

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

13-16 MAY 2003.

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

Day 2. Morning Session
RSDF Building 98, Mankhurd

MD 7a

Sheela – Many of their other leaders have gone for that function so they are not here. *Introduce everybody quickly.*

Nick – now where are we?

Sheela - Now we are in the permanent relocation.

Nick – this was bought by the Railways?

Sheela – this was bought by the project, by the MUTP II project for relocation. These were the tenements we were saying that we fought for procurement, to buy.

Nick – but you were buying them from a different project?

Sheela – no we bought them from the government. That is where we breached the procurement laws that all the procurement over a certain amount was supposed to come out of a tendering process. *Ok. Our discussion there, till now has been that how we fought with the government to buy these for us. And we also discussed how all the societies were split. This is what we have done. Now introduce yourselves.*

Devkule – *My name is Mohan Shankar Devkule. (Sheela interprets in the background) I used to live in Govandi, Anand Nagar, next to the Bridge. Next to the Railway Tracks.*

Sheela – he used to live on the Railway track, next to Govandi Station. Near the bridge of Govandi Station.

Devkule – *I used to work in the BMC (Bombay Municipal Corporation)*

Sheela – he also worked in the BMC.

Devkule – *then I came into this work and formed a society there*

Sheela – and he got involved in the Federation's activity and started getting involved in creating a society of his own community

Devkule – *then I formed a few societies close by – for those who did not have a house to live in. I brought such people together.*

Sheela – and he was part of the Federation which began to get other people involved, people who aspired to move to get involved in RSDF. *We have talked about the RSDF.*

Devkule – *since then I have been working as President.*

Sheela – he is the President of the Railway Federation. Parab whom you met is the vice-president and Patil is the General Secretary.

Sulakshana – *namaskar. My name is Sulakshana Shankar Parab. I lived next to the railway line at Govandi, Tatanagar.*

Sheela – her name is Sulakshana, she used to live in Tatanagar which is one of the settlements along the railway tracks. *what do you do?*

Sulakshana – *I do the Mahila Milan organization and Mahila Milan savings and work for the Mahila Milan.*

Sheela – she is involved in all the Mahila Milan activities of savings and all the other activities that the .. *later we will discuss that in RSDF federation there was not much role for women in the beginning. Then how this came to you. Now you say.*

Malti – *My name is Malti Ambre. I lived on the central line at Ghatkopar. Even there I used to work with Mahila Milan and helped in savings. There I came into the organization and was there for five years and then I lived in the Transit Camp at Kanjur Marg for two years. Even there we work in Mahila Milan. Now It has been three years since I came to the building. (Sheela in the background)*

Meena – *My name is Meena Ramani. I used to live next to the Rail track in Ghatkopar on the central railway. I had a grocery shop in the house and did a wholesale business of garlic.*

Sheela – Her name is Meena Ramani and she also lived on the Central line at Ghatkopar. She has a business of selling garlic and she has a small grocery store which she runs.

Meena – *from there we came to the transit Camp at Kanjur Marg and then I came here.*

Sheela – then she came to the transit camp at Kanjur Marg and then here.

Now we will introduce ourselves. Alison.

Alison – My name is Alison, Alison Barret. I live in New Delhi (Hindi, Hindi) *My name is Alison. I live in Delhi. It has been five six years. I have come with them.*

Smita – *My name is Smita and before this worked in SEWA in Ahmedabad. Even that is an organization of the poor and works like you. Presently I live in London. I have worked earlier with SPARC, I have come many times and I am very happy to see your work. I have to learn a lot and that is why I come so many times.*

Nick – what did you say to them?

Smita – I just said that I am really really inspired by them, so I want to learn more and that's why I keep coming here.

Jane - I am Jane Samuels. I am doing architecture and I also do work with ... I am working here with Romi Khosla who is an architect.

Sheela – her name is Jane Samuels. And she and Romi Khosla are both architects. And they .. there is a very famous man called Amartya Sen, he got the Nobel Prize and there was a lot about him in the papers. How Jockin got the Magsaysay, it is an even bigger thing. he has some theories and they have come to see our work in light of those theories. The discussions about that are with Celine, Jockin and me and we told them that until you meet our Federation and hear their thoughts. And how we take their ideas and work. And the culture of our Federation in which we find out the wishes of the people and then people like us go forward. It is not that we go ahead and you are following us. We have come to show them how this happens.

