

Defining Strategic Action Planning led by Civil Society Organisations: The case of CLIFF, India

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the notion of 'being strategic' in the pursuit of social justice in urban development. It does so in the context of action planning¹ led by civil society organisations of the urban poor. The question addressed is what is the possibility of consciously and collectively achieving social justice in urban conditions through planned collective action at scale? As Fainstein (2000) points out, the context of this question, that is, the global capitalist economy, is paramount.

This paper proposes three indicators to assess whether action planning is strategic: that

- It builds on and creates synergy between actors in civil society, the public and private sectors
- It has a multiplier effect in changing the material and institutional conditions of the poor
- It expands the room for manoeuvre for socially just actions led by civil society, but which also involve the public and the private sectors.

The paper argues further that strategic action planning that meets these criteria comprises an interacting series of components: the 'construction' of collective intent; a reframing diagnosis; precedent setting actions; the development of organisational and institutional capacity; dialogue and advocacy; and 'public learning'.

¹ The notion of 'action planning' used in this paper builds on the DPU tradition of action planning initiated by Koenigsberger(1982) and built on by Mumtaz (1983) and Safier (1982, 1983). A positive response to rapidly urbanizing human settlements, action planning seeks to address social justice in the physical, economic, socio-cultural and environmental dimensions of urban development within short time frames and in a flexible and responsive manner.

The strategic indicators and components of strategic actions planning are explored in the case of the Community-Led Infrastructure Facility (CLIFF) in Mumbai, India.

2. THE CONCEPTUAL ARGUMENT

The notion of 'being strategic', is historically rooted in the military and corporate management fields. Clearly there is a contradiction between these origins and collective democratic action in the field of public sector policy and planning. In the former, being strategic has been associated with strongly hierarchical military or private sector organisations, with the emphasis on top-down leadership, and command and control structures to implement unquestioned expert vision.

When the notion of 'being strategic' was taken on in urban planning, it was viewed as public sector led, but taking with it the underlying logic of the market. This is so even where, as in the case of strategic planning, the notion of 'being strategic' was placed within democratic politics, and included civil society and public sector actors. The lessons from this experience indicate that there is considerable tension between the economic interests of those involved in strategic planning, and social justice in the context of democratic politics (Healey et al, 1997b).

This paper draws on Young's definitive contribution to the definition of social justice in contemporary plural societies (Young, 1990). In particular, her distinction between distributive and institutional justice has moved the debate from a liberal dominated one into a post-modern discussion in the context of diversity and difference. It is this distinction on which this paper draws. The distributive dimension reflects the distribution of material resources, in this case, of housing and infrastructure. The institutional dimension refers to access and control that organisations and individuals have to influence and change decision-making structures and processes. In the Mumbai context, this dimension relates to decision-making within the governance structures affecting the provision of housing and infrastructure, and the extent to which the urban poor are able to exercise decision-making power. The relationship between these two dimensions is also important, with material outcomes being influenced by and influencing institutional relations.

Since Harvey's seminal work on 'Social Justice and the City' in 1973, others have taken up this discussion, most recently engaging with Young's work, including Harvey himself (1996), Fainstein (2000), Sandercock (1998), Smith (1994). The direction of this literature has been the creation of *analytical* frameworks for assessing different notions and processes for the achievement of, to use Fainstein's (2000) phrase, "the just city".

When it comes to exploring social justice and collective social action at scale by civil society², the emphasis in the literature is on social movements or more recently, 'insurgent practices'. Defined in marginally different ways, the work on insurgency is useful here in that it implies 'oppositional' collective action by civil society, which is attempting to change the terms of the relationship between civil society and the state and/or the market (see Young, 1990; Holston, 1998; Sandercock, 1999). A little explored aspect of this debate is the planning and tactics of these movements. The discussion remains at the level of principles of what a "politically informed and consciously values-based" (Sandercock, 1998: 219) planning practice might be.

² At scale refers to city and inter-city level action with implications for policy and wider political and socio-economic change, rather than neighbourhood or project centred action.

The question this paper focuses on is how would civil society organisations committed to challenging injustice 'organise' to bring about a more socially just material and institutional conditions? The argument put forward is that this would necessarily involve strategic action planning, given the structural forces and active agents maintaining injustice in the interests of powerful actors in the local and global political economy. In this sense, underpinning the understanding of strategic action planning is a view of social change which, while acknowledging Giddens' notion of structuration theory (as argued by Healley, 1997), also draws on Foucault's view of power and its implications for planned action. (see also Allmendinger, P 2002; Flyvbjerg, 1998, 2002, 2004; Watson, 2002, 2003) While power is viewed as "a fundamental enabling force" (McNay, 1994: 3), it is nevertheless situated within conflictual power relations which offer both opportunities and resistance to social change. Furthermore, the contextual expression of conflictual power relations is crucial and the new international political economy (Jenkins et al, 2007) offers a powerful framework for the analysis of context in a global capitalist economy, and the articulation of power relations based on class, gender, and their intersection with other social relations relevant to a particular place and time.

Based on these theoretical underpinnings, it is proposed that strategic action planning is a defining characteristic of planned action which seeks to achieve three related conditions to support a process of social change which will address social injustice: synergy, a multiplier effect and the expansion of the room for manoeuvre.

It is argued that action planning which creates a *synergy* at scale between civil society organisations, public and private sector actors, is strategic. Any challenge to social injustice is going to involve *struggle* and synergy between collective actors is central to building and sustaining *the struggle* for change - hence the importance of progressive 'insurgent' social movements in any process of social change. This notion of synergy challenges its treatment in most development literature, which is based on an underlying pluralist and consensus notion of relations between actors, and seeks to build on 'co-production' (Ostrom, 1996), 'complementarity' and 'embeddedness' (Evans, 1996) of actors in civil society, the state and the private sector. It is argued here that co-production of collective goods and services built on such complementarity and/or embeddedness is a moment of 'periodic consensus' within conflictual power relations, constructed by actors with very different interests and positions of power.³ It is precisely the construction of periodic consensus to work together in relationships of equality, respect and trust at a particular moment in a particular place that makes such synergy strategic.

It is also argued that for action planning to be strategic, it must be able to create a *multiplier effect* in its impact on the material and institutional dimensions of social justice. Thus strategic action planning seeks a conscious link between the strategic action planning process, the planned actions generated, and outcomes and impacts in terms of their contribution of the latter to social justice. This raises many complex issues about the notion of causality, which have been at the core of contemporary theoretical and practice-based discussions.

³ This is based on two arguments which are brought together and developed elsewhere. (Levy, forthcoming) The first is the notion of the different principle of operation of civil society (reciprocity), the public sector (redistribution) and the private sector (profit maximisation) (Polanyi in Jenkins et al, 2007; Safier, 1993).). The second is the notion of 'cooperative conflict' developed In a seminal article by Sen (1990) uses this term as a basis to understand women's agency in relation to household relations.

Finally, it is argued that for action planning to be strategic, it must *expand the room-for-manoevure* to address social injustice in the city. This discussion directly addresses the questions of context, power and urban development planning. As Safier (2002: 124) notes, "(T)he capabilities of planned interventions to have any significant impact on the 'structural dynamics' of urban development have been brought into question by successive analyses of the factors affecting such dynamics in the current era of 'turbodynamic' globalization, structural adjustment and cultural conflict." Based on the notion of power discussed above, the case seeks "...to analyse it in its most diverse and specific manifestations rather than focusing on its most centralised forms such as its concentration in the hands of a coercive elite or a ruling class" (McNay, 1994: 3), exploring the room-for-manoevure of organisations of the poor to address social injustice in the city.

The paper argues further that the 'technology' of action planning is also important in achieving a strategic approach. Synergy, a multiplier effect and room-for-manoevure are created and strengthened by certain more formal strategy-making components. These include the following: the 'construction' of a clear vision or *collective intent*, based on a *reframing diagnosis* or a challenge to the dominant discourses about power relations, their impact on governance structures, and the opportunities and problems faced by women and men in urban poor communities; the development of strategies which will selectively address and *set precedents* for alternative ways of addressing social injustice; the *development of organisational and institutional capacity*; *dialogue and advocacy* to influence and persuade powerful actors involved, and where judged necessary, to display collective strength in selected arenas; and last but not least, '*public learning*' in order to nurture and strengthen strategic action to challenge social injustice. How this definition of synergy is created and sustained in grassroots-led processes is explored further in the case.

3. METHODOLOGY AND THE CASE

This paper is a 'reflection in practice' based on my involvement in the implementation of CLIFF as a member of the HI Board, but more pertinently, as the Chair of the Homeless International Technical Advisory Group (HI TAG), an operational entity in the CLIFF structure. I was a member of the HI TAG committee that was established in June 2002 and took over as the Chair of TAG from January 2003, in the build up to initial preparation phase of CLIFF, prior to the official commencement of Phase 1 in April 2003.

The next paragraphs will give some explanation of CLIFF and its structure, as a prelude to a better understanding of my involvement and experience in CLIFF. Thereafter I will briefly review the elements of the 'reflection in practice' methodology developed for this paper.

