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Guidelines  
For  
Slum-free City Planning**

**Review & Proposed modifications.**

**Contents**

- 1a. Recognition issue.
- 1b. Mapping of slums.
- 2a. Land Question.
- 2b. Re-visioning Development Plans.
- 3a. Comprehensive Planning of slums redevelopment.
- 3b. Ward based approach.
- 3c. In-situ priority.
- 3d. Rehabilitation Policy.
- 4a. Creating Affordable Housing stock.
- 4b. The question of private land & finance.
- 5a. Increased Government role.
- 5b. Implementation principles.

## **Preamble :**

'Slum-free city' is a metaphor for poverty alleviation in urban India. Physical transformation of housing conditions of the poor is indeed one of the many means for the achievement of this objective. RAY is therefore a significant policy guideline for enabling slums redevelopment, rehabilitation and promotion of affordable mass housing. Specific focus on these urban development aspects through RAY, is indeed an important step.

(1) Redevelopment of slums is important for development of cities. (2) Poor are integral to the city's economy and successful functioning. (3) Multi-linguistic and multi-cultural dimensions important for the city's social and cultural enrichment. (4) Their integration and equality is important for the establishment of democratic cities. (5) Human development apart from the development of physical conditions is vital. Therefore affordable education, health and recreation for the slum-dwellers is necessary for the development of a modern state. (6) Freedom and equality cannot be exclusive for some "citizens". This causes social tensions and decadence. Enabling 'slum-free cities', particularly through slums redevelopment, rehabilitation and construction of affordable (restricted housing units area, liberal loan schemes and exclusion from free-market) housing is therefore a significant urban development priority.

### **(1a) Recognition Policy:**

**Recognition and eligibility of all the slum-dwellers is the objective.**

Recognition of all the slum dwellers and their equality is truly an important starting point of poverty alleviation policies and programs, including RAY. Various state governments have different recognition policies, particularly on matters relating to slums redevelopment and rehabilitation. Recognition of slums and slum dwellers is fundamental to making 'slum-free cities'. All slum and pavement dwellers must be equally recognized and considered eligible for various social development programs, without any pre-conditions and or discriminatory eligibility criteria. Recognition is a vital human rights issue and therefore must be respected and observed.

We have realized over the years that poor people choose to move into cities for earning what they cannot earn back in their villages or small towns. Once in the city of their choice, they contribute to the economy and functioning of the city. We also have examples wherein poor people have moved from their first city of residence to another for better opportunities. Choosing to live in miserable.

conditions in slums that adversely affect their health, particularly of children and women, is never a preference.

- Under RAY the aspect of recognition of vast numbers of people living in slums and on pavements has to be explained better.
- Policies such as cut-off-dates for redevelopment and rehabilitation eligibility, as in Maharashtra must be repealed.
- Planning phased redevelopment of slums is necessary to deal with vast numbers of slums in our cities and our limited construction and financial capacity.
- The integration of slums redevelopment projects with the cities development plans and programs is essential.
- Ward or area based planning for undertaking slums redevelopment programs be initiated to minimize displacement and to enable phasing of slums redevelopment projects.
- All slums must be declared protected from evictions and demolitions until comprehensive re-development plans and projects are implemented.
- Evictions of slums from untenable sites elaborate untenable would be carried out only after rehabilitation plans are prepared and projects implemented. Budgeting of the rehabilitation project or PAP's must be a part of the primary scheme for which slums eviction becomes necessary.
- In-situ redevelopment should be carried out after 70% consent of slum dwellers is attained, after public discussion of the plans and proposals and participation of the slum dwellers in decision-making. (elaborate participatory mechanisms).

Free housing should not be a part of the redevelopment or rehab programs. Slum dwellers must financially contribute (elaborate sum and basis) to the project. This will reinforce their sense of participation and ownership, necessary for successful and sustainable redevelopment and rehabilitation projects and programs.

**(1b) Slums Survey and Mapping:**

**Mapping of all the settlements of the poor is a necessary condition for planning 'slum free cities'.**

Survey and mapping of all the settlements of the poor in our cities, on, as is where is basis irrespective of the place, location, type of structures, land status, conditions of living etc., is necessary without prejudice.

