

EXPLORING AMARTYA SEN'S DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND THE INDIAN ALLIANCE.

13-16 MAY 2003.

Romi Khosla, Jane Samuels, Nick Hall, Alison Barret Smita Biswas, BK Agarwal, Sheela Patel, Celine D'Cruz, Sundar Burra, A. Jockin, and people from the alliance of SPARC, Mahila Milan and NSDF.

Day 1. Afternoon Session
Sahil Conference Room

MD 3 a

Sheela – lets look at the kinds of issues and questions we want to .. then I'll try and from some sort of flow of it.

Nick – I'd like to hear more about CLIFF. And I'd particularly like to hear about monitoring.

Alison – when you said you had an introductory session, that was this morning? Have you got a sort of overall agenda for four days ...

Romi – Is there a paper she says she needs to read otherwise she will not be able to convince her bosses that she wasn't here for just the one day. With nothing sent back except her own notes.

Nick – the main thing I have got is the original to the plan with, remember those four points and the outputs that I set down. (Nick explaining to Alison but drowned in other voices)

Sheela – Look at all the questions that people want to put out and look at which we want to address to day and which we want to do tomorrow.

Alison – so we have to come to that decision in the next four days?

Nick – sort of, yes, I mean precisely there is ... the extent to which the Sen Primer is useful as a evaluation tool for urban programs.

Jane, remember the early draft agenda that I put around, I think that can be modified a bit... identify modification subsequently..

Jane – no, because a lot of the issues, when I discussed the thing with Romi really depended on seeing – first of all being able to see and understand SPARC better and seeing what the reality was and then it will be clear how best to go forward between these discussions.

Sheela – what we are hoping to do in the next three days is to show you how the community empowerment process was put into place that began to negotiate for goods and services for the poor. And into that we want to locate CLIFF as a mechanism that is going to support the dialogue and the negotiations, fruition of early land, infrastructure related outputs that people are getting out of that. How those get financed through CLIFF that's the trajectory that we want to put it in. For instance, 4.19 **today when you talked to the slum dwellers in the morning, the Pavement Dweller's what we will deduce or we will extract from the experience are actually three sets of things. One is to show how you start with something which is very specific, dealing with the poorest**

people, dealing with women, dealing with vulnerability and how it has produced a form of organizational development which continues to grow and evolve and include large numbers of people into it's process. If you look at the kind of investments that go into it and look at the output of what it is producing not only locally but nationally and internationally, that's the genesis of that process. Like martin talking about what happened there – this is what people came to see. That was one thing.

The second things that we were saying is that – 5.33 **If we want to get involved in really scalable solutions which we believe are now the new expectations of all development investment then along with the resources you need institutional arrangements that also deliver those things.** I think our proposition is that institutional arrangements don't only have to be in the domain of the state or the NGO but they also have to be in the domain of the community.

The third thing that we are trying to say is that – 6.09 **In the story of the Pavement Dwellers you have a trajectory that goes from a group of women in one locality aspiring for a better house, having found a strategy or the formulation of the framework of a strategy which now the slum dwellers are using as their basic process of capacity building and negotiations. And that as these women go to get their homes for which they have got land, they have worked towards creating a policy in the city and in the state which will also deliver housing to other people like themselves.** Which makes this process I think in our eyes definitely special, because most organizations only provide solutions to their membership. You have to be a member of the federation to get something. But in this case the idea is to produce a policy for all those who belong to that constituency.

Alison – so what you spoke – you saw that investment and precedents setting changes the policy context which then helps others as well as the people.

Sheela – 7.35 **whether it was something as simple and humble as getting a ration card or opening a bank account or getting bail for somebody or it's as momentous as being able to get land to build your house it is on that trajectory where initially you use the energies of the federation to set the precedent. But then you push for policy that makes it accessible to people who are from that kind of circumstances.** What we are saying is that that process, in the first instance, in the case of the Pavement Dwellers – took us from 1985 to 1995 to get it in policy and now it will be 2005 or 2004 December by the time these women get into those houses. So if you want to be ambitious, then you have a time frame also that allows that process. Because change, real change in the difficult circumstances in which we are doesn't occur quickly. So in most routine evaluation terms it's very hard to assess this. Because the people who gave us the grants, for instance, to form first collectives of Pavement Dwellers, unless they are with us like Homeless International is, they can't be proud of or claim that they supported this venture. Because most people have a cycle of three to five years and then they go away.

Nick – if I was a hard headed donor, World Bank or DFID or somebody and needed to see a way of measuring whether you've actually achieved what you've done, how would you present that information. What sort of ... I mean people know that it takes a long time. You couldn't have said – our outcome will be that within three years every third woman will have a ration card. Because you wouldn't be sure that that would be achieved. And anyway the ration card in itself isn't the objective. The ration card is indicative is of something bigger. Of an inclusive process as well. I am trying to think...

Alison – it's also that you don't actually at the beginning know that the ratio card is actually the precedent that you want to set or the ...

Nick – In 1985 you probably wouldn't have realized that the ration card was such a pivotal turning point.

Sheela – it was, ..

Nick – it was, but in 1985 you couldn't be ..

Sheela – you are trying to get the agenda being set by your members rather than by the project design of the fund. So you are not sure what the measures are going to be in the future.

Sheela – let me bring you into our form of strategy building. Then I'll try and answer your question.

One of the most important thing in our trajectory of financing our processes is – we never went to a DFID or a World Bank in 1985. We went to those kinds of donors who were committed to supporting groups that were doing interesting, innovative and new things. they gave us very small amounts of money which we needed at that time. We didn't need large amounts of money. what we had at that time – if you look at our process from a funding point of view, it is only in the last 3-5 years that we are talking to the DFID's and the World Bank's of this world. We never spoke to them before for funding because we didn't need that kind of funding at that time and our process would not have proved what you are saying at that point of time. What we did at that time was – we matched what we were doing to the sources of funding that were capable of dealing with us.

The second thing which we did is that those people who were our donors then – specially the NGO donors, they have stayed with us for the first fifteen years so that now they are our partners. So Ruth McLeod and Cordaids and the Miseriors and the Ford Foundations of this world are now our partners when we go to the DFID's and the SIDA's and the ...

Nick – what you mean whereas before they were your donors.

Sheela – they started a relationship with us as donors and gradually over a period of time we developed a partnership in a dialogue with the next level of organizations. In the process we made our old relationships more equal. So the other thing which you see in this process is For instance, most NGO's and CBO's are also locked in a vertical process. **12.51 Whatever people may say – in the end it is the NGO that controls the money, the choice of priorities and everything. And by abdicating that to the federation we made that choice. So we equalled our relationship and then when we brought donors in we brought them in and they participate in meetings like this in which they see how our decisions are made.** Why this priority is chosen, why not... because all donors also come with their ideas that they like. Why don't you this or that. We say – ok, you talk to the federations and see whether the federations are interested or not. so many people have come to us and said – why don't you campaign for AIDS. And the federation is saying – no we will focus on housing and infrastructure because those are the most fundamental things on the basis of which all other issues in the city for the poor (as we understand it) are located. A lot of people will tell me – 'so what are the poor people going to do when they die like flies, when they get AIDS?' I said that's a realization that the federation has to make. We will keep exposing them... like now when the federations go to East

Africa or Southern Africa they see those things. But they will make that choice, we will not make it for them. That's the way I would answer your question about what was it that time.

The other very important thing that has brought us into a dialogue with the international mainstream donor community is that – 14.26 **In the late 1990's more and more of their programs have shown that they don't survive the project period. So now people are looking for other solutions. And in that context what we are doing begins to make sense to them. They are also ready to extend or concede that there might be something that they might understand or learn from this process. And that what they have produced as a model is not THE only way of doing things.** That brings us into that dialogue. Because we have an Shack Dwellers International network nobody can tell us – 'oh, you are only doing this in little Byculla, in that little engagement'. But you are seeing it happening and repeating and reproducing itself in different locations so that you can't be discounted as easily as it could have if it was only operating in only one place or two places.

Romi – I'd still like to ask you a question which worries me. I am not saying it worries me about SPARC about the donor, it worries me per se as a concept. Is – How do you arrive at social decisions? I think this is essentially a sensitive point and I think we can explore it. If you take individuals, the range of preferences that they have is very wide, because each circumstances is different, each's immediate needs is different and each will say – I have certain individual references which I am willing to temper because there are social constraints but actually I believe that if they weren't there I'd ... At some point this magically translated into a social decision. This process, it's a major subject I know, but it's not very clear to me.

Celine – Eg, if Mahila Milan has chosen a system of savings, it's a trigger off by SPARC or is it ...

Romi – no, it's not that. If you say to me that the federation thinks that housing is more important, I'd say – well how do arrive at this social decision. What is the process of arriving at this social decision. To me individuals have..

Nick – maybe 80% want housing...

Romi – where is the process? This is the problem of democracy.

Celine – maybe I'll try and articulate it and you can help me Sheela. I think they all started off with things that were very non-controversial and easy to get to. Those were health, education, counseling, sponsorship and things like that. But with each of these things, each time the issue of demolition kept coming up. If it was education you realized that the child kept losing his books each time there was a demolition. You kept going and telling him – go to school, it didn't really help. The education system didn't want Pavement Dwellers because they didn't have a fixed address (like the rationing system.) if you took health it was the same thing. Pavement Dwellers did not have access to the health system. So basically instead of creating a service, you were trying to see how Pavement Dwellers could access the health system and actually get the Dean or people in the health system to come and interact with Mahila Milan. Each of these things we realized was directly related to security of tenure. Something that was long term which just an immunization campaign or just sending children to school was not going to solve. I think these were the signals we picked up and we legitimized those signals and acknowledged it. Because there were communities who said – please don't waste our time. If you can't give us a water tap we are not

interested in coming to the federation. We said 'too bad, then we are not interested in working for you, if you want a short cut solution.'

Romi – I think where you are a confrontationist situation where the social constraints are larger and more common than the individual circumstances, this will always happen. I don't think this is a problem. The issue is how do you monitor the social decision. Because – at one give time you are confronted with a demolition drive, so I don't think this issue will arise in this situation at all. It is when there is no demolition drive that one begins to talk about social decisions on what is to happen next. That the real problem starts.

Suppose, you shift people to a new location, Ok and the process of doing that and the process of what house they get and how they do it. To my mind if there is no mechanism of regulating social decisions there is always a great danger that community or ascribed leaders will begin to take decisions..

Alison – how will such decisions be different from organizational decisions when you have got a federation type organization...

Romi - ... no, how will individual preferences.. at what point do individual preferences become social decisions.

Jane – In the beginning you talked about everyone having different identities, you explained it as being quite a diverse set of qualities and characters, stakes, potentials that each individual had and then you sort of showed how they created a membership to SPARC and you said what draws all these people together is that they are poor. and this was the sort of membership idea. I think what Romi is saying is that now if you begin to look at all these individual people and have their social process, it's ...

Sheela – I don't think I can answer at that meta level. I can only do it in specific terms. 20.54 **If you take Eg this whole housing training process that we have. If you are talking about choices. Visiting lands, locating where those lands are on the map, what will happen if you go to this land vs. that land – were exposures that were given to everybody. Every family had to send one representative to go to those land visits. So those land visits were not done by just the leaders. The land visits were done by everybody. Even now – in front of the office there was this big bus. The idea is that a whole community 30,50,100 people at a time actually go to see different places and they begin to think through what it means if they were to be relocated.**

Then I'll give you another interesting example. 21.59 when the discussion about what is the difference between living on the pavement and living in a slum came up – communities went and visited people who lived in slums as a group. It wasn't as if they had not visited slums before. But they went as a group to talk to people who lived in the slums, who were part of the NSDF network and said – what's your life like vs. our life. What is the difference in your life and my life? And the big difference was that what would have started as a torn, soft, recycled material hutment could over time be consolidated into a brick structure which could withstand rain and things like that. And people began to see those differences and said – ok, the thing that we can never believe we can get by ourselves as Pavement Dwellers is a secure place to stay. That was one way in which that decision came out. Another way by which this decision came thorough is also – there is a tradition in the urban NGO's to work in all areas except housing and infrastructure. And that tradition comes out of – in my opinion- the way in which urban philanthropy is developed. In which middle class professional

people will get grants, choose which slum they work in, what they want to do in that slum – so you end up choosing whether you are going to develop health or education or housing or whatever you are going to deliver and you'll choose the location of that. But by doing that you also limit what you can get as an output. 23.46 In this process all those who agree to what those group of people decided have the freedom to join in. so initially this was quite an intuitive process but on reflection I can say that what it has done is produced an aggregation of communities who feel that they want to join an exploration of getting this. So choosing to participate in this process, choosing to explore these solutions, choosing to get their capacities built to make those choices. This decision people make when they come as communities to join the federation. As the local and the national leadership gets more and more matured their abilities to address their other needs get improved. But the focus remains on housing and infrastructure.

