"Creating Space for the Formal Amongst the Informal: An Examination of Urban Housing Policies, State Power, and Multi-Scalar Politics in Indian Cities"

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Abstract:

To address the proliferation of urban slums, in 2005 the Government of India inaugurated its most ambitious urban housing policy since Independence. The Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) scheme aims to improve the living conditions of the poorest living in Indian cities by providing improved housing and basic infrastructure. While the goals driving BSUP are laudable, meeting the objectives of this ambitious policy has proven challenging for urban governance institutions, and the policy has been widely criticized for failing to provide the quantity and quality of housing required to meet the needs of the urban poor.

In the south Indian city of Bangalore, however, urban governance institutions have produced housing in large numbers under BSUP. During the ten years since implementing agencies began work on BSUP, more units of housing were built than in the previous 30 years combined, raising doubts as to whether the policy has been an outright failure. Rather than advancing yet another critique of the policy, therefore, this research examines how urban governance institutions *can* and *do* produce housing for the urban poor. Drawing on ethnographic data collected in Bangalore between 2013 and 2015, I trace the implementation processes of five BSUP housing projects in the city. Specifically, I examine how state actors respond to and negotiate institutional arrangements mandated under national urban policies in an effort to meet policy objectives.

I find that with the emergence of BSUP—a results-driven policy characterized by strict deadlines and a number of new rules and oversight agencies operating at all scales of government—new institutional structures have been created, opening up opportunities for actors to mobilize formal channels to influence policy processes. This has had numerous effects on urban governance. Actors who were previously excluded from informal channels utilize policy procedures to insert themselves into urban processes. Further, when implementation agencies are not performing, state actors strategically use policy structures to circumvent the agency, often employing multi-scalar tactics to pressurize non-performing actors to produce outcomes. In this sense, the actions of state actors are almost never restricted to specific scales under this policy, as multi-scalar assemblages prove most effective in achieving policy outcomes. State actors use tactics like "jumping scale" (Smith 1992), creating new scales, and developing complex multi-scalar assemblages to ensure that policy objectives are met.

While existing literature on urban governance in India has highlighted the role of *informal* coalitions in a number of cases—slum rehabilitation, urban land acquisition, etc.—this approach has largely ignored the *formal* political-institutional structures that shape the actions of actors. In fact, most research on urban India assumes that institutional procedures are largely flouted as actors choose to work through informal social networks to achieve various goals. This paper seeks to address this gap by illuminating formal governance processes and scalar politics in an urbanizing context in the Global South.

Introduction

Studies of urban governance in contemporary India have largely focused on the role of informal networks and political coalitions in shaping governance processes and outcomes within Indian cities (Benjamin 2008; Roy 2009; Sami 2013; Shatkin 2014a, 2014b; Weinstein 2008, 2014). This body of research argues that the highly fractured nature of governance within cities has enabled the rise of ad hoc, informal coalitions that come together primarily to meet immediate needs rather than to develop strategic, long-term development and governance plans for Indian cities. A number of these scholars attribute the rise of informal political coalitions to a "political power vacuum" (Sami 2013:152) that characterizes many Indian cities. This power vacuum exists largely because of the fact that authority to govern cities lies not with municipal governments, but with state governments who retain formal political powers to determine the physical and fiscal development of Indian cities (Weinstein 2008; Sami 2013; Shatkin 2014a, 2014b). As a result, many decisions regarding the future of cities are not made by local residents in conjunction with their municipal politicians, but rather by state government officials whose political priorities may or may not align with the needs of those living in cities and whose constituencies may not even be located in urban areas (Shatkin 2014a, 2014b; Weinstein 2008, 2014). This power vacuum, and its corresponding absence of stable, predictable urban politics, has allowed a number of new actors like community associations (Ghertner 2011), independently-appointed task forces/planning groups [*e.g.,* the Bangalore Action Task (BATF) and the Agenda for Bengaluru Infrastructure and Development (ABIDe) in Bangalore (Sami 2014) and Bombay First in Bombay (Chattaraj 2012)], and "political entrepreneurs" (Weinstein 2008) to emerge in cities and to use their personal networks, clout, and, occasionally, class and caste linkages to avail economic and political benefits from urban development (Kudva 2014; Sami 2013; Shatkin and Vidyarthi 2014:26).

While this research has enhanced our understanding of the dynamic, contingent, and informal processes that shape urban governance in India, the emphasis of this research on the increasing "informalization of politics" (Roy 2009; Shatkin 2014:27) in Indian cities has led to a simplification of the role of more formal processes, policies, and institutions that impact urban governance. To date, little research has been conducted on the day-to-day functioning of the state and bureaucracy in cities and how formal political structures and policies influence the possibilities and actions of urban actors. This paper seeks to fill this gap by focusing on the how formal urban governance institutions work to implement a national urban housing program in one of India's largest cities, Bangalore. Specifically, I seek to answer two main questions: *first,*

how do urban governance institutions produce housing for the urban poor? *Second*, how do state actors respond to and negotiate new institutional arrangements mandated under national urban policies in an effort to meet policy objectives?