Romi – *My name is Romi and I live in Delhi. I draw plans for houses. I have come to see your houses.*

Nick – I am Nick. In London at the moment I work as a volunteer with a Residents Association. A bit like your one..

Sheela – I'll tell them your history and tell them about .. I'll translate what you said there also.

Nick – Now currently I am chairman of the Residents Association in Westminster. And we have to negotiate with the Westminster council which is very difficult because they are very conservative and they manipulate things very cleverly. So it's a big question about whether you are co-opted into some corrupt system by being in that negotiation. That's what I am doing in my voluntary time and then (in London at the moment) then my work is trying to understand how groups like you operate, succeed what your problems are and then use that in my other work in other countries. Zambia and London and ...

Sheela – His name is Nick hall. Many years ago he used to put the roof on the houses how we do it with grass etc. then he came to London and in London there are lots of buildings where nobody lives. So many people enter those and live there. How we live in the slum, that is how they live there. He lived there for many years and then how we have negotiated for land, even they got land. And now he is a committee member in the same manner as we have the Ward Committee and Council and there are committee members. He is also a committee member. And he says that how it happens – that the people opposite take bribes and do wrong things – and we have great problems with working with them or it is possible that they take us with them. He works like that as a volunteer. Otherwise he works with an organization in different places. He has come here to see how we work. How we strengthen the organization. What is our view point. They see if they can use these things else where. I can be a good agent for you, all of you.

Michael – I am Michael Mutter and I work with the British Government in their International Development .. in London. My Prime concern is to see how international Development cooperation can come to assist what you are doing. And so with Sheela we have been developing this idea of CLIFF which will see some new projects coming up on a similar basis. We want to see how these kinds of approached to shelter can fit with the Amartya Sen approach to understanding hoe people can improve their own lives.

Sheela – His name is Michael Mutter and he work with the Foreign help organization called DFID of the British government. Many people have come to us

from DFID. We have had many DFID teams from India coming in here. And his work there is specially that the money from his government that is given to India or to others- whether it goes for the needs of the poor, how it is used. He is very interested in that. Specially with SPARC and NSDF he has begun a project – when we build these toilets or houses we take loans. And the money that we take in the beginning for Nirman. For Nirman he has given us money and when we build anything eg Transit, the government gives us the money at the end. (I am explaining why the CLIFF issue is important) Our organization should have so much money that we can give it in advance. To increase the work of our organization and our federation they have given us capital. How we take and loan and then repay it – they have given us money to roll it and to use it for our work, but increase it and learn from it.

And Amartya Sen has a theory that everybody has a right – each man or woman has a right that whatever their wish is – like since childhood we think we will do this do that – it is our right to think like this, to have wishes and it is our right to fulfill those wishes. So when we don't get the right because the government, what do we do and how the organization helps us. This discussion is for that. How we study the Federation (I am explaining how this is another form of evaluation and this is another) this is like a study. What do you do here.

Now this is how the operation map, in the communities it gets used. Explain the map. This is the same map you saw there. Now it's color coded.

Jockin – explain what the colors are.

Devkule – these in the green color, they have gone into buildings.

Jockin – those who have gone to the buildings are the green.

Romi – who have gone into these buildings.

Jockin – these building and other buildings also. We have altogether 48 buildings today. These are the green ones, who all over Bombay who had gone to the buildings.

Devkule – the ones in orange have gone to the transit.

Jockin – these are all in the transit camps.

Devkule – then these are in 138 B.

Jockin – transit camp also different color. 138 is where we sat. Another one is B. where we sat is A.

Devkule – this color are in Turbhe Mandala.

Jockin – this yellow is a transit camp in another site. We have three here.

Romi – how did you divide?

Jockin – I think that is an interesting debate, we should have it. 16.33 **How did you decide to go where.**

Nick – Before you answer that, in the map, why are some people seem not to be anywhere, there's a lot of houses, no color. Where are they?

