

Study of Urban Health Infrastructure and Community Assets in BSUP, SRA and Slum Settlements, Pune (2017–18)

MASHAL conducted a comprehensive study during 2017–18 to assess the feasibility of utilizing community infrastructure and local institutional mechanisms for strengthening urban health services in Pune city. The study was undertaken in the context of the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM), recognizing the need for city-specific planning to address the diverse healthcare challenges faced by urban poor communities.

Background and Rationale

At the time of the study, India lacked a uniform and integrated urban health service delivery system. Effective implementation of the National Urban Health Mission required a thorough understanding of city-level realities, including the availability of healthcare infrastructure, presence of community institutions, distribution of slum populations, and existing government interventions. Recognizing this need, MASHAL undertook the study to generate evidence-based insights that could support urban health planning and improve healthcare access for vulnerable populations.

Objectives of the Study

The study was designed with the following objectives:

- To map physical infrastructure, community facilities, and institutional assets developed under housing and slum improvement programs such as Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP) and Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) projects.
- To assess the availability and condition of healthcare facilities and related community infrastructure within selected slum settlements.
- To identify community groups, organizations, and local institutions that could contribute to urban health service delivery.
- To evaluate the feasibility of utilizing existing community structures and resources in alignment with the National Urban Health Mission framework.
- To provide recommendations for strengthening urban health systems through community-based approaches and improved service integration.

Study Area and Coverage

The study covered 44 slum settlements and rehabilitation sites across Pune city that had been developed under BSUP and SRA schemes. Primary data was collected from a total of 17,237 households comprising approximately 80,894 residents.

The study area included:

- Two relocation housing sites developed under BSUP Phase-I.
- Twenty-six in-situ slum redevelopment projects implemented under BSUP Phase-II.
- Sixteen completed Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) projects.
- A review of areas covered under urban development and housing improvement initiatives within Pune city.

The study observed that Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) projects had not yet been implemented in Pune at the time of the assessment.

Research Methodology

MASHAL adopted a mixed-method research approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the urban health ecosystem.

Qualitative Assessment

The qualitative component involved:

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community members, residents, local leaders, and community-based organizations.
- Discussions aimed at understanding the functioning of community structures, social networks, local governance mechanisms, and community participation in health-related activities.
- Documentation of community perceptions regarding access to healthcare services and existing health challenges.

Quantitative Assessment

The quantitative component involved:

- Structured surveys and checklists to collect data on public healthcare facilities located within and around the selected slum settlements.
- Assessment of infrastructure availability, service delivery mechanisms, staffing patterns, and utilization levels of healthcare facilities.
- Mapping of community assets and public service infrastructure relevant to urban health outcomes.

In addition, secondary data regarding healthcare facilities and services operating under the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) was collected and analyzed to supplement the primary research findings.

Key Contributions

Through this study, MASHAL developed a detailed understanding of the relationship between housing, community infrastructure, and urban health outcomes in low-income settlements. The research highlighted opportunities for leveraging existing community assets and institutional networks to improve healthcare access among urban poor populations.

The study provided valuable recommendations for strengthening urban health systems through enhanced community participation, improved utilization of public infrastructure, and better coordination among government departments, healthcare providers, and community organizations.

Impact

The study contributed to evidence-based urban health planning by generating critical data on underserved communities and identifying practical approaches for integrating community structures into healthcare delivery systems. The findings supported the broader objectives of the National Urban Health Mission and reinforced the importance of participatory, inclusive, and community-centered approaches to urban development and public health planning.

Through this initiative, MASHAL demonstrated its expertise in urban research, community engagement, policy analysis, and health systems strengthening,

contributing to the development of more responsive and equitable urban healthcare strategies.