By examining the implementation of a national urban housing policy—the Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) sub-mission of the Jawaharlal National Urban Renewal Mission (NURM)—in the south Indian city of Bangalore, I find that with the emergence of BSUP—a results-driven policy characterized by strict deadlines and a number of new rules and oversight agencies operating at all scales of government—new institutional structures have been created, opening up opportunities for actors to mobilize formal channels to influence policy processes. This has had numerous effects on urban governance. Actors who were previously excluded from informal[1] channels utilize policy procedures to insert themselves into urban processes and debates. Further, when implementation agencies are not performing, state actors strategically use policy structures to circumvent the agency, often employing multi-scalar tactics to pressurize non-performing actors to produce outcomes. State actors use tactics like "jumping scale" (Smith 1992), creating new scales, and developing complex multi-scalar assemblages to ensure that policy objectives are met. Due to the ambitious mandate placed on implementing agencies—who, generally speaking, have never produced housing in such large numbers in such a short period of time—often times these scalar strategies are the only means of circumventing institutional weaknesses and ensuring that policy objectives are being met.

Literature Review

As India continues to urbanize, the proliferation of slums and lack of affordable housing in cities has become a growing challenge (McKinsey & Company 2010). The most recent Indian census data collected in 2011 shows that number of those living in urban slums is approximately 17.4% of the total number of urban households, or approximately 65 million people (this represents an increase in 13 million people living in slums since 2001) (The Hindu 2013; Government of India 2011). Further, data collected on urban housing in 2012 indicates that 99% of the urban housing shortage—estimated to be near 26 million homes in India—is for the economically weaker

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[1] While I do not specifically intend to contribute to debates on the construction and deployment of the "informal" and "formal" concepts, it is nonetheless imperative to define how these terms are to be used in this paper. A number of scholars have examined the construction and employment of the terms "informal" and "formal", particularly in the urban context (for an excellent summary, see McFarlane and Waibel 2012). Generally speaking, this literature characterizes the two concepts in four main ways: as spatial forms, as organizational forms, as governance tools, and as forms of "negotiable value" (McFarlane and Waibel 2012:5; AlSayyad and Roy 2006]. In this paper, I view "informal" and "formal" as organizational forms and see "informal" institutions and structures as those that are created and exist outside of "officially sanctioned channels" (Helke and Levitsky 2004:727). "Formal" institutions are those that exist within officially sanctioned arenas (*e.g.,* the state, bureaucracy, constitutions, etc.) (2004).

sections and low-income groups[2] living in cities, and despite the addition of eight million new homes between 2007 and 2012, the urban housing shortage is still quite severe (Government of India 2007). In an effort to address the growth of urban slums and the lack of housing in Indian cities, in 2005 the Government of India inaugurated its most ambitious urban housing policy since Independence. The Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) scheme—one part of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (NURM)—aims to improve the living conditions of the poorest living in Indian cities by providing housing, basic infrastructure (*e.g.,* water and sanitation), and a variety of social services (*e.g.,* education, social security, etc.) (Government of India 2009).

While the goals driving BSUP are laudable, meeting the objectives of this ambitious policy has proven challenging for urban governance institutions, and the policy has been widely criticized for failing to provide the quantity and quality of housing required to meet the needs of the urban poor (Mahadevia 2011; Kamath 2012; Kundu and Samanta 2011). The majority of the critiques advanced against BSUP focus primarily on the poor performance of state institutions in implementing the policy. Some of the major critiques of BSUP and NURM include: long delays and underutilization of funds in project implementation, lack of implementation of key policy reforms, poor criteria for identifying project beneficiaries, and a lack of coordination between implementing agencies (Mahadevia 2011; Kamath 2012; Kundu and Samanta 2011; Kundu 2014; Sivaramakrishnan 2011).

Contemporary scholars of urban politics and governance in India would likely attribute BSUP's implementation failures to the fragmented nature of political power in cities. A number of scholars have argued that politics in Indian cities are shaped primarily by ad hoc, informal coalitions made up of a variety of state and non-state actors (Benjamin 2008; Roy 2009; Sami 2013; Shatkin 2014; Weinstein 2008, 2014). The fragmented, dispersed, and contingent nature of urban governance leads to poor compliance with formal rules and regulations (Benjamin 2008; Björkman 2014; Roy 2009; Weinstein 2008), cities that are largely unplanned (Roy 2009), and local politics defined by complex negotiations and political patronage networks (Benjamin 2008; Kumar et. al. 2009). While these scholars do not explicitly examine national urban policy processes and implementation, their collective work highlights the numerous challenges to implementing any systematic development plan in urban India. The approach of this literature is

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[2] Because this paper focuses on housing in Bangalore, Karnataka, it is important to note that the housing shortage in the state of Karnataka was 1.14 million units in 2001, of which 480,000 units are in rural areas and 660,000 units are in urban areas (Government of Karnataka 2009).

incredibly fruitful for understanding the complexities of urban governance, but the emphasis on the informalities that characterize city politics has often led to a simplification of the formal political-institutional structures and policies that shape the actions of actors in Indian cities.