Jockin – these with no color, what about them?

Devkule – *they have stayed where they were.*

Jockin – These are the people away from the safety zone but remaining to stay on the Railway Line, there itself. They are not demolished, they need not to be shifted, they can stay there for ever. And now our second step is – all of them all over Bombay, which is about 26,000 formed into co-operative society and we are negotiating with the State and the Center – give the land here itself and build our houses.

Nick – next to the Railway line.

Sheela – Beyond a certain – build a fencing and build the house...

Jockin – which is almost through now.

Nick – some exchanging the law with relation to the safety zone alongside the Railway.

Jockin – It's a Railway property, so they are asking market value. I have got them now to 5% of the market value. We will pay it in ten years time. 5%, not all. This is the only way the land has to be given to us. In some places we have agreed to give some land to them back, for various reasons. Rest will be given to them.

Romi – but why can you not combine commercial development with residences. Why do you have to take the view that you have to take a plot and develop it as a house.

Jockin – wherever there is a commercial option we are making the commercial option.

Romi – why can't you combine the two? In other words suppose you build the house on top and let us say – commercial space below..

Jockin – wherever there is potential for commercialization, for commercial sales or market. That we are doing in Dharavi. In Railway also, see when we negotiated with the Railway, that was the argument – I am giving so valuable land. Then I showed them – your value of land is 1, 2, 3, 4 only. Not all. It has no market. There's no access road. There's no infrastructure. So we are doing now, in this commercial and this and also we are mixing up some places, a middle class housing also. All the three combined. One section is slum dweller, another building is for commercial lease, selling it to the middle class and the complete market down.

Nick – If you are going to sell and develop some of them as middle class housing or commercial development then the price that you paid, 5%, is rather low. Surely the Railway people are thinking that you've cheated them a bit, by getting a cheap price and then doing a expensive development on this.

Jockin – I don't think so. Even what we are trying to pay the 5%, today as per existing law, we don't have to pay even that much. But we are the only group giving this much to the Railway. In a very potentially commercially valuable lands we are asking them – take over and give us this. See, which is not only the land – 5%. In fact if you talk to me – I will say technically we are giving 100% and taking 100%. We are giving all potential valuable land

Sheela – wherever it is very useful for them, we are vacating it and giving it to them.

Jockin – they are taking their liability on us. Giving their lands. That is at least, as on today, that is ten times more than the total resettlement cost, which they are benefiting than us. So they are more benefited than us. But since our work and effort and all are there, we are trying to equalize it. This is like Airport. In the airport, if the spend 400 crore rupees to resettle 23,000 families we are offering them 3000 crore rupees worth of land. Today you don't have a penny of that with you.

Sheela – it's gone in any case.

Jockin – it's gone. But through our approach, we are telling you to say – you'll spend 400 crores in return you are getting 3000 crores.

Nick – yeah, ok.

Smita – it will be interesting to discuss how you are valuing that 3000 crores.

Sheela – in their estimations, not ours.

Smita – then in yours it will be much higher then.

Sheela – no. it's all in terms of attributing the potential commercial use that they .. see, there is a plan made by the Railways for the last 15 years of expanding the Airport in Bombay. They are not able to do anything because whenever they talk about any issue of relocation, all the parliamentarians – congress, BJP, Shiv Sena – each one comes and they block it.

Alison – so you are removing the unfreedoms of the government.

Sheela – but more so the community. you look at the circumstances in which people are living.

Alison – you are actually removing their properties and your freedoms. You are actually benefiting on both sides.

Sheela – always! It's always win-win. Ok, let's finish with him. *Begin.*

Jockin – you were asking where the decision is getting done. Look at it. here.

Romi – My view of charts is that their savings rate seems to be much more than it is here.

Jockin – this is, one is Mahila Milan, one is Bank.

Romi – but in that, in the other place (transit) saving rate was much more than this. what is the difference?

Jockin – Large number of people ask us all the time, your target is house, your house is over, now is everything is over? Take the example here. I don't know. We are working on it. 23.08 **After people getting this permanent settlement, the savings have increased hundredfold. Everywhere. There is another settlement we have another 27 millions. Every day I think it is something between 30-40,000. all. Somehow people able to analyze, I think. That getting organized, getting this house, now to settle ourselves in terms of various kinds of ... employment, education all those things.**

Sheela – other aspirations open up.