"The Community-Led Infrastructure Finance Facility (CLIFF) provides loans and other support to organised communities, so that they can access subsidies, and borrow from formal finance institutions, in order to scale up community-driven housing and infrastructure initiatives that benefit the urban poor." (Morris, 2006: 109) It is funded through the World Bank Cities Alliance programme by DFID (£6.84m) and SIDA (£1.5). It is co-ordinated internationally by Homeless International (HI) and is being piloted in India and in Kenya (Ibid). For the purposes of this paper, the analysis will focus on CLIFF in India, from Phase 1 which started officially in April 2003 and ended in March 2006.

The Indian partner for CLIFF is the Alliance, made up of SPARC (an NGO), Mahila Milan and the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) (both CBOs) and SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak (SSNS) (an NGO established by SPARC and the NSDF to effect project management

and financial services for slum rehabilitation). SSNS administers the CLIFF capital loan funds, and worked in close collaboration with SPARC in the first phase. Project proposals come up from the federations, through SSNS. The formal and legal responsibility within CLIFF rests with the SSNS and SPARC Board (which overlapped in the first instance due to the recent creation of SSNS), the HI Board, and the Cities Alliance Consultative Group (left hand side of Figure 1). However, an operational structure was put in place to serve the Boards at every level (right hand side of Figure 1). A CLIFF India Technical Advisory Board (TAG) was created to review proposals from the communities on the basis of a set of criteria derived from the objectives of CLIFF. Once ratified by the SPARC/SSNS Board, the proposals came to the HI TAG who recommended projects to the HI Board.

In this capacity, my involvement in the project was guided by the terms of reference for the HI TAG⁴. The group was “made up of individuals with specific expertise in urban finance, contract law and low income settlement initiatives in developing countries.” (CLIFF, 2005) The key roles and responsibilities of the HI TAG are outlined in Table 1.

The HI TAG met every quarter to review projects. In the first year, because SSNS was recently established and the Board and local TAG was yet to be set up, the HI TAG had a critical role both in the review of projects and in supporting HI and local CLIFF staff in the creation of technical and financial systems. The HI TAG also made two trips to India to visit projects and to discuss the progress of CLIFF with the local partners. (January 2003 and October 2004)

Another point of contact with CLIFF was as one of a team of three who were invited to discuss and propose a monitoring framework for CLIFF. This involved a visit to Mumbai and Delhi in August 2003 and a follow-up visit in July 2004.

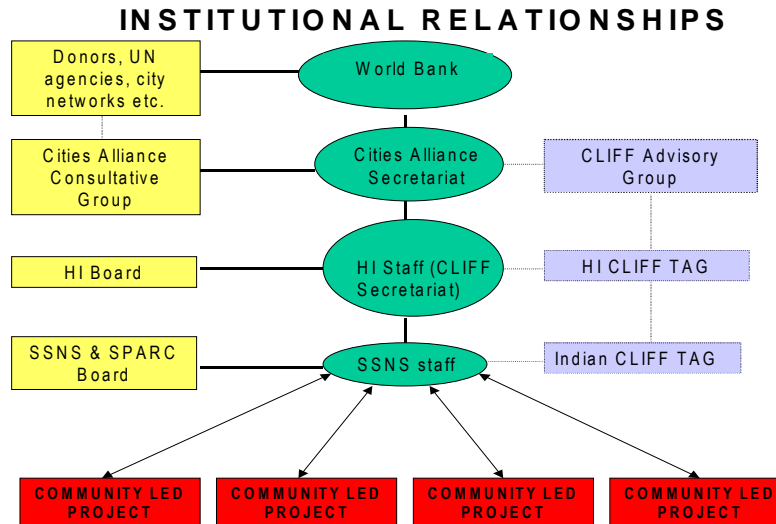
The database for the ‘reflection in practice’ is a combination of CLIFF documentation, my own notes, particularly during visits to India, interviews with key informants in the CLIFF structure to fill information gaps, and a review of relevant literature on Mumbai. The framework for analysis of the case was developed by the author as part of a module in an MSc programme⁵, in which it has been ‘tested’ and developed in interaction with students, in seminar discussions and in their written work.

It is hoped that this ‘reflection in practice’ is a contribution to a ‘new wave’ in ‘the practice movement’ (Watson, 2000a, 2000b), which building on Foucault’s view of power, is constructing a critical understanding of the how of planning practice. (For example, Flyvbjerg, 1998a and b; Few, 2002) This takes the notion of ‘reflective practice’ in planning, with its liberal roots in Schon’s work (1983), into a new paradigm.

⁴ The HI TAG for Phase 1 comprised two HI Board members and two appointed UK housing experts.

⁵ Strategic Intervention in Urban Development, Core Module on the MSc Urban Development Planning, Development Planning Unit, UCL

Figure 1: Actors and Institutional Relationships in CLIFF



Source: "A Discussion of Institutional Roles and Responsibilities within CLIFF", HI, September 2005

4. THE EXERCISE OF STRATEGIC ACTION PLANNING BY THE ALLIANCE AND ITS PARTNERS IN CLIFF

The history of the Alliance has been documented elsewhere (see for example, Patel and Mitlin, 2001, 2004). In brief, the relationship between SPARC and Mahila Milan⁶ (MM) was initiated in the first three years after SPARC established itself (1984 –1986) through their early work with women pavement dwellers, among the poorest groups in Mumbai. MM was "an organisational form that invested knowledge in women's collectives rather than in male leaders" (Ibid, 2004: 218), with savings and credit schemes as a central activity. The Alliance was established when SPARC and MM joined forces with the NSDF, itself established in 1974 as a response to forced evictions. IYSH Trust UK, which became Homeless International (HI), funded a SPARC/MM initiative in 1986-7 and in 1988-89 HI collaborated with SPARC to develop their first international community exchange (Bombay-Bogata). This marked the beginning of HI's long association with and support for the Alliance and other country partners, who eventually came together under the umbrella of Slum Dwellers International (SDI).

It was within these relationships in the context of Mumbai that the idea and aims for CLIFF were formulated and implemented. The following sections tell the story of CLIFF using the proposed components of action planning (see Figure 2). These are: collective intent, reframing diagnosis, precedent setting, organisational and institutional development, dialogue and advocacy, and 'public learning'. Often simultaneous but tactical in their interaction, for the sake of presentation, these components are presented as separate categories. However, discussion under each will reflect their inter-relationship in practice.

⁶ Translated as 'Women Together'

4.1 Collective Intent

Collective action is generated by a shared vision, but it is argued here that to support a process of strategic action planning, this vision needs to be translated into a more focused mission. In the context of strategic corporate management, Liedke argues that strategy has to be 'intent focused' and that strategic thinking is "...driven by the shaping and re-shaping of intent" (ibid, 122/123). While she emphasises consultation, most corporations are hierarchical and the intent is clearly profit driven. In civil society organisations where there may be a clear mandate for inclusive democratic processes, and a wide range of possible goals, this approach is too limiting. However, as argued above, establishing a collective intent is not a once and for all activity. It has to be constructed, negotiated and re-constructed over the life of a process, as situations and the demands on actors change.

Hamel and Prahalad (in Liedke, 1990) talk of strategic intent within the context of corporate management as a "sense of direction, sense of discovery, sense of destiny". Each carries an underlying principle which is interesting in the context of civil society organisations, that is, a basis for strategic choice, a basis for innovation and learning, and a basis for mobilisation, respectively. Furthermore, Csikszentmihalyi (in Liedke, 1990) notes the interaction between intent and the creation of 'psychic energy' [check], which is also crucial to sustain any collective process.

Thus, three issues stand out as important with respect to collective intent. Firstly, although there will be moments of periodic consensus, it will have to be renegotiated and reconstructed in a changing context. Secondly, the process of doing this acts as a mobilising force for the actors involved. Thirdly, it acts as a guide for the strategic choices that are inevitably going to arise through the formulation and implementation process of any planned action.

The collective intent constructed for CLIFF emerged through years of interaction between HI and its partners. It was formalised through a research project, "Bridging the Finance Gap", carried out by HI with its partners and funded by DFID. The research findings provided the basis for informed discussion with DFID and then SIDA for the creation of CLIFF. It was the donors who proposed that their funds be channelled through Cities Alliance (World Bank), which HI and the Alliance in India accepted on the basis that it was an opportunity to set a precedent relating to scale and delivery of funding for the poor.

"The objective of CLIFF is to support scaling up of community-driven slum development, rehabilitation and infrastructure initiatives, in partnership with local authorities and the private sector in towns and cities characterised by high levels of poverty." (CA Application Form, 2001)

This shared intent is reflected in eight criteria that were developed jointly by HI and the Alliance for the selection of projects for CLIFF (see Table 1).

While there has been periodic consensus around these objectives and criteria, interaction in Phase 1 illustrated that stakeholders in CLIFF did not always interpret this collective intent in the same way. Because of the prioritisation of the market in the neo-liberal shift in development thinking, by the late 1990s most aid agencies were prioritizing private sector related programmes eg privatisation, PPPs. Thus donors tended to emphasise the private banking sector aspects of CLIFF early in Phase 1, with less prominence given to local government and even the livelihood impacts in the local construction sector. There was also a constant tension between innovation in CLIFF, articulated in its criteria, and the interpretation of risk in the projects put forward for CLIFF. This tension was nowhere more visible than in the HI TAG due to different perceptions of risk in the proposed projects; different levels of 'comfort' with flexibility and learning in the

portfolio; and ultimately, different understandings of the relationship between a community-led process and the tendency that professionals have to micro-manage. To some extent, these tensions can be traced to differences in interpretation of the reasons for CLIFF, that is, to its underlying diagnosis.

