her. I will take notes in the process of interviewing. The nature of the research may require me to interview informants more than once for further questioning, elaboration or clarification. Such interviewing will take place from time to time over a period of six months.
III. Risks:

The proposed research involves not more than minimal risk to you. Your identity revealed in the field notes maintained by me, and other sources of data will be kept confidential in that the names of the members will not be discussed and field notes erased after elaboration. The name of NGO/the government department and the position/role of the members in the organisations will not be kept confidential. I will personally elaborate on the notes. Until elaboration, all field notes will be in my sole possession and supervision.

IV. Benefits:

I make no promise or guarantee of benefits to encourage you to participate in this research. Participation in this research will lead to larger societal benefits in that the findings of the research will contribute towards developing a richer and more detailed taxonomy hitherto insufficiently recorded in empirical and theoretical literature. Details of the benefits that will accrue in areas of both empirical and theoretical literature are explained the following three paragraphs:

NGOs and government agencies in cities of developing countries such as India are increasingly working together in planning and implementing housing for the poor living in slums and squatter settlements. This is a recent trend that roughly began in the 1990s when greater collaboration among institutions began to hold grounds in official and scholarly circles for reasons that it is a more effective and efficient means of solving societal problems.

In particular, housing rights advocacy NGOs are now entering into different types of collaborative relationships with various levels of government. Such relations are however growing without great deal of attention or focus. Ambiguity exists about the expectations these two sets of institutions have of each other and about how their relationship should best evolve such that the goal of housing the poor can be efficiently and effectively realised.

Using multiple case study analysis of dyadic relations between at least three NGOs and their respective relations with city government agencies, this research will speak to the ambiguity by contributing towards developing a clearer, richer taxonomy explaining contextual nuances of NGO-government relations in India in the arena of low-income housing.

You can contact me at a later time for a summary of the research results.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality:

Your confidentiality will be maintained by me at all times. The name of your NGO/government department and your position/role in the organisation will not be kept
confidential. Your identity revealed in the course of interview-notes and other sources of data will be kept confidential in that the names will not be discussed and records will be erased subsequent to elaboration. I will write detailed notes after each interview. Until elaboration, all field notes will be in my sole possession and supervision.

VI. **Compensation:**

No compensation will be offered and earned by me for participating in the doctoral research.

VII. **Freedom to Withdraw:**

You are free to withdraw any time without any penalty. You are also free not to respond to any question without penalty.

VIII. **Approval of Doctoral Research:**

This research project has been approved as required, by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University:

IRB Approval Date: June 20, 2002
Approval Expiration Date: June 19, 2004

IX. **Interviewee's Responsibilities:**

I voluntarily agree to participate in the Principal Investigator's doctoral research. I have no responsibilities other than providing the Principal Investigator with information and data pertinent to the objectives of the research as stated above.

X. **Interviewee's Permission:**

I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this project. I hereby have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

Interviewee's signature: Date:

Should I have any pertinent questions about this research or its conduct, and research subject's rights and who to contact in the event of a research related injury to the interviewee, I may contact:

1. Ramya Ramanath and Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim (Investigators)
   Ramya Ramanath's (interviewer) Contact Telephone: 98201-14776
   Ramya Ramanath's Email: ramya@vt.edu
   Ramya Ramanath's Signature:
2. David M. Moore
椅, Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Compliance
Research and Graduate Studies
David M. Moore's telephone contact in the US of A: 540-231-4991
David M. Moore's Email: moored@vt.edu
Appendix D

Letter to Government Officials

Shri ….  
Date: February 12, 2003  
Chief Executive Officer  
Slum Rehabilitation Authority  
5th Floor, Grihnirman Bhavan  
Bandra (East)  
Mumbai - 400 051  

Subject: Request for a meeting

Respected Sir,

I am a Ph.D. student of Urban Affairs and Planning at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, USA. My doctoral research explores the collaborations between nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and government agencies in housing the poor in Mumbai. I am in Mumbai since August 2002 pursuing data collection towards the above-mentioned research and write to you to request you for your time.

My discussions with housing NGOs in the city and conversations with others involved in the field of housing as well as my own reading on the subject has frequently brought to light your valuable contributions in the area of addressing the housing needs of the poor in the city of Mumbai.

I would be extremely grateful if you could spare some of your valuable time to share with me your insights on the subject. In case, there is any elaboration that you might need prior to such a meeting, please feel free to reach me at 98201-14776 or by email at ramya@vt.edu. I have taken the liberty to enclose a copy of a letter requesting your participation in my Ph.D. research from the Chair of my doctoral research committee, Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim.

Thanking you, in advance, for your time.

