Siesta on the street. Fort Kochi, Kerala.

Photo Credit: Rahul M.

Strife in a Metro

Affirming Rights to Admission in the City of Delhi*

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1.1 Introduction

> 'When you first come here, there is a lot of hope, abhilasha. You think anything is possible. You have heard all the stories of people who have made it big in the city. Slowly, as time goes by, you start wondering what you are doing. One year, two years, three years, and bharosa, something will happen. But slowly you realize, nothing will happen, and you can live the next five years just like the last three years, and everything will be the same. Wake up, work, eat, drink, sleep, and tomorrow it's the same thing again…. After enough time in Delhi, you even stop dreaming, you could go crazy if you think about it too much.'
>
> —*A Free Man* by Aman Sethi

The 'urban poor' is a fraught term that often hides the extreme heterogeneity of the poor in an urban space. An economic definition of poverty and the poverty line is inadequate to understand the multiple forms of deprivation that a person or a family might experience in the harsh exclusive cities in India. It is also almost impossible to define the population or the community of the 'urban poor' in the context of Delhi, neither is that the scope or the purpose of this chapter. It is even more difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the population that would come under this category given that the people themselves do not identify with this classification as a political identity. It is rather an academic segregation imposed by those trying to understand their reality. The scope and aim of the chapter is thus to provide glimpses into the vulnerabilities faced by the population, in their living and working in Delhi, to bring out various forms of penalty and denial of citizenship rights by the state.

The first part of the chapter discusses the major trends of urbanization in India and how the 'urban poor' are defined. Stating important observations of the 2012 Hashim Committee Report (Hashim, 2012), it highlights the significance of the concept of 'vulnerability' as a break away from monetary calculations of poverty. Adopting the framework of the report, the second part of the chapter illustrates the experiences of residential, occupational and social vulnerabilities to understand how exclusion manifests itself in the national capital. The third section illustrates two examples of good practices, one through legislative efforts of the state and another through efforts of the civil society, aimed at making urban spaces more inclusive. The final section lists recommendations for the State to improve the conditions of the vulnerable communities in the city.

In 2007 for the first time, more people in the world were recorded as living in cities than in villages. In 2005, the United Nations estimated that the world's urban population growing at a rate of

* Reviewer: Patrick Heller, Richard Jolly

1.8 per cent annually would soon outpace the world population growth of 1 per cent (United Nations, 2005). Nearly 48 per cent of the world's population lived in urban areas, and the developing countries were urbanizing more rapidly compared to the developed countries.

The urban population in India is now around 377 million, constituting 31.2 per cent of the total population. It has grown 15 times in 110 years; in 1901, only 25 million people constituting 10.8 per cent of the population lived in urban India (Finance Commission, 2008, p. 237). The figure of 377 million, however, is possibly an underestimation in itself due to the undercounting in informal settlements in towns and in big metropolitan cities. Moreover, the growth of population in slums is difficult to assess since the 2001 and 2011 Censuses are not directly comparable; while the 2001 Census only covered statutory towns with population greater than 20,000, the 2011 Census covered all 4,041 statutory towns (*The Times of India*, 2013). A big gap remains between the pace of urbanization and the provision of infrastructural facilities required for supporting such a large concentration of population. As a consequence, urban environments, particularly in large cities, are deteriorating very rapidly. All cities have acute shortage of housing, water supply, sewerage, developed land, transportation and other facilities. Only 70 per cent of urban households have access to piped water, 74 per cent of urban households have access to latrines, 23 per cent of sewage is treated, and only 30 per cent of solid waste generated is treated prior to disposal (Finance Commission, 2008). These deficiencies are particularly severe for the urban poor and have serious livelihood impacts for them. Lack of political and administrative will, inadequate finances and investment and hostility towards migrants, compounded by weak municipal institutions and poor delivery systems have constrained the administration's ability to improve the living conditions, incomes and services for the urban poor.

1.2 Urbanization: Major Trends

While the pace of urbanization in India has not been as fast as in many other middle income countries, the urban share of India's overall population rose from 23 to 31 per cent between 1980 and 2011. Changes in the share of urban population and in the decadal growth rate since 1951 are shown in Figure 1 (Planning Commission, 2012).

Urban growth in India, according to official figures, has been modest in the last few decades. Despite reaching its peak in the 1970s, the growth rate fell in the 1980s and further in the 1990s. Between 2000 and 2005, the growth rate has been estimated at only 1 per cent (Kundu, 2011).

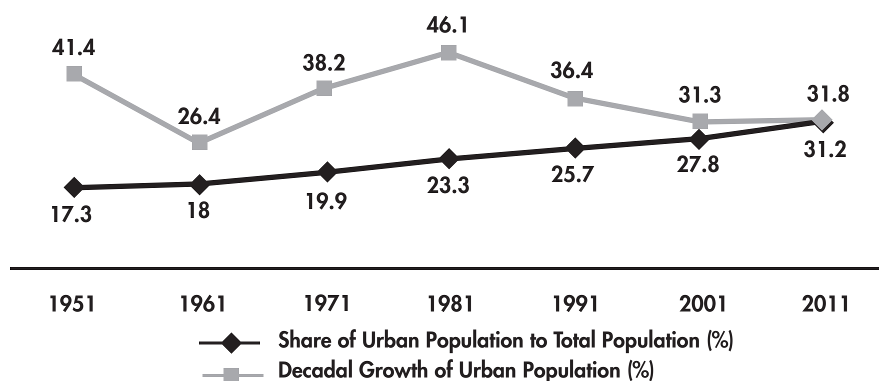

Figure 1: Urban Share in Total Population & Decadal Growth in India (1951–2011)

Kundu has argued that urbanization has become concentrated in developed regions and larger cities, while it has stagnated in smaller towns (2011).

A World Bank agglomeration index report released in 2015 on urbanization in South Asia showed that 55.3 per cent of Indians lived in areas with urban features (*The Hindu*, 2016). The underestimation in the Census could be due to the fact that it does not enumerate populations living on peripheries of towns or other urban centres, and refuses to acknowledge the 'subaltern urbanisation' in India[1] (Denis, Mukhopadhyay, Zerah, 2012). India might be more urbanized than the official figures admit with more than 10 per cent 'living in dense built-up settlements that do not satisfy the Indian census definition of urbanization. The large cities are important and growing steadily but 41% of the urban population lives outside Class I towns, and there is growth there too (2012, p. 56).' Subaltern urbanization takes account of 'diversified cities' (Ramachandran, 1989) which are urban centres that might not be connected to an immediate metropolis but are connected to a global centre.[2]

Besides 'subaltern urbanization', the increasing concentration of urban population in larger cities, is one of the key features of urbanization in India (Table 1). The number of cities with over 1,000,000 population, in 2001 was 35 and the urban population share of these cities was over 37 per cent. This number has gone up to 53 in 2011, and 42 per cent of the total urban population lives in these cities. Moreover, 11 cities, namely, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, Surat, Jaipur and Kanpur will have a population of over 4.0 million in 2025 and these mega cities will have a total population of 127 million, which is likely to be over 24 per cent of the total urban population of the country (Vaidya, 2009).

In addition to the 53 metro cities, each of which has a million-plus population, there are 468 cities with a population of 100,000 and more, and these account for 28 per cent of the urban population. The remaining 30 per cent of urban India is scattered over 4041 towns with populations less than 100,000 (Census of India, 2011). In addition, there are 3894 census towns, defined as those with a minimum population of 5000, with at least 75 per cent of male workers engaged in non-agricultural pursuits and a population density of at least 400 per sq. km. These have not been declared as statutory towns by the states, as the states fear that doing so would lead to a reduction in the development assistance that they receive from the Centre. Each state can decide norms for declaring these as towns, as there is no uniformity in the country regarding norms for what constitutes towns and when they should be declared as such, etc. If the population of these census towns, which technically continue to be rural, were to be taken into account, the total urban population would be an estimated 35 per cent by now.

It is worth noting that the population growth of Indian towns with population less than 100,000 has been slowing down, particularly in the 1990s. Their population growth decelerated from 3.4 per cent per annum in the 1970s to 1.6 per cent per

Table 1: Past Trend of Growth of Metro Cities in India

	1981	1991	2001	2011
Number of metro cities (population-1 million +)	12	23	35	53
Population (million)	42	70	108	161
Percentage of total urban population	26	32	37	42

Table 2: Growth of Urban Population by City Size (per cent per annum)

	1971–81	1981–91	1991–2001	2001–2011
Cities	3.7	3.2	2.9	2.7
Metropolitan Cities >4 million (m)	2.8	3.8	2.9	3.5
Class IA >5 m	2.7	3.4	2.8	3.3
Class IB 1–5 m	3.4	4.0	3.1	3.8
Other Cities(Class IC) 0.1–1 m	4.2	3.1	3.3	1.7
Towns	3.4	3.2	2.3	1.6
Class II 50000–100000	4.8	3.7	2.5	1.6
Class III 20000–50000	2.7	3.4	2.3	1.6
Class IV+ <20000	2.3	2.4	2.2	1.6
Total				
Urban Population	3.9	3.2	2.8	2.4
Rural Population	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.2
Total Population	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.5

Source: (Planning Commission, 2012)

annum in the last decade. Migration from villages has been largely to the metropolitan cities and their peripheries, and the small and medium towns have languished for want of an economic base.