There are a number of scholars who have examined policy processes, formal institutions, and state capacity in India, but not specifically in the urban context. The majority of this work examines the reasons behind why the goals and outcomes of policies in India frequently do not align. Existing studies have examined policy processes and state capacity in sectors like education, health, and poverty reduction (Gupta 2012; Harriss 2003; Kohli 1989; Pritchett 2009; 2011) and argue that the despite the ambitious policy goals and strength of the federal government, the lack of enforcing capacity at the local level produces poor policy outcomes, leading to what Pritchett (2009) calls a "flailing state." In his study of the local bureaucracy in rural north India, Gupta (2012) emphasizes the disconnect between the imaginary of the state—as a unitary, cohesive entity with official, enforceable policy mandates— and the actual processes of governance on the ground, which are characterized by irrationality, arbitrariness, conflict, and numerous "fortuitous accidents" (2012:13). Other studies have highlighted the conflicting demands facing bureaucrats responsible for implementing policies— typically from beneficiaries and other bureaucrats and politicians operating at multiple scales— noting how policy directives from above often conflict with demands from below, forcing bureaucrats to adopt creative strategies to show policy "success" to their superiors while simultaneously managing the relationships with beneficiaries and implementing agencies locally (Banerjee, Duflo, and Glennerster 2008; Gupta 2012; Pritchett et al. 2010).

This work on the capacity of the Indian state highlights a number of challenges with implementing large-scale policies throughout the country. However, the majority of these studies examine processes in *rural* India, and, to date, there has been no systematic analysis of federal *urban* policies and the complexities involved in their implementation. As cities become increasingly central to India's economic growth and development, it is critical to understand the complexities involved in urban policy implementation and the ways in which state actors respond to new urban policy mandates. While this work is based on research conducted from rural areas, it still demonstrates the complex and multi-scalar nature of state power and the downfalls of viewing the Indian state as a coherent, unitary entity. These theoretical prove incredibly useful for understanding processes in the urban Indian context.

Due to the multi-scalar nature of the state power and political processes in India, research on scalar politics and geographies of state power in urban contexts proves fruitful for

understanding urban governance and the implementation of urban policy in India. Scholars of scalar politics have examined the ways in which scale is both produced and contested through numerous political acts and policies (Allen and Cochrane 2010; Brenner 1999, 2004; Lefebvre, 1991; Marston 2000, Smith 1984, 1992; Swyngedouw 1997a, 1997b). In his work on the social production of scale, Neil Smith (1984,1992) argues that scales do not exist *a priori*, but are created and constructed through multiple political acts. Scales are created and enforced in a capitalist system by those with a stake in particular scalar arrangements and actors often "jump scales" in an effort to resist the arrangements imposed upon them (Smith 1992:60). Other scholars have also taken this constructivist approach to when thinking about state spatial power. Rather than thinking of state power as necessarily hierarchical (thereby creating a sense of *power over* or "above" society), state power should be seen as produced via strategies employed by the state (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). State power, in this sense, is contested, negotiated, and functions within and across multiple scales (Allen and Cochrane 2010; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Jessop, Brenner and Jones 2008; Jones, Woodward and Marston 2007; Jones 2001). These critiques of *a priori* scales and state power have been further expanded by those who argue that state power should be understood not by its ability to impact process within and/or between scales (*i.e.,* its "height"), but by its "reach" (Allen and Cochrane 2010:1073).

In this paper, I adopt an understanding of state power and scale as constructed through multiple political acts, and I seek to illuminate the ways in which formal state actors contest, negotiate, and maneuver scale to meet housing policy objectives in urban India. The processes in urban India are somewhat similar to experiences described by scholars in other contexts, but there are a number of critical differences in the ways that scales are negotiated and utilized in India. *First,* all of these theories (with the exception of Ferguson and Gupta 2002) were developed in contexts in the Global with relatively strong and established state institutions at all scales of governance. The context in urban India differs because, despite the economic and political importance of the urban scale, municipal governments still lack the formal political powers to implement urban plans. In this sense, the urban scale represents a place with weak formal powers, but strong symbolic powers. For this reason, the urban scale is a highly contested one, but actors must often go outside of the urban scale (where formal processes are weak) to influence processes within it. *Second*, in Smith's (1992) study of the Homeless Vehicle in New York City, those who "jump scale" (*i.e.*, homeless people/societal actors) are resisting the spatial arrangements imposed upon them by the capitalist system. By focusing primarily on

the societal actors who resist scalar impositions, this overlooks the ways in which state actors also actively resist scalar impositions and "jump scales" to move policies and projects along. In India, the scalar structure of the state is under constant negotiation and state actors must frequently "jump scales" and create multi-scalar assemblages to meet the objectives of urban policies. *Third,* while Ferguson and Gupta (2002) describe the state as actively producing scale to appear "above" society, there is little discussion within their work as to the strategies that the state actually employs to produce these scalar arrangements. Under the Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) housing scheme, political actors frequently create new scales and negotiate the existence of others in an effort to insert themselves into political processes and expand the role of state power and this study seeks to illuminate these unique processes.

