

# – FORMALIZATION, CITIZENSHIP AND THE CHALLENGES OF SELF-GOVERNANCE IN MUMBAI'S SLUM RELOCATION COLONIES

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## Abstract

*The city of Mumbai is engaged in large-scale urban restructuring efforts. Foundational to these is the demolition of many of the city's informal settlements and the relocation of residents to newly built housing complexes. Often discussed in terms of dispossession, this process is also one of formalization, with spatial, economic, cultural and sociopolitical implications. This article focuses on formalization's sociopolitical dimension, entailing the registration of residents and the establishment of formal governance provisions and new citizenship expectations. The provision of formal housing and recognized housing tenure has, designedly, been coupled with the establishment of official self-governance mechanisms leading to new civic responsibilities and reshaping the experience of citizenship among former slum dwellers. We explore these governance arrangements, the interaction between formality and informal governance processes and how these arrangements impact residents' perspectives on citizenship. We also identify several challenges to effective self-governance and the ways in which formal and informal processes shape residents' experiences of community life, citizenship and urban integration. While residents have benefited from some aspects of formalization (e.g. indoor plumbing and codified tenure rights), it has brought additional burdens, and the challenges of self-governance have, for many relocatees, reproduced a kind of marginalized citizenship within formal structures.*

## Introduction

As part of a broader global process of urbanization, a number of cities around the world are engaged in bold urban restructuring efforts focused on eradicating slum areas and reshaping the urban landscape. The city of Mumbai is in many ways emblematic of these efforts, with significant investment being expended on slum clearance and redevelopment in the service of expanding and upgrading the city's infrastructure and opening space for corporate, commercial and housing development. These efforts include the aggressive demolition of informal settlements and the relocation of residents to newly built, mid- and high-rise housing complexes commonly referred to as relocation colonies.<sup>1</sup> From a policy perspective, the stated aims of these efforts are both to spur economic growth and solidify Mumbai's place on the global stage as a 'world-class city'

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<sup>1</sup> To give a sense of the scale of investment, as of 2018 approximately 150,000 units of housing were built to rehouse relocated slum dwellers by private developers under the auspices of the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) and Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), which are the two principal parastatal agencies responsible for slum clearance and relocation, with an additional 36,000 units then under construction (Indorewala, 2018). As we note below, the monetary costs incurred to build these units are borne by private developers, not the state, which provides development rights to developers in exchange for providing housing for relocatees, though the state shoulders administrative costs associated with managing the relocation and development process.

and to address the needs of care, protection, and security of the urban poor (Bombay First, 2003; Jha *et al.*, 2013). Critics, on the other hand, see these efforts as revanchist, dispossessing the urban poor of their homes and appropriating property for development to benefit capital and the affluent (Banerjee-Guha, 2010; Bhide, 2017a). Indeed, most of the scholarship focused on state-led displacement is grounded in theories of ‘accumulation by dispossession’ (Harvey, 2003; Leitner *et al.*, 2022). Driven by the exigencies of global capital expansion, accumulation by dispossession in this context entails the spatial displacement of the poor to make way for spaces of consumption and profit as well as catalyzing other dynamics of marginalization, including the commodification of basic services (e.g. housing, sanitation, education, water), the rise of public–private partnerships, the adoption of neoliberal mechanisms of governance and the regulation and exclusion of the poor in public spaces (Banerjee-Guha, 2010).

Certainly, the clearance of informal settlements and the policy of relocation in Mumbai in many ways exemplifies this process of dispossession. For some residents in particular—those who live in unregistered slums, for example, or are unable to prove that they have lived in their settlement since at least 2000—experience an unmitigated dispossession without rights to compensation or relocation. And, as will become clear in the analysis to follow, many of those who accept compensation in the form of a unit in a relocation colony in exchange for their removal and the redevelopment of their informal settlement experience a kind of ‘social dispossession’ (Leitner *et al.*, 2022)—a disruption of social networks, experiences of exclusion, new financial burdens, contentious community dynamics—that are not fully compensated for by the tangible benefits of a new-built flat.<sup>2</sup> But, at the same time, the policies driving dispossession are also an effort at *formalization*, and the costs of displacement and relocation are often justified by the state in light of the presumed benefits of formalization, however tenuous they may be.

Formalization in this context can be manifest along several dimensions, though not all efforts at formalization address them all. Spatially, residents of informal settlements are moved from makeshift hutments to small flats in formal buildings and tower-block complexes. Culturally, by clearing slums and making way for new development, formalization is part of an effort to establish the city’s reputation as a modern, global city. Economically, formalization contributes to the regulation of workforce participation and community-level economic activity. Sociopolitically, formalization entails the enumeration and registration of individuals and the establishment of formal governance arrangements and citizenship expectations.

Although much has been written about slum communities and the broad processes of urbanization and urban restructuring policy in Mumbai, most extant research focuses either broadly on shifts in the state’s stance toward and response to informal settlements (Chatterji, 2005; Bhide, 2009); the dynamics of real estate speculation, corporate investment and the housing circumstances of slum dwellers (Appadurai, 2000; Grant and Nijman, 2002); the role of neoliberal policy and governance in driving slum clearance and urban restructuring (Banerjee-Guha, 2009); the role of state, market, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community actors in negotiating specific redevelopment and resettlement processes or decisions (Sanyal and Mukhija, 2001; Patel and Arputham, 2008; Weinstein, 2014); or the ways in which processes of development either contribute to the dispossession and containment of the

2 Prior to clearance, relocation and redevelopment, 70% of ‘eligible’ residents in informal settlements—those who can meet the requirements of proof of residency—must be consulted and agree to the process of redevelopment and accept the provision of a flat in a relocation colony. The extent to which the consultation process is robust and free of coercion, however, is unclear and, once an informal settlement has been approved for redevelopment, all households, regardless of tenure status or consent, are subject to relocation. In addition to the kinds of social dislocation outlined here, relocatees also sometimes experience others, including from livelihood opportunities and support services (including schools, social services and healthcare providers), and from basic amenities (including commercial outlets and banking facilities).

poor (Banerjee-Guha, 2010; Jha *et al.*, 2013) or can open up new avenues of inclusion and contention (Appadurai, 2001; McFarlane, 2004; Anand and Rademacher, 2011). Aside from some impact assessment studies that point to the economic, social, cultural and political disarticulation of these communities a few years after their resettlement (TISS: 2003; 2008; S. Singh, 2008; Bhide and Dabir, 2010; Coelho *et al.*, 2012; Ayyar, 2013), little empirical research exists on the lived experiences of former slum dwellers post-resettlement or on the nature of the emergent communities in which they now live.

This article addresses that gap, with a particular focus on the sociopolitical dimension of efforts to move residents of informal settlements into formal residential spaces and make them take on formal roles of self-governance. This includes governance arrangements established at the local level, the nature of citizen participation in these arrangements, the ways in which formal structures, processes, and expectations shape community life and impact relocated residents, the interactions between formality and informal processes of governance and interaction around decision-making, resource allocation and representation. The article thus moves beyond much extant literature to examine the *afterlife* of dispossession for those who have been relocated, compensated for their displacement with a formal flat, and integrated into formal systems of community governance and local resource management. In so doing, it focuses specifically on how efforts at formalization—however incomplete and however wide the distance between the presumed benefits claimed by the state and the reality experienced on the ground—shape the perceptions and enactment of community and urban citizenship for relocated residents. Formalization in this context brings with it expectations of community self-governance and mechanisms to support it that affect residents' orientations toward and experience of citizenship in their new communities.

