

**Providing Security of Tenure to the Urban Poor:
Investigating the Roots of Slum Improvement in Hyderabad, India**

By

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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning on May 16, 2002 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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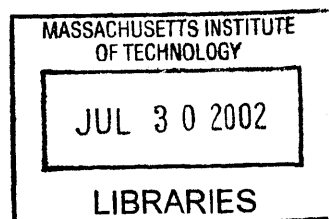
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the relationship between urban land reform and large-scale slum improvement in Hyderabad, India. It forges a link between citywide slum improvement in the 1980s and efforts to guarantee the occupancy rights of squatters a decade earlier. More than twenty-five years have passed since the city undertook land reform. This distance offers an opportunity to re-examine the history of land reform and its impact on slum improvement and the city in general.

Studies interested in learning from Hyderabad's experience often credit the "political will" of the Government of Andhra Pradesh or the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad for the success of urban land reform in the city. In contrast, this thesis argues that Communist-led social movements, beginning as early as the 1940s, were a major influence in convincing the polity to acknowledge the land rights of the poor. In this way, political will is not equivalent to public benevolence or the charisma of a handful of decision makers; instead it emerges from challenging the political status quo. With the historical antecedents of land reform in mind, the thesis then investigates the current status of slums in the city. It concludes by enumerating conditions and caveats for cities contemplating the replication of Hyderabad's model for slum improvement and land reform.

Thesis Supervisor: Prof. Bishwapriya Sanyal

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Acronyms		5
Chapter One	Introduction	
	1.1 General Overview	6
	1.2 The Particularities of the Hyderabad Case	7
	1.3 Thesis Structure	8
	1.4 Research Question and Theoretical Framework	10
	1.5 Research Design	12
Chapter Two	Examining Urban Community Development	
	2.1 Introduction	15
	2.2 Urban Community Development in Hyderabad	17
	2.3 The Case for Security of Tenure	19
	2.4 The Theory of the Patta System	20
	2.5 The Evolution and Expansion of the UCDD	22
	2.6 The Immediate Problems of Land Reform	26
	2.7 Dispelling the Myths of Giving Land to the Poor	30
Chapter Three	The History and Momentum of Land Reform	
	3.1 Introduction	33
	3.2 Hyderabad as a Princely State	33
	3.3 Land Reform Movements in Andhra Pradesh	36
	3.4 The Nature of Political Will	43
	3.5 Concluding Remarks	44
Chapter Four	The Consequences of Land Reform	
	4.1 Introduction	46
	4.2 The Status of MCH Landholdings	46
	4.3 The Politicization of Slums in Hyderabad	50
	4.4 The Waning of Institutional Momentum	52
	4.5 Concluding Remarks	55
Chapter Five	Conclusions	
	5.1 General Findings	57
	5.2 Can the UCDD Urban Land Reform Model be Replicated?	63
	5.3 Should the UCDD Urban Land Reform Model be Replicated?	64
Appendices		68
Bibliography		71

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AJS	Andhra Jan Sangham
AMS	Andhra Maha Sabha
APSHCL	Andhra Pradesh State Housing Corporation Limited
APUSP	Andhra Pradesh Urban Services for the Poor
ASCI	Administrative Staff College of India
COVA	Confederation of Voluntary Agencies
DFID	Department for International Development
EIUS	Environmental Improvement in Urban Slums
EWS	Economically Weaker Section
GoAP	Government of Andhra Pradesh
GoI	Government of India
HSIP	Hyderabad Slum Improvement Project
HUDCO	Housing and Urban Development Corporation
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
IGA	Income Generating Activity
MCH	Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
UCDD	Urban Community Development Department
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPACOR	Urban Poverty Alleviation Corps

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Overview

This thesis is concerned with the relationship between urban land reform and large-scale slum improvement. It demonstrates how slum improvement in Hyderabad, India in the 1980s was born from the provision of secure land tenure to the urban poor a decade earlier. The thesis derives lessons learned from Hyderabad's successful experience and determines which elements of the endeavor ought to be replicated if similar results are to be obtained elsewhere.

For the purpose of this thesis, land reform and land redistribution are used interchangeably. Both refer to the transfer of a strand of property rights from the legal owner of land to the landless or illegal occupier. The thesis investigates the role of Hyderabad's Urban Community Development Department (UCDD), a fixture of the city's municipal corporation, to undertake slum improvement on the basis of land reform. Consistent with the legal justification used to redistribute urban land in Hyderabad, the thesis uses "slum" in the same manner articulated in the Andhra Pradesh Slum Improvement (Acquisition of Land) Act of 1956. Under the Act, a slum is broadly defined as a "source of danger to public health, safety or convenience of its neighborhood by reason of the area being low lying, insanitary [sic] and squalid."¹

This thesis relies on the work of Angel (1983), De Souza (1999), Payne (1997), and Turner (1967) in maintaining that security of tenure within informal settlements, or the perception thereof, is crucial to the long-term physical and socio-economic improvement of slum areas. This thesis goes one step further: it describes how the process of land reform was managed in Hyderabad and uncovers its relationship to replicability. In general, the case of Hyderabad demonstrates that local governments can play an active role in urban land reform and by extension, slum improvement.

The scope of land reform in Hyderabad in the 1970s is best understood by examining its impact on slum improvement in the city. The Hyderabad Slum Improvement Project (HSIP) represents one of the "more successful attempts at intervention in slums in India" (Marsden, 1990, pg. 11). It welded together a disparate set of publicly and privately sponsored initiatives into an integrated approach for slum

¹In brief, the Act justifies the acquisition of slum land where "it has not been possible to provide for the basic needs of sewerage, water supply and roads and side-drains in these slum areas, without causing excessive financial strain on the owners of the lands affected". Given these circumstances, the Act is applicable where "it is expedient first to acquire the lands in those areas and thereafter to undertake the execution of works designed to improve those areas."

improvement and poverty relief (Marsden, 1990). The Project provided physical infrastructure such as roads, drainage and sewers; utilities such as water and electricity; as well as social services in the form of pre-school education and health clinics. In conjunction with the provision of these goods, the Government of India (GoI) established housing schemes centered on the provision of subsidized loans for self-help construction (Clark et al., 1989). UNICEF began supporting the HSIP in 1980, but withdrew funding for the Project three years later.² The Project however continued under the auspices of the United Kingdom's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) until 1997. Three phases describe developments in the HSIP: Phase I marks UNICEF's involvement in slum improvement (1980-1983); while Phase II (1983-1989) and Phase III (1989-1997) connote the period of ODA support (Prasad, 1999).

Within the Project, Phase II represents a watershed moment. Prior to its inception, 20% of Hyderabad's 4.5 million citizens lived in 730 slums (Bijlani and Roy, 1991). From 1983 to 1989, the HSIP improved 455 slums. In that time, 73,000 families, representing some 480,000 people, benefited from the provision of roads, electricity, drainage, drinking water and community latrines. In addition, more than 8,100 residents took advantage of the adult literacy programs established in the slums; more than 22,300 residents enrolled in job-training and skill development programs in these neighborhoods; and nearly 68,000 residents used slum-based health clinics.³ Phase III of the Project was completed in 1997 after improving 666 slums (ASCI, 1999). The combined efforts of local and State officials as well as those from community and voluntary organization produced the above results.

1.2 The Particularities of the Hyderabad Case

Though many studies are concerned with the mechanics of land reform, the Hyderabad case is unique on at least four fronts.⁴ First, it investigates land reforms that took place in an urban setting as opposed to a

² UNICEF began surveying the impact of UCDD programs in Hyderabad on women and children in 1969 (Rajagopalchari, 1983). Cousins and Goyder (1979) explain that support for UCDD's slum improvement efforts provided an avenue for UNICEF to provide essential services to children and mothers. The authors found that "children make up about half of the urban slum population...if their potential [to improve] is to be realized, social change must begin in the bastis [slums] where they live" (pg. 1). Kishore (1984) reports that the low level of people's participation in the slum improvement process is responsible for UNICEF's withdrawal from the Project. In contrast, Prasad (1999) maintains that UNICEF had fixed a three-year limit to its involvement of the Project.

³ Figures regarding the outcomes of the HSIP vary from report to report. These figures have been taken from the UNCHS Database of Best Practices (www.bestpractices.org).

⁴ See Chiddick and Millington (1984) for a general overview of motivations driving land reform movements throughout history. Zhang (1997) examines the current process of urban land reform in China and contrasts it with similar movements in the country under Dr. Sun Yat-sen and during the first half of the twentieth century. Nishida (1997) traces the evolution of land redistribution in Japan, paying particular attention to post-war reforms. Williams (1996)

rural one. Convention tends to view land reform in terms of revolts led by peasant farm workers, “land to the tiller” campaigns and popular agrarian movements. Admittedly, the case of Hyderabad draws on these themes; nevertheless, UCDD-led land reforms occurred within the city of Hyderabad and are therefore an exclusively urban phenomenon.

Second, land reform in Hyderabad was purposefully designed as a penultimate goal. That is, the distribution of land titles to the urban poor was carried out to achieve the larger and tenable target of providing permanent housing and basic municipal services to slum communities. Often such movements identify land reform as an end in itself and stop short of articulating a course of action once land redistribution is realized. At the opposite end of the spectrum, other movements perceive land reforms as a launching pad for nationalist goals.

Third, unlike the Mau Mau in Kenya or Maoists in China, land reform in Hyderabad was not couched in any overt populist ideology. As the name of the Urban Community Development Department suggests, the simple aim of the endeavor was to better the livelihoods of communities housed in the city’s slums. The fact that the story of urban land reform is intertwined with that of the UCDD, and more generally the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH), is a testament to the top-down orientation of the endeavor.

The last particularity concerns the timing of land reform in Hyderabad. Land reform movements are most successful in periods of national transition. For example, in many cases land reform has occurred in the reformulation of the nation-state (as in South Africa after apartheid and Uganda in the 1970s); as an assertion of external authority (as in post-war Japan and Taiwan); or at the cusp of national liberation (as in Central Asia with the demise of the Soviet Union). Land reform under the guidance of the UCDD, on the other hand, occurred in the mid-1970s - more than twenty years after the formation of Andhra Pradesh and nearly thirty years after Hyderabad joined the Indian Union.

1.3 Thesis Structure

The structure of this thesis parallels the three motives of this essay: a) to investigate the dynamics of land reform in Hyderabad’s slums; b) to explore its origins and inspiration; and c) to analyze the consequences of land reform on urban development.

investigates the link between the expansion of the State and modern efforts to free up land resources in Africa. Last, Haugerud (1989) lends insight to the workings of rural land reform in Kenya.

Following a discussion of the theoretical framework and research design, Chapter Two narrates how the UCDD provided security of tenure to slum residents. It begins with a description of India's Urban Community Development Program and its evolution from a government body created to ease communal tension to one inspired to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. Specifically, the chapter focuses on how UCDD coordinated the efforts of government agencies, foreign donors, private voluntary organizations and slum communities themselves to improve the physical environment and social welfare in slums. As a wing of the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH), UCDD served as the lead agency of many slum improvement and community development programs. I argue that these various agencies would have been unable to attain their level of success had slum dwellers not received certificates of land allocation prior to the slum improvement process. In this sense, the work of the UCDD in strengthening the occupancy rights of slum dwellers was a pre-condition to the provision of basic urban services in Hyderabad's slums.

Chapter Two also sheds light on the conflicts that took place during land redistribution namely, those between the UCDD and the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP); the squatter and private landowners; and among squatters themselves. In this way, the chapter not only illustrates the extent of urban land reform in Hyderabad, but also identifies the obstacles encountered by the UCDD and how they were overcome. At the conclusion of the chapter, I revisit theories of slum improvement and dispel its myths: that it encourages rural-urban migration; that the poor cannot afford to build and maintain homes in the city; and that the poor, if given the chance, will opt to "cash out", shift to a different informal settlement and thereby undo public investment made in slums.

Chapter Three is retrospective in that it investigates the motivations behind successful urban land reform in Hyderabad. The literature tends to explain the feats of the UCDD as an extension of Gandhian ethics or the genuine concern of politicians for the plight of the poor.⁵ While these forces may have an important role in shaping the actions of the UCDD, they neglect the historical antecedents that gave rise to the Telangana Armed Struggle (1944-1951), Police Action in Hyderabad in 1948 and the rise of communism in the State throughout the 1970s. The third chapter explores these events with the conviction that they made a profound impact on the psyche of UCDD workers and thereby infused an

⁵ The connection between the charismatic personnel within the UCDD and slum improvement can be found in Bijlani and Roy (1991); Marsden (1990); and Reddy (1996). Many former UCDD officials also mentioned that Gandhi shaped their willingness to help the poor.

activism in the Department that neither existed elsewhere in the MCH or in the twenty-one other Urban Community Development Programs in the country. In short, the chapter adopts the position that the political history of Andhra Pradesh matters and must be acknowledged when discussing the replicability of the Hyderabad model.

While the second and third chapters are historical in nature, Chapter Four is speculative. It uses the hindsight achieved from the two decades that have passed since the era of land reform in Hyderabad to compare the HSIP of the 1980s with the status of the city today. In challenging the notion that slum improvement is a boon in all its aspects, the chapter acts as a foil to the earlier sections of the thesis. In attempting to account for the surprises associated with the success of land redistribution – the inflexibility of Hyderabad’s current land management policy, the dominance of the poor in shaping the municipal agenda and the waning influence of the UCDD in the city - the chapter shifts the conversation from one centered around replicability to one of protracted consequences stemming from slum improvement. Many evaluations concentrate on the immediate impacts of slum improvement; this investigation of the Hyderabad case however draws out both the positive and negative effects of slum improvement and land reform.⁶ Determining whether slum improvement *should* occur will provide insight into the repercussions of similar citywide efforts in the future.

The fifth and concluding chapter summarizes the themes articulated earlier in the thesis and develops a set of lessons learned from the HSIP. In doing so, it enumerates issues that merit careful attention before embarking on comparable urban land reform strategies.

1.4 Research Question and Theoretical Framework

The criterion of successful land reform is principally one of endurance. That is, will the redistribution of land inspire a lasting positive change in the lives of those the reform aims to benefit? With regards to Hyderabad, land redistribution enabled slum dwellers to access permanent housing, drinking water and roads that would have otherwise been unavailable. At the same time, slums have not disappeared from the city. In fact, the number of slums in Hyderabad has nearly doubled in twenty years.⁷ Determining

⁶ The scarcity of information on the long-term impacts of projects plagues much of the research in international development research. In contrast, there is a wealth of reporting on the immediate impacts of projects. Bijlani and Roy (1991); Clark et al. (1989), Prasad (1999) and Vasudeva (1991) all provide in-depth evaluations of the HSIP soon after project completion.

⁷ According to the Urban Community Development’s “List of Identified Slums” (no date given), there were 455 identified slums within the jurisdiction of the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad in 1979. By 1994, this figure had grown to 811.

whether other cities should follow the same route necessitates asking not only whether the Hyderabad model (and its results) can be replicated but also whether they should be replicated at all. This normative line of questioning demands that a comparison be made between the impacts of land reform soon after the implementation period and the impacts after some time has passed. Thus, the over-arching research question framing subsequent chapters is both objective and normative: Can and should the UCDD model of urban land reform be replicated?

Analogous to the construction of the research question, the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis comprise two parts. First, the thesis asserts that history, though important, often does not figure into the calculus of urban upgrading replicability. The case of Hyderabad demonstrates that efforts to scale-up the physical improvements made to the city's slums could not have taken place if the seeds of urban land reform had not been planted early in the history of Hyderabad and more generally, Andhra Pradesh. With this in mind, the thesis deviates from the usual argument that political will and the inherent charisma of a handful of leaders is key to the implementation of pro-poor programs. On the contrary, it claims that political will emerges when coerced and threatened by challenges to the status quo. In the case of Hyderabad, the Telangana Armed Struggle, the rise of communism in the State and the credible threat to the integrity of Andhra Pradesh provided enough of a crisis to prompt the State to adopt a pro-poor stance towards urban land distribution.

The second aspect of the framework acknowledges that cities change over time; that the civic successes of yesterday do not necessarily remain in the future. While the first section of the thesis asks whether, given history, replicability can be achieved, the second portion of the thesis centers on whether replicability is warranted and if so, which components and under what conditions? It notes that while the HSIP has improved the livelihood of the city's urban poor, Hyderabad currently struggles with the unanticipated effects of regularizing squatter settlements, such as the inability to accommodate urban growth and the inefficient use of valuable downtown land among others. Understanding the nature of these surprises is crucial for other cities contemplating large-scale urban upgrading.

In order to answer the principal research question, the following will be addressed:

- How important was the socio-political climate in Hyderabad in the 1960s and 1970s to the success of land reform in the city? Could one replicate the land reform program without accounting for its historical antecedents? In what way does history matter?