The urban context in India is certainly distinct and an exploration of these unique processes can provide new insights not only on our understanding of urban governance in India, but also to our understanding of state power and scalar politics in urban contexts, broadly speaking. In this paper, I describe and analyze two examples—drawn from my fieldwork of BSUP housing implementation processes in Bangalore—to demonstrate the contestation and construction of scale by formal actors under this scheme. Using interview data collected from politicians and bureaucrats involved in the implementation and oversight of BSUP, I first show how the main implementing agency for this housing program in Bangalore, Karnataka—the Karnataka Slum Development Board (KSDB or Slum Board)—often jumps scale and moves within and between scales in an effort to coordinate its work with numerous agencies and meet the ambitious goals of this housing program. In order to effectively implement the policy, the KSDB must strategically align with other actors and agencies and use policy structures to circumvent non-performing agencies and pressurize them to produce outcomes. It is these multi-scalar strategies and assemblages of actors that prove most effective in producing housing under BSUP. The second case highlights how political actors at the state and federal level, specifically Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) and Members of Parliament (MP), have used the formal BSUP process to insert themselves into negotiations about project processes and outcomes because they were previously excluded from other channels of influence under BSUP. These two examples highlight the formal processes of policy implementation in India and the ways in which the state power adapts and negotiates scalar arrangements to implement large-scale urban housing policies.

The data analyzed in this article was collected during multiple field visits to New Delhi and Bangalore, India between 2013 and 2015. During this time, I investigated my central research

questions through a variety of qualitative techniques, including: analysis of BSUP official documents, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. I relied primarily on semi-structured and unstructured interviews as the main form of data collection, and I conducted approximately 110 interviews with residents impacted by BSUP projects, bureaucrats and politicians (at the local, state, and federal level), policymakers, civil society activists, and scholars. To identify interview participants I used snowball sampling and also relied on "sequential interviewing" (Small 2009:24-25) so that each interview was used to inform and shape my research question and approach to subsequent interviews. Interviews ranged in duration from 15 minutes to two hours. To obtain a range of data regarding BSUP project implementation, I observed project processes at five BSUP housing project sites in different locations around Bangalore. At each project site I conducted two separate focus groups with residents impacted by the BSUP scheme. Each focus group conversation lasted for approximately one to two hours and the number of participants ranged from five to ten. To triangulate and supplement findings from my qualitative interviews and focus groups, I collected and analyzed official government documents newspaper articles about BSUP project implementation.

A Growing Number of Slums and New Urban Housing Policies

Responding to domestic and foreign pressures to address worsening urban problems—*e.g.,* the proliferation of slums, a severe and growing shortage of urban housing, the lack of basic infrastructure, and poor urban investment—while simultaneously promoting economic growth in cities, in 2005, the Government of India unveiled its most comprehensive urban policy to date, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (NURM). The central government designed NURM as a reform-based policy that proposes the restructuring of political and economic institutions at the state and local levels (Government of India 2012). There are two submissions under which all NURM projects fall: Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) and Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP). Under NURM, state and city governments must adopt a series of reforms for improving land-use planning, liberalizing urban economies, and decentralizing authority to municipalities in order to receive funds from the central government for projects under these submissions (2012). The mission is time-bound and implementing agencies were originally given five years to implement and complete projects[3]. For the first time

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[3] It is important to note that despite the time-bound nature of these schemes, the final project deadlines set by the federal government are frequently extended due to requests from implementing agencies and/or state governments who argue that they need more time to complete projects. The BSUP scheme has been extended four times (each time it is extended for two years), with the current final date of completion slated for March 2017 (Economic Times 2015).

in India's history, federal urban grants are tied to reforms, signaling that the central government is keen to transform institutionalized forms of urban governance and development.

With increasing urbanization, the Government of India, and specifically the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, created the BSUP submission to address the growing number of urban poor and the related growth of urban slums. In 2001, the slum population was estimated to be 52 million and expected to grow, making it imperative to create a comprehensive policy to address this issue. The BSUP submission aims to address the growing proliferation of slums in Indian cities by providing basic infrastructure like housing, water, sanitation as well as a number of social services like education, health care, and social security (Government of India 2009). In the south Indian city of Bangalore, the number of BSUP projects undertaken since 2005 is 14, with homes built in 70 slums throughout the city. The total number of housing units is 18,180 and the total cost required to complete these projects to date is 522.23 crore Indian Rupee (approximately $88.6 million USD) (Government of Karnataka 2014). The Bangalore municipal government (*i.e.,* the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike or BBMP) and the Karnataka Slum Development Board were originally the two main implementing agencies of BSUP in Bangalore, but after the pilot phase of the BSUP program, the BBMP handed over all implementation responsibilities to the Slum Board. These agencies must coordinate with a large number of governmental and non-governmental actors and agencies at the local, state, and federal level to ensure the effective implementation of the scheme.

By focusing on housing (as opposed to the Urban Infrastructure and Governance sub-mission of NURM), this allows a window into the processes that urban governments adopt as they attempt to address this critical urban issue. As described above, the problem of slums and affordable housing in Indian cities is only expected to worsen, and an examination of these processes—at the local, state, and federal level—allows for an understanding of how states are adapting to new policy mandates and demands coming from all scales of government. As well, under BSUP, the municipal corporation (the BBMP) and local municipal councilors are involved in the implementation and oversight of housing projects in their communities and in the city at large and the implementation of BSUP requires active participation of political actors at all scales. This is in contrast to the Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) sub-mission of NURM where most of the projects are managed solely by actors at the state level. Conducting an in-depth ethnographic study of the BSUP housing scheme in a quickly growing Indian city, therefore, allows for a more detailed understanding of the scalar processes and politics both within and between all scales of government.