Sincerely,

Ramya Ramanath
Appendix E

Agreement with YUVA

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)
and Ramya Ramanath
Terms of Reference for undertaking doctoral research project
with YUVA

Title of the project: Goal and Strategy Formulation in Collaborative Housing Networks in Mumbai, India

Date: September 1, 2002

Principal Investigator: Ramya Ramanath

Institutional Affiliation: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Environmental Design & Planning Doctoral Program, College of Architecture and Urban Studies 202, Cowgill Hall Blacksburg Virginia - 24061 (0205) USA

Chair of doctoral research committee of Ramya Ramanath: Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim

Contact person in YUVA: <name>

III. Purpose of this Research project:

The purpose of this research is to analyse the growth and evolution in relations between government and nongovernment organisations (NGOs) working in the area of housing in the city of Mumbai. More specifically, the research centres on the growth and evolution in goals and activities pursued in collaborative networks between housing advocacy NGOs and city government organisations working in the area of housing the urban poor.

564 Contact information provided at the end of this document
565 Secretary and Chair of YUVA Consulting

YUVA
52/53, Nare Park Municipal School
Opposite Nare Park Ground, Parel, Mumbai - 400 012
Tel.: 91-22-4155250, 4116393, 4116394
Fax.: 91-22-4135314
E.mail:
The two-fold objectives of this research are: a) To explore the strategies that NGOs use to balance their advocacy missions with the interests of governmental organisations and b) To provide details on the extent to which the growth in goals and activities can be attributed to learning processes in collaborative housing networks between NGOs and government organisations.

IV. Procedures:

In achieving the two objectives of this research, Ramya Ramanath will use a case study design. The case study design will comprise of in-depth interviews with key informants in YUVA, archival research of YUVA's documents and participant observation of staff meetings (or perusal of recorded minutes of such meetings) in YUVA and meetings with government agencies such as the MHADA, the MCGM, the MMRDA and conversations with members of the community. Key informants in YUVA will likely include its current employees who include the executive director of YUVA; its founder or the founding team; YUVA's board members; program director and his/her immediate supervisor; members of the housing team of YUVA comprising of field workers and secretarial staff; and members in the communities where YUVA has worked/is working.

In depth interviews will be undertaken for the following purposes related to this research:

c) To recapture the experience of the members of YUVA as also those of community members with respect to events related to YUVA's history in the area of housing and particularly its history with city government agencies. The interviews will be conducted for purposes beyond mere recollection of facts, incidents, dates and people. It will comprise of questions aimed at understanding relationships between events that are perceived to have influenced past activities, influence current course of action and are expected to influence the future. The events will be identified by the interviewees and validated by way of interviews with other members and documents in YUVA.

d) To gather the perception of issues addressed in housing networks, strategies considered, and the goals and activities over which there was and is a divergence of interests with government organisations.

Ramya Ramanath will interview each informant in YUVA individually at a time and place convenient to him or her. She will tape-record the interviews and will also take notes in the process. The interviews, subject to the consent of each informant, will be tape-recorded to facilitate listening of explicit descriptions and meanings. The nature of the research may require her to interview informants in YUVA more than once for further questioning, elaboration or clarification. Such interviewing will take place from time to time for a period of six months. In circumstances wherein informants in YUVA or the
community do not accede to the use of tape recorders, contemporaneous notes will be maintained in the course of interviews.

III. Risks:

The proposed research involves not more than minimal risk to members of YUVA and the communities where YUVA works. The identity of members revealed in the course of tape-recorded interviews, field notes maintained by Ramya Ramanath, and other sources of data will be kept confidential in that the name of the members will not be discussed and records erased after transcription. The name of YUVA/the government department, and the position/role of the members in the organisations will not be kept confidential. Ramya Ramanath, will personally transcribe the tape-recorded interviews. Until transcription, all the tape-recorded materials and field notes will be in her sole possession and supervision.

XI. Benefits:

Ramya Ramanath guarantees that she will complete a case study report on the process of resettlement and rehabilitation in Bhabekekar Nagar by the end of June 2003 in return for YUVA acceding to participate as a case study NGO in her doctoral dissertation research. Towards this end, she will follow the same methodology as her doctoral research but will also interview stakeholders besides YUVA and the government agencies involved in the Bhabekekar Nagar project over the last five years.

YUVA’s participation in the doctoral research will also lead to larger societal benefits in that the findings of the research will contribute towards developing a richer and more detailed taxonomy hitherto insufficiently recorded in empirical and theoretical literature. Details of the benefits that will accrue in areas of both empirical and theoretical literature are explained the following three paragraphs:

NGOs and government agencies in cities of developing countries such as India are increasingly working together in planning and implementing housing for the poor living in slums and squatter settlements. This is a trend that roughly began in the 1990s when greater collaboration among institutions began to hold grounds in official and scholarly circles for reasons that it is a more effective and efficient means of solving societal problems.

Housing advocacy NGOs are now entering into different types of collaborative relationships with various levels of government. Such relations are however growing without great deal of attention or focus. Ambiguity exists about the expectations these two sets of institutions have of each other and about how their relationship should best evolve such that the goal of housing the poor can be efficiently and effectively realised.

Using multiple case study analysis of dyadic relations between at least three NGOs and their respective relations with city government agencies, this research will speak to the ambiguity by contributing towards developing a clearer, richer taxonomy
explaining contextual nuances of NGO-government relations in India in the arena of low-income housing.

