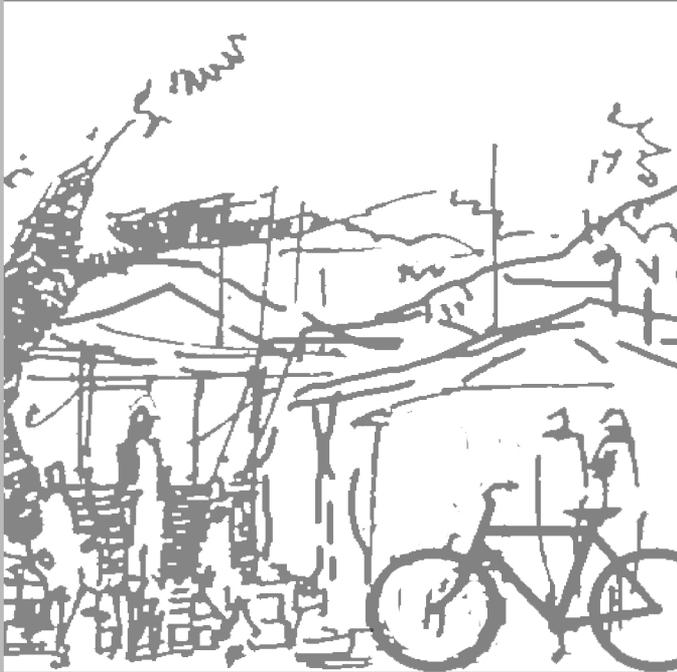


National Resource Centre for Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India
CEPT University
Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus, University Road, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad-380009

Research Report

Rental Housing for the Urban Poor in Guwahati



Renu Desai
Darshini Mahadevia
Trishna Gogoi

August 2012

Centre for Urban Equity (CUE)





Research Report

Rental Housing for the Urban Poor in Guwahati

Renu Desai

(Centre for Urban Equity, CEPT University, Ahmedabad)

Darshini Mahadevia

(Centre for Urban Equity, CEPT University, Ahmedabad)

Trishna Gogoi

(Centre for Urban Equity, CEPT University, Ahmedabad)

With assistance from:

Abhijit Datey

Tejas Patel

Aseem Mishra

Kaushal Jajoo

Vishal Darji

Ankur Parasher

August 2012

Research funded by

SNPUPR (Support to National Policies for Urban Poverty Reduction),
a Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA) and DFID
partnership.

Disclaimer

The comments and opinions in this paper are of the authors and not of the Centre for Urban Equity or CEPT University.

Contents

List of Tables	iv
List of Figures	v
List of Maps	v
List of Photos	v
List of Boxes	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Literature Review.....	3
2.1. Informality, Housing and Tenure.....	3
2.2. Extent and Diversity of Rental Housing	7
2.3. Determinants of Rental Housing.....	8
2.4. Supply and Demand of Rental Housing.....	10
2.5. Policy implications.....	11
3. Methodology and Sample Profile	16
3.1 Methodology	16
3.2 Sample Profile.....	20
4. Background of Guwahati	27
4.1. Demography.....	27
4.2. Migration and the Political Economy of Assam: Implications for Guwahati...28	
4.3. Urban Economy	31
4.4. Urban Growth and Development	33
4.4.1. Urban Infrastructure and Basic Services.....	35
4.4.2. Growth of Informal Settlements	37
4.5. Urban Land and Housing Conflicts	40
5. Rental housing markets in Guwahati	43
5.1. Types of housing sub-markets	43
5.1.1. Housing through informal occupation of public and private lands.....	43
5.1.2. Housing through alienation of land.....	60
5.1.3. Public sector housing	65
6. Supply and Demand of Rental Housing.....	71
6.1. Types of rental housing.....	71
6.2. Types of suppliers and rental housing development process in the informal sector.....	79
6.2. Types of tenants	84
6.3. Factors that influence tenants' choice of rental housing.....	88
6.4. Landlord-tenant relations	89
7. Conclusion and Recommendations.....	92
References.....	99

List of Tables

Table 1: Proportion of Owners and Renters in different Countries and Cities.....	7
Table 2: Housing Sub-markets created by Different Land and Housing Development Processes.....	17
Table 3: Sampling for Household (HH) surveys in Case-study Settlements.....	19
Table 4: Sample Size and Demographic Characteristics.....	21
Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Religion.....	21
Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Caste.....	22
Table 7: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by State of Origin.....	23
Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Monthly Income.....	23
Table 9: Monthly Household Income among Owners and Tenants.....	24
Table 10: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Duration of Stay in Guwahati.....	24
Table 11: Employment Indicators by Gender.....	25
Table 12: Employment Indicators by Tenure Status.....	26
Table 13: Population Growth in Guwahati.....	27
Table 14: Distribution of Workforce in Guwahati Metropolitan Area in 2001.....	32
Table 15: Guwahati Land Use.....	34
Table 16: Deprivations in Housing and Basic Services, Comparison of Urban Assam and Urban India.....	36
Table 17: Categorization of Slums.....	38
Table 18: BSUP housing projects in Guwahati.....	39
Table 19: Landownership on Guwahati's hills.....	52
Table 20: Details of ASHB Rental Housing Projects in Guwahati as of 2006-07.....	69
Table 21: ASHB Rental Housing Stock in Guwahati as of January 2012.....	69
Table 22: Percentage Distribution of Owners and Tenants by Housing Quality.....	72
Table 23: Percentage Distribution of Owners and Tenants by Total Built-up Area....	73
Table 24: Percentage Distribution of Owners and Tenants by Level of Basic Services.....	74
Table 25: Percentage Distribution of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by Monthly Rent.....	75
Table 26: Level of Basic Services and Housing Quality in Informal Housing by Monthly Rent paid by Tenant Family Households.....	76
Table 27: Percentage Distribution of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by Monthly Rent per square metre.....	76
Table 28: Percentage Distribution of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by Rent % of Household Income.....	86
Table 29: Percentage Distribution of Different Income Categories of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by their Rent % of Household Income.....	87
Table 30: Household Monthly Income and Rent % of Household Income for Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers.....	87

List of Figures

Figure 1: Typical Tenure Continuum	5
Figure 2: Housing supply mechanism along the Railway tracks between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road (Railway Land)	45
Figure 3: Housing supply mechanism in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki (State government Land in the Plains), Nizarapara (State government Land in the Hills) and Bhaskarnagar (Private land marked for Acquisition)	47
Figure 4: Housing supply mechanism in Shahnagar, Hatigaon	62
Figure 5: Housing supply mechanism in GMC Fatasil Colony	67

List of Maps

Map 1: Location of case-study settlements in Guwahati	16
Map 2: Hills in Guwahati	34
Map 3: Railway slum between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road, showing ground built-up and number of dwellings	44
Map 4: Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, showing ground built-up of dwellings	48
Map 5: Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot	50
Map 6: Nizarapara, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot	56
Map 7: Bhaskarnagar, showing ground built-up of dwellings	58
Map 8: Bhaskarnagar, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot	58
Map 9: Shahnagar, showing ground built-up of dwellings	63
Map 10: Shahnagar, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot	64
Map 11: GMC Fatasil Colony, showing ground built-up of dwellings and number of dwellings	67
Map 12: Assam State Housing Board EWS and LIG housing in Kharguli Hills, showing ground built-up of dwellings and number of dwellings	69

List of Photos

Photo 1 (left): Informal occupation along railway tracks near Lakhtokia Gate	45
Photo 2 (right): Informal occupation along railway tracks near Lakhtokia Gate	45
Photo 3 (left): Houses on stilts in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki	50
Photo 4 (right): Houses on stilts in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki	50
Photo 5: Toilet on stilts in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki	50
Photo 6 (left): One of the spacious plots and houses in Nizarapara	53
Photo 7 (right): Open pit toilet in Nizarapara	53
Photo 8 (left): Road constructed through Nizarapara by the Unnayan Samiti	55
Photo 9 (right): Bore-well and piped water distribution network in Nizarapara	55
Photo 10 (left): Bhaskarnagar	59

Photo 11 (right): Bhaskarnagar	59
Photo 12 (left): Vacant plots in Shahnagar	61
Photo 13 (right): Rental housing in a plot with an absentee landlord, Shahnagar	61
Photo 14 (left): Landlord's <i>pucca</i> house & bamboo-mat rental rooms, Shahnagar	61
Photo 15 (right): Landlord's family & their tenants living in <i>pucca</i> housing	61
Photo 16: Water supply arrangement in Shahnagar.....	63
Photo 17: Informal houses built in GMC Fatasil colony	66
Photo 18 (left): Water and sanitation inadequacy at GMC Fatasil Colony	68
Photo 19 (right): Toilet block and unsanitary conditions at GMC Fatasil Colony	68
Photo 20: EWS housing by Assam State Housing Board at Kharguli Hills	70
Photo 21 (left): RCC building developed as rental housing by absentee landlord	81
Photo 22 (right): Well-to-do landlord's house across a fenced plot comprising rental rooms developed by him	81
Photo 23: Rental housing in an incrementally-built Brick and RCC building:	83
Photo 24: Poorer landlord's house	84

List of Boxes

Box 1: Land, housing and infrastructure development on swampy land and waterbodies:	49
Box 2: The informal land market in Nizarapara over time:	53
Box 3: Role of Unnayan Samitis in the development of informal settlements:.....	54
Box 4: Topography, level of infrastructure development and implications for rental housing:.....	55
Box 5: Petty-capitalist absentee landlord: Case-study 1	80
Box 6: Petty-capitalist absentee landlord: Case-study 2.....	80
Box 7: Petty-capitalist absentee landlord: Case-study 3.....	81
Box 8: Petty-bourgeois resident landlord: Case-study 1:	82
Box 9: Petty-bourgeois resident landlord: Case-study 2:	82
Box 10: Petty-bourgeois resident landlord: Case-study 3:	82
Box 11: Petty-subsistence resident landlord: Case-study 1:	84
Box 12: Petty-subsistence resident landlord: Case-study 2:	84
Box 13: Women-headed households: Case-study 1.....	85
Box 14: Women-headed households: Case-study 2.....	85
Box 15: Case-studies of tenants who have experienced evictions due to gentrification of rental housing:	90
Box 16: Kharguli Hills Housing Building Tenant Association:	90

Acknowledgements

This research has been funded by SNPUPR (Support to National Policies for Urban Poverty Reduction), a Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA) and DFID partnership. This funding is part of a programme for Strengthening National Resource Centres for supporting states and cities in developing pro-poor urban policies and programme implementation (East-North eastern region). We are grateful for this research funding.

Among the various people in Guwahati who gave us their valuable time for discussing land and housing issues or taking us on preliminary field-visits around the city, we would like to particularly thank the following: Mr. Shimonto Sarma of sSTEP, Mr. Debojit Goswami of Scorpion, Mr. Putul Sarma of Uma Sarma Gramya Vikash Kendra (USGRAVIKA), Mrs. Shehnaz Haq of Helping Hand Foundation, Mr. Arup Jyoti Kolita of Town and Country Planning, and Mr. Kamal Medhi of Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS). In the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC), we would like to thank the Municipal Commissioner Mr. Puru Gupta, Deputy Municipal Commissioner Mr. Mukul Gogoi and Officer on Special Duty (OSD), JNNURM, Mr. Dipak Agarwal for their help.

We would also like to thank the local survey team in Guwahati, which was headed by Mr. Nabajyoti Das. Various people at CUE have assisted us throughout the project. Tejas Patel and Vishal Darji assisted us in Guwahati in the mapping of the case-study settlements, and Tejas subsequently prepared the maps used in this report. Aseem Mishra, Kaushal Jajoo and Tejas did all the data entry of the household surveys, making possible the statistical analysis. Abhijit Datey processed the statistical data and assisted us in analysing it. Ankur Parashar assisted us in research for the literature review.

Last but not least, we are grateful to all the residents of our case-study settlements who agreed to participate in our household survey or our interviews inspite of numerous surveys they have answered in the last few years. Without them, this study would not have been possible, and we hope this study sheds some light on the importance of the rental housing sector in Guwahati as well as in their lives.

* We have changed the names of the residents who participated in this study.

1. Introduction

Rental housing constitutes a significant proportion of housing in many cities around the world. In cities of developing countries, rental housing is crucial in fulfilling the shelter needs of the urban poor. For poor migrants, there are limited shelter options, and rental housing, particularly in informal settlements, offers an important option. In some cities, rental housing is also significant for older residents amongst the urban poor as they are unable to make the shift to home ownership because of politico-economic factors that shape their household economic conditions and also unavailability of housing loan at this age making ownership housing unaffordable. New migrants to cities are also often undecided about their long-term plans and many come without the intention of settling down in the city for long. In recent years, regional parochialism, wherein low income migrants in particular have become the target of parochial politics, has resulted in further indecisiveness amongst migrants about their long-term plans regarding settling down in the city. Rental housing is significant for migrants for this reason as well.

In the context of this housing reality, it is unfortunate and even disastrous that rental housing has not been given attention in housing policy in most countries, including India. In fact, there is an increasing push towards home ownership in housing policies for the urban poor in India. There is an urgent need, therefore, to revisit the single-minded policy emphasis on ownership, and explore policy interventions that could support rental housing development in Indian cities. Ignoring rental housing in policy has not made it disappear. Instead, it has simply deepened the inadequate quality of housing and basic services for urban poor tenants, making them more vulnerable. Policies that appropriately support the rental housing sector could address these issues. For this, a necessary step is research into the dynamics of rental housing to better understand this sector.

This study examines rental housing for the urban poor in the city of Guwahati in the north-east state of Assam. Guwahati has a high level of rental housing, with 46 per cent of all dwelling units in the city being of rental tenure (GMC 2006). The main question posed by this research study is: What are the conditions of and dynamics of rental housing in Guwahati, particularly in the rental market occupied by the urban poor? To examine this question, the study explores the following sub-questions:

1. What are the housing sub-markets in Guwahati city? What types of rental housing for the urban poor have developed in these housing sub-markets (in terms of quality of housing, condition of basic services provision, levels of rent, and so forth)?
2. Who are the actors in each of Guwahati's housing sub-markets? Who are the suppliers of rental housing for the urban poor within each of these sub-markets? What is the process through which rental housing is developed by these suppliers and what role does rental housing play in their lives?

3. Who are the clients of rental housing in each of Guwahati's housing sub-markets? What are the factors that influence their choice of rental housing? What is the housing mobility among the renters?
4. What are the determinants of rental housing in Guwahati? What is the impact of the recent spate of speculative land markets on rental housing supply?
5. What is the demand for rental housing in Guwahati? What are the policy implications for rental housing in Guwahati given the dynamics of rental housing found in the city?

This study takes a sub-market approach. Housing is a heterogeneous economic good, defined by location, quality of housing, level of services and above all level of tenure security. These characteristics are as much an outcome of household incomes and social characteristics as of supply dynamics, in particular the local political economies including the policy paradigm. A sub-market is one where there are certain common characteristics. In this study, the sub-markets have been identified by land dynamics and actors involved in the supply. In particular, informal land occupation and alienation of land for housing purposes have been the most important processes for identifying a sub-market. The preliminary visit to the city had indicated that rental housing was all pervasive and was found in all types of housing sub-markets. The sub-market approach gave us a means to identify settlements for detailed surveys.

This report begins with a review of the policy and scholarly literature on rental housing. It then explains the research methodology of this study. The subsequent section provides a detailed discussion on the demographic, economic, political, and housing and planning-related aspects of Guwahati to set the urban and regional context for the research. The next two sections examine and analyse housing sub-markets in Guwahati and the processes and characteristics of supply and demand of rental housing in them. Following this, we discuss various determinants of rental housing in Guwahati to understand both the extent of rental housing as well as the types of rental housing found in the city. In conclusion, we summarize the findings of the research and discuss potential policy directions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Informality, Housing and Tenure

The supply of housing in the formal sector has always fallen short of the needs of the urban poor and low-income groups in cities of the developing world since the state has not developed adequate public housing and land and housing prices in the formal sector have been unaffordable for these groups. The informal sector has therefore played a key role in fulfilling the housing needs of these groups.

Contemporary debates on informality focus on the politics through which informality develops, that is, the politics through which the urban poor and low-income residents negotiate access to land, housing and urban services. For Asef Bayat, slums are the “habitus of the dispossessed” whose key feature is “informal life,” one that is typified by “flexibility, pragmatism, negotiation, and constant struggle for survival and self-development” (Bayat 2007: 579). He argues that the politics of the urban poor can be understood as a “quiet encroachment of the ordinary” (Bayat 1997; 2010). Here, the urban poor seek to remain invisible as they attempt to gain access to the city’s resources and build social and economic lives that allow for their survival in the city and even upward mobility sometimes. Although this is not a confrontational politics or one that seeks to make conscious and visible claims on the city, it is through these attempts at survival that the urban poor nonetheless subvert dominant modes of city-making. While Bayat’s focus is cities in the Middle East, in Indian cities too one finds the urban poor engaging in the quiet encroachment of the ordinary. Thus, many squatters improve their housing and services through their own investments, with intermittent or no aid from the state (Neuwirth 2005). Vote-bank politics and patron-client relations are also central for the urban poor in negotiating access to land, housing and urban services in India. Taking this vote-bank politics as his starting point, Benjamin (2008) conceptualizes the politics of poor groups in the Indian city as “occupancy urbanism.” For Benjamin, “poor groups, claiming public services and safeguarding territorial claims, open up political spaces that appropriate institutions and fuel an economy that builds complex alliances. . . . While engaging the state, these locality politics remain autonomous of it. . . . This politics is substantial and poses multiple crises for global capital” (Benjamin 2008: 719).

It is through these politics – both quiet encroachment of the ordinary as well as occupancy urbanism – that many informal settlements have emerged and developed in Indian cities, providing possibilities for fulfilling the shelter needs of the urban poor and low-income groups. It is important to mention here that scholars have increasingly critiqued notions of informality that equate it with spaces of poverty. AlSayyad (2004: 26) has argued that urban informality “does not simply consist of the activities of the poor, or a particular status of labor, or marginality. Rather, it is an organizing logic which emerges under the paradigm of liberalization.” Roy (2009) argues that in Indian cities, informality should be understood as an idiom of

urbanization and India's planning regime as an informalized entity itself, one that is in "a state of deregulation, ambiguity and exception." Here, the law is "rendered open-ended and subject to multiple interpretations and interests" and informality is "inscribed in the ever-shifting relationship between what is legal and illegal, legitimate and illegitimate, authorized and unauthorized." Some areas thus come to be designated as illegal and worthy of demolition while others are protected and formalized. The informal idiom of urbanization can be found in other contexts as well. For instance, Holston (2007) argues that much of the Brazilian city is occupied and built through the "misrule of law" as legal landholdings in both the wealthy and the poorest of Brazilian families are at base "legalized usurpations."

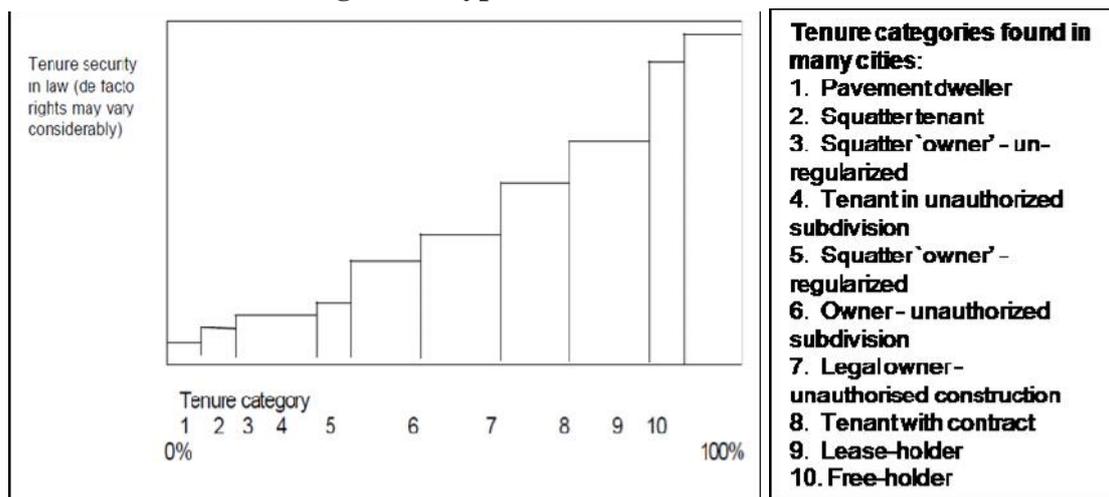
All forms of land transfer, subdivision or house construction which take place without official approval are part of urban informality. Informal housing is explained by UN-Habitat (2003) as that which does not conform to the laws and regulatory framework of the city. The majority of housing in Indian cities, be it of the poor, middle-class or elite, has an element of informality by this definition, although not all of it is viewed as such. Thus, Durand-Lasserve (2007) points out that "a given settlement type with particular characteristics regarding land tenure, urban planning, and housing can be considered either formal or informal depending on the local context and public authority interpretations." In the quest to create a "World Class City," demolition drives have been launched in many Indian cities with the backing of planning legislation that criminalizes slums and squatter settlements as illegal encroachments. Only some amongst the displaced urban poor are resettled. It is in such instances that we find that the law is rendered open-ended as public authorities interpret it in particular ways and deploy it selectively to assist such demolitions.