- Was the process used during the land reforms specific to Hyderabad? Can the institutions, partnerships and strategies used be generalized for the benefit of future projects?
- Given that nearly a decade has passed since the poor were given title to city land, is the current situation of land holdings among the poor in Hyderabad necessarily desirable? What were the unanticipated future impacts of land reform? What is the situation of Hyderabad today?

1.5 Research Design

Justification and Scope

The literature concerned with urban upgrading is strewn with descriptions of failed projects and narratives of unmet expectations. In giving the Hyderabad experience center stage, the thesis emphasizes that successful examples of urban land reform do exist. Rather than determining what went wrong and what can be corrected in the future, it assumes that there is much to learn from understanding why some land reforms projects are successful amidst the problems faced elsewhere. Moreover, there is a renewed interest in the technique of urban upgrading among those concerned with reducing the inequalities in cities. The thesis findings will hopefully contribute to the rejuvenated “cities without slums” movement.⁸

The inter-disciplinary nature of slum improvement necessarily involves amalgamating the expertise of a range of fields and formulating a pragmatic plan of action. While the thesis touches on a variety of issues from housing finance to community development to construction methods, the distribution of urban land to the poor is the central focus of the research. The supply and allocation of the land is the foundation of any slum improvement endeavor. Concentrating on the disbursement of land to the urban poor provides an opportunity to investigate the origin of road construction, the availability of housing loans to the poor, the installation of infrastructure and other aspects of slum improvement.

Methodology

The data for this thesis was collected in January, 2002 and employed a qualitative, semi-structured interview-based approach. The questions centered on discovering the details of the land redistribution process, as it related to the supply of land and the provision of secure tenure to the urban poor. The methodology comprised the following:

⁸ The Cities Alliance, a global partnership spearheaded by UNCHS and the World Bank, aims at improving basic municipal services for 100 million people over the next twenty years under its “Cities Without Slums Action Plan” (www.citiesalliance.org).

- A review of the literature pertaining to urban land management, the formation of informal settlements, the development of land rights and the dynamics of land invasion. A review of this literature provides a historical and conceptual framework with which to approach Hyderabad's current circumstances.
- Interviews with officials from the Urban Community Development Department, other cells within Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad. In addition, I interviewed individuals directly connected with the implementation of slum improvement among local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Garnering the insights of those directly involved in the improvement of Hyderabad's slums helps in ascertaining the specificities of the land-tenuring system and its future impact on the city.⁹
- Interviews with experts on land law and Indian housing issues generally. Interviews with academics lent objectivity and distance to opinions about the land reform experience, provided information to contrast with that acquired from the UCDD, NGOs and project beneficiaries. In addition, it supplied a view into the wider policy implications of the land ownership pattern.

Limitations

A major limitation of this thesis lies in the absence of follow-up research that revisits neighborhoods five or ten years after the completion of the HSIP. Best Practices and other data sets are useful for analyses immediately after the project completion but offer little in terms of time-series data. That others have not collected this data is testament to the unique nature of this thesis. The qualitative approach used herein, on the other hand, lays emphasis to the process adopted by the UCDD for slum improvement and not its results. In this way, the findings presented in the thesis are indicative at best. The dearth of quantitative data along these lines underscores the need to pursue research that evaluates the long-term effects of projects.

A second limitation derives from the short time spent in Hyderabad. Since 480,000 individuals benefited from Phase II of the HSIP, for example, the thesis would need a large sample size to conduct a rigorous study. In this light, the thesis generalizes the slum improvement experiences and relies on interviews with former UCDD project officers for these generalizations. Again by choosing not to conduct household interviews, the thesis recognizes the variability from slum to slum and stresses the importance of deconstructing the implementation process.

⁹ A list of those interviewed can be found in Appendix I.

The third limitation is also related to the timing of the research. Hyderabad's municipal elections, the first in fourteen years, took place in Hyderabad on January 22, 2002, towards the end of my stay in the city. Thus, many of the government officials I wanted to interview regarding land reform in Hyderabad were available for only brief interviews or unavailable altogether. I have tried to compensate for this via email interviews and extended interviews with those no longer involved in government service.

Finally, the difficulty in studying Hyderabad's experience with land reforms, and the UCDD in particular, is the plethora of programs and agencies involved in the process. Data concerning the allocation of plots is managed in a disparate manner and according to different standards, if at all. I have tried to assemble a patchwork of data sources to construct the story of land redistribution in Hyderabad. Where data is inconsistent, I have relied on government and ODA sources.

CHAPTER TWO: EXAMINING URBAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

The story of land reform in Hyderabad is inseparable from the work of the city's Urban Community Development Department in the 1970s. Interestingly, efforts to alleviate urban poverty in Hyderabad, and elsewhere in the country, can be traced to the GoI's Rural Community Development Programs of the early 1950s. The relative success of rural community development in integrating isolated and disparate villages under a single national identity led the GoI to experiment with the same approach in cities. With a grant from the Ford Foundation, the first Urban Community Development pilot project began in Delhi (1958), and later expanded to Ahmedabad (1962), Baroda (1965) and Calcutta (1966) (Cousins and Goyder, 1979).

The charge to ameliorate living conditions in Indian cities came from the Third Five-Year Plan (1961-1966). The Plan mentioned the need for each city to mobilize its own resources to help create better conditions for its citizens and emphasized a role for "urban community development" (Chandra and Punalekar, 1975). This new focus on cities led the Union Ministry of Health, Family Planning and Urban Development to establish the Rural-Urban Relationship Committee in 1966 to examine what role municipal governments could play to improve cities. The Committee reported that people lacked the awareness that municipalities existed to serve their needs. In addition, it suggested a need for a sustained discussion of local problems between residents and local government officials to ascertain the neighborhood problems and encourage people to exercise their own initiative to resolve these problems. For their part, local governments were instructed to ensure that their technical and welfare resources be used to improve roads, provide drinking water and other such urban improvements (Cousins and Goyder, 1979).¹⁰

From the recommendations of the Third Five Year Plan and the Rural-Urban Relationship Committee, the Union Ministry defined the twin principles of urban community development: a) the creation of community solidarity across religious and ethnic differences with urban neighborhoods; and b) the use of

¹⁰ Cousins and Goyder (1979) cite GoI, Ministry of Health, Family Planning and Urban Development. *Report of the Rural-Urban Relationship Committee*, Volume I, June 1966 in describing the deliberations of the Committee. I was unable to locate this report.

self-help and citizen participation in effecting community change (Rajagopalchari, 1983). The principles outlined were purposefully vague. The Union Ministry rationalized that the urban community development approach was meant to respond to the articulated needs of individual neighborhoods; any uniformly mandated series of tasks would therefore contravene the spirit of the approach. In this way, urban community development was inherently flexible: it put the onus on citizens to set their own development agenda (Chandra, 1980).

The Union Ministry did however establish five broad objectives for urban community development. The approach was charged with (Rajagopalchari, 1983, pg. 6):

- i. Creating a sense of social coherence on a neighborhood basis through corporate civic action; and promoting a sense of national integration.
- ii. Developing a sense of belonging to the urban community through increased participation of people in community affairs, and promoting a way of thinking that they should concentrate first on solving problems with their own initiative, organization, self help, and mutual aid.
- iii. Bring about a change in attitude by creating civic consciousness and by motivating people to improve their living conditions.
- iv. Developing local initiative, identifying and training local leaders.
- v. Ensure fuller utilization of technical and welfare services by helping the community to locate what help was available from the municipality or other organizations and how to get it; and what assistance and guidance could be obtained from governmental and higher levels and how to approach these.

Chandra (1980) defines urban community development as a social process by which individual households come together as a unified and empowered force to control their local environment. It involves cooperative efforts, group decisions, joint evaluation and continuous collective action to address community needs. Bringing about social action through the confluence of these activities was thought to be self-reinforcing - strengthening community bonds and committing individuals to the improvement of their respective communities. Contributions from voluntary and government agencies are requested only after resources native to the community are exhausted.

Chandra (1980) finds that the following principles govern the UCDD process:

- The process depends upon the formation of a community or the utilization of one already in existence. The start may be made with a single group or nucleus, but may proliferate into sub-association of many similar groups. The intimate relationship of participants in small groups is important for the development of personal competence and initiative.
- Though the process starts with a few people and continues through the actions of small groups, it is holistic, i.e. – it seeks local wholeness that includes all people and all sections of the community.
- The people's desire for change must precede any successful development action, as permanent change will come only as a community sees the need for the change and as the capacity for making such changes is developed by the group.
- The urban community development worker assumes the responsibility for energizing the process that influences the growth toward self-direction.
- The process becomes more effective when a collaborative effort involves the work of all institutions, agencies and helping professions. The community approach should seek to be locally all-inclusive.

2.2 Urban Community Development in Hyderabad

The Rural-Urban Relationship Committee Report led to the expansion of urban community development pilot projects throughout the country. By 1967, fourteen other cities, Hyderabad among them, established Urban Community Development Departments. The departments were to serve as exogenous agents in encouraging community change. Their functions were broadly defined as well: to identify people's most urgent needs; to define an appropriate form of intervention, and then to assist and inspire citizens to pursue this course of action. The departments were to act as catalysts in a developmental process whose major actors were to be the State, the local government, voluntary organizations on one side and slum communities on the other (Chandra, 1980).

UCDDs were designed to function as a part of municipal corporations, bridging people and local government. Its staff was given the freedom to develop activities according to the needs of people and given a mandate to cover activities not normally undertaken by municipal corporations (Cousins and Goyder, 1979). The Hyderabad UCDD, for example, organized picnics, sporting events, film screenings and weddings for slum communities.¹¹

Originally, the basic budget pattern of urban community development pilot projects comprised Rs. 50,000 per year plus a separate grant of Rs. 15,000 local development activities to be used on a matching

¹¹ Personal interview with D.G. Rama Rau, 16 January, 2002.

grant basis. In Andhra Pradesh, the GoI met 50% of UCDD expenditures and the remaining 50% shared between the GoAP and the MCH. After three years, the UCDD budget was shared equally between the GoAP and the MCH (Marsden, 1990). Cousins and Goyder (1979) report that the UCDD was reaching beneficiaries for as little as Rs. 5 per person.

The Hyderabad UCDD began with a staff of eight community organizers headed by a Project Officer. The original staff had university degrees and was recruited from the Rural Community Development Programs. Typically, the community organizers spent up to ten years working in the Program as social education organizers. By 1963, the post of social education organizer was being phased out of the rural community development process because managers felt that no tangible output was being derived from their work. These personnel were eventually absorbed into the GoAP's Social Welfare Department, which in turn, became the "feeding channels for the community organizers in the UCDD" (Marsden, 1990, pg. 15).

Goyder and Cousins (1979) report that although many of the original staff had experience in organizing communities, none had been trained in social work. In September 1967, a two-month training program was organized for the UCDD-Hyderabad staff at the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Baroda (Marsden, 1990). The UCDD began its work in Ward 22 of the old city. The ward had a population of approximately 40,000, of which more than 70% was Muslim (Rajagopalchari, 1983).¹² Marsden (1990) reports that the UCDD began its work in Ward 22 because it was near MCH headquarters.

Since 1967, Hyderabad's UCDD has been the focal point of a flurry of programs, schemes and projects aimed at improving the conditions of the city's slums and the social welfare of its residents. Hyderabad's slums, for instance, have benefited from combined efforts of the GoAP's Habitat Hyderabad scheme (1977-1980), the Andhra Pradesh State Housing Corporation; Center-sponsored initiatives such as the Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums schemes and the establishment of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO); as well as assistance from UNICEF and the ODA.¹³ At the same time, the UCDD has managed community-based efforts, for example in house construction and the recruitment of nursery-school teachers.

¹² Cousins and Goyder (1979) report that the population of Ward 22 was more than 80,000 in 1971.

¹³ Under the Habitat Hyderabad Program, the UCDD motivated slum dwellers to construct their own houses through self-help methods with loans arranged by the GoAP from private banks. The program was responsible for the construction of 2,973 homes in 31 slums (Reddy, 1996). The Andhra Pradesh State Housing Corporation Limited was

Thus, a major role of the UCDD is that of a coordinating body. With a limited budget and little political clout to implement programs alone, the UCDD encouraged slum households to express their needs and assured them that resources from the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP), GoI and foreign institutions would be properly channeled to fulfill their needs. Enamored with the principle of self-help and the praxis of community development, Hyderabad's slums - under the guidance and cajoling of the UCDD - have been beneficiaries of an array of programs including: youth and women's group formation to inspire new community leaders; income generating activities; primary health care clinics; the provision of water taps; school construction and house building schemes. Though the physical and social improvements made in the city's slums are impressive in themselves, their examination does little to explain the processes or conditions through which they came to be. The remainder of the chapter develops the case that the provision of secure tenure in Hyderabad, starting with the distribution of 10,000 land allocation certificates in 1975 under the Habitat Hyderabad Program, laid the groundwork for large-scale slum improvement and success in community development.

2.3 The Case for Security of Tenure

The self-help model adopted by the UCDD demands that security of tenure be clearly established before slum improvement is initiated. Since the model relies on the volunteerism of slum residents, the UCDD needed to provide an incentive for their labor. In agreement with the work of Doebele (1987), Hyderabad's slum residents already enjoyed some measure of secure tenure. That some households had been living on the same land for more than twenty years is evidence that the perception of secure is enough to encourage slum residents to invest in housing. The investment in housing or self-initiated slum improvement is not without limits. Slum dwellers invest in the physical improvement of their communities insofar as their perception of security of tenure in the neighborhood permits them. Thus, the willingness of households to participate in UCDD-led, self-help slum improvement is indicative of a desire to bolster perceptions of tenure with legal documentation. The lure of having occupancy rights formally recognized by the GoAP enticed slum dwellers to donate their time to build crèches, straighten roads and construct houses. Of course, the UCDD made strides in slum neighborhoods without

established in 1979 "to formulate, promote and execute housing schemes for the 'Weaker Sections' of society in Andhra Pradesh (APSHCL pamphlet, 1995). Until 2001, the Corporation constructed nearly four million houses for the - mostly rural - poor of Andhra Pradesh (APHSCL, 2001). Incorporated in 1970 by the GoI, HUDCO is mandated "to ameliorate housing conditions for all groups with a special thrust to meet the needs of Low-Income Groups and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) (www.hudcoindia.com). The Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS) scheme was a GoI-led effort articulated in the Fourth Five Year Plan (1966-1971) to provide roads, pavements, drainage, water supply, streetlights and community lavatories in slum areas. Though it began in 1972, it was implemented by the UCDD until 1989 (Reddy, 1996).

granting its resident security of tenure; but these accomplishments did not demand a substantial commitment from individual slum residents and were centered on socio-economic activities (i.e. - IGAs and community mobilization), not physical improvements.

2.4 The Theory of the Patta System

Regarding the distribution of land titles, the story of the UCDD is often told in a vernacular particular to South India, which is incomprehensible to the non-Indian analyst. The term *patta*, for example, is mistakenly equated with the western conception of freehold title. Thus, in the claim that, “more than ten thousand *pattas* were issued in 1975 to slum dwellers residing on State [GoAP] and municipal land”, one is led to believe that ten thousand title deeds were disbursed to slum dwellers on the land they occupied but legally held by some level of government. In the case of slum dwellers, a *patta* formally refers to a certificate of allocation that details the extent of the *patta*-holders’ (*pattadar*) right to occupy a specific parcel of land as well as the amount due to the State in land revenue. Unlike freehold title, *pattas* assigned to slum dwellers are inalienable save through inheritance. This represents a major discrepancy between the western conception of freehold title and the certificate bestowed to Hyderabad’s slum dwellers.

While freehold title is considered the strongest claim to land, allowing the titleholder to do as she please to the parcel in question (Favracque and McAuslan, 1992); *pattas*, on the other hand, offer slum dwellers a weaker entitlement. Nevertheless, the possession of legally-grounded occupancy rights is stronger than any feeling of security of tenure based on perception.

The provision of *pattas*, in effect, harmonizes the *de facto* land rights already enjoyed by the occupiers with *de jure* ones. In this way, the provision of *pattas* established a relationship between the squatter and the government that did not previously exist. In other words, the acceptance of *pattas* by slum residents at the behest of the government legalized the former through land taxation and effectively granted them “citizenship” so long as they upheld the conditions spelled out in the *patta* certificate.

The distribution of *pattas* essentially legitimized the process by which the urban poor acquired land for housing. The *patta* does not insist on full tenurial rights for the *pattadar* but distinguishes her right to occupy land from that of the State to own it. This system of flexible security of tenure is not particular to Hyderabad. Forsyth (1991) describes a similar process in Peru where land occupation is transformed into a political right: a right to build, a “right to the city”. As in the Hyderabad experience, this right is

activated when the relevant authorities grant approval to a particular housing area's location and layout. In this scenario, emphasis is placed on negotiation rather than regulation (Durand-Lasserve, 1998). The very act of granting pattas to the landless therefore signifies enormous progress made by the government in its thinking on how integrate squatters into the legal city.