Lastly, there is a great deal of inter-state variation in urbanization. Among the larger states, Tamil Nadu is the most urbanized at 54.4 per cent followed by Maharashtra (46.2%) and Gujarat (40.3%), whereas the least urbanized states are Assam (14.1%) and Bihar (11.3%). In tune with the experience of other countries, urbanized states tend to be more prosperous, with Himachal Pradesh, a hill state, being an exception with very low poverty levels despite only having a 10.1 per cent urban population (HPEC, 2011).

1.3 Who are the Urban poor? Poverty v/s Vulnerability

The widely used terminology of 'the urban poor' disguises an enormous amount of heterogeneity among deprived urban populations. There are wide variations in the specific profiles and experiences of urban poor populations based not just on caste, ethnicity, place of origin, age and gender, nature and relationship with family, but also on the nature of their living arrangements, and their occupations. The diverse groups of urban poor populations do not have the cognition of a cohesive class identity (Gooptu, 2001). The search for homogeneity in what is otherwise an extremely diverse population is an attempt on the part of researchers and planners, not emanating from the political consciousness of the group itself.

Poverty is also a subjective judgement about an acceptable standard of living in each country (Wratten, 1995, p. 16). While the poor can be effectively involved to arrive at this definition of poverty (Francis, 1991), Wratten says such definitions often highlight the concepts of vulnerability and entitlement, which help in understanding how people not only become but remain poor (1995).

Accordingly, a useful way of assessing and understanding the experience of urban poverty

is by assessing the vulnerability of a household or person or a group which indicates how dangerously close the family is to slipping below the poverty line. Vulnerability, in such case, will mean 'not lack or want, but defencelessness, insecurity, and exposure to risk, shocks and stress' (Chambers, 2006, p.1). For Chambers, vulnerability can be both internal and external, the former being of risks, shocks and stress while the latter refers to the inability to cope without suffering losses like economic impoverishment, physical weakness or psychological harm. The income or consumption measure, though convenient for policy makers, could sustain 'stereotypes of the amorphous and undifferentiated mass of the poor'. In other words, a family could increase its income and consumption levels through borrowing, but become more vulnerable due to the debt. Recognizing the concept of vulnerability is the first step towards thinking beyond income-based poverty measures to assess exclusion and deprivation.

The Hashim Committee report reads:

> Poverty is an ex-post measure of a household's well-being (or lack thereof). It reflects a current state of deprivation, of lacking the resources or capabilities to satisfy current needs. Vulnerability, on the other hand, may be broadly interpreted as an ex-ante measure of well-being, reflecting not so much how well off a household currently is, but what its future prospects are. What distinguishes the two is the presence of risk—the fact that the level of future well-being is uncertain. (2012, p. 24)

Vulnerability as against income-based poverty measures especially become significant in the urban context, since cities are characterized by a greater degree of commercial exchange, where one needs money or more money to buy water, housing, food, fuel, than in rural areas (Wratten, 1995, p. 22). In that sense, urban poverty need not be seen as a spillover of rural poverty (Mitra, 1992). In fact, it has been established that economic deprivation is not the most significant factor when it comes to rural-urban migration, not even for seasonal migrants. 'One observes that both poor and rich households report out-migration, although the reasons for sending out their family members and the nature of jobs sought by them are different' (Kundu and Sarangi, 2007, pp 306). NSS data confirms this and indicates that short-term migration opportunities are availed of by the better-off segments of population (Kundu, 2007, 2011). Therefore, even though urban poverty may be partially a spillover of rural poverty, the former's causes and manifestations differ from rural poverty. The Hashim Committee Report finds that urban poverty can be best captured through three categories of vulnerabilities: residential, occupational and social. It is using the framework of these three categories that the chapter will navigate the complex idea of the urban poor.

Residential Vulnerability

The Committee report observes:

> The most visible manifestation of urban poverty is in the crowding of large masses of the urban poor under the open sky, completely vulnerable to the extremes of nature, or in precarious and unsanitary slums in sub-human conditions of survival and always lacking a sense of safety and security. (2012, p. 25)

This would consist of living arrangements such as homelessness and also physical environments lacking in hygiene, water supply, sanitation and other basic provisions in the place of living, as well as the context of land rights and rightful citizenship in the context of 'illegal' settlements and 'encroachments'. Residential vulnerability will also cover 'legal' habitations , i.e., the designated slums in the cities or rehabilitated settlements and planned settlements in the case of New Delhi will have inadequate provision of basic services (Centre for Policy Research, 2015).

Occupational Vulnerability

Educational qualifications and the nature of work arrangements are two of the many factors that determine occupational stability. For regular workers, in both large cities and small towns, the possibility of falling below the poverty line is lower than for those in casual employment.[3] NSS data shows that 'the ordering in terms of poverty probability from lowest to the highest, thus works out to be regular, self-employed, unemployed and casual workers' (Kundu and Sarangi, 2007, p. 306). The Hashim Committee Report also points out that not just the status of employment but the quality of employment determines the vulnerability of an individual or group. The vulnerable group here is again heterogeneous, comprising daily wage workers, construction labour, petty traders, hawkers, street children, sex-workers, rickshaw pullers, domestic workers, etc. Labour markets remain highly segmented, in which the vulnerability and desperate survival needs of the unorganised workers and high levels of competition amongst the large army of work-seekers, enable exploitation by employers, and sometimes middlemen who mediate access (Hashim, 2012, p. 30).

Social Vulnerability

The urban poor population is socially disaggregated as well; some social groups are more at risk to fall into poverty than others. As the report says, 'Socially vulnerable groups are defined as those groups who routinely face severe social barriers to livelihood, food and dignified living' (p. 28). The gendered aspect of poverty, for example, is difficult to ignore with women constituting 68 per cent of the urban poor (Hashim, 2008). Transgendered people, people with certain disabilities, leprosy patients, older people, street children, for example, are seen as more vulnerable to poverty than others. In the Indian context, caste-based discrimination in the urban context needs to be acknowledged and further studied. Some recent studies have shown that caste-based inequalities in education or income might be lower in metro cities but high in smaller towns (Desai and Dubey, 2011). The caste identity, however, is crucial in taking important schooling decisions or getting jobs (Thorat and Newman, 2010). Spatial segregation based on caste rather than on socio-economic status is seen to be more pronounced. The percentage of scheduled caste or scheduled tribe as compared to the total population in an area has been negatively linked with access to basic public goods and services (Haque, 2016).

The numerous vulnerabilities listed above are not mutually exclusive to the urban poor, but nevertheless help to unpack the heterogeneity that exists in the population. The National Urban Health Mission Report states that ignoring this heterogeneity would not only be a conceptual failure but would also result in poor planning and poor delivery of state services. The report points out that access to public goods is 'intimately tied to the availability of and access to private goods and services (e.g., food, saving and credit), shelter, and health services, as well as the presence of social networks, participation in political processes, social exclusion, and freedom from violence, crime, and exploitation.' (TRG, Urban Health Mission, 2014, p. 21)

2. Nature of Exclusion: Case Study of Delhi

The Ajmer Shatabdi pulls into the New Delhi station daily at night around 11 pm. For an approximately five-hour journey from Ajmer, the train serves tea, evening snacks, soup, dinner and dessert, much more than an average person could eat in the short span. As soon as passengers start de-boarding, several people jump onto the train at the platform, scrounging through the seat pockets and dustbins for leftovers. While the railway staff insists there is nothing left to be given away, young boys and men

look eagerly for the leftover *samosas* (fried snacks), or *roti* (bread) or discarded plastic bottles. The picture encapsulates the nature of grinding poverty in a metropolis like New Delhi.

Delhi or the National Capital Territory is the second largest metropolis in India with a population of 1.86 crore people in 2016 (World Population Review, 2016). The NSS survey results in 2012 estimated:

> the total number of slums as 6343 and the total number of households therein was estimated as 10.20 lakhs. About 29% of slums were having 20-60 households, while rest 71% of slums were having more than 60 households each. Average 161 households per slum were found to be in these slums (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 2015, p. 14).