4.2 Reframing diagnosis

This component of strategic action planning focuses on what Healey (1997: 270) terms "...the capacity to 'read the cracks', to see the opportunity for 'doing things differently'..." There are two aspects to undertaking this kind of diagnosis. The first is related to content or understanding of the 'cracks'. Healey argues that in transformative strategy making "...there needs to be a 'moment of opportunity', a 'crack' in the power relations, a situation of contradiction and conflict, which encourages people to recognize that they need to reflect on what they are doing, that they need to work with different people, that they need to evolve different processes." (Ibid: 269-70)

The second aspect is related to challenging the very frame of thinking. In CLIFF this implied reframing the understanding of poverty, inequality and governance in cities, and ultimately of development itself. This implies a paradigm shift, changing the terms of reference of how actors understand their world and the way they define problems and opportunities.

The definition of the 'cracks' to which CLIFF responded related to the intersection of a number of contextual factors in India, which will be discussed in more detail in the final section of the paper. These are a stable but selectively liberalising economy, lessening restrictions in the financial sector; a state and municipal government that as willing to consider partnerships with organisations of the urban poor; and a banking sector that was interested in extending its client base to the low income, and not just through micro-finance. On the side of collective agency, the Alliance had demonstrated capacity to manage savings and credit, and a growing capacity to address the challenges of relocation and resettlement (see, for example, Burra, 1999b). They were experiencing a gap in the range of funding available, to support a scaling up of their activities. Together, the Alliance and HI designed a financial facility that could fill this gap: CLIFF.

Two main strands of thinking underpin and are promoted by CLIFF, which seeks to reframe the understanding of the urban poor by government, the private sector and sections of the better off in Mumbai, as well as section of the international 'development community'. In effect, CLIFF sets out to turn what is manifest as traditional bureaucratic thinking, on its head. The first is deeply rooted in the struggle of the Alliance from the beginning. "In most instances, the poor in Indian cities are unable to draw on the entitlements which Indian citizenship confers – many have no ration cards, most never receive the benefits meant for the poor, such as access to basic services, to schools, to health care." (SPARC, MM and NSDF, 1996: 5)

Re-framing the notion of poor women and men as citizens with rights, requires a change in consciousness among urban poor communities as well as other actors in the city. Working with communities who want to change their situation, the Alliance 'walks through' the process with them, enabling "...community collectives to see for themselves how to seek an entitlement", (Ibid) This involves finding out where the entitlement is located, how to access it and how to use it with resources which already exist in the community. The power exercised and experienced by communities in doing this, changes their perceptions of themselves and enables them to act collectively and to have the confidence to innovate with strategies to change their lives. Ultimately they make claims on their entitlements, knowledge of which often "lies with an elite of state administrations and political party members" (Ibid: 7), who often present entitlements as

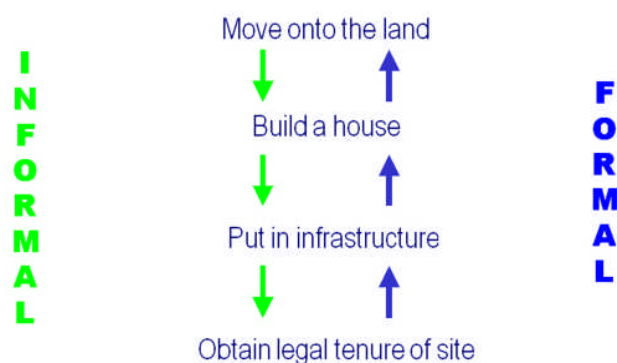
personal gifts, rather than rights, in unequal relations of patronage. In reframing diagnosis, CLIFF seeks to elevate the scope and scale of this collective action, re-framing the understanding of the poor in the city.

The second strand of thinking that CLIFF challenges came out of the research preceding CLIFF⁷ done by HI with its partners. This sought to record, analyse and turn on its head the “the way in which urban investment in settlements is conceptualised.” (McLeod, 2002: 7) The findings highlight how in reality the informal housing development and investment process reverses the logic of the formal processes, working from opposite starting points (see Figures 2 and 3). The formal process always starts from the point of legality in housing development, which translates into formal permissions and pre-project financing in the investment process. “The investment strategies of the poor nearly always begin as survival strategies ...’outside’ ...the legal and regulatory frameworks of the city”, which means “that the poor’s struggle for survival becomes a war of attrition with formal authorities, consuming valuable resources that could arguably be used far more effectively.” (Ibid: 7) Although the ‘enabling’ housing policies of the 1990s recognised many of these arguments, the research argues that nothing has changed on the ground.

Despite this, the research demonstrates how organisations like the Alliance are in fact making substantial investments in urban development and were “most effective in doing so when they follow the informal processes which they understand well. These investments require the management of significant and substantial levels of risk but are extremely valuable in the longer term because they provide the precedents that set the basis for scaling up.” (Ibid: 8) However, scaling up requires engagement with the formal sector – government and the financial institutions - which, because of their resistance, be it for different reasons, present substantial risk to the urban poor. “Unfortunately, this risk-taking has remained largely invisible and unacknowledged in development theory” (McLeod, 2006: 39)

Based on the identification of the ‘cracks’ and presenting a reframing way of understanding the situation in Mumbai, India, CLIFF was created to support the scaling up process, mitigating these risks. Reframing diagnosis is not a once and for all stage in a planning process. It is ongoing, interacting with the other components built on the synergy of the actors involved.

Figure 2: Informal and Formal Housing Development Process



⁷ The research, entitled “Bridging the Finance Gap”, was carried out by HI with its partners and funded by DFID. Phase 1 looked at India, Cambodia, Kenya, south Africa, Zimbabwe, Bolivia; Phase 2 went more in-depth in India, South Africa and Kenya; Phase 3 undertook additional research in Thailand and Jamaica.

Figure 3: Informal and Formal Project Investment process



4.3 Precedent setting

This paper proposes that ‘precedent setting’ is the key strategy development component of any strategic action planning that seeks to redress social injustice. Attempts at social change are likely to result in resistance, at the institutional (structural) level and among collective agents in the public, private and segments of civil society. Because of this, strategy development is unlikely to be a once and for all stage, as promoted in traditional planning approaches.

Defining a precedent setting initiative is closely related to the reframing diagnosis. As Healey (1997: 280) comments, “(S)trategies affect the dynamics of social relations through contributing to the way people “frame” how they think about how to act, and through generating constraints or barriers to action in one form or another.” While ‘reading the cracks’ in the social system can begin to be explored in the reframing diagnosis, the contribution of precedent setting is “...to be able to widen the crack into a real potential for change.” (Ibid: 270) In the context of private sector management, Liedke refers to this as room for intelligent opportunism.” (Liedke, 1998: 123)

At the macro-level of collective action at scale, both authors allude to expanding the ‘room for manoeuvre’ which will be discussed in Section 6. At the mezzo level of a strategic action going to scale, the term ‘precedent setting’ has been borrowed to capture a very particular kind of ‘intelligent opportunism’. Precedent setting is defined as follows:

“The idea is that the poor need to be able to claim, capture, refine and define certain ways of doing things in spaces they already control and then use these to show city-officials and external agencies that these are ‘precedents’ that are worth investing in. this gives legitimacy to the changes that the poor want to bring into a city strategy.” (D’Cruz and Satterthwaite, 2004: 37)

Patel and Mitlin (2004: 233) also emphasise the importance of precedent setting to communities themselves, when they add “(B)ecause they emerge from the existing practices of the poor, they make sense to other grassroots organisations, become widely supported and can easily be scaled up.” Precedent setting is about achieving a succession of ‘micro transformations’.

In CLIFF, the overarching demonstration is of community developers in action: a community formulated and controlled process of financing and housing and infrastructure construction at scale in Mumbai and selected parts of India.

At least four kinds of precedents are being set in the Indian context. The first is the notion that communities can manage a portfolio of projects. By June 2005, CLIFF was supporting 13

different projects, 8 of which related to housing and 3 to sanitation (see Table 2). Within the portfolio, these projects carry different risks, which are balanced within the portfolio, but which were pursued to establish a range of different precedents. The second category of precedents relate to demonstrating projects in different spatial and institutional settings. As Tables 2 shows, 6 of the housing projects fall within the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), covering in situ upgrading or the relocation of poor communities to the per-urban interface (PUI) in new development on greenfield sites. Despite the spatial differences, they illustrate the potential of the SRA framework and procedures to address relocation and rehabilitation in the city - controlled by organisations of the poor.

The third category of precedents demonstrate options for different financial blending of resources (including land) from sources in the public, private and community sectors in which risk is balanced within the portfolio. Table 3 shows the CLIFF capital loan and the combination of resources put together to finance each project. The SRA projects all include money from Transferable Development Rights (TDRs), which are unique to Mumbai, for land and/or construction costs due at the completion of particular stages of construction. Without CLIFF bridging capital, TDRs would not be accessible to the poor, and Banks, who required further guarantees (see Table 3) would not be confident to get involved. The other housing and sanitation projects are largely about leveraging subsidies from local and/or state level government. These are subsidies which the Alliance regards as entitlements, since they are enshrined in various national and state policies. This money has been very difficult for the poor to access, despite the anti-poverty intentions of the policies.