A survey carried out by the UCDD in 1972 identified 284 slums on public and private land within the jurisdiction of the MCH. Altogether, the slums housed approximately 300,000 people (Reddy, 1996). Three years later, under the guidance of a cabinet committee, the slums were categorized as either objectionable or unobjectionable. Objectionable slums are not designated for slum improvement because they are located on low-lying land, adjacent to railways, contravene the master plan or endanger public safety. Those residing in objectionable slums would be "re-settled" elsewhere in the city. In contrast, unobjectionable slums would benefit from *in-situ* improvements. The distinction is significant and has important implications. In the minds of slum dwellers, the unobjectionable classification means that, at some stage, public funds will become available for improvement and any legitimate tenurial right attached to the area will be enhanced (Marsden, 1990). Thus, classifying a slum as objectionable makes a statement about its probable future use and has implications for land speculators. The process of slum identification or notification is similar to the objectionable/unobjectionable criterion. The identified or notified designation is given exclusively to unobjectionable slums. Local authorities are obligated to provide basic municipal services to identified/notified slums. Though the process determining whether a slum is notified or un-notified is ambiguous, all slums on unobjectionable land in Hyderabad in the mid-1970s were notified (Marsden, 1990).

For the sake of accuracy, while all pattas comprise a certificate of land holdings, they do not share the same stipulations. The patta is a highly individualized instrument: it denotes particularities and regulations specific to the plot of land in question. Some pattas, for example, specify permitted land use while others set a time period when the land must revert to the hands of the government. A western analog to the patta might be that of a lease agreement between the State and the private individual, where conditions are precisely made clear to the lessee. Pattadars in slum areas are prohibited from selling their occupancy rights.

Patta distribution in Hyderabad, in contrast to reforms elsewhere in India, was a precursor for the larger goal of providing the urban poor with permanent housing. In this way, the patta was the foundation of all other physical slum improvement efforts.

2.5 The Evolution and Expansion of the UCDD

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the UCDD-led land reforms was the time period in which they occurred. The first instance of land re-distribution took place in 1975 – one year before the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act; several years after the Department had won a series of small triumphs in the slums, for example, in the form of installed water taps; and at stage where UNICEF, the first foreign sponsor of UCDD activities, was preparing to fund the Department’s expansion to cover all slums in Hyderabad. On the local front, the municipality was ready to initiate the “Habitat Hyderabad” housing scheme. Habitat Hyderabad (1977-1980) entailed the construction of 13,600 low-cost houses for slum dwellers possessing pattas, had access to loans from banks, and were willing to supply labor themselves. The first wave of patta distribution in Hyderabad took place in 86 slums, where the UCDD distributed 10,000 pattas for the construction of 13,600 homes in 1975. The scheme benefited more than 100,000 people (Marsden, 1990). The supervision of Habitat Hyderabad was entrusted to the UCDD.¹⁴

The distribution of pattas in 1975 marks a stark change from UCDD’s humble beginnings. In 1967, its efforts were relegated to one ward in the old city and covered only 40,000 people. Its mandate at this early stage was equally modest: to organize slum residents into groups to articulate the needs of the community and propose strategies to fulfill them. To this end, *basti* (slum) welfare associations, youth groups and *mabila mandals* (women’s associations) were mobilized. The organization of groups such as these within slums was designed to cultivate new community leaders to supplant the traditional ones (Rajagopalchari, 1983).

At first, slum dwellers were suspicious of UCDD officers, asking what political party they were affiliated with - they found it hard to believe that the officers did not represent any. They were equally surprised to learn that they did not have funds to distribute. Instead, the UCDD offered to “help these communities to help themselves.” UCDD officers, for example, accompanied slum dwellers to the Electricity Department offices to introduce them to the staff and ensure that their concerns were raised. They also organized meetings with the Public Health Department so that they could better understand the challenges facing slum dwellers. After addressing these short-term needs, the UCDD helped

¹⁴ Interestingly, when asked whether the construction of 13,600 homes would be too much for the UCDD to handle, a spokesperson responded that the Department was not building the houses; every family was building its own house through self-help and mutual aid techniques and that the task, therefore, was manageable (interview with D.G. Rama Rau, 16 January, 2002).

communities to raise funds to construct a community hall and provided others with matching grants to hire a nursery school teachers (Marsden, 1990).

In 1969, the GoI terminated its financial support of Hyderabad's UCDD.¹⁵ Since the project had achieved standing among the slum organizations it worked with, the Congress-led GoAP chose to continue and expand the scope of UCDD programs. By 1974, the UCDD project tripled in size to include four additional wards (Reddy, 1996). Though responsibility of the UCDD increased, its staff remained small, its budget fixed and its goals modest. Nevertheless, the Department gained popularity by fulfilling most of the relatively small requests of slum communities. At the same time, news of the UCDD programs spread throughout Hyderabad and communities not covered by the Department demanded to be included. Within the UCDD, the staff gained confidence in their abilities and the belief that significant change was possible permeated throughout the Department. The UCDD made a proposal to the Department of Social Welfare at the State-level to expand its work to nine additional areas in 1976. Unable to finance the expansion alone, the GoAP approached UNICEF for assistance. Those that had been skeptical of the gains realizable through the UCDD method were increasingly convinced that the UCDD was making inroads in improving the livelihood of slum dwellers. The gradual approach undertaken by the UCDD left the small numbers of beneficiaries craving further social and physical improvements in their neighborhood. At the same time, those not covered by the UCDD demanded that they be included as well. In this way, the UCDD managed to create an ethos among the urban poor that their lives were going to improve.

The increase in UNICEF's support for the UCDD enabled the latter to expand its jurisdiction from nine slums in one ward in 1967 (4% of the total slum population) to 52 slums in all city wards in 1974 (20% of the total slum population) (Reddy, 1996). The initial success of the partnership between the UCDD and UNICEF provided Hyderabad the distinction of becoming "the only city in India to have a comprehensive community development scheme that covered the whole city" (Cousins and Goyder, 1979, pg. 105). UNICEF began its support for the UCDD when the GoI withdrew funding in 1969 and remained associated with the project until 1984.

¹⁵ It is surprising that the GoI would abandon its support for an effective program like the UCDD. Dr. Surya Rao (personal interview, 12 January, 2002) and Mohamed Yusuf Ali Khan (personal interview, 15 January, 2002) however insist that the GoI never withdrew its backing of the UCDD. Marsden (1990) contends otherwise.

The housing schemes, which became the focus of UCDD activity after 1977, were initially financed through preferential loans from private banks.¹⁶ After 1980, they were financed through HUDCO and administered through the Andhra Pradesh Housing Board. At this stage, the capacity of the UCDD was spread thin and its work concentrated increasingly on housing schemes.¹⁷ One reason for UNICEF's withdrawal in 1984 was their assessment that socio-economic programs had suffered under the enlarged UCDD mandate (Marsden, 1990).

In the same period, though not related to slum housing per se, the GoI undertook the Environment Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS) Scheme as part of its Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985). The EIUS scheme provided GoI funds for upgrading infrastructure and services in slum areas. Facilities included water supply, storm water drainage, street paving, street lighting, and community latrines. Funding was based on a per capita allocation set at a level of Rs. 250 per slum dweller in 1980. In the Seventh Five-Year Plan, the GoI assigned more funds for HUDCO and increased EIUS funding of by 80%. For Hyderabad, this meant that the GoI's interest in housing could be incorporated into UCDD activities.

At the heels of the Habitat Hyderabad Scheme, the MCH developed a more ambitious and organized strategy to develop slum neighborhoods. In doing so, it recognized the limitations of earlier programs and sought to systematize the upgrading process. Previous attempts had been plagued by the provision of piecemeal inputs in slum areas (Prasad, 1999). In 1980, two planning documents were prepared with detailed proposals for the improvement of 435 of 455 slums in the city. The first plan covered 228 slums and the second, covered 207 slums. These plans covered the entirety of unobjectionable slums in Hyderabad, twenty slums existed on objectionable land.

Known as HSIP-I, the MCH tried to operate this phase from its own resources. A shortage of funds resulted in only 156 slums receiving assistance. In spite of the coverage shortfall, HSIP-I marked a new beginning for social welfare in Hyderabad by integrating housing, environmental improvement and socio-economic development. Along with financing from HUDCO, self-help housing became a major component of UCDD activities. During this HSIP-I, resources from the MCH, grants from the State and, assistance from UNICEF funded the installation of physical infrastructure, the establishment of health and social welfare programs as well as supported improvements in the educational, cultural and economic lives of slum residents (Prasad, 1999). By December 1982, pattas had been issued to 17,126

¹⁶ The program to involve private banks in the financing of urban development was initiated by Indira Gandhi's 1971 Garibi Hatao (Abolish Poverty) campaign.

families in Hyderabad's slums. An additional 7000 pattas had already been distributed for semi-*pucca* (semi-permanent) structures that already existed and were outside the State's EWS housing program (Rajagopalchari, 1983).

The second plan formed the basis of an application for assistance from the GoAP and GoI. This proposal later became known as HSIP-II and was funded by the United Kingdom's ODA (Clark et al., 1989). The Program was designed to benefit nearly 44,000 households in 207 slums with roads, sewer lines, storm water drains, a clean water supply, street lighting, low cost sanitation and community centers. It also included programs focused on health and nutrition, pre-school education and economic support schemes such as training centers and income generating activities.

The UCDD was responsible for coordinating the slum improvement efforts of other departments in the MCH (most notably, the Engineering Department), voluntary organizations, the ODA, and community groups. Though the project was designed to last from 1983 to 1987, delays at the beginning of the process extended ODA support until 1989. From 1983 to 1986, housing schemes were taken up in 49 slums and 5,839 units were completed. At a surface level, the housing scheme achieved limited objectives - only 8% of families living in HSIP-II slums benefited (Clark et al., 1989). The high level of default on housing loans lies at the root of this endeavor. That not enough houses were built does not take away from the fact that pattas were distributed to the urban poor.

At the close of HSIP-II in 1989, the ODA agreed to support the improvement of an additional 300 slums in Hyderabad, covering 76,000 households. Since the beginning of ODA's partnership with the UCDD, slums in Hyderabad grew more than 40% and increased from 455 slums in 1979 to 662 in 1986 (MCH, undated).

HSIP-III intended to last four years but delays in mobilizing resources pushed the completion date to April 1997. Like its predecessors, HSIP-III hoped to improve slums through the provision of infrastructure, bolstering the health and nutritional status of slum residents, increasing literacy rates and promoting community cohesiveness by strengthening community organizations and using participatory planning processes (Reddy, 1996).

¹⁷ See note no. 2

2.6 Immediate Problems of Land Reform

Necessarily, the successful distribution of public or privately held urban land to the poor at no charge raises questions about how the feat was accomplished. For instance, why was the State willing to acknowledge the occupancy rights of squatters? How were private landlords convinced to forfeit a portion of their ownership claims? I have relied primarily on the information collected from interviews conducted in Hyderabad in January 2002 to answer these questions.

*Pattas on Public Land*¹⁸

The first bold action to grant slum dwellers pattas took place in 1975. In one fell swoop, the Revenue Department, the Center agency responsible for taxation and all matters concerning land (save zoning), permitted the UCDD to distribute 10,000 pattas to landless households occupying land owned by the GoAP, its agencies or the MCH in 84 slums. The logic behind starting land reform on public land rather than that held privately was simply that it was easier to accomplish. Freeing up private land would be cumbersome and involve wrangling landowners to subscribe to an agenda which they vehemently opposed, and for which there was no precedent. By coordinating land reform on public land first, the UCDD demonstrated that the government was not asking the private landlord to do something that it was not willing to do. Moreover, in taking the first step to improve the lives of the poor, the GoAP and MCH won the confidence of the poor. The distribution of pattas on public land illustrated to the urban poor that the State did in fact have their best interest at heart.

For the most part, those involved at the UCDD held that political will of the GoAP was the driving force in ensuring that pattas were issued to the urban landless. They argued that the GoAP had always been sensitive to the plight of the poor; thus, the distribution of pattas was yet another manifestation of this concern. The progress made by the UCDD in social improvements, they argued, not only provided the impetus for the GoAP to “do something” but also the opportunity to do so. The requests for pattas originated from the community members themselves and this struck a chord with GoAP officials. If the campaign for security of tenure had been insincere, former UCDD officials claim, the distribution of pattas would not have taken place.

¹⁸ This section has been compiled from personal interviews with Kulsum Abbas (10 January, 2002), Dr. Ravindra Prasad (12 and 22 January, 2002), Dr. Surya Rao (12 January, 2002), D.G. Rama Rau (16 January, 2002), Janardhan Reddy (17 January, 2002), and Vasudeva Rao (23 January, 2002).

On a pragmatic front, the timing of the patta distribution coincided with State's Habitat Hyderabad Program. In this regard, the security of tenure provided by the patta acted as collateral against the bank loans arranged by Habitat Hyderabad organizers. Without the patta, private banks were reluctant to participate in the program. In accordance to general theories of property rights, the certainty attached to the issuance of pattas encouraged beneficiaries to invest in the improvement and consolidation of their housing. It guaranteed them, to an extent, the power to reap the dividends of their housing investment at some future date.

The MCH borrowed from HUDCO and private banks on behalf of slum dwellers with a guarantee from the GoAP. The MCH then issued loans to beneficiaries on the patta. The whole plot, house included, was mortgaged in favor of the MCH until the loan was repaid in full. Generally, the loan was issued only after the plinth was raised to a particular height according to standards and when a certificate of satisfaction was issued to beneficiaries. The Rent Collector in Revenue Branch of the MCH collected loan payments. In cases where pattadars failed to make loan payments for more than three consecutive months, the MCH had the authority to revoke the patta, take possession of the house and recover the loan by sale of the house. Subsidies from the GoI-sponsored EIUS scheme and general funds from the MCH were used to provide physical inputs such as roads, drainage and water taps, free of cost to beneficiaries (Rajagopalchari, 1983).

Politically, the land reforms could not have been at a better time. In August 1970, the GoAP superceded the elected City Council by a Special Officer drawn from the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), to act on behalf of the City Council until such time as fresh election could be arranged. These elections were not arranged for another sixteen years. The Special Officer responsible for initiating the Habitat Hyderabad scheme, held his post from 1974-1977. He saw this period as "free time, when harder decisions could be taken without the problem of politicians" (Marsden, 1990). The suspension of local democracy provided an opportunity for the GoAP to exert its political agenda in the municipality. This raises questions as to whether the project would have been as successful if it had been subjected to the influences of elected politicians and had not been supported by sympathetic and creative special officers. In granting pattas to the urban poor on public land, the GoAP did not relinquish its ownership rights. As a certificate of allocation, the patta was simply a formal recognition of the squatter's rights to hold possession of the land. Stopping short of full title, the patta enabled the pattadar to invest in land without the fear of eviction.

Pattas on Private Land

Convincing private landlords to abandon their land in favor of slum improvement was a difficult and drawn-out process. The pattern of private land holdings in Hyderabad was ambiguous and many disputes arose over who owned which parcel of land. Much of the confusion concerning the land registry can be traced to Hyderabad's absorption into the India Union in 1948. This event forced many of the city's land-owning Muslims to flee to Pakistan, leaving large tracts of land empty. Even though no land transaction had taken place, the landless quickly occupied vacant lands. Where land transactions did take place, original title deeds were written in Urdu with an Arabic script - a language unfamiliar to the majority of squatters. Thus, even people in possession of legal land documents had little idea of what they actually owned. As a result, many land dealings took place without the knowledge of the authorities. Adding more complexity to the nature of land transactions in Hyderabad, middlemen found opportunities to illegally subdivide land and often sold the same parcel to multiple buyers.¹⁹ This led to confusion on two fronts: it created a handful of parties with an equal claim to land; and the Revenue Department found it near impossible to prevent middlemen from selling land to which they had no legal right in the first place.

Squatters came to occupy land in Hyderabad in the 1950s, not necessarily aware of the status of the land that they claimed as their own. Efforts to resolve land ownership disputes via the courts further complicated matters, slowing the process. Land disputes, on average, took nearly twenty years to settle and involved placing a stay order on the land in question, prohibiting the true owner and the squatter from constructing on the land.²⁰ When these cases were eventually resolved, the courts relied on the Andhra Pradesh Slum Improvement (Acquisition of Land) Act (1956) to grant title to the squatter who occupied the same parcel of land for at least twelve years. Since many of the squatters lived openly on vacant land since Independence, the courts often ruled in their favor. Private land owners therefore had reason to doubt that court-arbitrated land disputes would benefit them. In their minds, the moment their case went to court, they had already lost the case. This mindset led many to seek the outside mediation of the UCDD.