The article is organized as follows. First, we provide some background on processes of urbanization, migration, and state responses to the rise and growth of informal settlements over time, as well as on the current policy response and the local contexts in which our analysis is grounded. Next, we outline some of the theoretical orientations to formalization, citizenship and governance that are relevant to understanding the empirical cases we will examine. We then outline our methods, data and analytic approach and turn to our empirical findings. These are organized around three themes: *formalization*, which focuses in particular on the nature of the formal associational and management arrangements that define the governance regimes of the relocation colonies; *self-governance*, which centers on the impacts of these arrangements on community participation, representation, norms and issues of capacity and resource allocation; and *citizenship*, which concerns how the dynamics of formality and informality and shifting community–state relations shape citizenship expectations and experiences. We close with some general conclusions and implications for policy and practice.

### Background and context

The city of Mumbai has grown exponentially since Indian independence, from a population of about 3 million in 1950 to a megacity of over 20 million inhabitants in 2020. This growth has been driven by waves of migration, including large numbers of poor people from rural areas across India in search of economic opportunity (Pacione, 2005). Given the absence of affordable housing in the city, many of these migrants established homes in informal settlements. Although estimates differ, while only about 5% of the city's residents lived in such slums at independence, the proportion of slum dwellers in the city is estimated to be around 50% today (David, 1996; Bhide, 2017a).

As the scale and distribution of informal settlements grew, government at both national and local levels began to see slums as a problem in need of addressing. Bhide (2009) outlines three phases of state response to slums, from *negation* to *tolerance*

to *acceptance*.<sup>3</sup> The negation phase, ushered in by the federal Slum Clearance and Improvement Act of 1956, focused on efforts to eradicate slum areas. But the growth of informal settlements far outpaced the resources available, and it became ‘clear that sheer eradication did not solve any problems and that efforts had to be made to upgrade or resettle slum dwellers’ (Nijman, 2008: 77). The second phase began in the early 1970s as the pace of inward migration accelerated. Here the emphasis shifted to providing basic amenities—water, toilets, pavement, electricity—to some informal settlements. Along with this came the first effort to enumerate the slum population, which was accompanied by some official recognition of slum dwellers’ tenure rights. The first official census of slum dwellers took place in 1976, and identification cards were issued. This was far from a complete census, however, since it only focused on settlements established on state government land (Chatterji, 2005), excluding properties that were privately owned or owned by the central government, which together comprised the majority of the land in the city. The third phase began in the 1980s, when policies turned to upgrading housing and infrastructure and providing alternative housing through, for example, the slum upgradation and low-income group shelter programs funded under the World Bank’s Bombay Urban Development Project. The former allowed cooperative societies of residents in informal settlements to lease land and provided funds to improve residences; the latter provided land at a subsidy for slum dwellers to build their own homes (Kumar, 2005). In the mid-1980s, the central government provided funding through the Prime Minister’s Grant Project (PMGP), including a pilot to organize slum dwellers into housing cooperatives. Though not fully implemented, the PMGP was instructive in providing evidence that slum dwellers might be open to redevelopment if it provided them with more valuable housing and in suggesting that, given the expense of redevelopment, private investment would likely be necessary (Mukhija, 2003).

These later efforts foreshadow the policies relating to informal settlements and urban development that began in the 1990s in the context of India’s embrace of a range of neoliberal reforms. But the role of the state in these schemes shifted, moving away from direct provision to facilitating rehabilitation and development through market-oriented processes and public–private partnerships. Current policy orientations are grounded in this period, beginning in 1991 with the central government’s Slum Rehabilitation Scheme and, at the state level in Maharashtra, the Slum Redevelopment Scheme, under which the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) was established in 1995 (Bardhan *et al.*, 2015). The SRA provides incentives to real estate developers who make land available to the state for public purposes or agree to provide housing for slum dwellers. In exchange for producing this housing, developers are provided with rights to build beyond the maximum permissible area that can be constructed on a particular plot of land (known as the floor space index) and may receive transferable development rights (TDRs) to develop additional properties in other parts of the city. Under these arrangements, slum dwellers are either rehoused in small flats in buildings constructed on a portion of the footprint of the original slum (in-situ development), with the remaining land developed for sale at market rate, or developers can use their TDRs to develop market-rate properties in more lucrative real estate markets in the city (Mukhija, 2001; Bardhan *et al.*, 2015). Flats are provided at no cost to the relocated slum dwellers, and the costs of building them are borne by the developers, not the state. A similar scheme, the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP), was launched in 2002 with funding from the World Bank but with a focus on resettling people displaced by road and rail infrastructure development. Again, TDRs are provided to developers as

3 Others have characterized these policy phases somewhat differently but, as Roma Chatterji (2005: 201) points out with reference to a report drafted by the Brihan Mumbai Regional Development Authority that characterized the state’s role as moving from controller to provider to facilitator, ‘all three types of legislation co-exist in Mumbai, making a rigid chronology problematic’.

an incentive to build housing at their own expense for project-affected persons (PAPs) in exchange for the right to develop lucrative projects at market rate in other parts of the city. The Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) oversees resettlement, working through public–private partnerships with developers and NGOs. PAPs are organized into cooperative housing societies (CHSs) and provided with occupancy rights to their units, which are small flats (around 225 square feet) with indoor toilets and piped water in tower-block buildings; the cooperatives have leasehold rights to the land (Modi, 2011). The establishment of CHSs are mandatory in all resettlement colonies and are established under the Cooperative Societies Act (1912), the same legislative instrument that governs the establishment of housing cooperatives outside the context of relocation and resettlement. However, the specific process for their establishment differs somewhat from place to place, as we explore briefly below.

The two sites that are the empirical focus of our analysis (Majas and Lallubhai Compound) are both MUTP relocation colonies. In each case, the MMRDA worked with a different coordinating NGO that was responsible for organizing and preparing the community for relocation, spearheading the establishment of housing cooperatives, coordinating the election of community leaders, establishing procedures for allocating flats in the relocation colonies, promoting the creation of self-help groups, and serving as a conduit for communication and mediation between residents, MMRDA, and other government agencies. In Majas, the responsible NGO was the Slum Rehabilitation Society (SRS), established in 1972. In Lallubhai Compound, the NGO was the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers (SPARC), founded in 1984.

Majas, located in north-central Mumbai, was built to accommodate residents displaced by the construction of the Jogeshwari–Vikhroli Link Road highway. It is a relatively small colony comprising 16 buildings that house primarily PAPs who were relocated within 5 kilometers of their prior residence, although about half of current residents are now renters or have purchased homes from the original residents and are relatively more affluent than the PAPs from whom they rent or bought the property. Majas is fairly well connected to the rest of the city, with ready access to public transportation and nearby amenities, including schools and banks, and there is a hospital within 2 kilometers. The colony is relatively homogeneous with regard to religion, caste and place of origin; about 90% of residents are Hindu and over two-thirds are originally from Maharashtra.