By the government's own admission, only 23.7 per cent of the total population live in 'planned colonies' while the rest live in entirely 'illegal' settlements or areas that were never authorized for development and as such never properly planned. The absence of planning means not only that the physical space of the settlement is not laid out in accordance with basic building codes or public space requirements (including road and access grids) but that the settlement is not integrated into the city's bulk infrastructure delivery system (CPR, 2015).

Instead of delving into an analysis of policies and meting out of state provisions to alleviate urban poverty, this chapter endeavours to portray the lived experiences of the urban poor in Delhi in order to understand the nature of urban vulnerability in a mega city. The field work for the study was done between the months of May and November 2016 through focussed group discussions and in-depth interviews with homeless people, people living in unauthorized clusters and resettlement colonies set up by the government, street vendors, rag pickers, construction workers and disabled persons.

2.1 Residential Vulnerability

The Delhi government has eight ways in which it broadly classifies housing clusters in Delhi:*JhuggiJhopri* (JJ) clusters or squatter settlements (14.8 per cent), slum designated areas (19.1 per cent), unauthorized colonies (5.3 per cent), JJ resettlement colonies (12.72 per cent), rural villages (5.3 per cent), regularized unauthorized colonies (12.72 per cent), urban villages (6.35 per cent) and planned colonies (23.7 per cent).[4] Only one of the eight categories is considered planned and the rest are considered unplanned.

These categories assume increased significance as the tenurial classification also 'represents a grid of *differentiated citizenship*, a system by which the state systematically assigns different levels of services to different categories of citizens based on their tenurial status' (CPR, 2015). Only 23.7 per cent of the population of Delhi which lives in planned colonies is in zones of full citizenship with access to electricity, piped water, sewage system, paved roads, solid waste collection, i.e., the 'inclusive city' (CPR, 2015). The Census data reveals that 14.6 per cent of households in the city live in slums, excluding resettlement colonies and big parts of unauthorized colonies.

The NSS survey in 2015 estimated that 90.24 per cent of the slums are on public land, of which 45.83 per cent are on the land owned by local bodies, 28.24 per cent on the land owned by the Railways and remaining 16.18 per cent are on the land of other government agencies. About 2 per cent of the slums are on private land and about 8 per cent of the slums are on land whose ownership is not known to the knowledgeable persons of the locality. For 86.50 per cent of slums, the major source of drinking water is either tap water or hand pump. While only 30 per cent of the slums use flush type latrines, 22 per cent had no latrine at all. Underground sewerage exists only in 16.3 per cent of the slums and garbage collection happens in less

than a third of the settlements. Only 16.76 per cent of slums have both street and house lighting (NSS, 2015).

The first category described here is that of the homeless population in the city, outside the realm of the eight tenurial classifications in the city, arguably with the worst access to any public provisioning; the second of a *JhuggiJhopri* cluster which is a squatter settlement; and the third of a resettlement colony with varying degrees of exclusion from state services.

2.1.1 Homeless

Surveys have put the number of homeless people in Delhi between 52,000 and 2,46,000 (Lama and Bharadwaj, 2016). With at least nine deaths reported in Delhi every day, according to a report by *Hindustan Times*, the government has shown apathy at best and been hostile at worst in its inability to provide roofs over heads or any protection to this vulnerable population. In 2015, there were 3285 unidentified dead bodies found in Delhi. The government estimates that there are 1,25,000 homeless people residing in Delhi (the number could be much larger) but it only has less than 200 night shelters.

In a group discussion with homeless men in a night shelter near Kashmiri Gate,[5] most people admitted that finding a place to stay in Delhi was more difficult than finding food. Govind,[6] originally from Nepal, was penniless when he came to Delhi. He was 11 then, knew no one and had no idea what he would do next. His mother had passed away and his father had remarried. He used to go to school, but one day when his father beat him up, he ran away to Delhi. He has lived in Delhi now for 40 years, without a home. 'When I first arrived here I used to sleep on the footpath for years. You can get some work in Delhi on the roads, and get some food too. But you will not find a place to sleep.'

The monetization of every need in the urban economy hurts the homeless the most. They are forced to buy everything for their survival, even sleep. Winter nights in Delhi are a striking instance of this when the city breeds 'sleep mafias' who decide the price and quantum of sleep a homeless person could be entitled to (*New York Times*, 2016). The homeless are also plagued by issues like drug addiction, theft and police harassment. In Old Delhi near the railway station where Govind slept for all those years, he says, the police would sometimes beat up those on the pavements and sometimes lock them up as well.

Mahesh Kumar, a 31-year-old graduate from Bulandshahar in Uttar Pradesh came to Delhi eight years back. He lived near Jama Masjid, working in odd jobs in the day and renting a *charpai* (foldable bed) for INR 20. He said in summer he still preferred to sleep on the road, but in winter one needed a protected place to sleep. 'You should come to a public toilet near Old Delhi one morning; there is a two-hour line to use the toilet or have a bath. Drinking water is often full of insects.'

Most people we spoke to said they worked as day wage labour, waiting tables at weddings or installing wedding-tents, and sometimes as labourers for PWD work. Living in Old Delhi typically cost them INR 80–100 for a day, including the cost of food, tea, renting a blanket for the night, money to use the public toilet and to access drinking water. Most people could not find even a whole week's work in a month. They had come to Delhi in search of jobs, or to run away from a past which often they were not willing to share. Arun (name changed), for instance, went to Mumbai to work as a tailor, stayed in a slum and worked for big companies on a contractual basis in casual employment. He came to Delhi 15 years ago and continued to work in the garment industry in Govindpuri while living in a slum. Working over a long time and for long hours in dim lighting has almost entirely damaged his eyesight.He lost his job and home eight years ago. His family lives in Uttar Pradesh but he has not visited them in 30 years. The

occupational and residential vulnerability therefore draw inertia from each other, reinforcing the other.

Conditions are far worse for women and little girls who are often sexually harassed and molested not only by complete strangers, drug addicts or other homeless men in the shelters but also by shelter caretakers and cops on the road. Additionally, most shelters for women in Delhi are temporary structures and not conducive to inhabiting in summer (*Hindustan Times*, 2016). It has also been reported that transgenders are among the worst sufferers. Since there are no shelters for them in the city, they must 'become men' to avail of nightshelters. They face regular harassment from other pavement dwellers and are also harassed by police officials who extort money from them. The experience of homelessness is harsher when combined with social vulnerabilities, as the experiences of sexual minorities reveal.

2.1.2 Jhuggi Jhopri clusters

Settlements notified under the 1956 Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act can be considered Slum Designated Areas (SDA). The last notification of an SDA had come out in 1994, which means most other sprawling slum-like settlements are seen as *Jhuggi Jhopri* clusters (JJC), built on public land and treated as 'encroachments'. In 2011, the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) estimated that there are 672 *clusters* in 2014, with 304,188 *jhuggis*. With an approximation of even five members in each *jhuggi*, it would amount to 15 lakh people who first got recognition only in 2010 with the passing of the DUSIB Act (CPR, 2015).[7] The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has not built housing for the economically weaker sections, neither did it provide effective rehabilitation during the same period for those displaced during demolitions across Delhi for the Commonwealth Games 2010. Between 2004 and 2007, more than 45,000 homes were allegedly demolished while only less than a fourth of the settlers received any alternative habitation (Bhan, 2009, p. 128). The state government, through its institutions and policies, has robbed people of any claim to the city which is seen as 'a show window to the world of our culture, heritage, traditions and way of life… and cannot be allowed to degenerate and decay' (Delhi High Court judgement, 1995).