Land disputes on the outskirts of the city were easier to resolve than those in the core. The owners of these lands often lived in the city and acquired fringe land via inheritance. They never had any intention of living on the land and were primarily seeking compensation from squatters. In many cases, the owners

¹⁹ Dr. Ravindra Prasad (personal interview, 22 January, 2002)

²⁰ Dr. G.B. Reddy (personal interview, 18 January, 2002)

accepted a small token price, often below market value, from illegal occupiers. The GoAP acquired the land through the Andhra Pradesh Slum Act and distributed pattas for these lands to squatters.²¹

In the city, land-sharing agreements were brokered by the UCDD on behalf of the private landlord and the squatters. The most common method called for a land-sharing arrangement, whereby the owners would be awarded control over that portion of land adjacent to the main road and allow squatters to occupy the back portion of the lot. In many instances, the original owners were also granted increased FSI (floor space index) to enhance the value of their property. Some squatters living on the front portion of lots were not pleased by this turn of events and refused to relocate to the back portion. In such cases, many of the landowners paid these squatters to shift. In this way, the owners kept possession of the most valuable portion of the land, while the squatters gained a patta.²² After the development of the slum, land prices rose as much as 400% and allowed owners to recoup the cost of the land lost through the land-sharing scheme within a few years (Clark et al., 1989).

Initially, the acceptance of land-sharing schemes was not widespread. However, after landlords saw that much could be gained by the construction of roads and the installation of basic infrastructure, the idea to allow the UCDD to mediate land disputes gained momentum. Owners who would otherwise have absolutely no control of their land acquired at least half. Retaining a portion of the land, it was believed, was better than nothing.²³

Problems Among the Pattadars

Though the issuance of pattas demanded an innovative land-sharing solution, its fallout required more ingenuity. The land-sharing agreements halved the amount of land available to the poor. Before the land-sharing, squatters had the option of locating anywhere on a vacant plot. Now that the original titleholders had reclaimed the portion of the land adjacent to the main road, the supply of available land was insufficient for the entire squatter population. The UCDD was perplexed by the prospect of resettling some slum residents. How would the UCDD decide who should remain in the improved slum and who should rebuild their lives elsewhere? In the spirit of community development, it asked the affected slum dwellers to develop a strategy that would be acceptable to the majority. Committed to the ideal that no section of the original community be forced to relocate elsewhere, the community

²¹ Dr. A. Malla Reddy (personal interview, 9 January, 2002)

²² Dr. Ravindra Prasad (personal interview, 12 January, 2002)

²³ Personal interviews with Dr. Ravindra Prasad (12 January, 2002), D.G. Rama Rau (16 January, 2002)

suggested that their dwelling be made two-stories instead of one. Though the land would be densely occupied, the solution would accommodate the entire community.

The question then remained as to who would take the prized ground floor and who would be relegated to the top floor. Again, the UCDD left this to the community to decide. In response, the community put forth a solution whereby the aged and those with the longest history in the slum would be given the ground floor. Since they struggled to establish the settlement and on more practical terms, were unable to climb the stairs to the second floor, the community as a whole felt that they deserved the ground floor. Younger members of the community would take the top floor.

2.7 Dispelling the Myths of Giving Urban Land to the Poor

“Slum Improvement Encourages Rural-Urban Migration”

Though the effort of the UCDD to issue pattas to the urban poor was pioneering in Hyderabad, granting security of tenure to slum dwellers has a storied tradition in the history of slum improvement. As well-grounded as the theory of slum improvement may be, doubts persist regarding the intended impacts of making land available to the poor. Among these, rests the belief that issuing pattas is equivalent to inviting the rural poor to re-locate to the city. Studies, however, have time and again shown that people do not migrate to avail cheaper housing, but do so to find employment (Bhattacharya, 1998; Glaeser, 2000; UNESCAP, 1995). The same line of thinking was used to discourage the UCDD from expanding its activities to the realm of housing construction. In addressing this concern, the UCDD convinced skeptics within the MCH and the GoAP that since rural land reform was taking place simultaneously in Andhra Pradesh, potential migrants would not be willing to risk their land holding in villages at the mere possibility of gaining a patta in Hyderabad. In addition, UCDD was working in those slums where residents had occupied land well beyond the statute governing adverse possession laws in Andhra Pradesh. If migrants did move to Hyderabad expecting to receive a patta, they would soon realize that they were ineligible and would have no choice but to return to their respective villages.

Regardless, the rate of rural-urban migration in Hyderabad was near 40% and as result, the number of slums increased at nearly the same pace (Clark et al, 1989). Surveys of these new entrants concluded that the motivating force for their migration was not the hope of receiving pattas, but in accordance to mainstream migration theory, to earn higher urban incomes. It appears that issuing pattas to the landless urban poor had little impact on rural-urban migration.

“The Poor Cannot Afford to Build and Maintain Homes in the City”

The contention that slum dwellers are too poor to own land and consolidate housing was a criticism of the UCDD process. Its supporters however pointed out that it is for precisely this reason that slums require outside intervention.

The UCDD approach showed that the GoAP need not bear the sole financial responsibility of rescuing the poor: a variety of resources existed to supplement GoAP assistance. In the case of Hyderabad, the slum dwellers benefited from programs funded by UNICEF, the ODA and most recently, the World Bank, as well as a slew of matching grant programs from the GoI to improve the lot of slum dwellers. Thus, the reason for undertaking a land reform or slum improvement scheme is precisely because “the poor cannot afford to build and maintain homes in the city” without these kinds of interventions.

“The Poor are Profiteers and Will Establish Slums Elsewhere”

This is a common concern among opponents of slum improvement. The Hyderabad experience however demonstrates that the sale of pattas was, at its maximum, only 10% (Clark et al., 1989). Several factors explain this result. First, pattas were registered in the name of both the male and female household heads. This meant that if a legal transfer of land was to take place both signatories of the patta would have to consent. Originally, pattas were registered in the name of the male household head but the UCDD soon discovered that pattas were being sold and gambled away without the knowledge of the female household head. The double-entry system was instituted shortly after.

Second, since slum improvement took place in Hyderabad on a large-scale and used a broad-based approach, many of the city’s slums were undergoing the same treatment simultaneously. Slum land throughout Hyderabad was regularized and pattas were distributed uniformly. The vacancy rate in the slums was close to nil. If a recent pattadar sold his/her land to a member of the middle-class, he would find difficulty in finding a place to live within his means, unless he relocated to the outskirts, far from his place of work and away from his social network.

A final explanation relates the success of the UCDD in building stronger and unified communities in slum neighborhoods. As one of the characteristics of the patta was its non-transferability, communities feared that if the UCDD became aware of an illegal sale, it would rescind their aid to the entire community. Thus, social pressure in the upgraded area prevented beneficiaries from selling their land.

The dynamics of this social pressure will likely change over time, as pattas will be bequeathed to the children of pattadars.

An alternative way of dispelling this myth is to question why it was formulated in the first place. That is, why should the poor be prevented from profiting from the sale of land when the middle class is permitted to do the same? If anything, it reflects the changing needs of households and perhaps even signals that beneficiaries have gathered enough savings to afford a home in a more affluent neighborhood. Prohibiting the sale of land, in this sense, limits the level of social improvement attainable by the poor.

CHAPTER THREE: THE HISTORY AND MOMENTUM OF LAND REFORM

3.1 Introduction

Land reform, like other momentous challenges to the status quo, cannot be understood in isolation from the sequence of preceding events. Chapter Three argues that the distribution of pattas to Hyderabad's urban poor, and the city's slum improvement schemes born from it, derives from the historical particularities of Andhra Pradesh. Accounting for these particularities helps explain why Hyderabad is an anomaly in the range of UCDD activities in India. The chapter analyzes the events that occurred prior and concurrently with urban land reform in Hyderabad. Chief among these, the conflict between peasants and an autocratic ruler; the rivalry between the Telangana and Coastal Andhra regions of Andhra Pradesh; and political competition between the Communist Party of India and the Congress Government all played key roles in shaping the socio-political landscape of the State. The same landscape was responsible for creating the conditions for patta distribution in Hyderabad. In this chapter, I assume that although much of the aforementioned conflicts occurred in rural Andhra Pradesh, the city of Hyderabad was not immune to the political jostling taking place in its environs. From this position, I contend that the notion of political will as an innate quality within an organization, cannot adequately explain the success of slum improvement in Hyderabad. As defined in this thesis, political will is a measured reaction to surrounding political upheavals. In this context, the policy to distribute pattas to the urban poor in Hyderabad can be seen as an exercise in prudence. Land reform in Hyderabad was a means of halting the socialist forces that were gaining support in rural areas of the State and threatened to weaken an already fragile local government in Hyderabad. This chapter argues that the political will to undertake urban land reform in Hyderabad is not without historical roots.

3.2 Hyderabad as a Princely State

Joining the Indian Union

The eve of British withdrawal from the Indian sub-continent proved a tumultuous period for the region's Muslim princes. Not only were they compelled to re-evaluate their sovereignty vis-à-vis the forthcoming creation of India and Pakistan, they were also vulnerable to pressure from their subjects who now viewed them as an obstacle to their nationalist freedom struggle. In spite of these pressures, the princes sought to retain their power as long as possible. Some princes, like the Nizam of Hyderabad, even presented full independence as a viable alternative to union with either India or Pakistan. This proposal however underestimated the strength of the "Join India" campaign and the willingness of the GoI to use military force to capture Hyderabad State.

The tactic to declare full independence allowed “Join India” proponents in the State to transform the movement into a campaign to terminate the autocracy of the Nizam. To meet this populist challenge, the Nizam ordered the *Razakars*, his personal army, to squash opposition to his leadership. The GoI saw the crumbling of Hyderabad State as an opportunity and launched its “Police Action” in September 1948 to gain control of the State. After five days of siege, the Nizam relinquished control of Hyderabad State and joined the Indian Union. The GoI installed a military government soon after its Police Action and replaced it with a civilian government in 1949. The State of Hyderabad was later trifurcated into Karnataka, Marathwada and Telangana regions. In accordance with the States Reorganization Commission in 1955, Karnataka and Marathwada merged with Mysore and Marahashtra States respectively. The State of Andhra Pradesh, not established until 1956, comprised the integration of the adjacent and linguistically homogenous regions of Telangana, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. Appendix II compares the extent and location of Hyderabad State under the Nizam with modern-day Andhra Pradesh.

Land Holdings Under the Nizam

In princely Hyderabad, all land belonged to the Nizam in one form or another. Of the 53 million acres of land in the State, 60% fell under the governmental land revenue system (either known as *Diwani* or *Khalsa* holdings); about 30% was subject to the *Jagirdari* system; and the remaining 10% was classified as *sarf-e khas* and belonged to the Nizam’s personal estate. It was only after the Police Action in 1949 that *sarf-e khas* and *Jagirdari* holdings were abolished and these lands merged with the *Diwani* system in order to raise governmental land revenue (Rao, 1980a).

The *Jagirdari* system was a distinctive feature of feudal Hyderabad. A *jagir* was a free grant of one or more villages from the Nizam to the grantee as reward for some outstanding, usually military, service. The grantee, the *Jagirdar*, had the right to collect revenue and generally retained the whole of it without passing it on to the State. The *Jagirdars* had no proprietary rights over *jagir* land. The *jagir* was inalienable and the *Jagirdars* were entitled only to the revenue raised therein. Since the State was regarded as the private property of the ruler, the Nizam had the discretion either to grant or terminate the *jagir*. A common characteristic of these landholdings was that the holder benefited by a remission or forgiveness of the land revenue, that would otherwise be payable to the Nizam. Often the grant lasted for the lifetime of the grantee or for the duration of a particular service. The system was abolished in 1949 by the GoI, partly as a measure of land reform and partly to eliminate the remnants of the Nizam’s administrative machinery (Rao, 1980a; Reddy, 2001).

Diwani or Khalsa, was similar to the *Ryotwari* system - the peasant proprietary system currently in operation in Andhra Pradesh. "The landholders were not called owners per se but were treated as pattadars. The actual occupants within each patta were called *shikmidars*, who had full rights of occupancy but were not mentioned in the land record. As the pressure on land grew, the shikmidars, who previously tilled the land themselves, began to lease out lands to sub-tenants for actual cultivation. The latter were without legal rights in land or protection against eviction" (Rao, 1980a, pg. 209).

The sarf-e khas land was the Nizam's own direct estate. Its income was used entirely to meet the expenditures of the Nizam's family and retinue. Whatever limited rights existed for peasants in the Diwani areas were unavailable in sarf-e khas lands (Reddy, 2001).

The Jagirdari system was a vital element of the political system in pre-Independence Hyderabad. In spite of the void of rights for peasants on sarf-e khas lands, conditions in jagir areas were considered to be more oppressive. Civil courts had no jurisdiction on jagir lands and as a result, jagirdars were given a free hand to collect as much tax revenue as possible from cultivators.

The Khalsa or Diwani lands fell under the dominion of *deshmukhs* and *deshpandes*. At first, the deshmukhs and deshpandes operated as civil servants responsible for collecting taxes for the government coffers. When direct tax collection by the State apparatus was introduced, deshmukhs and deshpandes were granted annuities that were calculated as a percentage of past collections and bestowed in perpetuity. Due to their access to the land records, deshmukhs and deshpandes often managed to fraudulently appropriate thousands of acres of fertile land and make it their own property. The peasants cultivating these lands were reduced to tenants-at-will or landless laborers.

The Vetti Labor System

Vetti labor is often compared with the bonded labor common to feudal Europe. Balagopal (1983) asserts that vetti was far more brutal: all lower castes within the village had to supply whatever products or services they produced free of charge to the landlord. The landlord had the authority to preside over village disputes and collect fines from offending parties. He would demand gifts from villagers on special occasions as well as contributions to the cost of ceremonial functions in his family. These feudal exactions were part and parcel of the jagirdars or deshmukhs dominion over land. The call for land

reform, therefore, was not simply about returning land to the tiller. More generally, it was concerned with regaining the economic freedom that had been forfeited to village landlords.

3.3 Land Reform Movements in Andhra Pradesh

The fate of the Nizam was sealed by the GoI's Police Action in 1948. For the victims of the Nizam's oppression, the event represented a promise of social, economic and political improvement. Since Hyderabad's union with India was a result of both an internal resistance to the Nizam and an external attack by the GoI, the State's peasants had good reason to expect more from Hyderabad's accession to India than they received.

The remainder of the chapter examines the nature of peasant reactions to the Nizam and the GoAP as well as their role in shaping the future politics of the Telangana region; the formation of Andhra Pradesh; and the fashioning urban land policies that were to impact the city of Hyderabad twenty years later. Understanding these processes draws out the commonalities between patta distribution in Hyderabad in the 1970s and other events that sculpted the politics of land reform in Andhra Pradesh.

The Telangana Armed Struggle (1946-1951)

The Telangana Armed Struggle emerged as a reaction to the Nizam's exploitative policies toward peasants and class tensions in Hyderabad State. Though much of the Struggle's justification is couched in terms of swelling nationalism, it appears that the Struggle's organizers exploited feelings of national pride percolating among the people of Telangana to rally the general population behind the need to change the pattern of land of holdings in the State. If the Struggle focused on the uneven distribution of land exclusively, it could only inspire the participation of the landless. On the other hand, by appealing to broader nationalist sensibilities, the Struggle was able to benefit from a wider net of support that included middle-class farmers and operated irrespective of shares in land holdings. The goal of the Armed Struggle was never an inherently nationalist one; it was born from the economic conflict between oppressive landowners and oppressed peasants, the tension between the concept of forced labor and the fact that land was held in the hands of the few. After 1948, the region bore other peasant movements inspired by the Armed Struggle, but they were marked by distinct regionalist overtones and divorced entirely from calls for Telegu solidarity. These later campaigns were also defined first by principles of economic justice and then, by the desire to assert a Telegu culture and national identity in the region. The roots of the Telangana Armed Struggle reach as far back as 1928 with the establishment of the *Andhra Jan Sangham* (AJS). The organization began modestly with the simple but explicit objective of

promoting the Telegu language and culture in Hyderabad city. In 1930, the AJS renamed itself the *Andhra Maha Sabha* (AMS) and continued to operate as a vehicle for cultural reorganization in the State. At this early stage, moderates, landlords and the rich controlled the AMS. Though it adopted resolutions against the Jagirdari system, the abolition of vetti and land tax reductions; it was ineffective in gaining the support of the masses (Rao, 1980a). By 1945, Communist ideology gained a foothold in the AMS and the organization became increasingly revolutionary in its goals and popular in its appeal. It decreased its membership fee to attract large numbers of agricultural laborers, poor tenants and small landowners. It is at this juncture that the AMS ceased to be an organization solely concerned with Telegu culture. The Communists lent the AMS a moral and political agenda devoid of culture. The AMS became a forum to air the grievances of the poor and propose strategies to resolve them (Rao, 1980a). AMS rallies and meetings attracted scores of poor peasants, tenant cultivators and landless laborers and infused in them an activism that was missing in their lives.