The other site is the Lallubhai Compound, one of the largest relocation colonies in the city. It is located in the M-East Ward, which has among the highest concentrations of informal settlements in the city (more than 75% of the ward's population), the lowest Human Development Index, and more than a dozen resettlement colonies (TISS, 2015). The compound contains 70 buildings organized in three sectors and houses about 100,000 residents, primarily Dalits and Muslims who migrated to Mumbai from several different states, including Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal and Bihar. It is much less well-connected to the city and has ready access to far fewer amenities in a larger community than Majas. It is also close to significant disamenities; in addition to the large concentration of informal settlements in the area, Lallubhai is located near Asia's largest dumping ground and the largest abattoir in India. Residents were relocated from hutments along railway lines and highways across the city's broad geography, creating a much more diverse population, in a peripheral area of the city, where social networks and access to work have been more seriously disrupted than in Majas. These differences between the two relocation colonies have had some notable influences on the nature of community life in each and on residents' responses to the governance arrangements and citizenship responsibilities and expectations that have come with relocation, although many of the themes and experiences we explore below are common to both sites. Both had been occupied for about 12 years at the time of data collection.

### Theoretical orientations: formalization, citizenship and self-governance

As noted above, the removal of slum dwellers from the homes they established in informal settlements is justified by the presumed benefits of formalization. Formalization can be seen in both a positive and negative light, either as a process to provide legal protection and security to city residents whose informality renders them essentially ‘invisible’ to the state and who therefore have limited access to services and citizenship rights, or as an exercise of state control that constrains freedom and has deleterious effects on the poor (Huang *et al.*, 2019). Indeed, while informal settlements are often sites of dynamic economic and social activity (Perlman, 1988; Nijman, 2010; Roy, 2011), life within them is also often highly precarious. They are ‘spaces of exception’ (Bhide, 2017a: 76) where housing tenure is unstable, environmental conditions are deplorable, agency for self-determination is constrained, and citizenship rights do not apply. Formalization renders these populations visible, providing residents with documentation that enables access to services, establishes tenure rights, and clarifies rules and expectations regarding rights and responsibilities. It also creates the means by which these populations can be more effectively surveilled and controlled (Scott, 1999; Baviskar, 2003). It thus has ‘contradictory effects that both benefit and harm its recipients’ (Huang *et al.*, 2019: 443).

But formalization and informality are not dichotomous; they coexist and interact in complex ways, shift over time, and are dynamically constructed by multiple actors both within and beyond the state (Roy, 2005; Chiodelli and Tsfadia, 2016). In addition, the promise of formalization’s benefits may be left incomplete—‘the state’s empty gesture towards formality’, as Kavita Ramakrishnan (2014: 759) puts it—with promises of permanent security of tenure, for example, unrealized or time-limited for some.<sup>4</sup>

Haid and Hildebrandt (2019) suggest attending to five dimensions that shape the dynamics between formality and informality: *governance*, which highlights the multiple stakeholders and network relations between state and nonstate actors and the importance of social relations within them; *agency*, which focuses on the interaction between state and nonstate actors as shaped by power differentials and capacities; *sovereignty*, which notes the existence of multiple centers of power and authority that co-exist, including those created by nonstate entities that ‘adopt state-like functions’ (*ibid.*: 557; Picker, 2019); *legitimacy*, which is defined here as negotiated among multiple parties rather than being clearly instantiated in particular institutions; and *legality*, produced not just by formal laws and regulations but through the interplay between formal regulations, interpretations of their meaning and the capacity to maneuver within these frames given differential knowledge and access to social capital.

In the context of neoliberal urbanism, these dynamics are accompanied by a reorientation to governance that emphasizes devolution from central to more local authorities, privatization, and mechanisms of participation that incorporate market actors and NGO representatives into deliberative and implementation roles (Bhide, 2017b). They also, often, invoke ideals of citizen participation into these processes, with the presumption that participation will lead to greater inclusivity and responsiveness. But these arrangements are also ‘Janus-faced’ (Swyngedouw, 2005) given the contradictory tensions between the promise of greater democracy, on the one hand, and the ascendance of market forces and logics, the ambiguities of authority, legitimacy, representation and accountability, and power differentials that are largely reproduced within newly configured governance arrangements and are exercised

4 Ramakrishnan is writing about formalization in the context of slum clearance and relocation in Delhi, where eligible residents were compensated with a 10-year lease on parcels of land in peripheral areas of the city on which to build homes, rather than being moved to flats in formally organized tower-block buildings. The ‘gesture’ toward formalization is arguably more robust in Mumbai, where there is no *a priori* date past which residents’ occupancy rights are put in question because of lease expiration, and where formal arrangements for representation and the management of community resources have been put in place. But uncertainties do exist, as will be demonstrated in the analysis to follow.

through both formal and informal channels and include both state and nonstate actors, on the other.

In the Indian context, forms of devolved participatory governance have a long history, but have become broadly embraced and taken on new dimensions in the context of liberalization. In the urban context, decentralization of governance was codified in the 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment passed in 1992, which led to the establishment of ward committees at the sub municipal level to be composed of elected officials, city bureaucrats, and (nonvoting) representatives of civil society organizations. The success of these committees in promoting meaningful participation and devolution of authority has for the most part been limited (Baud and Nainan, 2008; B. Singh, 2012), and additional mechanisms have also emerged that operate as parallel structures to the formal governance apparatus of ward committees. These include mechanisms such as advanced locality management (ALM) committees, local area citizens groups, and neighborhood-based resident welfare associations, and are largely focused on addressing shortfalls in the provision of public services (B. Singh, 2012). While assessments of these schemes vary, most of the literature examining their functioning suggests that they have contributed to a proliferation of competing claimants and claims for city space and resources, failed to promote broad participation, largely excluded marginalized populations and disproportionately benefited the middle classes at the expense of the poor (Zérah, 2009; Kundu, 2011; B. Singh, 2012; Chattopadhyay, 2015). CHSs in the relocation colonies share many of the roles and characteristics of these other participatory schemes, focused on the building and neighborhood level. They operate formally as 'invited spaces' of participation that are externally established and engage recognized resident groups in decision making, resource management, negotiation with state bureaucracies, and contributing financially to service provision (Lemanski and Lama-Rewal, 2013: 95; see also Zérah, 2010). 'These apparently managerial new approaches', as Zérah (2010: 158) points out referring to the ALM scheme, 'contribute in shaping urban citizenship as well as reconfiguring power relationships'.