Ramya Ramanath can be contacted at a later time for a summary of the research results.

XII. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality:

The confidentiality of individual informants will be maintained by Ramya Ramanath at all times. The name of YUVA and the role of the individual informants will not be kept confidential. The identity of members of YUVA and those in the community that are revealed in the course of tape-recorded interviews and other sources of data will be kept confidential in that the names will not be discussed and records will be erased subsequent to transcription. She will personally transcribe the tape-recorded interviews. Until transcription, all the tape-recorded materials and field notes will be in her sole possession and supervision.

XIII. Compensation:

No compensation will be offered and earned by Ramya Ramanath for participating in her doctoral research.

XIV. Freedom to Withdraw:

Members in YUVA are free to withdraw any time without any penalty. YUVA's members are also free not to respond to any question without penalty.

XV. Approval of Doctoral Research:

This research project has been approved as required, by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

IRB Approval Date: June 20, 2002
Approval Expiration Date: June 20, 2003

XVI. Subject's Responsibilities:

YUVA and its members voluntarily agree to participate in Ramya Ramanath's doctoral research. YUVA has no responsibilities other than providing Ramya Ramanath with information, access to information, and data pertinent to the objectives of the research as stated above. YUVA will also provide her with information, access to information and data pertinent to the objectives of the Bhabrekar Nagar case study undertaken by her for YUVA.
XVII. Subject's Permission:

YUVA and Ramya Ramanath have read and understood the Terms of Reference and conditions of this project. We hereby acknowledge the above and give our voluntary consent:

Ramya Ramanath's signature: Date: 28/2/2003

<name>’s signature: Date: 25/2/2003

Should YUVA have any pertinent questions about this research or its conduct, and research subject's rights and who to contact in the event of a research related injury to the subject, YUVA may contact:

1. Ramya Ramanath and Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim
   (Investigators)

   Ramya Ramanath's Contact Telephone: 98201-14776
   Dr. Ebrahim's telephone contact in the US of A: 540-231-2690

   Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim's Email: aebrahim@vt.edu
   Ramya Ramanath's Email: ramya@vt.edu

2. David M. Moore
   Chair, Institutional Review Board
   Office of Research Compliance
   Research and Graduate Studies

   David M. Moore's telephone contact in the US of A: 540-231-4991
   David M. Moore's Email: moored@vt.edu
Appendix F

Agreement with SPARC

Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC) and Ramya Ramanath: Terms of Reference for undertaking doctoral research project with SPARC

Title of the project: Goal and Strategy Formulation in Collaborative Housing Networks in Mumbai, India

Date: November 2002

Principal Investigator: Ramya Ramanath

Institutional Affiliation: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Environmental Design & Planning Doctoral Program, College of Architecture and Urban Studies 202, Cowgill Hall Blacksburg Virginia - 24061 (0205) USA

Chair of doctoral research committee of Principal Investigator: Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim

Contact person in SPARC: <name>

Director, SPARC
2nd Floor, Upper Primary Municipal School,
1st Lane Khetwadi,
Girgaon, Mumbai 400004
Tel: 022-3858785, 3865053

V. Purpose of this Research project:

The purpose of this research is to analyse the growth and evolution in relations between government and nongovernment organisations (NGOs) working in the area of housing in the city of Mumbai. More specifically, the research centres on the growth and evolution in goals and activities pursued in collaborative networks between housing advocacy NGOs and city government organisations working in the area of housing the urban poor.

The two-fold objectives of this research are: a) To explore the strategies that NGOs use to balance their advocacy missions with the interests of governmental organisations and b) To provide details on the extent to which the growth in goals and activities can be

566 Contact information provided at the end of this document
attributed to 'learning processes'\textsuperscript{567} in collaborative housing networks between NGOs and government organisations.

VI. Procedures:
In achieving the two objectives of this research, Ramya Ramanath (hereafter referred to as the Principal Investigator) will use a case study design. The case study design will comprise:

- In-depth interviews with key informants in SPARC\textsuperscript{568},
- Archival research of SPARC documents,
- Participant observation of meetings of SPARC and its meetings with government agencies. Alternately, perusal of recorded minutes of such meetings or a discussion of the outcome of such meetings as part of interviews with members.
- Conversations with members of the community where SPARC has worked/is currently working.

Key informants in SPARC will likely include its current employees comprising of the executive director of SPARC; its founder or the founding team; SPARC's board members; program director and his/her immediate supervisor; members of the housing team of the SPARC; and members in the communities where the SPARC has worked/is working.

In depth interviews will be undertaken for the following purposes related to this research:

e) To recapture the experience of the members of the SPARC as also those of community members with respect to events related to the SPARC's history in the area of housing. Of particular interest in the context of this research is SPARC's history vis-à-vis city government housing agencies. The interviews will be conducted for purposes beyond mere recollection of facts, incidents, dates and people. It will comprise of questions aimed at understanding relationships between events that are perceived to have influenced past activities, influence current course of action, and are expected to influence the future. The events will be identified by the interviewees and validated by way of interviews with other members and documents in SPARC.