During one such rally in July 1946, over one thousand villagers descended on the estate of a large landowner in Nalgonda to protest his immense landholding and abusive use of village labor. In the throes of the ensuing conflict, the landowner's henchmen killed two peasants. This event sparked a series of violent clashes between Communist-led peasants and the elite, lasted until 1951. The violence was later termed by the Communists as an Armed Struggle, indicating their uphill battle against an oppressive system and its proponents. It marked the genesis of grassroots movements for land reform in the region. The immediate effect of the Armed Struggle was widespread. That the Nizam did not make an effort to quell instability in rural Hyderabad demonstrates his misjudged preoccupation with the impending withdrawal of the British. His obsession with hatching plans for independence neglected the rising insurgency in rural areas of the State. Rao (1997) reports that the Armed Struggle carried an anti-Muslim flavor as well. That the Nizam was ready to declare Hyderabad a Muslim State in the heart of India and the fact that the bulk of the peasants were Hindu made the Communists "saviors of not only landless peasants but the Hindu community" (p. 175).

It is within this campaign to seek retaliatory justice that the Armed Struggle snowballed into a mass movement that endorsed Hyderabad's union with India. The advent of the Razakars in 1947 signaled the increased concern of the Nizam for the insurrection brewing in the State. It marked the Nizam's first major reaction to the growing influence of the Communists. The violence between the Communists and the Razakars provided the opportunity for the GoI in 1948 to deploy military forces to crush an already

weakened Nizam. The GoI and the Communists, in a sense worked in concert to topple the Nizam, albeit from different fronts and for different motivations.

The results of the Police Action in 1948 did not satiate the Communist demand for change in the political agenda in the State. The rule of the Nizam had been terminated; yet the Communists felt that the autocracy of Congress government had replaced that of the Nizam. Though the latter officially abolished vetti and jagirdari, there was little to show for it in rural Hyderabad: agricultural laborers continued to be exploited and large tracts of land still lay in the hands of the elite. Moreover, there was the feeling among the Communists that they had been excluded from the political process after having played a major role in liberating Hyderabad from the autocracy of the Nizam. The Communists took arms against the GoI to fulfill its leftist mandate. In response, the GoI positioned its armed forces to contain the threat of communism in the State. Unable to match the strength of the GoI, the Communists operated an underground movement and continued their struggle against what they perceived was yet another system detrimental to the social development of the poor. The Congress banned the Communist Party of India, further incensing them and provoking them to continue their revolution until 1951. In the interim, the Communists implemented their own land distribution program: jagir lands were distributed to the landless and debts contracted by the peasants from village moneylenders were annulled. In this way, the Communists succeeded in liberating more than 4,000 villages in Hyderabad State (Rao, 1997). After realizing that they were unable to compete against the GoI arsenal, the Communists abandoned the Armed Struggle and agreed to use legislative means to further their agenda. The ban on the Communist Party was lifted in 1952 and they were permitted to participate in the political life of the State. The conflict between the Communists and the Congress at this early stage was a precursor to the political competition that was to occur at the State level in later decades.

Though the Armed Struggle concluded in 1951, its impact was felt well after. The Struggle was successful in that it implanted the notion that change was indeed possible in the minds of the landless. After all, the rag tag group of peasants had managed to expel the Nizam, eliminate the jagir land system and the vetti attached to it, as well as resist the GoI for three years. If anything, the Armed Struggle demonstrated that collective action was a means of effecting substantial socio-economic change. The UCDD benefited from this positive mindset as well. They matured under the activities of the Armed Struggle and the movement to distribute land by the Communists provided a tangible example of what could be achieved through populist village-based action.

The existence of Communists and their sympathizers within the UCDD in the mid-1970s is therefore not surprising. In this light, the Armed Struggle became a starting point for a series of reforms in Telangana aimed at equalizing the distribution of land within the population. The efforts of the UCDD are a node in a sequence of land reform efforts that took place in Andhra Pradesh. What distinguishes the work of the UCDD from the history of land reform in the State however is that their efforts took place in a systematic manner and within the region's most important urban center.

The Formation of Andhra Pradesh (1956) and the Telangana Agitation (1969)

The birth of Andhra Pradesh in 1956 provided a regionalist motivation for land reform in Telangana. Though the formation of Andhra Pradesh is consistent with the Center policy of drawing state boundaries on the basis of shared language, its emergence as a unified political unit was premature. Language, it seemed, was the only feature held in common by Telangana, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. While the peoples of the three regions spoke Telegu, they were raised under two distinct political regimes: that of the Nizam in Telangana and that of the British in Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. The socio-cultural differences among the regions were pronounced. Nevertheless elites working with their own nationalist orientations felt that shared language was enough to wipe out divisive regionalist attitudes held by the masses. Satyanarayana (1997) notes that regionalist feelings are historically rooted in popular psyche, where the masses themselves have adopted the characteristics of their respective regions. Coastal Andhra was comprised of deltas with fertile, well-irrigated lands and was the wealthiest region of the State; Rayalaseema was known as the "stalking ground for famines." Telangana earned a reputation of being economically backward and beholden to the land tenure patterns dominated by jagirdaris and deshmukhs.

The merging of two unequal regions and the subsequent inter-regional mobility of people paved the way for social/caste tensions in rural Telangana. The 1969 Telangana Agitation is clear proof of this. Historically, the migration of Coastal Andhra peasants to Telangana began in the early twentieth century. Although Telangana was endowed with an abundance of natural resources, the autocracy of the Nizam stifled any opportunity among locals to undertake intensive cultivation. The opposite occurred in Coastal Andhra: under the British, inhabitants of Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema witnessed a tremendous agrarian transformation as a result of construction along the Godavari and Krishna rivers. Those living on British-controlled land became beneficiaries of an improved irrigation system and expanded commercial farming. An immediate effect was the replacement of subsistence crops with cash crops. The subsequent increase in agricultural prices, the growth of the agrarian market and export trade in cash

crops like cotton, and tobacco provided Andhra locals with an opportunity to gain profits unavailable to their neighbors in Telangana. The profits were in turn ploughed back into agriculture in the form of moneylending, land purchases, trade in paddy and tobacco and the establishment of agro-industries such as rice mills, tobacco and sugar factories. As a result of this agrarian change, a new constituency of rich farmers emerged in Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema (Reddy and Sharma, 1979).

The migration of peasants from Coastal Andhra into Telangana began as a result of an invitation by the Nizam in the 1920s to “colonize” his dominion. The Nizam envisaged a scheme where foreign capital would aid in cultivating land that lay fallow in the State. To motivate migrants to participate in the scheme, settler farmers were granted absolute hereditary occupancy rights over their land allocation. In addition, settlers were exempt from the paying land tax for the first four years and custom duties from the importation of agricultural machinery, fertilizers and improved seeds. Absolute ownership of minerals in those lands was also conferred on them. The government came forward to provide loans for the settler farmer. The advice of the government agricultural scientists was provided at no charge to improve cultivation in the colonized regions. Finally, settlers were issued gun licenses and allowed to exercise police powers on their land (Satyanarayana, 1997).

The colonization scheme attracted the attention of the coastal farmers and a large number migrated to Telangana. As the land values were high in Andhra, by selling their property they were able to acquire substantial tracts of land relatively cheaply from the Nizam’s government. The very presence of “outsiders” in the midst of economically weak, socially oppressed peasants spurred jealousy, hostility and hatred directed towards the Andhra settlers (Satyanarayana, 1997).

The dominance of Andhras in Telangana was not limited to the preferential treatment they received with regards to land cultivation. Their relative wealth allowed them to wield more political influence in the State than the people of Telangana. The peasants of Telangana resented that once again, the concerns of landed foreigners had overshadowed their own. The impact of this pro-Andhra bias was manifest within the polity too, as Andhras held a disproportionate number of government posts and favored policies promoting Coastal Andhra at the expense of Telangana. One of the main causes for the dissatisfaction of the people of Telangana was that a noticeable percentage of workers from the Andhra region were appointed to posts on the grounds that qualified people from Telangana were non-existent. For locals, this was particularly insulting given that the pro-Andhra prejudice was taking place under their noses in Hyderabad, Telangana’s primate city (Rao, 1997).

Politicians did little to diffuse the tension in the region. In fact, many trace the Telangana Agitation to Andhra Pradesh's first Chief Minister refusing to name a Deputy Chief Minister from Telangana, likening such an appointment as an "unwanted sixth finger on a hand" (Rao, 1997). The influx of people from Coastal Andhra into Hyderabad created palpable tension in the city. The discontent eventually spread to government officials and unemployed youth, who felt they were being neglected and exploited by domineering officials and enterprising people of the Andhra region. Students were at the vanguard of the movement. Some wanted safeguards to protect the interests of the people of Telangana while more radical segments demanded the separation of Telangana from Andhra Pradesh. In January 1969, officers from Telangana joined the debate by threatening to launch into "direct action" if the more than 6,000 Andhras occupying Telangana posts were not repatriated to Andhra. The agitation turned violent in certain areas and the Congress government was apt to remember the Armed Struggle and the persistence of Telaganites. The Chief Minister appealed to the striking students and agreed to transfer Andhra government officers from Telangana.

Shortly after, police opened fire on protesting students in Hyderabad. The incident was seen as a provocation from the State. Two days later, the agitation turned violent. Throughout Telangana, students inflicted heavy damage on the railways and other symbols of government authority. Meanwhile, the Telangana Student Action Committee called upon students to abstain from classes until a separate Telangana was formed. The feelings of exclusion from economic development rallied politicians as well. K.V. Ranga Reddy, a former Deputy Chief Minister, joined the students in stating, "without separate statehood, the injustices to Telangana cannot be rectified and prevented". (Rao, 1997). The agitation took a new turn when eight Congress legislators from Telangana supported the students and demanded statehood for Telangana.

Acute agrarian struggles developed in the country by the late sixties. The peasants discontent was articulated, mobilized and organized by the various extremist groups. A study of the agrarian agitations between 1966-69 by the Union Home Ministry came to the conclusion that the unrest was associated with "the persistence of serious social and economic inequalities" (Illaiah, 1980). In 1969, following careful assessment of evidence concerning all types of peasant agitations in various states, the Ministry of Home Affairs concluded that steps would have to be taken both by the Central government and by the states to reduce tensions in rural areas. This could best be achieved it seemed, by meeting the immediate needs of the weaker sections of rural society – especially the needs of the landless, the share-croppers,

and the tenants lacking secure rights in land. Indira Gandhi in a 1969 letter addressed to all state Chief Ministers pointed out that an effective agricultural development strategy for India would require “not only organization and inputs but also the removal of existing institutional and social impediments to production.” She made it very clear that for the sake of political stability, the States must implement a variety of agrarian reforms. Thus, by the late 1960s, land reform became a pressing issue for the preservation of stability and survival of the political system (Illaiah, 1980).

The Land Grab Movement (1970)

In August 1970, leftist parties in India began a land grab movement with the objective of forcibly occupying land belonging to the large, primarily Andhra, landlords and distributing it to landless tillers. The land grab movement led to clashes with the police and many leftist leaders who participated in this movement were arrested.

According to Rao (1980b), the struggle included the following five items on its agenda (p. 242):

- Occupation and cultivation of all types of government lands and nominal forest lands, including lands grabbed by the landlords, the monopolists and black-marketeers;
- Organized resistance to evictions of all types of tenants including the share-croppers and the struggle for reduction of rents, the abolition of illegal extractions and for full ownership rights for all cultivating tenants as was granted by the United Front government in Kerala;
- Restoration of tribal peasants on land illegally alienated by the moneylenders and the landlords and the traders;
- Struggle for the grant of ownership rights and pattas to agricultural laborers over the homesteads under their possession and occupation of vacant lands of the government and the landlords by the rural and the urban poor for house-sites; and
- Occupation of the big farms of the monopolists, former princes, jagirdars, zamindar, etc. and pressuring the government of enacting radical amendments to the existing land ceiling laws and distributing the surplus land among the landless laborers and poor peasants under supervision of popular committees.

More than 100,000 peasants participated in the movement. Of these, 9,241 were arrested. The poor peasants occupied about 97,600 acres of land. This land struggle gave a big push to the agrarian movement in the country as a whole and broadened the base of militant struggles in Andhra Pradesh.

The land struggle brought the question of land reforms to the forefront of public debate and compelled the GoI and GoAP to enact progressive amendments to the existing ceiling laws. The events testify to the rapid growth in the prestige and mass influence of the Communist peasant organizations.

3.4 The Nature of Public Will

The use of “political will” to explain the success of the UCDD is wholly inadequate; the concept says little about the context or the process from which it was born. The expression should instead be viewed as a quality that lays dormant within organizations, but is awakened during threats to the status quo. In this regard, the section considers political will as a calculated reaction to one’s political environment. For instance, Indira Gandhi’s decision to make land reform a priority in the 1970s should not be examined separately from the political setbacks suffered by the Congress in Kerala and Bengal in the late 1960s. Leftists won the legislatures of both states and each vowed substantial change to the pattern of land holdings therein. Given the popularity of the Communists, Gandhi had good reason to believe that similar results could take place in Andhra Pradesh. To maintain Congress control in Andhra Pradesh, she needed, at minimum, to match the promises made by her political opposition. To this end, she forced Brahamanda Reddy, an unabashed critic of Gandhi’s land reform policies, to resign his post as Chief Minister and replaced him with deputy Chief Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao. In appointing Rao, she hoped to silence separatists by choosing a Telanganite leader as well as ensure that her land reform measures would be carried out. Though Rao himself was a landlord, he came from a non-landed caste and was a strong advocate for land reform in Andhra Pradesh. With the commitment to changing the pattern of landholdings secure at the State level, Congress was not only able to maintain its dominance in Andhra Pradesh but managed to create an atmosphere where real change could take place regarding the ownership of land.

The first push for urban land reform in Hyderabad took place in 1975. The Emergency was in full force and the Telangana Armed Struggle and the Agitation remained fresh in the collective memory of the public. Thus, when the UCDD campaigned for the distribution of pattas for the urban poor and argued that the communities were mobilized to take action to gain security of tenure, officials at the Revenue Department, the MCH and the GoAP had little choice but to concede to their demands. The rising tide of land reform in the 1970s, embodied in the Telangana Armed Struggle in 1969, the Land Grab Movement in 1970 and the Andhra Pradesh Land Ceiling Act in 1973, left the urban landless excluded from the benefits expected to accrue to their rural counterparts. The UCDD was well aware of this. Their participatory approach allowed them to take the pulse of Hyderabad’s slum neighborhoods. The

expressed need of slum dwellers for greater control of the land they occupied provided the fodder for the UCDD to approach the GoAP for pattas. In the case of private landlords, they were quickly reminded that their rural counterparts were the first targets of malcontented, nothing-to-lose peasants. Would the urban elite be willing to share their fate? Unlike the situation in rural Andhra Pradesh, slum dwellers in Hyderabad had occupied urban land since the 1950s - both the government and private landowners realized that they had little chance of removing them.

The situation at the local government level was amenable to the requests of the UCDD. In the same way that the Emergency had suspended the State legislature, an IAS officer, appointed by the Center, headed Hyderabad's local government. With local democracy on hold, the latter was able to circumvent the meanderings of the City Council and permit the distribution of pattas to slum dwellers on unobjectionable MCH land. The officer was outside the local political sphere: he neither had a constituency to consider, nor a political stake in Andhra Pradesh. This made it undoubtedly easier for the MCH to make a bold move to formalize the occupancy rights of the poor on their land.

The UCDD chose an opportune moment to press for pattas for the urban poor. Politically, the timing was ripe for such large-scale reform. The political landscape at the Center, State and local levels was being shaped not only by the concurrent activities by the Communists, but historical events too weighed on the memory of the public. This combination of factors along with the credibility of the UCDD among slum dwellers convinced landlords, both public and private, that political inertia (with regards to land reform) was no longer acceptable.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

In recounting the pre-history of urban community development in Hyderabad, the chapter illustrated that the call for land reform in Andhra Pradesh was by no means new. Thus, the work of the UCDD, if studied in the context of the history of land reform movements in Andhra Pradesh, signifies a battle fought on many fronts to ensure security of tenure to the landless as a way to ameliorate their socio-economic status. The chapter also detailed the efforts made by peasants and their supporters to offset the power imbalance between the landed and landless classes in Andhra Pradesh. Indeed, land reform was a centerpiece in Communist-led movements to overthrow the Nizam, in the struggle to wrestle the future of Telangana from Andhra dominance and in the political strategies of the Congress in Andhra Pradesh. Though these campaigns articulated a diversity of goals, ranging from electoral victory to the exertion of nationalism, the question of who should control land resources was anchored at the core of

the debate. Upon closer investigation, the common strategic thread running throughout these historic events has been the cultivation of a collective faith in building popular support, encouraging action from the masses and fermenting grassroots resistance to the status quo. In rural Andhra Pradesh, these tasks remained the mainstay of the Communists.