We went to Shakur Basti, West Delhi, which was in the news for being demolished in December 2015. A few families had been brought here from Uttar Pradesh by labour contractors when a training centre was being built behind it. The contractor had built temporary huts for the workers on the piece of land which they had called home for more than three decades. More families joined them eventually, most working as casual labourers to load or unload cement trucks for the Public Works Department (PWD), as construction workers or working any other odd jobs they could find. The Railways and the Delhi government, trying to reclaim the land belonging to the Railways, were responsible for the demolition that claimed the life of a six-month-old, found buried under the rubble. Politicians were quick to show up with plenty of blankets, food and sympathy. The Delhi High Court, however, pulled up the authorities for the demolition in harsh winter, pointing out that the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) policy and the Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Act provide protection for clusters that have existed since before 2006. It even ordered for rehabilitation by all the concerned authorities notwithstanding the legal status of the cluster (*Indian Express*, 2015). At the time of writing, almost a year after the demolition, which the residents claimed was the fifth in 35 years, people are living under plastic sheets and torn clothes and sarees crafted into makeshift homes. Both the approach road and internal roads are ill-built. Electricity metres have been restored in around 100 households, a few temporary mobile dry toilets have been built and residents collect and store water distributed by a

tanker that comes twice a day. The *basti* comprises five clusters and has around 1700 households. Only around 250 households, the residents report, have ration cards. There is an A*nganwadi*[8] in the cluster but no Asha worker to support it. One of the residents told us, 'The Anganwadi worker gets one bucket of food for 70 kids, which cannot feed even half of them. People have stopped sending children there.' Some families are even scared to send their kids to primary school as that involves running the risk of crossing the railway line to access the school. Mohammad Kaleem, who had lost his granddaughter during the demolition said, 'Every household has a member suffering from dengue, chikunguniya or chicken pox now. Look at my feet, mosquito bites in the evening turn into such infections; even ambulances do not want to come to *jhuggis*, and this is the Health Minister's constituency.'[9]

The people said that railway officials often threaten the settlers to leave. Though there are no more threats of demolition due to the ongoing case in the court, officials tell them to stay in impermanent structures. Many families had put their lives' savings into building proper houses and after the last demolition do not want to risk losing it all again. Though the people have ration cards from 35 years ago, Kaleem's new voter card states the residential address as 'Homeless' followed by the address of the 'railway *jhuggi*'. His Aadhar card however does not describe him as a homeless person. The sense of helplessness and uncertainty together with the will to fight against the authorities and to not give up their homes is palpable at the *basti*; and that sense of hope is the only relief.

2.1.3 Resettlement Colonies

Since the 1960s, there have been at least three rounds of eviction of residents who have been resettled into colonies with the promise of better planning and public services in the city. The 1960s saw 18 such resettlement colonies come up while the 1970s saw the setting up of 26 more, with a population of 250,000 households. The third wave came post the Commonwealth Games in 2010, which took the total number of colonies to 55 (CPR, 2015).

Eviction and resettlement in Delhi have been studied at length (Ramanathan 2006, Bhan 2013). The Delhi Laws (Special Provisions Act) 2006 provided the government with the power to demolish settlements without any obligation to ensure alternative housing for the poor (Ramanathan, 2006). Between 2003 and 2008, around 350 slum clusters with more than 3,00,000 people were demolished and some estimates suggest only a third of these were rehabilitated.

In six resettlement sites in Narela, people received empty plots with no basic services like piped water, sanitation or electricity even after 15 years of resettlement. The resettlement sites being far from the city means that children lose out on decent schooling and people lose their regular livelihood opportunities (*The Quint*, 2015).

Though the DDA even established the DUSIB in 2010 to service and resettle JJC clusters, a CAG report in 2013 observed, that DSUIB 'had no mission to relocate all the JJCs, instead it takes action only on the request of the land owning agencies in the clusters prioritised by the department' (CAG, 2013).

As the Cities of Delhi project says, 'Nowhere (other than resettlement colonies) is the gap between legal designation and policy practice more pronounced and more emblematic of planned state failure' (CPR, 2015). The legality of tenure is also unique with people getting licences and not titles, which are non-transferable and have to be renewed (though there are no records of renewal) (Bhan 2013). Rentals are therefore illegal on these plots though widely prevalent.

In a positive move recently, the Delhi government has approved a plan to give ownership rights to the land so that the original allottees can

divide properties further and avail of credit facilities at a price of INR 10,000 for the 45 old resettlement colonies (*The Hindu*, 2012). Those who are not original allottees would have to pay less than INR 50,000 (*Indian Express*, 2015).

We visited the Shakurpur colony set up near Motinagar metro station. The residents estimated it was built 30 years ago, with many households uprooted from slums in Chanakyapuri. Many residents are from the southern part of India who migrated two generations ago. Both the approach road and internal road were well made, though the residents said that waterlogging in the monsoon is a major issue. Over the years, people have built more floors above the initial single-storey houses allotted to them. The population of the colony has multiplied with many families renting houses for INR 4,000–6,000 per month. The government had constructed public toilets in the past, but most inhabitants today are building private toilets on their own. Some of these are however pit latrines, with no proper sewage system to process the waste. All the houses, however, do have electric metres and receive piped water from the municipality. It must be admitted that the condition of a resettlement colony cannot be compared with that of the clusters with no public provisioning. However, as admitted by the residents and observed by the researcher, there are serious issues people face here.

First, most people rehabilitated were staying very far away in the city when they were evicted and resettled here. As a result, many people lost their livelihood, or school admissions and had to start their life almost afresh. Second, even today women find it very difficult to get jobs in the area. Few women work as a domestic help in nearby households, but most do not have a secure source of income anymore. As Kiran (name changed) said, "I worked in a factory nearby that made jams and pickles and ran the household. My husband drank on most days and stayed at home. But the factory that employed many women from this area shut down 10 years back. I had to pull my kids out of school.'[10]Another resident Chameli moved from Bandipur in Rajasthan to Delhi after her marriage. Her husband was a manual labourer and she used to cap bottles of jam earning INR 2,000–3,000 a month. 'But now there is no work for us; and the price of groceries has gone up so much. You take INR 100 to buy vegetables and you will get nothing. You ask any woman here what do they want, something they could earn from nearby or from home,' she told us.

The third problem that people pointed out was that of the apathy of the local elected councillor towards helping out people with issues like open drains, or to stop the increasing epidemic of Chikunguniya and Dengue in every household. They said the authorities had dug huge pits while installing a tower nearby and never filled them up. One boy died of asphyxiation and his brother was badly injured when they fell into the pit while playing. Even after multiple appeals to the authority no one had done anything earlier, and it was only after the accident that the pit was filled.

The other issue that was pointed out was the concern regarding women's safety, particularly in the late hours. Even though most women admitted that safety had been a concern even 30 years ago, the consensus was that the situation had become worse over time. Leena (name changed) explained, 'There is too much alcohol in the cluster now. There are shops around, but people also sell liquor out of their homes and young boys buy it. If you come here after 7 or 8 at night, you will find the men intoxicated. The police know about it but everyone has their share of the profit, we guess.'

2.2 Occupational Vulnerability

Philip Amis suggests that proleterianization and the labour market, rather than urbanization, have to be taken as the starting points of urban poverty, where an individual becomes completely dependent on

cash wage and is deprived of subsistence production (Amis, 1995, p. 147). In the absence of full-time wage employment for those migrating into the city, the nature of urbanization marks a departure from the Euro-centric notion of rural-urban migration due to industrialization. The 61st round of the NSS data has in fact shown a decline in real wages for the first time since independence, which implies a possible decline in the standard of living and even perhaps a lower collective bargaining power of the working class. There has been a simultaneous 'shift away from wage/salaried work to self-employment and casual labour, employment situations where workers must take on a certain element of risk within the open market' and increasing dependence on the market even for staples like rice and wheat (Bhan, 2009, p. 136).

In some cases, the state itself is involved in restricting employment opportunities, as in the case of some 100,000 units closed in Delhi for not being in legal areas (Heller and Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Sometimes these were given alternative sites'in peripheral industrial estates. As of 2009–10, 22,749 were allotted sites of which only 13,142 had taken possession.' The city had 10 lakh unemployed workers in 2003 (Harriss, 2005, p.1043) and also became more dependent on industries like garment factories, embroidery, etc., that use casual cheap labour in informalized spaces (Mezzadri, 2008).

The monetization in the urban economy, as discussed in an earlier section, makes the standing of an individual or household in the labour market a crucial determinant of their residential vulnerability as well. One's job gets both determined by and determines the living space in that sense, and one's place in economic production would shape in a sense, one's access to the urban space in the final instance.

A few attempts have been made by the state to provide skills and livelihood opportunities to the urban poor for self-employment and skilled employment, for instance the National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) under the central scheme of Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) in the 12th Five Year Plan (*The Hindu*, 2013).The government claims, 'The target of NULM is urban poor, with special focus on the urban homeless, street vendors, disadvantaged groups like SCs, women, minorities and disabled.' However, concrete implementation is yet to begin in the city.

Occupational vulnerability is discussed in the following section through case studies of street vendors, rag pickers and construction workers in the city.

2.2.1 Street Vendors

Delhi has roughly 3,00,000 street vendors though the official figure that the Delhi Municipal Corporation uses is 1,25,000, out of whom a third are women (Self-Employed Women's Association website). The National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) conducted a 10-city survey which revealed that 30 per cent of street vendors are between age groups of 21 and 30 while more than half are between 31 and 50 years of age. Forty per cent of the vendors are illiterate and around 56 per cent live in *kuchcha* (temporary) houses. More than 70 per cent of the vendors spend 8–12 hours to sell their wares and spend two more hours for cleaning and display. And 60–70 per cent of vendors pay bribes between INR 2 and 100 per day to the authorities. In Delhi, this could go upto INR 500–700 per day for the shoe sellers at the Sunday market near Red Fort (SEWA website). Hawkers and street vendors are now guaranteed protection under the Street Vendors' (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, but from her interactions with vendors, this researcher learned of the poor implementation of this law which prevents its realization. For instance, Town Vending Committees which are mandated to survey and regularize vendors, are either non-existent or ineffective. The moratorium

under the Delhi Special Provisions Act for the hawkers and vendors also remains, though the central government might order their evacuation in case land is needed for 'special public projects' (Ramanathan, 2006, p. 3197).