The proliferation of these participatory mechanisms in the context of the neoliberal reforms that were enacted beginning in the 1990s has increased the role and influence of market actors and some NGOs, and it has opened up differential space for citizen influence and engagement, largely capitalized on by the middle classes. For the poor, the governance arrangements generated have largely focused at the neighborhood level and may be more constraining. Reflective of Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality—governance less by the direct exercise of state power than by a diverse set of tactics and techniques operating through a range of actors and institutions across a variety of social settings—they establish mechanisms and processes for governing the poor 'at the level of the social', seeking to enlist them in developing 'technologies of citizenship' and strategies of self-help and self-regulation (Cruikshank, 1999: 39, 67). These strategies of promoting 'active citizenship within a self-governing community' (Rose, 1996: 335), as Talja Blokland and her colleagues (2015: 658) suggest, 'give urban citizenship its new significance, but at the same time they also render citizenship claims inherently ambivalent'. Relocation colonies seek to enlist residents in the establishment of self-governing communities through citizen engagement in formal governance arrangements and their contributions (including financial contributions) to the management of their buildings and communities. With formalization, therefore, relocatees are expected to embrace a new set of responsibilities around the governance of their new communities and are provided with specific mechanisms through which community governance is meant to operate. These arrangements in turn specify new civic responsibilities and reframe their experience of urban citizenship. Within this context, formality and informality interact as different stakeholders with differential access to power and influence, both working within the formal governance arrangements and engaging informal relationships and activities in pursuit of livelihood and quality of life.

In his seminal essay 'Citizenship and Social Class', T.H. Marshall ([1950] 1992) identified three elements of citizenship: civil, political, and social. The civil dimension concerns individual rights to freedom of thought, speech, property, and justice under the law. The political component concerns the right to participation in formal political processes. The social element refers to rights associated with economic well-being and social integration. Building on this framework (and subsequent critiques) and elaborating the dynamic evolution of ideas of citizenship in response to social conflicts and struggles over time, Bryan S. Turner (1990) identifies two additional dimensions: the division between public and private realms, and the existence of passive citizenship (determined from above through the state) versus active citizenship (constructed from below through participatory action at the local level). In the analysis that follows, we interrogate the ways in which the processes and instruments of formalization and the interaction between formal and informal arrangements in the context of slum clearance and development are playing out for the relocated residents, with particular attention to the role and implications of local self-governance for their citizenship rights and experiences. Formalization and its concomitant expectations for community self-governance affect residents' orientations toward and experience of citizenship in their new communities across each of Marshall's three elements and operate (drawing on Turner's distinctions) in both public and private realms, incorporating both top-down constructions of citizenship (through the formally established mechanism of the CHS) and bottom-up orientations (through the differential participation in decision making and community governance).

### **Methods and data**

Our analysis is grounded in a comparative case study based principally on in-depth fieldwork in the two relocation communities, along with analyses of census, administrative and archival data. The communities themselves, as noted above, provide variation along a few key dimensions: size, distance from the informal settlement(s) from which residents were relocated, relative centrality or peripherality of the community and degree of population diversity. Fieldwork included observation of community activities and public life over the course of two years, in-depth qualitative interviews with residents of each community, and key informant interviews with a small set of actors in local government and at NGOs that have worked extensively with communities affected by slum clearance and development activities. A total of 89 residents (31 in Majas and 58 in Lallubhai) participated in interviews. We used purposive sampling to ensure a diversity of perspectives, including general residents with different demographic profiles (men and women; adults, elderly and youth; from different religious backgrounds), CHS elected leadership and nonresident merchants. Interviews and observations were conducted in Hindi or Marathi by teams of 2 fieldworkers at each site, and interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and translated into English for analysis. Key informant interviewees included officials at MMRDA, SRA, and the local ward office of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), the three government agencies principally responsible for slum clearance and development and for the provision of public goods and services. We also interviewed staff of the two major NGOs involved in these processes across the city, SRS and SPARC, which served as the mediating NGOs for Majas and Lallubhai respectively, as well as staff from a third NGO, Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA), which has deep experience in this arena and in the communities in which our research was conducted. Key informant interviews were conducted in English, audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. All interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview guide, tailored to the type of interviewee (government agency, NGO, resident), that provided a core set of common questions across all interviews as well as specific questions designed to elicit perspectives based on each interviewee's positionality. Our interview approach also offered sufficient



flexibility to pursue themes and issues raised by interviewees but not anticipated by our interview guides. Interview transcripts were coded thematically using the qualitative data analysis program NVivo 12. Codes relevant to the current analysis include those focused on interviewees' perspectives on community governance, organizational actors' roles and effectiveness, citizenship, opportunities and barriers to civic and political engagement, social relations among neighbors, formal and informal social control, tenure rights, quality of life, the built environment (e.g. amenities, housing quality, sanitation, communal space, crime and safety, public infrastructure), and comparisons (costs and benefits) with life in the informal settlement from which each resident moved. Analytic matrices were constructed to clarify the extent to which particular perspectives on different themes suggested systematic differences among interviewees with different characteristics (e.g. research site, leadership role, demographic profile, resident, NGO representative or government key informant). Analytic memos were also prepared synthesizing observations from field notes.

### Findings

We now turn to our findings, organized around three central themes: formalization, self-governance and citizenship.

#### – Formalization: governance structures and processes

The principal mechanism through which self-governance is organized in these communities is the cooperative housing society (CHS). A CHS is meant to be established in each building and to be registered at the MMRDA as the official governing body for the Society, and each CHS has the responsibility to manage the building and represent and respond to the needs of building residents. CHS leadership is meant to be elected, with regular elections held at least every 5 years. In practice, this is not always adhered to and, even when elections are held regularly, there is a tendency for leaders to retain their positions with little turnover in leadership over long periods of time.

These housing societies perform what we argue are the basic roles of local (more or less democratic) self-governance on behalf of the residents: deliberation, representation and resource allocation (Chaskin and Greenberg, 2015). This includes, for example, providing a forum (through regular and special meetings) for residents to participate in the deliberation and decision making regarding community priorities and responses, representing the interests of residents to the MMRDA and other outside actors, ensuring the adequate provision of water, electricity and sanitation, attending to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the built environment (the building and its surrounding area), maintaining order and managing conflicts among residents, collecting maintenance fees and allocating material resources, including the distribution of residential units to different families and the allocation of rooms for collective use, such as preschools (*balwadi*) and meeting space for resident groups.<sup>5</sup> To the extent that these functions were active in informal settlements, they were largely achieved through the ad hoc, individual initiative of local residents or through grassroots mobilization, sometimes supported by intermediary NGOs, to advocate for responses from the state.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, the governance arrangements in the relocation colonies formalize the roles and responsibilities for maintaining community resources and fostering collective decision making under the auspices of housing societies.

How a CHS is established is somewhat variable. In some cases, CHS leadership is established prior to the society being registered, and these leaders often serve

5 In some cases, unit allocation was performed by MMRDA or the coordinating NGO prior to the formation of a CHS. This shift in responsibility to the CHS marks an important phase in these projects, with the formation and registration of the CHS an important milestone to be attained.

6 There are some exceptions to this in cases where Resident Welfare Associations have been established in informal settlements (Lemanski and Lama-Rewal, 2013) or where CHSs have been formed in anticipation of the move to a relocation colony under the SRA scheme.

as intermediaries between the government agency or NGO that led the process of relocation preparation and support and helped facilitate the relocation process. They also play an important role in determining the allocation of flats to different families in the building(s) to which they were moved. In other cases, the CHS takes longer to establish and only happens once the building is fully occupied at the site. Some buildings in Lallubhai, for example, were still without a CHS at the time of fieldwork or had a set of leaders performing CHS functions but without a formally registered Society.