Informality can be viewed in the context of two core areas of housing: (i) land, and (ii) dwelling unit. The primary holding rights to land have different implications on informality. Occupancy by squatting or other processes on public, private or trust/customary lands can mean different kinds of informality and different levels of insecurity. As lands has become an expensive commodity, land grabbing, informal subdivisions, informal sales, etc., have made squatting more and more difficult for the poor. Many private-sector developers acquire land from agriculturalists on urban peripheries, subdivide the land into plots for residential purposes and sell them at whatever cost the market is ready to bear. One of the most common features in these transactions is non-registering of agricultural lands as non-agricultural (NA), as a result of which these are informal subdivisions. Such subdivisions are also characterised by lack of development control regulations and services. The developers of such informal land markets are not concerned about legalities and development and infrastructural standards as they do not want to increase the price of their products to a level beyond the reach of low-income households. They leave it to their clients (land buyers) to take care of the provision of paved roads, water connections, etc. Payne (1989) found that such informal subdivisions have become widespread across developing countries, becoming a solution to the housing problems of the urban poor. However, in many cities – from Cairo to Delhi – such subdivisions also comprise of

very high-end commercial and residential developments (Soliman 2004; Ghertner 2008). The construction of houses that do not follow development control regulations and building norms creates informality in the context of the dwelling unit. Informal land occupation coupled with informal dwellings inhabited by the urban poor generally leads to slum-like situations because of the lack of recognition by urban authorities and consequently, the lack or inadequacy of basic services like water, sanitation, drainage, etc.

We find a diversity of tenures in and across informal housing. Tenure is the mode by which land or a dwelling unit is held or owned, or the set of relationships among people concerning land and dwelling unit (Payne 2000). In fact, a diversity of tenures is significant in providing a diversity of housing choices to urban residents. Payne (2000) further argues that instead of thinking of tenure as legal or illegal, it should be understood as comprising of a continuum of tenure categories. Although this tenure continuum might differ between different cities since each city has its own range of *de jure* and *de facto* tenure systems, Payne illustrates his point through a typical tenure continuum (see Figure 1), which shows a gradation of tenure security across a range of tenure categories. However, tenure security may also improve over time for either individual households or for entire settlements. For instance, informal settlements formed through squatting usually have no tenure security initially, but when they remain for a long duration, they often acquire a sense of security (Mahadevia 2011; Payne, 2000; Durand-Lasserve and Selod, 2007, Neuwirth 2005). This is called “perceived security” (Payne 2000) or *de facto* security (Mahadevia 2010 and 2011b). *De facto* security often comes through vote-bank politics, the politics of what Benjamin (2008) calls “occupancy urbanism,” and through negotiations in political society (Chatterjee 2004).

Figure 1: Typical Tenure Continuum



(Source: Payne 2000: 4)

Payne’s tenure continuum further shows that the law gives greater tenure security to an owner than to a tenant at each stage. Thus, an owner in an unauthorised

subdivision has greater tenure security than a tenant in an unauthorised subdivision. Similarly, a squatter owner, whether in a regularised or unregularised squatter settlement, has greater tenure security than a squatter tenant. Note that Payne does not define an owner by his/her legal ownership. In fact, UN-Habitat has also defined owners broadly, as “those with the legal or *de facto* right to occupy, let, use or dispose of their dwelling” (UN-Habitat 2003: 3-4). It further explains that ownership always relates to the tenure of a dwelling but not always to the land on which it is built. It sees ownership as a broad continuum of rights, with owners including those who hold full legal title to a serviced dwelling in a formally planned settlement, those who now possess a legal title to a house built on land that was acquired illegally, as well as those with *de facto* rights such as those who own the structure but not the land on which it is built as in the case of land invasions (ibid). In this study, we define ownership even more broadly, including squatters who might not even have *de facto* rights; they are owners simply by virtue of not being tenants and having built their own dwelling, however impermanent it might be in the face of eviction threats.

Although tenants have lower tenure security than owners at each stage, rental housing nonetheless plays a significant role in meeting the shelter needs of many amongst the urban poor, especially new migrants to the city, for whom ownership housing, even in the informal sector, is beyond their capacity. For them, rental housing is important for gaining a foothold in the city. It lessens the burden on a migrant to invest in shelter till he/she can find a stable job and save enough to invest in ownership housing. Scholars have therefore discussed rental housing as providing a much needed “room for manoeuvre” or flexibility in tenure arrangements during the lifetime of an urban poor household.

Earlier the assumption was that all urban migrant households moved through three stages towards home ownership (Turner 1968; Hansen and Williams 1988). Rental housing was seen as a temporary phase in the housing life-cycle of migrants with ownership as the ultimate choice. This understanding was, in fact, part of a particular explanation of housing mobility amongst the urban poor. Housing mobility, more generally, is a process through which families adjust their housing characteristics to changing income and household characteristics in context of the lifecycle of the household (Edwards 1983). Based on his observations in Latin America, Turner (1968) argued that both housing demand as well as spatial location changed with the income and lifecycle of a migrant household. Early in the life-cycle, new migrants to the city tended to have low incomes and often rented accommodation in the city centre. Turner called these migrants “bridgeheaders” as they sought to find a toehold in the urban system. According to Turner, these migrants then moved on to achieve the intermediate status of “consolidators,” and then at an advanced stage in their lifecycle when their incomes had increased, they became “status seekers” and moved into ownership housing on the city’s periphery where affordable ownership housing is available. At the advanced stage in their lifecycle, the higher value placed on obtaining space to accommodate a growing family and security and independence conferred by ownership housing were traded against ease of accessibility to the city

centre. This demand-side explanation was, however, challenged by supply-side analyses which emphasized the structure of the local housing market and the economic capacity of households which restricted their housing decisions and residential mobility (Edwards 1983). This research has argued that whether urban households can become owners or not is linked less to their choice (although this may be important) and more to the dynamics of the local land and housing markets. Rental housing has thus been an important source of shelter for the urban poor and low-income groups, both new migrants who have few shelter options as well as older residents who cannot make the shift to ownership housing because of its lack of affordability.

2.2. Extent and Diversity of Rental Housing

A high level of rental housing has been found in many cities around the world, both in developed countries and developing countries. Table 1 shows that rental housing is higher at the city level than at the overall country level, revealing that renting is a particularly urban phenomenon. Table 1 also shows a high rate of renters in the cities of developing countries, which reveals that a high level of economic development does not equate to high home-ownership. Tenure patterns in different countries and cities are, in fact, influenced by a variety of factors such as level of economic development, level of urbanisation, the dominant form of economic organisation and the ideology of the government (UNCHS 2003: 14).

Table 1: Proportion of Owners and Renters in different Countries and Cities

Developing Countries	Owners	Renters	Others	Cities	Owners	Renters	Others
Africa							
Egypt	77	22	-	Cairo	37	63	-
Kenya	-	-	-	Kisumu	14	82	4
South Africa	69	31	-	Johannesburg	55	42	3
Asia							
India	87	11	3	Bangalore	43	55	2
Thailand	87	13	-	Bangkok	54	41	5
Turkey	-	-	-	Istanbul	68	32	-
Latin America							
Argentina	-	-	-	Buenos Aires	75	23	2
Bolivia	60	18	22	Santa Cruz	48	27	25
Brazil	74	25	1	Sao Paulo	70	20	10
Mexico	78	22	-	Mexico City	76	16	8
Developed Countries							
Germany	40	60	-	Berlin	11	89	-
The Netherlands	53	47		Rotterdam	26	49	25
United Kingdom	69	31	-	London	58	41	-
U.S.A	66	34	-	New York	45	55	-

(Source: UN-Habitat 2003; UNESCAP/UN-Habitat n.d.)

A wide diversity of rental housing is found across cities and within cities. In cities of the developing world, rental housing is found across different formal and informal

housing sub-markets. As Payne's (2000) typical tenure continuum diagram shows, tenants are found in formal housing, unauthorized subdivisions and squatter settlements (both regularised and unregularised). Lim (1987) also writes that rental housing is found in various housing sub-markets such as the regular housing market, the invasion housing market, the slum housing market and the squatter housing market. The literature on rental housing further reveals that there is a wide range of rental housing types that cater to the affordability and choices of different tenant groups. Rental housing may vary within and between cities in terms of its size, construction quality, ownership, kind of contract, rental period, rent levels, location, profitability and so on (UNCHS 2003). For example, Ballestores (2004) identifies six rental housing types in the Philippines – single house in a private sub-division/slum, shack on rented plot, row-house in private subdivision, room/bed in multiunit buildings, room/bed in houses and room/bed in commercial/industrial establishments – and also identifies the kind of size, ownership, rent, rent contract, quality and legality for each of these types.

In India, rental housing sub-markets have been categorized on the basis of location (city periphery, industrial unit, commercial areas, along important routes, etc), type of supplier (private individual/household, trust, employer, government, etc), housing type (single room, dwelling unit, bed, etc) and government policies (contractual, leasing, sub-letting, etc) (NIUA 1989). Rental housing sub-markets can also be categorized by the income group of tenants, by production and exchange systems, or by type of settlement and provider (Kumar 2001). In this study on rental housing in Guwahati, we identify different housing sub-markets by the formal and informal processes of land and housing development, paying attention also to landownership and topography since these shape the processes in particular ways. Rental housing is found across all the different sub-markets, and most of these sub-markets also comprise of more than one type of rental housing.

2.3. Determinants of Rental Housing

Rental housing is influenced by and responds to various local conditions. It is influenced by conditions that are exogenous to the sector, such as local economy, politics, land and finance systems and varied social networks, as well as conditions that are endogenous to landlords and tenants (Kumar 2001). However, the literature on such determinants is scarce, and thus our understanding of rental housing determinants is still lacking on this front.

One of the basic determinants of rental housing is the rate of migration into a city since rental housing is often the first type of shelter for migrants. If there is a high rate of migration into a city, then the demand for rental housing is likely to be higher, spurring the production of rental housing. If there is no demand for new rental housing, the production of rental housing is likely to slow down. Urban India has nearly 29 per cent migrant population, with nearly 59 per cent migrating from rural areas to urban areas. It is these waves of migrants into cities who constitute the

majority of tenants in cities. Nearly 35 per cent migrate into cities with a motive of finding better job opportunities (NSS, 2007-08). Thus, local opportunities for livelihood influences migration, and consequently rental housing. Cities with a great demand for unskilled labour tend to attract single male migrants, who generally look to rental housing – and shared arrangements within rental housing – to satisfy their shelter needs. Rental housing is articulated with local employment opportunities more broadly as well. Changes in the nature and form of local employment have a “domino” effect on rental housing markets, resulting in either upgrading to fetch higher rents, peripheral relocation of rental housing, or conversion to ownership (Kumar 2001: 4). Land market dynamics are another important determinant of rental housing. Escalating land prices and increasing land speculation lead to narrowing opportunities for ownership amongst urban residents, even in the informal sector, and the rental housing market may therefore expand to fulfil the demand for shelter.

There are also various factors endogenous to tenants and landlords that influence rental housing. This includes the stage in the life-cycle of tenants. For instance, single male migrants who are yet to establish themselves in the city as well as younger couples with younger/fewer children tend to rent (UNESCAP/UN-Habitat n.d: 17). As economic stability increases, such tenants might seek to invest in ownership housing, although this mobility to ownership depends upon the feasibility of becoming owners in a particular city. The affordability of households – that is, the income they have available for expenditure on housing, be it rental housing or ownership housing – influences the rental housing sector. The stage in the life-cycle of owner households also influences rental housing. Owners turn to landlordism for a variety of reasons. Sometimes this is linked to the stage in the life-cycle of their household and the possibilities that the development of rental housing offers for meeting certain needs and priorities. For instance, owners might turn to landlordism to raise money for housing consolidation (construction and improvement), especially when other ways of raising housing finance are difficult (Kumar 2001). Incomes from rent have been found to be important source of investments in incremental housing (Hansen and Williams 1988).

Kumar (2001) also shows how the nature of state intervention shapes the production of rental housing. This is not confined to whether the state invests in directly producing a rental housing stock. For example, land acquisition by the state leading to loss of livelihoods may force farmers to find alternative livelihoods, including renting out of housing. Another example of state intervention shaping rental housing is the nature of the state’s squatter resettlement schemes. Kumar (2001) found that in Bangalore larger resettlement plots allowed for constructing and renting out of one room. This was not possible in the smaller resettlement plots in Surat. Also, poorer households could also become landlords in Bangalore since larger plots meant that the owner did not need to expand vertically (a more expensive proposition) to build extra rooms. Rental housing is also dependent on how easily ownership housing is accessible, and in particular, whether there is finance availability for ownership

housing. If ownership housing is unaffordable on account of lack of finance, renting is preferred.

2.4. Supply and Demand of Rental Housing

In some countries such as the former communist countries of Europe, the public sector has played a large role in supplying rental housing. This rental housing has largely been employer-provided housing. For example, in China, urban residents were largely employees of the State Owned Enterprises (SOE), which provided housing to their respective employees charging minimal rent per month. In most countries of the capitalist developing world, however, the majority of rental housing is supplied by individual owners. Rental housing for the urban poor and low-income groups is supplied largely by individual owners in the informal sector. Some scholars, notably Sunil Kumar, have thus focused their research on landlordism to better understand the supply of rental housing as well as the role that rental housing plays in the lives on its suppliers. Kumar (2001) argues that landlords are often viewed as exploitative accumulators of capital in the form of landed property, while tenants are viewed as disenfranchised individuals and households whose social and economic mobility is hampered by their tenure. He goes on to argue that pitting landlord against tenant in this manner is unproductive, and rather we must analyse their relations as well as the role that rental housing plays in their life-cycle, and thus, in the livelihood responses and strategies of both landlords and tenants.

Different kinds of landlords in the informal sector have thus been identified by Kumar (2011): petty-capitalist landlords, petty-bourgeois landlords and petty-subsistence landlords. At the richer end are petty-capitalist landlords who either possess a large number of rental properties or seek to expand their ownership of landed property. At the poorer end are subsistence landlords who develop rental housing to supplement their income and meet basic consumption needs. In between are petty-bourgeois landlords who do not need rental income to survive but are unable to make improvements to their dwelling or the material quality of their lives without supplementing household income with rental income (Kumar 2001: 11-12). Kumar, moreover, argues that these landlords are located on a continuum of petty-capitalist, petty-bourgeois and subsistence landlords. Thus, landlords might also move along this continuum as a result of various factors. UN-Habitat categorises three types of landlords slightly differently: circumstantial landlords, petty landlords and commercial landlords (UNESCAP/UN-Habitat n.d.). An extensive UN-Habitat report on rental housing discusses the class, age and gender of landlords as well as whether they are resident landlords or absentee landlords (UN-Habitat 2003). It is only through research on landlordism that the mechanisms through which landlords access land and develop rental housing can be better understood, and thus, the supply of rental housing can be better understood.

On the other side, our understanding into the demand of rental housing comes partly from the existing literature on tenants. As mentioned earlier, the rate of migration is

an important determinant of rental housing. However, the nature of demand for rental housing also depends on the kind of migrant groups in the city. A study by Mahadevia, Liu and Yuan (2010) identifies three main types of migrant groups in Indian cities: (i) long-term or permanent migrants who intend to settle down in the city, many getting into regular employment but keeping strong ties with their native town/village; (ii) seasonal migrants who stay in the city for more than 60 days a year but return to their native town/village for some period; and (iii) migrants who are tied to employers who move from one place of employment to another. This study also indicates that migrants' cultural backgrounds influence their rental housing demand. Invariably, recent migrants prefer rental housing and then shift to ownership housing after some years. But, migrants from some of the Northern states in India leave behind their wife and children in their home village and migrate singly. Such migrants prefer to stay in rental housing, mostly shared housing, and then go back to the villages after years of stay in urban areas. This study further finds that migrants employed in the construction sector are more likely to stay in rental housing than those who are self-employed as they move within the city with the construction sites. Many permanent migrants come to the city as single male migrants and then call their families once they are reasonably secure, financially, socially and shelter-wise. The nature of demand for rental housing by these different groups of migrants, and by families who migrate versus single male migrants, might vary in terms of the locations in the city where they seek rental housing, the type of rental housing they seek, their affordability given their income and expenditure, etc. Besides new migrants, the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA 1989) mentions that rental housing is also a preferred alternative for the floating population in the city and the population segment which finds ownership unaffordable (NIUA 1989). Thus, tenants also include those who have been living in the city for long periods of time but are unable or unwilling to move to ownership housing.

2.5. Policy implications

It is a popular belief that all households aspire to own housing, and many studies have also proven this assumption to be true. Governments have therefore usually designed their housing programmes to provide ownership housing, be it in public housing provision as well as resettlement programmes or now in the private sector under the "Affordable Housing" policy of the Government of India. However, as Kumar (2001) argues, the largely single-minded emphasis on ownership housing in policy has only created a mismatch between policy and lived reality. The crucial question is not whether poor households aspire to ownership housing but whether ownership housing is accessible to them. Kumar argues that it is necessary to put rental housing onto the agendas of multilateral institutions and governments, and they should be encouraged to form "tenure-neutral housing policies." Support for rental housing should be regarded as a complement to home-ownership, and not as a form of competition for it.

The single-minded emphasis on home-ownership, UNCHS argues, is mainly ideological, formed by misplaced notions that owners make better citizens than

tenants and that owners contribute to the economy more (UNCHS 2003: 2-3). UNCHS and UN-Habitat have thus increasingly emphasized the importance of bringing rental housing onto housing policy agendas. For instance, a UNCHS report argues that upgrading programmes must embrace tenants because so many of them live in informal settlements (UNCHS 2003). It states that governments should formulate rules, credit programmes and forms of assistance to create more rental housing and to improve the existing stock (UNCHS 2003: 3). However, housing policies need to address tenants in other ways as well. For instance, there is very little discussion on including tenants in resettlement and rehabilitation programmes. Hence, it is likely that they are being forced to vacate the unit by owners in case of rehabilitation of the settlement. Anecdotally, we know that landlords who construct housing units for rental purposes tend to push out their tenants if the settlement is to be rehabilitated. To overcome this situation, under the Rajiv Awaas Yojana (RAY), the largest of the slum development programmes in India so far, the guidelines mention that the current occupants (whether owner or tenants) need to be covered under the programme, but does not mention how to do so. We have also not come across any case study where these issues are discussed. If the tenant is covered under the RAY and the owner (who could be poor or well-off) is not compensated for his/her loss of rental income, there is a likelihood of conflict. For instance, in Ahmedabad we have observed that while the rehabilitation of the city's riverfront slums to BSUP housing targetted the occupant, relatively well-off landlords were successful in making their tenants pay them Rs.1-2 lakhs for not creating a conflict situation whereas poorer landlords were in no position to make these demands of their tenants. There is a need to think through such issues and address them through policies.

Rental housing can also be explored to meet the shelter needs of the homeless. A recent Supreme Court judgement on the homeless, using Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, which articulates the Right to Life, states that: "The State owes to the homeless people to ensure at least minimum shelter as part of the State obligation under Article 21."¹ The Supreme Court has ordered the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to construct night shelters for the homeless to be rented out on affordable charges. However, there is no policy on who should provide this and how to make this work for the homeless.

Historically, rental housing was supported in India through the Rent Control Act, which put a ceiling on the rents that could be charged to the tenants and also protected the tenants against eviction. Large numbers of industrial housing in the industrial cities of Gujarat and Maharashtra came up in this way. But the Rent Control legislation then froze the rents in the eternity, making even upkeep of such housing impossible for the unit owners. Subsequently, such rental industrial housing deteriorated into slums. This housing is called *chawls* and *chalis* in Mumbai and

¹ Source: <http://supremecourtfindia.nic.in/outright/wc19601.pdf> (accessed on May 6, 2012). This is from an order of 23/01/2012 for WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO. 196 OF 2001.

Ahmedabad, respectively. The early Subsidised Industrial Housing Scheme (SIHS) in some cities also provided incentives to industry owners to create rental or ownership housing for their workers. Upto the Third Five Year Plan (1961-1966), urban housing programmes consisted of: (i) rental housing for slum dwellers and specific low income groups such as plantation labour and dock labour, (ii) rental housing in the public sector townships and for the employees of public sector undertakings, (iii) rental housing for private sector industrial employees, wherein it was made mandatory for private industrial units with a paid-up capital above certain limits to construct housing for at least half their employees. The financial crunch after the Third Plan led to the government discontinuing rental housing programmes for the low-income population such as slum dwellers, industrial workers, plantation labour etc. (Mahadevia 2003).

With the onset of reforms, policy rhetoric of doing away with Rent Control Act began and this is still being debated today. The JNNURM reforms and now the RAY reforms have made amendment of the Rent Control Act mandatory and a Model Rent legislation has been created by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA) to assist the states in amending their legislation. This proposed legislation states that the “rent of a housing unit should be fixed by mutual agreement between the landlord and the tenant for a stipulated lease period prior to which, the tenant will not be allowed to be evicted and after the expiry of the said lease period, the tenant will not be permitted to continue in the said housing unit” (MoHUPA 2007). Thus, rental housing has now been recognised as an important area of public policy and action. But, the National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy (NUHHP), 2007 does not state who should provide rental housing. The tone and tenor of the NUHHP, 2007 is facilitating the private sector to provide housing, including rental housing, for the urban poor. In a number of cities that we have visited to discuss the new project proposals to be submitted under the RAY, rental housing figures as an important option for the ULB. In fact, Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) may apply for funding for constructing rental housing under the RAY. However, rental housing by the Assam State Housing Board (ASHB) has had limited success in Guwahati and faces a number of challenges, some of which are similar to those faced by public rental housing programmes in other developing countries and are discussed below.