Building Housing for the Poor: The Role and Strategies of Implementing Agencies

The process of implementing such a large-scale urban housing program requires multiple agencies and oversight processes. Figure 1 shows the official project approval and funding process under BSUP that is distributed in formal documentation by the Government of India, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. In this figure, the process of oversight and implementation appears quite simple, with a handful of government agencies at the local, state, and federal approving project proposals and dispersing funding accordingly. When Figure 1 is compared to Figures 2 and 3, it becomes quite clear that while official reports and descriptions of project processes put forth by the federal government may appear quite simple, the actual day-to-day implementation of BSUP within Indian cities, and Bangalore specifically, is much more complex and requires the participation of numerous agencies and new oversight mechanisms at the city, district, state, and federal scales.

Figure 2 shows the internal process that the Slum Board must follow in order to develop a project proposal for one BSUP housing project in one community (as described by a senior official within the agency) (Interview BL041501)[4]. Before construction begins for any BSUP project, the KSDB must conduct a number of surveys within each community to determine the number of project beneficiaries, their eligibility for the housing program, and the structural designs for each housing unit. Once these surveys are conducted (by state actors and a number of external, private consultants), the KSDB then submits a Detailed Project Report (DPR) that includes proposals for project construction, detailed lists of project beneficiaries, and a budget for total costs. It is important to note that one DPR or BSUP project can include anywhere from 13 to 45 communities. The reason the Slum Board combines a number of communities into one project/DPR is because of the extensive amount of time it takes to get project approvals (anywhere from one to two years) at the state and federal level. This simplifies the approval process for BSUP projects.

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[4] Interviews were conducted with bureaucrats and politicians at the local, state, and federal level in Bangalore and New Delhi between 2013-2015. In certain cases, interview subjects requested to remain anonymous in accordance with the author's approved research protocol, but location (ND=New Delhi and BL=Bangalore), month (*e.g.*, "07"), and year (*e.g.*, "13") of interviews are given, as are unique codes for each interviewee (*e.g.*, "01a").

The next step in the BSUP implementation process is the approval of the Detailed Project Report and distribution of BSUP funds, which is shown in Figure 3[5]. The process shown on the left-hand side of the figure is the DPR approval process. Once a DPR is developed in collaboration with municipal bureaucrats from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the KSDB then must get approval for the project from the municipal corporation. The municipal corporation has the authority to approve or reject any BSUP project within the boundaries of the city. Once the BBMP approves a project, the DPR must then move to new layers of approval at the district-level (*e.g.,* the District Level Review and Monitoring Committee) and at the state-level [these agencies are shown in light blue, for example the Karnataka Urban Infrastructure and Development Finance Corporation (KUIDFC), the Housing Department (HD), the Urban Development Department (UDD), etc.]. These agencies are responsible for vetting proposals prior to forwarding them to federal agencies for final approval and dispersal of funds [federal agencies are shown in red [*e.g.,* the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MHUPA), etc.]. The process of approving one DPR requires coordination and collaboration between a series of actors and agencies with multiple organizational priorities, jurisdictions, and rules, and can take anywhere from one to two years. Once a DPR is approved, the process of dispersing funds must go through a federal budget approval process (through the Finance Ministry), back down to the state level [where funds are managed and dispersed by the Karnataka Urban Infrastructure and Development Finance Corporation (KUIDFC)], and the KUIDFC is then responsible for dispersing funds to the Slum Board. This process can take anywhere from six months to one year.

Coordinating the work of and receiving approvals from all of these various agencies is an incredibly difficult task and often creates a number of complications for the main implementing agency, the Slum Board. The Slum Board often faces a complications coordinating with other agencies to resolve critical implementation issues—*e.g.,* complications related to availability of land, beneficiary lists, beneficiary contributions, connectivity for electricity and water, and funding—and because the Slum Board is the only implementing agency in Bangalore, it receives all the blame regarding policy implementation problems. While direct communication with other agencies is nearly always the first approach to meeting policy objectives (Interview BL041502), when these inter-agency negotiations prove ineffective, the KSDB will use multi-

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[5] Figure 3 represents an aggregation of the implementation processes described to the author during interviews with local, state, and federal-level officials directly involved in the implementation and oversight of BSUP in Bangalore (Interview BL041502; Interview BL061401; Interview BL011501).

scalar tactics to circumvent and pressurize agencies that are not performing. One official describes "we fail because non-cooperation from the BBMP" (Interview BL031501) and when the BBMP does not respond, this official describes how:

> *"The government has to interfere. The secretary of the [Urban Development] Department, the secretary who controls the BBMP, has to come to our rescue, he has to help us. So he has to convince [the BBMP]". If not him, then we will go to the Chief Secretary to address these issues"* (Interview BL031501).