Jockin – Lot of people have come to this . Before their housing, they had a problem. Now there is so many marriages taking place. I said – why? 'Earlier my daughter was not getting married because we are sitting in a slum'. The Minute you got to the safe house, the proposals are coming.

Sheela – *why are the savings more there? He said that the savings are less in transit and more here. He saw this and said it.*

Jockin – I am only trying to show you, yesterday I was trying to explain. 24.20 **Here is the cooperative society is the marking. This is the first decision making process. All these people sit together.**

Romi – they will go into one building?

Jockin – It was thought, no it is not one building. When they formed society, they formed like this. they never know they would be getting 114 houses. So here, this society, this, this, this are mixed up in 118. but for 18 years they were together as a one society, one society, society. So all this also, they are not going into the same, the same. Here the building is ok. Now only the process started, how to get married, how to amalgamate, How three can come together and select one building. How... get the people to select one building or the other. That process started.

Romi – maybe changed the definition of the cooperative also.

Sheela – yeah.

Jockin – yes, yes. Main change is – Definition of the society, principle, objectives. And what are the things, maintenance, collection process, leader process..

Michael – but the principal of collective responsibility remains.

Nick – and that's based on whether they live on the same floor (NO) .. you've got all these different societies, what are they related to? What is their origin. Based on origin..

Jockin – no, no religion..

Nick - not religion... on their origin

Jockin – there was a lot of difference of people who don't want to be with him. He was the Chairman of the society. 40% of these people have moved into other places. And these three in one. She is another one and he is another one. Like that all has changed. The whole leadership structure ..

Michael - .. changed since they've moved into this building.

Alison – I'd be interested in some of the issues and problems they are dealing with in the building. I don't know if you've got time to get on to it. within the building now, so – what the sustainability is of the society once you've got the house.

Romi – what problems you are having?

Jockin – *what are the problems in your building?*

Malti – In our building the problems – we have a house I a building. It is a seven floor building. The lift does not work. So the lift is a problem. Then the maintenance the people pay, then the bill for water, electricity and the bill for passage light. In our building we take out Rs. 350 for maintenance. Out of that we pay all the bills. And if some people have problems – those people who have to climb 7 floors have a greater problem. Then there are some poor people in this – and we think of something to do for them. Some can't pay the maintenance, so we think about that in the society.

Smita – the main problem is that the lift doesn't work, it's a seven story building. Sp specially those who live on the 7th floor have real problems going up and down. And then they are paying charges for maintenance and passage lights and things like that. But then there are some poorer more vulnerable families who live in the building, who are unable to pay those maintenance charges. So they are wondering how to address that issue and what to do about this thing.

Malti – *In our building we have a woman who has nobody. She has three children and she used to live in another building on the 6th floor. She is a TB patient and she has a lot of problem so she has been give (a house) in our building on the first floor.*

Smita – there is a woman eg, who has three children and she is a widow and she's very poor. And she also got TB. She used to live in another building on the 6th floor so she just couldn't cope with that. So they have found her a space and put her on the first floor of this building. Shifted down.

Malti – *she has nobody, no husband and three children. So our society has exempted her from paying maintenance. And SPARC and Jockin sir pay her households expenses. We give her all groceries and we have a ration shop and we give her kerosene from there. In free.*

Smita – because she has no income and she is a widow, so the society has said to her that she doesn't need to pay the maintenance charges. They've forgiven her that. And the SPARC and NSDF between them are giving her money to pay for her household bills and food and there's a shop outside here so she can directly buy goods that she needs to survive from here.

Malti – 29.21Every month we fill up her food etc and then we give her Rs 20 every day for expenses.

Smita – Plus Daily allowance of Rs 20 they give her from the society funds.

Malti – and also the hospital expenses, if she has a problem then the hospital expenses are also met from SPARC.

Smita – if she has any problems paying her medical bills, then also SPARC helps her out.

Malti – if there are other people we can think of the same way to help them.