It must be understood that Survey and mapping is an important socio-political act. Mechanisms for participation (elaborate) of slum dwellers and neighborhood people must be integral to this process. Democratization of survey and mapping is a necessary condition for the successful implementation of slums redevelopment and rehabilitation projects.

Survey and mapping is a necessary precondition for the initiation of slum-free cities programs and projects. This covers matters relating to both, social as well as physical data. Boundaries of slums, land status, tenability, number of houses or family size and such other issues are best ascertained by including the information and knowledge that people possess. People know best about the place they live in.

Surveys and mapping of slums must be reviewed in conjunction with the city's geography and development plans and programs, and not assessed on individual slum plot basis in isolation. Simplistic thinking, quick turnover motive and practicability excuse in undertaking slums redevelopment projects has led to further slumming of our cities. The integration of slums and slum dwellers with the mainstream development of the city is a necessary condition for building equal and 'slum-free cities'.

**(2a) Land Question :**

**Allocation of proportionate open land and the reservation of slums land for affordable housing is a way forward.**

It's not new to say that un-availability of land for the poor is at the root of the housing crisis in our cities. But adequate and effective land and development policies have not been pursued in-order to facilitate the eradication of slums and slum like conditions in which millions in our cities live. Instead we have diverted our attention to dubious development schemes to appease the homeless by engineering the most outrageous and oppressive building standards to house the poor particularly, in slums redevelopment and rehabilitation projects.

In cities like Mumbai, where there is no surplus vacant land with the government, it is necessary to amend the development plans of the city to reserve lands occupied by slums as sites for affordable mass housing, that includes in-situ slums redevelopment. Besides this, in whichever city it's possible, additional land must be earmarked in the development plan for affordable housing in proportion to the immediate demand and the future needs.

Reservation of a certain percentage of building areas in MIG and HIG housing for EWS must also be pursued. But, this cannot be the only way of addressing the critical housing shortage situation in cities. We have experienced gross abuse and misuse of such formulas in the implementation of housing projects under the ULCRA. Apartments were amalgated and sold to MIG and HIG people thus, blatantly undermining the central purpose. In any case by just this method alone the deficit in housing cannot be met.

In the case of slums redevelopment projects, the existing slum dwellers may be re-housed, in 50% of the occupied land but with a cap on density and FSI/FAR, and the other 50% land utilized for building affordable housing stock for present and future demands. In smaller towns, where

multistoried buildings are not necessary for compensating land values, slums may be redeveloped guided by other mechanisms including, self-help models with low-rise high-density planning for optimum utilization of land. Urban Land Acquisition Act must be detailed and dovetailed to slum redevelopment, rehabilitation and affordable housing.

**(2b) City Development Plan's and Land-Use:**

**Undertake revision of the development plans of our cities on priority for reserving land for mass affordable housing.**

Allocation of land for EWS and LIG affordable housing is fundamental to the successful implementation of slums redevelopment and rehabilitation programs and projects. Development plans of most cities do not have land earmarked exclusively for affordable housing. Land is reserved generally for housing and is developed by private developers for HIG and MIG that enables quick turnover. It is for this purpose that revision of development plans of our cities is immediately required.

We must remember here that in most cities housing is un-affordable even to the middle class, let alone the poor. The issue here is not only about incomes as the basis of classification of our cities population, but the unreal, un-controlled and speculative real estate prices that excludes and marginalizes vast majority of people, particularly, evident in big cities. That is why not it is not only the poor but also large sections of the middle class including, professionals, academics etc. also live in slums.

Reservation of land exclusively for affordable (limited size of housing units and alternate finance models) mass housing, along with other regulations, will protect the objective of 'slum-free cities' from free-market influence. Releasing land from speculative market is necessary for ensuring that social housing is not commoditized and open to the ravages of open market. Housing is a significant social development need, as much as education of children, health-care, employment etc. therefor cannot be put to trading.