Among public housing programmes, Singapore’s large public housing programme, which also has a social housing component, is well-known. The Singapore Housing and Development Board (HDB) has constructed one and two room housing units for households unable to afford either rental or ownership housing in the private market (Yuen 2007). However, in this city-state, 95 per cent of the occupants of the public housing, which constitutes 85 per cent of the total housing stock, are on ownership basis (Yuen 2007). Hong Kong, on the other hand, has a large public rental housing programme by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA). In 2011, it provided

housing to 30 per cent of the total population of the city.² However, this subsidised rental housing programme is now facing a huge backlog of supply. It is not surprising then that in developing countries, which have fewer resources, public housing programmes creating rental housing have faced the problem of not being able to match demand with supply. These programmes – implemented in countries like Kenya, South Africa, Mexico, Venezuela, etc – have also faced other challenges such as clientalism in the allocation of the housing which has often meant that the poorest (and true beneficiaries) have been excluded, defaulting on rent payments by tenants, low maintenance and dilapidation of the rental housing units, etc (UN-Habitat 2003: 30). In fact, as the orthodoxy in the 1980s and 1990s tilted in favour of home-ownership, and the World Bank and USAID discredited public rental housing by arguing that governments were inherently inefficient landlords, many of these public rental housing programmes were terminated (Un-Habitat 2003: 32).

Even in the former socialist countries like China, rental housing provision has declined. Employer-provided housing, which is in a sense rental housing, was the main approach to housing in these countries. But, since 1997, China has shifted towards commercial housing provided by the private sector and has been encouraging the occupants of the employer-provided housing to purchase the same (Mahadevia, Liu and Yuan 2010) to come out of the maintenance liabilities on one hand and also raise capital through disinvestments. The increasingly wealthier urban population now prefers to move to modern, large commercial housing from the former employer-provided housing that was small and also deteriorating.

Despite the heightened emphasis on rental housing by institutions like UNCHS and UN-Habitat, its resuscitation in housing policy has been taking place only in a few countries such as South Africa where it was recognized in 1998 that “expanding homeownership alone could not cope with the sheer scale of the housing deficit” (UN-Habitat 2003: 217). A Rental Housing Act was formulated in 1999 and a massive increase in rental accommodation in the form of social housing was planned. A pilot project of 15,000 units was inaugurated in 2002 with private companies building the accommodation, social housing foundations running the projects and the central government, through the National Housing Finance Corporation and the Social Housing Foundation helping to finance new projects and improving the performance of the NGOs. However, there have been various problems such as the financial viability of running the projects for the social housing foundations, the housing not really catering to the poor, etc (UN-Habitat 2003: 221). The problems facing large-scale public rental housing provision have also led to proposals to support small-scale landlords who are in any case the predominant suppliers of rental housing to the urban poor (in the formal and informal sector) in South African cities. However, “the idea of offering financial help to private landlords and to enhance the quality of private

² Hong Kong: the Facts, Source: <http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/housing.pdf> (accessed on May 6, 2012).

accommodation of the flimsy shelter in the townships was felt to hold too many political risks” (UN-Habitat 2003: 223).

In India, besides the Model Rent legislation created by MoHUPA, there are also existing legislations that can be explored for supporting the rental housing sector. In post independence India, tenancy laws were promulgated in the states to give ownership rights to the tenants of former landlords. While these laws were largely for rural lands, in Kolkata, rights were given to the Thika tenants of the erstwhile landlords who had given their plots of lands or buildings in the urban area to tenants. This legislation is called the West Bengal Thika Tenancy Act and is currently applicable to 100 wards in Kolkata City. The Thika tenants were given occupancy rights of the properties they were living in, while the lands were transferred to the State government. Research into the experience of the Thika Tenancy Act could shed light on the possibilities and limitations this kind of legislation holds for expanding tenant rights and improving housing conditions for tenants.

3. Methodology and Sample Profile

3.1 Methodology

The research methodology involved two stages. Stage 1 was conducted over 4 weeks during Dec 2011-Jan 2012. This involved preliminary research carried out through (a) discussions with key informants in Guwahati, such as government officials and NGOs, on urbanization, land and housing policies, and poverty in the city; (b) a study of secondary material, such as Guwahati’s City Development Plan, Master Plan, and slum surveys by the government and NGOs as well as journalistic and scholarly writings on development issues in Assam to understand the unique social and political context of housing and urbanization in Guwahati; and (c) field visits to settlements identified through the discussions and secondary material. Based on this preliminary research, and in preparation for the second stage of research, an analysis of land and housing development processes in Guwahati was undertaken. Three main processes, each giving rise to a number of housing sub-markets, were identified (see Table 2). Based on this analysis and the field visits, eight case-study settlements covering seven housing sub-markets were identified for the second stage of research. Stage 2 was conducted over 2 weeks during Jan-Feb 2012. This involved (a) mapping the case-study settlements and deciding the survey sample size for the household surveys; (b) conducting the household surveys; and (c) conducting qualitative interviews in the case-study settlements.

Map 1: Location of case-study settlements in Guwahati

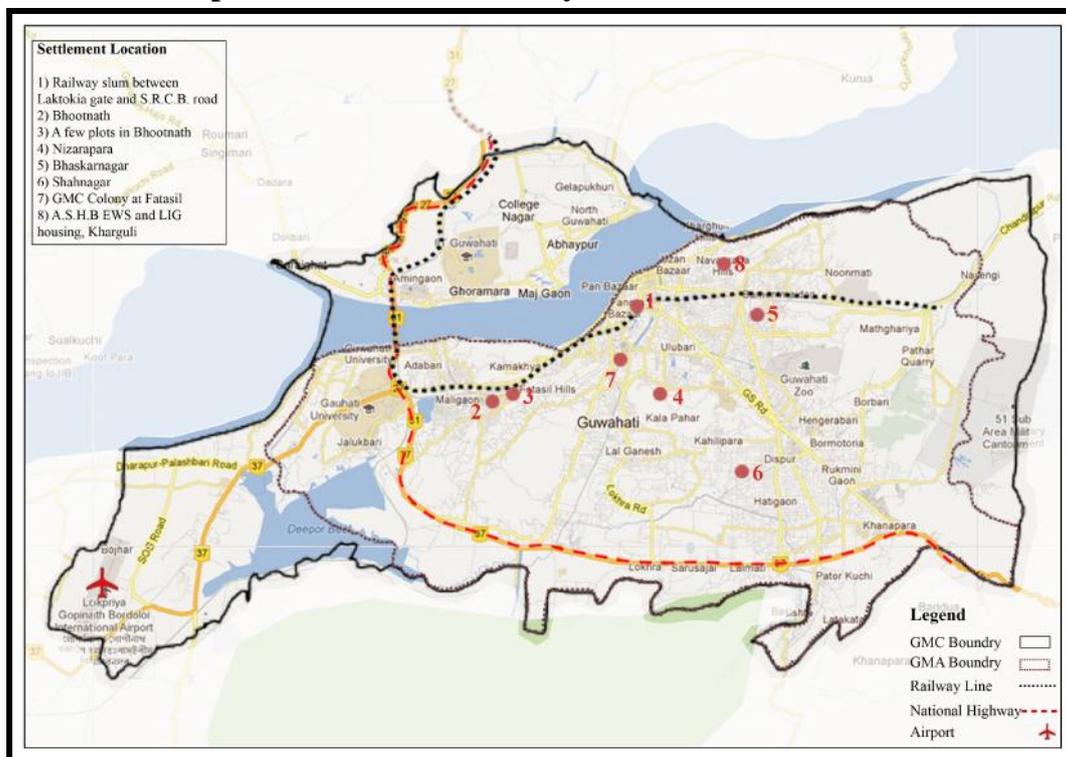


Table 2: Housing Sub-markets created by Different Land and Housing Development Processes

No	Land and housing development process	No	Housing sub-market	Case-study settlement
1	Housing through informal occupation of public and private lands	i	Informal occupation of Railway land	(i) Railway slum between Lakhtokia gate and S.R.C.B. Road, Ward 30
		ii	Informal occupation of State government lands in the plains	(ii) Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, Ward 11 (iii) A few plots in Bhootnath area, Ward 11
		iii	Informal occupation of State government lands (Revenue lands and Reserve Forest lands) in the hills	(iv) Nizarapara, Birubari, Ward 26
		iv	Informal occupation of private lands earmarked for acquisition	(v) Part of Bhaskarnagar, Ward 41
		v	Informal occupation of private lands and trust lands	(Not studied)
2	Housing through alienation of land	i	Commercial subdivision in the informal sector	(vi) Shahnagar, Hatigaon, Ward 60
		ii	Commercial formal land supply for self-built housing	(Not studied)
		iii	Commercial formal housing	(Not studied)
3	Public sector housing	i	Employer-provided housing (encroached and unencroached)	(vii) GMC Colony at Fatasil: Harijan Colony, Punjabi Colony, Andhra Colony, Ward 14
		ii	Public housing	(viii) Assam State Housing Board EWS and LIG housing at Kharguli Hills, Ward 37

The mapping was necessary because existing slum surveys by government and non-government organisations gave conflicting and insufficient data to locate the settlements on the city map or decide the survey sample size. To get location of each of the eight case-study settlements and up-to-date information of number of households in each settlement, a mapping methodology was devised using Google-Earth maps, Google maps, GPS locator and field-visits. First, the city's Ward map was superimposed on the city's Google-Earth map. An attempt was then made to roughly locate each case-study settlement on this Google-Earth Ward map so that large-scale print-outs of each settlement could be taken with us to the field for the next step of mapping. However, it was difficult to precisely locate every settlement on this map due to the visual homogeneity of settlement-form in some areas of the city. As a result, for settlements which could not be located precisely on this map, a print-out was taken of the entire ward so as to locate it through field-visits.

The next step in the mapping was to carry out field visits and mark each settlement's boundary on the map print-outs so that the number of dwellings (considered to correspond to the number of households) could be counted and the sample size for household surveys could be decided. For this, first, a GPS locator on a mobile phone was used to help mark the surveyors' real-time location on Google maps. With the

help of this, the surveyors' real-time location was then marked on the map print-outs. Taking this as the starting point, help was taken from local residents and shop-keepers at the site to mark the settlement's boundary on the map print-outs. The surveyors then walked through the settlement to mark its main internal roads on the map print-outs. Based on this, the surveyors then prepared sketch maps showing the settlement boundaries and main internal roads and then walked along each and every road, lane and bye-lane of the settlement to count the dwelling units.

While each dwelling unit was counted during this mapping exercise, each dwelling unit was marked on the sketch maps in only one of the case-study settlements: Railway slums between Lakhtokia gate and S.R.C.B. Road (See Map 3). In the case-study settlement of GMC Colony at Fatasil, the mapping demarcated the three sections *within* the colony: Andhra Colony, Punjabi Colony and Basfour or Bihari Colony. The intricate pattern of lanes and bye-lanes in the colony would have made marking each dwelling on the sketch map a time-consuming and cumbersome process, and unnecessary for our main purpose of counting the total number of dwelling units / households. As a result, the number of dwelling units in each of the three sections of the colony was marked on the sketch map (See Map 11). Similarly, in the case-study settlement of Assam State Housing Board (ASHB) EWS and LIG housing at Kharguli, the number of dwelling units in each EWS/LIG building was marked on the sketch map (See Map 12). The four remaining case-study settlements – Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, Nizarapara, Bhaskarnagar and Shahnagar – comprise of plots, each belonging to an owner-occupier or an absentee owner. Where these owners have developed rental housing, the plot also comprises of a number of rental units (ranging from one unit to 25 units). Marking each dwelling unit on the sketch map would have been a time-consuming and cumbersome process. As a result, the surveyors marked not each dwelling unit but rather each plot on the sketch map, also noting the number of households residing within the plot (later, during qualitative interviews the number of plots / owners were whetted from residents) (See Map 5, Map 6, Map 8 and Map 10). Marking the number of households residing within each plot was also important for arriving at the proportion of owners versus tenants in these four settlements as well as to get an idea of the number of rental rooms developed by different owners.

It may be noted that a sketch map was not prepared for the settlement referred to as "A few plots in Bhootnath area" since the total number of households did not need to be counted here because household surveys were not to be based on stratified sampling. This is because single-male migrants employed in different occupations (i.e. as cycle-rickshaw drivers, street vendors, manual labourers working in the nearby wholesale market, etc) live as tenants in different rental arrangements (i.e. sharing a rental unit with another single-male migrant, sharing with 3-4 single-male migrants, sharing with large groups of 8-25 single-male migrants) that are scattered across

different plots in this area. Our objective was to include such single-male migrants in our study, and thus few migrants with different occupations and living in different rental arrangements were traced and household surveys carried out with them.

Table 3: Sampling for Household (HH) surveys in Case-study Settlements

No	Case-study settlements	Total Households*		% of sample survey	Sample of Households surveyed***		
		Owners**	Tenants**		Owners	Tenants	Other
i	Railway slum between Lakhtokia gate and S.R.C.B. Road, Ward 30	112		20	21		
		n.a.	n.a.		15	6	0
ii	Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, Ward 11	644		10	73		
		58	586		15	57	1
iii	A few plots in Bhootnath area, Ward 11	n.a.		n.a.	18		
					0	18	0
iv	Nizarapara, Birubari, Ward 26	183		20	46		
		65	118		20	26	0
v	Part of Bhaskarnagar, Ward 41	1096		10	121		
		174	922		30	90	1
vi	Shahnagar, Hatigaon, Ward 60	671		10	74		
		145	526		15	59	0
vii	GMC Colony at Fatasil, Ward 14	270		15	41		
		n.a.	n.a.		4	27	10
viii	Assam State Housing Board EWS & LIG housing, Kharguli Hills, Ward 37	102		20	20		
		0	102		0	20	0

* Total number of households were counted through mapping, except in case-study settlement (iii) where, as explained earlier, the HH surveys were not to be based on stratified sampling.

** Total number of owners and tenants were counted through mapping where possible. Since rental housing in case-study settlements (i) and (vii) was not located in plots owned by landlords, it was not possible to separately count the owner and tenant households during the mapping. As a result, the sampling in these two settlements was applied to the total households.

*** In some of the case-study settlements, some households that were surveyed were found to be neither owners nor tenants or their owner/tenant status was not clear. These households have been classified under "Other." For instance, in case-study settlement (vii), some of the surveyed households had been tenants of the GMC earlier, but since no one in the household worked as a permanent GMC worker anymore, they no longer paid rent to the GMC. While they were thus no longer tenants, neither were they owners.

After the mapping was completed, systematic stratified sampling was done. It was decided to take 10 per cent sample for large settlements with greater than 400 households, 15 per cent sample for medium-size settlements with 200-400 households, and 20 per cent sample for small settlements with less than 200 households. It was also decided that the sample of households surveyed should represent the proportion of owners versus tenants in the case-study settlement. Since the method of surveying every Nth household to get a representative sample was not feasible – since many residents were reluctant to participate in surveys – the household surveys were conducted in different parts of the settlement so as to get a roughly representative sample. Moreover, we could not prepare a list of the universe

to be able to get the exact stratification of the universe and hence, we went by the first level of information obtained through discussions with the settlement residents about the location of the tenants and owners in a particular settlement. In the end, on account of reluctance of many who could have been in the sample, we ended up with more surveys of the owners than the tenants. Also, some parts of the settlements were missed out and we had to get the households in them surveyed at a later date. Also, in some schedules, the quality of data was incomplete and we had to get re-surveys done in the same settlement. In the end, we canvassed more schedules than what we had planned for and also got more number of owners than their share in the settlement. However, the entire analysis is bi-variate; the samples of owners and tenants have been analysed separately so as not to influence the overall trends if the two samples were to be combined together. As a result, we are able to get an idea about not only the socio-economic and housing situation of the tenants but also their situation in comparison to the owners in the same settlement.

The qualitative interviews involved questions about the case-study settlement regarding: (i) informal land occupation / land alienation process; (ii) actors in the process; (iii) chronological developments in the settlement and actors involved in this; (iv) implications of chronological developments in the settlement on tenants. Qualitative interviews with owner/landlords sought to briefly understand: (i) their social and economic background and migration history; (ii) their occupation/purchase of land and the process of developing their land and housing on it (their own house or rental housing); (iii) their decisions around the construction of rental housing and provision of services to tenants; and (iv) their decisions regarding choice of tenants. Qualitative interviews with tenants sought to briefly understand: (i) their social and economic background and migration history; (ii) the nature of the rental housing they inhabit and the infrastructure provided; (iii) their mobility as tenants in the city and the reasons for this mobility; and (iv) their decisions regarding choice of rental housing in the city.

3.2 Sample Profile

This section gives the overall profile of the sample. The profile is presented by housing sub-market. On the whole, 414 households were covered in the survey, of which 303 were tenants and 99 owners. Of the 303 tenants, 65 comprised of “Sharers,” that is, single male migrants sharing a dwelling unit, while the rest were “Family Households.” The detailed discussion on tenant types and implications on housing is in Section 6. The average sex ratio (females per 1000 males) in the sample is 770 for the tenants and 844 for the owners (Table 4). Tenants tend to have lower sex ratio as they are less likely to be stable families than those who have opted for ownership housing. In our sample, 5.6 per cent of those staying as tenants are single male migrants. Inevitably, the sex ratio among the tenants therefore is lower than the owners. Among the owner households, sex ratio is high in the informal settlements on government and hill lands and very low in the informal settlement on the railway land. The settlement on the railway land was the most insecure in terms of tenure and

here the sex ratio is the least among the owner as well as tenant households. The owner households here are those who have encroached on the railway land and self-built their housing units, which are occupied by single males. Some units here are also shared rental units by single males. Sex ratio in the formal housing is much higher than in the informal housing in case of tenants. Lastly, the average household size among the tenants is lower than among the owners in informal housing and is higher than among the owners in the formal housing.

Table 4: Sample Size and Demographic Characteristics

Housing sub-market	Tenants			Owners		
	No. of Households	Sex ratio	Household size	No. of Households	Sex ratio	Household size
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	6	545	2.8	15	611	3.9
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	75	735	2.8	15	1079	5.3
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	26	553	2.3	20	1000	4.6
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	90	818	3.2	30	789	4.5
Commercial Informal Sub-division	59	667	3.3	15	757	4.3
Informal housing	256	659	3.0	95	845	4.5
Employer-Provided Housing	27	910	5.5	4	800	4.5
Public Housing	20	762	3.7	0	0	0
Formal housing	47	858	4.7	4	800	4.5
Total	303	770	3.1	99	844	4.5

Note: There are 12 other households, who are neither owners nor tenants, and have not been mentioned in the tables in this section. They have been brought into discussion in Section 6.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Religion

Housing sub-market	Tenants			Owners		
	Hindus	Muslims	Others	Hindus	Muslims	Others
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	17	83	0	67	33	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	27	73	0	0	100	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	96	4	0	85	15	0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	14	86	0	23	77	0
Commercial Informal Sub-division	31	70	0	40	60	0
Informal housing	30	70	0	42	58	0
Employer-Provided Housing	93	0	7	100	0	0
Public Housing	95	5	0	0	0	0
Formal housing	94	2	4	100	0	0
Total	40	59	1	44	56	0

Each of the settlements is dominated by a particular religious group. In other words, each settlement has a concentration of a particular religious group, although the

degree of concentration varies. Among the tenant households, there is overwhelming concentration of Muslims in the informal settlements and more so in the settlements on State government land in the plains, private lands earmarked for acquisition and commercial informal sub-divisions (Table 5). The informal settlement on State government land in the hills are comprise mainly of ethnic Assamese tenants and they have declared themselves as Hindus. Tenants in the formal housing are nearly all Hindus and some others but very few Muslims. Similarly, owners in the formal housing are all Hindus. In the informal settlements, owners' market also has similar concentration of a religious group in a particular settlement. Thus, a settlement in which majority tenants are Hindu also have majority owners who are Hindu. Similarly, a settlement where majority tenants are Muslim also have majority owners as Muslim. There is an exception to this pattern in the case of railway slums where the owners are largely Hindu but the tenants are largely Muslim.

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Caste

Housing sub-market	Tenants					Owners				
	General	ST	SC	OBC	NR	General	ST	SC	OBC	NR
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	100.0	0	0	0	0	86.7	6.7	6.7	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	94.7	0	2.7	2.7	0	100.0	0	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	65.4	19.2	15.4	0	0	65.0	25.0	5.0	5.0	0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	96.7	1.1	1.1	1.1	0	93.1	3.4	0	3.4	0
Commercial Informal Sub-division	84.7	6.8	8.5	0	0	93.3	0	6.7	0	0
Informal housing	90.2	3.9	4.7	1.2	0	87.2	7.4	3.2	2.1	0
Employer-Provided Housing	37.0	0	63.0	0	0	50.0	0	25.0	0	25.0
Public Housing	60.0	15.0	5.0	20.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Formal housing	46.8	6.4	38.3	8.5	0	50.0	0	25.0	0	25.0
Total	83.5	4.3	9.9	2.3	0	85.7	7.1	4.1	2.0	1.0

The castewise break up of the surveyed population indicates that 84 per cent of the tenants and 86 per cent of the owners belong to general caste (Table 6). 25 per cent of the owners and 19 per cent of the tenants in the informal settlement on State government land in the hills are from Scheduled Tribes (STs) of ethnic Assamese origin. Scheduled Castes (SCs) are living in informal settlements on the hill lands and commercial sub-divisions on urban periphery as well as employer-provided housing which was developed for sanitation workers of the Guwahati Municipal Corporation. While ethnic Assamese dominate the informal housing market, in the rental as well as ownership tenure category (Table 7), in employer provided housing, there is overwhelming presence of inter-state migrants, a large proportion of them being from

Andhra Pradesh. Migrants from Bihar are in informal encroachments on railway lands and government lands.