Smita – if there are other vulnerable families who are really really poor like this then as a society we would like to also help them and we will find a way to support them.

Jockin – there's a building No. 52. you see there – Navjivan. I kept it earlier as a building – beggars building. 70 % of people living there are beggars. Begging was their work.

Sheela – their occupation is begging.

Jockin – so almost all of them were some business – some buying mutton and selling, buying vegetables and selling , except from ten twelve of them still are begging. This is the change. Now look at that building - they are having very good saving. People realize – this is what is going to be the collective group coming together. They refused to be part of the Federation almost till the end of the demolition. They never joined. Finally at the time of crisis they joined, but if you rate them; in the whole building they are the first. In terms of organized, in terms of collective looking after this. Regular maintenance, regular meeting, regular keeping clean the building and all that. This case is not one case. Something about 16-17 of them. This demonstrate to people that they can have support therefore the collection was high..

Sheela – and also that shows – that is why that woman will not sell her house and run away. Otherwise there would be lot of people who will try and force her to sell. By knowing that the support system is there, she can survive, she will stay there.

Nick – I am sure you get the ownership then. So the building is owned by who?

Jockin – now owned by the collective society, including the land.

Sheela – A registered cooperative society.

Nick – It's a freehold. And the service charge is for each individual apartment, flat, or paid to ...

Jockin – the collective, the cooperative housing society. And that society in turn pays to the Municipal authority. The tax is paid to the municipal authority. Water is being paid to the municipal authority.

Nick – you suggested that people could sell their flats, this lady who got TB, she could have sold her...

Sheela – we are saying that in a regular situation where no support system was there, somebody like her would have been so indebted by now, ..

Jockin – Not only that. A person like him, he is the leader. You know the vulnerability of that lady. Half rate he will pursue her to sell it..

Sheela – that's the traditional way..

Jockin – here that is the reason you are taken care completely. Irrespective of what is going to happen.

I am putting up this one point. One person was very sick, he has no family members, nobody. Finally one week before he is dead. He was searching for me. Our leaders, met many of them, finally met me and told me, as soon as I die I don't have any body, and I want the house to be given to the Federations. He died and kept the key and belongings to the federation.

Nick – where do people work? What's their living income?

Smita – *what business or work do you do?*

Meena Ramani – *I have taken the contract for a toilet after coming here. Before that I had a grocery shop and wholesale garlic business.*

Smita – she is saying that I had said before that I had the garlic shop and the small petty grocers. Then I came here and I got a ...

Jockin – I am stopping there and asking her what is the job of her husband?

Meena – *he plays cards in clubs*

Jockin – He is a professional gambler. Even goes out of India to gamble. And the family is standing on her income and not on his income. He brings lot, he takes lot. You don't believe, she has a car, but sometimes she doesn't have food to eat at home. She is the one..(Meena cries) *See, it is good to tell such people, we are not doing any...you know she has brought the family and she became a contractor and she is running the house and now grown up children. She was rejected in her family by all – sister, brother everybody. But now all of them coming to her to guidelines. Because she has established herself. She has become a contractor, she runs a shop. She took up one of the toilet contracts which is part of our project and she did a qualitative best job.*

Romi – *she his very brave..*

Jockin – *oh yes, very brave, by god! Garlic-wali. That is why I said that now she has put on weight because she has less money but when she has money then she loses weight. Meena Ramani.* This is kind of a community business, selling garlic. She is expert in selling garlic, from there she moved on.

Nick – How far away is where they used to live on the railway lines. How many Kilometers or ..

Jockin – something around 5 kms.

Nick – Can they go back to the same place where they used to work.

Jockin – the only problem is that – that time she was living next to the Railway station, here also she is living next to the railway station. If you look at the distance it's 5 kms. But today she can just in five minutes reach the station. Earlier where she was living, it was within 5 minutes. *Right, you were five minutes away? here also it is the same. Is it good?*

Alison – that was part of the decision making when they determined they wanted these buildings to be bought.

Romi – have they paid the money for the flats?

Jockin – no, free. This is what has come from the government. But free in the sense – the problem is – there I was paying nothing. Today I am paying 350 a month. It's not just..