\textsuperscript{567} Interaction between SPARC and government organizations is posited as an arena that facilitates “learning” in SPARC and government organizations. Learning refers to the process of generating knowledge by processing information or events and using this knowledge to guide organizational routines. Routines consist of rules, roles, responsibilities, technologies, hierarchies, norms and practices.

\textsuperscript{568} Where applicable, mention of SPARC includes the other two members of the 'Alliance', namely, Mahila Milan (MM) and the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF).
f) To gather the perception of issues addressed in housing networks, strategies considered, and the goals and activities over which there was and is a divergence of interests with government organisations.

I will interview each informant in SPARC individually at a time and place convenient to him or her. I will take notes in the process of interviewing. The nature of the research may require Principal Investigator to interview informants in SPARC more than once for further questioning, elaboration or clarification. Such interviewing will take place from time to time over a period of six months.

III. Risks:

The proposed research involves not more than minimal risk to members of SPARC and the communities where it works. The identity of members revealed in the field notes maintained by the Principal Investigator, and other sources of data will be kept confidential in that the names of the members will not be discussed and field notes erased after elaboration. The name of SPARC/the government department and the position/role of the members in the organisations will not be kept confidential. The Principal Investigator will personally elaborate on the notes. Until elaboration, all field notes will be in her sole possession and supervision.

XVIII. Benefits:

The Principal Investigator guarantees that she will complete a case study report on the process of resettlement and rehabilitation in selected housing projects undertaken by the SPARC. The case study work will be undertaken until the end of July 2002. The case study will be done in return for SPARC acceding to participate as a case study NGO in Principal Investigator's Ph.D. dissertation research. Towards this end, Principal Investigator will follow the same methodology as her doctoral research but will also interview stakeholders besides SPARC and the government agencies involved in the housing projects over the years.

The SPARC's participation in the doctoral research will also lead to larger societal benefits in that the findings of the research will contribute towards developing a richer and more detailed taxonomy hitherto insufficiently recorded in empirical and theoretical literature. Details of the benefits that will accrue in areas of both empirical and theoretical literature are explained the following three paragraphs:

NGOs and government agencies in cities of developing countries such as India are increasingly working together in planning and implementing housing for the poor living in slums and squatter settlements. This is a recent trend that roughly began in the 1990s when greater collaboration among institutions began to hold grounds in official and scholarly circles for reasons that it is a more effective and efficient means of solving societal problems.
In particular, housing rights advocacy NGOs are now entering into different types of collaborative relationships with various levels of government. Such relations are however growing without great deal of attention or focus. Ambiguity exists about the expectations these two sets of institutions have of each other and about how their relationship should best evolve such that the goal of housing the poor can be efficiently and effectively realised.

Using multiple case study analysis of dyadic relations between at least three NGOs and their respective relations with city government agencies, this research will speak to the ambiguity by contributing towards developing a clearer, richer taxonomy explaining contextual nuances of NGO-government relations in India in the arena of low-income housing.

The Principal Investigator can be contacted at a later time for a summary of the research results. She will share her interpretations with members of SPARC prior to submitting the research report to her doctoral research committee.

XIX. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality:

The confidentiality of individual informants will be maintained by the Principal Investigator at all times. The name of SPARC and the role of the individual informants will not be kept confidential. The identity of members of SPARC and those in the community that are revealed in the course of interview-notes and other sources of data will be kept confidential in that the names will not be discussed and records will be erased subsequent to elaboration. The Principal Investigator will write detailed notes after each interview. Until elaboration, all field notes will be in her sole possession and supervision.

XX. Compensation:

No compensation will be offered and earned by the Principal Investigator for participating in her doctoral research.

XXI. Freedom to Withdraw:

Members in SPARC are free to withdraw any time without any penalty. SPARC's members are also free not to respond to any question without penalty.

XXII. Approval of Doctoral Research:

This research project has been approved as required, by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (copy of IRB approval is attached).

IRB Approval Date: June 20, 2002
Approval Expiration Date: June 20, 2003
XXIII. Subject's Responsibilities:

SPARC and its members voluntary agree to participate in the Principal Investigator's doctoral research. The SPARC has no responsibilities other than providing the Principal Investigator with information, access to information, and data pertinent to the objectives of the research as stated above. The SPARC will also provide her with information, access to information and data pertinent to the objectives of 'SPARC's housing projects' case study undertaken by her.