More than twenty years later, the success of the Communists in Telangana was not unnoticed by the UCDD. They adopted the same strategies as the Communists to mobilize Hyderabad's urban poor. In the same way that the Communists organized peasants to rally and protest, the UCDD targeted disaffected segments within slum communities, primarily women and youth, to take an initiative in improving of their neighborhood's socio-economic destiny. Besides instilling confidence, mahila mandals, basti welfare associations and youth groups became units for community change and political action. These groups, once discouraged and invisible in their communities, became the driving force behind slum improvement in Hyderabad.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CONSEQUENCES OF LAND REFORM IN HYDERABAD

4.1 Introduction

Chapters Two and Three investigated UCDD activities in Hyderabad with a retrospective lens. They constructed the story of land reform in Hyderabad, but did so in a descriptive way without examining the impact of patta distribution on the city. Building on the preceding sections, Chapter Four takes a forward-looking approach. It establishes a link between the land reforms of the mid-1970s and the state of affairs in the city today. Earlier chapters concentrated on the operational aspects of replicability and asked whether the results of land reform and slum improvement in Hyderabad could be achieved elsewhere. This chapter, on the other hand, is concerned with the unforeseen impacts of land reform in Hyderabad and raises issues that are seldom considered before cities embark on similar large-scale projects. In this sense, the chapter expands the scope of the thesis to include an analysis of the drawbacks of citywide patta distribution, as well as a narrative of its motivations and methods. More than twenty-five years have passed since the completion of the UCDD mandate providing this chapter the distance to witness the consequences of land reform and slum improvement in Hyderabad.

This chapter is not exhaustive in its discussion of the impacts of patta distribution. The chapter highlights problems related to the small reserve of public land in Hyderabad and the inability of the MCH to accommodate future urban growth; the increased politicization of slum neighborhoods; and last, the current institutional stagnation within the UCDD. These are the key issues raised by both former and current UCDD staff and academics in Hyderabad.

The chapter is built on the perception of those interviewed rather than quantitative data. Where possible, I have tried to compare the information derived from interviews with that describing Hyderabad prior to patta distribution and slum improvement.

4.2 The Status of MCH Land Holdings

Prior to the advent of the UCDD, 30% of the total slum land in Hyderabad was held publicly. These parcels were among the first to be assigned pattas (Rajagopalchari, 1983). With Hyderabad's first experiment in land distribution occurring in 1975, proceeding years have witnessed an increase in the rights of slum dwellers over land and a matched decrease in the rights of public or private landlords over the same land. Though the distribution of pattas did not entail a legal transfer of title, nor injure the legal ownership rights of the MCH per se, the practical implications of patta distribution are such that

beneficiaries gained complete and legitimate control over land once held illegally. Undoubtedly, this was the intent of the land reform in the first place: to endow slum dwellers with a legal right to occupy land to which they already enjoyed de facto control. The UCDD believed the endeavor was essential to the socio-economic improvement of the urban poor. The authorities that granted pattas to the poor however did not anticipate the new legal relationship that would be forged between slum dwellers and the rest of society.

Prior to the UCDD, society in general was able to overlook the legal rights of slum dwellers to occupy land. This does not appear to be the case today. Pattas complicate redevelopment efforts by adding a new bundle of land rights for developers, the MCH and the GoAP to untangle. The distribution of pattas did more than merely legitimize an informal arrangement; it stripped a layer of authority from the MCH and the GoAP to alter the terms of the patta, at some future date. Instead of over-running squatters for the sake of urban development, public authorities must now consider the patta rights of the poor. In this way, patta distribution diluted the unilateral authority once enjoyed by the MCH and the GoAP to determine the future use of land.

Negotiations over land have also been made more complex as a result of land reform. Where in the past the MCH needed to deal with a single private landlord who controlled a large tract of land, the MCH is today obligated to settle land disputes with a slew of pattadars holding occupancy rights over smaller parcels. This change in the pattern of land holdings in Hyderabad has proven to be a logistical nightmare. Freeing a strip of land for road construction, for example, requires convincing the entire community of the benefits of the project; selecting homes that need to be cleared; paying compensation; and finding new homes for those forced to re-settle. Typically, a process of this kind is met with resistance at every turn, engendering mistrust in the community towards the MCH and GoAP. Even if slum dwellers are willing to part with their pattas, MCH officials worry that they are understaffed and lack the capacity to negotiate settlements with the panoply of competing interests over land in a timely and cost-efficient manner. The sheer size of the project is overwhelming to the extent that it prevents the MCH from attempting to forge a resolution.²⁴

The conditions attached to pattas have also rendered land transactions inflexible to Hyderabad's changing urban environment. In particular, the prohibition imposed on the legal sale of occupancy rights

²⁴ Kulsum Abbas, personal interview, 10 January, 2002

to other citizens has prevented the allocation of land for its most efficient use. This can be traced to a miscalculation by the UCDD regarding the pace and pattern of urban growth in the city. In 1971, Hyderabad was a small city with a population of 1.6 million and has since grown to house nearly six million people (Reddy, 1996). As a result, areas that were once at Hyderabad's fringe have today become city centers in their own right. For instance, once relatively worthless parcels of land on the edge of the city increased in value by nearly 400% by the late 1980s (Clark et al., 1989). Though the MCH and the GoAP still hold ownership, they are restricted from selling the land.

The stipulation preventing the sale of pattas was instituted to discourage new pattadars from foregoing their occupancy rights for cash and establishing a new slum in a different area in the city. It forbids the poor from profiting from their investment in land in the legal market in the same manner that the non-poor are allowed to do so.²⁵ It was a stark reminder to UCDD beneficiaries that while they enjoyed the right to occupy land, they had little alternative to move elsewhere in the city. Thus, immobility was an unspoken condition inflicted on the urban poor. The rigidity of the patta is reinforced by the non-existence of an official channel to revert pattas to the State, so that the public could take advantage of inflated land values. Where such transactions took place in the past, they occurred on an ad hoc basis that defied replicability. In barring commerce from occurring on patta land, the MCH was also prevented from bolstering its budget from revenues raised from licensing fees and business taxes.

Another complaint relates that Hyderabad's experience with land reform was too successful, that the UCDD outperformed expectations in its provision of pattas throughout the city. In the 1970s, there was an abundance of publicly held land in the city. This perception, in turn, led the MCH and the GoAP to give away land wantonly. Today the MCH owns less than 5% of the land in the city. The need for future flexibility was never a concern for the UCDD because it was never identified as a problem in the first place. The UCDD did not envision Hyderabad's current physical and economic growth, and as a result, there is little vacant land in the center of the city.²⁶ With no alternative housing sites in the city, the unwillingness of pattadars to sell their occupancy rights to the State (if there was such a clause) is

²⁵ Undoubtedly, the illegal sale of pattas exists in Hyderabad. Rajagopalchari (1983) insists that the rate of illegal sales was less than 5% in the 1980s, while Clark et al. (1989) argue that it the figure lay at 10%. Both rates are likely underestimates. Determining whether the proceeds earned from black market land sales are on par with those from the legal market merits further study: it would aid in quantifying the financial loss incurred by those with no other option but the black market. Here, I simply assert that the very fact the urban poor are excluded from the formal market is in itself evidence of anti-poor discrimination.

²⁶ Personal interviews with Dr. Ravindra Prasad (12 January, 2002) and Janardhan Reddy (17 January, 2002)

understandable as there is little space for re-settlement. In clearing a route for urban development, the pattadar is, in effect, choosing to exit Hyderabad altogether.

The widespread distribution of pattas, though beneficial for slum dwellers, today represents a major obstacle for the MCH because the Corporation is incapable of responding to the changing needs of the city. That pattas are prohibited from being sold on the open market to private or public buyers is simply a product of the inherent inflexibility of the patta instrument. The repercussions of this flaw, combined with the large-scale nature of the UCDD scheme, have had far-reaching consequences. It prevents the MCH from responding to the growing pressures on land that results from both increasing population and investment in the city. Today, Hyderabad, or “Cyberbad” as its known in some circles, has secured a foothold in South India’s economic boom.²⁷ As land values are bolstered by the flow of foreign investment in the city, the MCH is finding it progressively difficult to accommodate the commercial growth associated with the increasing importance of Hyderabad as a regional hub. This has severe impacts for the city as a whole. Due to restrictions from converting land from residential uses to commercial ones for example, the MCH foregoes revenues collected from increased property tax rates and commercial fees. Given the current rigidity attached to the transferability of patta land, the only possibility of gaining control of valuable land is via the politically-charged power of eminent domain. As slum dwellers form the majority of Hyderabad’s population, and by extension the bulk of the electorate, an administration exerting eminent domain risks falling in the disfavor of voters in the next election.

The attention paid to the competition over scarce land in city politics highlights a fundamental conflict facing Hyderabad today: Can the benefits of urban development accruing to the city’s population, including the urban poor, be reconciled with the acute and immediate sacrifice needed to be made by the urban poor? This reconciliation has yet to be made in Hyderabad. Urban redevelopment is virtually at a standstill due to the concern that gentrification would evict the poor from their homes. Although significant physical change has taken place in Hyderabad since the 1970s, it has in large part occurred on non-slum land. The informal settlements established in the city forty years ago, though modified, remain in place today.²⁸

²⁷ Microsoft, Boeing, Epson, Motorola, and others companies have invested in Hyderabad and its environs in recent years.

²⁸ Kulsum Abbas, personal interview, 10 January, 2002

The notion that the money earned from the sale of land to commercial developers as well as the higher stream of governmental revenue, could be used to compensate the poor or accommodate them in denser housing has largely been overlooked. In ignoring the plight of the poor, the MCH endangers its chances for political survival, or worse, sows the seeds for future mass movements. On the other hand, disregarding the collection of higher tax receipts to the MCH or permitting the inefficient allocation of land prevents the MCH from enriching the lives of the city's poorest.

4.3 The Politicization of Slums In Hyderabad

In spite of UCDD initiatives to distribute pattas to the urban poor and coordinate a range of slum improvement programs in Hyderabad, the number of identified/notified slums in the city has grown from 300 in 1976 to 811 in 1994 (MCH, undated). This figure, however, is misleading. It does not represent a shortcoming in the efforts of the UCDD to provide occupancy rights and basic urban services to slum communities. The statistic is instead the result of a push made by the MCH to reclassify objectionable slums as unobjectionable, as well as a laxity in "denotifying" slums once improvements have been made. In other words, the increase in the number of slums is due to the broadened criteria of eligibility for slum improvement, as well as the failure to update government records after physical improvements have occurred.²⁹ The notion that slums have increased in number in Hyderabad is, in part, a reflection of the corruptible system of slum classification rather than an assessment of reality. Another factor influencing the number of slums in Hyderabad is the land reform process itself. Slums that were once situated on large parcels of land have been divided, modified, and re-zoned thereby enlarging the slum count in the city.

UCDD staff and NGOs assert that the "growth of slums" in the official record is an outcome of deliberate political manipulation. This line of thinking maintains that both politicians and slum dwellers have an interest in preserving the "slum" status in certain areas of the city. Typically, slum dwellers pay a discounted price for municipal services, like water and sewerage in Hyderabad. For example, household water connections for slum dwellers are provided at a 40% the normal tariff. While sewerage rates for slum dwellers that do not avail water supply but use the system are charged Rs. 5 per house per month compared to Rs. 30 for non-slum households (ASCI, 1999). This provision is meant as a social welfare measure for those without the means to pay the full price for these services. While slum dwellers are not exempt from paying property taxes on their patta property, the practical implications of living in a slum

²⁹ Personal interviews with Kulsum Abbas (10 January, 2002); Dr. Ravindra Prasad (22 January, 2002); and Janardhan Reddy (17 January, 2002).

are such that very few pay taxes. That slums are still notified gives credence to the assertion that they are too poor to pay for municipal services. Thus, there exists a cost incentive for the slum households to maintain their slum status even if they live on improved land.

For the politician, slums represent a density of potential votes or “vote banks.” The UCDD staff contends that astute politicians pander to slum dwellers in the hope that gaining political support will translate into a victory at the ward level. The promise of protection from increased municipal service fees and inclusion in government slum improvement projects is often enough to secure the backing of slum dwellers during election time.³⁰

Though state-level elections have occurred in the Andhra Pradesh since 1956, January 22, 2002 marked the first municipal election in Hyderabad in sixteen years. The election provided the opportunity to test the vote bank theory, and in so doing determine the relationship between slum dwellers and politicians. The results of vote-banking, however, were evident well before the election. Campaign posters and flags plastered the gates and homes of slums. Political rallies were common in slum areas, as were regular reports of violence. None of this occurred in the city’s non-slum areas. In general, more political activity occurred in slums than elsewhere in the city.

Newspaper reports on Election Day revealed that Hyderabad posted a voter turnout of only 53%, where the bulk of voters came from poorer wards of the city. The Old City, for example, witnessed a 90% voter turnout, whereas high-income wards received a voter turnout as small as 15%. Newspapers reported that the non-poor chose not to vote because “it was better to stay at home”, “nothing was to be gained by voting”, and “our votes will not make much difference.”³¹ If the vote banks existed in Hyderabad, they were ever-apparent in the city’s last election

A general belief among NGOs and the UCDD persists that slums are classified as such even when formally connected to city infrastructure. The fact that poorer neighborhoods are more politically active than richer ones, and that a slum denotification process is not yet in place portends some sort of vote banking. This concept is not unique to Hyderabad: Bombay, Chennai and a score of other cities are plagued by the same phenomenon (Desai, 1995; Turkstra and Wolffe, 1986). The reasoning, though

³⁰ Surprisingly, all those interviewed acknowledged the existence of vote-banking in Hyderabad.

³¹ In addition to general apathy, three English-language newspapers, *The Deccan Chronicle*, *The Hindu*, and *The Times of India*, explained that a nationally televised cricket match between India and England kept Hyderabad’s middle- and upper-class voters home on election day.

detrimental to spirit of the democratic process, is logical enough. Politicians campaign in areas where they hope to garner the most votes with as little cost as possible. In turn, those who are receptive to such campaigns typically have something to gain or lose from an election. Conversely, those who refuse to vote, do so because they are either pessimistic about the process altogether or, in contrast, have little to lose by not participating. Since the urban poor are the segment most affected by shifts in the city's political landscape, they are the most in need of a representative at the city council. In turn, the politician is beholden to her constituency, composed of the urban poor. If she betrays them, she is unlikely to keep her office in the next round of elections. The symbiotic relationship between the slum community and politicians is further corroborated by the fact that many slums in the city are named after local politicians. Typically slums are christened with the names of politicians after large improvements are made through their sponsorship.

In this light, the increase of slum neighborhoods in the city is a sort of political reward for the support given to a particular politician. The slum dweller-politician relationship is but one force driving urban politics in Hyderabad. The self-interested politician has little choice but to adhere to the demands of the poor, and often does so at the peril of the city as a whole.

The rich are not excluded from this model at all. They, too, have an incentive of preserving the city's current "slum" conditions. For the rich, the slum represents a source of cheap labor. The drivers, cooks and nannies of Hyderabad's well-to-do live in the slums surrounding upper class neighborhoods. Though removing the slum might translate into increased real estate values, it would also force slum dwellers to move outside the city, increasing their costs of transportation and in turn, raise the wages paid by employers. The idea of living near slums thus seems like a small price to pay, given that the alternative could be costlier.³²

4.4 The Waning of Institutional Momentum

The predicament plaguing the UCDD today is similar to the challenge faced by other organizations once stated goals are accomplished. Within the Department today, there exists a palpable uncertainty concerning what course of action to pursue given that the era of physical slum improvement in Hyderabad has come to a close.³³

³² Kulsum Abbas, personal interview (10 January, 2002).

³³ Personal interviews with Dr. Ravindra Prasad (12 January, 2002); D.G. Rama Rau (15 January, 2002).

The fact that many of the identified slums in Hyderabad have been provided with water, electricity and roads and continue to benefit from the provision of social services such as primary education programs, public health initiatives and income generating activities is a testament to the strides made by the UCDD in its heyday. Undoubtedly, Hyderabad's slums have not completely been integrated with the rest of the city, but their conditions remain a far cry from slums in other Indian cities.