Alison – any other problems in the buildings?

Jockin – lot of problems. Lift is an issue. It is a collective issue. Everybody is trying to convince each other whether we have to start the lift and pay the

money. Unless everybody come to an understanding – all of them have decided one thing. Everybody should pay. Then I .. go haywire. I say ground floor people will not pay. Because I am not using the lift. 'oh, if somebody dies?' 'Nobody dies everyday, I don't go everyday up.' So the dialogue is going on among the – how the ground floor people will not pay. From first floor onwards people will pay. That is the amount they are negotiating with the government and the Lift company. If we just hire them, it is like the middle class. We can't afford Rs 100 a month. E are trying to bring down maintenance to something around Rs 15 a month. Then lift will start.

Sheela – what I thought is we just do two three things more. One is – just like we have those other things, you have the same names and you have each person – where they lived before and where they live now in terms of building, in terms of location. So this is translated now in this in the new form. Grievance. *The complaint register.*

Communities will complain – my name was not in. so people will write letters like this about what is their complaint. It's like this woman in the morning that Jockin was talking to you about.

Jockin – all sorts of requirements.

Devkule – *for different reasons. Some have got a house but in the house the woman has got it and she fights – out it in my name. There are a lot of complaints like these.*

Jockin – very interesting is one of the women was making illicit liquor. She has about 20 houses. She had 7 houses inside this area. So she is very smart. She caught hold of this one, made her take a photograph and gave the key to her. She catch hold of whoever was staying here. After the demolition who is finding out. So she got all the seven houses. She has three in the building ..*that Daaru-wali*, then she has one in the transit camp. After one year she has slowly come out. And going – 'oh, this is my house, give it to me'. Finally she could not hide. That is what I am saying, communication, transparency is so clear. Finally we got to know everything. And she has to come and say – yes. So we started clearing – vacate this first one, another one, No. give him another house, he will go. Then we'll see whether to give it to you or to somebody. Because legally you have exploited and got this many houses.

Completely, 41.13 this is where the main importance of the women. One lady seven houses. She managed to get seven people stand and get seven .

Sheela – how she stole them before?

Jockin – no, at the time of people went to the final decision of the allotment and took photograph, she can stand only on one house.

Sheela – but in the cadastral and this...

Jockin – In the Cadastral.. map is there, number is there, huts are there. But those who are living there also, somebody else was living so we have registered their name. So she has no choice to make these only people ... some of the rented people she threw them out. Who are in our list. She brought somebody else, put in front of the Collector, it was registered and give her name. She went to them – that fellow to vacate, the fellow who is living there is also having another house there. But he said – now the house belongs to me, we can't do it because I will go to the Federation. That way everything was opened up!

Devkule – *in this case the wife's photo is different. Then when the wife came this is with the family. There are two wife's. such cases come to us.*

Jockin – this is fact. Two wife. At least in the beginning, first she got it and he has another house with another wife. So some of these conflicts just go on everyday. Everyday from here society, start from the bottom, the arrangement is also floor wise. When you select the leaders, selected leaders from each floor.

Alison – what amazes me is that government or official agencies think they can manage relocation. When you see this complexity and hidden processes there is no way an external agency can manage this.

Sheela – but what happens is that in those cases it's just blanked out. It's just blocked out. Who cares. You've just seen bodies in those houses. Whether they were the ones who got were entitled, not entitled . And those who have some muscle power, some money, some agency to go to talk to a politician, something, will do it.

Alison – figures in Vijay Wada was like that. Non-residents getting houses.

Sheela – OK, you want to go and see the houses. All the other things they have seen there.

All the houses, all the buildings have these kind of community centers. And different community centers are used for different purposes. And there's one which is a federation of all these cooperatives. So they look at the open spaces and things like that.

Nick – did people move in these buildings who didn't ever live on the Railway line yet?

Sheela – no.

Nick – that's forbidden...

Sheela – nobody who was not on the railway line can live here. Nobody'll accept.

Nick – but in time that will change surely. I mean in ten years time somebody will get married to somebody who wasn't on the railway line and they'll move in here.

Jockin – marriage is possible. Like maybe .. that is very very minimum.

END OF MD 7