A critical and urgent review of the land-use plans of our cities is required in-order to re-designate land-use and allocate land for housing in proportion to the population of various income groups – HIG, MIG, LIG & EWS.

Till date almost all the slums redevelopment schemes have dealt with slums on individual basis, detached from their neighborhoods and the city. Tragically the housing question too has been reduced to simplistic solutions with overwhelming thrust on a game of numbers to suit commodification and trading objective. How more and more units can be squeezed into the slums land without any consideration for basic services and a social amenities, is often the merit of the projects under implementation as seen by developers. Again the example of Mumbai's SRA policy is noteworthy, for wrong reasons. Under the scheme developers, both private and government, force the existing slum

dwellers onto as small as 15% to 20% of the slums land that they occupy, in spite of the built-up area being 50% of the total permissible development on that plot. This is leading to the most irrelevant and unsustainable high-rise and high-density buildings with slum like living conditions.

**(3a) Comprehensive Planning:**

**Slums redevelopment and affordable housing must be planned along with various social amenities.**

Redevelopment and rehabilitation projects must be planned on town planning norms for the provision of various social amenities such as schools, health-care center's, recreational facility and open spaces. Till the time major re-construction of particular slums is carried out, services and amenities provision must be undertaken to get rid of slum like conditions. Simultaneously density and related FSI or FAR limits fixed, to enable slum free planned redevelopment. Slums redevelopment projects in Mumbai under the present scheme of the state government is leading to further slummification of our city, with serious consequences for now and the future.

Integration of the slum areas with the city is important too. Affordable public transportation, roads connectivity, setting up of municipal markets in the slum redevelopment project areas or in the immediate neighborhood, solid-waste collection and management services, adequate storm-water and sewage networks connected to the cities grid, supply of safe and adequate drinking water as per standard norms for all, etc., are significant aspects of slum-free cities.

**(3b) Area/Ward Based Planning priority:**

**Ward or area based planning is important in-order to minimize displacement and for integration with the neighborhood development.**

Local area and or ward based planning for slums redevelopment and rehabilitation is a positive step towards minimizing the severities of displacement and dis-location from familiar places and social networks. Also, by this planning approach, we would enable the integration of slums redevelopment plans with other slums in the area and the neighborhood. Cities and towns that do not have well developed Development Plans must use this opportunity for addressing slums and affordable housing issues to plan for effective slum-free neighborhoods and city.

**(3c) In-Situ Redevelopment :**

- Priority has to be to undertake and enable slums redevelopment in-situ.
- Critical assessment of common services, amenities and open-spaces be the priority in order to alleviate slum-dwellers found living in sub-human conditions.

- Layout of existing houses/huts requires critical review to enable the provision of amenities, services and create open spaces. Who moves, whose houses have to be relocated within the area, what nature are big issues to deal, would certain houses accept another house as top of theirs, etc.
- This requires huge community network, organization, collaborations, professional assistance, etc., along with sustained campaigns and public dialogues.
- Lastly, enable and facilitate the reconstruction and or improvement of individual houses through individual effort and initiative and incremental approach. Facilitate long term, soft interest loan schemes.
- Questions of multi-level/storied reconstruction of dwelling units may be necessary for modified layouts for enabling various common provisions and developments. This is difficult to deal with on the ground
- Collaborative roles of NGO's , Govt. agencies and communities have to be detailed
- Govt./ Municipality to provide the various essential services and undertake their execution and bear the cost.
- In case of improvement and up-gradation, individual slum hutment dweller will rebuild / improve their houses. NGO's, CBO's will monitor, co-ordinate the overall redevelopment works. Architects and PMC's will provide necessary professional services.
- Total demolition and reconstruction is a decision that the slum dwellers themselves will undertake, including the construction of multi-storied buildings with 70% consent.
- In-Situ development would include improvement, up-gradation and or total demolition and reconstruction. In case of total reconstruction, the Architect will only with the communities prepare new layouts and building typologies, Govt. agencies will monitor and administer, Municipality will provide services and bear the cost. Govt. agencies will tender for selection of contractors. (Needs elaboration)
- Surplus affordable housing generated besides rehabilitation of the existing slum-dwellers, shall be made available for ownership and rentals, managed by the govt. agency.
- In case of total reconstruction the apportionment of land for rehabilitation and add housing stock shall be on approved FAR and or Density norms (needs elaboration)

**(3d) Urban Rehabilitation Policy & Programme and the Property Rights to Slum Dwellers Act :**

A detailed discussion of the proposed rehabilitation policy and the Property Rights Act by the Government of India is necessary in view of slum dwellers interest.