On a Tuesday afternoon in the monsoon of 2016, we visited the busy Lajpat Nagar Central Market to meet some street vendors. Many of them were already associated with the NASVI. They said that around 500 vendors work in the market which implied that the market provides a means to live for at least 1,500 people (considering their families). The government, they complained, makes it difficult for those who are trying to earn a living honestly. Kiran, one of the leaders of the struggle for the vendors who sells readymade garments on the road said, 'It is not just us and our families. Imagine the manufacturers and suppliers of our products: street vending in this market supports lives of many more people than is apparent.'[11] Most people said they came to this profession through someone they knew from their village or otherwise, who was already a street vendor. They said that they had come to the city to escape the unemployment and poverty of rural life. Most began with odd jobs, employed to wire wi-fi or as a security guard.

Police harassment was another issue they highlighted. In the past, they used to pay regular bribes to the authorities; however, following the passage of the Street Vendors Act in 2014, the government is supposed to form Town Vending Committees under each municipal corporation to issue licences and collect fees from registered members (*The Hindu*, 2016). Despite this, police harassment continues. 'Even a few weeks back we were demonstrating to be allowed to sell products[12] when the SHO picked many of us up from the market. At the police station we are often manhandled with not even a woman officer present,' said Kiran. She continued, 'The SHO gave me a letter to sign that said we never sold our wares here, neither will we do so henceforth. I refused to sign it and they physically assaulted me. But all our vendor brothers and sisters sat outside the police station in solidarity and they released me after midnight. They insisted I go home afterwards but we refused; we wanted to get a medical done first for the assault.'[13]

Jitendra Singh, who has been selling goods in the market for the past 35 years now, said, 'The government is sleeping; it acts on behalf of the rich.' Most vendors we spoke to complained of harassment by police and municipal authorities despite the new Act. 'The British used to look at Indians like garbage; that's how the shopkeepers look at us. And the authorities? *Keede makode ke tarah vyavahar karte hain.* (They treat us like insects),' said a vendor, who wishes to remain unnamed.

Besides the police and municipal authorities, the street vendors are also fighting the union of shopkeepers at the Central Market. The shopkeepers, they allege, bring in new people to sit outside their shops so that the new government survey includes them and not the street vendors working in the market for years. Shopkeepers charge the vendors INR 500–600 per day to sit outside their shops. Such bribes or 'rents' have put most vendors under enormous debts.

There are local financiers who come to the market every day to provide loans for picking up supplies or payment of rents. For a loan of INR 10,000, the going rate of interest is INR 500 per day (at the time of writing this). When her husband built up a debt of INR 4 lakh in the market, Kamala (name changed) began to sell wares herself. She said, 'My husband was scared the loan sharks would hurt him. I started selling wares and told them every day that the man who used to sit here had run away. I sold my house back in my village and over a period of time paid back the loan. Now we sit together again; but many people just run away.' People often lose their goods to municipal raids. 'They take our

goods and return half of them after we pay the penalty. What they return is also soiled. Last Diwali they picked up goods and there was a fire at their warehouse. We did not get back anything, and no compensation was given,' says Subir who has been selling garments for 22 years at the market. For women, the marketplace is more hostile; as Kiran says, 'A woman who sits on the street is seen as "loose", someone who does not have a man at home. A woman would not come and sit on the streets if she had other options, people feel. Also, there is only one public toilet in the whole market which is often in an unusable condition.' The struggle is made more difficult by the fact that the vendors are not a part of the vote bank in the area where they work; this makes local elected authorities apathetic towards help them.

2.2.2. Ragpickers

India, according to estimates, has over 15 lakh wastepickers or ragpickers, whose work includes collecting waste, sorting, segregating, and trading it (Chintan, n.d.). According to other estimates this number stands at 40 lakh with five lakh of them in Delhi itself (Singh, 2016). Government statistics shows that 36.5 million tonnes of solid waste is generated in India annually (Chintan, 2011). Upto 20 per cent of this waste is removed from the waste stream by informal sector workers like ragpickers and petty traders. Wastepickers have been classified into four groups: those who carry sacks and collect anything of resale value from open drains, municipal bins, dumps, etc; those who carry two sacks separately on a bicycle and collect items like glass, bottles, plastics and keep them separately; those who carry tricycles and collect almost 50kg of waste each day and travel long distances to sell them; and those who work for waste dealers collecting and sorting waste for them (Sarkar, 2003, p. 7). Research shows that their health problems are linked to their occupation which exposes them to toxins with no provisions for adequate protective gear. They often take up this work from a young age and frequently suffer from cuts, respiratory diseases, tuberculosis and other infections (Ray, Mukherjee et al., 2004). It is high time that the government took cognizance of the fact that waste management has to be treated not just as a technical crisis but as a human crisis as well.

In 'Darkness Under the Lamps', a CES study undertaken in Madanpur Khadar, a colony of ragpickers, it was reported that the residents were 'treated with suspicion and derision, because of their extreme poverty, vocation of ragpicking, minority faith and suspicions that they are from Bangladesh by the middle-class community living around' (Mander and Manikandan, 2011). Moreover, the same study found that children of ragpickers often carry on in the same occupation and are denied education.

With the support of the KachraKamgar Union, a union of rag pickers in the city, we visited a ragpicker's colony near Vasant Kunj close to the airport. More than 250 families here depend on ragpicking to earn a livelihood. The men leave early in the morning with their carts to pick waste. A few of them work where the municipal corporation deposits their waste, a few pick them from the roads while many cycle around various neighbourhoods picking anything on offer from door to door. Ranjit was a landless labourer in Bihar who came to Delhi looking for more stable and better paying work. Kundan used to graze cattle in a farmhouse in Chhattarpur for many years before he picked up this profession. Another man washed toilets at the Delhi airport prior to settling down at the ragpickers' colony. Chandrika, who was a bonded labourer in Bihar and earned 1.5 kg of vegetables for a month's work, came to Delhi in 1985 at a very young age. She said, 'It is out of absolute destitution that people come to the city. Sometimes people are contracted into the work through moneylenders who dump several people in a single room and pay a pittance to make them work. There are traders

who do it for ragpickers as well.'[14] But most in this colony work independently in the profession. Most men we spoke to agreed that they had tried their hand at other work but came back to ragpicking due to the very poor payment and instability in other forms of work. Most families here too follow the pattern of helping their kin from villages to get the same job they have, which means most people in the *basti* have come from two states: Bihar and Bengal.

The women we met, do not go out for picking, but are expected to sort the waste at home. Even eight- or 10-year-old children often join their parents in sorting. Kundan complains, 'If you work 12–14 hours a day, you can make a living in this work. But rates have gone down significantly. One sack of rag could fetch us INR 300 five years ago. Now it is not possible to get more than INR 175–200. See the price of rice and vegetables; it is impossible to survive now.' Police harassment is also common among ragpickers. Young boys are picked up on false allegations and beaten up in police stations. Sometimes young men pick up mobile phones or other goods which have been stolen or lost, but they get arrested when tracked. However, at this colony, regular harassment has reduced over the past few years due to the strength of the union, the residents say.

The best rates are fetched by hair and plastic, they say, but sorting waste is difficult and hazardous. 'We open sacks and there are sanitary napkins in newspapers, and human excreta in polythene; there are shards of glass, syringes or nails. We cut ourselves, develop rashes and infections. There is often completely rotten food which causes health problems. We have no pension, no recognition, no medical facilities. And here we are falling sick all the time, finding it difficult to breathe or suffering from incessant stomach infections,' says one of the residents of the colony. When the main earning member falls sick or a child does not recover for weeks, the family goes to the native village to recover. The government hospitals, they say, do not want to treat them, and most of them go to private dispensaries to get medicines. Neither the government nor the citizens have given a thought to the human cost of how their waste is treated. For example, both diapers and sanitary napkins must be treated as medical waste. However, with no proper mechanism to treat them, they are handled as domestic waste and thrown in dumpyards where ragpickers roam around with bare feet. Without any protective gear, they are bound to fall sick (*Indian Express*, 2016).