A final set of precedents has to do with showing that communities can be large scale developers, and can actually produce housing and infrastructure of good quality for the poor. At the heart of this community-driven process is an astonishing organisational and institutional capacity.

4.4 Organisational and institutional development⁸

As will be discussed in Section 5, synergy is at the heart of organisational and institutional practices that, in support of a strategic action planning, seek to create more equal and robust relationships between poor communities and other civil society actors, government and the private sector. This case demonstrates the level of organisational and institutional development that has to be in existence before a project of the scale of CLIFF can be taken on by community organisations. It is also a living example of how structures, norms and procedures can be strengthened – not without struggle – towards creating relationships of equality among the actors engaging with CLIFF.

Savings and credit schemes have always been at the heart of community mobilisation in the Alliance. The community groups say ‘when we save, we are collecting people as well as money.’ (ACHR/TAP, 1996: 3) The now long history of these schemes (and its transference into communities in the SDI network all over the world) illustrates a number of positive spin-off organisational and institutional effects. Daily and regular collection helps consolidate not just the savings scheme but also collectively establish community priorities and build trust among its members. (Ibid) Building on this and in response the development challenges they have faced,

⁸ A distinction is made between organisations as “groups of players who come together for a common purpose or to achieve specific objectives” (DFID2003: ii), while and institutions are the “rules of the game” or “ consist of formal rules, informal constraints – norms of behaviour, conventions and self imposed codes of conduct – and their enforcement characteristics” (North 1991:)

the Alliance has developed a set of new strategies – or precedents – which have been embedded as ‘routines, based ’...very much (on) the logic of the informal city dweller.’ (Patel and Mitlin, 2004: 218) These include the enumeration of slum dwellers, dialogue to resolve community divisions or disagreements, land searches in the city, mapping, model housing building, and the orderly relocation of communities.

Not only have these routines been scaled up to deal with increasingly more numerous and complex situations in the city, but many have also become formally institutionalised. Thus for example, after long negotiation the Mumbai Municipal Corporation agreed to sign off on the enumeration data on pavement dwellers. (Interview with Patel, 2005) Similarly, the whole set of ‘routines’ listed above were ‘tested’ and consolidated prior to and then within one of the first SRA applications in the relocation of railway slum dwellers to Kanjur Marg, (SPARC, 1988; Burra, 1999)

This deep organisational base with its established institutions has been extended in different ways through the CLIFF process. MM continue to save, and members of the federation continue to support and monitor the process. The federations make decisions about which projects they want to put forward on the basis of a complex set of criteria.⁹ They have also managed the relocations in the SRA projects.

SSNS has had the steepest learning curve in the Alliance, given its most recent establishment. They have taken on the tools of large scale developers: costing, projecting, management of construction contracts, documentation for regular monitoring and reporting to funders (including CLIFF). The balance between these more formal procedures and the bottom-up routines of the organisations of the poor is a critical issue in the organisational and institutional dimension of the collective strategic action. Who establishes and controls procedures which regulate and control resources, is the essence of the exercise of power. McLeod (2005: 5) pinpoints the challenge in CLIFF: “Large-scale projects and the management of a substantial project portfolio have required rapid development of systems and structures for which there is no blueprint. This is particularly difficult when, inevitably, donors and NGOs tend to have more formalised systems and structures which they can impose without realizing that they may not be appropriate or helpful to the informal process upon which community capacity is built.” CLIFF was predicated on the bottom-up control of communities, but it is funded by bi-lateral donors through a multi-lateral programme which have their own established ways of ‘doing business’. SPARC, SSNS and HI are in the middle of this local-international relationship. Patel once referred to the set of relationships in CLIFF as a ‘multi-layered sandwich’, commenting to the effect that it is not always comfortable to be in the middle of the sandwich, with demands and expectations on either side. (Conversation, 2004)

SPARC has maintained its position as supporting NSDF and MM, responding to their needs with “...minimal involvement of professionals and minimal supervision and control.” (Patel and Mitlin, 2004: 221) Currently in CLIFF, they share joint strategic leadership in the Alliance, developing new strategies and responding to changes in both the local and international contexts; give ongoing support to the federations, the form of which is agreed between them; and build capacity in SSNS so that they take over construction management of the growing portfolio in the future. Balancing these roles in the ‘sandwich’ framework of CLIFF is a complex and often conflictual task – responding to spontaneous demands of federations which are growing

⁹ Including the strength of the local community organisation and the availability of land.

exponentially, and the formal bureaucratic demands of international agencies, which do not work in the same timeframes and at the same pace.

As the implementing partner in CLIFF, HI have operational, institutional capacity building and dissemination roles. They have sought to carry out their management function “in a flexible manner, but equally follow(s) unambiguous reporting requirements.” (HI, 2005: 11) Because of the history of the relationship with the Alliance, the style and routines of a decentralised and trusting interaction were established. However, the pressures of being in another level of the ‘sandwich’ have operated here too.

Perhaps SSNS, the contracting partner at the local level of CLIFF, faces the biggest challenge of all. Set up as the construction management arm of the Alliance, it is the interface between the formal often technocratic and specialist financial, construction and management procedures of a large scale developer, and the community-built knowledge and routines of the federations. Maintaining credibility on both sides is a major task for the future of SSNS, as well as for the ability of the Alliance to deal with development at scale.

As all the partners in CLIFF have acknowledged at various moments, the stresses through Phase 1 of CLIFF has only resulted in organisational and institutional strengthening because of the “...longstanding nature of the relationships involved...” (McLeod, 2005: 6) In any collective strategic endeavour like CLIFF, which is exploring new ways of doing and producing outputs that really matter to citizens, organisational and institutional relationships of equality and respect have to be constantly re-constructed, negotiated and defended. Dialogue and advocacy are central to this process.

4.5 Dialogue and Advocacy

Dialogue, as part of communication, is an essential part of all the components of a strategic action planning. However, it is argued here that dialogue needs to be coupled with advocacy, a more proactive, persuasive and directed dialogue, to get the results that the ‘strategic’ aspect of collective action intends. As Healey (1997: 273) notes “...the challenge of collaborative discussion about urban region futures is...complex... The issues themselves often involve making difficult chains of connection between what bothers people, what causes this, and what could be done about it.”

Dialogue and advocacy is a partner to reframing analysis. Referring to the work of Bryson and Crosby, Healey, reminds us that “ ‘(A)nalysis’ is ...an interpretative activity, trying to bring out the ‘worldviews’ that lie behind the way participants articulate issues, problems and the solutions they offer.” (Ibid: 269) Advocacy needs to engage with these different ‘worldviews’, creating a new language in which to articulate them.

Dialogue and advocacy are constants companion to precedent setting and the organisational and institutional development necessary to support it. As Forester (2000: 115-16) says of argumentative processes “...at stake... are issues of political membership and identity, memory and hope, confidence and competence, appreciation and respect, acknowledgement and the ability to act together. “

Of critical importance in all these circumstances is to pay “attention to the communicative contexts in which dialogue takes place, to the routines and styles of dialogue, since these too carry power; the power to encourage and include the participation of all stakeholders, and the power to discriminate and exclude.” (Healey, 1997: 264) CLIFF highlights the importance of this observation, given the range of actors it involves. Internal to CLIFF relationships, the previous

section highlighted the tension between the informal systems of the organisations of the urban poor and the NGOs supporting them and the formal technocratic procedures and language of the donor agencies. The Alliance is particularly vigilant about this aspect of communication, and is careful to create equality of access to relevant discussion contexts.

Dialogue and advocacy with the external actors of the state and the private sector are of strategic importance to CLIFF, and very much part of its mandate. Regular interaction with government has been ongoing, but it has not avoided problems of “delay and inaction” in those projects where government support and commitment are crucial. (McLeod, 2005: 4) This has related in particular to delays in payments (on the basis of formal agreements between SSNS and government) and in decision-making (for example, the granting of permissions). “The strategy of the Indian alliance is following to pursue overdue payments from government is one of slow and patient pressure...raising the issue...in meetings and letters, and the building up of good relationships with government officers who recognise the inequity of the situation...A decision has been taken to avoid more confrontational means..., given the damage this could to their relationships with government bodies with which they have to work.” (First CLIFF Monitoring Report, 2004).

Regular interaction with banks is also critical to the achievement of CLIFF’s goals. “Banks have no significant experience in the slum-upgrading sector, particularly regarding projects with substantial community involvement.” (McLeod, 2005:12) However, it is not just the message in dialogue and advocacy that have proved important. Who to talk to is also crucial, given that experience to date shows that “...the first loan is very often provided on the basis of the credibility and reputation of the borrowing institution in the judgement of the head of the Bank, rather than on lending criteria.” (McLeod, 2005: 11-12) Loans have take 4-5 months to negotiate, and as Table 3 showing the financial blending in the portfolio, persuasion is not enough. All have demanded guarantees, and while these are essential to securing loans, the CLIFF experience shows that even these are not enough to avoid delays. (Ibid) Although the issues are different, ‘public learning ‘ is a final component that is key to the successful operation of a collective strategic action like CLIFF.