XXIV. Subject's Permission:

SPARC and the Principal Investigator have read and understood the Terms of Reference and conditions of this project. We hereby acknowledge the above and give our voluntary consent:

Ramya Ramanath's signature: Date: 23/12/2002

<name>’s signature: Date: 23/12/2002

Should SPARC have any pertinent questions about this research or its conduct, and research subject's rights, and who to contact in the event of a research related injury to the subject, SPARC may contact:

2. Principal Investigator, Ramya Ramanath and
   Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim

   Ramya Ramanath's Contact Telephone: 98201-14776
   Dr. Ebrahim's telephone contact in the US of A: 540-231-2690

   Dr. Alnoor S. Ebrahim's Email: aebrahim@vt.edu
   Principal Investigator's Email: ramya@vt.edu

2. David M. Moore
   Chair, Institutional Review Board
   Office of Research Compliance
   Research and Graduate Studies

   David M. Moore's telephone contact in the US of A: 540-231-4991
   David M. Moore's Email: moored@vt.edu
Appendix G

Research Proposal

Goal and Strategy formulation in Collaborative Housing Networks: Learning processes among Nongovernmental and Governmental Organizations in the city of Mumbai

Introduction and Motivation:

Collaborative arrangements between governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) currently enjoy considerable approval in official and scholarly circles. Under the rubric of collaboration, themes such as ‘consensus’, ‘joint appreciation’, and ‘common aims’ dominate the present genre of policy planning and development literature (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Gray and Wood 1991; Healey 1997). Emphasis accorded to such themes has rendered consensus with a normative superiority over instances with a divergence of interests among participating organizations.

The proposed dissertation looks upon NGO-government collaboration as an emergent and extended process of interaction. Collaborative networks are emergent and extended processes in that the goals and activities of individuals and organizations involved have potential to change with the passage of time. Such changes create the possibility of a variety of relationship types commonly classified to comprise of cooperation, confrontation, complementarity, and cooptation – all of which, I argue are part and parcel of the process of collaboration. The few attempts at rendering analytical frameworks with a richer taxonomy (Coston 1998; Young 1999; Najam 2000) have only gone so far as to classify relationship types. Though useful for analytical purposes, merely differentiating relationship types simplifies the historical-political complexities in dynamics between interacting organizations. It provides us with minimal details on how and under what conditions goals and strategies develop and evolve in the course of interaction or indeed if NGOs and government organizations “learn” in interactions with one another.

Of particular interest in the proposed dissertation is the process of goal and strategy formulation in networks between housing advocacy NGOs and government organizations working with the poor in the city of Mumbai in western India. My interest in housing advocacy NGOs has its roots in the history of advocacy NGOs in the city of Mumbai. Briefly stated, most housing advocacy NGOs emerged in the city of Mumbai in the 1980s in response to government’s policy of slum removal and forced relocation. As a consequence, the agenda of many housing NGOs at the time consisted of advocating against human rights violations perpetrated by the state. A decade later, advocacy NGOs began entering into different types of partnerships with government agencies. These partnerships are however growing without great a deal of attention or focus. Ambiguity exists about the expectations these two sets of institutions have of each other and about how their relationship should best evolve. My interest in learning processes has its origins in my interest in determining if the process of ongoing interaction over the years resulted
in the two influencing each other’s goals and strategies. Is it possible, for instance, to attribute changes in goals and activities to interactive experience of the past? Is what is learnt applied to the concurrent and subsequent pursuit of means and ends?

**Research Objectives:**

More specifically, the following are the two objectives central to the proposed dissertation:

1. To explore strategies that housing advocacy NGOs have used to balance their advocacy missions with the interests of governmental organizations in collaborative networks between them.
2. a. To identify key influences on goal and strategy formulation in collaborative housing networks between NGOs and government organizations
    b. To examine the extent to which the growth and evolution in goals and strategies can be attributed to learning processes.

The proposed dissertation will use multiple case study design involving in-depth interviews, archival research, and participant observation. The dissertation will focus on at least three NGOs in the city of Mumbai.

“Dyadic relations” between the two organizations is the proposed unit of analysis. The dyads will be identified by organizational participants and corroborated with further interviews and analyses of NGO and government documents. In each dyad in depth interviews and documentary analysis in NGOs and government organizations will be used to identify key events. Each key event will then be the subject of embedded case studies. Therefore, any dyad identified and corroborated as being of significance in NGO-government relations will be selected and key events identified therein will be the subject of embedded case studies. At least three NGO-government dyads will be studied.

**Propositions and Methods:**

Each of the objectives is detailed below with propositions and methods.

**Objective 1: Managing conflicts between advocacy missions and the interests of governmental organizations.**

In the context of the proposed dissertation, housing rights advocacy is defined as a set of activities that NGOs use to advocate their cause of protecting and promoting housing rights of the poor. The set of NGO’s advocacy related activities is restricted to comprise of mobilizing communities towards organized protests and demonstrations and the organization of campaigns and movements.
Proposition: It is proposed that NGOs manage conflict with governmental organizations by using various strategies of negotiation (see Appendix 2).

NGOs adaptively “learn” to negotiate with governmental organizations in collaborative housing networks. A basic perceptual frame of preserving and promoting the housing rights of the urban poor guides NGO’s use of strategies. While publicly displaying positional commitment to its advocacy mission, actual negotiations with government organizations entails the use of such strategies (Oliver 1991) as compromise, acquiescence, defiance, avoidance, and manipulation. NGOs negotiate and bargain over means and ends making cooperation with government organizations a possibility.