In this case, when the municipal corporation was not responding to requests for action by the KSDB, the agency moved to higher-ranking officials and agencies within the state scale to then place pressure on the municipal corporation. This strategy often proves more effective than one-to-one negotiations between the Slum Board and the BBMP due to the administrative structure of governance in Bangalore and Karnataka. In Karnataka, the municipal corporation falls administratively under the Urban Development Department and the Slum Board falls administratively under the Housing Department. Despite their obvious need for the Slum Board and the BBMP to collaborate and coordinate under BSUP, the administrative structure and chain-of-command is so different for the two agencies that it creates numerous complications when trying to implement such a large-scale scheme. Actors must frequently jump scales and move within scales to ensure that agencies respond to requests for action. The Slum Board has no authority to tell the municipal corporation when and how to act, so it must frequently circumvent the agency and force other actors to place pressure on it to perform. By pressurizing those actors who reside at the "top" of the political hierarchy, the slum board is then able to move projects forward despite initial resistance and inactivity from the municipal corporation. When pressures at the state level do not work, actors within the Slum Board will jump scales and make connections at the federal (central) level to place pressure on state and local actors. The Slum Board official describes how:

> *"The BBMP has to come to our rescue. The BBMP has to [be] involve[d],…but to make the BBMP involved, who has to make this effort? I can't do it, I can only make a request to the BBMP and then to the UD [Urban Development Department]. The people at the central level, they have to get involved too"* (Interview BL031501).

While this is only one interview with an official within the Slum Board, these examples of jumping scale were numerous during my fieldwork and are also shown in official documentation from meetings of the main BSUP/NURM oversight committee at the state level (the State-Level Empowered Committee or SLEC). In these meeting minutes there are numerous examples of

the state government pressuring implementing agencies to perform. Facing pressure from the federal government to perform and, therefore, not be seen in a "poor light" (Karnataka Urban Infrastructure and Development Finance Corporation 2007) by the Government of India, the Government of Karnataka and the SLEC officials frequently pressure implementing agencies to meet deadlines, spend project funds, and finish projects.

However, because there are so many agencies responsible for implementation and oversight under BSUP, the only way that implementing agencies like the Slum Board can produce outcomes (and avoid the blame and scorn from the Government of Karnataka and Government of India for failed projects) is to move within and between scales in an effort to pressure actors to perform the duties described under the policy. One high-ranking Slum Board official claims that "we fail because non-cooperation from the BBMP" (Interview BL031501), and to avoid this failure, actors in the Slum Board must discuss these issues with the departments at the state and federal level and request their assistance with implementing the scheme. In this sense, to move one project forward requires an assemblage of actors within scales, negotiating scalar roles and shifting the balance of state power to produce outcomes under this housing ambitious policy.

Creating New Scales of Influence

Another strategy employed by formal actors to influence the implementation process of BSUP scheme in Bangalore is the creation of new scales. Actors who were previously excluded from channels of influence choose to utilize the formal structure of NURM to create new scales of influence and oversight. For example, under NURM, each city and state that receives funding for the scheme has the option to create a city-level sanctioning and monitoring committee (CLRMC), but creation of these oversight committees depends on complex negotiations between actors at the city, district, and state level. The role of this committee is to bring together municipal politicians, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), and Members of Parliament (MP)[6] to oversee and discuss housing projects within the city. In Bangalore, however, this committee was not established until 2013 and one official describes the reasons for the delays:

> "When the scheme was in the beginning stages, the city-level [review and monitoring committee] was not outfitted. …It took so much time for legal decision making to constitute the committee because, at the Government of Karnataka level, the Finance Department has to agree, the Legal Department has to agree, then the legislature has to

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[6] For the MLAs and MPs, only those whose constituencies fall within the city boundaries are members of the committee

agree for these total reforms. So giving legal, full powers to the committee took so much time that it was…it could be constituted only last year" (Interview BL081401).

While it could be argued that the MLAs and MPs were simply exercising their rights to the formal process outlined under NURM, according to one official, demand for the CLRMC only emerged when these political officials were not able to influence other channels of influence. Under BSUP, the municipal corporation has "maximum powers" (Interview BL081401) to approve or reject projects within the city and all projects must go through the council for approval. This created issues for MLAs and MPs who realized that they had no formal role in the decision-making process of BSUP within the city. The official describes how:

> *"See what will happen was the council has the MLAs and MPs also, many of them may not be able to participate in all council meetings… the council being a powerful body, many times the MLAs and the MPs could not get their opinion properly handled at the council level, or at Mayor level, the Mayor may have to go with the opinion of the councilors and just to remain silent on the opinion of MLAs or MPs. …So, the CLRMC, when it came through, that demand was satisfied and they felt that yes, whatever BBMP or the ULB does is not final, we also have a say to modify or change their final decisions in the projects or take deviations to [change projects]."*

This example illustrates the lengths actors will go for political influence under these schemes. Because MLAs and MPs were excluded from discussions regarding BSUP, and because they were not able to influence processes by placing pressure on other actors and agencies like the Mayor's office, they actively lobbied for the construction of this new scale of influence. Where the municipal corporation once had full authority to approve or reject BSUP projects, now the decisions of the council were subject to final approval from officials at the state and federal level. These actors utilized the formal structure of the BSUP policy to create new scales of influence to ensure their active participation in the scheme.

