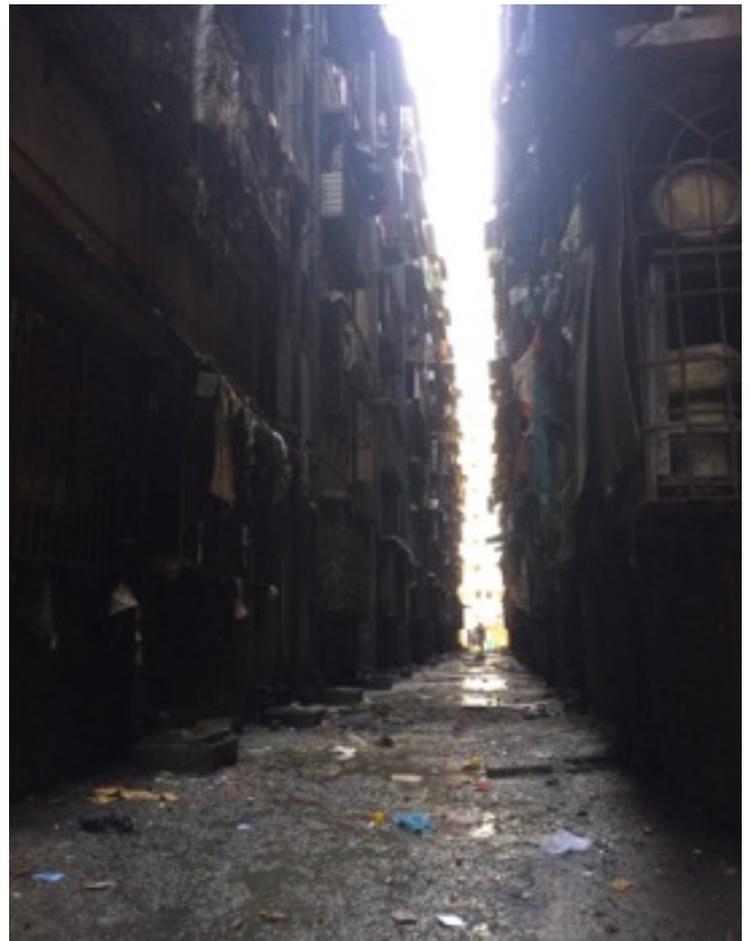


Resettlement Housing and Health

Urban resettlement of slums

- In almost all Indian cities today, informal settlements are being replaced with formal housing in resettlement sites outside the city. **World Bank (2015) estimates that 1 billion people over the world who currently live in slums are vulnerable to resettlement.**
- In India, at least 30% of the population which currently lives in slums has insecure tenure and is thus vulnerable to resettlement.



- There are very few studies of urban resettlements, globally
- Urban resettlement in Indian cities is not documented arbitrarily. In the past resettlement sites were also counted as slums. With the emergence of vertical construction sites, they are now counted as part of general population in Census. So there is **no comprehensive data on this.**
- However, almost all Indian cities show a tendency to push out the poor to the peripheries through relocation, and a recent trend is to provide vertical apartments. Eg: Chennai- Kannagi Nagar- Rehabilitation site was 14 km away from the earlier location. Mumbai sites of rehabilitation are at the peripheries, M Ward. In Bhubaneswar it is at Dumduma again 25 km away.



The Pruitt-Igoe studies in the USA represent the most negative aspects associated with high rise living. These studies showed that the buildings and the open spaces around them had turned into dangerous 'no-man's lands characterised by vandalism and crime and subsequently these buildings were pulled down by the administration. More consistent research shows that these negative impacts of high rises are also mediated by several non - building factors (socioeconomic status, stage in life, gender, neighbourhood infrastructure, location) than verticalisation itself. However, high rises consistently show a greater propensity for:

- (a) High rise living is seen to be associated with greater mental strain , as a co-factor
- (b) High rise living is also associated with greater suicide rates through it is contested that this may be linked to the specific 'opportunity' presented by the same as opposed to other habitation sites
- (c) Actual crime is found to be associated more with high rises. Poverty may be a moderator for this but at least a few studies across the socioeconomic spectrum suggest that the prevalence of crime is more in high rises.
- (d) Research strongly brings out that high rises are socio-fugal. They encourage anonymity, privacy and depersonalization. Helping others is minimal in high rises.
- (e) Research also consistently documents the negative impacts of high rises on children. The incidence of every behavioural problem in children is found more in high rises. This may be due to the lack of open ground contact, restriction of play area and social interaction. There is no single study that documents positive impacts of high rises on children.



In the context of India, critical factors are:

- a) Housing without enabling conditions for health - inadequate water, Inhabitable sites; poor compatibility with building codes, lack of open space, extremely high densities
- b) Inadequate access to public health infrastructure
- c) Need for systematic studies, and review of housing policies
- d) Need to develop norms and policies for urban relocation

References

Gifford(2007), World Bank(2015),HRLN(2014),Jalota(2016)