Table 7: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by State of Origin

Housing sub-market	Assam	Bihar	West Bengal	Andhra Pradesh	Other
Tenants					
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	100.0	0	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	76.0	21.3	1.3	0	1.3
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	100.0	0	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	93.3	4.5	2.2	0	0
Commercial Informal Sub-division	98.3	0	1.7	0	0
Employer-Provided Housing	18.5	18.5	0	37.0	25.9
Public Housing	100.0	0	0	0	0
Owners					
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	73.3	20.0	6.7	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	100.0	0	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	95.0	0	5.0	0	0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	90.0	3.3	0	3.3	3.3
Commercial Informal Sub-division	100.0	0	0	0	0
Employer-Provided Housing	0	25.0	0	50.0	25.0

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Monthly Income

Housing sub-market	Monthly Household Income (Rs.)						Average (Rs.)
	<= 5000	5001 - 7500	7501 - 10000	10001 - 15000	15001 - 20000	20001+	
Tenants							8272.43
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	33.3	0	66.7	0	0	0	7666.67
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	37.3	38.7	21.3	1.3	0	1.3	6433.33
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	30.8	38.5	26.9	3.8	0	0	6846.15
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	61.1	21.1	12.2	2.2	2.2	1.1	5966.67
Commercial Informal Sub-division	5.2	20.7	46.6	17.2	3.4	6.9	12741.38
Employer-Provided Housing	23.1	23.1	26.9	23.1	3.8	0	8519.23
Public Housing	5.0	0	35.0	35.0	15.0	10.0	14300.00
Owners							11313.13
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	73.3	20.0	6.7	0	0	0	4146.67
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	0	13.3	20.0	33.3	26.7	6.7	14400.00
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	10.0	5.0	60.0	5.0	15.0	5.0	11100.00

Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	26.7	26.7	23.3	16.7	6.7	0	8536.67
Commercial Informal Sub-division	0	6.7	20.0	13.3	13.3	46.7	21946.67
Employer-Provided Housing	25.0	0	25.0	50.0	0	0	8625.00

There is no pattern in terms of income groups by sub-markets (**Table 8**), indicating that households of all income groups are found in all the sub-markets, irrespective of their tenure status, indicating a mixed income living in Guwahati. However, in the commercial informal sub-division, we do find that compared to the other informal settlements, a larger proportion of owners and tenants have higher household incomes (above Rs.10,000/month). **Table 9** also shows that there is a larger proportion of tenants in the lower income groups and higher proportion of owners in the higher income groups, indicating that renting is on account of inability to find affordable ownership housing.

Table 9: Monthly Household Income among Owners and Tenants

Monthly Household Income (Rs.)	Owners (%)	Tenants (%)
<= 5000	22.2	34.2
5001 - 7500	15.2	25.2
7501 - 10000	27.3	26.2
10001 - 15000	15.2	9.0
15001 - 20000	11.1	2.7
20001+	9.1	2.7

Table 10: Percentage Distribution of Tenants and Owners by Duration of Stay in Guwahati

Housing sub-market	Duration of Stay (in years)				
	<= 5	5.1 - 12	12.1 - 20	20.1 - 30	30+
Tenants					
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	33.3	0	33.3	16.7	16.7
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	32.0	33.3	21.3	8.0	5.3
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	30.8	42.3	15.4	11.5	0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	27.8	26.7	31.1	8.9	5.6
Commercial Informal Sub-division	18.6	44.1	11.9	18.6	6.8
Informal housing	27.3	33.6	22.3	11.3	5.5
Employer-Provided Housing	0	3.7	7.4	22.2	66.7
Public Housing	0	5.0	25.0	55.0	15.0
Formal housing	0	4.3	14.9	36.2	44.7
Owners					
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	6.7	20.0	33.3	26.7	13.3
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	6.7	0	0	33.3	60.0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	0	5.0	15.0	20.0	60.0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	10.0	6.7	6.7	36.7	40.0
Commercial Informal Sub-division	9.1	9.1	18.2	18.2	45.5

Informal housing	6.6	7.7	13.2	28.6	44.0
Employer-Provided Housing	0	0	25.0	25.0	50.0
Public Housing	-	-	-	-	-
Formal housing	0	0	25.0	25.0	50.0

Longer duration of stay in a city usually means that households have shifted to ownership housing. Hence, in all the informal sub-markets, except the commercial sub-division, about one-third of the households are recent migrants, that is, migrants of last 5 years whereas more than two-fifths in these sub-markets in the owner category are living in the city for more than 30 years (Table 10). This indicates that there is a gradual housing mobility with increase in duration of stay in the city. In spite of overemphasis on ownership housing, for recent migrants, that is not a choice, largely on account of its unaffordability compounded by the parochialism playing out in the political arena in recent years. This is not true, however, for the employer-provided housing.

Table 11: Employment Indicators by Gender

Economic Indicator	Male	Female	Total
Work participation rate (%)	60.0	15.9	41.3
Status of employment (%)			
Self employed	50.1	34.4	47.5
Regular employed	26.6	51.0	30.6
Casual labour	23.3	14.6	21.9
Unemployed	8.0	25.0	11.3
Employment sector (%)			
Manufacturing	2.8	4.2	3.1
Construction	20.5	14.6	19.5
Wholesale trade	1.4	0.0	1.2
Petty trade	23.9	10.4	21.7
Waste collection	11.2	13.5	11.5
Transport	18.3	3.1	15.8
Hotel & restaurant	1.4	7.3	2.4
ICT + Finance + Real estate	2.6	5.2	3.1
Public admin + social service	5.7	11.5	6.6
Personnel services	6.3	25.0	9.3
Others (unspecified)	5.7	5.2	5.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The work participation rate (WPR) of the surveyed population is 41.3 per cent, in which male WPR is 60 per cent (Table 11). But, nearly all, that is 96 per cent of them, living in shared rental units work (Table 12). Surprisingly, about half the males are working as self employed and the same proportion among the females are working as regular employed. Regular employed are those who are drawing monthly salary. Casual labour incidence is also high among the males as compared to females. But, self employment is higher among the owners as compared to the tenants. Those living in shared rental units (“Tenant Sharers”) are either working as casual labour (48 per cent), or as self employed (46 per cent). Clearly, those who have poor employment are living in shared rental units. Regular employment is the highest among the

owners. Hence, renting is a predominant phenomenon among those with poor quality work and hence low incomes.

Table 12: Employment Indicators by Tenure Status

Economic Indicator	Owners	Tenant Family Households	Tenant Sharers
Work participation rate (%)	34.6	40.3	96.4
Status of employment (%)			
Self employed	56.1	44.3	46.3
Regular employed	36.8	31.7	5.6
Casual labour	7.1	24.0	48.1
Unemployed	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employment sector (%)			
Manufacturing	1.9	3.7	1.9
Construction	5.2	23.0	37.0
Wholesale trade	0.0	1.3	3.7
Petty trade	35.5	18.5	5.6
Waste collection	14.8	11.3	3.7
Transport	9.7	15.8	31.5
Hotel & restaurant	3.2	2.4	0.0
ICT + Finance + Real estate	3.9	2.9	1.9
Public admin + social service	8.4	6.6	1.9
Personnel services	7.1	9.8	13.0
Others (unspecified)	10.3	4.5	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Petty trade, construction, transport services and waste collection are the four largest employment sectors on the whole in the surveyed population. But, among the females, the largest employer is the personnel services and among the males it is petty trade, construction and transport services. Those living as tenant family households are in construction, petty trade and transport whereas those living in shared rental units, that is, tenant sharers, are largely in construction and transport. The owners are largely in petty trade and waste collection business. There is more even distribution of employment sectors among the owners than among tenant sharers.

4. Background of Guwahati

4.1. Demography

Guwahati is the capital and commercial city of the state of Assam. It is also the largest city in the entire North-east (NE) region. According to the 2011 census, Guwahati city has a population of 963,429 (Table 13), far exceeding the population of any other city in the state.³ With Assam's urban population standing at 4.39 million, Guwahati comprises of 22 per cent of the state's urban population.⁴ However, on the whole, Assam has a low level of urbanisation at 14.1 per cent, and thus Guwahati comprises of only 3.1 per cent of Assam's total population.⁵

Table 13: Population Growth in Guwahati

Year	Population in GMCA*	Decadal Growth (%)	Population in GMA excluding GMCA	Decadal Growth (%)	Population in GMA*	Decadal Growth (%)
1951	43,615	-	53,774	-	97,389	-
1961	1,00,707	130.90	98,775	83.69	1,99,482	104.83
1971	1,23,783	22.91	1,68,436	71.54	2,93,219	46.99
1981**	2,68,945	117.27	1,02,351	-39.59	4,35,280	48.45
1991	5,84,342	117.27	61,827	-39.59	6,46,169	48.45
2001	8,09,895	38.60	80,878	30.81	8,90,773	37.85
2011***	9,63,429	18.95	85,998	6.33	9,68,549	8.73

* GMCA-Guwahati Municipal Corporation Area; GMA-Guwahati Metropolitan Area (also known as the Guwahati Urban Agglomeration)

** The Census 1981 was not conducted in Assam. The population figures have been extrapolated on the basis of the 1971-1991 CAGR

*** Census 2011 Provisional Population Totals from http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/prov_data_products_assam.html (accessed on 8 March 2012).

(Source: Master Plan for Guwahati Metropolitan Area-2025, GMDA, 2009, p. 12, and Census 2011 Provisional Population Totals)

Guwahati is located in the district of Kamrup Metro, which was created in 2003 by bifurcating the old Kamrup district into predominantly urban and rural areas.⁶ The city of Guwahati, which is currently spread across an area of 216 sq.km, is under the jurisdiction of the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC), while the Guwahati Urban Agglomeration area, equivalent to the Guwahati Metropolitan Area (GMA), covers an area of about 264 sq.km. and lies under the Guwahati Metropolitan

³ The three largest cities in Assam after Guwahati are Silchar (population 172,709), Dibrugarh (population 138,661) and Nagaon (population 116,355).

⁴ Assam's population figures are obtained from the Provisional Population Totals – 2011, from the census website: http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/assam/Paper-1-I.pdf (accessed on 25 April, 2012).

⁵ In 2001, the urbanisation level for Assam was 12.9 per cent. The urban population share has thus increased by 1.2 percentage points over the 2001-2011 decade.

⁶ According to the 2011 census, Kamrup Metro's total population is 1,260,419 while its urban population is 1,044,832 (Source: Provisional Population Totals Paper 2 of 2011 – Assam at: http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/prov_results_paper2_assam.html (accessed on 25 April, 2012)).

Development Authority's jurisdiction (GMC 2006).⁷ Population growth in the GMC area (GMCA) over the past number of decades is linked to the important place that Guwahati came to occupy in Assam and the NE region. Guwahati is known as the gateway to the North-east for mainland India and vice versa. The North-east's trade and communication with the rest of India takes place through the city. This has been particularly true after Assam's capital shifted from Shillong to Guwahati in 1972 with the formation of Meghalaya as a separate state. With the shift of the capital, Guwahati grew in terms of political and administrative importance. It also emerged as a magnet for administrative activities as well as trade and commerce, thus generating employment. In 1974, Guwahati became a Municipal Corporation, and the population in the GMC more than doubled during the 1971-81 and 1981-91 decades (See Table 13). In the rest of the GMA, however, there was a decline in population growth during these two decades. After this, we find a decline in population growth in the GMC as well as GMA over 1991-2001 and further decline over 2001-2011. The rate of migration into the city has thus been decreasing over the past two decades and Guwahati's population is not growing at a high rate anymore. It is likely that the population from Assam as well as the whole of the NE is now migrating to mainland India for the purposes of work and education as the city does not have much of industrial activities to attract additional migrants.

4.2. Migration and the Political Economy of Assam: Implications for Guwahati

The city of Guwahati has been marked by strong in-migration. The 1971 census showed that 59 per cent of Guwahati's population had migrated to the city. The highest migration was from within the Kamrup district (17 per cent), thereby indicating high rural-urban migration from nearby areas. The next highest migrant source was from outside Assam (16.9 per cent). Of these inter-state migrants, a large proportion were from Bihar (41.9 per cent), followed by West Bengal (12.6 per cent), Rajasthan (10.4 per cent), Meghalaya (10.2 per cent) and Uttar Pradesh (9.6 per cent). This was followed by intra-state migration from other districts of Assam (15 per cent). Finally, a high proportion of Guwahati's migrants were from outside India (10.6 per cent) due to the international borders surrounding Assam. Of these international migrants, maximum were from what was East Pakistan at the time (70 per cent) followed by Nepal (15.5 per cent) (Borgohain 2011). As mentioned earlier, with Assam's capital shifting from Shillong to Guwahati in 1972, the latter's population grew further over the next two decades with migrants pouring into the city. In 1991, 47 per cent of Guwahati's population comprised of migrants (GMC 2006).

It is not only Guwahati but Assam as a whole that has had a strong history of migration. In 1978 Myron Weiner wrote that Assam had been the fastest growing area in the sub-continent for nearly 70 years (Baruah 1999). All of the nineteenth and early-twentieth century saw the discovery of tea, coal, oil and natural gas in Assam.

⁷ The Master Plan for Guwahati Metropolitan Area-2025 mentions GMA as covering 262 sq.kms.

Demand for tea labour in the plantations was unfulfilled by the Assamese peasantry who were more involved with agricultural activities in their own fields. This fostered the first wave of migrants from the surrounding states of Bihar and Odisha to work in the plantations. This “tea labour community” has been the oldest of Assam’s migrant groups. Nepalis are also an old migrant community in Assam. Marwaris came to Assam along with the British, and came to dominate the trade and commerce in the NE. They were pivotal in bringing in a monetized economy into Assam. But, during the anti-migrant wave of politics, discussed later, the Marwaris became one of the targets as they came to be viewed as economic exploiters of the ethnic Assamese. Migration was also promoted by the labour demands in industries, the coal and oil fields, construction of railway lines and other development activities. Muslims of Bengali descent as well as Hindu Bengalis are two of the other important migrant communities who began to move into Assam from East Bengal during the period of British rule. The Partition of India and the formation of East Pakistan, the Bangladesh Liberation war, and various economic and political conditions in Bangladesh further brought in millions of Hindu Bengalis and Muslims of Bengali descent into Assam.

The incessant flow of migrants into Assam, especially from Bangladesh, led to the rise of the Assam Movement from 1979 to 1985 against illegal immigrants and their enfranchisement. The conflicts between native population and migrants were so strong that the 1981 census could not be held due to political unrest in the state. Numerous statistics on the migrant and native population have been put forth, however, these are usually controversial. Even the census data has been unreliable for determining the scale of immigration into Assam since the census in Assam “has been far from a passive register of social facts” and has “been a tool in the political management of tensions over immigration” (Baruah 1999: 52). Thus, it has been found that large numbers of immigrant respondents – both Muslims of Bengali descent, but also others – identify themselves as Assamese speakers during the census whether or not they speak the language. This has even created notable peaks in the proportion of Assamese speakers registered in the census. For instance, we find that from 1911 to 1971, when Assam’s population grew by 280 per cent, the proportion of Assamese speakers increased by 966 per cent, from 21.69 per cent of the state’s population in 1911 to 60.89 per cent in 1971 (Baruah 1999: 52).

Despite the Assam movement, migration from Bangladesh to Assam continued, mainly due to economic reasons. As a letter from an ex-Governor of Assam to the President of India in 1998 explained: “Bangladesh is the world’s most densely populated country with a population density of 969 per square kilometre. The growth rate of population in that country is 2.2 per cent and its population is growing at the rate of 2.8 million per year. Each year nearly one third of Bangladesh gets inundated by floods, displacing 19 million people. 70 million people constituting 60 per cent of the population live below the poverty line. The per capita income in Bangladesh is 170 dollars per year, which is much lower than the per capita income in India. The border between India and Bangladesh is very porous. In these circumstances, the continued large scale population movement from Bangladesh to India, is inevitable,

unless effective measures are taken to counter it” (Government of Assam 1998). However, there has been no consensus on how to counter this population movement.

According to the Assam Accord of August 1985, immigrants were to be classified into three main categories based on when they had entered India. Those who had entered India before 1966 were to be given citizenship rights, those who had entered between January 1966 and March 1971 were to be disenfranchised temporarily for a period of 10 years, and those who had entered after March 1971 were to be deported. Baruah (1999) writes that these measures were difficult to implement because of the difficulties in legally determining who was an immigrant and when they had entered. Identifying Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam was a complex task because of the historical association of East Bengal (erstwhile name of Bangladesh) communities with Assam and weak identification drives by the government. Baruah (1999) also argues that newer immigrants have had an ambiguous citizenship status because: (i) there is an informal obligation towards refugees of partition widely accepted in the rest of India, (ii) the difficulty of monitoring the Indo-Bangladesh border for both Hindu political immigrants and Muslim economic immigrants, and (iii) poor or lack of identification documents in whole of India, making it difficult to identify legitimate citizens and otherwise. Conflicts over identity have also mutated into ethnic violence between social groups within the state, most glaringly between the Bodo tribe and Assamese natives. Hindu Bengalis and Muslims of Bengali descent continue to be seen with animosity as eating into the resources of Assam.

In Guwahati, migration of different groups into the city over time and the conflicts over migration discussed above have manifested in the form of community-centric settlements in many parts of the city as well as in current struggles over urban land. Within the city, migrants are concentrated in certain pockets, like Nepalis in hilly areas and on the city’s outskirts; Muslims in Lakhtokia and Machkhowa, which have concentration of markets; Hindi-speaking communities from Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in Paltan Bazar, Fancy Bazar and Athgaon; Bengali-speaking communities in Pandu, Maligaon, Rehabari, and the Railway Colonies (most of the Railway employees are Bengalis); and Christians in Christian Basti where the missionaries built churches. According to Shimonto Sarma of the NGO sSTEP, there is a link between particular new migrant communities and specific areas of informal settlements. Thus, newer Muslim migrants have concentrated in Hatigaon, Sijubari and Nothgoma. Hindus from Lower Assam are seen to increasingly inhabit the hills where dwellings are scattered; the characteristics of these hill informal settlements are quite different from “slums,” the term used for the congested informal settlements in the plains of the city, particularly in the central areas. Migrants from Bihar continue to flock to market areas and transportation hubs such as Maligaon and Narengi. During our field visits in Guwahati, this community-wise organisation was found to be strongly prevalent. It is not clear how many migrants continue to come into Guwahati today. Guwahati’s decreasing population growth rate in the past decade means that migration rates have dropped, because of the lack of vibrant industrialisation and job opportunities in the city. However, struggles over urban land have already become

acute as state authorities have begun to push for Guwahati's development along main state highways. The nature of these struggles, moreover, have been shaped by these community-centric settlement patterns and the previously discussed political conflicts in Assam over migration. We shall elaborate on these struggles and their implications for land and housing politics in Section 4.5.

4.3. Urban Economy

Guwahati is the commercial and industrial hub of the NE region, and its economic links with the rest of India for industrial and consumer products makes it the major market serving the hinterland of other NE states. However, while Guwahati is an important urban economy in Assam and the NE, the nature of its economy needs to be viewed in the context of the political economy of the NE, which is one of the most backward regions of India. This backwardness, Khanna (2005) argues, is a result of the policies of the Indian government. Although the NE region could have been developed a dynamic trade route with the bordering countries of Thailand, China, Myanmar and so on due to its geographic location, India's foreign policies and economic / industrial policies have curtailed social and economic links of the NE with its neighbours. India's closed border policies have provided little incentive to locating industries in the NE as the market is small and shipping out produce from this region into mainland India is time-consuming and expensive. The NE, therefore, has remained a largely agrarian economy and depends on distant manufacturing regions of India for all products. The only industries that came up in this region, including in Assam, were those set up by the public sector (Khanna 2005). Thus, unsurprisingly, the performance of Assam's economy on the whole has been poor.

According to the Assam Human Development Report, 2003 (Planning and Development Department, Government of Assam 2003), since the economic reforms in India in early 1990s, "the pattern of incremental investment has been skewed in favour of regions with relative advantages in infrastructure, communication and transportation access, an established environment for entrepreneurship, and the availability of a skilled work force. It is precisely in these areas that the North East and Assam are particularly disadvantaged" (pp. i). The Report then goes on to indicate that as a result, Assam lags behind in secondary and tertiary sector growth and continues to remain a largely agricultural state.

Lack of industrial development in Assam has forced a high dependency on the tertiary sector for employment in urban areas. NSSO surveys show that in 2009-10, 76.8 per cent males and 70.1 per cent females in urban Assam were employed in the tertiary sector (Mahadevia and Sarkar forthcoming). While there was an increase in tertiary sector employment among urban males from 2004-05, there was a significant decline in the proportion of urban females employed in the tertiary sector from 84.1 per cent in 2004-05 to 70.1 per cent in 2009-10. About 24 per cent of urban females in Assam are now employed in the secondary sector, while this proportion was only 8.6 per cent

in 2004-05. However, this secondary sector employment is likely to be in the self-employed category, indicating women taking on sub-contracted work at home.

The tertiary sector is also the main sector of employment in Guwahati's economy. The Fourth Economic Census of India shows that in 1998, 5 per cent of the population in the GMA area was engaged in the primary sector, 12 per cent in the secondary sector and 83 per cent in the tertiary sector (GMC 2006: 25). As per the 2001 census (see Table 14), almost 83 per cent of Guwahati's workforce was engaged in the service sector (construction, trade and commerce, transportation, storage and communication, and other services) and only 12.96 per cent in non-household based manufacturing activities (GMDA, 2009).