While this example represents a successful strategy that actors employed to influence the BSUP process, the ability to create new scales is not always successful and depends on the balance of state power between scales. For example, within each city there is an independent unit called the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) that manages the day-to-day processes of project implementation. The creation of the unit is mandated under the Government of India guidelines and their responsibilities are clearly outlined in these official documents. They are responsible for seeing that project funds are being spent, that policy reforms are enacted, and that implementing agencies are performing their duties. In addition to these day-to-day

responsibilities, the PIU is also responsible for ensuring that a number of city-level and state-level oversight and technical committees are established (as per the formal guidelines under BSUP/NURM established by the Government of India). One of their main responsibilities is to ensure that a City Volunteer Technical Corps (CVTC) is established in Bangalore. The CVTC is essentially an independent committee of experts from a range of disciplines—urban planning, social development, engineering, etc.—whose role is to offer suggestions and opinions regarding the preparation of DPRs and project implementation in the city. Despite persistent efforts by the PIU to establish this committee at the city level, PIU officials faced numerous obstacles to establishing this group. One official describes how:

> *"In this meeting, we explained how we have processed and shortlisted [candidates for the CVTC] and then we placed it on the BBMP council agenda for approval. We have placed it on the agenda and the BBMP council has deferred to constitute a committee, fine. Then, the CLRMC said that decisions made by the BBMP would have to be placed before the CLRMC for approval. Even though the BBMP believes that here is no need to constitute another committee like CVTC, the CLRMC has decided to approve this committee in the city."* (Interview BL021501).

The entire process of establishing this committee took years (and the committee was only established within the last year) with issues and contestations emerging from the BBMP and the CLRMC that delayed the process. Despite the fact that the PIU is an agency that is mandated by the federal government to enact the BSUP/NURM reforms, their ability to influence these processes was quite minimal. Instead, actors within the BBMP and the CLRMC delayed processes, negotiated amongst themselves, and finally decided that they would constitute the CVTC. In this sense, despite the federal "clout" and mandates given to the PIU, this was not enough to force the BBMP and CLRMC to act. The reasons behind why the CVTC was eventually established are quite unclear, but officials describe the agency as essentially "toothless" and it has only met once since its inception (Interview BL021501).

These examples of constructing new scales highlights how state power in urban India is constantly changing and shifting under these schemes. In certain cases, actors are able to easily use formal channels to create new scales of influence, whereas in other cases, the political pressure to create new scales of influence is simply not enough to meaningfully shift processes. The creation of new scales also demonstrates the ways in which state actors seek to create and reinforce hierarchy within the state. While Ferguson and Gupta (2002) describe the state as actively producing scale to appear "above" society, there is little discussion in their work

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about how hierarchy is produced within the state itself. Because politics in urban India are so contingent and fractured (Benjamin 2008; Roy 2009; Sami 2013; Shatkin 2014a, 2014b; Weinstein 2008, 2014), the ability for state actors to produce hierarchy, and thereby influencing formal processes and urban politics, is essential. Without this perception of influence, MLAs and MPs would have no more or no less power than municipal politicians. Their ability to influence processes through agencies like the CLRMC then proves essential not only to influence policies, but also to reinforce their role as more influential in the city than municipal politicians.

Conclusion

Examining formal housing policy processes in a quickly urbanizing context like Bangalore, India, demonstrates the changing institutional processes and changing nature of state power in urban India. The examples from Bangalore's implementation of the Basic Services for the Urban Poor housing scheme highlights the ways in which state actors negotiate, enact, and create new scales of governance and influence in the city. In this paper, I describe and analyze two examples of scalar processes that occurred during the implementation of the BSUP scheme to demonstrate the contestation and construction of scale by formal actors under this scheme. Drawing from detailed interviews with politicians and bureaucrats involved in BSUP, I demonstrate how with other actors and agencies and use policy structures to circumvent non-performing agencies and pressurize them to produce outcomes. It is these multi-scalar strategies and assemblages of actors that prove most effective in producing housing under BSUP. I also show how actors have used the formal BSUP/NURM process to insert themselves into formal negotiations about project processes and outcomes because they were previously excluded from these discussions. These two examples highlight the formal processes of policy implementation in India and the ways in which the state power adapts and negotiates scalar arrangements to implement large-scale urban policies. These examples show that the actions of state actors are almost never restricted to specific scales under this policy, as multi-scalar assemblages prove most effective in achieving policy outcomes. State actors use tactics like "jumping scale" (Smith 1992), creating new scales, and developing complex multi-scalar assemblages to ensure that policy objectives are met. Further, these examples also highlight the ways in which the formal political-institutional structures influence the actions of agencies and actors. Despite the emphasis on the "informalization of politics" (Roy 2009; Shatkin 2014:27) in urban India, this paper demonstrates the important role of formal processes and institutions in shaping policies and outcomes in cities. While informal processes are still present in cities like Bangalore, this research demonstrates how overlooking formal structures can be

detrimental to the broader understanding of urban politics and the delivery of important urban services like housing in quickly urbanizing contexts like Bangalore, India.