Romi – I just thought to explain this thing on a diagram. If we say that ..(moved far from the mike so not very clear)

END OF MD 3a

MD 4
Contd.

Romi - This process never gets monitored. Never gets monitored because there's no procedure to monitor it. There is no way in which we can every go back, and keeping on feeding that on what is it that makes individual's decisions communicable to this process. There is no mechanism. That's the problem, that there is no regular, within the Ngo groups there is no way in which you are going back. Except a group discussion in which 50% of the people keep quiet. That's the group discussion and that's the pattern used more or less for what I've seen. But the nature of this monitoring is so organized , it's so systematic that I don't see why we don't have some kind of more predictable system here which is monitoring this traffic and which is actually taking into account --- because this is the dynamic which is also changing all the time. Once because of this representation the situation changes, the perception of each one of these will get more diverse. Because lets say, the immediate threat is over and now they are a little more relaxed and they are thinking about the house of their own. The other alternative is – ok, you have a similar situation. You have this.. but let's say that a facilitating organization is here. If you start doing that which is a thick way of doing it (meaning that it's totally unpredictable, totally subjective) that individuals in the organization are not getting processed or communicating directly to whoever is .. I mean it's just an extreme, I this case we are putting both these extremes. But what is happening is – that whoever is hearing this, whatever the circumstances change, this person's changing circumstances, changing reactions, changing family situations, changing relatives etc, is constantly getting communicated. Which I feel here very much is not likely to happen because the logic of the funding makes this person do a very .. do a reduced (if you like) description of the complexities here. This is not a problem, this is a problem of democracy essentially. That once you've elected a, you out in democratic values, is it therefore.. have you given him the power to take all your decisions or is there some way of monitoring. Every five years you can change him but otherwise he seems to think about all aspects of your life. In an NGO that's not necessary, because in an NGO you have a much more soft and a human situation, it's not an institutional situation.

Sheela – who is that middle round, who it is?

Romi – this is the community leader.

Celine – elected representatives...

Alison – it's the women that were speaking today

Romi – this is who represents the community, it could be the federation. How are we monitoring this? How can we set up a sensitive system here? Which we haven't bothered to do. His argument being that the root cause, the root source of different decisions is actually here. So we need to be sensitive to it. I don't think that he is saying therefore that these guys – whatever they decide goes. It's just that – there is this thing is missing. We need to hear from you that (I mean there is process going on, I am not saying it's absent) The process is working very close to your beneficiaries. But can we formalize it? Can we make it a little less informal. I wouldn't mind if the whole thing was informal. If these people came and they had a little ... it's alright. But you know this stuff.

Alison – and it's an issue for going to scale.

Sheela – what is informal about that fact that Eg, today in the morning you heard women say that most of them, I most settlements there is a leader amongst 15 to 20 women who represents their aspirations. They in turn elect a smaller group of people, but that they are discussion with each other and that whenever they are issues to be discussed, they go back. So there are these different levels, and that these levels are in play not to dictate everything in their lives but only in those areas where they feel that they can not do anything by themselves but they have to do it collectively. And that is for me that is the degree of formalization that already exists. That it is not contractually mandated is a difference.

Romi – No, I am saying – take a person like Laxmi. Laxmi goes into every household, she knows exactly what's happening in that household. So it's not as if you are not .. this thing is not there. Right. But there is no way in which a. this get communicated here because this bunch is concerned with a completely different set of issues. And they are monitoring a different set of issues which have been reduced. This concern here – the thing that Laxmi is looking at, is lost in the whole process. Is taken from granted. That- she said if there's a problem she'll let you know. But there is no way in which one is able to tell her that there are these sensitive changes going on. Because you are visiting a hundred households every day and there is nothing that takes into account that. Except that when the logics of this program descend down and then you revalue it. all I am saying is that there is a need for a little bit more direct monitoring of these sensitive changes that somebody at her level is doing but it's nor formalized, it's not noted, it's not discussed. It's left to her to monitor. To me that's a very crucial thing.

Sheela – then I would like to restate the position that you are making because the way in which you were saying it earlier, I was thinking that you were asking me – why don't you formalize it more. Because I felt that you can't formalize it any more than it has in that context. But I would agree with you with the reality today that that structure, that system, that mechanism and what it's producing is not something which is of great interest to anybody sitting in London or Washington today. How to make that so?

Romi – 7. 14 We'd like to know are we losing something. Are we losing something in that. Is that important or does it really not matter. That's a question that I just want to say. Because Sen's position is that it's very important. Right.

Sheela – We think it's very important.

Celine – it's very important for strategizing and bringing the community together. It's not important for us to communicate that to DFID.

Romi – I'd like to know why?

Celine – ideally, yes. We would want to communicate it but what you are saying is that today's structures and the way these organizations are designed they are not interested in these nitty gritty's and these nuances. They are interested in the delivery.

Romi – Ok. But then we should say that they are wrong and they need to change or whatever. I don't know. Maybe we are happy with what we do.

Celine – We are happy to discuss those nuances but there is no space to do it.

Sheela – but on the other hand if you look at the last five years of our dialogue with various donors, with various institutions, we actually constantly reproduce a situation where we make people sit directly and talk to different... What you saw today, like we were discussing yesterday – different people in the communities come. These kinds of exchanges and dialogues and discussions occur very often as a means to provide sensitization and exposure to people who are sitting somewhere else. But we face five types of problems. 8.45 first of all – everybody who works in the north has no time. Only we have time. Nobody has time. They want to come to Bombay and in ten minutes they want to know everything that ever there was to know about everything that you ever did for the last ten decades. There is no way we can encapsulate those kind of stories in a five minute capsule.

Second problem is – that there is also a constant change of personnel in these agencies. So very rarely is a person we spoke to five years ago, there, to look at what's happening later. Because lot of these issues are qualitative. Each person comes and then what happens is the written word is the only way by which there is any memory and I know most institutions – we used to think it's only our problem that we don't know where the papers are – but this problem is there everywhere.

The other problem is that people don't find documents that were done. Then the very paradigm of those institutions changes. Ten years ago it was some theory, now it is sustainable livelihood, tomorrow it will be something else. On what framework are you being looked at? We have to constantly keep up to those fashionable theories and try to structure ourselves and people's aspirations - which however dynamic they are, are rooted in their reality - Into all these different things. And as a result of that many NGO's actually end up betraying the community trust, because they keep flitting from project, to project to project. Today I am doing AIDs, tomorrow I am doing water, day after tomorrow I am doing something else. Because funding moves like that. And then there is this whole thing – do something new. Today I give you money for water, tomorrow do something for energy. So these things really destroy that kind of real understanding. What we end up - as intermediaries what we end up doing is – if NGO's have a strong accountability system with the community federations then depending on their degree of confidence, they will actually talk about this crisis and this problem with their donors. In most cases there isn't that kind of co... we are very fortunate that we can talk about it. Most communities and NGO's can not talk about this to their donors. If the donor says – this is my framework of monitoring and evaluation and You just go ahead and do it. So there is a very major crisis over there and I don't see the capacity of northern institutions or even government institutions to truly monitor this on a long term basis because there is no continuity over there.

Romi – but how important are individual perceptions in the whole of this scenario? Let's take the 563 to be more specific. How important are the individual aspirations, I mean the differences in the individual aspirations ..

Sheela – just pause. Jockin lets quickly introduce everybody to you. (round of introductions)

Jane – I just wanted to say on the subject that we were just discussing – I was just trying to hold to Romi there because it is so much involved with what I have understood that you do. the diagram he's just put on is rather crucial and could I just sum up for a second. Because we've had this wonderful morning being able to meet the different women who have help up the women's savings circles and other collective works and the organization of SPARC has been really illustrated to us and the Slum Dwellers Federation how it's work. It's been an extraordinary, very good morning, explaining all this first hand. What Romi was drawing up here on the board, we are trying to begin to question how social decisions are regulated in a situation like this. He drew it – the diagram he's just drawn on the board there shows in the middle a sort of person who's a representative of the Federations. And that federation interacts with the different donors and that that process is monitored quite carefully. What happens. But what happens between the federation representative and all the different individuals. And when for example Laxmi goes and she interconnects with all the individuals. So she hears each individual situation. But the process by which she then goes back up, a lot of that individual issues and social situations aren't necessarily monitored to show whether each individual person has had .. their situation , their potential has really been addressed. Have I said that alright.

Sheela – the question he was asking is – if you just take the 500 plus households in Byculla, how do we ensure that whatever they want to do, what their requirements are, how they want to go ahead. How are those individual and smaller groupings, their needs taken care of discussed, and how are they represented.

Romi – Jockin , how do we make sure that – what their real and individual and personal problems and all are really reflected in part of the program. The program logic – if it is like housing, then a whole lot of issues are not even looked at.

Jockin – even to begin with earlier, I am talking about 10 years before. With this collective of 536 we had something between a hundred to 300 things . Not one. This was ranging from who sleeps where – the husband and wife, children, bathing, kitchen, income, pocket, pick-pocketing within the husband and wife. This has been completely discussed in deep with them. So there are lot of compromises or adjustments. I had my individual aspiration that I need thousand rupees today. But while deliberating between colleagues or in the street within five of them I come down to Rs.100. this is also hundred, this is also hundred. What kind of a mechanism is existing in the federation. All the time everybody comes – my house. I don't want this, I want this here. The kitchen has to be this side. What I am trying to say is that the number of meetings, the number of interaction in which individual's all aspirations are being addressed. Maybe they changed their vision, their expectation as far as the group is concerned. Eg, I would treat like one street, Laxmi street. That whole street in any case you have one particular street, whether you could reach – there are people who are earning Rs 300 a day there, there are people earning only Rs 30 a day there. They have been put together to be a collective and see what maximum each one can get. In the federation it is very clear from beginning to end. It is not one leader like me who come up and make a representation. NO. Lot has been going among them.

That is why, I don't know, most of the time I talk about women...(break?). Bits and pieces and made into all nonsense and crap and in the evening something comes and we sit up to 10.30 or 11.30, go on talking about that whole particular issue. so it is not that it's not being addressed.

Celine – Jockin what Romi is saying – you have that system there, why doesn't it get translated to the higher level. When you are talking to DFID or when you are talking to other international organizations why those nuances. Or do they get translated or how do they get translated.

Sheela – 19.16 **there have been two occasions when in our dialogue with the World Bank the aspirations and choices that came out of these discussions were actually communicated and they did change the design and the policy of those processes.**

Romi – the next question is that – how will it be possible for us to continue that communication unless we are able to translate it at a very individual level to a sort of a method of communication to the donor. Because the donor mechanism is such that where the data is composed it's gross data and they are quite happy with that. Unless one intervenes in that and says – sorry, this is not as simple as that, I can't give you these bar charts and things. The data we are getting is dense like this and this is how the situation, our analysis is this, you can make your own analysis of this and it's right down from the individual level that we are giving you the data. Unless one actually starts breaking the thing.

Sheela – 20.26 I think the Railway resettlement actually does that. That's the way in which we challenged that process.