Most of the workforce in the formal service sector in Guwahati is engaged in administration and other institutional areas of employment. Many poorer migrants who have come to the city looking for work have been consumed into the city's informal service sector as petty shopkeepers and vegetable sellers, cleaners, domestic help, small shop assistants, cooks and waiters in food joints, mechanics and other assistants in small workshops, construction workers, manual labourers working in the wholesale and retail markets, and so on. Trade and commerce is an important source of employment in the service sector, and the city has large areas where these activities are dominant. Fancy Bazar, Pan Bazar, Uzan Bazar and Paltan Bazar areas are the hub of all trade and commerce in the north part of the city, while GS Road and Ganeshguri are upcoming areas of trade and commerce in the south. There are numerous transport nodes and freight corridors which are also a source of many tertiary economic activities.

Table 14: Distribution of Workforce in Guwahati Metropolitan Area in 2001

Activity	Percentage of workers, 2001
Primary Sector	2.63
Manufacturing in Household industries	1.75
Manufacturing in other than Household industries	12.96
Construction	6.14
Trade and Commerce	30.92
Transportation, Storage and Communication	10.93
Other Services	34.66
Total	100.00

Note: As per the GMDA estimates.

(Source: Master Plan for Guwahati Metropolitan Area-2025, GMDA, 2009, p.14)

Although industrial opportunities are not expanding in Guwahati, the city has some important industries. The establishment of the Guwahati Refinery in Noonmati in 1962 supported the development of smaller corollary businesses. There are about six industrial estates in Guwahati at Bamunimaidam, Bonda Amingaon and Kalapahar, which focus on chemicals and fertilizers, engineering industries, petroleum and refineries, and agro-based industries (GMC 2006). The industrial policy after the 1990s has been more focused on setting up light and medium industries in the city

(GMDA, 2009). With the urban economy not expanding sufficiently, we observe that work participation rates in Guwahati have not increased much. In 1991, work participation rates in Guwahati were 52.4 per cent for males and 8.7 per cent for females (32.2 per cent for the total population) (CDP 2006: 24). According to NSSO data, work participation rates for males and females in urban Assam were 55.1 per cent and 10.9 per cent, respectively, during 2004-05, and 52.8 per cent and 9.3 per cent, respectively, during 2009-10 (Mahadevia and Sarkar forthcoming). If we presume that the NSSO data for urban Assam is influenced by the situation in Guwahati since it is the state's largest city, then this data shows that work participation for males in Guwahati increased between 1991 and 2005, and then dipped. Even if we consider that lower work participation rates in the state's smaller towns and cities are influencing the NSSO data for urban Assam, work participation rates in Guwahati could not have increased substantially otherwise this would have most likely have registered in the urban Assam data. In the absence of sufficiently increasing income-generating opportunities, renting is likely to be an important source of income for certain groups in Guwahati.

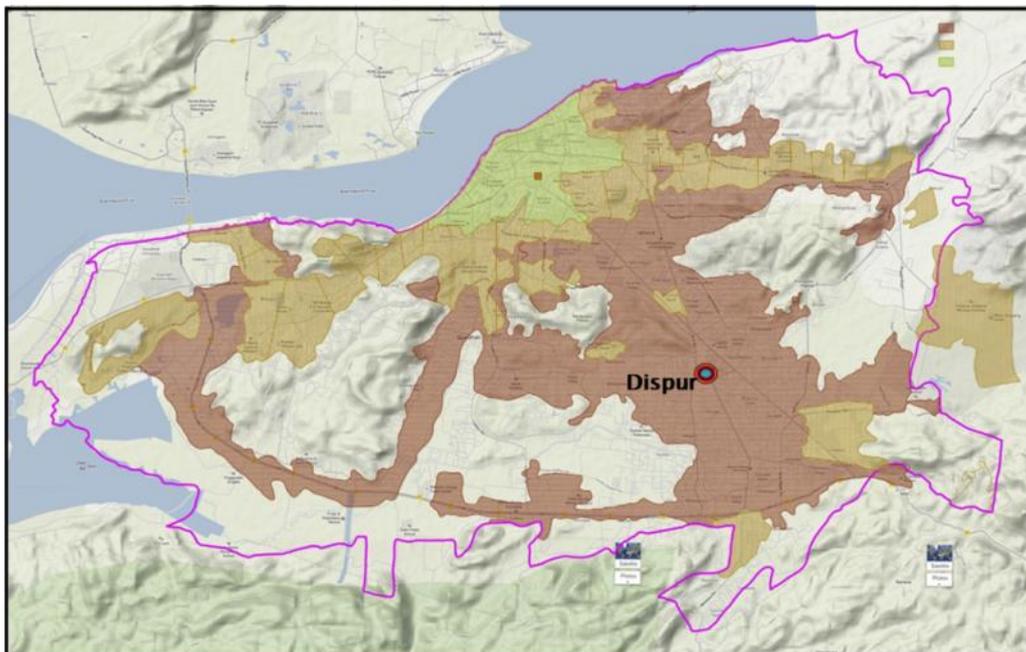
4.4. Urban Growth and Development

Guwahati has a mix of plain areas, low-lying marshy lands and hillocks. The Brahmaputra river runs across the length of the city on the North. All of this has had an impact on the physical growth of the city. Most of the older core administrative and commercial areas of Guwahati like Uzan Bazar, Fancy Bazar, Pan Bazar, Kachari and Paltan Bazar developed along the bank of the Brahmaputra. Two other major magnets that developed on the river bank were the Kamakhya Temple on the Nilachal Hills and the Northeast Frontier Railways Headquarters in Maligaon. The Maligaon area has now developed as an important corridor with the development of the railroad linking main Guwahati city to North Guwahati on the other side of the river and the other states of India. The Inland Water Transport Authority (IWTA) ports and many smaller jetties are also on this road, where some amount of trade takes place. This is part of the National Waterway of India, which was formerly a core business trade route but which is now a small trade and transport route. The capital complex of Assam (Assam Secretariat) was developed at Dispur, south-east of the older core area. The Guwahati-Shillong (GS) link road, which connects the older core area to Dispur, has been improved and this corridor has developed as an important commercial area with a densely-built residential area in the inner parts. Ganeshguri has developed as a sub-centre in the south along this corridor. Rapid development has led to new residential and commercial areas in the erstwhile peripheral zones of the city. The further expansion of the city in the east and south is, however, restricted by the Khasi and Jaintia Hills ranges and the Meghalaya Plateau. This can be seen in Map 2, which depicts the hills in light grey.

As per the land use pattern of the city in 2001 (Table 15), more than 25 per cent of the land is under residential use. Water bodies and hills and green belts cover more than 46 per cent of the land within the city. Industrial and commercial uses cover only 5.2

per cent and 2.5 per cent land, respectively. Commercial area coverage is the lowest although there is high commercial activity in the city. On the ground, commercial activity is highly mixed with residential uses. A crucial issue of land ownership that arises in Guwahati is that the Guwahati Municipal Corporation owns almost no land. There is high share of private ownership and large tracts of land are under the State and Central governments.

Map 2: Hills in Guwahati



(Source: Adapted from M.Plan-Housing Students' Report of Housing Strategies Lab, CEPT University, April 2012)

Table 15: Guwahati Land Use

Landuse	Total %
Residential	25.10
Commercial	2.50
Industrial	5.20
Public and Semi-Public	9.40
Special category Government	6.20
Recreational and Parks	5.40
Transport	12.90
Water Bodies, Hills	17.70
Green Belt	15.40
Total	100.00

Note: As per Guwahati Master Plan

(Source: GMC, City Development Plan, 2006, p. 84)

The Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) is the local government body, administering an area of 216 sq.km, covering 60 wards, while the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) is a state parastatal agency, in-charge of planning and development of the Guwahati Metropolitan Area (GMA) covering an area of 264 sq.km. The Guwahati Development Department (GDD) has been created

under the Government of Assam to specifically look after the governance of Guwahati city and administratively control the GMC and GMDA.⁸ There are also various government agencies involved in the planning and design, construction, and operation and maintenance of various infrastructures in the city (See Chart 1).

Chart 1: Institutional framework for urban infrastructure provision in Guwahati

Infrastructure	Planning and Design	Construction	Operation and Maintenance
Water	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC
Sewerage	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC / FCD	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC / FCD	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC / FCD
Drainage	PHE / AUWSSD / GMC / FCD	GMDA / GMC	GMDA / GMC
Storm water drainage	GMDA / GMC / T&CP	GMDA / GMC	GMDA / GMC
Solid waste disposal	GMC	GMC	GMC
Municipal roads (including flyovers)	PWD / GMDA / GMC	PWD / GMDA / GMC	PWD / GMDA / GMC
Street lighting	PWD / GMDA / GMC	PWD / GMDA / GMC	PWD / GMDA / GMC
Town planning	GMDA / T&CP	GMDA	GMDA

AUWSSB- Assam Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Department; GMC- Guwahati Municipal Corporation; GMDA- Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority; PHE- Public Health Engineering; PWD- Public Works Department; FCD- Flood Control Department; T&CP: Town and Country Planning
(Source: GMC, City Development Plan, 2006, p. 12.)

4.4.1. Urban Infrastructure and Basic Services

Urban infrastructure provision of basic services such as water, sewerage and drainage is extremely inadequate in Guwahati. Discussions with GMC officials revealed that only 20-30 per cent of Guwahati is covered by piped water, while there is zero coverage for sewerage.

The major source of water for Guwahati is the surface water drawn from Brahmaputra and its tributary Bahini. Other sources are the various natural depressions and water bodies locally known as ‘beels’, which are spread across the city. Piped water provision as well as water through tankers is provided by Assam Water Supply and Sewerage Board (AWSSB), GMC and Public Health Engineering (PHE). According to the city’s Master Plan, there are about 1 lakh assessed holdings in Guwahati and only about 40,000 of them are served by piped water connections. Providing water to households has not been a major concern in the formal housing areas, as most households or housing colonies have built their own borewells. However, Guwahati is established on very hard rock and with decreasing water levels in the city, borewells will have to be dug deeper to obtain water. In the last few years, borewells have thus

⁸ GDD is a separate entity like the Urban Development Department and is headed by a Secretary who reports straight to the Chief Minister of Assam.

become a very expensive affair and water supply is therefore increasingly becoming a concern. At the time of the preparation of the City Development Plan (CDP) 2006, the installed capacity of water in GMC was about 20 MGD assessing the capacity of the four treatment plants in Panbazar, Hengrabari, Satpukhuri and Kamakhya. These were all running at 50 per cent of capacity and water losses were assessed to be about 40 per cent. In recent years, JNNURM funding and external funding are being used for the establishment of water supply plants. The South West Guwahati Drinking Water Supply Project and the South Central Guwahati Drinking Water Supply Project are currently under implementation.

As mentioned earlier, Guwahati has no sewerage network except in a few areas such as the Railway Colonies, the Indian Oil Corporation Refinery colonies and the residential areas under defence establishments. In the rest of the city, individual houses have been built with septic tanks without any collective disposal system for effluents, and the sewage from the septic tanks goes directly into the open drainage. Further, despite having very high rainfall which is almost continuous throughout the year, the only stormwater drainage system that Guwahati depends on is pumping during high floods. The Bharalu channel to which the flood water is diverted does not have adequate capacity to cope with the discharge and thus it is common sight to see homes, roads and office buildings flooded during the monsoons. Solid waste management is also inadequate, although JNNURM funds are being used to improve this situation. In the context of very poor or almost no integrated water, sanitation or sewerage system in the city, providing basic urban services to the urban poor, many of whom live in rental housing (some of which is developed by landlords from poor and lower-income groups), is an even more challenging task.

Table 16: Deprivations in Housing and Basic Services, Comparison of Urban Assam and Urban India

Indicator	Assam			India		
	1993	2002	2008-09	1993	2002	2008-09
% Households not having access to tap water*	56.4	64.5	59.7	29.5	26.4	23.1
% Households not having water supply within premises*	19.7	12.1	8.1	33.8	29.7	25.5
% Households sharing water connection*	46.1	45.4	35.7	59.8	56.2	53.0
% Households not having bathroom access*	25.4	12.0	5.8	46.5	31.5	21.5
% Households without drainage connection*	48.0	23.6	22.6	26.8	18.5	14.8
% Households with connection to katcha covered and open drainage*	96.5	89.2	88.4	60.9	48.8	41.5
% Households not having access to toilet	7.0	1.8	0.9	30.6	17.9	11.3
% Households sharing a toilet*	28.9	19.8	25.1	41.4	46.5	34.5
% Households not having electricity for domestic use**	-	13.2	5.4	-	8.4	3.9
% Households living in katcha structures**	-	2.4	9.5	-	2.1	3.3
Per capita floor area in housing (in sq.m.)	-	-	13.65	-	-	9.45

Source: * Calculated from Mahadevia and Sarkar (forthcoming)

** Institute of Applied Manpower Research and Planning Commission (2011)

*** NSSO (2010)

While a further detailed picture regarding level of basic services is difficult to draw for Guwahati, the NSSO data for urban Assam is a useful indicator since Guwahati is the state's largest city. The data shows that the proportion of households without access to tap water is higher in urban Assam as compared to urban India, for all the three years of NSS rounds: 1993, 2002 and 2008-09 (see Table 16). This shows the poor provision of piped water by the Urban Local Body (ULB). In fact, the proportion of households without access to tap water in 2008-09 (59.7 per cent) increased as compared to 1993 (56.4 per cent). At all India urban level, the proportion had come down from 29.5 per cent to 23.1 per cent. The proportion of households without access to drainage connection is as high as 22.6 per cent in urban Assam, whereas at all India level, the proportion is just 14.8 per cent. If there is a drainage connection then the drains are usually open or katcha covered. Thus, in 2008-09, among the households connected to drainage, 88.4 per cent were those connected to open or katcha covered drains in urban Assam compared to 41.5 per cent in urban India. Urban Assam does, however, fare better than urban India in case of household-level basic services such as water source within premises, households having individual water source, households having access to bathroom, and households having access to toilet (see Table 16). But, beyond this comparison, the proportion of households sharing water connections and toilets in urban Assam is nonetheless quite high. This was in evidence among the urban poor in Guwahati as well.

4.4.2. Growth of Informal Settlements

When the capital was shifted to Dispur in Guwahati, a large number of the local ethnic communities were displaced. It is estimated that about 1 lakh people were displaced to build the Dispur administrative blocks and residential colonies. Other displacements were caused by the development of the Assam Zoo and Botanical Park, which covers a full hillock. People were also displaced due to the establishment of Guwahati University and the IIT campus in North Guwahati. None of the displaced have been rehabilitated by the government. The majority of the displaced were the original tribal communities of Karbis and Bodos living in these areas, who moved into the peripheral areas and largely into the hills within and around the city (Hussain and Phanjoubham, 2007).

As the city grew and more migrants came in, the informal occupation of State and Central government land in the plains and hills became a significant means of fulfilling shelter needs for the urban poor and lower-income groups. The informality of these settlements and the poor quality of houses and services in them have created many "slums" in the city. But the identification of settlements as slums has been a complex process and different official documents mention different numbers. Based on the slum definition from the 2001 Census, Guwahati's City Development Plan from 2006 and GMDA's Master Plan mentions 26 slum pockets covering 1.6 lakh people.⁹

⁹ The 2001 Census definition of a slum includes: All areas notified as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act; All areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration which have not been formally notified as slum under any Act; and a compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements,

However, a 2009 study commissioned by the GMC identified 1,67,796 people living in 90 slums under four categories: “Slums as per Census definition”; “Scattered hillside housing”; “Railway quarter illegal extensions”; and “Congested slums with more than 70% rental housing” (Table 17). Field visits and discussions with officials revealed that there are many discrepancies in this identification. Furthermore, if the Pranab Sen Committee definition¹⁰ is used – or better still, the special slum definition for the North Eastern states which identifies a cluster of 10 dilapidated houses or less as a “slum” – then Guwahati would comprise of 250 slum pockets which are in dire need of better housing and services.

Table 17: Categorization of Slums

No.	Categories	No. of Slum Pockets	Approximate No. of Households	Approximate Population
1	Slum as per Census definition	52	17,056	102,336
2	Scattered Hill side housing	24	5,380	32,280
3	Railway quarter illegal extensions	6	2,850	17,100
4	Congested slums with more than 70% rental housing	8	2,680	16,080
	Total	90	27,966	1,67,796

Note: According to “Guwahati City Slum Policy-Phase 1, Identification of Slums”

(Source: GMC 2009)

Besides the displaced tribal communities who settled on the city’s hillocks, many migrants coming to Guwahati in search of a better livelihood have also been progressively settling in the hills. A recent study conducted for GMC revealed that there are 65,892 households in the 16 hillocks of Guwahati. According to the study, 10,208 households are on Reserve Forest land in the hills and 40,121 households on government land other than Reserve Forest in the hills (AC Nielson 2011). Since their dwellings are scattered on the hillsides rather than being dense congested settlements, most of these hillside settlements are not recognized by state authorities as “slums.” This poses challenges for the improvement of housing and services in these settlements since recent Central government programmes are targeted at “slums.” In fact, as explained in the next section, many of these hillside dwellers have also been facing the threat of eviction, posing even further challenges to the improvement of housing and basic services for the city’s urban poor and lower-income groups.

Informal settlements have also emerged on the city’s periphery through commercial informal subdivisions of agricultural land. Many of these are identified as “slums” in the slum identification study commissioned by the GMC (GMC 2009), however, many of them are not yet dense congested settlements and some of the problems they

in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities (GMDA 2009: 91).

¹⁰ The Pranab Sen Committee defines as a “slum” as “a compact settlement of at least 20 households with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions.”

face are therefore different from the informal settlements in the central city areas. According to the City Development Plan (GMC 2006), 46 per cent of dwellings units in Guwahati are rented. A large proportion of these units are likely to be in informal settlements, catering to urban poor and low-income groups whose shelter needs are unmet by the formal housing sector or even ownership housing in the informal sector.

Programmes addressing the housing and basic services needs of the urban poor have, in fact, been scarce in Guwahati. The Assam State Housing Board (ASHB) has built some EWS and LIG housing in Guwahati (discussed in further detail in Section 5.1.3), but the GMC has not had the finances to invest in housing for the urban poor until recently. Under JnNURM's BSUP, GMC has recently taken up the construction of housing for the urban poor in three locations: Fatasil, Morasali and Amingaon. Under this funding about 2,260 dwelling units are being constructed (Table 18). However, looking at the identified housing shortage of 12,817 as per the 2001 Census (GMDA 2009), the BSUP housing built will not be able to address the housing shortage in any significant way. As explained earlier, water, drainage and sewerage in Guwahati is extremely inadequate, and in this context, the upgrading of basic services in the city's slums will require large investment into city-wide infrastructures.

Table 18: BSUP housing projects in Guwahati

Project name	Project Cost (Crore)	No.of Units	Starting date	Project details	Status
Fatasil Slum Housing Projects (BSUP Phase I)	53.95	1104	12 June 2008	G+3; 2-room; separate bathroom, WC, Kitchen	352 dwelling units are ready for handing over
Morasali Slum Housing Project BSUP- Phase I		128			30% civil works completed for 64 units
Amingaon slum Housing Projects (BSUP Phase II)	54.49	1028	1 June 2009	G+3; 2-room; separate bathroom, WC, Kitchen	90% site development Work completed including acquisition of land
Total units		2260			

(Source: GMC Pamphlet on BSUP)

Although government authorities have invested little over the past several decades in the improvement of housing and services for the urban poor in Guwahati's informal settlements, security of tenure has been extended to many under the Assam Land Policy of 1989 and the Assam government's patta system. The Assam Land Policy states that an indigenous landless family settled on government lands that are *khas* lands (that is, land which is not reserved for any specific purpose, and thus the government can allow settlement on such land) may be given 1 katha 10 lecha (about 400 sq.m.) of land provided they meet certain criteria. Key among these criteria are that they must not already have land elsewhere in an urban area and they must have been in occupation of the land or living in the city for at least 15 years. Land pattas have also been given to many families who have informally occupied or informally

purchased State government land. Three types of pattas are given, which extend different levels of tenure security.

(i) *Miyadi Patta*: It is a patta or lease given for 30 years. The application for *miyadi patta* must be made to the Assam government's Land Revenue department, and it involves paying for *miyadi patta*. This amount has increased in the past few years. Although *miyadi patta* is not ownership tenure, yet having *miyadi patta* is seen to be permanent land tenure, and is transferable through inheritance as well as sale/purchase. During our fieldwork in Guwahati, some *miyadi patta* holders reported that one could take a bank loan on this patta.

(ii) *Ek Sonia Patta*: It is an annual lease which needs to be renewed by paying a fee to the Land Revenue department every year. Not many people, however, seem to be following this renewal practice.

(iii) *Tauzi Patta*: This can be said to be the first stage of tenure, which does not give any recognition of ownership, but allows the squatters to use the land.

As discussed in the next section, the Assam government has increasingly withheld these forms of tenure security, creating urban land and housing conflicts that have sometimes intersected with tensions over migration, particularly "illegal" migration, into Assam.

4.5. Urban Land and Housing Conflicts

Over the past decade, conflicts over urban land and housing have increasingly surfaced in Guwahati. While the June 2011 eviction drive on some of Guwahati's hillsides is well-known by now, eviction drives against "encroachers" on Reserve Forest lands in Guwahati's hills took place even in 2002 as part of a larger eviction drive on Reserve Forest lands all over Assam and the North-east (Kumar 2002). Protests had erupted then as well, and it seems that the eviction drive could not be sustained by the government. This has been the case recently as well, however, the conflicts continue with no resolution in sight as yet.