4.6 Public learning

By distinguishing public organisational learning from private individual learning, Schon (1971) focussed on the powerful structural and cultural systems that organisations create to maintain and defend, if necessary, ‘business as usual’¹⁰. Transformation of structures and ideologies is a collective activity, in which learning is central to the positive interaction of the previous components. As Forester comments “(T)he analysis of learning through deliberative, participatory rituals suggests that we learn not only with our ears but with our eyes and hearts. We learn not only from surprising information that leads us to propose new hypothetical lines of action to test, but we learn from style and passion and allusion too. We learn to reframe our predictions and strategies, but we learn to develop new relationships and even a sense of ourselves as well. In participatory processes, we not only generate arguments, but we construct networks and new organizational forms as well.” (Forester, 2000: 151)

This statement captures much of the essence of the learning strategy that SPARC has evolved from its inception, and which is now central to the Alliance, partner organisations of the poor in

¹⁰ In a later work, Schon (1991: 327-28) comments that “...formal organizations also have a powerful interest in the stability and predictability of organizational life”, seeing them as “dynamically conservative”.

other countries and to its relationship with international civil society partners like HI. In summary this cycle involves priorities being identified by communities and debated in the Alliance; a community comes forward to 'test', with the support of the Alliance, a strategy derived to redress the problems identified; other communities learn from their experience through exchange visits and the 'next generation of volunteers' emerge to try out similar, refined strategies; this is then explored with city officials through local and inter-city exchanges; following up on interest, a core team will visit other cities to demonstrate the strategies developed.

The Alliance has continued this style of learning within the CLIFF framework, sharing learning between communities, with government officials and the private sector, both locally, inter-city in India and internationally, in site visits and also in community exchanges. The exchanges are powerful learning processes, "...drawing large number of people in the process of change, supporting local reflection and analysis, enabling the urban poor themselves to own the process of knowledge creation and change." (d'Cruz and Satterthwaite, 2000 : 34) They also have the possibility to create strong personal bonds, breaking down class, and possibly ethnic/caste and gender barriers between the actors.

However, learning with government officials and bankers has been limited because of two factors. The first is staff turnover. With respect to government, Morris (2006:128) notes that staff transfer is common, with "officials ...in post for a maximum of three years, and the reality is that official often get transferred before their time period is up." The situation is the same in the banks. The loss of knowledge and potential to institutionalise procedures is enormous. McLeod (2000) notes that senior bankers were unable to develop a 'comfort' factor without understanding how the saving and credit schemes worked at community level. It appeared "chaotic and unreliable" to them, but "as they spent time in the communities with the women running the savings and loan schemes..., they rapidly realised that the principles that were being applied in the community financial systems were, in fact, almost identical to those used within the formal banking system. As a result they became more confident about lending." (Ibid: 19) However, this learning was not institutionalised in the banks and when staff were transferred or left, the advocacy and learning process had to start all over again.

The second factor affecting learning is corruption. Some government officials "are used to receiving pay-offs as a standard part of project implementation." (McLeod, 2005: 5) The Alliance has historically resisted paying bribes, not just because of principles of honesty, but as a demonstration of the meaning of state entitlements and the transparency and accountability that is important in honouring them. The result is "(D)elays in payment, unwillingness to certify work as being up to standard and complete, prevarication and delays in the issuance of ...official building authorisations and certificate. However, with the support and commitment of many senior government officials, "(A)s more officials are exposed to the Federation process, trust in a more transparent way of doing things develops and mutual respect is strengthened." (Ibid: 5)

At the institutional level of CLIFF, learning is formalised in regular and consultative 360 degree monitoring. The framework for monitoring was formalised by the author, with Satterthwaite and Bennington (2003) in face to face discussion with the Alliance, the donors and site visits to Alliance projects in India. The result is termed the CLIFF 'pizza' in Figure 4. The information for monitoring reports is gathered by HI in visits to India and discussions with the Alliance, shared with the TAGs and reported to the CLIFF Advisory Group (CAG). It is then disseminated and shared in other international fora, including the media, local and international conferences, and expert meetings in the UN.

Learning at donor level is also important. For example, CLIFF models could be applied to debt forgiveness funds, debt-equity swaps and donor grants for slum upgrading and infrastructure provision. (Morris, 2006) CLIFF also offers opportunities to donor instruments like the MDGs and PRSPs, but it is still not clear how the donors involved will take these on.

‘Public learning’ is important to make sure that precedent setting strategies are still just that – that they maintain a strategic edge, and do not have negative consequences or become co-opted. To what extent have these interacting components in the CLIFF process resulted in synergy between the actors, a multiplier effect in reducing inequalities, and an expansion of the room for manoeuvre to continue to address social justice in the Mumbai? These questions are tackled in the following sections.

5. HAS CLIFF CREATED SYNERGY?

From the preceding analysis, it is clear that central to the intentions and success of CLIFF is a notion of synergy, which seeks not only the advantages of a complementary ‘co-production’ (in Ostrom’s terms) in the construction of housing and infrastructure, but also a greater equality and trust between actors from civil society, the state and the private sector. The preceding analysis also highlights that this is a conflictual process creating moments of periodic consensus that is under continual negotiation and reconstruction, given that it is set in a context in which the actors involved have very different capacities to exercise very different forms of power.

Many authors refer to the “endowments of social capital” (Evans, 1995:1124) as a central condition for the creation of synergy. However, Evans goes on to state an important proposition that is precisely what the Indian Alliance has always worked at making operational: “(T)he limits (to synergy) seem to be set less by the initial density of trust and ties at the micro level and more by the difficulties involved in ‘scaling up’ micro-level social capital to generate solidary ties and social action on a scale that is politically and economically efficacious.” (Evans, 1995:1124) CLIFF has been a vehicle for enabling the Alliance to go up a gear in this scaling up process.

A first layer of synergy is within the Alliance itself and between it and its civil society partners. As indicated elsewhere, the very notion of federated communities is aimed at scaling up the organisations of the poor in two ways. Geographically, the Alliance grows laterally through a decentralised flat structure, as new communities mobilise around their particular interests and physical conditions (eg Railway Slum Dwellers, Pavement Dwellers, Airport Slum Dwellers) and federate their organisation to the Alliance. In this manner, the Alliance has extended within Mumbai but also in cities across India. The synergy of these geographically distinct groups is built and maintained through the interplay of structure and agency in the interaction between the different components of action planning analysed in the previous section.

A collective intent is developed in interaction with the emergence of a shared and reframing diagnosis of problems and opportunities, encompassing a changing consciousness by individual and groups in civil society and of their relations of power to better off groups in society, to the state and to the private sector. Materially, their aim is improved housing and infrastructure for slum dwellers in the federation, with secure and formally recognised tenure. Ideologically, they believe and are committed to collective organisation, and the power of communities to learn, decide, plan and manage their own process of change. Their understanding of these actions is not linear, but iterative, interacting with and building on each other. The common thread through each and every action is that control remains with communities.

The processes underway in these components are driven by community-led precedent setting actions, which are themselves reinforced by and/or institutionalised into organisational and institutional routines. All components are sustained and strengthened by 'public learning', particularly through community exchanges which deepen the skills and knowledge within the Alliance. CLIFF is built on, benefits from and contributes to the strong bedrock of social capital built up through this process.

Another dimension of synergy can be found in the relationship between the Alliance and HI, its international NGO partner, built on complementarity or division of labour in the implementation of CLIFF. This is captured in the preface written by Sheela Patel (Director of SPARC) to a recent book by Homeless International (HI) (McLeod and Mullard, 2006), in which she discusses the history of the relationships between SPARC and HI and their other partners. Patel places her comments in the context of a contribution by Appadurai (Ibid) who refers to a collectively constructed social capital, built on trust, experimentation and learning. Yet, even within these close relationships, must synergy be constantly reconstructed and negotiated, a process in which open dialogue is central.

The relationships between the Alliance and the state in CLIFF demonstrates another and different layer of synergy. The strongest moments of 'periodic consensus' have been created in the SRA projects, almost half of the CLIFF portfolio. There are a number of possible explanations for this, which demonstrate both Ostrom's notion of co-production and Evans' explanation of this as complementarity and embeddedness. Not only are the rules and procedures of the SRA well institutionalised, but they emerged from the deliberations of a Task Force on which the Alliance was represented (by the Director of SPARC, see Burra, 1999b). In addition, SPARC sought the help and advice of a retired senior member of the SRA who has been a crucial resource in translating and interpreting the procedures of the SRA into the relocation, construction and financing of the SRA projects in CLIFF. The capacity of the state to manage the SRA policy and in particular market for TDRs, has also played a part in the success of this collective action.¹¹ If this aspect of SRA policy had failed, a very key financial aspect of the rehabilitation process would have been undermined and could have put considerable strain on relations between the Alliance and the SRA.

However, it has been very difficult to establish a synergetic relationship with other parts of the state. This is particularly clear in the sanitation projects in CLIFF, where the state has not played its part in the co-production relationship through the slow reimbursement of subsidies. One reason for this has been the Alliance's refusal to pay bribes, or to participate in the deeply rooted corruption among many state officials in their dealings with the private sectors, in particular with private developers.