Romi – 20.37 **I understand what Jockin is saying that because of the nature of community organization the representatives are able to negotiate and settle a lot of the individual preferences and individual choices and all. But in a sense what one is doing at that stage, fairly early on one is doing in this whole process – one is using a slightly larger social goal in order to compress those individual requirements. Instead of letting them grow.**

Sheela – the way I would say it is – **that you are using that social goal to work out a minimum norm that is acceptable to everybody.** That's what you are doing. And that's based on a philosophical choice that the federation makes. Which is – 21.39 **there are a range of people living in a slum better off, poorer. The federation's agency is for the bottom 50% not for the top 50%. So it says that if it can produce norms that are acceptable to the bottom 20% those who are better off can build on that further. But it ensures that there is something minimum that is available and is acceptable to the bottom 30 or 50%.** A very interesting example of this is like when we talk about toilets. In infrastructure when you talk about sanitation there's a big debate in the last 15-20 years where most of the agencies want to go for individual toilets. And the reason why people want to go for individual toilets is because they say – nobody looks after community toilets so give everybody a toilet in their house. When they shit inside their house they will look after it. which is what I call negative logic. But nobody acknowledges the fact that you don't have the infrastructure to support the individual toilets, you do not have space, you do not have water supply, you don't have a drainage system to deal with the individual toilets. so by bringing the shit inside the house you are further jeopardizing the health of the family. What does the federation do? It does this analysis with communities. And together they make a demand saying that until and unless the city has the capacity to address the larger issues of giving people a house which is more than 200 sq feet. Give people water so that

the flushing facility is available. You will have community toilets. And then it will invest in creating a social mechanism by which people take charge of managing the toilet. Which is what they consider a pro-active, positive mechanism to create a higher level of social order to manage that community asset.

This is what I meant by saying that you produce minimum norms. And you use that larger goals to produce these norms. It's like right now in all cities, many governments give land pattas. What it means is that if you had encroached 500 sq feet, you get 500 sq feet. She encroached only 20 sq feet, she gets 20 sq feet. What does the federation do? The federation says no, we'll put all this together and we will work out a standard size house, minimum house that is available to everybody so at least the minimum is taken care of.

I would restructure your question. Our answer would be that the federation makes a lot of discussion to produce those norms. That they think are acceptable to everybody in the community.

Alison – I think where Romi started off describing this. That top bit is very well thoroughly explained and visited and seen and often translated into English so we all understand. **This level of dialogue and quality of dialogue at the community level, is harder for outsiders to grasp and is actually the essence and value that you have in the federation, it's different from the other NGO's. I think we really need to find ways of actually sharing that.** And those two examples you've given are brilliant. And the process whereby you come to that, it's not your and Jockin's decision but there has been some community mechanism to come to that conclusion somehow needs to be captured. I would have thought..

Nick – the quality that I see below the line, below the circle is a quality of dialogue that is going on constantly and that's expressed if that quality of dialogue is expressed in the stories we've heard today and 535 other ones as well. Multiplied by any number of times because everybody's stories changes by the day. And what's important somehow is a mechanism to recognize that the process of dialogue is characterized by certain features which are high quality, in a sense. And I was talking with you about this at lunch time – donors are monitoring (I suspect it's governments as well) they are monitoring the products, they are seeing that out their the money that's being put into whatever activity in terms of products. In terms of outcomes, in terms of poverty reduction or something like that. Things that they can sort of measure. Whereas actually the achievement of those products depend entirely on the quality of that process of the dialogue that goes in below the line. 26.52 **If you can get to a point where the donors will say – if your dialogue of a high quality, if it is inclusive, it is flexible, if the accountability processes are really really clear, if there is a great transparency. Basically if your process is characterized by certain qualities then the product is almost certain.** Which is what I was trying to say to you earlier about say – would ration cards have been something you could have identified ten years before they became so important. That would be a product approach, saying in 1985 we knew ration cards will be critical point so we aimed for a product which is – everybody has ration cards. **If you instead said – we will aim for a product which is characterized by a good quality process. That way it didn't matter whether it was ration cards or whether it was land tenure or whether it was anything else. But it's the quality of the process. That's what is so good about SPARC and Mahila Milan example. The quality of the process seems so very fast.** If there is a work characterizing that process in terms of slightly more structured way, in a way that can be believable to the donor,. Mind you they will just say, ok, provided you do your projects in that way then you can have the money, if you want the money.

Sunder – I think this brings back to what Romi started off with – the whole issue of democracy and I think that is what you are also talking about and to utilize that distinction that we spoke about and what you also referred to today – formal and substantive democracy. You have elections every five years and then that's how notion of a democracy. Whereas in between nobody has anything to say or no way of participating in the affairs of the State. If you take the Athenian city State (of course it left out slaves, women and some other important categories) that was a real democracies, if you don't count those exclusions. People participated in daily life. And I think to characterize what you are saying – the term that has been used a lot – even about our work is – that this is really grassroots democracy. So that these for a that are available at the absolute grassroots, that is your Mahila Milan or that is your Slum dwellers Federation or you housing co-operative societies. These are all the for a where these discussions take place leading to some sort of collective vision, collective decisions of what you say is a social decision. It's not as if that individual has been denied the opportunity to express his or her views or to participate in the arrival or the formation of that decision which once taken becomes the decision of the collective.

Nick – It's a classic ... between participatory and representative democracies. And if you didn't participate in governance at the top line (you could say with the State) then how do you mediate between ...

Alison - Also there is a quality issue within the participation. A lot of NGO's around India could have those community groups and the dialogue and so on. But there's a quality issue where I feel, I am not able to grasp how we describe that or how we measure it.

Celine – Everybody says they are doing participation.

Nick – I don't think it is a diversion. It's something I said at lunch time as well. I did a study on various research studies. Anyway. But I looked at common property, public goods if you want. What are characteristics of public goods or common property. And public good might be accessed to democratic process just as much as they are accessed to security of tenure or access to ration cards or access to water supplies. That's common property or public good. There are various anthropologists who studied the way groups of people organize themselves in order to get equitable access to common property, public goods. And there are certain characteristics of the way that people relate to each other, the organizations they create, in order to get access to a particular type of public good. So there is a certain pattern in the quality of the type of the institution, the relationships that exist between people in the way they manage their access to common property. The way they manage access to ration cards for example or the way they get access to ration cards. In a sense those are the qualities of the process that there are fairly well respected in .. to some extent it's theory but it's also drawn directly from real practice. I think perhaps some of those, the way those qualities are described are quite a valid way of monitoring that sort of the quality of the relationship between the community and the agency that interfaces with the donors. If you can look at the quality of the relationship between .. it's not just – you've got a sort of set of lines going upwards from the community to some NGO. But there's also a lot of horizontal lines, should be in there as well between Laxmi and somebody else. The people within the community. And not only should it be just the community, I've got a feeling, but also in there is all the institutions as well. The local government, the traders, the bus drivers, the bus owners. It's not just a relationship within Pavement Dwellers that's important. It's the relationship between Pavement Dwellers and the people they relate to, they

trade with or work with. That sort of relationship needs to be measured for its quality as well.

There are ways of doing that. Social Network Analysis is a method of analyzing the quality of relationships which would be an interesting way of presenting... like I see there is a problem at the moment. What we've got is good quality stories, really interesting stories of people's lives and how they have changed as a result of the federation activity. But at the moment what we've got here is just stories. We haven't got a pattern in which to put the stories, in which to present. It's what Alison was saying – how do you scale up, how do you move up to, so that

Alison – the pattern is quite clear above the line, but the pattern is not very clear to outsiders below

Romi – I think the other aspect is that there is a sort of an assumption that –let's take middle class people. Middle class people have a kind of freedom and don't need to collectivize in order to realize this freedom. Are we making an assumption therefore that since the poor need to collectivize because they don't have the choices of the middle class. Therefore they must first arrive at a stage at which they can become middle class before they can actually think about other things. Then, conflict resolution between society and themselves. So is there some danger that we are confining our entire perceptions to the solution of what is confronting us and we are absolutely giving no space or time or occasion to address some other aspects of their lives. Which is – again I go back to Sen – Sen is saying that – here are some issues which are very abstract in kind but which anybody can think about. Doesn't necessarily have to be a poor person. If a solution of poverty and the confrontation with society is taking all that person's time and then we are also going into that and taking all his time away; at what point are they going to address some other issues in their lives? Or are we going to wait till they become free of all those confrontation before we ask them other questions. Because essentially I think there are some issues here about life in general, whether a person is poor or rich. If we are going to say that you can only think about those who you knew are well off, I'm sorry you are condemned to a life of dealing with confrontation. How do you raise these larger issues because these are the larger issues that individuals are concerned with. They may not communicate it, they may not get a chance to communicate about other ...

Smita – it's a bit abstract, can you just give me an example of what you mean by a larger issue?

Romi – Just about the quality of life. About what would they like to do. What would they like their children to do. It remains suppressed there because of the nature of the improvement, the process of collectivization etc, actually dominates all their entire life. So this issue never gets looked at. There are other issues. Any human being is not solely concerned only with survival. That's my point. But if we are going to address ourselves only to that, do we have space or is it not worth doing or whatever. I mean I have no answers for these, these are questions that go through my mind saying that – 38.18 **to me for instance, the process of collectivization is such a strong process, it's such a supportive process, that it transforms, to me, life very quickly. Any other alternative which is based on any kind of handout is a very random, very slow, very careless working. Collectivization builds in such an enormous support at a micro-level. They are all supporting each other. You don't even have to worry because all the minor things are looked after.**

I am saying about the nature of the program and about how we descend into this thing that I am more concerned that the individual voice is not being heard

loudly. Lets put it that way. It's getting translated into a program goal. And that's dominating the whole process. The individual voice is getting lost completely. It's heard by Laxmi, but it doesn't come beyond Laxmi. Is this an issue.

Jockin – Very clearly it's not true that the collective effort is trying to suppress any individual need or feeling or things like that. That's the reason when I started off talking about – Eg take the family matters or affairs, or suppose Laxmi lost her husband, she wants to get married. Even she has that aspiration. There is – in this collective group they have a lot to share with each other and find out, what is she aspiring for. How she can address that. There is a lot of chance like this – like you put it very nicely – lot of children in the whole federation., they talk about the schooling, what they have to become, who becomes graduate, this and that. There's a high rate of scope, rather than an individual person trying to earn something and become .. there's complete scope here. There is no way there is anything which is preventing them from coming out of these things. Many of the girl marriages, lot of Biharis would like to arrange their marriage at the age of 13-14. with very clear reason – the mother says that – she is young, I am living on the street, in the night I go to sleep, somebody will come and rape her. Before that happened I want to get her married. That is her very clear. But ten of the biharis sit together and say – why not we protect all the young girls and wait till another three or four years till they get matured. I think in all our collective all over in the federation (I am talking about, because my figures are bigger figures) there is a very high scope of individuals needs are being thoroughly discussed, shared among one another and it has a place. It has been addressed.

If you look at it – the mechanism of the saving in the first place, I remember some years back this was the major issue for us – there is so many individualistic things which has found place. This whole money mechanism, because of the savings – like somebody comes and say that – I am going to take a loan but this should not be told to anybody. Very clearly. And the whole people have discussed and talked about why it should not be said. What is wrong? You are taking 5000 for vegetable vending but you are buying gold. You are not going to sell the vegetables. It was brought out. What I am trying to say is that there's a high rate of collectivizing these things. The individual hopes has been .. even so many things have been .. like Laxmi's daughters marriage was arranged because of it's collectiveness. When she ran away with some boy the whole community took responsibility...

Alison – so the 'any other' business in the meetings is quite significant!

Jockin – that's what I am trying to say. In the Mahila Milan process – most of the time I used to talk about this – when you become a collective leaders, I hardly see pregnant women. We don't talk about family planning at all. This is the influence of Byculla that has spread all over. Wherever the federation is there, the key leaders – birth control. I don't talk about also, we don't even talk about it. but certainly the woman doesn't come with (). That doesn't stop there.

Celine – but Jockin the same thing in South Africa changes completely where all individual matters are solely individual and the collective can not interfere in those matters.