The colony, built on 'forest land' belonging to a nearby village, has no concrete houses as the landowners will not allow any construction that suggests permanence. Only a third of the households have ration cards while no one gets a pension at present. There is no personal or public toilet in the colony, and no electric metres have been installed. We asked a few women, originally from Uttar Pradesh, sorting waste in the colony, that if the government granted them one facility what they would ask for. They replied, disposal bins for the leftover waste after sorting is done. As pointed out by them, the colony only consists of *kuchcha* houses with no proper roads or drinking water or sewerage system allowing the waste to pile up after 'valuables' like plastic, bottles, paper, wrappers or hair have been removed. 'Give us that and access to water. We buy two buckets of water every other day and pay INR 1000–2000 a month to the one person who has a hand pump. If a tanker would come, we could have a bath properly. Yes, we deal with garbage, but we want to be able to live in a space that is clean.'

2.2.3 Construction Workers

Informal employment in the construction sector almost doubled between 2004–5 and 2011–12 from 2.49 crore to 4.89 crore, according to NSS data (Srjia and Shirke, 2014).[15] Construction is the largest employer in the country after agriculture (ibid., 2014) though this employment is of a casual nature

(National Labour Commission Report, 2002). 'The construction industry in India is characterized by poor work habits, lack of ergonomic practices, prolonged work hours with inadequate rest periods, hazardous working conditions, migrant labor with poor rights and say at the workplace and poor healthcare access' (Valsangkar and Sai, 2012, p. 1727). The National Commission for Labour (NCL) adds, 'Unstable employment/earnings and shifting of workplaces are the basic characteristics of work for construction workers' (2002, pp.633–34). Construction workers are recruited on a casual and often daily basis either directly by a builder or construction company, but mostly by intermediaries who take a commission on the payment being made. Women are paid lower wages (NCL) and often the children are deprived of 'primary facilities like health, water, sanitary facilities, education and ration cards' (NCL, 2002).

We spoke to a group of construction workers who are part of Nirmana, an NGO working for the rights of construction workers and the enforcement of The Building and Other Construction Workers Act and The Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996. Most people who come as migrants, the workers said, know someone from their village or a relative, with whom they enter this field. They were landless agricultural labourers or farmers with such little land that the city was their only hope of survival. Some of them had been artisans who traditionally made shoes or ploughs or other articles. Unable to compete with mass-produced cheap consumer goods, they have all joined the urban labour force. Mangal Singh, from Ajmer in Rajasthan came to Delhi in 1977 during the Emergency. He said, 'In the village they were giving vegetables as wages and scarcity brought many of us to the city. The land in the village is not fertile since the good land parcels have been taken by upper caste men. I began as a construction worker but now take up contracts myself sometimes. My kids have grown up here and will not go to the village.' They complained that instead of individual contractors, most of them have to work with big builders on massive projects now. 'The wages have gone down, so many of us are unemployed. In 10 years, per day wage has not even gone up by INR 10. It is around INR 300–400 a day and you will not even get 10–15 days of work in a month," a worker rued. They complained that in a big construction site the builder only registers 500 workers if 2000 are working there so that the contribution to the welfare board is low.[16] If there are inspections, they give a day's leave to the workers. In case of accidents or injuries on sites no one takes responsibility for the treatment. If a death occurs, a big contractor might give some compensation to suppress the matter, and the workers said that a construction worker working alone on a site without a family and facing grievous injuries is most vulnerable to such suppressions.

Janaki, who came to Delhi with her husband and has worked on construction sites throughout her adult life informed us that in large sites they could make disposable toilets. But in smaller sites, there are neither creches nor washrooms. The houses built on the sites are of very poor quality and women's wages, always much lower than the men's are handed over to the man of the family (National Labour Commission, 2002). Umesh Singh and Ishwar, who have been with the NCC-CL movement from its early days said, 'Even in the metro construction sites, it is compulsory to build crèches and bathrooms. But they will put tins and a curtain and pass it off as toilet. When we work in houses which have been built or are being renovated and have running water, we cannot even use it for drinking or for going to the bathroom.' A worker can send his children to school if they can afford to take a house in a slum. Otherwise they shift from one site to another and older siblings take care of the younger ones. Babita(name changed to protect identity) said, 'During the constructions for the Commonwealth Games, most labourers were hired

like bonded labourers. There were instructions that they could not leave the site or speak to anyone. The contractors paid a lump sum to the workers' family back in the village and brought them here for three months.' A woman who had joined the meeting said, 'Caste discrimination was rampant on those sites. The wages were lower for the lower caste and their children would eat separately.'

The Delhi government collected a cess of INR 1536 crores from 2002 till 2016 (though it should have collected more) but spent only a little more than 10 per cent of this, INR 174.71 crore (*Newslaundry*, 2016). The AAP government has recently decided to divert INR 1000 crores from the welfare cess the government collects at the sites to build schools and hospitals which makes the workers' fate worse (*Times of India*, 2016).

2.3 Social Vulnerability

While mapping both occupational and residential vulnerability, we have seen that the social standing of a person often makes the experience of negotiating the city more cumbersome. Gender, caste, religious identity and disability often determine a person or household's access to urban space as well as the more abstract space of the labour market. If vulnerability is conceived as the risk to slip into poverty, it is imperative to engage with the social identities of a household or an individual, to effectively recognize and analyse the multi-dimensionality of the lived experiences of marginalized subjects. Intersectionality is useful to conceptualize the simultaneity of multiple identities (Crenshaw, 1989) that make one vulnerable.

Most interviewees shared that they migrated to urban areas, to escape limited employment opportunities in the native villages. But the social identities in rural areas continued to shape their livelihoods and lives in urban areas. Research has shown that disparities have endured in India across social and religious groups due to differentiated and unequal access to skill and education (as well as land and capital endowments) and (lack of) occupational mobility (Thorat, 2010). It has also been shown that urban male workers from 'SC, ST, OBC and Muslim communities earn disproportionately lower than what is consistent with their education and experience' (Singh and Husain, 2016). While their occupations are already low-paying, they earn even less than the market rate in these occupations.

Here, social vulnerability is discussed along three axes—disability; gender , i.e., the experience of being a single woman; and the Muslim identity. These case studies attempt to dismantle the 'universalism' (Nash, 2008)[17] of residential and occupational vulnerabilities, revealing the heterogeneity of vulnerability depending on one's social location.

2.3.1 Disabled People

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007, interprets disability as an 'evolving' concept, one that is born out of an interaction between the physical condition and the social barriers a person suffering from such a physical condition faces (Fremlin, 2015). The treatment of the medical condition, though of paramount importance, must be seen as aligned with addressing the social stigma that comes with it. The medical condition, as evident in several interviews with disabled people from different age groups and parents of disabled children, is less crippling in a city like Delhi than in rural areas or even small towns. State negligence, however, in providing proper education, public infrastructure and jobs excludes people from equal opportunities.

Social marginalization leads to exclusion from accessing health care, education, or employment leading to poverty, which in turn results in restricted access to safe housing and food, health care and so forth (Groce et al, 2011). In the *Vikalangbasti* (colony of the disabled) near the

Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which houses about 450 households (about 1000 people), most people are disabled and earn their livelihood by seeking alms. Only around 10 per cent households have ration cards. The case of the Viklang *basti* shows how disability is made even more challenging by state apathy (Mander and Manikandan, 2011). 26-year-old Gaurav lost his eyesight after Class 12 when a fever affected his brain. Growing up in a poor family of a single mother and other siblings, he eventually started computer classes and plans to apply for admission in a college for distance learning. 'I had only heard about disability. Now I know what it means. Sometimes I stand at bus stops for an hour because no one tells me what bus number is approaching. One day I asked the conductor to drop me at Nehru Place, and he dropped me at Nehru Nagar instead. I reached home at 10 at night,' he recalled.[18] He explained that he gets a pension of INR 1500 from the government and a bus pass from the terminal on showing the disability certificate, but all he wants are options for a full-time job. He says his family has never let him feel impaired, but the lanes in the slum are so narrow that stepping out alone is difficult.

Rakesh, who has a locomotive disability since childhood, and is from the same slum in Govindpuri has a similar complaint. He says that there is no way a wheelchair or a crutch could be used in the slum. Even in school there were no ramps or lifts and often it would be difficult to attend a class on the third or fourth floor. Till the fifth standard his mother had to carry him to the school. Though the government has reserved quotas for the disabled in jobs, they are not serious about maintaining it. 'This time, my seat for the exam for a railway job was in Rohini Sector 6, 40 kilometres away from my house, even when I had attached my disability certificate and my address with the application', said Rakesh.