Objective 2: Key influences on processes of goal and strategy formulation

In addressing the first objective, the proposed dissertation will identify key influences (see Appendix 3 for a list of key influences and possible indicators) on goals and activities pursued in collaborative housing networks between NGOs and government organizations. Of particular interest in the proposed dissertation is the role of organizational learning in determining the pursuit of goals and strategies in networks between the two. Interaction between NGOs and government organizations is posited as an arena that facilitates “learning” in NGOs and government organizations. Learning refers to the process of generating knowledge by processing information or events and using this knowledge to guide organizational routines (Ebrahim and Ortolano 2001, 449). Routines consist of rules, roles, responsibilities, technologies, hierarchies, norms and practices. Routines capture the lessons of history in a way that makes it accessible to organizations and organizational members who haven’t themselves experienced the history.

Therefore, in addressing the first question the following two sets of propositions will be considered:

Proposition 1: The perceptual frames of key participants in NGOs and government organizations influence “learning” relevant to goal setting and strategy formulation in collaborative housing networks.

How the network is organized, defined, and given meaning is influenced by the worldviews of key organizational participants. In the proposed dissertation, perceptual frames are understood as the lenses through which participants understand NGO-government relations. These frames guide how and what interorganizational problems are perceived, what sorts of strategies are used to address the problem, and how the experience in analyzed and interpreted. The frames could be a product of the history of their relations with one another and the institutional environment facing the NGOs and government organizations. The frames not only influences learning processes but can also be influenced by learning processes.
Proposition 2: Power relations within and between NGOs and government organizations influence “learning” processes in collaborative housing networks.

Rational school theorists vest goal determination and strategy formulation to reside within the boundaries of the organization. To the contrary, Cyert and March (1963, 27-32) propose that organizational goals are determined through a process of negotiation between members of dominant coalitions within and without the organization. No one participant or group has propriety over goal determination. This manifests itself as shifting power and control systems in organizations. Not only do power and control systems influence internal decision-making but also have the potential to influence aspects such as which goal is presented, by whom, and at what point in time in collaborative networks with other organizations.

Interdependency gives one organization the power to influence identification and legitimation of goals and strategies pursued by the other as well those pursued in collaborative networks. Both NGOs and government organizations may invoke strategies such as cooptation, bargaining, invoking sanctions, threats, financial incentives, or legislative mandates to influence each other’s behavior. A perceived sense of self-reliance could also influence power distribution in the network. If for instance an NGO or a government organization perceives itself as having a sufficient pool of resources say in human, financial, or technical areas, it may not deem it necessary to collaborate. The proposed dissertation will explore what, when, and how different patterns of power distribution influence change in goals and strategies in collaborative housing networks over time. The three aspects of power taken as being of particular relevance in understanding power relations in interorganizational domains is identified by Hardy and Phillips (1998, 219) to comprise of: formal authority, control of critical resources, and discursive legitimacy. Formal power is power residing either in an institution, an organization, is shared by organizations or could reside in an individual. Control of critical resources is explained under Pfeffer and Salancik’s (1978) articulation of resource dependency theory (also see Hickson et al 1971; Pettigrew 1973). Discursive legitimacy resides among those who are widely understood to be speaking “legitimately” on “issues and organizations affected by the domain” (Hardy, Phillips, and Lawrence 1998).

**Methods:**

The following series of steps will be followed in addressing the research objectives:

- **Identification of key events in organizational history.** Events will be identified from in depth interviews with NGO and government participants and through archival records (see Appendix 1) in the two organizations. Such key events will facilitate further probes as regards the activities and decision making processes that preceded and succeeded the event as well as the conduct of the actual event. If participants identify more than one event as a key turning point, each event will be the subject of an in-depth case study.
• Identification of forces that shaped these events (see Appendix 3).
• Focus on those events in which organizational learning was important in
  understanding how the event occurred and how it shaped goals and strategies
  pursued in the housing network between NGOs and government organizations.
• Special attention will be paid to the strategies deployed by NGOs and government
  organizations in networks between the two as well as how perceptual frames of
  organizational participants and relations of power have shaped goals and
  strategies pursued in the network over the years.

The data will be subject to an ongoing process of coding in which themes and categories
will be extracted from multiple sources of evidence and their relations explained in the
context in which they occurred. The research is therefore proposed to be an emergent
process rather than one that is tightly prefigured. The intent is not to test the applicability
of the propositions developed but to compare them to the central theme on how NGOs
and government organizations interact with one another over time to determine goals and
activities to be pursued both within and between them. NGO-government dyads will be
subject to analytical generalization.

The following set of criteria will be used in selection of NGOs to be included in the
study:

• Their mission statements and activities since the time of their inception should
demonstrate pursuit of advocacy-related activities
• The NGOs should have been in existence for at least five years
• The selected NGOs should also have cooperated with city government
  organizations in projects with the goal of delivering housing and related services
to the urban poor.