In some cases, CHSs have come together to form a federation of societies, adding another layer of governance within the relocation colonies. In Lallubhai, two of the three residential sectors have formed a federation; in Majas, one federation has been formed representing the whole colony. Federation governance involves representatives from each CHS within the federation, and federations play a similar role to housing societies but focus beyond individual buildings on common issues related to the upkeep, improvements, financing, infrastructure, safety and service delivery for the colony more broadly. They also play a role in fostering communication among different building societies and representing the community as a whole to outside actors, such as government agencies, in an effort to garner resources, improve services and address challenges that arise within the community. Like the CHSs, federations are meant to hold regular meetings and elections, providing a mechanism for representation, participation, deliberation and problem solving at the community level. The formation of CHSs for managing housing colonies is widespread across urban India (India has a long history with the cooperative movement that took root in the early twentieth century through consumer cooperatives and subsequently expanded across sectors and regions), and municipal policy requires that CHSs are formed in any new colony being established. This indicates the handing over of responsibility for the buildings from the developer to residents and to some extent, as will be discussed further below, from the state to residents and their formal associations.

Beyond these formal governance arrangements, more informal associational groups have been formed to promote collective action and mutual aid among residents. The two most common forms of self-help groups in the relocation communities are women's groups (*mahila mandal*) and youth groups (*yuva mandal*). For the most part, the *mandals* focus on organizing, advertising and implementing ceremonial festivals and events around key religious holidays, although some focus as well on promoting self-sufficiency and community betterment by organizing collective activities (such as revolving loan funds and community improvement projects), promoting and supporting microenterprise activities, and organizing and mobilizing residents in response to specific concerns as they emerge. These groups are dynamic, more active at some times than at others, and a number of respondents, particularly in Lallubhai, noted a decline in activity among many of these groups. They may or may not interface with the CHSs in terms of membership, actions and issues.

There is significant variation among respondents regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness and responsiveness of the mechanisms through which community governance is maintained. About half of the respondents in Lallubhai noted that CHSs perform the basic functions for which they were founded: they run regular meetings, ensure that common areas in the building are clean and maintained, respond to problems with water, sanitation, and interpersonal conflict and provide for enhanced security through the installment of CCTV cameras and the like. In this way, the CHS serves to bring residents—as members of a formal, legally constituted and clearly legible association—into the normative expectations of other duty-bearing citizens in the city space. Formalization in this case constructs an apparatus of community self-governance that reshapes citizenship expectations and experience.

Although half of respondents in Lallubhai credited their CHS with performing these basic functions of self-governance on behalf of residents, a similar number claimed

their CHS is largely ineffective and a number of them that CHS leadership is in some way malfeasant, either privileging the needs and priorities of some residents over others or using their positions for personal gain or aggrandizement.

Residents in Majas who opined on CHS effectiveness and responsiveness were split into three roughly equal groups with either generally positive, negative or neutral assessments of their CHS, respectively. CHS and federation activity in support of security, including the installation of CCTV cameras and gates for the main entrance were particularly, and fairly universally, appreciated. But, as in Lallubhai, residents also raised issues of corruption, incompetence and nonresponsiveness on the part of CHS leadership. As one put it:

The name of any society contains the word 'cooperative'. So, this is a cooperative society, but you will not find the meaning of this word in the workings of the society. The only thing they know is [how to] choke residents' throats here ... [Which] means that you do not give any kind of facilities and you keep on increasing the maintenance. Did they cooperate or choke our throat?

In both sites, many respondents recognize the limitations of what the housing societies and federations can do given limited resources and leadership capacity, non-responsiveness on the part of government agencies and resident behaviors (themes to which we will return). However, a number of respondents also level claims of corruption at CHS officials. About a third of respondents in Lallubhai, and about a quarter in Majas, discussed corruption on the part of CHS leaders, primarily with regard to embezzlement, mismanagement of funds and bribery. As a resident in Lallubhai recounted:

There was always deficit of funds. The funds were not deposited also. There was no check on where the money was spent. The money was circulated and used on 'rotation' basis. The president had a business. So, he used the money in his business.

This is one way in which the line between formality and informality is blurred, with individuals with formal leadership roles leveraging their positions to establish alternative centers of agency, negotiating relationships through informal networks, and navigating around formal role expectations and regulations for rent seeking and other purposes apart from, and sometimes contrary to, intended governance roles and responsibilities. These actions reflect several of Haid and Hildebrandt's (2019) dimensions of the dynamics between formal and informal action. As one staff member of a mediating NGO put it:

People are so creative with ways to siphon money you would never even know whether it is right or wrong. You know, if the steel or sand or brick vendor is compromised and the guys is telling them okay we will pay you X but we're going to take a kickback there, I'll never find that out, if it's all being done in cash.

Fewer residents discussed the effectiveness of the federations since the CHSs are more foundational and proximate to their experience. Most who offered an opinion were CHS officers, and have a more direct connection with and knowledge of the federations' work. In Lallubhai, respondents' assessments are generally mixed. They note the role their federation plays in promoting communication among housing societies and substituting for the MMRDA to address issues that the government agency has failed to respond to. The latter illustrates a kind of hand-off of formal responsibility from the state to the community via the establishment of CHSs and the federation. But, while acknowledging

the potential for the federations to play an effective advocacy role on behalf of the community, they also note their relative ineffectiveness in playing that role to date.

In Majas, assessments of the federation were more likely to be negative. Criticism centered on the federation as largely inactive, or operating in an exclusive, nontransparent way and on federation members failing to meet or perform their duties. In both sites, respondents recognized that the federations have limited capacity to make improvements without the support and contribution of residents. They also noted that leadership roles demand significant time and effort and are not remunerated. They thus rely on volunteer labor in the context of formalized responsibilities which perhaps, as some have suggested, contribute to some leaders' embrace of informal rent-seeking activities that they see as justified by their unpaid labor.

Relations among housing societies are variable: they are sometimes described as supportive, sometimes as independent and sometimes as sources of conflict. In general, the societies play a mediating and supporting role in relation to the *yuva* and *mahila mandals*. Most respondents who discussed the relationship between their CHS and the self-help groups noted a general lack of CHS support (financial or otherwise) and engagement with the *mandals*, although there were also a few instances where the CHS was instrumental in supporting them. Dynamics have also changed over time, in some cases beginning strong and drifting apart; in others working through conflict toward accommodation. This is another example of the dynamic between formal and informal governance arrangements. As a member of a *yuva mandal* in Lallubhai noted:

In the beginning there were tensions. The older members of the housing society thought that we were not giving value to them and also led to certain conflicts amongst us. Questions are like, why is the youth group is not calling us when they are organizing things? ... Questions like, why they are going alone to the police to take permission? Why do they not ask us? You know! There are some people with small minds.

Again, these dynamics reflect several of the dimensions of the formal/informal dynamic outlined by Haid and Hildebrandt (2019), including the existence of multiple stakeholders and stakeholder networks with varying relations to state actors, power differentials among them, and negotiated and contested legitimacy.

### **Dynamics of self-governance: representation, participation and community norms**

Beyond the capacity limitations of the formal organs of governance and the concerns about incompetence and corruption described above, a major challenge to effective self-governance in these communities has to do with the level and nature of resident participation and the degree to which residents feel that the formal associational mechanisms established provide adequate representation of their interests and respond adequately to their needs. Concerns about participation center on both engagement in the formal deliberative and governance activities of the housing societies and on the informal behaviors of residents that undermine self-governance and create conflicts around adherence to community norms. Respondents also expressed concerns about the unequal representation of certain groups and exclusionary policies that constrain opportunities for participation in formal governance processes, as well as about the level of conflict among members of some Societies and between residents and CHS leadership.