Jockin – that is the reason, ten times it's broken, ten times it's getting built up and we are going on the 12th time, we are going on the 5th time in building the whole process there. 43.50 it's very clear, what you are talking is exactly suits South Africa. Completely individualistic. Completely. I don't care, she doesn't even have the food. But I would like to take the whole cake and eat it. Very clearly. They are completely, a distorted version in South Africa. Individualistic.

Every house they wanted to have – everything individualistic. But then organization collapsed. What you wanted, you didn't get it. you don't have your security, you don't trust one another, you don't trust your son. Forget about others. Because of this.

Then, at the same time there are groups in South Africa, Celine, who built on the collective and all of them moving better and better and better. And as you put it very nicely. I am not aspiring to become middle class. That is where that individual thing gets stopped. Somebody individual would like to become the middle class. There is a scope here. They say, you leave this house, you go on, you have got a better income, you have everything, you have a car, you have a car coming to your house, why don't you go out as a middle class. But this is the difference between African countries and Asian countries. We have a very contradiction in South Africa.

Nick – is that genetic?

NO, no, no... culture

Celine – but it is this western thing of – why should I interfere in your personal business. It is intrusion.

Agarwal – that is in Africa..

Nick – But if you go to Sweden, it's a different attitude. Scandinavians are very collective in their approach, much less individualistic.

Agarwal - ..only at the government .. individual vis-a-vis the State. Not individual with the others. Cradle to the grave ...

Sheela – I have another take on this. Jockin you will tell me if you agree with me. For me one of the most exciting things about the federation is that it actually allows community leaders to be able to take initiatives and do things on each other instead of just become beneficiaries and consumers. That's also for me a very important ... you take all of us. We come from well to do families and then we have decided to work through development and then sometimes we may not get a very paying job but then we can manage it because we have a family that supports that. What happens to a poor person who aspires to help you? It's very difficult because his family can't support him. What this collective process does is it actually allows that aspiration (I think that's also an important thing) the aspiration to help somebody else to get accredited for being a help. We all get so much kudos for helping others and everything. People like us get stipends, we get scholarships, or hardship allowances, we get money to work. When the Federation, for instance, initially .. I remember the first time Jockin and I met – 47.28 **Jockin said why should only you get money to work with poor people, Why can't slum dwellers get money to work in the community. And that's how the cadre of the federation began.** If you were a carpenter and you now want to work full time in the Federation, OK, whatever money you earned, I'll give you that much money. you work in the federation.

Jockin – that is not that much money. something has been put like ..47.56 **another thing very interesting, let me test about you.. This is about 15 years back. When we were working on ration cards. In a particular street there are 56 houses. There are 72 ration cards, and there are 10 people who don't have a ration card! What we decided collectively – we said, let's do a map of the settlement, give the number to the families and go to the ration office and tell 'there are 56 families in the street. We want**

56 cards, we don't want 76 cards. But 10 people don't have a ration card'. Today it is an accepted norm, only day before yesterday for one of the settlements we managed to get 6 new ration cards and getting cut all the rest of the ration cards. But these individuals fought to have two ration cards because they wanted to get two houses. I would like to go to this individual very clearly down, where, how? Today I was there in the morning, that's why I could not come in the morning. Yesterday night I got information from Mu... we are shifting just now, allotment is going on today afternoon. I got a very information – these are the families 3 houses, these are the family 2 houses, these are the family 5 houses. Wife stood with the kid, took the photograph – one house. Husband stood with kids – one house. Husband-wife stood in one house and got a third house. To put these three together, I think from 11.40 to 12.40 we have to sit with the whole family and ask – how did you manage to do this? Now this is open. So, so many people say 'hey, what is your problem? I need to have one more house.' I said there are a hundred people not getting a house here. If I go one giving you more houses, the less number is going to be given to the other people. Finally we have to take a very strong position and after 1 o' clock I called the whole society. 53 families. Put it in front of them, this is what is happening. There are 12 people who are having more than one houses. Luckily all of them only three children. Not larger families. Son got married, daughter got married. Where do we have ... but this collective has taken a very clear decision today. They said if there is more than ten, if there is a son or two or three of the older boys who have to be there in the house then two houses could be permitted. If they are not like that let everybody get one only. Because government will say – he had a hut, he has a house. So anybody who has more money – I can buy more houses and keep it for him. This is the kind of things, lot of issues which has come to us since the beginning of the federation. Which is rightly the individual everybody. In terms of work, employment, gift, grant, donation. I remember, 25 years back I was sitting and enrolling for nutrition program anybody who have a child below 6 to register to get daily two bread. One woman write that name, age 6. Another name 5. I said what is this, something wrong. She said, 'another one'. I said where is this? She is 8 month pregnant. She is booking one. I said, you are booking now itself, why don't you book for next one also!

Nick – these sort of conflicts are going to be in any society. I was working in Kenya at a time when Land privatization was taking place of communal lands. And it happened that what used to be commonly owned piece of land with hundreds of families occupying that land was going to be divided up into individual plots of land on a particular date. It just happened that you are a little bit older than me I think. Your family was grown up, so you had you plus three sons each of whom had wives and family. Now me, I have got my children, they are 10, 12 and 14 years old. I only got one plot of land for my family, you got four. Just because on that particular date, your family was a little bit older than my family. So you got four and I got one.

In any environment where you are going to start --- where this sort of negotiation is going, there's going to be that sort of conflict. And that happened in the Masai land sub-division absolutely and there was a big conflict as a result. And they had to work it out and negotiate it and eventually they have come to accept it. but it's no different from the women who's got one child 8 months pregnant, really. Why shouldn't that child have had a ration card as well because by the time the ration card was actually in force that child would have been born and would have needed that ration.

Again it's the quality of the negotiation that's so vital, isn't it.

Sheela – I think that's the other quality or the characteristic of this process, if you are articulating what it should be or what are the ... when you are saying how should this process be articulated. I think the other one, apart from the fact that it's norm setting, is also the arbitration. 54.09 **Because very often what you have is a situation in which communities have no capacity to do internal arbitration. Therefore when the arbitration is done from the external environment, it never works in the interest of the poorest. That's part of a very important function of the federation as we see it.** Because, what usually would happen is eg, if the external environment was there then those who are better off can bribe their way into getting more goods and services and there's nobody to defend the interests of those who are weaker and poorer. And that, that is often left to some external environment to do. When you embed that within those communities then you create the capacity and also valorize that process. For instance, for me it's an important thing to evaluate that that community – like when Jockin was sitting with those 53 families and they agreed that yes, this is right. It also reflects that that culture is embedded in that peer thinking. Or there will be others who will say – no, no, this fellow's managed to swindle his way through three, give it to him. Could be like that.

Romi – then we still come back to this issue – at what stage do you convert your discussions with the community on a one to one basis into a social discourse. So, when you discuss with each member of your community, each one has got completely different problems. Right. But you as a community leader have to reduce these. You can not address the 500 problems. What is this process? And how do you arrive at this process – alright, these are the minimum things that I can address and I will convert these individual requirements into a social decision and we will move forward. At that point is the one I am saying – how does this process take place? And is there a better way of doing this. I am not just saying in time. Is there a better way of doing it than what we are doing now?

Jockin – 56.20 This is the collective of federation particularly when you come to the two level of discuss ... with the federation network. The federation. Predominantly male, all of us sit and talk and the issues come out. Finally then there are certain issues, the federation or this group – let me take one area as co-operative housing society, where so many individual issues are being put together. Starting from big family, smaller family, very big house, medium house, small house, very very small house. Then in this meeting after getting all this idea , 1, 2, 3, 4 in the form of agenda then we say – we need to have a qualitative information data about this information. Who could give this, let's put this through this things to Mahila Milan, women. Then the whole things go to the women. Then when the women come together the whole figure, the whole information on which we had a dialogue changes completely. It sometimes even clearly comes in the men's, the other federation's housing society meeting – the bigger family. When the woman comes she says – no, no, no. this grandfather or this wife is not staying in this family. They are staying in that family. To get another house this fellow is giving this information. This daughter is going to get married on so and so date, therefore she is going out. Then where is the need for this big family, big house. So that kind of a discussion takes place before we make a decision. OK, what are the general criteria? Is it anybody have more than 12 members in a family could be treated as a second family, second house. It's a collective decision, everybody agrees, everybody talks, goes into detail. What is a 12 member family? We had a shock. Once on one of the society one person had two wives, and 21 children alive! Today I have them living in a building which we have given out. And the federation took a decision-government is going to sue me and going to put me .. government is saying you will be .. SPARC will be (legal ..) we say nothing doing. I have given it because the woman came and told that if you are giving this room, this husband only sleep with that first wife, he is

not coming to me. It's an open discussion. In public she said it. This bloody buggler goes to her only, doesn't come to me. And the group has taken a decision, give her another room. This is how we work out ... Ok, group sits together and says how the loan is to be given. It's not strict rule. This woman has to have some exemption, this is the crisis and it has to be considered. It's not a set rule – ok, don't give 5000. SPARC says no more than 5000, I'll say, take from another account, give it 7000 and put it to SPARC, 5 and 2 and 7. it's not completely...

1.00.01 So there is two kind of dialogue. Collective. Correct information is collected from the women and jointly sit together work out, and take a decision even for the society-wise. But then it comes to the federation, collectively. 40 buildings. There some of these individual things have been completely objected by larger group. If you do this to them, to them, what would happen. Then you reflect back and say – no, this is separate individual societies. They are very individual functioning. It can not be converted into whole building, all the federation. That is where I am trying to say – the scope for even those individual societies, that smaller collective is very high. It is there, been provided. This is the level of decision making. First you sit together as a society, then a lot of people will say – we don't want to do saving. The group takes a decision – yes, fine, don't do it. But with condition – you don't do saving, don't come for any help. If you want emergency loan you won't get it. If you want something to be done for school, for health, for anything, you won't get it. Be part of everybody, then you also do the saving like everybody. Then you get everything done. That is one level.

Above that then the group sits together and sets norm. slowly, slowly that is become a norm of the federation. But with an exemption – even that particular group can change certain policies, certain systems – like loan. One group has taken a decision I remember about 2000 of them. They said – very adamant individuals – they said very clearly we don't want to take loan at all. They went in for ten years, they never took loan. After ten years, things went wrong, then they said – because we are keeping this money we need this more interest, this interest will go for our loan etc. But after ten years they fall in the line of rest of the people.

Nick – you said all the savings and loan schemes, but it's like an insurance policy isn't it, in a sense. You could say I have got a lot of insurance policies, but myself I pay to a company which is not a... I don't have any direct decision making power over that company. But I put my money, which is a saving in effect, into that company and if I have a crisis, if my house burns down or if my children (something happens) I can get money from that insurance company according to the turns of the quarter. Is that insurance company the equivalent of the collective decision making that you are talking about with the savings and loan schemes and the ... what's the difference..

Jockin – not technically like that.

Sheela – I would look at it in a specific sense. In terms of specific problems and crisis, Jockin, it is. If there's a crisis in the family the community and the federation does help that person out. In that case it is an insurance. That's what he meant.

Jockin – I can not get into that kind of thinking. It is there, it is a kind of a ...

Sheela – it is an insurance, it is a hedge,

Celine – safety net.

Nick – it's a safety net, yeah.