The question of giving land rights to those who have settled on State government lands other than Reserve Forest lands has also increasingly become an issue. As mentioned earlier, many migrants from poor and lower-income backgrounds have informally occupied State government land in Guwahati as the city has grown. As in other Indian cities, such informal housing is seen primarily through a legal lens rather than as a process through which shelter needs are met by these groups in the absence of other viable options and the state's inability to meet their housing needs. As a result, government authorities in Guwahati have often tried to deal with "illegal settlers" on State government land in a way that neither evicts them nor legitimizes their settlement. For instance, while the GMC used to collect holding tax from residents on State government lands, the State government instructed GMC to stop this collection in 1996. A newspaper article reported that the "government fears that payment of any such tax would legalise the right over land, some of which have been

occupied illegally” (The Telegraph 2005a). In 2004, the GMC attempted to levy a service tax for “illegal settlers” on State government land since they availed of certain civic services provided by it. Unlike the holding tax, it was thought that the service tax would not legitimize the settlers’ holding of property, and yet it would allow the GMC to augment its tax collection and increase annual revenues by at least Rs.1 crore (The Telegraph 2004). However, this service tax was not passed by the GDD out of fear that collecting even a small amount from these settlers would make it difficult to later relocate the settlers from these State government lands.

In fact, even the abolition of the *tauzi patta* system was demanded by Save Guwahati Build Guwahati (SGBG), a non-governmental organization, because this patta was seen to be encouraging illegal settlement on State government land, including the hills (The Telegraph 2005b). Although the *tauzi patta* system comprises of collecting a nominal fine from settlers and does not give any kind of right of ownership over the land, it is interpreted by many settlers as giving a temporary right. After staying on the State government land for a couple of years and paying for *tauzi patta*, many settlers often apply for *ek sonia patta* and then for *miyadi patta*. This is seen as undesirable by those who advocate an approach of removing encroachments from State government lands, particularly in the hills which are ecologically sensitive areas.

The issue of informal settlements on State government lands in the hills has especially been a controversial one. As mentioned earlier, Guwahati’s hills have been settled since the 1970s when Assam’s capital moved from Shillong to Guwahati. Successive governments have accepted the presence of these hill settlers and many have been partly provided with approach roads, electricity and even water connections (Misra 2011). Even officials in government have admitted that the issue of hillside settlement has “social, economic and psychological aspects” and therefore they would have to “rehabilitate the settlers in a suitable manner” (Kamrup Metro’s Deputy Commissioner quoted in The Telegraph 2005b). And yet, government authorities have not formulated a proper resettlement policy for hill dwellers. They have also stopped extending patta to settlers on State government lands in both the hills and the plains. One newspaper article from 2011 reported that over 15,000 applications for *miyadi patta* – with maximum applicants from Guwahati – have been gathering dust at the State’s Land Revenue department despite the Assam Land Policy of 1989 which has a legal provision to give permanent land settlement (TOI 2011a).

It was in this absence of a proper resettlement policy and the non-implementation of the Assam Land Policy that the State government initiated evictions in June 2011 from some of Guwahati’s hillsides and wetlands, and met with substantial resistance and protests. These protests took place under the leadership of the Akhil Gogoi-led Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS – loosely translated as Committee for Struggle for Peasants Rights) and the *Brihattar Guwahati Bhumi Pattan Dabi Samiti* (loosely translated as Committee for Demand for Settlement of Land Titles in Greater Guwahati). On June 22, thousands of settlers marched to Dispur to demand that the evictions be stopped and that pattas be granted. However, the police violently

dispersed the protesters, and three people and a nine-year old child were also shot dead, making the protestors retaliate. The eviction drive was subsequently stopped and the State government constituted a committee to look into formulating a new policy. The committee also held discussions with KMSS. According to one newspaper article, the government agreed to grant patta as well as implement the Forest Rights Act for those living in forest areas prior to December 2005 (TOI 2011c). However, the government did not make the committee's report public and had not given any pattas by March 2012, leading the KMSS and the *Brihattar Guwahati Bhumi Pattan Dabi Samiti* to announce that they would renew their struggle (The Sentinel 2012).

Kamal Medhi, spokesperson for KMSS, has pointed out that even as the evictions were carried out on Reserve Forest land, the government has been giving rights to develop hotels on forest lands and licenses for quarrying in the hills (Conversation with Kamal Medhi, KMSS spokesperson). Scholars have argued that although the evictions were carried out to “bring back the ecological balance of the city, the actual reason seemed to be to help some private firms set up multistorey housing complexes and hotels” (Misra 2011). Thus, the dispossession of poorer groups in Guwahati seems to play out through ecological arguments that hide the illicit acquisition of land by the rich and powerful in the city.

Moreover, a key emphasis of the struggle has been that the evictions dispossess indigenous people who are the majority of the hillside settlers. KMSS, whose focus has been to fight for the rights of Assam's indigenous people, has pointed out that many other groups have laid claim to land and other resources in Assam, including in Guwahati, while the state's indigeneous population has been continually dispossessed. The KMSS struggle against evictions and for land pattas has not, however, openly pitched the rights of indigeneous peoples against other groups, although they are concerned with the question of who should be given land pattas and who should be allowed to buy land in Guwahati. Thus, KMSS has demanded that only those who came to Assam before March 25, 1971, should have the right to buy land in Guwahati (Conversation with Kamal Medhi, KMSS spokesperson). The choice of this date clearly links the question of who has rights to land (including urban land) to the long history and complex politics around “illegal immigration” in Assam (discussed in Section 4.2). KMSS has also opposed the steep increase in charges for *miyadi patta* (by almost 200 times) in recent years, which places this patta beyond the affordability of many settlers.

Conflicts over land in Guwahati have also intensified with increasing land-grabbing by gangs of land mafias. According to a city-based organization fighting for land rights for the poor, 15,000 bighas of land, comprising of forests, wetlands and patta land were in the grip of land mafias in 2011. Gangs of land mafia are reported to be forcefully taking control of land – some of it being *ek sonia* land – often dispossessing poor settlers in the process, and selling it to business and corporate groups at sky-high prices (The Telegraph 2011).

5. Rental housing markets in Guwahati

5.1. Types of housing sub-markets

In Indian cities, housing sub-markets are shaped by both formal and informal processes of land and housing development. In Guwahati, three main processes can be identified: housing through the informal occupation of public and private lands; housing through alienation of land; and public-sector housing. Each of these processes gives rise to a number of housing sub-markets (see Table 2) and rental housing is found in each sub-market.

5.1.1. Housing through informal occupation of public and private lands

Public and private lands in Indian cities are often informally occupied by the urban poor in the absence of affordable formal access to land and housing. In Guwahati, public lands are owned by different agencies, in particular the Indian Railways and the Assam State Government. State government lands are found in the city's plains and hills, and topography shapes the nature of land, housing and infrastructure development, with implications for the nature of rental housing markets as well. The State government lands in the hills also include lands under the Forest Department which are notified as (and known as) Reserve Forest (RF) lands. Private lands which were marked for acquisition under the Urban Land Ceiling Act are another category of public lands that have been informally occupied. The processes of land, housing and infrastructure development on these lands were found to be similar to those on State government lands in the plains. Private lands in Guwahati have also been informally occupied and primary among these are lands belonging to trusts such as Kamakhya Temple Trust which owns large parcels of land. Landownership and topography have implications for the possibility of extending formal tenure to informal settlements. For instance, many informal occupants of State government lands have been granted formal tenure through Assam's patta system whereas settlements on Railway land and on State Government's RF lands in the hills cannot be extended formal tenure under current policies.

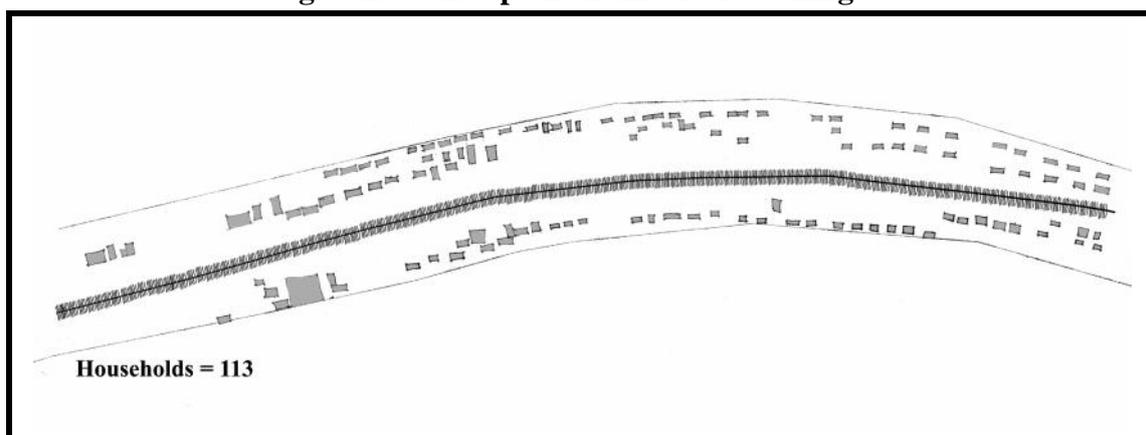
Various actors have been involved in the land, housing and infrastructure development process in informal settlements on public and private lands. This includes squatters (both poor and more well off) who have informally appropriated government land themselves – this is known in Guwahati as *dakhla*; middlemen who did *dakhla* and then sold off the land to others; purchasers of land from middlemen (both poor and more well off); local resident organizations (usually known as Unnayan Samitis) who are engaged in building infrastructure, applying for *miyadi patta*, etc; political leaders and parties who support infrastructure provision or residents' rights to get *miyadi patta*; and political activist organizations (like Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti) who have been agitating for *miyadi patta*, particularly for indigenous groups living in the hills. In most of the informal settlements, government agencies (such as the GMC and the GMDA) have played a minor role, if any, in the development of infrastructure.

5.1.1.1. Informal occupation of Railway land

The Indian Railways owns large tracts of land in Guwahati, many of which have been informally occupied. Some of these lands are narrow strips along railway tracks where evictions are carried out on a relatively regular basis (for e.g. on the stretch of Railway land along the railway tracks between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road, one of the case-study settlements). Some Railway lands are adjacent to railway tracks but are subject to less frequent evictions (for e.g. stretch of land along the railway tracks in Bhootnath) while some are not located along railway tracks at all and here residents are relatively secure. About 23 per cent of the slums are on these different railway lands as per one slum survey (GMC 2009). The land, housing and infrastructure development process on Railway land is related to the frequency of evictions, that is, the level of *de facto* tenure security.

For instance, in the stretch of Railway land along both sides of the railway tracks between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road (see Map 3 and Photo 1 & Photo 2), the land has been squatted upon by the urban poor who, because of the frequent evictions, have built huts out of the most temporary and inexpensive of materials such as plastic sheets and bamboo mats. Many of them live in areas demarcated by small *kabadi* (collected recyclable waste) shopkeepers. These shopkeepers also informally occupy this land with their small shops and some of them also live here. They also have small land parcels where the recyclable waste is stored. The fact that these shopkeepers are able to demarcate certain areas suggests that they are able to exert some control on this land, however it is not clear how they are able to do so: whether they have any links to police or railway officials, whether they pay them any protection money, etc. Moreover, they too get evicted during the eviction drives.

Map 3: Railway slum between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road, showing ground built-up and number of dwellings



The relationship between the squatters and the shopkeeper whose informally demarcated area they live within is complex. Only a few of the squatters said they pay a monthly rent of Rs.100-300 to the shopkeeper. Since they build their houses themselves, this should be taken as rent for occupying the land controlled by the

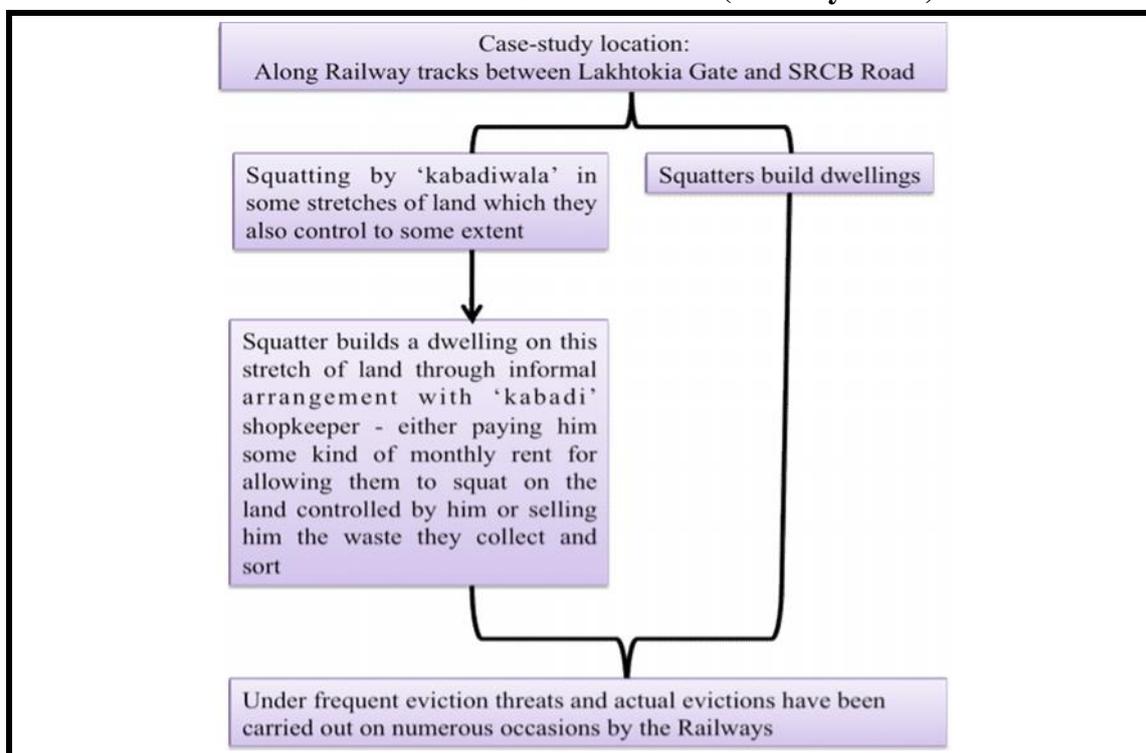
shopkeeper. Most of them, however, said they did not pay anything to the shopkeeper. Although these non-rent-paying squatters appear as “Owners” in our Household Surveys, qualitative research revealed that a number of them worked as waste-pickers and they explained that they are usually required to sell their collected and sorted waste to the shopkeeper whose area they live in. It seems that by allowing a certain number of waste-pickers to live on the land they control, the “*kabadi*” shopkeepers guarantee that they have a steady supply of collected and sorted waste. Other squatters have occupied the land themselves and built temporary dwellings.

Photo 1 (left): Informal occupation along railway tracks near Lakhtokia Gate

Photo 2 (right): Informal occupation along railway tracks near Lakhtokia Gate



Figure 2: Housing supply mechanism along the Railway tracks between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road (Railway Land)



No infrastructure is provided by any government authority, and since there are frequent eviction drives, none of the squatters, including the shopkeepers, have invested in creating any infrastructure. Many of them obtain water for bathing and washing clothes and utensils from shallow pits dug in the ground. Drinking water is obtained from the nearby market or the nearby mosque. No toilets or drainage have been constructed. By contrast, consider the relatively better quality of housing and infrastructure in the stretch of Railway land in the Bhootnath area. Although located adjacent to the railway tracks, evictions are not as frequent here. Many squatters have informally occupied larger areas (some might have paid a middleman as well), demarcating these plots as theirs. They have built their own houses as well as rental rooms out of bamboo mats and tin-sheet roofing, a less temporary and less inexpensive material than the plastic sheets used by squatters at the Lakhtokia Gate railway tracks. Some squatter-landlords have also constructed bore-wells with a handpump for their own use and their tenants. One squatter-landlord reported an expense of Rs.30,000 on his bore-well. Such investments on housing (including rental housing) and infrastructure reveal a higher level of *de facto* tenure security. Thus, variations in land, housing and infrastructure development – including extent of rental housing development – are seen even within this housing sub-market depending on the level of *de facto* tenure security.

The ethnic and religious backgrounds of those who informally occupy railway lands varies widely. On the stretch of Railway land between Lakhtokia Gate and S.R.C.B. Road, the squatters were mostly Assamese and Bihari, and comprised of both Hindus and Muslims. Most of the squatters – both owners and tenants – were from the poorest income groups, all of them with a household income of less than Rs.10,000/month, and many less than Rs.5000/month (Table 8). It is noteworthy that 90 per cent of the squatters have lived here for more than 4 years, and almost 67 per cent since more than 10 years (Table 10).

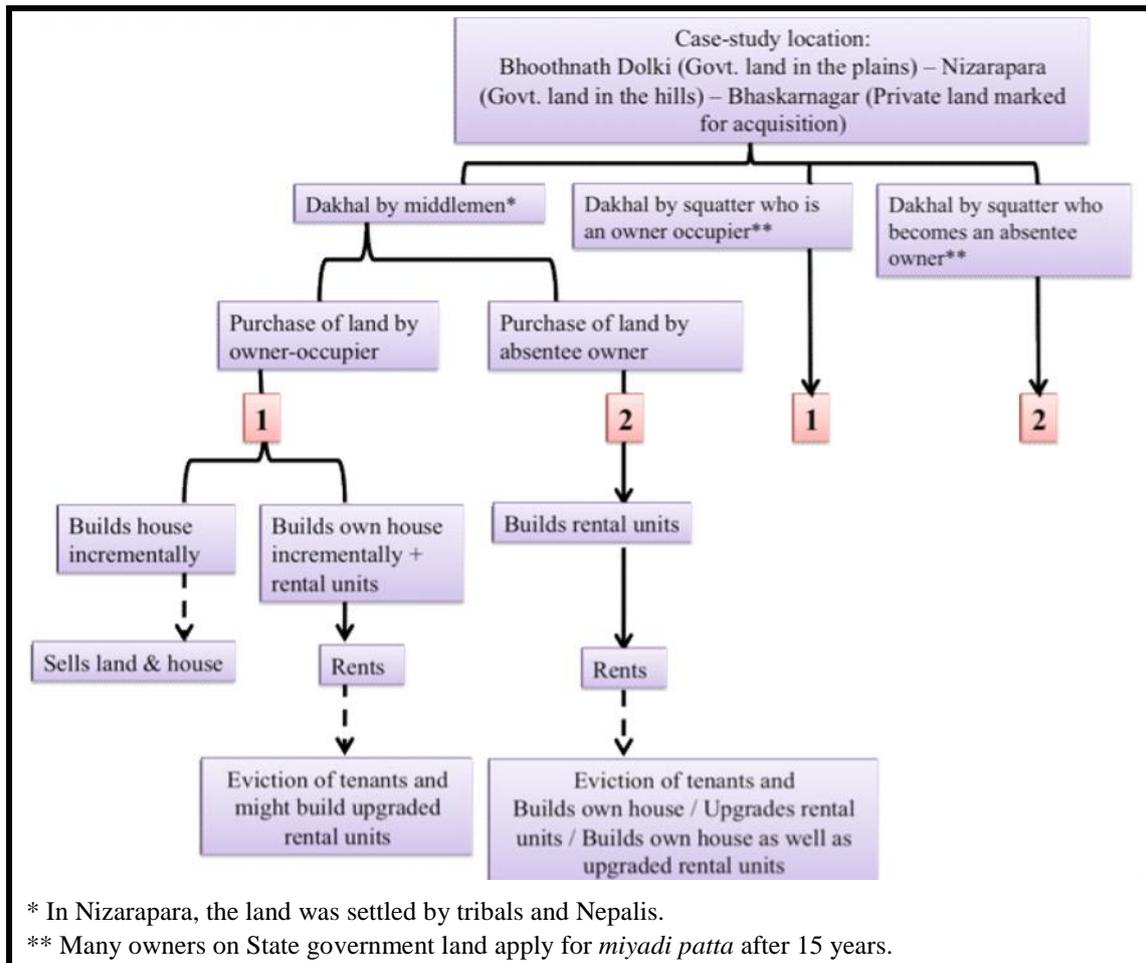
5.1.1.2. Informal occupation of State government lands in the plains

Many State government lands in Guwahati have been informally occupied. In some cases, the current owners (or their father, grandfather, etc) had informally appropriated, that is, done *dakhal* on, these lands. In most cases, however, they had bought land from middlemen who had done *dakhal*. These are of course informal transactions. The identity of such middlemen differs from settlement to settlement. In the case-study settlement of Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, some owners reported purchasing land from a *panda* or temple priest. One owner claimed that the land historically belonged to a *raja* (possibly a feudal lord) who had distributed land for religious purposes. If this is true then it explains how priests came to be middlemen, although how this land became State government land is unclear. Some of the oldest residents have been living here for more than 25 years. One of them reported having inherited her *miyadi patta* plot from her *pardada* (ancestor).

Over the years, many owners with plots on State government land have applied for and obtained *miyadi patta* (30-year *patta* equivalent to permanent land tenure).

However, many owners have also not been able to get *miyadi patta* either because they are more recent owners (and thus not eligible to get the *patta*), or because they have not been able to afford paying for the *patta*, or because their application remains pending with the government. One thus finds that many informal settlements on State government lands comprise of a patchwork of three types of plots: plots in which owners have *miyadi patta*, those in which owners have *ek sonia patta* (one-year renewable *patta*), and those in which owners do not have any *patta*.