With regard to formal participation and representation, several challenges emerged in both sites. One has to do with CHS leadership and selection. CHS elections are not always scheduled regularly and, as noted above, CHS officers tend to remain in post over the long term with little leadership turnover. In some cases, this is due to the perceived competence of existing officers (and a sense that there is no need to replace

them). In others, it is because current leadership invests in efforts to hold onto power, or because new elections are simply not held or are held at times when the larger membership is unlikely to attend.

Time, resident capacity and interest present a clear barrier to greater leadership turnover. Many residents note that they don't have the time, feel they don't have the capability or don't want to assume the responsibility of leadership. In many cases, this is due to a basic lack of interest, lifestyle limitations such as lack of time due to work or childcare or immobility due to age. But many residents also spoke of their (or their neighbors') limitations due to poverty and lack of education. As a resident in Majas put it:

There is no one in my family who can represent us in the Society, and we do not have knowledge of it how it functions ... There are people who have been working for the past ten years and they have the knowledge of running a society that way to support them.

Those who approved of their housing society's leaders and reflected positively on their effectiveness were less likely to express concern on this point, although several CHS leaders felt the burden of their continued service, noting the time and energy the work takes and the lack of remuneration—and in some cases lack of appreciation on the part of their residents—and expressing burn-out, competing priorities and a desire to hand over responsibilities to other community members. This may also speak to the limitations of the capacity-building efforts of the government agencies and NGOs responsible for facilitating the transition to formalization in the context of the resettlement colonies. These factors reflect a fundamental limitation in the formalization process in these contexts, in which, as Veena Das (2004: 419) notes, resettled slum dwellers are meant to 'play by the rules of an urban bourgeoisie', but without access to the resources available to their middle-class counterparts.

These barriers to leadership participation also extend to challenges with broader participation in deliberation and oversight. As another Majas resident noted, 'people did not say anything because more than half the people here are uneducated, they are not aware of a lot of things. Some don't even want to engage in these issues'. These dynamics contribute, in some cases, to particular individuals having a lock on power in the community that further dampens broader participation. A resident in Lallubhai, for example, complains:

Just like I said, people who have muscle power and know how to talk become self-appointed leaders ... They can beat our kids, do anything, so we are afraid and have to stay shut.

There are also structural and procedural barriers to participation, including meetings not being held or not being announced (and so held only with the officers who schedule them), membership rules that exclude certain residents and other exclusionary practices such as, in at least one case, running the meetings in a language that not all residents understand. In this way, the extent to which leadership leverages community conflict and engages in informal processes of gatekeeping conditions the success of formal governance structures and opportunities for participation and influence.

Membership rules that exclude some residents are common across both sites, with renters in particular (who represent a relatively high proportion of residents in Majas), excluded from participation in CHS meetings and required to communicate through the unit owner if they have any complaints about maintenance or other issues. In addition, in accordance with the Cooperative Societies Act, only residents whose names are officially registered as owners of their units are eligible to represent the interests of the household to the CHS. A resident in Majas notes:

There are a lot of rooms here which are registered in the names of parents of occupants who have passed away. There has been no follow-up for verification by NGO at the time of registration at the origin site. The allotment letter was given but as the name was of the father of the person who [lives in] the flat, membership in the CHS is denied to such residents.

This is one way in which the process of formalization remains incomplete, contributing to the uncertainty of tenure and citizenship rights that formalization was meant to address.

In addition, particularly in Lallubhai, the societies and federations are largely dominated by men, with little effective participation by women and insufficient attention to women's issues. This lack of representation can contribute to a myopic view of community needs and a lack of attention to the concerns of large subsections of the community. As a woman in Lallubhai noted:

Male members are more and they all leave for their work in the morning then come home at night and only stay on Sundays, how would they know all these problems? Women stay here every day the whole day so they face the problems most.

Finally, another challenge to effective community self-governance has to do with the level of conflict generated in CHS meetings and, outside of meetings, among residents or between residents and CHS leadership. Some of this is generated by a general lack of trust and some from particular interpersonal animosities, but they most often center on arguments about the collection and allocation of CHS funds, the allocation of rooms (both residential units and the few common rooms that are set aside for collective use), and problems with maintenance and sanitation. As a member of the CHS leadership in Lallubhai put it:

If you go to ask for maintenance there is a fight. Somebody has kept the tap open; if you tell him, there is a fight. Society's electricity is stolen and you go shut it off, then there is a fight. If someone's child is making a disturbance and you tell them, there is a fight. They ride cycles in the passage. If you tell them that space is not for cycles, they will ask where should our kids play, then there is a fight.

As this last quote begins to make clear, beyond the challenges connected to formal leadership and participation, significant concerns have arisen about the nature of some community members' informal participation in community life, particularly around failures to adhere to expectations of communal behavior. This is particularly the case with regard to adhering to rules around payment of fees, maintenance of property, and appropriate disposal of garbage. In some cases, this has included flouting rules or transgressing expectations for community behavior in explicit or subversive ways. As a resident in Lallubhai recounted, for example:

Last year the CHS installed cameras at the back side [to keep people from throwing trash out their windows into the common areas below]. But [laughs] someone, some people covered the cameras with clothes, so no one could see who was littering.

This creates challenges for the housing societies and federations in terms of maintaining order and often leads to tension, and sometimes outright conflict, among residents and between them and the housing societies. It also raises questions about responsibility and accountability, in which some residents blame the CHS for inaction,

and sometimes corruption; some feel abandoned by the government for failure to provide adequate services; and others lay responsibility at the feet of particular residents. The latter is often accompanied by denigrating these residents in terms that align with 'culture of poverty' (Lewis, 1966) arguments about slum dweller behavior and is often associated with particular subpopulations, such as 'pavement dwellers', people from particular Indian states outside of Maharashtra, or Muslims. This is particularly the case in Lallubhai. One CHC leader there notes:

We have gone to BMC many times to complain, but still there is filth and garbage but it needs to be seen that BMC is not throwing all this garbage, our own people are. If our own people are creating the filth then we should first change ourselves. This means, whoever is throwing the waste should try and improve themselves first.

As noted above, resources and resource allocation are a significant issue at both sites, but particularly in Lallubhai where the population is in general poorer, the resettlement colony larger and the population more diverse. Part of this challenge stems from an insufficient—or undelivered—allotment of the building reserves meant to be provided by the government as a fund to address building maintenance needs over time—another example of formalization promises falling short in implementation. Each CHS is meant to receive 20,000 INR per resident as an initial deposit, the interest from which, along with maintenance fees collected from residents, is meant to cover the costs of upkeep, and added to the principal over time, larger expenses (such as roof and lift repair). Several respondents (primarily CHS officers) note that this sum is simply insufficient, others note that not all housing societies have actually received this initial deposit and others point to the lack of oversight regarding the management of these funds and the corruption of officers who are accused of embezzlement.