Sheela – the other level at which it is a safety net – that's the other interesting thing which I want to bring up in this discussion. When in many situations, individuals and communities don't want to explore change because of the fear of implications of participating in that change. When you do something new, you have to take a lot of risks, and to take risks means that you have to have the resources to mitigate them. 1.04.36 **The federation and this alliance supports communities which do new things.** for me that's the other interesting thing, Romi, in that discussion, in that dialogue which you are talking about. Is that there's a paradox. Development is about bringing change. And change means trying to do things which were not done before. Exploring avenues which are unknown. And yet, **when you look at the whole development framework, there's very little understanding of what happens when poor people take risks. Or poor people explore new options or poor people try to do something which is different. Because there's very little that is kept there for them to explore those risks. That's the thing that I always talk about if a DFID or a SIDA or somebody has a brilliant idea and they put 5,10, 15 hundred million pounds and they do things, do things, do things, it doesn't work – and then it gets written off. In real terms it gets written off. 1.06.08 But if I was to say – give me one tenth of that money to explore things that poor people are dreaming of doing for ever, it's not only too risky, there is no mechanism in what you call the text book of development procedures that will ever allow them to explore that. For me that's where CLIFF comes in. I am saying – poor people have fought so hard to get these things and now they are doing these huge new projects and taking all the risks themselves. And everybody is very happy to learn from those. We are saying – now you put your money there, so that you can learn along with them. Because these are huge new things which they are doing anyway by themselves and taking all the risks by themselves.** The reality is that in mainstream development and in the discourse about development and the discourse about change and transfer of power and all those things, our exploring of new ways of doing things – there is no language or no discourse about risks. Who takes the risks? Like Jockin is forever taking risks. It's like this thing – the government says only one house but he says – ok, I'll take the risks. Unless people take risks which are related to those choices there can be no change that works. Now that risk is not for everybody, it is for those particular groups. I think that's another level, ... I mean if you are making a list of things that are not discussed, not communicated, not mainstreamed, in fulfilling these things, I think that's another ...

Nick – the poor can't afford to take risks.

Sheela – The poor just can not afford, the poor can't afford to make a mistake. It's like all of us. We always have to show that we always come out hundred percent right.

Jockin – people like to always make mistake only, doesn't want to do anything else. In this thing, in this big family thing, out of about 4000 families we shifted, the whole community as such we faced with about more than 75-80 families, all huge ones. Means in 225 (sq feet) nobody could stay. And we really took a risk and the World Bank is literally investigated and went around us, even to the extent of how do we get the contract broken (rescinded because of that). I even told them – ok, you take it, give it to any agency you want to give it and try to do it. Show you whether you can do it. and then we have to come out and say

very detailed – these are the 72 families, these are the reasons. Everyday we are facing that kind of crisis. I am opening and talking to everybody. This we made it and taken the risk and let the policy makers know this is a problem. How do you address it. In this connection risk is ...

Alison – 1.09.28 **the interesting thing it's very often from that top level, you don't look at the level of problems that actually these projects come up with. And they don't even think that that's going to happen. So it's setting in motion a process that actually can deal with the unknowns – both the unknowns in terms of the objectives whether it's ration books or land tenure or resettlement, or it's the unknown in terms of the problems within. And you need a mechanism that's water tight and valuable enough that it can deal with this. Transparently and effectively.**

Jockin – In fact we have a problem just now. Sunday we were there in Cambodia. Government somehow because of some people from the west, it's full of western, all of Cambodia and they decided to give individual land title. That is the society which will sell it and go back to the streets next day. So the debate we are talking about it – no, it has to be collective land. Because there was a policy in Cambodia, no individual is allowed to buy land. It was so bad in that country, poverty, people can't even afford to buy one meal, where are they going to find the land. Then we managed to get the land policy changed. The government gives land and provide people a green land. Now the government decided to give individual land pattas! And the document was prepared. I don't how you are going to tell me – I stopped it. I said – talk to the people. I called some of the people, sat with them (this has happened just Saturday) I told them, you want this paper, this is how it is. The community as such has said no. but the people, those who are trying to help them, all these visionaries they are saying 'no, no, no it can't be'. We are worried about – the minute you give this – because so much is the poverty there, this may be 100,000 real (\$100 or \$ 50) if they sell it, they will go back to the street, they will do something for survival. So then whole system of addressing this poverty alleviation or whatever it is ...

Nick – well the whole banking system depends on individual titles. This is what happened with the Masai in Kenya. They took individual pieces of land title. One family one piece of land, one title. That meant they could go to a bank and borrow money – which they did and then six months later they couldn't believe when the bank - when they didn't pay the loan – that the bank was taking the land. They said 'no, but this land has been in my family for hundreds of thousands of years. How can the bank suddenly ... ' and suddenly you've got a big problem. But the fact is that individual titles are the key to the whole capitalist system. Isn't it.

Sheela – here comes another very interesting thing which we keep talking about and I think it's interesting to see how it relates to what you are talking about individuals. 1.12.30 **If you have assets, that are given to poor people, the reality is that they are so vulnerable that they can not protect that asset. Therefore you need a collective to protect their asset until they develop their individual capacity to k after it.** what is happening for the last three four decades in development is that you have a whole set of this capitalist thought which is – individualizing benefits. And then you have an evaluation system which says – oh, but the poor don't really care about these things, they just sell it and run away. The thing is that there is such a huge market – it's waiting to pounce on the first time that they ...

1.13.20 One of the first things that the federation analyzed when people moved into the buildings was that it takes two to three years for the

families to begin to settle down and learn to manage living in those tenement structures, managing their bills, managing their outgoings in this formal structure. And they need support for that period of time. And there is a huge market waiting to buy those things from them. And inevitably in our country the first time that the bill is given to the poor person is after one year. As soon as you enter instead of getting the bill the first month, so that you know your electricity is so much, your water is so much – after six months you get 5000-8000 rupees per household and if you don't give it tomorrow the thing is cut. What do poor people do? Their debts increase like this. They find they can't do it, so if somebody's buying, they sell it because they don't know how to deal with this. but this doesn't go back into that evaluation.. there is some mechanism or some reason why this doesn't filter back into the evaluation system.

Alison – the assumptions are there that they sold it for other reasons.

Sheela – and there is almost like a convenience...

Nick – it's a secret sign of the market working perfectly ..

Sheela – there is another very interesting thing which we keep seeing happening – that there is no shortage of insight and data that is available in that level, it doesn't get picked up, or it gets reduced and other issues get highlighted and moved. So the frailties

END OF MD 4.

MD 5
Contd.

Romi – 0.03 **I feel it's probably because we have not set up sensitive enough ways to talk about interpersonal comparisons and thinking. What's put on the table is a collective desire, but nobody bothers to ask how it operates. Like what Jockin is saying is – there is a very complex process of arriving at a collective decision. It's a process. It's a process that's very dense but somehow it doesn't for part of the project. and that I think is something that we need to look at. And really be able to say – this is not a collective decision, this is a result of a whole process that's being happening. Part of it is the collective monitoring but really it starts from the base...** So that you know you are addressing that. Otherwise I really feel that development issues – because of the way we are processing them, because we lay the collective decision down, the development decisions get stopped there. We assume that alright, the collective is looking after the rest of it. and there is a danger that the collective itself also may ... I mean, a large number of NGO's is the case that the collective becomes reduced, it becomes more autocratic and it doesn't diffuse back again. Right. We are looking at For instance, those NGO's which are pro-active and actually not like you supporting a community process, but they are interfering in the community process. And you know that as a weak point.

I think the development perceptions with institutions and governments get framed because of this by and large trend. That we are not addressing behind the collective, the process that's happening. **2.06 And I think that in your case, this process is so strong and is not brought out. What is emerging from our discussion that this is actually the crucial part of your process. It's not the rest of it.** Rest of it is like everybody else. The crucial part is the process

that he is talking about and we are not actually addressing this. I mean you are addressing it but we are not putting it as THE critical component of the development scenario. In a way you need to actually turn it round a little bit and think of ways in which ... think of ways in which we can talk about this. **the fact that the federation is doing interpersonal comparison, is talking to individuals, is negotiating with individuals and this is actually the root of it all.** In that sense I can guess at the fact that what is Sen saying is this! they this is the voices of the individual. How it's heard that nobody is talking about. Who cares. How does it get process? It's a very very important aspect. I think we can over the days, we could also think a little bit about how we can open this up to a little bit more daylight from the institutional structures and in a way actually make those institutions and governments look at the last point which is the person concerned. Not the NGO, not the collective.

Nick - ... you can actually see that that person's priorities and perspectives are recognized and incorporated in the collective decision. 3.54 **One way that the donor can recognize that is not by recognizing each individual, because there's too many of them. Especially if you are trying to scale up. It's by recognizing the fact that the process by which they have been incorporated is high quality process. And that high quality process is characterized by a high quality conflict resolution, arbitration processes, information flows, use of knowledge etc. so provided the process is characterized by certain qualities then the donor should recognize that the achievement is going to be high quality,** what ever it is, whatever the achievement is.

Sheela - that for me is very important and I have a serious challenge which I am not able to address is how to do that. Because the way in which ...

Nick - that's what I have been trying to do myself for years, I don't think I've got the answer either but between us we probably could somewhere...

Sheela - because I think that the real issue here is that what we are all articulating is that in the final analysis what you are talking about is a high quality of communication and organization in those communities whose aspirations have been suppressed for such a long time. 5.34 **Like one of the things which we didn't discuss, which was an interesting thing which the federation does when it does this housing training is - it says - start dreaming about what kind of a house you want. And it's so hard for women to even start visualizing and dreaming. Because all they are doing is - their whole life is a set of reactions,. Reaction to this, reaction to that. So you are actually creating a process of transformation when you are saying - what is it YOU want? And then how do you envisage. And then you dream and dream and dream and the you say - ok, that is our dream. What's the first step of what is achievable, that is acceptable to all of us. And that's how the norms get set.** And we have a knowledge system that treats these process and these details and these things as trivia. We live in a culture in which story telling and anecdotal things are all - these are the little boxes in the discourse, they are not ... while, whether it's Jockin taking or the federation talking we use those stories to portray the feeling the strategy, the ideas and the processes. And they are much more powerful in the communication of the idea and the thought and the emotions that go with those thoughts than just a theoretical framework. Yet those two have to link together to make that change occur. You've got to have a theoretical framework in order to present it to donors.

Alison - and also to other NGO's that then see what they are doing and try to mimic and understand it

Jane – this is backtracking just a little bit. What you were just saying about, I hadn't realized this process ... I hadn't fully understood what you talked and it would match the women's saving, we've heard how that process works but it's just the first time you've mentioned that they actually are encouraged to dream about what they would imagine would be their home. And I think from what I have been understanding of Amartya Sen's interpretation of the individual is that that when you are working with individual, there is this hidden potential and character that's within each of us. In that sense and that respect we are not poor at all. No one is, even if you take absolutely everything away. You still have this extraordinary imaginative or aspiration or value, human value that's been passed down somehow within the oral tradition that allows you to be able to dream these things. and it's this extraordinary capacity of the individual that often times isn't addressed. And what you are saying in a sense is that this is very much part of the process you are trying to instill in the actual...

Sheela – Not instill. It's something we all are .. you talk to Celine and you talk to me, when we started SPARC we had no idea that we would be part of such of such an exciting process. Sometimes all of sit together and we dreamt about that we would make change happen. That whether there are slum dwellers or us, that we can actually enthuse other communities to start exploring these ideas or do these things. Jockin what would you say about that? Would you say that? That's also a way of thinking.

Jockin – We start with ... I don't know, all over, wherever we have the federation. IN South Africa any other countries also. I remember last time we went with the minister of Housing – Captain Babu (from Uganda) I told him – why don't you dream about how city look like, how you want to look like. The first thing in the community is that – first we have to sit and dream what you want. And I said - ..

Celine/Sheela – they call it the dreaming exercise.

Jockin – they used to dream, sometimes people said – what dream? I said – close your eyes. Tell me where is your broom to be kept? Where you want to sleep. Where you want to keep your utensil, where you want your kitchen, where you want to sleep, where you want to wash your clothes, where you want ... I think that time we used to have fun. 15-18 years now. Even now in the new community whether it's the first meeting or the third meeting, you have to go through the process once. You have to have a dream and talk about everything. Then ALL individualistic things come out. In the first instance when we are .. these 536 families – first thing was that we told them, after the dream and this, about 30-40 meetings. I said why don't you bring your houses. That was one of the best things. Everybody brought – somebody brought four room house, somebody brought three room house, somebody brought bungalow with car parking. I said you are living in a street ... definitely they designed a car park house and brought it to us in Byculla. It took half an hour only for us to laugh. Who all brought what kind of houses. And have you talked this one, beggar, three bedroom house. This even today happened in – I think last – three months back we did the same exercise in Uganda. There is a Muslim community. I told them, go and bring your dream house. All the dream houses 200 sq meters. This is the main exercise. This is the beginning of the people joining the federation is after the dream. Then we go for a model house, housing exercise. Once you put the model house, 90% join in, in the federation mainstream.