Today slum improvement in Hyderabad is undertaken by NGOs. The Confederation of Voluntary Agencies (COVA), for example, has supplanted UCDD's role of reducing community tensions in the city; the DFID-financed Andhra Pradesh Urban Services for the Poor (APUSP) is charged with the maintenance of the physical infrastructure installed in slums under the ODA slum improvement schemes; and Hyderabad's Urban Poverty Alleviation Corps (UPACOR) maintains a set of objectives strikingly similar to that of the UCDD.³⁴ Ironically, the argument supporting their work in the slums is similar to that which justified UCDD intervention thirty years ago: NGOs possess a comparative advantage in being close to the community and are therefore better able to assess their needs; they enjoy the financial support from external funding agencies and are able to fulfill their mandate without public assistance; they remain uninfluenced by party politics and their work is divorced from political ambition. These claims may substantiate the growing involvement of NGOs in slum improvement; but they do not explain the current institutional weakness of the UCDD. Today, the UCDD is allocated less than 1% of the total MCH budget. Of that, 85% of the Department's budget is allocated for salaries, leaving only 15% for programs (ASCI, 1999).

The success of UCDD's community development efforts in the 1960s rested in its ability to straddle the realms of public works and private philanthropy. Having its feet in both spheres allowed the Department to use its close relationship with beneficiaries to promise security of tenure to slum dwellers, a product that could only be guaranteed by the State. Simultaneously, its position within the MCH enabled it to convince other government officials that patta distribution was necessary for the good of the city. Now that pattas have been provided to the bulk of the urban poor, the grounds for UCDD activity in the slums seems to have dissipated. In its place, a culture has emerged within Hyderabad that community development in slum neighborhoods is best left to NGOs or NGO-led partnerships with government.

³⁴ Former UCDD staff members today run COVA, APUSP, UPACOR and other leading NGOs in Hyderabad. Many left the UCDD at retirement, coincidentally when the role of the UCDD in slum improvement diminished tremendously.

Since the Department remains backstage on many of these partnerships, slum dwellers perceive NGOs as the principle agents for change in slum communities. The UCDD, on the other hand, is seen as superfluous, if seen at all. The success of the UCDD in securing tenure for the urban poor in the past is, in a sense, responsible for its withdrawal from slum neighborhoods. The task was completed with such effectiveness that finding a role for the UCDD in slum improvement today has altogether disappeared.

Since the departure of the ODA, the staff of the UCDD has diminished tremendously. Where the UCDD once enjoyed the reputation of being the most progressive cell within the MCH, a posting with the Department is today seen as a sort of punishment. High profile and donor-funded projects cease to belong to the UCDD cadre. Instead, its role in slum improvement is chiefly that of a sideline supporter or an apprehensive ally of NGOs. Though the MCH is now faced with the consequences of patta distribution, it has yet to develop a clear mandate or strategy. Officials within the UCDD admit they are still trying to find their niche in the current urban discourse. Since the task of community development has been usurped by NGOs, the Department is compelled to find new cachet for their work. Former UCDD members contend that the cell today suffers from low staff morale and a lack of direction, ailments the Department rarely experienced before. The high turnover in personnel at leadership positions within the UCDD is further evidence of the Department's organizational stagnation.³⁵

The root of the UCDD's muddled set of goals is the product of narrow thinking. Little attention was given to outlining an institutional plan for the Department once its goals were achieved. As a result, the UCDD has been relegated to "pitching-in" around the MCH wherever possible. Their work lacks the focus and commitment to the community development spirit of an earlier UCDD. In January 2002, for example, while Hyderabad was engrossed with municipal elections, the UCDD was preparing election reports and analyzing tallies. Community development and promoting the exercise of franchise, a typical function in the golden era of the UCDD, was left to the NGOs and politicians. The void of a UCDD presence at this crucial period is perhaps symbolic of the growing invisibility of the Department in the lives of the urban poor. That pattas have already been distributed (and hence, the task of the UCDD completed) is an unjustified excuse for the UCDD's current non-involvement in ameliorating the conditions of slum dwellers. If the solution to the problems facing Hyderabad can be found in reforming patta rules, then an entity like the UCDD of old, should be ready to play that role.

³⁵ Personal interviews with Dr. Surya Rao (12 January, 2002) and D.G. Rama Rau (16 January, 2002).

It appears that the distribution of pattas terminated UCDD's role in slum improvement. The patta system needs to be brought up to date with changes that have occurred in Hyderabad's urban environment. UCDD's position as a liaison between the polity and slum communities could aid this process. Unfortunately, the lack of direction within the Department and the void of initiative further entrenches the problems of slum neighborhoods in Hyderabad.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

Undoubtedly, the land reform and subsequent slum improvement that took place in Hyderabad in the 1970s had a tremendous positive socio-economic impact in the lives of the urban poor at the time: slums were fitted with water taps, electricity and roads; investments were made in health, education and income-generation activities in the slums; a sense of community was created within slum neighborhoods; and the occupancy of slum dwellers was legalized. The strides made in Hyderabad's slums are due to the collaboration of public and private institutions under the leadership of the UCDD. Twenty-five years have drawn out unanticipated surprises that the city administration has yet to resolve. This chapter exposed these surprises to serve as a beacon to other cities considering large-scale slum improvement.

First, whatever slum dwellers lose in patta transferability, they are compensated by increased political power in the city. As slum dwellers account for nearly 30% of the total population, politicians look to them for electoral success. Though the concept of vote banking endows the poor with a louder political voice, it means that the voices of others are not heard. The over-emphasis put on winning the "slum vote" has created a relationship in Hyderabad where the politician is indebted to the slum community and in turn, the latter looks toward the politician for community improvement. The system appears fruitful for both parties; however, it ignores the wants of other members of society. In succumbing to the immediate, short-term needs of slum dwellers, the city forsakes what may be advantageous for the city in the long run.

The fundamental obstacle to the continued socio-economic improvement of Hyderabad's urban poor is the absence of a lead agency to initiate any such effort. In the 1970s, the UCDD officers took it upon themselves to improve the lives of slum dwellers. Today, the same organization appears on its last legs: staff morale is low; the confidence shown by the MCH has all but disappeared; and it is searching for a concrete vision for itself vis-à-vis slum neighborhoods. The large-scale success of the UCDD in distributing pattas is, in part, responsible for the demise of the UCDD. A more credible explanation however asserts that the UCDD failed to see its role as adaptive or evolving. In devising a plan to secure

tenure for the urban poor, the Department overlooked the institutional need to carve out its niche after slum communities gained their own legitimacy.

In a sense, Hyderabad's circumstances are a result of the UCDD doing too effective a job. In convincing the MCH and the GoAP to donate its occupancy rights to the poorest, it unwittingly hamstrung either party from exercising its public authority to respond to urban growth. The reality remains that while the MCH and the GoAP have retained ownership of patta land, there is little either can do to repossess land or allocate it to more efficient uses.

The following chapter proposes recommendations and enumerates the lessons learned from Hyderabad's experience with urban land reform and slum improvement.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 General Findings

The literature tends to assess slum improvement and land reform by the bundle of goods and services won by slum residents. Though the literature describes UCDD efforts to distribute pattas and coordinate the provision of physical infrastructure in slum areas; evaluations focus, in large part, on the magnitude of tangible end products. Prasad (1999), for instance, evaluates HSIP II and III in terms of road construction and the provision of sanitation units in slum neighborhoods. Similarly, the ODA (Clark et al., 1989) uses increased accessibility to crèches and health clinics among poor households as evidence of successful slum improvement. Documenting results of this kind is valuable, but provide only a cursory analysis of how outcomes of citywide slum improvement are achieved and say little about replicability. To this end, equal attention should be accorded to understanding the process of slum improvement as well as the socio-political context responsible for inspiring it. In order to accomplish this, a nuanced investigation of the historical themes underlying such processes must be included in the replicability criteria.

In spite of the strides made by the UCDD to provide basic municipal services to Hyderabad's poorest, the triumphs of the Department are more accurately understood when viewed as an extension of urban land reform. From this perspective, the distribution of pattas – as a means to safeguard tenure rights for slum dwellers – is the foundation of all subsequent efforts to ameliorate the physical environment of the urban poor. In this closing chapter, the replicability of Hyderabad's experience with land reform is considered.

The Role of Governments

Though the GoI sponsored the Urban Community Development Program, its implementation at the municipal level was decentralized and differed from department to department. As such, many UCDDs relied on past experiences to formulate programs, adopting strategies from earlier successes in the region and rejecting those that had failed. For the Hyderabad UCDD, it had only to revisit the late 1940s to learn that exploiting the numerical advantage of the landless over the land-owning class could bring about reform. To accomplish this, the UCDD first won the trust of the slum community and later, organized individual slum dwellers into a corporate unit. A similar approach worked for the Communists in rural Andhra Pradesh more than two decades earlier.

The UCDD's success in distributing pattas lay in its ability to win the credibility of slum dwellers and gain the respect of other divisions within the MCH and GoAP. In doing so, the UCDD fused the zeal of popular, and often anti-government, movements with the realism that only compromise could resolve conflicting claims over land. The patta is a prime example of such a compromise: it gave occupancy rights to slum dwellers and preserved ownership rights for the GoAP.

This fusion was rooted in historical circumstance: many UCDD officers were first-hand witnesses, if not sympathizers, of campaigns to alleviate poverty in rural Andhra Pradesh. In addition, most officers joined the UCDD after working for a number of years in rural community development. Their ground view observations regarding how popular movements operate informed their future work in slum neighborhoods. The fact that the UCDD staff, at the outset, comprised social workers, not engineers as in other departments, is telling of the emphasis they gave to the *process* of community development. This process involved listening to slum dwellers, living with them and becoming part of the community itself. With this approach, the UCDD organized slum dwellers and inspired them to become leaders in their own right (Marsden, 1990).

The role of history in shaping land reform in Hyderabad should not be overlooked. The systems employed by the Communists to gain the trust of peasants, mobilize them and organize rallies were imported by the UCDD from rural villages and adapted to suit slum environments. Under the guidance of the UCDD, slum dwellers that were accustomed to living subsistence lives accrued the benefits of organized collective action. At the most basic level, the work of the UCDD inculcated hopefulness into slum neighborhoods. It convinced residents to believe that amenities like health clinics, community centers and crèches could be achieved through self-help and mutual aid.

The Hyderabad UCDD was established in 1967 and its campaign to distribute pattas to the urban poor did not begin until 1975. This eight-year interim allowed UCDD community organizers to gain the confidence of slum dwellers through relatively small-scale activities not requiring pattas, such as hiring teachers for makeshift schools and accompanying slum residents to the offices of the Electricity Department. When communities began asking for larger goods, such as crèches and improved shelter, the UCDD realized that not having access to and rights over land limited slum improvement efforts. Improving homes, building schools and widening roads after all required control over land.

The Hyderabad case demonstrates that successful citywide slum improvement requires leadership from a UCDD-like agency, i.e. – an organization with ties to the government as well as the slum community. It is doubtful that NGOs alone are able to fulfill this role. In the Hyderabad case, the contributions of local NGOs like the Lions and Rotary Clubs to the Hyderabad slum improvement process, though helpful, lacked initiative and the economies of scale to effect citywide change. In fact, the UCDD raised the attention of these organizations to the plight of the urban poor. It was only at the request of the UCDD that they volunteered resources for slum improvement. Moreover, the small size of local NGOs is a constraint on their financial capacity and know-how, making individual slum improvement efforts prohibitive.

Where financial resources do exist, they often rest with international and bilateral agencies such as the ODA and UNICEF. What these entities possess in resources, they lack long-term commitment. UNICEF, for example, withdrew support after only three years of sponsoring urban community development, while the ODA's departure has meant that large-scale slum improvement has altogether stopped in Hyderabad. Both organizations abandoned the community development process in the city once the lifetime of their respective projects had been reached. Conversely, the UCDD and the APSHCL continue efforts to ameliorate the living conditions of the poor, albeit in a limited way.

The justification for government leadership in slum improvement schemes rests partially in the ideals of democratic governance. Where NGOs can decide themselves whether to become involved in poverty alleviation activities or not; public agencies, particularly in cities where the poor are politically-active, are reminded at the voting booth of their responsibility to serve the needs of the disadvantaged. The notion of being accountable to society at large exerts pressure on public officials in a way that NGOs are unlikely to experience.

A lesson from Hyderabad relates that for NGOs, an alliance with at least one level of government is crucial for project success. The Hyderabad experience dismisses the claim that poverty alleviation is best left to NGOs or partnerships where lead actors are NGOs. Though UNICEF and the ODA financed stages of slum improvement in Hyderabad, their participation was contingent on the consent and collaboration with the Government. Moreover, these agencies quickly realized that the authority to make wholesale changes in the city rests squarely in the hands of government. If slum improvement is to take place elsewhere, NGOs need to align themselves with the government in some manner. After all, the

latter are the only entity with the power to alter zoning bylaws; to condone physical improvements to land; and most important, to guarantee security of tenure to the landless.

Slum improvement in Hyderabad was a collaborative effort of Center, State and local levels of government. The urban community development mandate, for example, can be traced to a GoI policy aimed at quelling communal tensions in Indian cities and subsuming disparate communities under a unified national banner. Given this “top-heavy” orientation, the UCDD was able to access funds from a variety of public sources. The GoI sponsored many programs that funneled resources to municipalities for poverty alleviation. In this way, the UCDD was not only endowed with the political impetus from the GoI, it also used its funds. Monies from EIUS, for example, provided water and sewage infrastructure to slum neighborhoods. Likewise, APSHCL loans enabled the UCDD to participate in house construction programs. At the local level, the UCDD benefited from funds set aside for Habitat Hyderabad initiatives.

The problems faced by the UCDD were never about accessing funds per se; rather they centered on coordinating activities once resources had already been allocated. Through patta distribution, the UCDD did more than create an “enabling environment” for slum improvement: it mobilized slum dwellers to pressure the GoAP and the MCH to free up public land, recruited local NGOs to donate resources for slum improvement, and liaised between public agencies such as the APSHCL and slum dwellers. It led the charge against urban poverty in Hyderabad.

The Role of Political Will in History

In the enthusiasm for urban community development in India, twenty-two cities in the country established UCDDs to spearhead urban poverty alleviation. In spite of the shared origin and principles of the various Departments, Hyderabad’s UCDD is distinct not only because of its success in slum improvement but also because of the process used to achieve this success. Much of this process is informed by the history of social movements in Andhra Pradesh. The “Join India” movement, the Telangana Armed Struggle and the Telangana Agitation all emphasized the need for land redistribution in their agendas. In pursuing slum improvement in Hyderabad, the UCDD was able to use the momentum already built by these earlier social movements to push for land reform in the city. In this way, slum improvement in Hyderabad should not be regarded as a radical shift in policy. Instead, patta distribution in Hyderabad should be perceived as another manifestation of a tried and true method in Andhra Pradesh to appease those believing that equalizing the distribution of land will improve the

socio-economic status of the poor. The success of earlier rural-based movements, in a sense, prepared the GoAP and MCH for the forthcoming changes to the pattern of landholdings in the city. It also made the proposition of land-sharing easier for landlords to accept.

While land reform occurred in Hyderabad in the 1970s, the call to reorganize the pattern of landholdings was made much earlier in the State and earlier still during the reign of the Nizam. The thesis argues that land reform in Hyderabad is rooted in the historical tension between the Congress government at the State and Center levels and leftist grassroots forces in rural Andhra Pradesh. Arguably, the political competition between the ruling Congress Party and the Communists was one factor that prompted the former to pursue land reform in the State.

History provides context and a shared starting point for both failed and successful social movements. It does little however to clarify why some movements are more successful than others. Both the literature and former UCDD officers attribute land reform in Hyderabad to political will. This concept is ambiguous. It equates political will with either public benevolence or an untapped well of political resolve. In this light, political will is thought to be an element emerging from the depths of the status quo and summoned by the willpower of decision makers to force political reform.

A closer examination of events in Hyderabad reveals that political will is more a product of political conflict than some pre-existent personal quality. Thus, land reform in Hyderabad is not an outgrowth of State concern for the poor. Rather, it became a viable social policy at a time when a kaleidoscope of political pressures convinced the government that patta distribution, at the very least, was an appropriate course of action. The application of political will in Hyderabad is therefore not a symbol of governmental generosity but the consequence of making a hard choice when the alternative is even more arduous to undertake. This view illustrates that the political events enveloping Hyderabad in the 1970s pushed the State to the juncture where upholding the existent state of affairs was too difficult. Urban land reform, on the other hand, became an option to relieve the political pressure exerted by the city's slum population. Undoubtedly, making "hard choices" is contingent upon having the capacity and legitimacy to do so.

At the federal level, Communist political manifestos detailing land reform gained influence in South India in the 1970s. The call for land reform challenged the dominance of the Congress in the region, prompting Indira Gandhi to announce sweeping land reforms. At the State level, violence associated

with the Telangana Armed Struggle and the Agitation had threatened the integrity of the State before. Unwilling to risk turmoil in the capital city and encouraged to participate in GoI-led slum improvement programs, the GoAP abandoned a strand of its tenure rights by endowing slum dwellers with patta rights. At the local level, an IAS officer was responsible for conducting Hyderabad's civic affairs. With the suspension of democracy in the city, the Special Officer circumvented the City Council and made difficult choices about the future of Hyderabad. With land reforms already in full swing in rural Andhra Pradesh, there was mounting pressure on the local government to undertake corresponding reforms in Hyderabad.