CLIFF's experience of dealing with the state echoes other experience in the literature exploring the notion of synergy in development in at least two ways. The first is the recognition that the state is not monolithic and that while it may be possible to work with some state organisations, others may actively work against organisations of the poor in collusion with powerful elites outside the state. (See for example, Fox, 1994, in Evans, 1995) The second relates to how synergy between actors in the state, the private sector and civil society, has to be constructed in an open and transparent manner, whether there is a clear divide in their relationships or whether

¹¹ At the beginning of CLIFF, the state flooded the market with TDRs, causing the price to drop. Since then the TDR market has strengthened and the value of TDR's have risen steadily.

the relationships between public and private are more complex and 'embedded'. (Evans, 1995; Ostrom, 1995)

One of the objectives of CLIFF was to leverage money not only from the state but also the private sector. While a co-producing relationship with selected banks has been achieved in some CLIFF projects, as the previous section indicates, there is still some way to go to building a sustainable synergy with the banking sector. Advocacy and dialogue, and the success of the precedent setting projects which have involved the banks, have an important role to play in this process. CLIFF achieved outright co-production success with medium sized contractors. They have established relationships of trust with the Alliance and on that basis, have agreed to pre-finance construction (at 20 – 30% of construction costs). The pre-financing is reimbursed in line with SRA policy guidelines on completion of certain stages of the construction process (eg to plinth). In addition within the framework of SRA projects, private landowners have also been drawn into partnerships with the Alliance.

This paper argues that the construction and negotiation of these synergies is what makes CLIFF an example of a strategic approach to action planning. It argues further that there is a relationship between the sustainability of these synergies and the material and institutional changes that CLIFF brings about. While the moments of 'periodic consensus' on which the synergies within CLIFF have been constructed are dependent in part on achieving a positive multiplier effect on the conditions of injustice faced by the urban poor, in turn these changing conditions will require a renegotiation and reconstruction of new synergies in the future.

6. HAS CLIFF CREATED A MULTIPLIER EFFECT?

Although this paper examines Phase 1 of CLIFF, about 4 years (including the preparation phases in 2002), CLIFF builds on as well as supports the cumulative effects of previous community organisation of the Alliance. With this in mind, and recognising the difficulties of tracing causality in human affairs, this section focuses on the multiplier effects of CLIFF, discussing the material and institutional changes which have come about within Phase 1, and which lead to a more socially just situation for the urban poor.¹²

In terms of material benefits from CLIFF, by June 2005, 5332 families were planned to benefit from the housing development and more then 279,00 families from the sanitation projects. (Morris, 2006) These material outputs include secure access to land¹³, which in a city like Mumbai is a great advance for poor households. It also includes connection to local infrastructure and services like water, sewerage, electricity and roads. While not all the projects in the portfolio are completed, Table 4 demonstrates that considerable gains towards these targets have been made since April 2003. A next step is to undertake follow-up research to assess the socio-economic and political impacts of upgrading and relocation on those households who have moved into the improved housing.¹⁴

Other material benefits have been related to livelihoods. The Alliance has supported community members in starting their own construction businesses, and both NSDF and MM members have

¹² The following two sections of the paper will use the CLIFF monitoring "pizza" as an underlying guide to carry discussion forward.

¹³ Estimated at 42,000square metres of land in the hands of poor households. (Jack and Morris, 2005)

¹⁴ Some small scale pieces of research on the impact of relocation have been carried out by DPU students on MSc Urban Development Planning and Environment and Sustainable Development, 2006 and 2007.

taken contracts to manage the construction of CLIFF housing and sanitation projects. (Jack, Morris and McLeod, 2005) In the latest generation of housing projects, the NSDF negotiated with contractors to sub-contract internal building work, plastering, paintings etc to NSDF and MM members. (Ibid) SSNS has also negotiated better work conditions for construction workers, agreeing the provision of facilities like transit tenements, medical dispensaries, crèches and schools by contractors.

At an institutional level, a number of observations can be made. Tables 2 and 3 indicated the precedent setting characteristics of the CLIFF portfolio. As Morris (2006) notes, CLIFF "...projects are selected for support precisely so that they can test state delivery processes for specific subsidies that have historically failed to reach the poor as no practicable delivery mechanisms have been put in place." (Morris, 2006: 120) Has CLIFF resulted in institutional changes which change this? Initial multiplier effects can be seen at the local and the national levels.

In Mumbai, 6 of the 13 projects in the CLIFF portfolio are 'testing' SRA policy. Despite the delays in some of the projects, multiplier effects in three areas can be noted. Because of the precedents set and the experience gained from the early projects (Rajiv Indira, Milan Nagar and Bharat Janata), the speed and efficiency of the Oshiwara projects was greatly increased. (Ibid) Three of the CLIFF projects have also resulted in the release of privately owned land for low income housing development (prior to 2000, no community managed SRA projects had achieved this). The Alliance has now been approached by private landowners to form partnerships, encouraged by the SRA. Finally, CLIFF projects have challenged SRA design standards, improving quality of life by providing more public space in buildings without undermining the financial feasibility of projects. This is likely to have knock on effects on standards in the future. (Ibid)

CLIFF's own portfolio has grown partly as a response to interest in replication of the early CLIFF projects (eg Hadapsar) and has also generated interests for further replication in the cities of different States (eg Adhra Pradesh, Orissa, Karnataka). (Ibid: 41) At national level, the Director of SPARC was invited to advise both the National Review Committee of the PMs Office and the Policy Advisory group of India's new urban programme, Jawharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). Similarly, as a result of the sanitation projects, the Alliance has representation on the National Sanitation Task Force and can influence the national debates on sanitation. They were also invited to participate in the training of government officials at the Administrative Staff College of India.

In the private sector, there are impacts on the practices of three different private sector actors. With respect to finance from the Banks, as the monitoring reports and Morris (2006) show, while in June 2002 almost all the financing for the portfolio came from CLIFF or SPARC/SSNS sources, by June 2005 one-third of the financing of the portfolio came from the Banks. This happened over time, as the Banks saw the successful precedents of private sector financing from one project to the next.

Another interesting outcome has been the participation of medium sized private contractors in CLIFF projects, and the synergy created between them and the Alliance. Their pre-financing of projects is reimbursed in line with SRA policy guidelines on completion of certain stages of the construction process (eg to plinth). Not only does this have an effect on the growth and development of this sector of the construction industry. Being able to start construction without delay has had another multiplier effect by drawing the banks into projects more effectively, with the potential for systematic involvement of the banks in housing and infrastructure for the poor.

As indicated above, private landowners have also been drawn into partnerships with the Alliance, and this promises the faster release of private land for low income housing development in the future. This is particularly important in a global city like Mumbai where the pressure on land is growing and the threat of eviction of poor neighbourhoods is growing, as discussed in the following section.

Perhaps the most powerful multiplier effects have been on the social and political relations within civil society and between civil society and the public sector. Within civil society, Burra (2005) comments that the sanitation projects have changed the patron-client relationships that politicians have established with slum dwellers, treating the provision of toilets as gifts. "...(N)ow, communities of the poor increasingly perceive it as a right." (Ibid: 84) Similarly, through interaction with the state "(E)ngaging with bureaucracy demystifies its authority and they are capable of negotiating with local municipal officials on a wide variety of issues...The culture of silence and subservience begins to give way to a more substantially democratic perspective." (Ibid: 84) However, as noted in section 5, this does not automatically result in more synergy between civil society organisations and the state.

7. HAS CLIFF EXPANDED THE ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE?

To what extent has the synergy CLIFF has created in these interacting components added up to an expansion in the room for manoeuvre to address social injustice in Mumbai and beyond? As in section 5, this discussion has to be put into the context of CLIFF building on the cumulative effects of the precedent setting by Alliance previous to 2002.

Building on the work of Abrams, Safier identifies "...a four dimensional model of the 'action space' of planners and planning agencies, in terms of which to estimate the degrees of freedom, or 'room for manoeuvre' open to practitioners in promoting progressive interventions in urban affairs." (Safier, 2002: 127) These four areas, which also are "the corresponding areas of proactive possibilities" (Ibid) are:

- "Improving technical-professional (in the broadest sense) innovations and individual or group ethics and behaviours;
- extending institutional and inter-organizational reforms – or goals, roles, priorities, procedures and resource allocations;
- expanding social interaction and mobilization – involvement in modes of inclusive, participative and collaborate bargaining and negotiation;
- enlarging the scope of strategic analysis and tactical response to the dynamics of urban development in time and place." (Safier: 2002: 127-8)

Assessing whether CLIFF has extended the 'action space' in relation to these four dimensions, it seems most appropriate to start with those dimensions where the Alliance is the strongest. As the analysis of the case demonstrates so far, the Alliance has a highly developed level of social interaction and community mobilization. It is distinctive for the active participation of women in the movement, and the recognition of the limitations of a male-dominated NSDF. CLIFF projects have extended the federations and the constructive engagement the Alliance has always practices with stakeholders, contributing to more equitable relationship between them.