Sheela – Jockin the other thing which I wanted to talk about, which I was talking just now is also the whole transformation that occurs when you are not just the leader of your five six houses but you are helping 5000 others. What change does

it do you. That's what I am talking about. 12.44 **Because the Federations momentum and power is also in the fact that it is not only helping each other it is helping others to negotiate with the state, with everybody. So they are promoting their agency. They are not just saying ok now I am doing this, I am doing this, it's in my own backyard.**

Jockin – that's the only problem. They are all part of this kind of thing but as poor people they might not be able to articulate to say like that – ok, I met the planning commission member, I met the Minister, I am talking at that level. I think in the last week we are having a debate. I am having a problem because there's a Parliamentary Committee coming to look at our transit camp etc. when I talked to all the people, straight away they said – where were these buggers and bastards when our houses were demolished. No water, no toilet, no nothing. Why these buggers didn't come. We don't want to answer to them. I have to go and convince them so much that you have to respond to the parliamentary committee. Which is coming and looking. Now they are feeling crisis. Now they are saying - they are living in inhuman conditions. The women straight away reacted – that time you bulldozed me, that time we never had anything. No water, toilet, everything was there, you have bulldozed.

So people, in different time they can not ideologically or collectively articulate in a big way. That they are doing this and that. Today I think maybe because we have large numbers like in the last six months or so we have been continuously talking about how all of us come together between 5-10 lakhs people together spend one day, two day. It's a big thing. Which people are talking about. They are saying why not call all the federation of Bombay people to hear ... which will be between 5lakhs to 10 lakhs to spend two days, including one night.

Alison – is it a proposal

Jockin – by September we are all working on that big thing. We are thinking about Shivaji Park. Except, it's a big political change. Our worry is that once you do that, then do you think the politician will allow you to live. Then it means that we are debating now at the Federation level – we should not do that, the minute you do you are exposing to the politicians, the political parties and you will be killed. Now at least you are allowed to grow.

Sheela – you have to live with that .. and constant because of their fear of ...

Break of five minutes. 15.57

Romi – I'll just recall and recap a little bit where we were before the discussion. One is that we were discussing only about SPARC at the moment that there is a very valuable process that is going on which is addressing individual idiosyncrasies, desires etc. there is a collective system that monitors it, exposes it simply because as I understand from Jockin, Individual aspirations are wild sometimes. They can be anti-social, they can be harmful. So you need a mechanism by which you not only hear it but you temper it down to it's normal ... to what becomes a social decision eventually.

What I feel very much is a direction we should be looking at is – first of all that this process is not exposed sufficiently in the work of SPARC. Not exposed, to me it's the most crucial part of the developmental process. Because, there's a wide range of NGO's working and the way the donor mechanism works is that people look only at the upper end and there's a good enough to give the donation. So the developmental process is very much harmed.

Secondly that – in many ways this addresses the central issues that Sen is raising in terms of ... as I understand from what Jockin is saying is – his starting off point

is the change that people want in his community. Individuals want. Even if it is housing, lets take for example the fact that housing project has come as a possibility of a choice to pursue. Then there is a process he is putting into it, where he is finding out what is the individual choice for this. it may not be that housing is the first choice they have, but it's arrived from somewhere; I think it all consists of that, there's a package of whatever it is that's come and the possibility of a site has become for some external reasons housing has come to ... so you are in negotiation with individual decisions.

Another question that comes to me is whether we should therefore in the communication process tool – whether we should try and formalize that is some way. Record it, I won't say formalize it, record it and make something out of it. To demonstrate the fact that there is a developmental process is successful because right from the top to the bottom there is a unified, you can't break it arbitrarily, perceptually. So that's very important to me.

One or two questions which I think Jockin will be able to answer me – a. suppose somebody like Laxmi, goes funny. How do we judge that? What is the process? Suppose Jockin goes funny sometimes and he becomes irrational. What is our mechanism of judging that, managing it or correcting it or saying – this is not on. And he says 'no, I represent the Federation. I know. You don't know, you are from the outside.'

Nick – conflict resolution..

Sheela – it's renegade. It's like when based on the fact that you have a degree of power and autonomy because of what you have done you misuse that ..

Celine – or you can make wrong judgments

Romi – I am saying that if we are saying that - here is the way that SPARC is functioning and that another NGO comes in. I mean you have 30 years of field experience and working and there is a lot of subtle inter- adjustments going on here. But somebody takes that model, then it can go ... you can have somebody like in his position going a little bit off. It happens.

Celine – but I think one of the ways we have been able to or we've been very conscious of that right from the beginning and created a counter balance at every level that we work with. Eg, SPARC neutralizes the Federation when it goes haywire. The federation neutralizes SPARC ..

Romi – how? Lets take an example of how would you model it..

Sheela – I think we have to discuss it at two levels. And I just made a note to myself that we need to explain the relationship between SPARC and the Federation which we have not yet done. Then that intra-organizationally how does the federation deal with people at different levels who go wrong or who make a mistake or who might run away with the money or who might appropriate resources.

Celine – who may just want to go a different path.

Sheela – first of all – one of the most exciting and important aspects of SPARC's own evolution and functioning which I mentioned I the morning was that **21.33 when we started SPARC in 1984 we had an image, we had a dream that we would work in partnership with people's organization. We didn't know who these people's organizations were. We didn't know whether they would pop up from somewhere or whether we would create them.**

We had no idea. but we basically acknowledged at that point that we as middle class activists were not going to be able to reproduce ourselves, produce the kind of scale that is necessary for real change to occur and that organizational replication has to occur amongst communities. That our role basically would should be at doing what we are good at which is becoming intermediaries or bridge between what the people want and what they want to do and the larger formal institutional arrangement which owns and controls all the resources that the poor aspire to get.

22.31 and we had the spectrum of our old organization which had done everything wrong – wanted to control the process, didn't want to take risks , all those kinds of things as things that we said we will swear by, we will not do. So we knew what we didn't want to do, but we didn't know what we actually wanted to do. What we wanted to do emerged initially out of our relationship with these women's groups.

23.01 In early 1986 Jockin whom I knew many years ago reappeared in our lives. He came basically to check us out. And between say march of 1986 and June of 1986 it became very clear that he and NSDF were very interested in exploring a partnership with SPARC. For us the excitement of doing that was that here was a (I know Jockin from before, I knew he had his own federation) and they were basically making a mess of their management and administrative system. All these very talented community organization leaders who were lousy administrators, never got their accounts audited, lost their Charity commissioner number. All those kinds of things. but were basically people who for the last three four decades had fought with governments and municipalities, produced many exciting solutions and were intensely committed to the cause of the urban poor. But had never included pavement dwellers in their process.

The way in which I described this partnership was – that here was a bunch of men (and they were all men at that time) who were people who had defended their communities and were committed to creating their own organization which would seek to raise their voice and present their choices that poor people wanted to the cities. They needed an alliance with an organization that would be supportive, help them raise money, manage their financial systems, work in partnership with them in designing new things. That was what was attractive about us. What was attractive to us about the federation was who they were and what they represented and the fact that they already represented a very substantial independent people's process which we hadn't created. They were their own. When we started working together there was an agreement on Jockin and the federation's part that they would include the cause of the pavement dwellers as their central commitment; because that was our commitment. And they would bring the issue of women and their participation in their federation. A lot of people ask me today – did you work out the percentage of how many people should be part of your federation and I remember Jockin telling me – don't ask me how many women will come and be on the federation but we make a full blooded commitment that we will support and strengthen central role of women in development processes. Today what you have is that more than 50% of the national leadership of the federation are women. Of the NSDF not Mahila Milan. **So Mahila Milan which was actually this organization of these six settlements that we talked to in the morning, became a sister organization of NSDF which also became a way by which local women's collectives in slums got their capacity and identity built to manage local affairs. And it produced these women with these experiences and these capacities, which as they got more and**

more confident began to participate in the regional and national and international processes. So, they got over a period of time this process.

And I think the reason that happened so successfully is that the core leadership of NSDF had a very high commitment to that women's process. It wouldn't have happened if just SPARC went on after it. because we were all women and we were all very committed to that. It wasn't that which made it change. It was because Jockin and the Federation leaders championed that process and as the role models to the other men in the community actually began to share why women produce sustainable people's organizations. that for me is – in the morning Nick was asking – what about the men and where are they. It actually produced a very good rationale of what men did, what women did, why women had to be given a central leadership of asset management in communities. All those kinds of issues came up very well.

28.08 In return of all these things that the NSDF agreed to do for us what we did was – we agreed that we would back off from participating in the internal explorations of the federation. And the reason for that was that very often as middle class professionals you brains sort of work very fast and you keep pushing your ideas and you keep making suggestions and that often derails the way in which people's processes move. The whole thing of allowing people to make those decisions, to make those choices, to meander. Those were the kinds of things that earlier we would have been very impatient about. Why is it taking so much time. Because we were also tuned in and socialized on how to manage a process, how decisions are taken. So there was a re-socializing of processes with us and ultimately we have produced a very symbiotic relationship on which SPARC is the guardian or the trustee of all the financial aspects that we have in the form of grants and donors. But we don't execute any of those projects. The federation executes all the projects. If the federation not to execute the funds that we have, we are finished. How do we explain that we have not been able to use the money. if on the other hand we don't agree with what the federation is doing then again that gets jammed.

And we spend a lot of our time as these three organizations negotiating how to address these issues. These negotiations for us are the way that we get trained to dialogue and negotiate with everybody else. Because these are very important for our joint survival. We argue and we discuss and we don't always agree but we believe that those negotiations and that dynamic helps all these organizations to grow and evolve. For instance when I met you in London and got this proposition I had to come back and talk to Jockin and talk to all of us here to say – shall we explore this idea. And for us, from our side this process is the initial exploration because everything that we were talking over there sounded very esoteric and very airy-fairy and where will all this fit with what we want to do? We don't know. So, it reflects another thing which we do in our relationship with each other, if somebody says – it's a good idea, you must try it out then the other group indulges you. OK, you think it's important, lets try it out. But if it fails, then you accept it fails. So tomorrow the federation might say – 'no, no this is very important, this has to be done', then I'll say 'no, no, no, this is not very good, it's a problem.

Nick – so why did you accept this proposition....

Sheela – let me finish this then Jockin says he'll tell you. In all these things it's the arguments that you put across into validating what you are saying. Why do you think it is important, how do you think it's important. What will it help open up. If I strongly that it should be done, then the federation will accept it. Tomorrow Jockin will say –'no, no this is very important for the community, these risks have to be taken, we have to do this'. then I say this is not acceptable, this is not part of the contract... he says 'no, but this is very important, people must

do it this way'. Like he gave the examples of those 72 houses, there are hundreds of examples like that at different levels. Then we say ok, we will go with that because that is important. Then after that there is no discussion – 'you said like that and seem you made a mistake'. It's OK. After that it's a collective decision.

32.26 As an NGO there are I think three four very significant choices that we have made which make us capable of becoming a partner of the federation. Because we have this problem all the time. A lot of people say – there are so many NGO's , why doesn't the federation work with other NGO's. here it's because of the kind of autonomy that the federation gets, the kind of partnership process that occurs, the kind of risks that we take. And the capacity to explore things which are new and different and unknown. These are the characteristics that lot of NGO's don't want to take on because it goes outside their comfort zone. And the federation is constantly pushing us out of our comfort zone, of what is familiar, what is known, what is understood. And each time you make that choice you get more confident of dealing with it. **So, in that sense these last 20 years have produced the kind of capacity to deal with those things. In a way that we have to now start articulating to help others do it. but the fact is that the kind of buffering we have to do between what donors expect and demand and what Federations want us to do required us to produce a whole lot of space between those aspirations and these. And we are constantly battling with those issues as SPARC. As the Federation does between what individuals and small communities want and what we bring to them as what are the things that have to be done related to these resources that we get.** That kind of tension and anxiety and negotiations and dialogue are dynamic and they continue.