Unfulfilled promises of formalization exist at the individual level as well. As one NGO representative notes:

Though they had an entitlement, which is why they have got resettlement, entitlements for them, like a ration card, has [*sic*] not been transferred. Or even if it has been transferred, they're not getting ration here. And very often the ration, they keep saying the ration *wallas* tells us we live in a building we don't need it anymore.

Financial resource challenges are exacerbated by the inability or unwillingness of residents to make timely payment of maintenance fees or their inconsistency in doing so. This is variously attributed to the poverty of residents who are unable to pay in spite of the relatively low maintenance fees, to their resistance to paying, in part due to their mistrust of CHS officers and previous instances of corruption and embezzlement, and to their lack of education and understanding regarding maintenance fees and the necessity of paying them. Maintenance fees are new to residents; there were no such costs associated with living in the informal settlements from which they were relocated. This is one of the responsibilities that comes with formalization as a corollary to the recognition of residents by the state as being 'just like any other citizen of Mumbai', as a municipal official put it, adding:

So that tenement is maintained by the society, that is a good thing. It is to say, utilization of their power. They are not relying on any other agency to maintain it or clean it or keep it in good condition. And if responsibility is there, they will also take care of that structure ... Means they are the owner, they should take care of it.

Some housing societies sometimes make allowances for residents who have trouble paying maintenance and utility fees because of poverty to provide partial payment and payment when they can; others seek to force compliance through sanctions such as turning off their electricity or pursuing legal action. A CHS leader in Lallubhai described their strategy, an example of the kind of pedagogy of self-regulation characteristic of governmentality (Cruikshank, 1999), like this:

Only 35 people pay maintenance on time. Then slowly we cut off their water, then electricity. Then they start paying it ... Initially, I used to fight but now I don't have to really. Now they know that if they don't give maintenance, their electricity will be cut. So now people come and pay the maintenance. Even if one person's electricity is cut, ten others come and pay their maintenance in fear that their electricity might be cut next.

There have also been tensions around the allocation of space. With regard to residential flats, CHS officers generally describe a process of either random allocation (by lottery) or allocation based on specific resident needs (for example, ensuring that elderly residents or those with health problems are provided with rooms on the ground or first floors). However, a number of respondents, particularly in Lallubhai, claimed that the allocation process was unfair and, in some cases, coercive, driven by favoritism or requiring bribes to be provided in order to be given a preferred flat—generally front-of-building locations and on lower floors. Here again is where formalization and enduring informality interact. There remains, as a government official describes it, an ongoing 'social process or social dynamic when you catch hold of a leader the leader is demanding something from you for cooperating with you'. Tensions around these issues tend to be less intense in societies where the resident population is less diverse and has moved as an organized society from their informal settlement or transit colony, more common in Majas than Lallubhai, and therefore social relations among them are relatively strong and remain intact.

### **Citizenship: shifting community-state relations and civic expectations**

The effort to formalize governance in the relocation colonies has entailed a shift in the relationship between former slum dwellers and the state and has raised questions about the extent to which formalization establishes or enhances citizenship rights and experiences of inclusion or generates new forms of exclusion. In some cases, this takes the form of coproduction. One NGO staff member provided an example:

In all these colonies we have community networks that work very closely with the police. We have a concept called police Panchayat [in which] women are authorized by the police to solve conflicts where they can, so like a fight between a husband and a wife, issue of children getting into drugs and things like that. Therefore, these women are given ID cards by the police in order to fight certain smaller issues on the ground that they can.

In other cases, it elicits efforts to advocate for state action in response to particular community needs. This takes two forms. In addition to efforts to govern through the 'invited spaces' of civil association represented by their housing societies, residents sometimes also embrace 'invented spaces' of political advocacy and grass-roots contention (Lemanski and Lama-Rewal, 2013). Thus, beyond the deliberative and provisionary functions of the formal governance arrangements in the relocation colonies, individuals or informal groups of residents sometimes engage in mobilization and advocacy in order to get particular actors to respond in particular ways to



community needs. Their methods include letters, negotiation, pressure tactics and moving up the ladder of authority to get a response from higher levels of government to enforce compliance on the part of local politicians or CHS or Federation leadership.

Respondents in Majas were a bit more sanguine about the efficacy of at least some of these efforts than were those in Lallubhai, noting the importance of 'raising your voice' in order to get a response. Sometimes advocacy efforts were spearheaded by CHS leadership, but they were often led by individual residents or informal groups and, in spite of some successes, most respondents focused on the relative lack of response or the limitations of the responses they were able to elicit. A resident in Majas notes:

We say this to society people and they deal with concerned authorities. They follow up with BMC<sup>7</sup> people but BMC people also do not come after even follow-up. Even corporators<sup>8</sup> do not visit this area on regular basis and this area corporator is from BJP.

As this last quote suggests, residents also note the extent, importance, nature and impact of political connections and dynamics—another reflection of the interplay between formalization and ongoing informality and the dynamics of, in particular, the dimensions of governance, agency and legitimacy as outlined by Haid and Hildebrandt (2019). Several note the impact of interparty competition and conflict, mostly in quite negative terms. Some note the benefits that accrue to those who are politically well-connected.<sup>9</sup> Several respondents pointed to the lack of unity among residents in Lallubhai, conditioned in large part by the size and diversity of the population, as the reason for their limited influence on CHS leaders, government agencies and NGOs. And, as in Majas, several note the importance of political connections, as well as the ways in which these connections often redound to the benefit of the well-connected rather than the community as a whole:

You know how it is. These people who don't do much work and aren't very educated, the ones who can speak and have muscle power to support their words, it is them who everybody has to listen to and they become the leaders of people who work, who are educated but don't speak much, don't have muscle power. These people are close to the MLA, to the corporator, to the social worker, so they get their way.

These dynamics play into residents' perspectives regarding government responsiveness to community needs and complaints. Respondents in both sites had serious criticisms of government agencies in this regard, but more respondents in Lallubhai leveled such critiques, and those who spoke of government interactions were almost universally critical. As one noted: 'There is no contact person who will address their grievances. Their voices if raised are simply ignored. They will simply be sent from one door to the other'.

Indeed, many respondents, in Lallubhai in particular, noted feeling outright abandonment by the government after the sunset period of ten years when community governance was to be turned over fully to the societies. One official described the stance of the municipal corporation on this front:

7 BMC stands for the Bombay Municipal Corporation, the former name of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) that is still widely used, especially by longer-term residents in the city.

8 Corporators are local elected officials in municipal government in India.

9 In at least one case, taking on a CHS leadership role set the stage for a larger political career which has redounded to the benefit of his local constituency.

BMC even today says no, no, no, these are privately owned. My road goes up to your colony's road, but beyond that it's not my jurisdiction ... So a slum dweller when he was living in the slum, he was being provided water supply, if there were problems those had been repaired, his solid waste was being collected. But once they shift to a colony then BMC just doesn't do anything.

This dynamic is arguably a feature of, not a bug in, the formalization process, emphasizing the status of relocation colonies as private spaces and the importance of residents taking responsibility for their community. In this vein, a municipal official noted some of the efforts supported to transform former slum dwellers into self-governing citizens:

Sometimes we are also running seminars in schools, also in some places like temples, mosques, conduct programs for children for various purposes like to educate them to keep your area clean, keep your area good, make a sensible life.