Figure 3: Housing supply mechanism in Bhoothnath Milanpath Dolki (State government Land in the Plains), Nizarapara (State government Land in the Hills) and Bhaskarnagar (Private land marked for Acquisition)



Although the Assam government has not been giving *miyadi patta* in recent years, the promise of eventually getting this *patta* – particularly since the government has been politically unable to evict settlers even when denying them *miyadi patta* – has meant that owners on all three types of plots (i.e. irrespective of *miyadi patta*) have gradually invested in land, housing and infrastructure development. This is also true in informal settlements on swampy lands and waterbodies – such as Bhoothnath Milanpath Dolki – although they require higher investments by owners (See Box 1). The perceived low likelihood of eviction and the promise of *miyadi patta* has even encouraged owners who have not got *miyadi patta* to become landlords and invest in

developing rental housing although the returns from tenancy take at least a few years to materialize. One also finds that some of the owners are absentee landlords. In Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, approximately 11 of the 54 owners are absentee landlords. Tenancy plays a significant role in protecting their plots (from others who might want to do *dakhal* in them) as well as developing the land until it is fit for their own occupation or for more profitable development. These processes are discussed in further detail in Section 6.2.

In Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, 90 percent of households are tenants (see Map 5). Most owners have developed rental housing, with many owners (31 out of 54 owners) having constructed more than 10 rental rooms (5 of these owners have, in fact, constructed between 25-31 rental rooms). The settlement has a range of rental housing in terms of rents. 26.4 per cent of rental rooms occupied by family households are in the rent range of Rs.250-500/month, 43.4 per cent are in the rent range of Rs.500-750/month, 22.6 per cent are in the rent range of Rs.750-1000/month and 7.5 per cent are in the rent range of Rs.1000-1500/month. Here, family households pay an average rent of about Rs.700/month and sharers pay an average of about Rs.250/month (Table 25). 90.7 per cent of rental rooms are made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing and 9.3 per cent are made from brick walls and tin-sheet roofing (Table 22). All tenants share water connections and toilets (Table 24). Almost all owners and tenants obtain water from bore-wells while the remaining obtain water from open wells. Very few owners have individual water connections although a substantial proportion have individual toilets (Table 24).

Map 4: Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, showing ground built-up of dwellings



Box 1: Land, housing and infrastructure development on swampy land and waterbodies:

Many informal settlements in Guwahati are on swampy land and waterbodies (*bils*) on which owners have built houses on stilts. Over time, they develop the land by land-filling. In fact, settlements on swampy land and waterbodies in Guwahati are at various stages of development. For instance, Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki (a case-study of an informal settlement on State government land in the plains) still comprises of extremely swampy land. Residents have been gradually filling it through land-filling, garbage deposition, etc. It also comprises of eutrophication. A 6-8 feet floating landmass has thus been formed on top, below which residents reported water of 16-feet depth. All houses are built on stilts (Photo 3 & Photo 4) inserted deep into the swampy land, elevating the houses 3-4 feet above the ground. Most houses are made of bamboo posts, bamboo-mat walls and bamboo-mat or tin-sheet roofs. Houses made out of bamboo need to be rebuilt every few years. Often some of the building materials are re-used in the reconstructed house, however the bamboo posts have to be changed since they are inserted deep into the swampy land and therefore rot over time. One owner reported incurring an expenditure of Rs.2-3 lakhs every four years on rebuilding their house. Another owner reported an expenditure of Rs.1 lakh on recently rebuilding her house. Some owners have also made higher one-time investments to build pucca houses on RCC stilts. One owner reported an expenditure of Rs.5 lakh for building a pucca house. Some owners also incrementally make their houses pucca by elevating the house on RCC stilts but constructing the rest of the house from bamboo (Photo 3).

Bhaskarnagar (a case-study of an informal settlement on private land earmarked for acquisition), on the other hand, was an extremely swampy area earlier. The oldest residents remember it as low-lying agricultural land, and recounted that during floods they used to wade through waist-deep water at places. They used to build their houses on bamboo stilts and many have invested large amounts on land-filling over long periods of time. For instance, one owner estimated having spent Rs.8,000-10,000 every year for 30 years on land-filling. The houses no longer require to be elevated, although small areas within some plots remain a bit swampy.

Infrastructure development in swampy settlements like Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki has generated specific kinds of innovations. Owners have laid out strong bamboo weaves on the settlement's pathways so that there is no danger of sinking into the swampy land (Photo 3 & Photo 4). On shared paths, this has been done through collective contributions. During the monsoon, the land mass reportedly rises by a couple of feet along with the bamboo weaves. Owners have also built toilets on stilts with improvised disposal systems in which sewerage pipes are inserted deep into the floating landmass such that they open into the water below it (Photo 5). For drinking water, owners reported having made deep tube wells, nearly 140 feet deep. One owner reported an expenditure of Rs.15,000 on building a tube-well 10 years ago.

In many informal settlements on State government land, owners have formed local committees known as Unnayan Samitis. The samitis have often succeeded in developing infrastructures of water, road and drainage through residents' financial and labour contributions as well as soliciting political support for these activities; and in some cases have even applied collectively for *miyadi patta* (See Box 3). The Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki Unnayan Samiti comprises of owners who pay Rs.50 per month to the Samiti. While the Samiti has succeeded in getting electricity into the settlement, it has failed so far in getting a road developed.

Map 5: Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot

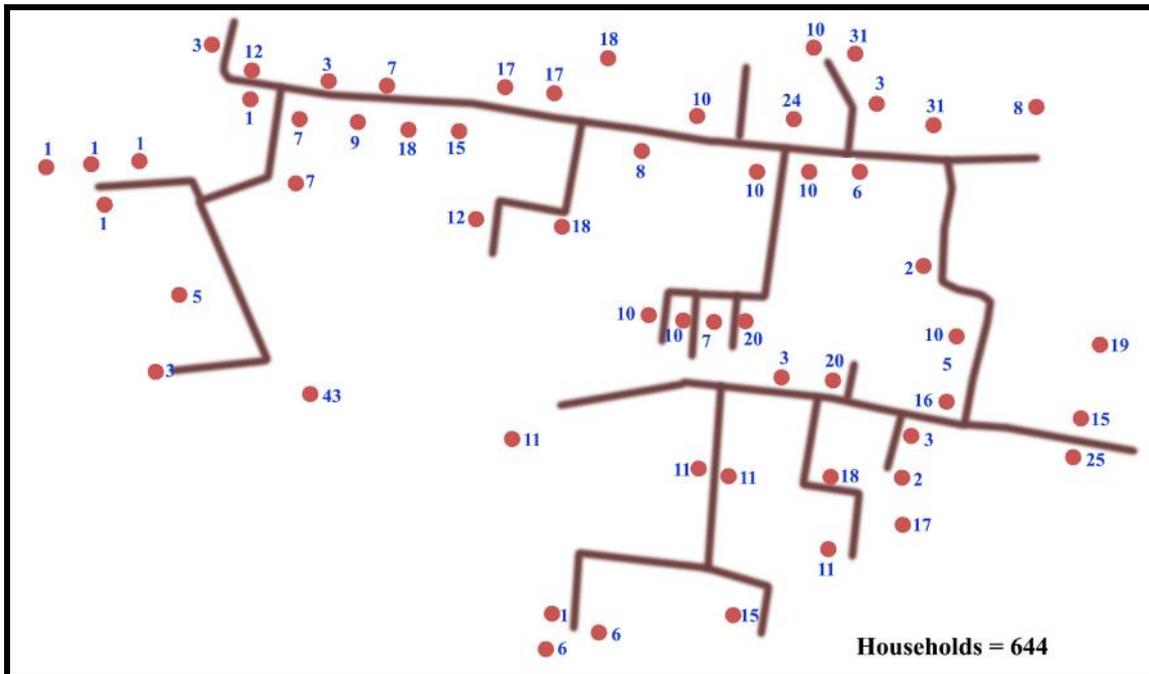
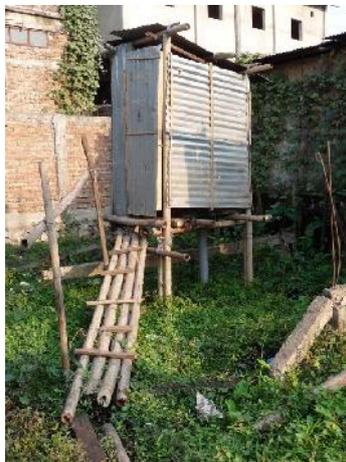


Photo 3 (left): Houses on stilts in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki

Photo 4 (right): Houses on stilts in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki



Photo 5: Toilet on stilts in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki



The ethnic and religious backgrounds of those who have informally occupied State government lands in the plains varies widely. However, residents of particular settlements have particular ethnic and religious backgrounds. Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, for instance, is predominantly Muslim. Owners are all Assamese Muslims. Tenants are approximately 90 percent Muslim, while the rest 10 percent are Hindu. 90 percent tenants are from Assam and 5 percent are from Bihar. The economic background of the owners in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki varies widely although none are from the lowest household-income group of below Rs.5000/month (Table 8). Some of the owners are also very well-to-do, and one of the owners is reported to be a Block Development Officer and another a restaurant owner. The average household income among owners is Rs.14,400/month. One of the oldest residents explained that out of the 54 owners, about 35 of them are today relatively well-to-do. The tenants are mainly from the lower income groups with a household income of less than Rs.10,000/month – the average household income among tenants is Rs.6433/month (Table 8).

5.1.1.3. Informal occupation of State government lands (Revenue lands and Reserve Forest lands) in the hills

The GMC area comprises of 16 hills on which a total of 65,894 households reside. These hills comprise of a mix of landownership, and 71 per cent of households informally occupy State government Revenue lands and 17.7 per cent of households Reserve Forest (RF) lands (see Table 19).¹¹ These hillside informal settlements are considered to be a separate housing sub-market for two reasons. The first is that the the process of land occupation and development in the hills has involved cutting into the natural slopes to make the land habitable, leading to loss of vegetation, soil loss and soil erosion, and vulnerability to landslides. The government has therefore identified the hills as “eco-sensitive zones” and the hillside informal settlements, particularly those on RF lands, as “encroachments” requiring resettlement and rehabilitation (GMDA 2009). In June 2011, a large-scale eviction drive was thus initiated by the government against the “encroachments.” As discussed in Section 4.5, the evictions mainly affected Assam’s indigenous communities, leading to large protests which spiralled into violence. This forced the government to stop the evictions and constitute a committee to negotiate with relevant groups and formulate a new land policy. The second reason for considering the hillside settlements as a separate housing sub-market is that their topography is an important factor influencing the nature of land, housing and infrastructure development. The processes of land occupation and land, housing and infrastructure development on State government lands in the hills are examined here through a case-study of Nizarapara

¹¹ A 2011 GMC-commissioned study of hillside dwellings (AC Nielson 2011) noted that during the fieldwork validation exercise, officials from Forest and Forest wildlife departments raised their concerns related to type of land, and that many officials reported that part of the Forest land is shown as Revenue land and vice versa, and that in the absence of proper maps and landmarks, identification of actual land type was found to be difficult.

(in Birubari), a settlement on Revenue land. We did not take a case-study from the RF lands due to the recent evictions and the ensuing political sensitivity of these lands.

Table 19: Landownership on Guwahati's hills

No.	Hill Name	Reserve Forest	Govt. Land (Other than RF Land)	Private patta land owned by others	Private Patta land owned by self	Don't Know / Can't Say
1	Jalukbari / Lankeswar	0.0	99.2	0.0	0.0	0.8
2	Fatasil	9.8	68.3	14.8	4.8	2.2
3	Gotanagar	41.8	38.2	13.2	6.9	0.0
4	Kharguli	0.0	78.0	14.9	7.1	0.0
5	Nabhagraha	0.0	84.5	8.5	6.9	0.0
6	Noon Mati	0.0	86.9	8.9	4.2	0.0
7	Kamakhya/ Nilachal	0.0	78.3	16.1	5.6	0.0
8	Kalapahar	17.3	73.0	8.1	1.6	0.1
9	Narangi	15.5	84.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
10	Hangrabari	13.0	74.5	8.8	3.2	0.4
11	Sarania	8.4	56.8	19.7	13.6	1.6
12	Narakashur	0.0	93.1	1.7	4.5	0.7
13	Sunsali	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
14	Kainadhara Hills	0.0	85.9	11.9	2.2	0.0
15	Khanapara Rf/ Amchang Rf	6.3	92.2	1.0	0.5	0.0
16	Garbhanga	99.7	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	17.7	71.0	7.3	3.6	0.4

(Source: AC Neilson 2011)

In Nizarapara, the processes of land occupation were found to be similar to those discussed in the case of State government lands in the plains. Thus, in some cases, the current owners (or their father, grandfather, etc) had done *dakhal* on this land themselves. In most cases, however, they had informally purchased the land. Whereas in the plains, many owners had purchased land from middlemen (that is, those who had not themselves settled on this land), in the hills, many had purchased land from the original settlers who were mostly tribals. In Nizarapara, the original settlers were a few Bodo, Kachari and Nepali families. Each controlled large parcels of land, which they subdivided and sold. One of Nizarapara's oldest residents is a Bodo who explained that he had bought his land from a Kachari family in 1959. According to him, most of the original tribal settlers used to do agriculture (step cropping) and ran dairy farms, and they later shifted out to the Khasi-Garo hills adjoining the city. While one area of Nizarapara continues to have a Nepali population (and is known as Nepali Basti), many of the current residents are Hindus of Assamese origin.

One Assamese Hindu owner explained that her husband had bought their plot of land 40 years ago from a Nepali driver who was with the Forest Department. Her husband was a watchman at Guwahati's Cotton's College and they had lived in the college staff quarters. When she gave birth to a son, they decided to buy some land since they would have to leave the quarters when he retired. The plot was heavily forested when they bought it, and she recalled that they would put their 2-month-old son to sleep at night and then clear the land and level it. It took them several years to level their land.

Despite this clearing of trees and leveling of land at places, Nizarapara – like most of the informal hillside settlements – has developed as a low-density hilly settlement with dwellings located in relatively large plots interspersed with much greenery (Photo 6, Photo 7 & Photo 8). Interviews with residents reveal that informal land purchases have continued to take place in Nizarapara into the present, and land prices have increased steadily (See Box 2). A descendent of one of the first settlers also explained that earlier the plots of land that were sold were quite large and varying in size, but over time these have become smaller and are often fixed in size at 1 katha 5 lessa to comply with the Assam Land Policy of 1989.

Box 2: The informal land market in Nizarapara over time:				
Owners interviewed	Time period of purchase of land	Size of plot	Purchase price (Rs.)	Purchase price (Rs. per katha)
Owner 1	50 years ago	1.5 bigha	700	93.2
Owner 2	45 years ago	1 bigha	500	100
Owner 3	25 years ago	1 bigha	35,000	7,000
Owner 4	20 years ago	1 katha 3 lessa	3,000	2,608
Owner 5	16 years ago	1 katha	10,000	10,000
Owner 6	Present	1 katha 5 lessa	15,000	12,000

Photo 6 (left): One of the spacious plots and houses in Nizarapara

Photo 7 (right): Open pit toilet in Nizarapara



About 11 per cent of the hill lands are patta lands (Table 19). In Nizarapara, none of the owners have obtained *miyadi patta*. However, many have *ek sonia patta*. Many used to pay GMC holding tax (*khazana*) for a GMC holding number, and although the government has discontinued the collection of GMC holding tax most owners still feel fairly secure. Like in the plains, the low likelihood of eviction and the promise of eventually getting *miyadi patta* has spurred owners to invest in and improve their housing and infrastructure. While the hills have many natural streams that are used as water sources, this requires residents to carry water over hilly terrain. Thus, many individual owners have invested in building open wells or bore-wells in their own plots. Many have also built toilets connected to septic tanks, although there are also

open-pit toilets (Photo 7). Through Unnayan Samitis, owners have also developed collective infrastructures of water, drainage, roads and street-lights (See Box 3).

Box 3: Role of Unnayan Samitis in the development of informal settlements:

The Birubari Nizarapara Unnayan Samiti comprises of 50 members who are owners. The Samiti collects Rs.10/month from each of its members. The Samiti has been instrumental in developing various infrastructures. The GMDA had constructed only 120 metres of road going up the hill through the MLA fund, so 2 years ago the Samiti collected Rs.3.5 lakhs through member contributions (Rs.1000-5000 from each) and donations and extended this road (Photo 8). It has installed street-lights through member contributions. The Samiti has also made 3 reservoirs to collect the water from some of the natural streams on the hillside. Residents manually fill water from the reservoir. The Samiti allows 24-hour access to the reservoir during the monsoon, and twice a day (6 am and 5 pm) during the rest of the year. It has also constructed three boring wells. At the base of the hill the biggest boring well and supply system has been set up. It is 1000-feet deep and distributes water to 50-60 households. A person has been employed for the operations and maintenance of the unit and the beneficiary households pay a certain amount towards his salary and overhead costs of running this unit. There is another such boring well and supply unit that serves another 25-30 households. However these water supply networks do not reach the upper parts of the Nizarapara hill. Moreover, because of load-shedding, such piped distribution systems – which require electricity to pump the water up the hill – do not always guarantee a reliable water supply.

Every month the Samiti declares one or two Sundays for general development work in the locality like clearing roadside bushes, constructing the road, cleaning the reservoir, cleaning the drains, removing boulders and rocks from the access road, etc. The tenants are not expected to contribute monetarily to the Samiti and it is upto them if they want to contribute. A few tenants explained that even though they do not contribute money, they have invested their physical labour in community development activities.

In 2011, 120 families collectively applied for *miyadi patta* through the Samiti, which has proposed that each family would pay the government Rs.30,000-40,000 for a katha of land. This is contrary to the KMSS demand that the Assam government should give *miyadi patta* for Rs.10,000 per katha. If an owner decides to sell their plot of land, the Unnayan Samiti charges money from both the buyers and sellers in lieu of the road and other development and maintenance charges.

The Samiti has also organized a ‘dola’ or hand-held stretcher system to carry patients to and fro the hill.

The development of land and housing also includes investing in the development of rental housing, although, as mentioned earlier, the returns from tenancy take at least a few years to materialize. There has also been some absentee landlordism, and rental housing has played an important role in protecting the land from *dakhal* by others. For instance, one Bodo owner in Nizarapara had bought the land in 1959 but moved to his plot only in 1996. In the intermediate years, he had kept some students as tenants on his land. Topography and its impacts on infrastructure development also shapes the nature of rental housing markets in the hills, as elaborated in Box 4.

Photo 8 (left): Road constructed through Nizarapara by the Unnayan Samiti
Photo 9 (right): Bore-well and piped water distribution network in Nizarapara



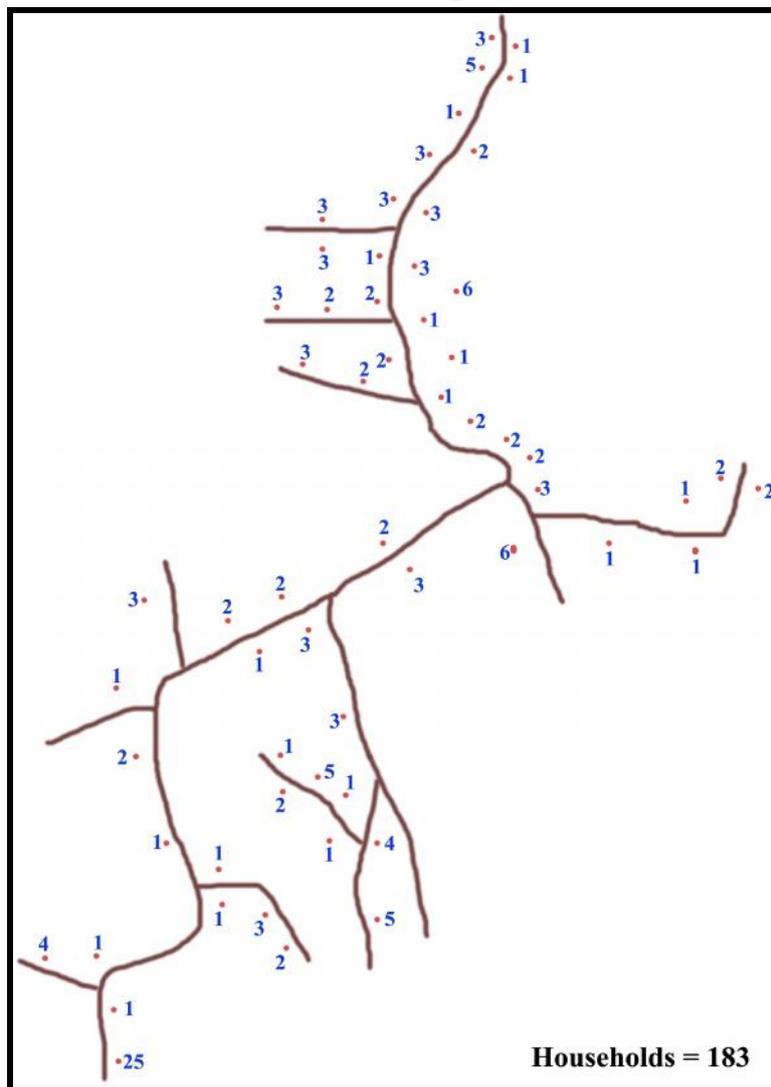
The hillside settlements supply substantial rental housing. 32 per cent of all hillside households are tenants, although some hills such as Sarania have a high proportion of tenants (50.9 per cent) and some such as Sunsali have a low proportion of tenants (11 per cent) (AC Nielson 2011). In Nizarapara, 64 per cent of households are tenants (see Map 6). A majority of owners (40 out of 65) have developed rental housing, although most owners have constructed only 1-3 rental rooms. Nizarapara has a wide range of rental housing in terms of rents even though the housing quality and level of infrastructure does not vary too widely. 16 per cent of rental rooms occupied by family households are in the rent range of Rs.250-500/month, 36 per cent are in the rent range of Rs.500-750/month, 32 per cent are in the rent range of Rs.750-1000/month and 16 per cent are in the rent range of Rs.1000-1500/month (Table 26). 76 per cent of rental rooms are made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing and 20 per cent are made from brick walls and tin-sheet roofing (Table 22). Only 3.8 per cent of tenants have individual toilets and none of the tenants have individual water connections (Table 24). Owners and tenants obtain water from a range of sources: bore-wells, open wells, and other sources including natural hillside streams.