Government organizations to be included in the study will be determined in the course of
interviews and documentary analysis in NGOs.

The sources of evidence to be used for investigating the propositions related to the first
and the second objective include:

• In-depth, semi-structured interviews with key informants in NGOs and
government organizations
• Analysis of NGO and government documents, and
• Participant observation of internal and interorganizational staff meetings

Key informants in NGOs will likely include the executive director of the NGO; its
founder or the founding team; NGO’s board members; program director and his/her
immediate supervisor; other members of the housing team of the NGO comprising of
field workers and secretarial staff. Key informants in government organizations will
likely include departmental heads and officials associated with a program or a project.
The interview questions will be semi structured and will be interspersed with scheduled
and unscheduled probes (Berg 1998, 67) to provide richer, in-depth stories about
individual experiences in organizational and interorganizational decision-making processes related to the use of strategies. The interviews will aid in identifying key events in NGO-government relations. The events will be identified by both NGO and government participants and validated by way of interviews with other participants and archival records.

NGO-government collaborative processes in housing for the urban poor in Mumbai will be explained inductively. In other words, each intervention will be treated as having potential to both test and add to existing theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967).
Appendix 2 (part of Appendix G)

Archival Records in NGOs and Government Departments to be analyzed as sources of evidence include:

- Periodicals (annual, monthly, semiannual) reports in NGOs and government departments
- Minutes of internal staff meetings (maintained by the selected NGOs and government departments) and minutes of meetings with government/NGO officials
- Journal and newspaper publications
- Photographs, video recordings of events, life histories of organizational leader or recorded history of the organization
- Memos and letters exchanged within and between NGOs and government departments
- Evaluation reports of external consultants hired by the organization.
Appendix 2 (part of Appendix G)

The first objective of the proposed dissertation is to explore the strategies that NGOs use to balance their housing advocacy mission with interests of governmental organizations. I propose that NGOs utilize various strategies of negotiation to balance this seemingly paradoxical nexus. The list of strategies and the accompanying indicators are borrowed from Oliver (1991) who utilizes the table below to summarize various types of strategies and tactics (replaced by the term ‘indicators’) used by organizations to respond to institutional pressures.

Table 2: Strategies used by NGOs to balance their advocacy missions with cooperative arrangements with government organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquiesce</td>
<td>habitual response, imitation, compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>balancing, pacifying, bargaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid</td>
<td>concealing, buffering, escaping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defy</td>
<td>dismissing, challenging, attacking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulate</td>
<td>co-opting, influencing, controlling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3 (part of Appendix G)

The key influences though listed separately below, interactively influence each other to determine the formation of goals and strategies in and between organizations. Upon identifying key influences on goal and strategy formulation (objective 2) processes, I will pay particular attention to the role of organizational learning. Perceptual frames of organizational participants and the relations of power are proposed as two key influences on goal setting and strategy formulation in NGO-government collaborative housing networks.

Table 1: Key influences on goal and strategy formulation in NGO-government Collaborative Housing Networks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Influences</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Leadership</td>
<td>Distribution of authority in and between organizations, decision-making authority of members, nature of control exercised by dominant coalitions within each organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement of Personnel</td>
<td>Degree of influence of members over decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Mandates</td>
<td>Regulatory framework, nature of political regime, laws, policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demands of Institutional Legitimacy</td>
<td>Nature of control exercised in the form of agency mandates, and state, societal, and cultural pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Resource Interdependency</td>
<td>Practices of resource control (strategies such as cooptation, bargaining, invoking sanctions, threats to withhold resources, financial incentives, or legislative mandates)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Mission</td>
<td>Mission statement, agency mandates, norms and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations of Power within and between organizations</td>
<td>Nature of control over planning and implementation (e.g.) formal authority, resource dependency, discursive legitimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual Frames of organizational participants</td>
<td>Nature of interorganizational problems that have received attention, type of information collected, how the information is analyzed and interpreted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of relations</td>
<td>Degree of institutionalization of interorganizational experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Learning</td>
<td>Extent of fixing and adapting, degree of internal criticism, amount of research commissioned, monitoring and evaluation systems in place, number of reflective documents produced, improvements in organizational technology, improvements in structure, organization and methods of coordination, development of better understanding of who is good at what</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References (part of Appendix G)


APPENDIX H

CHRONOLOGY OF KEY HOUSING POLICY INITIATIVES FOR MUMBAI, 1943-present

1943-1956: The Government of the then-existing Bombay State disburses several grants of miniscule proportions to various municipal bodies for improving an unauthorized area.

Slum Clearance Scheme (1956): This is a Central government sponsored program which primarily deals with demolition and replacement of areas of unfit housing. The government is vested with necessary powers to compulsorily acquire such areas and redevelop them. More often than not, the pace of demolition exceeds the pace of redevelopment and this results in widespread resentment.

Maharashtra Slum Improvement Act (1963): This State Act is passed to coordinate and ensure speedier execution of the Slum Clearance Plan of the Central government.