Romi – How do you get informed that you are actually listening to the federation.

Celine – when the Federation is happy.

Romi – how, what's the mechanism?

Agarwal – the constant dialogue gives the reaction of the federation to the working of SPARC.

Romi – no, you have the dialogue with a representative of the federation? (Yes) which is a what?

Celine – with the Mahila Milan leaders and the federation leaders. There are 50 cities in India whose leadership gives you a message of what they want to do with their city. They give the federation that message, the federation transfers it to SPARC and says 'ok, we want to construct a toilet in Lucknow. Are we ready for it, do we have the money, what do we do?' So you jump into it.

Romi – but what is the mechanism of that representation taking place of the NSDF. How are the leaders created?

Sheela – Jockin can talk about it.

Jockin – you are asking about the structure?

Romi – no, I am saying how does SPARC know it is dealing with the real representatives of the slum federation. Basically that. I am talking to an MLA because in the last election he was elected as MLA, so I know. But how do I know that you are dealing with ..

Celine – the authentic leader..

Romi – yes! It's a different question that – somebody one of them goes wonky, how do you know he's gone wonky? What's the mechanism by which it's regulated.

Jockin – I think there are four or five levels of dialogue that takes place between SPARC, and federation Mahila Milan. We have a annual meeting, for Bombay and national. The large meeting. The biggest one, about 10,000 people attended. That is where SPARC presence is there, get to know what are the theme, what is the message of the federation, what is it talking ..

Romi – the federation has an annual meeting,

Celine – convention..

Romi – convention

Jockin – Every month we have a meeting in one city or the other. One region, suppose south region

Alison – how many people are those?

Jockin – most of the time... the smallest gathering is about 500. the biggest gathering is about 10-15000. in the south 67 cities come together, have a meeting. I am trying to give where are the communication. One is at this level and there the messages. Then there are small group city wise meetings. And Bombay city meets is the four Federations – Railway, Airport, all the federations meet together. That is also between 500 to 2-5000. this is where the main message of the federation ..

Romi – this is a formal federation, it's a registered society..

Jockin – NO registration. We don't ... at least till I die I won't register it, then somebody will register it. we don't believe in this registration so it's not registered. But there are – like today we have 51 buildings. All the 51 is getting registered.

Romi – who owns these buildings?

Jockin – the co-operative society. Which is part of the federation like. Today it's a kind of federation asset. But technically it goes to that particular co-operative society, including the land.

Sunder – these are the buildings where people have been resettled, which you will see tomorrow.

Jockin – resettled and wherever we are building all those kinds of things.

Romi = now, who then administers the federation? There is a board or there's a .. what is it a collective approach..

Jockin – we have a collective leadership. There are five national leaders. Then there are city level leaders. There is all around society leaders. From each society. From society and to the federation. For Railway, there are 460 cooperative societies. The former Railway slum Dwellers Federation. That is

divided into Western railway, Central railway, Harbor line, then down from Kurla to down, Kurla up, like this it's been divided completely.

Romi – how do these society leaders get selected?

Jockin – the society leaders get selected because the society is marked between two poles or one region, one particular block. That whole people get together, select their own leaders.

Romi – and then similarly, those people go and select one for the town?

Jockin – no. then they go for three to five, everywhere there is the three to five time ... Eg, the general body of the Railway Slum Dwellers Federation is about 1,200 people. If you want to meet once a year. It meets twice a year. And then there's a cooperative society regular weekly meeting and monthly meeting. Federation meets very often. That one particular federation. Then parallelly the Airport Slum Dwellers Federation. From here to there.

Romi – so we have got a sort of consensus leadership that emerged in the process of ...

Jockin – it continuously changes. Whoever ... the main focus here is working leader. Whoever is not working is eliminated, directly pushed out and they are no more as leaders.

Alison – do they get an honorarium?

Jockin – not all of them. We hardly have about 350 people who get traveling allowance. There are about 1000 people sometimes once a while they may get some money (some money in the sense maybe Rs 100) Actively working about 1,200 people work daily in Bombay.

Romi – it's like a voluntary work, they do something else..

Jockin – It's a voluntary work. They are all employed, fully employed somewhere, BMC or government or all those things.

Alison – they can be a leader and work full time.

Jockin – they are the leaders who are working. The federation is running by these 3,200 people who is working every day.

Romi – 41.00 in a way the relationship between the Federation and SPARC is this – SPARC is actually certain institutes that management

Jockin – they are the (I call in my kacchhaa-wasshaa, my language) they are the horrible washing machine. Get dirty and put it in the machine that washes and puts it back. You watch, you put some soap, you put some surf and bring some English soap, some American soap, sometimes German soap into the washing machine. So we very clearly don't touch this proposal writing, auditing, accounting and I even write dirty vouchers. You organize a workshop, it will cost you 10,000. The same workshop for us will cost only 1,000. so the auditor will say, no, nothing, we'll not accept it. I will say I will not also accept your argument. I will spend 1,000. this is the way of spending. This is how it is in the federation. That is where SPARC – directly they don't, the relation is going very well basically, they are not sitting on our head and dancing. Most of the time.

Romi – but in fact the projects are SPARC projects, as far as the donor is concerned.

Sheela – yeah.

Jockin – all the fund completely I remember there are many many agencies who have come to us saying – don't worry, we will give you so much money, why don't you get away. Forget about SPARC, you are doing everything, you have this quality, your survey, this that. I said, this is a problem. 42.41 **Now here, this works because of this three; otherwise it can't work. I worked earlier for 15 years away from NGO or being an agent of NGO and all these things. It didn't work, it didn't click. This is up to 1985. After 85 we worked and we concretely believe this is the only way it could work. There is no other way. They can not do what I do. I can't do, I don't want to do what they should be doing.** If suppose somebody, I remember many NGO's come or sometimes others also will say – why don't you take laptop and go to the slum. I say – no I don't want, I already carried a hajjam box not this box. I don't want this box to be there with me. I don't want this kind of thing. This is not my role. I have a very clear way of collecting information but I don't have the knowledge and experience which I don't want to transfer into this... we still have this small conflict – 43.51 **the information collection is ours. We give it to you, you do all that data analysis this that, everything they should do it. it's not our job. Organizing the people is our job. You can't do it. you can't collect qualitative data, only we can do qualitative data. Impossible. It's a challenge. You can't do it, we will do it. at the same time we can't do the analysis, you do, which we will accept it. this analysis is fine but we will debate on that. So we have a clear line of division of labor. What we will do even they know very well and what they can do they know.**

Alison – you sit on SPARC's board.

Jockin – no, no. I am an invitee, I go there, I see get headache and come back. Sometime I get headache, sometime I get migraine, sometime I get mutton and chicken very well. Sometime I enjoy that whole meeting and able to express what is our concern. Like I think about 2-3 years back all on a sudden I went there, I went and talked to money- millions of millions. I said 100 crores rupees next year.

Sheela – 5 years ago

Jockin – five years ago. The whole board was – oh, my god. But that time, what we are going now, that 100 crore was piddly. I should not be talking about it. 1000 crores. Because that is the federation grown in that way – now we can see whole city. I still remember the first press conference of SPARC. After collecting the Pavement Dwellers data, Sheela and Srilata and key people are sitting on the dais, talking to the press. The whole press was attacking them. 'what is your alternative?' I think both those women they could not open their mouth, they could not say anything. They didn't say anything at all. We don't know what is it, we don't have the answer. Now I said – after ten years you have to shout and tell them – this is the answer. And we have very clearly – and that's what – very recently talking to many of them, therefore Mr Agarwal and kind of same people, and Dr Sunder Burra now – we say that in two years we can completely change the Bombay city if you have the political will. Just two years. There are scientific reason is – give me 1,2,3,4,5 – what scientific information you want. Today State government doesn't have the which we have. All, complete detailed information. I don't know how much money that will cost. This is where between SPARC and us.

I don't think we will ever be able to break. We can not cope with any other NGO at all. Impossible.

Romi – and you are not dealing with anything else except the federation. O it's not as if you have some other 500 projects.

Sheela – actually this is a very interesting issue to bring in. Just like lot of people ask the NSDF – why do you want to work only with SPARC and not with us. It is not as if local federations don't work with local NGO's and explore that relationship. Those things happen. But at pace, at the level that they work with SPARC. Similarly we have a lot of people who say – why doesn't SPARC do consultancy and help these communities too. And our response to that is – the reason why we produce these kinds of results is that there is a dedicated relationship which nurtures these processes and produces these outputs. You can't reproduce those things by this sort of quick going there, doing something, like go as a consultant, design something, come back. We feel that doesn't work.

47.56 And we believe that it is this long term investment in collectivizing and producing this sort of larger network of people who are able to produce this whole learning arrangement and capacity building arrangements - that produces the political change. We are very clear that as NGO's we can not produce political change. We can make a representation on behalf of people, we can open the doors for people to negotiate but we can not produce that political change. And that even if we help to produce a policy we won't be able to actually deliver the out put of a policy. Today our organizational alliance get lot of credibility locally because we not only produce some policy change but we actually produce scalable output that demonstrates that that policy works. That, this relationship produces.

Alison – you do work with some or the federation does work some other NGO's?

Romi – what about sadak chhap and all this, is that part of the federation?

Sheela – yes, that's the junior partner of the federation.

Alison – I was just wondering... with DAWN, you are sort of recommending a sort of initiative with DAWN or working with the federation in Orissa. Just explain why you would work or how you choose, you define that that is a good NGO or that you are willing with the NGO. What is it that allows you to make ...

Sheela – any NGO that is willing

Celine – any NGO that is ready to make of commitment of saying that – we want to build capacities of poor communities, we are ready to invest there. We are not ready to invest in NGO's who want to build capacity themselves.

Nick – and how will you now it

Alison – how will you judge that.

Celine – they make a choice..

Sheela – by trial and error

Celine - .. and they make a choice. They say – ok, our full time business is – we want to create this federation.

Sunder – also sometimes we have thought that some NGO will work that like that, when it hasn't then we have withdrawn from that process also.

Alison – how do you know it's not working, just give me

Jockin – Alison just one example of Poona. Poona, Shelter Associates. Few persons got together, they want to explore it, they don't know head and tail about development and we are not saying experts. But we go with them slowly. They developed. All on a sudden they started talking the language of – We know everything, we tell what you do. You don't tell.

Alison – so it would have been the federation locally that told you that ..

Jockin - .. the local federation when they grow ... slowly they grow. See, we help them to build the NGO also. We have to build up the federation also. It was working together. All on a sudden the NGO started saying – 'uh, we tell what to do, you don't tell us what to do. NO.' In language, in presenting, in putting on to the government across; we are fighting with the Poona Municipal Corporation, you have to listen to the people. NGO tells, 'shut up. They have to sit behind. We are the one, they don't know anything. You can't entertain them.' And a very clear example. The toilet. We went there as a federation, convinced the corporation, the commissioner accepted. We were together with the women and it was exciting and 20 crores worth of toilets was to begin. Immediately the NGO kept the people out when they put up a proposal and said –we want to do it. I got a shock 'what are you doing. We have worked so hard, struggled, brought, made the women to sit and talk to the commissioner and you took the contract.' In the name of the community they hire the contractor, they did everything, people didn't know nothing! That is the day we took a decision. I said, whatever this NGO want a toilet, you give it to them, remaining toilet to us. And we just give it to the community, the federation. The federation built at least 15 times more than what they could build. More concrete, the whole toilet program in Poona is Mahila Milan vs. Shelter Associates.

Celine – the whole intention there was to make an efficient toilet that worked perfectly well, that was monitored and managed by the professionals, which they thought communities can not do. I think that's the intention. You feel you have to control it, otherwise they will mess it up.

Jockin – Seven toilets they took it. Used Mahila Milan name. Mahila Milan was not involved at all. Even SPARC. Nobody involved. All the 8-9 crore rupees given to the people, produced 100% results. Whole city is having toilet.

Alison – the mechanism by which you knew it was going wrong was not Sheila talking to whatever it is..I was just trying to understand how you knew it's started to going wrong. Is the relation ship ...