**(4a) Affordable Housing Stock:**

For achieving 'slum-free cities' we have to not only prepare plans for existing slums redevelopment and rehabilitation but also with equal priority for building mass affordable housing in our cities for additional demands for now and the future. Otherwise slums will continue to proliferate in our cities and we would be forever engaged with fire fighting. Historical experiences of the growth pattern and demographic character of cities, along with its future economic and growth projections be evaluated in-order to asses future demands.

In case private agencies undertake the responsibility of re-building slums along with the additional affordable housing stock with their investments, then the profits and management of sales and or rental housing, whose proportions may be decided as per the policy, may be left to them to manage. In this manner private financiers and developer's participation in the promotion of affordable housing and building 'slum-free cities' would be partially fulfilled.

**(4b) Private Land and Finance issues:**

We have to address this issue particularly since large proportions of land in cities, are privately owned, including slums occupied lands. They cannot be ignored nor completely bypassed unless strict land acquisition laws are implemented and or land is nationalized. Similarly tapping private finance for various social development projects including, mass affordable housing is necessary for enhancing housing finance. But the investments and the development rights of land occupied by slums be restricted in the re-development projects to re-housing of the existing slum-dwellers and the surplus area as permissible under the FAR /FSI norms and development plans of the city for construction of affordable apartments / houses having areas limited to 300, 400, 500 sq. feet.

The division of land for re-housing the existing slum-dwellers and construction of additional affordable housing stock shall be in equal proportion. It ought to be a necessary condition that the built-up area too will be equal for both purposes as in the present case of the SRA policy of GOM but, with specific time deadline for land-owner led development upon which the government should acquire the land for its reserved purpose.

Simultaneously there are other mechanisms and incentives including, tax rebates, bonds, etc. for increasing housing finance for the promotion of affordable housing in the country.



**(5a) Increased Government Role:  
Governments would have to get back to building affordable housing  
and provide incentives to private owners of reserved lands.**

Upon liberalization, governments have withdrawn from undertaking direct responsibility of developing various social development projects including housing. Private sector is not interested in building affordable mass housing either. As a result there has not been any formal housing option for the vast majority of the people but to live in slums. Slums have therefore proliferated and slum population increased substantially over the years.

It is necessary for our governments to get back to undertake directly, through various public sector agencies, the task of slums redevelopment and construction of affordable housing stock. There has to be a massive determined campaign and mission throughout the country to tackle this critical crisis in housing and to achieve 'slum free cities'. Governments cannot merely facilitate private developers and expect them to take responsibility of this very important poverty alleviation program. A radical political shift is necessary at this point of time.

**(5b) Implementation and Governance:  
Role of state governments, formation of governing Committees and  
Architects & PMC Panels.**

As the government takes on active role in the implementation of various poverty alleviation programs including the achievement of 'slum-free cities', it will be necessary for the concerned government agencies to constitute architects and project management consultants panels. The various redevelopment and rehabilitation projects could then be assigned to the panelists for providing professional services along with close interaction and participation of the affected people. Democratization of planning and architecture is necessary for successful implementation of the various projects. Concerned government agencies would pay the professional fees and charges of the consultants and be the principle implementation agency. This approach is opposite of the present modalities where-in private developers are simply handed over the turnkey responsibility and the concerned government agency then facilitating the private business interest. After the panelists have prepared plans and designs, the government agency invites bids from contractors, not builders-developers. Governments, local municipalities and other governmental agencies like housing boards etc., along with central assistance for funding. Similarly, they also undertake the construction of additional affordable housing stock for sales and rentals.