The legal system also played a major role in coaxing private landowners to participate in land-sharing schemes. The pro-poor stance adopted by the legal regime of the period led private landlords to believe that even if their case was heard in the Courts, they had little chance to re-claim the entirety of their land holdings.

The last and most intriguing form of pressure was that exerted by the UCDD on the MCH and GoAP. In having organized and mobilized slum dwellers, the UCDD wielded the power to increase the level of political pressure on the State. UCDD officers were seen as "gatekeepers" of the slums in the same way that the Communists had become the voice of the rural poor decades earlier. As the most prominent governmental wing working in the slums, the UCDD became the only avenue through which the poor could access local government. In effect, these roles put the UCDD on both sides of the political struggle; it remained the cause and the solution to the problems faced by the slum dwellers, MCH, GoAP and private landowners.

The Role of the Patta

The ability of the UCDD to resolve conflicts between slum dwellers and public and private landlords is rooted in the flexibility of the patta system. The patta, though not equivalent to full freehold tenure, furnished slum dwellers with enough security of tenure to invest in housing, obtain housing loans as well as prevent eviction from the authorities. In theory, the patta allowed titleholders to retain full ownership of the land in question. The existence of the patta, somewhere between full and absolutely no tenure rights, enabled all parties to gain some benefit from land reform: private landlords capitalized from land-sharing schemes that provided them control over commercially-viable land adjacent to main roads; slum dwellers were endowed with a legal right to land where they had none before; and the GoAP and MCH were able to ease the increasing political pressure.

Evidence from Hyderabad relates that, in the short term at least, bestowing occupancy rights to slum dwellers is sufficient to prompt their participation in self-help slum improvement schemes. Ideally, this modicum of land rights needs to be updated concomitantly with the pace of house construction and physical improvements in slums. In such a scenario, slum dwellers would gain full control of the entire property once housing construction is complete.

5.2 Can the UCDD Urban Land Reform Model be Replicated?

Government leadership and the capacity to learn from the political history of Andhra Pradesh comprise key ingredients to the success of land reform and slum improvement in Hyderabad. However, there is no ready substitute for the political context that shaped patta distribution and slum improvement policies in the city during the mid-1970s. The implementation of land reform in Andhra Pradesh can be traced to the Communist-led rural-based social movements of pre-Independence Hyderabad State. It is difficult to imagine how the “political will” to undertake urban land reform in Hyderabad in the 1970s was forged without the weight of history.

While it may be possible to transplant the internal structure of the UCDD, the community development approach or any other element of Hyderabad’s experience with land reform to other cities, it remains unclear whether the results achieved in Hyderabad could be replicated. The success of the patta system in Hyderabad, for instance, is connected to its familiarity in the region. The use of pattas to connote a specific form of land tenure has a history within Andhra Pradesh and was well known among slum dwellers, landlords and government officials. Conversely, it is difficult to imagine a city in Northern India where all the stakeholders, for example, would be willing to adopt the patta system: they would lack the historical context necessary for instituting such a system. Resistance to patta distribution among private landlords in Hyderabad was not born from a rejection of the patta system itself; instead, it was rooted in the rightly held fear of private landlords that they would be left with weaker claims to land.

The key to replication is found in capturing the purpose or vigor of successful programs. That is, while pattas lay at the heart of land reform in Hyderabad, its success as a land instrument rests in its ability to guarantee security of tenure to the landless without completely forfeiting the rights of original landlords. This sort of “tenure in flux” is the feature worthy of replication, not the rules governing the patta system. The challenge in separating the purpose of an institution from its structure appears to hinder replication. The UCDD, in fact, is currently struggling with this very issue. Although it continues the

legacy of community development initiated by its predecessors, it has forgotten that community development is not an end in itself but a means to organize community groups and build solidarity. Replicating the purpose or vigor associated with the UCDD of the 1970s appears to be a more difficult task than reproducing its institutional structure.

Replicating the UCDD model is feasible but only if tempered with the realism that only the artificial organizational structures of programs can be reproduced. Cities contemplating citywide slum improvement should consider the Hyderabad model, but focus on indigenous models of social reform and their own political history for methods to improve the socio-economic status of the urban poor.

5.3 Should the UCDD Urban Land Reform Model be Replicated?

Undoubtedly, the guarantee of security of tenure in Hyderabad's slums has improved the socio-economic status of its residents. The patta acted as collateral for slum households, enabling them to obtain housing finance from the APSHCL and HUDCO. In accepting pattas, slum dwellers entered into a formal legal relationship with the GoAP. This relationship obligates the latter to protect the occupancy rights of the pattadar as well as abandon its slum clearance policies. In spite of the UCDD achievements in slum improvements, slums have not disappeared from Hyderabad – they have nearly doubled between 1979 and 1994.

Patta distribution was appropriate for Hyderabad in the 1970s because slum dwellers enjoyed only modest security of tenure and the urban poor already occupied public land. Today, the patta is considered to be narrowly-constructed instrument, endowing pattadars the right to occupy land but preventing them from selling it. Moreover, the twenty-five years that have passed since the inception of patta distribution in Hyderabad has brought tremendous change in the city: slums have become vote banks, civic authorities are unable to accommodate urban growth, and the reserve of public land has dwindled. Given these circumstances, the patta has not adapted and as a result, the once flexible patta is now seen as restrictive. In effect, pattas have outlived their usefulness.

In the 1970s, the UCDD would have been poised to address these problems in the city. Today's UCDD has grown lethargic. Rather than adopting a proactive approach to change the political environment (through community development or otherwise), it neglects the grassroots legacy of the UCDD of old. Consequently, NGOs have assumed the UCDD role as the lead agents for slum improvement in the city.

Land reform is foremost a social welfare measure. From an ethical perspective therefore, land redistribution ought to take place when it benefits society as a whole. Land reform had this effect in Hyderabad and is manifest *inter alia* in better roads and the improvements in health derived from, for example, the installation of water taps. In replicating the UCDD model, cities should consider the following:

Occupancy Rights Should Transform into Freehold Tenure

Freehold tenure for slum dwellers can be achieved by linking the disbursement of land rights to the pace and quality of housing improvements. The patta, in its current mode, is a static instrument. It offers slum dwellers little incentive to work quickly to improve the housing stock beyond minimum standards or maintain the land they occupy. The promise of freehold tenure to complete the housing process, on the other hand, confers beneficiary-owners the right to profit from the sale of land. Admittedly, the black market already permits dwellers to sell their land without full ownership. This route however is risky because the black market for land is ripe with a) information asymmetries; b) middlemen charging commissions; and c) a high probability of purchasing land not owned by the seller (Turkstra and Wolffe, 1986). These elements can encourage slum dwellers to enter the formal market. In this way, both buyers and sellers are aware of the rules governing the latter and have legal recourse if transactions go awry.

On some level, permitting the poor to sell land speeds their integration into the formal city. It removes their restriction of mobility and places them on equal footing with the non-poor in society who have always enjoyed this right. In addition, it allows the private market to allocate land to its most efficient use.

The Needed Leadership of a Public Agency

NGOs and donor agencies operate on pressures separate from those of public agencies. The involvement of the former in poverty alleviation schemes is contingent on funding, fixed in duration and focused on meeting articulated project targets. Once resources dry out, time has passed or project goals have been met, NGOs and donors are not bound to continue their work – even if the overall task is unfinished. In Hyderabad, both UNICEF and the ODA withdrew their support from the UCDD at a period when slums needed further improvements.

The very nature of public agencies, on the contrary, prevents their abandonment from poverty alleviation programs. Their relationship to the poor, unlike that of NGOs and donor agencies, is defined by State

responsibility, electoral motivations, and public accountability. The social movements calling for land reform in Andhra Pradesh reminded GoAP and the MCH of this relationship. In this way, the permanence of the State in the lives of the poor provides public agencies a comparative advantage in working for the social welfare of the poor.

The process of slum improvement is seemingly unending: the slums that sprouted in Hyderabad in the 1950s continue to exist today, albeit in relatively better conditions. While it remains to be seen whether these areas will ever be rehabilitated into the formal city, the UCDD and MCH have nevertheless remained fixtures in the city's slum improvement agenda, where NGOs and donor agencies as well as programs and policies from the GoI and GoAP have come and gone.

If citywide slum improvement is to take place, an agency enjoying the trust of slum communities as well as legitimacy and access to the polity is essential. It is doubtful whether NGOs would ever be able to fulfill this role entirely.

Curtailing the Politicization of Urban Poverty Alleviation

In elections, voters support the political candidate who promises to best serve their needs. Once elected, the politician is faced with either serving these needs or risk defeat in the next election. Density, like that existent in Hyderabad's slums, tends to skew the voter-politician relationship because the rational politician will concentrate campaign efforts in areas likely to capture the most votes. Conversely, she will divest efforts in areas where voting is thinly spread, as in Hyderabad's middle-class neighborhoods. This phenomenon is reinforcing: the middle-class in the city find no benefit in participating in local elections and therefore choose to not vote. The opposite is true for the city's slum dwellers.

As a consequence, local politicians direct their energies towards serving the immediate needs of the poor without considering the larger impact on the city as a whole. The fact that slums are not "denotified" after being connected to municipal services is an example of this from Hyderabad's experience. While slum dwellers benefit from maintaining their slum status, the lower water tariffs and the avoidance of property taxes they enjoy can be linked to gaps in service provision in other areas of the city. Moreover, the inefficient use of municipal resources constrains efforts to improve living conditions for the city as a whole.

In replicating the Hyderabad model, cities should be mindful of the political manipulation that can occur in parallel with urban land reform and slum improvement. Though slum improvement in Hyderabad was undertaken by the UCDD, the decision regarding whether a slum should be notified or not is left to a GoAP-appointed committee comprising senior officials from the Revenue, Social Welfare, Town and County Planning Departments as well as local development authorities and the MCH. Thus, the public entity active in the slums and most aware of the situation therein is excluded from the process that determines its beneficiaries. Ensuring that an entity, such as the UCDD, is present on such a committee could counterbalance the influence of politicians on slum notification and infuse realism into the entire process.

A stronger democratic voice among the middle-class would also offset the pandering of politicians to slum dwellers. For the politician, a voting middle class is one whose needs should be met by local government. Frustration with the electoral system, not satisfaction with elected officials, prevents the middle class from exercising their franchise today. Without the tension created by serving the needs of the middle class and the poor, it seems unlikely that Hyderabad's political machine would consider the long-term overall development of the city.

The question of whether land reform should occur is principally a moralistic one. Urban land reform should take place because it would benefit society more than do it harm. In this conceptual sense, the Hyderabad model should be replicated but not without considering how to mitigate the long-term negative consequences of urban land reform.

APPENDIX I: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Interviewee	Relationship to Slum Improvement in Hyderabad
Mrs. Kulsum Abbas	Currently a Manager within UCDD
Mr. B. Subhash Babu	Currently the Superintending Engineer and Director of HABTECH, APSHCL
Ms. Banashree Banerjee	Academic; Associate Staff Member, Institute for Housing and Development Studies, Visakhapatnam
Dr. Srivinas Chari	Professor, Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad
Mr. Mohamed Yusuf Ali Khan	Former UCDD Community Organizer; Currently Youth Activities Coordinator at COVA, Hyderabad
Mr. David Marsden	Member of UK Slum Improvement Evaluation Team; Currently, Senior Anthropologist, World Bank
Dr. V. Lakshmipathy	Current Director, RCUES, Osmania University, Hyderabad
Dr. Ravindra Prasad	Former Director, RCUES, Osmania University; Member of Indian Slum Improvement Evaluation Team; Currently Capacity Building Advisor at APUSP, Hyderabad
Dr. Surya Rao	Former UCDD Project Officer and Director; Chairman of UPACOR, Hyderabad
Mr. Vasudeva Rao	Member of Indian Slum Improvement Evaluation Team; Currently Senior Faculty at the Council for Social Development, Hyderabad
Mr. T. Venkateswara Rao	Formerly Hyderabad's Municipal Commissioner; Currently General Secretary of UPACOR, Hyderabad
Mr. D.G. Rama Rau	Former UCDD Community Organizer and Deputy Project Officer; President of UPACOR, Hyderabad
Dr. A. Malla Reddy	Professor, RCUES, Osmania University, Hyderabad
Dr. G.B. Reddy	Professor, Faculty of Law, Osmania University, Hyderabad
Mr. Janardhan Reddy	Former Deputy Project Officer; Currently a Project Officer at UCDD
Mr. Mike Slingsby	Member of UK Slum Improvement Evaluation Team

APPENDIX II: MAPS OF ANDHRA PRADESH AND INDIA

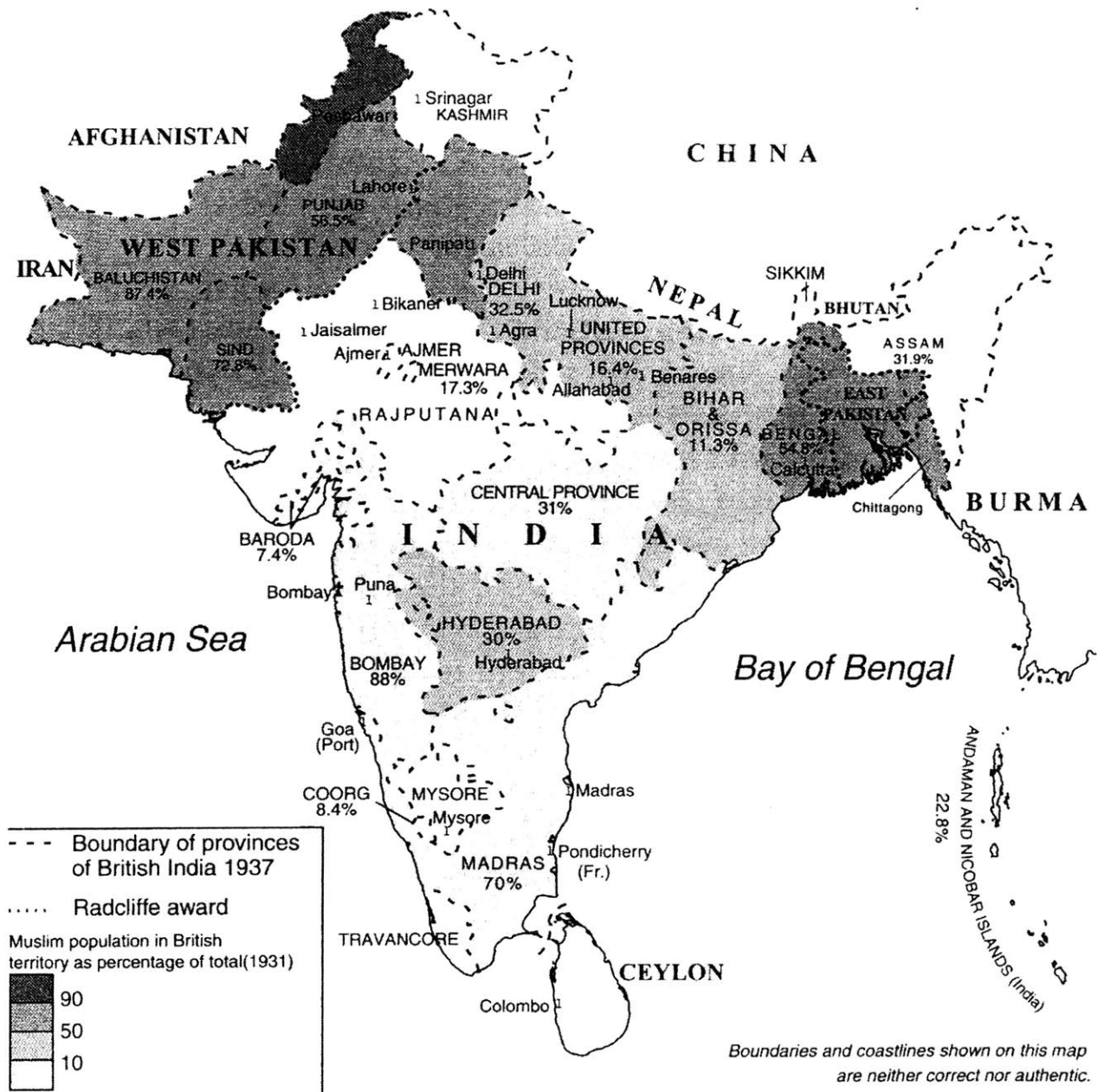


Figure 1: Political Boundaries of Pre-Independence India (1947)

(Source: Tan and Kudaysia, 2000)

APPENDIX II: MAPS OF ANDHRA PRADESH AND INDIA (continued)



Boundaries and coastlines shown on this map are neither correct nor authentic.

Figure 2: Political Boundaries of Modern India

(Source: Tan and Kudaysia, 2000)

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