Rupin, who manages a disability helpline for an NGO in Delhi, informed the researcher that they get 7–10 calls a day, mostly from lower middle class or poor households. Most of the callers are concerned about their child's school admission or about entitlements like pensions. He said that unlike in rural areas, the urban poor in Delhi do not always stay permanently in one location. Running prolonged awareness programmes, therefore, becomes more difficult. 25-year-old Shabana pointed out that schools are not easy for such children. She, as a child, was almost never helped to go to the toilet as the teacher would not be supportive in such matters. Because of limited mobility, she chose to educate herself through a correspondence course for college. Though she might get a job in the future, she is worried about travelling to the workplace everyday. She complained that most of her seats for university examinations were in faraway colleges. In one of the examination centres, disabled students were made to sit separately, which was an insulting experience for most. When asked what she would want from the government besides a pension, she said, 'I don't even want pension if I get a job. That pension money does not even cover my medicines. I would prefer to work and earn on my own. What I want is that the government create conditions that allow for us to work.'

2.3.2 Single Women

The institution of marriage and family has been given so much importance in Indian society and its laws and policies that single women often have to face stigma in addition to solitude and poverty when there is no family support. One must acknowledge that single women are not just victims. Their decisions to either leave their husbands, often single-handedly running their families and bringing up their kids, or to not marry at all, exhibit their grit and agency. But being a woman and choosing to stay single often magnifies the gender discrimination that follows; single women are often looked at with pity, sympathy or as sexual objects. In an urban setting, with smaller nuclear families,

the experience of being single could be more difficult; but as most women we spoke to admit, it is easier to work and earn to live in one's own in a city than in their native villages. Cities, especially large urban areas have more single women or women-headed households (Khosla, 2009, p. 7). Unless backed by better human capital endowment, their participation in the labour market will continue to be on unfair terms. Poverty is higher in urban areas among female-headed households as compared to male-headed ones (Rustagi, 2006). Also, stigma and societal pressure make these women more vulnerable.

Kiran, a second-generation street vendor in the Lajpat Nagar Central Market, lost her husband to an illness a few years ago. As a child, Kiran used to stand at the car park to sell wares which she would put on car bonnets. After her marriage, she struggled with poverty in Gujarat—her husband had an unstable income and yet did not allow her to work. In 2005, she returned to Delhi with her children. She came back to Lajpat Market to work as a street vendor and paid half her earnings to her mother to stay at her house. Her husband came back to her after he gathered that she had started earning and they took a house on rent in a slum. She lost him soon after. However, even before her husband's passing, Kiran had learnt what it meant to be a single woman fighting to arrange food, shelter and education for her children. She said, 'People judge you even when you try to rent a house. So many men see you on the road and think ill of you. They tell you, "*Road pe baith ke kya karegi*? (What will you do on the road?)" They want to offer money and think you are available.'[19]

Jaishree in Shakurpur married outside her caste at a young age. The relationship turned out to be physically abusive and she returned to her *maika*(mother's house) in a few years. But Jaishree's mother, Kalyani, no longer welcomes her: 'I do not want Jaishree here. I did not get her married; she chose herself and must find a solution to this. I am single and have brought up my daughters with much difficulty. If the elder one comes back, no one will marry my younger daughter.'[20] With a two-year-old child, and no one to support her, Jaishree finds it very difficult to work and earn without someone to take care of her infant.

Age and the inability to continue to work make single women especially dependent on their children or any support they can get from neighbours or relatives. A 70-year-old widow Antara (name changed) now lives with her daughter's family in Vasant Kunj. She said that even though she was being cared for, she wanted to have access to a pension to help her daughter financially and buy her own medicines. However, staying in the ragpicker's colony with not even a valid Voter ID card or other identity proof she has not been able to get her entitlements.

In conclusion, Kiran, Jayshree and Antara may all be clubbed together under the category of single women. However, once one considers factors such as age, mobility, area of residence, and the capacity to work, their experiences of Delhi could not have been more different.

2.3.3 Muslims

According to Planning Commission estimates, among religious groups in urban areas, the poverty ratio is highest for Muslims at 33.9 per cent, i.e., one out of every three Muslims in urban India lives below the poverty line. The Planning Commission while releasing its poverty estimates in March 2012 for the first time segregated its data into religious groups, along with the other usual social groups.[21] But as Kalyani Menon rightly points out, it is more than economic impoverishment that a poor Muslim faces in a city like Delhi. Here, while 'the securitization of the state impacts everyday life in the form of metal detectors, security cameras, check points, identity verification and armed personnel policing public space, notions of security

are inflected by majoritarian understandings of nation and citizenship that position Hindus as the normative subject, while relegating religious minorities to the murky margins of the national imaginary' (Menon 2015, p. 114).

She (Menon) writes about Ameena Baaji who sees the *burqa* as an integral part of her religious practice. But she is forced to take it off when she comes out of her neighbourhood to see her doctor or else she is perceived as being 'dirty' or a 'thief'. Like many other major cities, Delhi also has its pockets of predominantly Muslim-inhabited areas like Jamia Nagar, Okhla, and most parts of Old Delhi which are derogatively called 'mini Pakistan' (Ahmad, 2016). In Delhi, Muslim 'ghettos' have emerged as a result of the Muslim minority community seeking a sense of security and belonging in numbers. An architect and urban planner, Sadiq Zafar writes, 'High population density, sub-standard housing structures, crowded streets, unplanned haphazard growth and encroachments make Okhla one of the most vulnerable residential pockets…. Basic issues like water supply, sewage and drainage, parking, waste collection and disposal and natural ventilation are some of the core issues which people face collectively at the grass roots' (Zafar, 2016).

This commonly observed segregation does not imply that Muslims do not live in mixed spaces in Delhi. As Mohammad Kaleem, who now lives in Shakur Basti and who had travelled to Delhi with other migrants from Uttar Pradesh long back to work in a construction site said, 'When we came it was a mix of people from different religions travelling for work. So even today after 35 years, this settlement has a mix of Hindus and Muslims staying together. Here it is different from Old Delhi; people are daily wage labourers here and discrimination based on religion is not common.'

But difficulty in finding jobs in such mixed places is commonly experienced by Muslims. Hafeez (name changed), a street vendor in Lajpat Nagar, left his native village after he lost his father at a very young age and came to Delhi to stay with his uncle. He was not put into any school and started working as an air conditioner mechanic for cars. But because of the seasonality of the job and the low income, he came to Lajpat to sell wares. 'All other shopkeepers and even vendors would say "*Yeh Musalman hai*" and refuse to give me any space to work.' Access to labour markets is also limited by access to education. One fourth of Muslim children in the country go to unrecognized schools; only 15 per cent are enrolled in English medium schools and only 4 per cent in *Madrasas* (Singh and Husain, 2016, p. 43).

Exclusion in both occupational and residential spheres in such cases is deeply rooted in prejudice against and the marginalization of a religious minority.

3. Best practices

A lot of efforts are being made across the world by community-based movements and civil society organizations to improve the lives of the urban poor. However, the two examples below are not just about improving living conditions and catering to their needs, but about empowering the poor, aiding them for what is rightfully theirs: a place to live and work with dignity in the city. The first example is of a new law for the protection of street vendors while the second one is of an initiative led by a non-governmental organization to strengthen the fight of the poor for better rights.

a. Legitimization of street vendors:The Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Bill 2014, referred to earlier, is a laudable legislation that rescues street vending from the perception of being a nuisance and protects the livelihood of lakhs of vendors in the country. The law prescribes the formation

of the Town Vending Committees (TVC) at the municipal level, though the criterion for issuing street vendor licenses is based on various criteria which are not specified in the Act. The TVC is supposed to comprise street vendor representatives (40 per cent of the TVC), planning and local authorities, local police, the Municipal Commissioner, Resident Welfare Association and other trader associations. The Act provides for a certificate of vending which proves the legitimacy of street vending as a profession. Chapter VII of the Act prevents harassment of any registered street vendor, which is the most important concern of the vendors. But the penal provisions in the Act give immense power to the local police and municipal authorities. Any breach of the law can lead to a cancellation of the certificate. Additionally, the formation of the TVC itself needs a survey of all vendors which is very difficult. Moreover, the Act says the vendors cannot have any other profession, which is an unfair demand given that the income is poor and volatile (Pariroo Rattan, 2015). Such provisions coupled with the poor implementation of the Act have not provided much relief to the vendors. However, the Act has to be treated as a step in the right direction for legitimizing the profession of lakhs of people in India.

b. Training community para-legals: The United Nations had estimated that 4 billion people live outside the protection of the law. Community organizations could help people with legal training to empower them to understand and use the law for collective rights. Training community para-legals from low income groups in the urban context has been practised in several countries which empowers the community to navigate the legal system. The poor in urban India constantly battle state structures which treat them as illegal/criminals/encroachers. Though India offers legal aid in the judicial system, the system does not favour the weaker group and the police-lawyer-judiciary nexus often renders the poor vulnerable. As Namati, which builds grassroots legal advocates within the community explains in a report, the effort must treat people not as victims who require technical expertise, but those whose participation in the legal process must be enhanced. In a research evaluating 199 cases of providing legal services through community para-legals, 191 had positively impacted citizens, and 111 had led to an increase in legal knowledge and the willingness to act, and facilitated actual action. The most prevalent change noticed is the 'increases in the agency of participants—both willingness to act and actual action—as well as enhanced legal knowledge (Goodwin and Maru, 2014).

