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Tenure Security in Nagpur, India

Submitted By: Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)



Organization Profile

Organization Name: Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)

Organization Type: Civil society

Website: https://yuvaindia.org/

Practice Details

Country(ies): India

City(ies): Nagpur

Start Year: 2024

Ongoing: No

End Year: 2025

Main Adequate Housing Components:



Housing Thematic Areas:



Relevant SDGs:



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Problem & Context

Nagpur has more than 400 informal settlements where nearly one-third of the city's people live. Parvati Nagar is one such slum, about 20 years old, with 130 households and around 450 residents. Yet it remained "not-notified" by the government, which meant families had no legal recognition and were kept out of government schemes for housing, water, and sanitation. Most residents are Muslims, Dalits, and OBCs who work as daily wage earners. Although a state government order allowed such settlements to be 'notified', the process was weighed down by bureaucracy, little public awareness, and complicated paperwork. Because of this, Parvati Nagar's residents lived under constant fear of eviction, with poor housing conditions and no access to basic services. Their lives were marked by invisibility in the city's planning and insecurity in their everyday existence.

Solution Developed

Residents, with YUVA's facilitation, co-created a community-led recognition model. YUVA helped form the CBO Parvati Nagar (Vanjara) Vikas Samiti as their collective voice and used multiple strategies: organising mohalla sabhas (neighbourhood meetings to strengthen participatory governance under the 74th Constitutional Amendment), running a signature campaign, compiling land and survey records, and engaging directly with NMC. YUVA also supported Aadhaar enrolment camps and facilitated negotiations with officials, ensuring active CBO participation. At the same time, residents pushed for and secured household water connections. This dual approach—linking immediate service needs with long-term legal recognition—was the innovation. By generating evidence and managing negotiations themselves, residents shifted from being treated as "encroachers" to partners in urban governance.

Implementation

The journey unfolded in phases:

- Mobilisation: YUVA's organisers went door-to-door, listening to concerns and building trust. Community meetings helped residents act as one collective. Camps for ID documents prepared families for recognition. Women led the process, building unity and confidence.
- Formation of CBO: The Parvati Nagar Vikas Samiti was formed, giving residents a representative voice with authorities.
- Evidence: Residents gathered proof such as old land ownership extracts and property cards, and cooperated with socio-economic and plane table surveys. This community data, backed by a memorandum with signatures, photos, and demands, strengthened their case.
- Services: Water access was prioritised. Through advocacy and joint engagement, 130 household taps were installed, with fees waived—a major relief for daily wage families.

- Advocacy: Follow-ups with NMC, public hearings, and media outreach kept the issue visible. Hearings saw residents co-create the PTS map, ensuring local knowledge shaped the process. Supportive policies like the GR on slum regularisation created opportunities, and constant pressure led to official notification in Oct 2025.
- Stakeholders: CBO, YUVA, NMC, OCW, survey agencies, media.

The model was low-cost and participatory, investing in people and process rather than infrastructure, ensuring sustainability.

Enablers & Obstacles

Enablers: Several critical factors enabled the success of this initiative. Women's leadership, community unity, and the credibility of community-generated data built collective strength. At the same time, the existence of supportive policies such as the Government Resolution (GR) on slum regularisation—created important advocacy opportunities.

Obstacles: Residents lacked awareness of slum notification rights and struggled with identity documentation. Bureaucratic delays and shifting political interests slowed progress. At times, efforts to divide residents surfaced. These were overcome through persistent dialogue and support from YUVA. Strong community bonds built through years of collective organising were decisive in withstanding setbacks.

Results & Impact

In October 2025, Parvati Nagar was officially notified by Nagpur Municipal Corporation—opening the door for 130 households (~450 residents) to secure tenure and access development schemes such as PMAY (a Government of India housing scheme promoting affordable housing through subsidies, credit-linked assistance, and in-situ redevelopment) and the Ramai Awas Yojana (a Maharashtra scheme providing pucca houses to SC, ST, and Neo-Buddhist families).

Key achievements:

- Water: All households secured piped tap connections, improving health, hygiene, and reducing women's labour.
- Security: Legal recognition removed eviction threats and enabled access to land titles and housing schemes.
- Empowerment: Women's groups gained confidence to negotiate; the CBO emerged as a governance body.
- Evidence: First official dataset of the settlement (socio-economic + PTS surveys) validated by NMC.
- Measured outcomes: 130 taps, 229 signatures, official notification order.

- Qualitative impacts: improved dignity, reduced vulnerability, and stronger community identity. The initiative proved that organised, low-income residents can influence city policy through evidence and persistence

Replication & Scale Up

For replication, institutional recognition of community-generated data and simplified slum notification procedures are essential. Critical enablers include strong community mobilisation, women's leadership, accessible documentation processes, and municipal willingness to engage. Supportive state policies, like the 2019 GR, create the framework, but replication depends on political will and administrative openness to participatory governance models.

The model is replicable across Maharashtra (except metros). In Nagpur, 424 informal settlements exist, of which 131—housing 1.4 lakh people—qualify for notification under the 2019 GR. It has already inspired similar mobilisation in Nagpur and Akola with YUVA's support. Critical enablers include women's leadership, structured documentation, and municipal engagement. Scaling city-wide needs recognition of community data and simplified processes, enabling thousands more households to secure tenure and housing upgrades.

Policy Uptake

This housing practice has informed or been partially integrated into policy discussions, strategies, or pilot-level policy instruments.

The practice demonstrated how community-led mobilisation, evidence generation, and negotiations can operationalise the Government of Maharashtra's 2019 GR on slum notification. In Parvati Nagar, residents worked with survey agencies and NMC to co-produce official data, creating a precedent for participatory approaches in implementing state policy. This has informed policy discussions in Nagpur and Akola, where similar processes are being piloted, and has highlighted the need for institutional recognition of community-generated data and simplified procedures to scale city-wide.

Lessons & Takeaways

The Parvati Nagar case shows that organised communities, especially with women's leadership, can drive slum notification through evidence and persistence. Community-generated data and structured documentation built credibility, while continuous engagement with municipal authorities ensured accountability. The key takeaway is that participatory, low-cost models linking immediate service needs with long-term tenure security are scalable and can influence city policy when institutionally recognised.