Urban Community Development Programme (1967): This program originates in rural areas and is extended to select town and cities on a trial basis in 1967. The objective is overall community development, with redevelopment being one of a total package of interventions. The program is admittedly successful only in select cities. It demands intense concentration of resources and hence its replicability is limited.

Slum Improvement Programme (1971): The program while retaining the right to demolish and redevelop areas of ‘unfit’ housing, emphasizes on improvement of the living environment in slums through provision of tap water, sewer and storm water drains, community baths and latrines, paved roads, street lights, etc. The Slum Improvement Act brings in a new phase of tolerance of slums. Basic amenities that are available in slums are largely a product of this program. The program gets plagued with issues such as lack of necessary physical space (high density in settlements) to carry out improvement works. As a result, the amenities such as water taps are few and far between resulting in overuse and poor upkeep and maintenance. Also, slums on land belonging to private owners and Central government authorities (such as the Airport Authority, the Indian Railways, etc.) are excluded from this program. Panwalkar (1995, 123) adds that the program was extended to slums located on private and Central government lands in the 1990s. Private owners, adds Panwalkar (1995, 124), would obtain stay orders from courts disallowing execution of improvement works on their lands.

Slum Improvement Board (1974): is created in February 1974 but Central financial assistance for this program is stopped in April 1974 and the State government is forced to carry out its improvement works using its own total plan allocation. In 1977, this Board is merged with the newly created State housing authority called the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA).

Census of Slums (1976): A census of slums is carried out this year and identity cards (also called photopasses) are issued to slum dwellers. It is generally agreed that photopass holders will be relocated elsewhere in the case of demolition. The position of the Controller of Slums is created. This office is vested with the responsibility to prevent proliferation of slums; to protect existing
settlements from being encroached upon by new entrants, to protect vacant lands required for public purposes, and to coordinate the programs of various authorities.

1979-1982: The World Bank evinces interest in utilizing Bombay as the site of its new approach to slums namely, slum upgradation. Between 1979 and 1982, a series of consultations take place between the World Bank and State government officials. A research study sponsored by the World Bank produces a report called the “Bombay City Study.” The report identifies shelter as a sector “deserving high priority” (Panwalkar 1995, 125). The Bombay Urban Development Programme (BUDP) is launched in 1985 for INR 2,820 million. INR 530 million of this is allocated for a Slum Upgradation Programme (SUP). The project is funded by the World Bank.

Slum Upgradation Programme (SUP) (1985): Based on the Bank’s philosophy of cost-affordability and full recovery, the program aims to grant 30-year renewable leaseholds to cooperative housing societies of slum dwellers. For each lease, a ten percent Environmental Improvement Cess (fee), standardized at INR 200, is to be paid by the participating household. The balance amount of the purchase price of secure tenure is to be repaid at no less than 12 percent per annum over the next 20 years. Based on an elaborate financial analysis, the burden of land improvement and service charges is designed to be affordable, with charges not to exceed 18 percent of the household income. The program envisages covering 100,000 households occupying about 315 hectares of land across 200 different slum areas across the city. Those enumerated in 1976 and then in 1980 are the only settlements eligible for inclusion in the SUP.

The SUP is taken up in Bombay in 1985 with World Bank assistance. The land tenure gives slum dwellers a sense of security which facilitates own investments in housing; however its applicability is restricted to lands without a nonconforming reservation such as a playground, a school, or a hospital. This accompanied with derelict land record keeping systems meant that the numbers of leases granted are low compared to the number of cooperative societies registered. The program comes to an abrupt end in 1991 with announcement of the SRD.


VITA

Ramya Ramanath was born in New Delhi, India, on the 12th of December 1973. In 1994, she completed a Bachelor’s Degree in Economics from the Ethiraj College for Women in Chennai (Madras), India. She then went to Mumbai (Bombay), India, for a Master’s Degree in Social Work at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and specialized in Urban and Rural Community Development. While in Mumbai, she trained with two nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) -- an NGO working with street children called ‘Shelter’ Don Bosco and, then, with a human-rights advocacy NGO, called the Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action.

After completing her Master’s in 1996, she joined the Indian Association for Savings and Credit (IASC), a joint-venture micro-finance initiative between the Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC), a leading private sector housing finance provider, and, an NGO called the Palmyrah Workers’ Development Society. IASC planned to extend credit to micro-entrepreneurs living in the hilly tracts of Southern India. She trained with HDFC in South India for six months before she was appointed to help assess community needs and prepare a business-plan for the proposed venture.

In 1999, she joined the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO), a leading public-sector housing finance provider, in New Delhi, India. At HUDCO, she worked with its Community Development wing where her responsibilities included appraising and recommending housing loan applications from NGOs from across the country as well as to monitor and evaluate NGO-led housing projects in different States.

After a brief time with HUDCO, she joined the Environmental Design and Planning Ph.D. program at Virginia Tech, USA, in the Fall of 1999. Her dissertation research at the School of Public and International Affairs is centered on NGOs working to address the housing needs of those living in slum and squatter settlements in developing countries.