It could be argued that CLIFF itself is a technical-professional innovation, which was built in part on the various and established community mobilization and planning capacities of the Alliance. The range of community developed techniques like self-enumeration, mapping, house modelling

and the like, were all innovations in their time which have been become established and even officially recognised, planning practices. CLIFF has enabled the Alliance to go to scale, and in the process to extend their capacities for portfolio management, both within the federations and within SSNS. The financial and technical capacities of portfolio management have also been greatly strengthened in HI.

In reference to Safier's emphasis on ethics in this dimension, it has been clear from the beginning that both the Alliance and HI place their technical-professional capacities within a well articulated framework of ethics. Indeed, their approach interrogates the notion of a 'technical' in isolation from social and political, and professional expertise which holds itself above community knowledge, procedures and techniques. In this conscious questioning and close interdependence with the dimension of social mobilisation, the Alliance's actions in these two dimensions makes for a powerful extension of the room for manoeuvre for collective action in Mumbai.

It is more complex to assess whether CLIFF has extended institutional and inter-organisational reform in Safier's terms. In the years prior to CLIFF, there had been significant changes at national level, with the adoption of structural adjustment and liberalization policies. The liberalisation of the financial sector has created more 'welcoming' conditions for CLIFF. Burra (2005) notes the conflict between a draft national slum development policy, with some progressive features (eg secure land tenure), and resistance by other central government departments who own slum encroached land. This is of particular relevance to Mumbai, because they own vast tracts of land in the city (related to railways, ports, airports) and the Alliance set its first successful precedents of relocation at scale with railway slum dwellers on Indian Railways land. (Burra, 1999b; Patel, D'Cruz and Patel, 2002)

Based on this experience and the 1995 election¹⁵, Burra (1999b) recounts how the government of Maharashtra eventually created the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) as an independent co-ordinating body. Included in its arsenal of instruments were Transferable Development Rights (TDRs), to compensate public and private sector land owners for giving over their land to slum redevelopment. Thus, the policy context not only recognised a section of slum dwellers, but also put in place instruments to leverage land and resources for their use.

This is the policy environment into which CLIFF came, and on which it was designed. It is no mistake that six of the thirteen projects are SRA projects. By providing bridge financing, CLIFF supported the innovative financial blending developed by the Alliance (see Table 4). These six SRA projects have also legitimised community-led projects within the SRA framework, to the extent that the SRA has approached them to complete projects abandoned by the private sector (which they have refused). Similarly, CLIFF bridge financing has also enabled the Alliance to bear the risks of drawing down subsidies for other housing and sanitation form the state, and as indicated previously, has enabled the Alliance to take the time to engage with banks.

Thus, CLIFF has contributed to extending institutional and inter-organizational reforms, but as discussed, severe constraints remain: corruption and inefficiency in government, staff turnover in both government and the banking sector, and to date, lack of institutionalisation of procedures for community lending in the banking sector. Questions remain about the commitment of local state and city government to deliver on current entitlements of the poor in Mumbai. The

¹⁵ The new government made election promises "to provide 8000, 000 free houses for 4 million slum dweller in Mumbai." (Burra: 1999b: 72) All slum and pavement dwellers who were on the electoral role on 1st January 1995 were eligible for a free house.

tremendous orchestration of innovation in the social mobilisation and technical-professional dimensions have made advances, with the contribution of CLIFF. How sustainable is this undoubted expansion of the room for manoeuvre?

A review of how CLIFF contributes to enlarging the scope of strategic analysis and tactical response to the dynamics of urban development in time and place give critical clues to this question. Although naming Mumbai as the commercial and financial capital of India, Mahadevia (2006) paints a picture of Mumbai as a de-industrialising city which is stagnating.¹⁶ He therefore argues that there is a close connection between efforts to stimulate the growth of Mumbai and the future of slum dwellers in the city, given that 54.1% of MCGM population lives in slums (Census of India 2001 in Mahadevia, 2006). The Vision Plan for the conversion of Mumbai into a World Class City is just such an initiative, led by Bombay First, an organisation of corporate leaders in the city. (Bombay First-McKinsey, 2003) Labelling this as the 'Shanghaing Mumbai', a vision accepted by the Chief Minister's Task force in 2004, Mahadevia lays out how, by playing with the definition of 'citizenship', it has already led to the forced evictions of some 7% of slum dwellers in MCGM. He points to powerful political forces underpinning the evictions, including the operation of a builder-politician nexus. Dharavi, the largest slum area in Mumbai is in their sights, and the Alliance is already mobilising to counter this vision of how to address 'the largest slum in Asia'.

The Alliance is fully aware of all these pressures and is constantly seek opportunities to expand their room for manoeuvre, against these powerful forces, for example, by offering an alternative vision in articles like "Beyond evictions in a global city: people-managed resettlement in Mumbai." (Patel, D'Cruz and Burra, 2002) Their argument is based on their experience of peacefully relocating slum dwellers living along major transportation routes, clearly an important focus for the World Class City Vision. CLIFF has contributed to this work by the Alliance in which they recognises that the development of infrastructure is important to a different vision of the city as well. One worrying factor is that those behind the World Class City Vision intend to by-pass the SRA, and following neo-liberal principles, to address housing for the poor through the market. In such a conflictive context, the need for funding of the type CLIFF offers appears to be ever more urgent. The Alliance can justifiably take the long view, given its history and formulate its collective strategic action to maintain its strengths in the social mobilization and technical-professional dimensions, continue making inroads in the institutional dimension and to constructively resist the current expression of the powerful forces at work in Mumbai to reduce its room for manoeuvre and set back the vision of a 'just city'.

8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

What does the case highlight about the notion of being strategic in the context of community-led action planning and the conceptual argument underpinning the three indicators? The achievement of *synergy* between different groups in civil society, both in political mobilisation and within the components of action planning, is important to insurgent grassroots movements. However, based on a co-operative conflict view of society, it is a set of relationships which has to be constantly reconstructed and renegotiated. The case also highlights that a level of synergy was reached with particular parts of the state (the SRA), but because of divergent interests and political pressure, other parts of the state were obstacles to the timely implementation of some

¹⁶The city's Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) and Per Capita NSDP growth rates foere -2.98% and -4.53% respectively during 1999-00 to 2000-01. (Mahadevia, 2006: 355)

CLIFF supported projects. Similarly, CLIFF benefited and enabled synergy to be created between some parts of the private sector (medium size construction companies and some banks), while others remain to be convinced that their interest will not be compromised by joint action with poor communities. While the 'communicative turn' (Forester, 2000, Innes, Healey) provides useful insights into synergy, it does not always fully "...explain how communication could be transformed within the context of power..." (Fainstein, 2005: 125) The case has demonstrated that, following Foucault's view of power as "a fundamental enabling force" (McNay, op cit.), that organisations of the poor can drive the process of change forward, through co-ordinated efforts between themselves, and between their organisations and parts of the state and the private sector.

Following this approach, the link between synergy and outcomes, or a multiplier effect impacting social injustice, is crucial. As Fainstein (2005: 125) notes, "...an examination of planning's outcomes and comparison of those outcomes to a view of the just city" is an important way of understanding the interrelations between context and planning actions. While recognising the embeddedness of social and power relations in the context of planning, the case has explored collective agency and the "... *room for manoeuvre* open to practitioners in promoting progressive interventions in urban affairs" (Safier, 2002:127). It suggests that both synergy and a multiplier effect are necessary but not sufficient indicators of an expansion of the room for manoeuvre. Because challenging social injustice implies "...changes in dominant values and institutions, shifts in relationships of power, and ultimately a transformation of the state apparatus." (Sandercock, 1999:41), expanding the space for action is a complex process of co-operation and conflict. Marxists and some post-modernists have argued that the state, and planning as an activity of the state, will always work to undermine such processes and to co-opt civil society movements (see for example, Harvey, 1996; Young, 1990). Nevertheless, the paper supports, and demonstrates the empirical possibility of, under certain conditions, a contested notion of the cumulative effect of strategically focussed 'micro transformations' to address social justice. As Sandercock comments, "...the idea of 'a thousand tiny empowerment' (Epstein quoted in Sandercock, 1998: 129) was not only meaningful, but perhaps the only acceptable path to social change." (Sandercock, 1999: 41)

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APPENDICES

**Table 1: The role and responsibilities of the Homeless International
Technical Advisory Group (HI TAG)**

- To ...function as a Credit Committee for CLIFF with responsibility for assessing loan and guarantee agreements prepared by the project team, and to review loan and grant extensions
- To recommend to HI activities to be incorporated into the annual implementation plan
- To provide technical assistance to HI staff and local CLIFFs as necessary
- To provide technical advice to the CLIFF Advisory Group.

Source: Paraphrased from HI, 2005

Table 2: Criteria for Project Selection in the CLIFF Portfolio

Projects must demonstrate that they:

- have the potential to be implemented as a flagship that will provide a precedent for future scaling-up, replicability and pro-poor policy change;
- have emerged from strategies developed by organizations of the urban poor and their existing relationships with local authority and municipal officials, and have the potential to strengthen such city-community relationships;
- actively include and benefit the poorest and most marginalised members of the community in the area where the project is to be implemented;
- be properly costed, financially viable and offer options for negotiating loans from commercial banking institutions and municipal/state subsidies
- include an analysis of the major project risks...and their management and mitigation
- incorporate a management strategy (roles and responsibilities)
- long term planning for the sustainability ...of assets development from the investments
- incorporate a learning and knowledge-sharing agenda...