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*Interviews were conducted with bureaucrats and politicians at the local, state, and federal level in Bangalore and New Delhi between 2013-2015. In certain cases, interview subjects requested to remain anonymous in accordance with the author's approved research protocol, but location (ND=New Delhi and BL=Bangalore), month (*e.g.*, "04"), and year (*e.g.*, "15") of interviews are given, as are unique codes for each interviewee (*e.g.*, "01").

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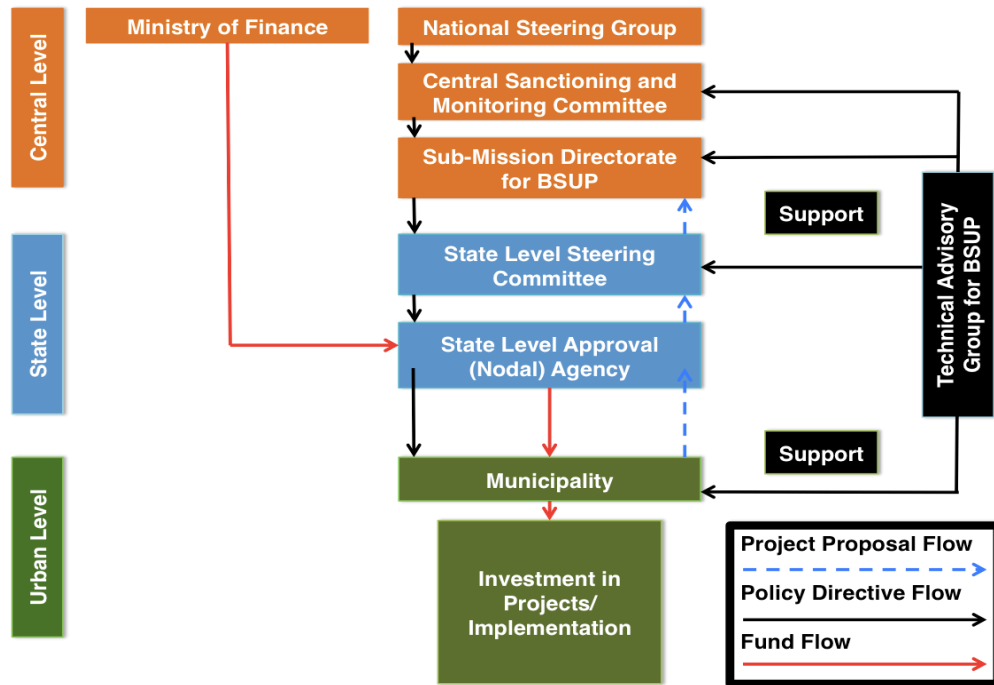**Figure 1: Project Approval Process, Government of India, Ministry of Urban Development**

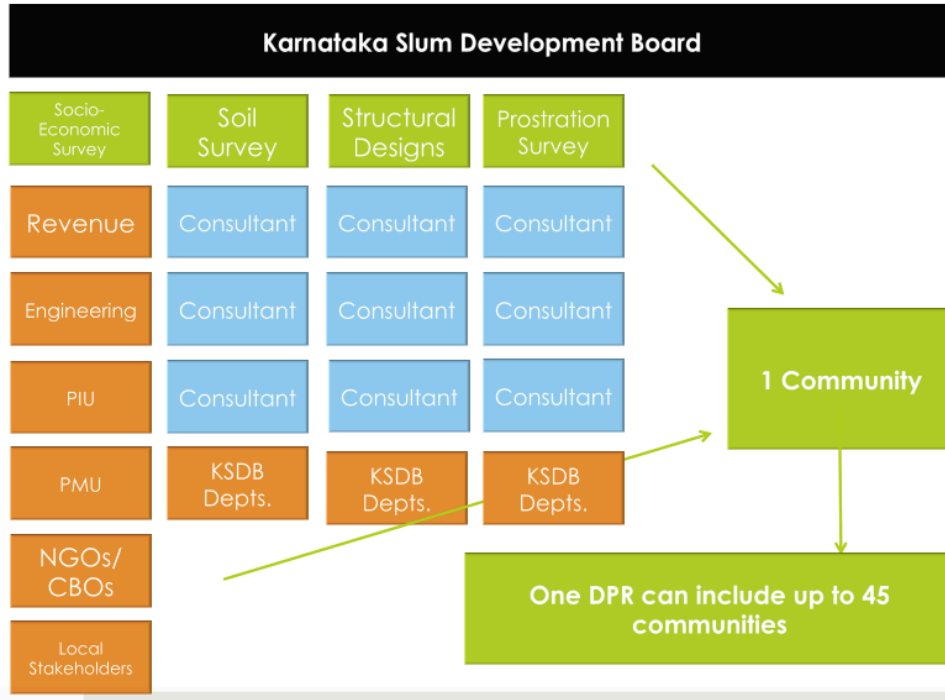**Figure 2: KSDB Detailed Project Report Preparation Process**

Figure 3: Detailed Project Report Approval and Funding Process