Jockin – It was going wrong to the extent – the community leaders were told, don't go sit next to Jockin. How can you go and meet Jockin with these beautiful saris? Don't do these things, you have to talk at a distance. You can't go with him when he is seeing the commissioner. This is the message I was getting from the people. Is it right. This message coming to me, then I was passing. And Sheila continuously kicking me from left and right and everywhere she kicked me and saying – 'patch up. It's a good NGO'. Called so many meetings. Dr Sunder Burra explored South-West conference. How many times he tries to organize conference. ... this is very real story, if you really want to understand, that could be taken from each day one, to final day. And find out how NGO does it.

Alison – It's a bit like your question asking – how you know if the leaders are going wrong and this is case apparently now with the NGO's going wrong. The information sort of comes thorough the Federation system.

Celine – and government

Sundar – also when we used to interact I was also ..

Jockin – he was completely in favor of helping the NGO. Please give one more chance, one more chance, ten more chance, twenty more chance, hundred chance...

Sunder – In the hope that these people would reform. But then you could see that they didn't believe in community participation – finally they even said that. And then you know at some stage after so many of them we said - then let's take different...

Jockin - .. how do you expect these people have.. we are also architects we are engineers. They don't have the quality, they don't know the knowledge. But they built the best toilet. The toilet which they build collapsed today. But the Mahila Milan take responsibility of repairing that.

This is very very concrete example – what kind of NGO's ...

Celine – it's also the choice you make, Mahila Milan toilet could also collapse but it's giving them the choice to make that mistake, the right to make the mistake, screw up completely and it's ok to do. And that's what builds that quality itself.

Sheela – and like we hedge resources to deal with those problems later.

Celine – and that is the essence of this ...

Jockin – Resource management – last one minute. Resource management, information management, they didn't trust on the community. They said – you can't, your information collection can't be qualitative. To that level it went on.

Romi – I think we have almost come to a close of this thing today. I will just ask one more question to Jockin. Which is simply this that – now that the size of the Federation that you have is a National level federation and many of the problems that you have been facing for so many years come from a result of mis-government, come from a result of various levels of injustice that are put in the system. You are almost reaching a critical mass where you could create change of a nature that all of this energy that you have been fighting could be removed essentially. What happens when you reach this size, because you are of that critical size now. Although you are not a political party, but you could exert sufficient pressure not for you to be every day be bludgeoned with stupid problems which are being caused by corruptions and mis-governments. So what kind of choice is before you at this stage?

Sundar – before he answers I'll only mention some interesting facts. The significance of which we are still to fully appreciate. After this, Railway resettlement in particular, but then we have been doing Airport resettlements, some other resettlements, generally slum, pavement work. In the last year or so, I think he has, in the last one year? Two years. What has happened is that Jockin is now being recognized as a mass leader and this is a new phenomenon. Being approached by all the top people of political parties. Now they see that there is a

mass base here which they want to capture and align with and so on. And now all sort of blandishments being offered. All sorts of toffees and things.

Jockin – I think what we are trying to is – I don't know. It is not my individual dream, it is a collective dream. Without getting in to politics. Bombay along with two or three more cities will be able to demonstrate – we can still run, complete run the whole city by the poor without getting into politics. Like today I have about 14 municipal wards. We don't have to campaign and all. Sit at home get elected. 90% voters are the federation. That kind of a situation. So there we still allow whichever political party they want go ahead with it. I don't know what we are trying to .. what may happen the way we are going in next two or three years, it's quite possible.. a non-political organization, community, people's organization can determine certain policies and work, without aspiring to political office, that's all.

Romi – how you can actually influence development, I think finally – because that's a slightly different.. one can influence political decisions and wide range of things. but if the developmental process doesn't get influenced then the political process takes over and I absolutely agree with you that if you combine the two, it's a disaster. Because this is what's been happening since independence. The critical question is whether you can separate the developmental process from the political process. And that is the challenge.

Jockin – it's a challenge, it's possible and we will, I don't know, we will demonstrate. I think if once we do this in Bombay then the whole of India is nothing.

Romi - I agree with you.

Celine – this is very contrary to the belief that most NGO's think that if you are a slum dweller, as a political representative many problems are solved. And we found that very disastrous. So we can't even begin to look in that direction.

Romi – yeah. In a way it' goes back to our independence struggle, when it began with Gandhi it was a non-political struggle. When the critical mass was reached, it became political and the congress organization took over something that ... in many ways I think the parallel still exists in your work. He was not able to separate out the pressure from independence from the political process partially because the British people who founded the political party (the Congress was founded by the Britishers) advised him that you can not gain independence without politics. Politics is an inherent part of the independence process. So he went over on to that side and agreed to the formation of the congress and with the British and then eventually the Indian leadership took over. And it was successful, by and large, I should say we were lucky we had no...1.01.36 **but in this case I think what you are on edge of is – whether the developmental process and the resources for development can be separated from political control which is a very very hard struggle.**

Jockin – I think the time where the kind of moving to the whole technology world and all this democracy all we have been talking about – it is possible that development could be separated from political and this is what we are trying to demonstrate very clearly. Because 60-70% of our leadership has all tested all political party. I can have a Shiv Sena guy, can sit with me and talk Shiv Sena's bad as much as possible. I have got a Congress guy who is a district President sit and talk to an MLA how bad your party is, but he was there. And he is the Federation guy now. I got a BJP Secretary for Bombay city who left BJP and joined the federation and said – this party could not give me my house, but now I

am giving 200 houses to somebody. In political ... it will not happen. This is where the political awareness. If anybody want to go to the politics we say straight away 'go.' 'want to contest, if you can able to win our sympathy, but you join somebody, gone!' but he is so badly eliminated from the community process, he can't come back.

Alison – he has to leave the community?

Jockin – yes, there are so many, I don't know how many, we have about 5-6 councilors. These days there is a big change now. Not like earlier, like he's put it, very properly. Those days where we as a NGO ... today Member of parliament, member of assembly and Councilor have to come to our office, to the federation. If they want a toilet, they have to come here, if they want something to be .. they have to come here, some road need to be resettled, they have to come there. The canal is not working, they have to come to the federation, the sewer has to be opened, the monsoon is coming, from 3 days they have just been harassing... it's the other way round. 1.03.56 **And if we manage this scene, if this kind of Member of Parliament to a local person to come to you and if he not yet got attracted to that political power and the money and what thing, you will win the battle. This is our test period which is going on now, from now to the next election. Maybe in two three years if we can still hold on to what we are today then I think this will be demonstrated** and Bombay we will be able to .. earlier we worked with 15% of people of Bombay, with slum dwellers. Then we moved to 20%. Today I can very clearly say 60% of Bombay slum population covered by us.

Romi – I think that the larger idea, the bigger idea of what the federation qualitatively would change to from having addressing the wrongs of administration. A goal which is not there but it has to be realized. I think in this sense one could learn a lot from these non-political approach that Sen is putting before us. That you can have a higher goals which are non-political which address some more abstract things. That we are not demanding political things, we are demanding some kind of facility for us to sell things the way we want to sell things. live the life that we want to carry. We are not interested in ... In that sense I think that there is the very interesting discussion can go on. For the Federation to now begin to address the larger issues because you know you have come from the and you are continuing to have an individual dialogue that the political process is not giving us. Because the fellow is elected for five years he disappears. Here you have a very valuable kind of a flow, right from the bottom to the top. And for the larger idea now to express itself and for the individual aspiration to be to be represented through your organization; I think in direction if we change, then these goals can be realized as non-political goals. And expressed as non-political goals, expressed as a kind of removal of obstructions in the lives of ordinary people. Basically what should we do and I think, 1.06.35 **Sen's giving us the opportunity to take these as a more comprehensive goal international level to address it. That we are fed up with the obstructions that all of you are placing in front of us, we are capable of doing ten times more than you are letting us do and we are not interested in getting anything from you. We are interested in removing all this rubbish that you put in front of us, so that we can move forward. That itself becomes a non-political agenda because anytime you are trying to portray a society that doesn't exist, then you will have to come in a political agenda. That we have to achieve socialism, because we have to do this that or the other. Because we have to do this we have to do private enterprise. But when you are not expressing any utopia, but you are saying – just clear the road, that's all I want, don't worry where I am going.**

Jockin – we are trying to look at it. I don't know how far it is the collective wisdom of the whole federation. We are trying to look at it. we have a political process. We have a policy maker. But that policy making is not reflecting what the people want. It is we who are going to make, determine, what to be happen. You can not interfere. That is where we will be having two kind of thing. Without going into the politics without becoming elected and sitting there a make a policy maker- how you can be outside and be a policy maker.

Alison – people have to go but outside the political structure..

Jockin – people. It is people, it is majority. Today in Bombay city slum dwellers are majority, it's not the other side of it. but here, once we go, the way I would look at it from the federation and the SPARC approach – suppose tomorrow, which I have been telling in the last six month, with the big bureaucrats everybody – close your eyes and look at Bombay city without pavement dwellings. You will see a new Bombay, absolutely which you never even thought. Only old people who are 50 years back, they have seen that Bombay without pavement dwellers and what they call dirty. And we have worked out a system by next two years this will be true. And then part of the middle class which you looked at the city's what they wanted, they will join in mentally with us. They will not join mentally with the politicians. They will support us. It means then we are the majority, not the politician, not political parties. And there can be a dialogue between us in determining what the city should be doing, what the city should look like, how the city should run will be determined by this process.

Nick – I have great difficulty with the idea that you can divorce development from politics. I know that politics with the big P is something you can be very disillusioned with. The current political processes with the big P that half the political parties behave in a sort of despicable way and know you don't want to associate with that and become muddled and become dirtied by that association. But still what you are talking about is a group of people, the majority of people who are 405 of the inhabitants of Bombay. That is in classical terms the polity that's the people. That is politics. Politics and development can not be separated. The fact that the current political process is dirty and you don't want to have anything to do with it, is one thing. but actually politics and development are inseparable, they are ...

Sheela – but Nick, this is exactly the thing which Jockin is trying to unbundle.
1.10.49 **When we started talking about working with Pavement Dwellers, we started talking about - you have a right to dream, you have right to aspire. The response of the NGO's was – you don't have a solution, how can you take them on this ride? And what you have is that you have a committed discourse and an exploration that in itself and of it's exploration produces the answer.** I think what I want to draw as an analogy here is, I agree with you that it is the contemporary belief that most social movements and processes at some time flow into political processes. That is the way historically things have worked, by and large. But if you examine those processes, ten years down the line, they corrupt and they destroy the very essence of what was powerful and innovative and working in those movements.
1.11.54 **What I think we are exploring without actually having a solution which already is designed is that it is an exploration to look at how can these demands and the aspirations of these huge number of people reform the people that you send for representing them. Which is for us the exciting part which is what is missing today.** Because today the way in which politics operates in our system is that you elect somebody and that person isn't accountable to you and then you choose him or her or a clone from another

party and there's not much to differentiate between the different parties when people actually come on the ground. So, what happens is that instead of getting involved in this party, that party and going as individuals you say – if we the people who are facing these problems, these difficulties and things, find solutions. And we say – ok, how can those who are presently in political representation, how can they be made to change and transform the way in which they think and behave to fulfill these aspirations. Because now, it's not just a matter of us going to them and saying – please give me a toilet, please give me this, please give me that. Now the federation and the community women, or the community groups are telling elected representative – we did so much without any help from you but there are so many more things that we need to do. And you have an opportunity to play a pro-active, constructive role in partnership with us. That's the negotiation which I see Jockin doing now, with all these people who come to talk to him. Because they sense that. Their first reaction is to see, can we get them into our party so that he can be an MP from our area and can he identify people who become MLA's and corporators whom we can appropriate. They come with that negotiation but when he decides not to go onto that train and says instead – why don't you do this, why don't you play this role, why don't you explore that..

Jockin – I think another very important thing is – from our relation, from SPARC federation when we started up – till today for anything

END OF MD 5

MD 6

Everybody generally talking . End of session in 2 minutes.