Source: Edited from HI TAG meeting papers, 2002

**Table 3: Units Planned and Spatial/Institutional Precedent Setting
Characteristics of the CLIFF India Portfolio**

Type	Project	Number of units planned	Spatial & institutional circumstances	
Housing SRA Housing Projects in Mumbai	Rajiv Indira	209 units 5 multi-st buildings	In situ upgrading on the edge of Dharavi Land from government	
	Bharat Janata	147 units 5 multi-st buildings	In situ upgrading in middle of Dharavi Land from government	
	Milan Nagar	327 units 5 multi-st buildings	Resettlement of pavement dwellers on greenfield site in PUI Land from government	
	Oshiwara (Ph 1)	780 units 6 multi-st buildings	In situ upgrading (slum dwellers onsite) and resettlement of roadside dwellers on greenfield site in PUI Private landowner	
	Oshiwara (Ph 2)	2 480 units 19 multi-st buildings	Large scale in situ upgrading and resettlement of roadside dwellers on greenfield site in PUI Private landowner	
	Jollyboard	101 units 2 multi-st buildings	Voluntary resettlement of railway slum dwellers in greenfield site Private landowner	
	Solapur bidi, Solarpur	501 tenements	Subsidy draw down test in dormant policy First time working with unions Private landowner	
	Other Housing	Sunnuduguddu Bangalore	74 units 4 multi-st buildings	New development Land from government
		Hadaspar (Phases 1 & 2) Pune	713 tenements	Combined in situ and greenfield in PUI Subsidy draw down test Land from government
	Infrastructure	BSDF (Phase 1)	208 toilet blocks	Subsidy draw down test – government Land from government
Pune sanitation (Phase 4)		22 toilet blocks	Subsidy draw down test VAMBAY gov policy Land from government	
Tiruppur sanitation		42 toilet blocks	First citywide sanitation programme in Tamil Nadu Creating new policy and testing new partnerships Land from gov	

Sources: Project proposals presented to HI Technical Advisory Group (TAG) (2004 to 2006); Third CLIFF Monitoring Report, June 2005

Table 4: Financial Blending Precedents in the CLIFF India Portfolio¹⁷

Type	Project	Total cost (£)	CLIFF financing (£)	Financial blending	
				Pre-financing/ guarantees ¹⁸	Sources of financing ¹⁹
Housing (81% of CLIFF capital loans) ²⁰ SRA Housing Projects in Mumbai	Rajiv Indira	1,413,202	400,000	HI guarantee to Citibank	Land from gov Loan from Citibank TDR Sale: 27 units and commercial space
	Bharat Janata	933,349	213,855	HI guarantee to NHB	Land from gov TDR (construction) Loan from NHB Sale: 50 residential units and 8 commercial units
	Milan Nagar	1,447,804	339,687		Land from gov TDR (construction) Sale: 30 commercial units tbc Community contributions
	Oshiwara (Ph 1)	3,231,487	1,151,622	Contractor pre-financing (approx 30% of construction costs)	TDR (land and construction) Sale: 38 residential units (handed over MHADA for households with disabled members)
	Oshiwara (Ph 2)	11,549,610	715,202 (included temp. bank guarantee waiting for USAID guarantee)	USAID guarantee to ICICI Contractor pre-financing (approx 30% of construction costs)	TDR (land and construction) Loan from ICICI Sale: 120 residential units and commercial space
Other Housing	Jollyboard	374,924	20,360	Contractor pre-financing (approx 30% of construction costs)	TDR (land and construction) Sale: 5 residential units
	Solapur bidi, Solarpur	859,431	472,476		Subsidy from state Sale: commercial units
	Sunnuduguddu Bangalore	139,985	120,032		Subsidy from state Sale: 11 commercial units

¹⁷ Costs and CLIFF financing from Jack & Morris (2005) Fourth CLIFF India Monitoring Report to end December 2007

¹⁸ All the loans from the private sector required guarantees of between 10 to 15%.

¹⁹ Project proposals presented to HI Technical Advisory Group (TAG) (2004 to 2006); discussions with Morris (2007)

²⁰ Proportions from Independent Evaluation of the Community-Led Infrastructure Finance Facility (CLIFF) (2006)

Type	Project	Total cost (£)	CLIFF financing (£)	Financial blending	
				Pre-financing/ guarantees ¹⁸	Sources of financing ¹⁹
	Hadaspar (Ph 1 & 2) Pune	688,494	416,288		Repayment thru VAMBAY subsidy
Infrastructure (19% of CLIFF capital loans)	BSDP (Ph1)	4,117,175	800,000	UTI guarantees to municipality	Reimbursement from Municipality (from WB loan to BMC)
	Pune sanitation (Phase 4)	166,343	96,499		Reimbursement from Municipality (at tender costs) (thru subsidy from gov)
	Tiruppur sanitation	842,747	15,153		Reimbursement from Municipality (at tender costs)
Total (£)		25,764,530	4,760,793		

Figure 4: Components of CLIFF Monitoring – Risks and Relationships

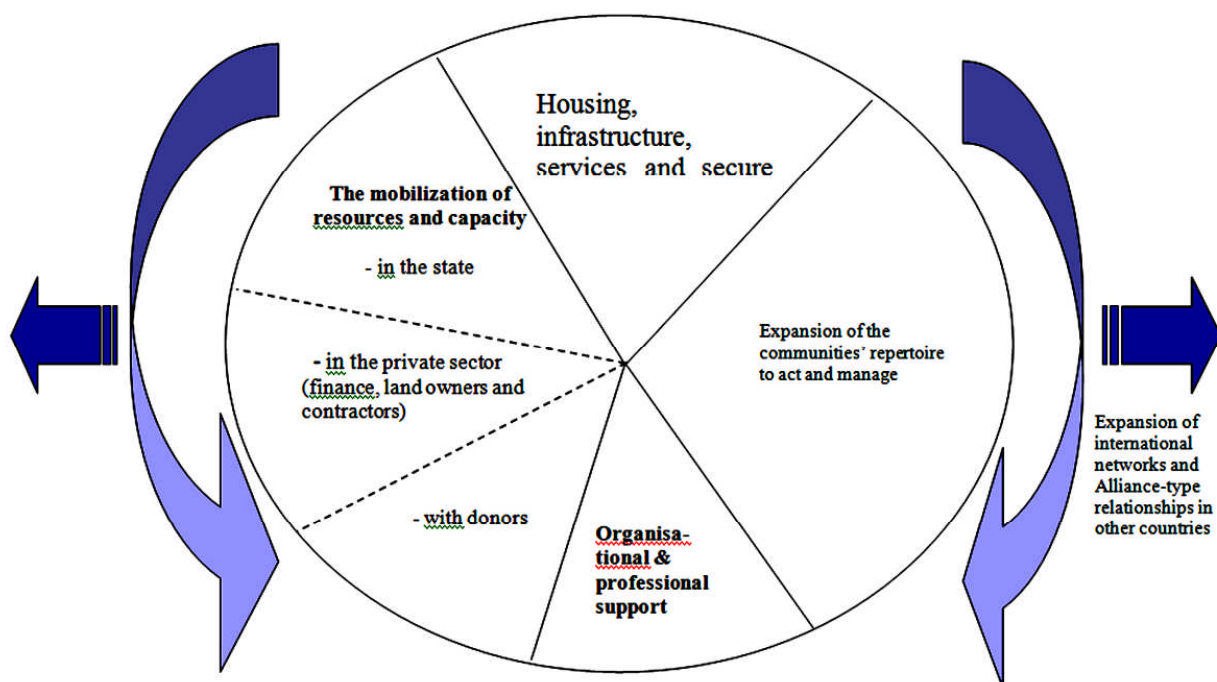


Table 5: The Physical Outputs of the CLIFF India Portfolio, April 2006²¹

Type	Project	Units planned	Completed
Housing SRA Housing Projects in Mumbai	Rajiv Indira	209 units planned 5 multi-story buildings	2 buildings occupied 1 complete 1 almost complete 1 to be started
	Bharat Janata	147 units 5 multi-story buildings	3 buildings almost complete 2 to be started
	Milan Nagar	5 multi-story buildings	327 units 1 complete 4 to be started
	Oshiwara (Phase 1)	780 units 6 multi-story buildings	6 buildings completed & inhabited
	Oshiwara (Phase 2)	2 480 units 19 multi-story buildings	8 buildings started
	Jollyboard	101 units 2 multi-story buildings	1 building started
Other Housing	Solapur bidi, Solarpur	501 tenements	Delays
	Sunnuduguddu Bangalore	74 units 4 multi-story buildings	Delays
	Hadaspar (Phases 1 & 2) Pune	713 tenements	All work complete
Infrastructure	BSDF	208 toilet blocks	200 handed over to BMC
	Pune sanitation (Phase 4)	22 toilet blocks	Completed
	Tiruppur sanitation	42 toilet blocks	Delays because of land search

Sources: Project proposals presented to HI Technical Advisory Group (TAG) (2004 to 2006);
Independent Evaluation of the Community-Led Infrastructure Finance Facility (CLIFF) (2006)

²¹ Data from Portfolio Basics Overview, paper presented at 26th April, 2006 TAG meeting