This orientation goes beyond expectations of local responsibility, extending to expectations as citizens in the larger community. In the words of the same official:

In that sense they are developing now, they are part of this city. To develop this city they are the members of the city, the city development part, and it is good for them because they are also becoming a part of the city. They are not shifted from the city to the outside city. Their contribution is much more.

Residents often have a different perspective. Beyond disappointment with government bureaucracies, relationships with corporators and other elected officials were also described by the vast majority of residents as nonresponsive, treating the community less as full citizens with reciprocal rights and responsibilities than as a 'vote bank' to support their political careers and only making their presence known around election time. In Lallubhai, nearly three-quarters of residents who provided perspectives on the work and responsiveness of elected officials discussed them in these terms. A notable exception was with reference to one former corporator, no longer in office, whom several respondents noted by name as effective, connected and working for the community.

### **Conclusions and implications**

The findings above highlight the interaction between formality and informality with regard to the dimensions laid out by Haid and Hildebrandt (2019) and the ways in which tensions and ambiguities in the roles, responsibilities and expectations in the governance regimes of these relocation colonies, created as part of the process of formalization, shape the experience of residents in their new communities. These touch on the civic, political and social dimensions of citizenship outlined over 70 years ago by T.H. Marshall ([1950] 1992), as well as the interaction between top-down and bottom-up, public and private, citizen action and constraints on such action, including modern forms of surveillance. What do they suggest for the impact of slum clearance and relocation policy on residents' experience of and expectations for their citizenship rights?

Respondents' perspectives on the reasons behind these policies combine with their experience living in the relocation colonies to contribute to their sense of inclusion or exclusion in the city more broadly and the extent to which their rights as citizens are being honored or undermined. The majority of those who gave their opinion on these issues focused on the pragmatic goals of infrastructure improvement and broader urban development that required the clearance of their slum and their relocation to replacement housing. Some, particularly in Majas, noted that these actions are taken for the broader good of the city as a whole, with trade-offs and sacrifices (including their own relocation) needing to be made. As one Majas resident put it:

#### CHALLENGES OF GOVERNANCE IN MUMBAI'S SLUM RELOCATION COLONIES

Obviously, if slum rehabilitation is a catalyst for development, then it's very good. As you can see a big road has been built at the land from where we have moved. The construction was done because of slum rehabilitation. Today the issue of traffic has been solved.

A few also frame the policy in terms of its potential positive impact on slum dwellers, noting that the move to a flat in a formal housing development can improve their quality of life, their social status, and potentially contribute to their social and economic mobility. But respondents in Majas were significantly more positive about the policy motivation and its effects than those in Lallubhai. Here, more respondents expressed the feeling that the state is unfavorably disposed toward the poor in general, and slum dwellers in particular, and felt that they were paying disproportionately for urban development that largely benefits the middle classes, the affluent, developers and government interests. As one stated:

Now that they have removed us from their way, roads, bridges have been built. Their needs are satisfied. They had this imagination that when the infrastructure is developed, good people will come to stay. But what will happen to the people who belonged to that place? They don't want to think about us. We are like insects to them. Once we are out of the way, they happily forget us.

Several pointed to the inadequacy of local amenities and their spatial disconnection from areas of the city with more vibrant economic, commercial and social activities. These residents feel removed from the city and cast to the periphery at a significant personal cost. Part of this cost includes the new responsibilities of self-governance that come as a planned consequence of formalization. As Amita Bhide (2017a: 255) puts it, 'the assumption that inhabitants of slums can be smoothly shifted to a model of self-management of assets ... has proved to be problematic'. On the one hand, relocated slum dwellers have benefited from some aspects of formality—housing units with toilets and indoor plumbing, codified tenure rights (when those have been firmly established), and some elevation of status (at least as perceived by some). On the other hand, these improvements have come with increased expenses and responsibilities, ongoing issues with the built environment (maintenance, sanitation, safety), and new forms of community conflict. The challenges of the transition to self-governance thus go beyond merely the requirements of asset management. They also include the weaknesses of the new representational mechanisms and their limited capacity to make them successful. This involves the burdens of leadership and lack of turnover among leaders, barriers to effective participation among the population as a whole, power dynamics and uneven access to networks of influence and political connections, and the limited impact of advocacy efforts—whether formally on the part of CHS and federation leadership or informally among the residents themselves—that have effectively reproduced a kind of marginalized citizenship within formal structures among some relocatees, particularly those in Lallubhai.

Yet effective functioning of CHSs and federations is imperative because the transition to a satisfactory resettlement status takes time and requires continual management of local dynamics and common amenities, and efforts to elicit a response from the authorities. So, it must work. However, as noted in the analysis above, making it work entails addressing the complexities that contribute to local dynamics and discontent. While institutions for self-governance such as CHSs have existed for several decades across urban India (including in informal settlements where resident welfare associations have been created), the dynamics associated with relocation create new challenges. The comparison between the experiences of residents in the two sites that are the focus of our analysis is instructive. Although similar criticisms and concerns

were raised in both sites, they were both more universal and more powerfully felt in Lullubhai, with the overall level of satisfaction much higher in Majas. This is due in large part to greater population diversity, higher levels of poverty, geographic peripherality, infrastructural problems, limited amenities, the increased costs—both financial and social—of formalization and the ways these factors contribute to community conflict and vexed social relations.

Formalization can have significant benefits for slum dwellers whose informality renders them, in many ways, invisible to the state and therefore without access to a range of citizenship rights, including access to essential services and supports, and without the stability that secured, legally recognized housing tenure provides. In the context of their relocation to the newly built housing complexes of the relocation colonies, it can also contribute to important aspects of their quality of life, including an improved built environment and the provision of indoor toilets and plumbing. The establishment of CHSs as local self-governance mechanisms through which residents can be adequately represented in deliberations about community needs and priorities, can manage and allocate community resources in response to those needs and can advocate for government action is a potentially useful approach to making formalization work. But without effective representation, adequate resources, sufficient resident knowledge and capacity, and sustained government responsiveness to community needs, formalization in these contexts falls short of its promise. Indeed, as we have noted above, even some of the most basic promises surrounding the delivery of CHS start-up funds, ration cards, and secure tenure have been incompletely delivered. And basic quality-of-life issues like improved sanitation and safety have been elusive given the inability of the housing societies to maintain them, the limited resources residents command to support them, the weakness of participatory mechanisms to monitor and enforce them, and the effective withdrawal of state provision to these new ‘private’ communities. These shortcomings, along with the increased burdens on residents to contribute to community self-governance, have for many residents—particularly in Lallubhai—created new citizenship responsibilities without the concomitant provision of full citizenship rights. In light of these limitations, some possible policy responses to enable more successful transitioning include smaller relocation colonies, more concerted investment in addressing the livelihood needs of the population, minimizing disruption of supportive social networks, incorporating amenities into the development of new colonies rather than focusing only on housing units, and ensuring better spatial connection and accessibility to opportunities in the larger community and the city as a whole. In addition, more robust efforts at community building, more sustained training and support for the transition to formal self-governance, and more responsiveness on the part of government agencies may contribute to addressing some of these challenges.

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