In Chile, government-aided NGOs, central and local government agencies, the Justice departments and many young professionals are involved mainly in training young para-legals from low income groups. Many community leaders have also been trained to become local legal leaders (UN-Habitat) and this has been included by the UN-Habitat as one of the best practices for access to land rights for the poor (United Nations Human Settlement Programme, 2003), something which is of prime importance in urban India. In India, this has been tried by the organization Namati in Gujarat, which has a presence in 10 countries working on similar lines. It helped people in the small industrial town in Vapi, Gujarat, to file a complaint with the Gujarat Pollution Board against industries for dumping waste in the river. The board in turn issued a notice to 53

factories, asking them to abide by the law or shut down (Vijayann, 2016).

This model could be extended to other urban areas in India, however, instead of just depending on non-governmental organizations, the government must aid legal training and certification and training of para-legals under its skill development or urban development programmes to empower people to fight for their rights.

4. Recommendations

Policies and programmes in India need to respond to India's urban poverty challenges from a human development perspective. The starting point for this must be an acceptance of the presence of the urban poor in the cities. As of now, there are categories of urban poor, whose very presence is considered illegitimate by the city authorities, by denial of recognition of living spaces, denial of access to basic services, hostile working conditions through harassment by the police or municipal officials, etc. Government programmes such as Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP) and Integrated Housing and Slum Development (IHSDP) have been started for them, specially by the GoI, but only half-heartedly. These are marred by inadequate allocation and even lower expenditure, as city municipalities are engulfed in their obsession with smart cities, air-conditioned shopping malls, five-star hotels,and housing for the elite. Construction of these facilities for the elite creates jobs for the poor, who migrate from the countryside and live and work in inhuman conditions to earn a livelihood. Their earnings are not sufficient for them to find shelter and satisfy basic human needs in an oppressive market with little governmental intervention. Neither are the poor able to exert pressure on municipalities to give them any priority as they are not organized politically. Therefore this chapter argues that initiatives to provide essential basic amenities to the urban poor must come from the GoI and state governments, who need to ensure that municipalities are empowered and incentivized to do justice to the poor.

The major recommendations for improving the conditions of the urban poor are:

1. Redefine urban poverty to consider both per capita expenditure and civic services while accounting for the urban poor. Migrants must be recognized by the government for the provision of subsidized food, healthcare, schooling, and services.
2. Urban housing shortage for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) stands at 56 per cent and the Low Income Group (LIG) households at 40 per cent (*Firstpost*, 2014). It should be obligatory to reserve 25 to 40 per cent of land in city development plans for the new social housing stock to accommodate the future inflow of poor migrants. Heavy taxation on unoccupied land or flats could be used as a deterrent to speculation.
3. The government must provide financial incentives to the states for the implementation of laws that protect informal workers, such as the law for protecting street vendors. Ragpickers, rickshaw pullers, construction workers, etc., must be issued job identity cards to allow them to work without police harassment.
4. Provision of basic water and sanitation should be de-linked from issues of land tenure and legal status. This basic service should be extended to recent and temporary/seasonal migrants as well. These services should be provided on the clear understanding that this provision does not automatically translate into legal entitlements in other spheres, especially with regard to legal rights to the land and/or dwelling space.

5. All health posts should provide outreach services to slum and slum-like areas. Special provisions should be made for providing health services to pavement dwellers and temporary settlements.
6. The improvement of affordable public transport must be made a priority by the state government. Buses ply most passengers in the urban centres, and a megacity like Delhi must focus on making its bus fleet numerically and technically adequate to deal with the pressure of transport. Buses of even small sizes could be considered, though at higher costs (number of passengers less with number of staff employed remaining the same), to be plied on narrower roads.
7. A survey of multiple workers in the unorganized sector, similar to what the Street Vendors Act aims at, and issuing of identity cards to recognize various categories of work like ragpicking, construction work, home based work, etc. One should be aware however, that such implementation of a process of identification of workers should not lead to more exclusion of workers, like already discussed in the case of street vendors.

Notes

1 Subaltern urbanization, as the authors define it, 'refers to the growth of settlement agglomerations, whether denoted urban by the Census of India or not, that are independent of the metropolis and autonomous in their interactions with other settlements, local and global.'

2 Authors argue that Gurgaon, in Delhi's periphery, could be an example to see how the nature of growth of an urban centre changes over time. While the initial growth of Gurgaon (the municipality has grown by 15.9 per cent annually from 2001–11) could be dependent on Delhi and its investment in the Maruti automobile factory, today it owes much of its expansion to its modern service sector and manufacturing sector not dependent on Delhi. So its urbanization to a great extent is independent of being peripheral to Delhi.

3 Definition by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation:
Regular wage/salaried employee: Persons working in other's farm or non-farm enterprises (both household and non-household) and getting in return salary or wages on a regular basis (and not on the basis of daily or periodic renewal of work contract) are regular wage/salaried employees. This category not only includes persons getting time wage but also persons receiving piece wage or salary and paid apprentices, both full-time and part-time.
Casual wage labour: A person casually engaged in other's farm or non-farm enterprises (both household and non-household) and getting in return wages according to the terms of the daily or periodic work contract is a casual wage labour. Usually, in the rural areas, one category of casual labourers can be seen who normally engage themselves in 'public works' activities. The concepts related to 'public works' are discussed later in this chapter.
Accessed at http://mail.mospi.gov.in/index.php/catalog/143/datafile/F5/V206.

4 Note how percentage of population under two categories often match to the decimal. For example, both resettlement and regularized unauthorized colonies have 12.72 per cent while both rural villages and unauthorized colonies comprise 5.3 per cent of the population. This is highly unlikely and points to the quality of survey conducted to reach the mentioned figures by the government.

5 Approximately 200 night shelters are being run in Delhi in 2016, under the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, in collaboration with NGOs.

6 FGD on 22 August 2016, Kashmiri Gate, New Delhi. All quotes used in this section are from a part of a focused group discussion held on the same day and told to the author directly.

7 Elsewhere, DUSIB has also stated that there could be 30 lakh people living in six lakh jhuggis, while admitting that none of the numbers are based on door-to-door surveys or a systematic census.

8 A pre-school shelter which was started by the Indian government in 1975 as a part of Integrated

Child Development Services. It provides health and education services to children between 0–6 years and nutrition supplements like contraceptives, maternity nutrition, etc.

9 FGD on 17 September 2016, Shakur Basti, New Delhi. All the quotes in this section are from a focused group discussion as a part of primary field work on the same day, and told directly to the author.

10 Interview on 22 September 2016, Shakurpur, New Delhi. All the quotes in this section are from a focused group discussion as a part of primary field work on the same day, and told directly to the author.

11 Interview on 20 September 2016, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi. All the quotes in this section are from a focused group discussion as a part of primary field work on the same day, and told directly to the author.

12 The incident was also reported in the*Times of India*, Lajpat Nagar street vendors protest against eviction. 7 September 2016.

13 The Code of Criminal Procedure was amended after Supreme Court rules were set out to prevent custodial torture in the case of DK Basu vs West Bengal in 1997. A medical examination right at the beginning of taking someone into judicial custody is mandatory so that injuries caused during judicial custody can be determined later. Also, such a medical test has to be carried out every day while someone is in judicial custody. For more details on the rules, see https://counterview.org/2016/12/19/deaths-in-custody-could-be-prevented-if-police-follow-rules-designed-to-deter-mistreatment/

14 Interview on 21 September 2016,VasantKunj, New Delhi.

15 The Delhi Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board is constituted under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Labour, Delhi which is responsible for financial assistance and welfare schemes for construction workers. Under the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Cess Act, all organizations carrying out construction projects need to pay a labour cess to the government for it to carry out welfare activities, like providing healthcare benefits, ration cards, mobile creches and mobile schools to the construction workers. Once workers are registered they are issued identity cards and passbooks to avail of the benefits.

16 Pitampura Sudhar Samiti vs Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (CWP 4215/1995).

17 Interview on 14 September 2016. All interviews in this section were conducted between 14 September 2016 and 15 September 2016.

18 Interview on 20 September 2016, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi.

19 Interview on 22 September 2016, Shakurpur, New Delhi.

20 The poverty ratio in urban areas is particularly bad for Muslims in states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and West Bengal (Planning Commission, 2012).

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