Box 4: Topography, level of infrastructure development and implications for rental housing:

For a rental room of roughly the same quality, rents at the base of the Nizarapara hill are approximately Rs.1000/month, Rs.400-500/month in the middle of the hill and Rs.200/month at the top of the hill. Rents are low on the top because access to dwellings is difficult here. Even if roads have been built in some hillside settlements, these do not reach the upper parts of the hills. Similarly, water access is more difficult further up the hill. While there are many streams, people must fill and carry water manually from them. They do not have access to the piped water distribution systems that have been laid in the lower areas of some hillside settlements. Even where piped distribution systems are there, the water must be pumped up the hill, and load-shedding means that people do not always get water at regular times and in adequate quantity. This dissuades owners living further up the hill from developing rental

housing. One owner explained that she has contributed Rs.10,000-15,000 towards a shared bore-well from which a piped distribution network supplies water once a day for 10 minutes. She pays Rs.300/month towards electricity since the water has to be pumped up the hill from this bore-well. The water supply is, however, not adequate or regular, and this is one of the reasons that she has not developed rental housing on her land. Furthermore, more well-to-do tenants are unlikely to take rental housing where access to dwelling and water is difficult. Thus, even when rental housing is developed higher up the hill, this is usually for poorer tenants. Topography thus shapes the level of infrastructure, which in turn shapes the quality and rents of rental housing at different altitudes on the hill. Moreover, since rents are low at the top of the hill, it is difficult to recover the minimum investments that need to be made for rental housing construction. As a result, we even find lesser rental housing built at the top.

Map 6: Nizarapara, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot



The ethnic and religious backgrounds of those who live on State government lands in the hills varies. The majority are Assamese and indigenous tribal communities such as Bodos, Kacharis and Garos, many of whom moved to the hills after being displaced from various parts of the city as it grew and developed (Interview with Legal Advisor

to KMSS). On some of the hills one finds both Hindus and Muslims. On some it is predominantly Muslim. In Nizarapara, owners are mainly Assamese Hindus and Nepalis, with the former strongly objecting to the entry to Muslims in the neighbourhood. Tenants in Nizarapara are thus mainly Assamese Hindu. 25 per cent of owners and almost 20 per cent of tenants in Nizarapara are from Scheduled Tribes.

The economic background of the hillside residents varies. In a GMC-commissioned survey, across the 16 hills in the GMC area, 60 per cent reported an annual household income of less than Rs. 60,000, 28 per cent between Rs. 60,000-100,000, 10 per cent in the range of Rs. 100,000-150,000, and 4 per cent over Rs. 150,000. In terms of occupational profile, this survey found that 28.5 per cent of hillside residents are unskilled labour, 19 per cent are skilled labour, 18.7 per cent are in business, 13.8 per cent are salaried employees in government, 7.6 per cent are in petty trade, and 6.1 per cent are salaried employees in the private sector. The hills have also been informally occupied by influential persons with government connections although these are not labelled as encroachments (Interview with Kamal Medhi, KMSS spokesperson). In Nizarapara, owners come from a wide range of income groups. Although a substantial proportion of owners had household incomes between Rs.7,500-10,000/month, there were also owners with household incomes less than Rs.5,000/month and many with more than Rs.15,000/month. Owners' average household income was Rs.11,100/month (Table 8). In recent years, some have been selling their land/house and moving out. Almost all tenants had household incomes less than Rs.10,000/month – and the average household income amongst them was Rs.6846/month (Table 8).

5.1.1.4. Informal occupation of private lands marked for acquisition

The Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act (ULCRA) of 1974 was enacted to provide for the imposition of a ceiling on vacant land that could be held by a person in an urban area, for the acquisition of such land in excess of the ceiling limit, and to regulate the construction of buildings on such land, with a view to preventing the concentration of urban land in the hands of a few persons and speculation and profiteering from this. By making the acquired land available to low-income groups, the Act's goal was to bring about equitable distribution of land in urban areas.¹² Various private lands in Guwahati which were in excess of the ceiling limit were thus marked for acquisition. In such cases, landowners at times informally sold off the land to make some money, and these lands developed as informal settlements as a result.

In the case-study settlement of Bhaskarnagar, part of the settlement is located on land that was marked for acquisition under ULCRA. It is not clear whether the landowner informally sold off the land or whether middlemen did *dakhal* on this land and then sold it off. Some of the earliest residents from this part of the settlement purchased land 25-30 years ago, and paid varying amounts. One owner who purchased land 30 years ago, paid Rs.7,000 for a 1 katha 5 lessa plot (i.e., Rs.5600 for 1 katha) while

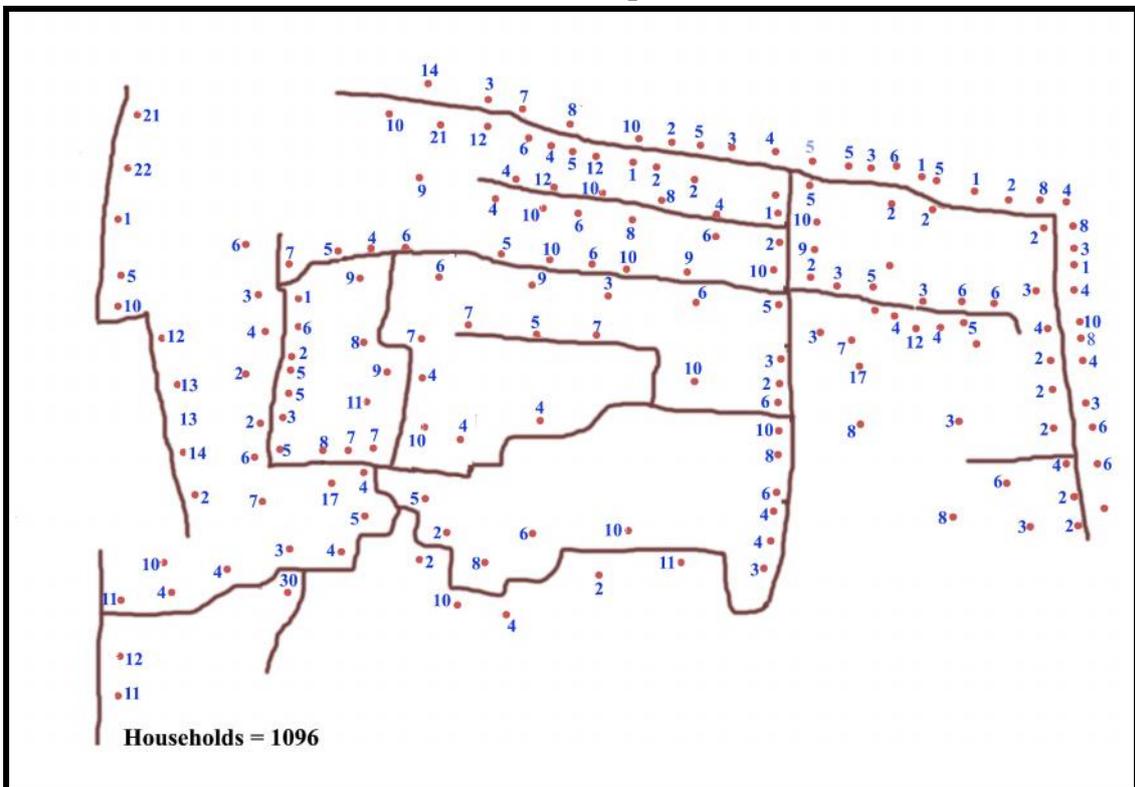
¹² Source: http://urbanindia.nic.in/legislations/sub_legis/ulcra_1976.pdf (accessed April 28, 2012)

another owner purchased 1 katha 17 lessa of land 27 years ago for Rs.11,000 (i.e., Rs.5946 for 1 katha). Some owners also have sale deeds on Rs.10 notary papers. One owner recalled harassment by the land mafia which tried to force them to give up their land. Alongwith others, she had chased young thugs with a sickle to protect her land.

Map 7: Bhaskarnagar, showing ground built-up of dwellings



Map 8: Bhaskarnagar, showing number of owner plots and number of dwellings within each plot



Bhaskarnagar was developed on swampy land, and owners have thus put in large investments over the years in land-filling (See Box 1). Many owners have paid GMC holding tax (*khazana*), but the GMC has stopped accepting this tax from them since 4-5 years. None of the owners surveyed have obtained *miyadi patta*, however, residents seem to have a high level of *de facto* tenure security which would explain their investments in land, housing and infrastructure development. Infrastructure has been developed gradually in the settlement by both residents as well as political leaders. Some owners have dug their own open wells or bore-wells. A couple of years ago, the MLA funds were used to build a road as well as a bore-well. A piped water distribution network was built from the bore-well, which now supplies water every alternate day to the owners. A 15-member committee of owners manages this bore-well supply and collects Rs.220/month from each owner for this. Most owners have built toilets with septic tanks.

In Bhaskarnagar, 84 per cent of households are tenants (see

Map 8). Most owners have developed rental housing, with the majority (80 per cent) having constructed less than 10 rental rooms each. Bhaskarnagar has a wide range of rental housing and a wide range of infrastructure provision to rental housing. Thus, 20.5 per cent of rental rooms occupied by family households are in the rent range of Rs.250-500/month, 25.3 per cent in the range of Rs.500-750/month, 30.1 per cent in the range of Rs.750-1000/month and 24.1 per cent in the range of Rs.1000-1500/month (Table 25). 63 per cent of rental rooms are made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing and 34 per cent are made from brick walls and tin-sheet roofing (Table 22). Only 9.4 per cent of tenants have individual water connections and 3.4 per cent have individual toilets, while a substantial proportion of owners have individual water connections (37.5 per cent) and individual toilets (51.7 per cent) (Table 24). Water sources vary. Owners and tenants obtain water from GMC supply, bore-wells, a combination of GMC supply and bore-wells, open wells, and other sources.

Photo 10 (left): Bhaskarnagar

Photo 11 (right): Bhaskarnagar



The ethnic and religious backgrounds of Bhaskarnagar's residents is diverse. Approximately 80 per cent of owners and tenants are Muslim (**Table 5**).

Approximately 90 per cent of owners and tenants are Assamese, with the remaining from Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and other states (Table 7). The economic background of the owners varies widely although it is notable that more than 75 per cent of owners have household incomes of less than Rs.10,000/month – their average household income is Rs.8,536/month (Table 8). This means that Bhaskarnagar has the highest proportion of poor owners when compared to the other case-study settlements which have relatively high *de facto* tenure security (i.e., Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki and Nizarapara). Most tenants (82 per cent) have household incomes of less than Rs.7,500/month, making it home to a very high proportion of poor tenants – here, tenants have an average household income of Rs.5966/month (Table 8).

5.1.1.5. Informal occupation of private lands and trust lands

No case-studies were done for this housing sub-market, however, GMC's slum identification exercise from 2009 (GMC 2009) and preliminary field visits revealed that there are private lands and trust lands that have been informally occupied in Guwahati. One preliminary field visit, for instance, took us to the Bihari Basti in the Noonmati area where an owner explained that the land had been part of a tea-estate and after the English owner left, the tea-estate's workers did *dakhal* and sold land parcels to others. She and her husband had bought their land from one such worker in 1989. In another preliminary field visit, we visited such informal occupations on land that was once part of a litchi orchard (the area is thus known as Lichubagaan). Trusts like the Kamakhya Temple Trust own large parcels of land. These have been informally occupied, often with priests acting as middlemen and selling off trust land to the urban poor, who have then developed the land, housing and infrastructure through their own incremental investments and efforts.

5.1.2. Housing through alienation of land

The alienation of land through commercial sale of land and housing shapes three housing sub-markets in which different actors play a role in the development of land, housing and infrastructure. The first comprises of informal subdivisions of agricultural lands by the landowner and their commercial sale. The other two housing sub-markets comprise of the commercial supply of land for self-built housing and the commercial supply of developer-built housing. Since rental housing for the urban poor has developed mainly in informal commercial subdivisions, this research examines a case-study from this sub-market.

5.1.2.1. Commercial subdivision in the informal sector

Many tracts of agricultural land on the city's periphery have been subdivided by landowners and commercially sold off for residential purposes. Since these lands are not converted to non-agricultural (NA) use, the housing that develops on these lands are in the informal sector. In the case-study settlement of Shahnagar in Hatigaon, land subdivisions were purchased by some of the earliest owners in the early 1980s. One owner had purchased 1 bigha of land for Rs.40,000 in 1983 (i.e., Rs.8000 for 1 katha) while another noted that land was sold cheaply for Rs.15,000 for a katha of land in the

early 1990s. Today, 1 katha costs at least Rs.25 lakh in Shahnagar, showing the steep increase in land prices in this informal housing sub-market (compare this to Rs.15,000 for 1 katha in Nizarapara, an informally occupied settlement on State government Revenue land in the hills).

Earlier, the area was low-lying and there was high water-logging. The buyers invested in land-filling over many years, similar to the informal occupiers of public and private lands. Many owners did not move to Shahnagar themselves until the area became more developed with better (though still *kutchā*) roads, and until they had been able to do substantial land-filling to decrease waterlogging on their own plots. During this time, many became absentee landlords as they developed rental housing on their plots. Today also Shahnagar is a patchwork of vacant plots (Photo 12), plots with an absentee landlord and one or more tenants usually living in low-quality rental housing (Photo 13), plots with the landlord's family living in a *pucca* house and tenants living adjacent to them in low-quality rental housing (Photo 14), and plots with the landlord's family as well as their tenants living in *pucca* housing (Photo 15). There are only a few owners who have not developed any rental housing.

Photo 12 (left): Vacant plots in Shahnagar

Photo 13 (right): Rental housing in a plot with an absentee landlord, Shahnagar



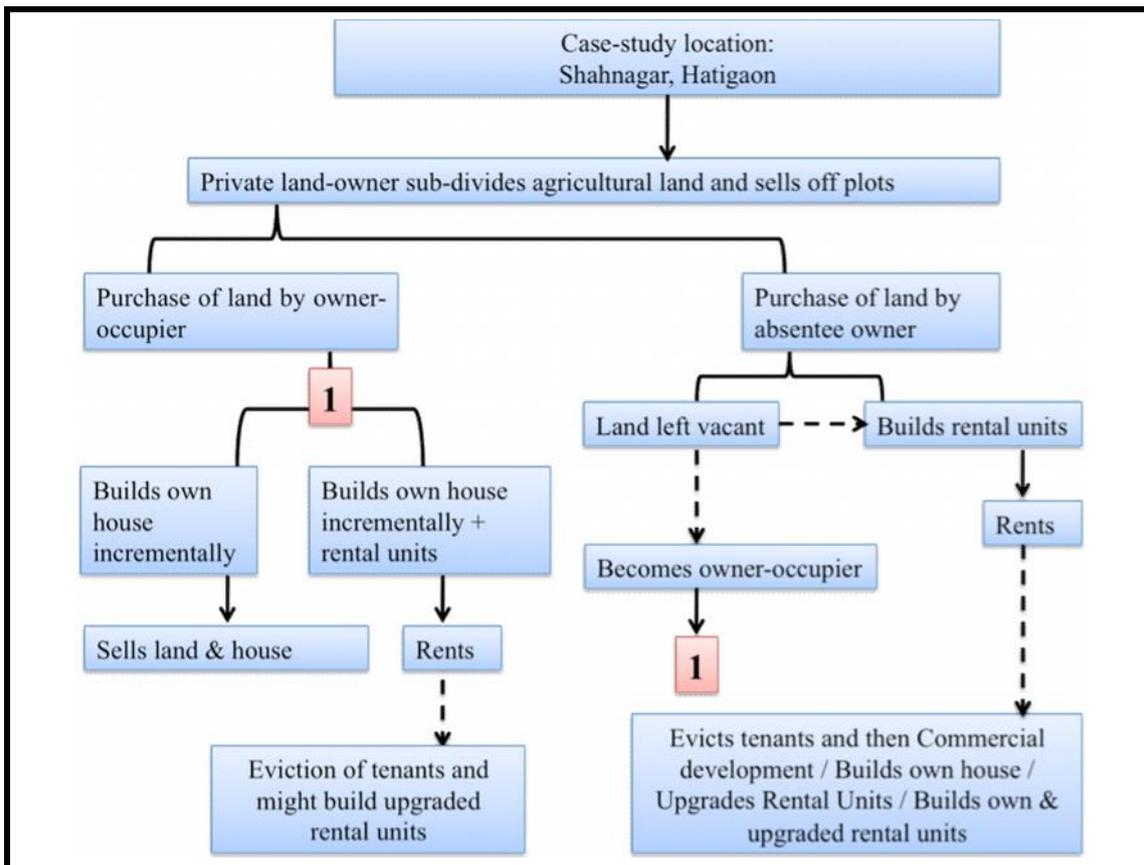
Photo 14 (left): Landlord's *pucca* house & bamboo-mat rental rooms, Shahnagar

Photo 15 (right): Landlord's family & their tenants living in *pucca* housing



In Shahnagar, 78 per cent of households are tenants (See Map 9). Shahnagar has a wide range of rental housing and a wide range of infrastructure provision to rental housing. Thus, 14.3 per cent of rental rooms occupied by family households are in the rent range of Rs.250-500/month, 16.1 per cent in the range of Rs.500-750/month, 37.5 per cent in the range of Rs.750-1000/month, 14.3 per cent in the range of Rs.1000-1500/month and 16.1 per cent are of a rent of more than Rs.1500/month (Table 25). 45.6 per cent of rental rooms are made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing and 49.1 per cent are made from brick walls and tin-sheet roofing (Table 22).

**Figure 4: Housing supply mechanism in Shahnagar, Hatigaon
(Commercial informal sub-division)**



Owners have developed their own individual infrastructures of water and sanitation through open wells or bore-wells and septic tanks. 22 per cent of tenants have individual toilets and 18.6 per cent of tenants have individual water connections (Table 24). Water is mostly obtained by owners and tenants from bore-wells or open wells. Often, while owners and tenants obtain water from the same wells, where owners are more well-to-do, they have constructed piped water for their own houses, while tenants fill water manually through a handpump or through a shared tap connected to the overhead tank (Photo 16). Thus the mode of water supply differs amongst tenants with access to bore-wells as well.

Photo 16: Water supply arrangement in Shahnagar



Owner-constructed open well and overhead water tank which provides piped water to his own house (on the right) as well as through a shared tap to his tenants (who live in the bamboo-mat houses on the left)

Map 9: Shahnagar, showing ground built-up of dwellings



Almost all of Shahnagar's surveyed residents reported that they were Assamese, with 60 per cent of surveyed owners and 70 per cent of surveyed tenants reporting that they are Muslim (Table 5). Since the majority of residents in Shahnagar and the larger area

5.1.3. Public sector housing

Various public-sector agencies and institutions have developed housing on lands owned by them, vested in them, or acquired by them through land acquisition in Guwahati. As in most cities in India and elsewhere in the developing world, the share of public sector housing as a proportion of the total housing stock in the city is very low. Various actors have been involved in the land, housing and infrastructure development process, and two housing sub-markets are in evidence here.

5.1.3.1. Employer-provided housing – encroached and unencroached

In Guwahati, employer-provided housing comprises of rental housing built by public-sector agencies and institutions such as the Indian Railways, Guwahati University, Guwahati Medical College, IIT Guwahati, GMC, etc, for their employees. The staff colonies built by the Indian Railways are scattered at different locations in Guwahati. Educational institutions provide faculty and staff quarters on their campuses. GMC's staff colonies are at a number of locations such as Fatasil, Solapara, Morasali and Uzanbazaar. While the GMC has built rental housing only for its sanitation workers, all of the other agencies and institutions have built rental housing for their different classes of employees. For example, Guwahati University has at least nine types of rental housing, ranging from 1600 sq.ft. units to 700-900 sq.ft. units, for its different classes of employees. The Indian Railways has built five types of rental housing, ranging from 2500 sq.ft. to 400 sq.ft.

The GMC Colony at Fatasil was studied as a case-study of Employer-provided housing. The colony was constructed more than 30 years ago, and comprises of three sections: Andhra Colony, Punjabi Colony and Bihari Colony. The colony comprises of four 3-storey RCC buildings, numerous Assam-type (AT) units which are built out of brick walls and sloping tin-sheet roofs, and numerous informal rooms in the vacant spaces of the colony. The housing and infrastructure conditions in the colony are extremely poor. The RCC buildings have damaged or broken balcony slabs and parapets. Basic services such as water, toilet provision, drainage and solid waste management is extremely inadequate (Photo 18 & Photo 19). Water taps and toilets are shared amongst large groups of tenants and often residents have to go outside the settlement to get water. In the part of the settlement known as Andhra Colony, 6 latrines are shared between approximately 95 families. Some tenants in the AT units have space to extend their houses, and have used this to build an individual toilet and bath or because their families have expanded and more space is required.

Informal rooms built out of brick or bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing have been constructed at the GMC Fatasil colony (Photo 17). While many residents of this informal housing are self-employed or work as daily-wage labourers, many also work in the GMC. This is true of the informal housing in the Railway colonies as well, with some residents being Railway employees. This housing has therefore partly emerged because of the inadequate amount of rental housing built by these agencies for their employees. The residents of the informal housing are, in some cases, tenants of the residents of the formal employer-provided housing and, in other cases, they are

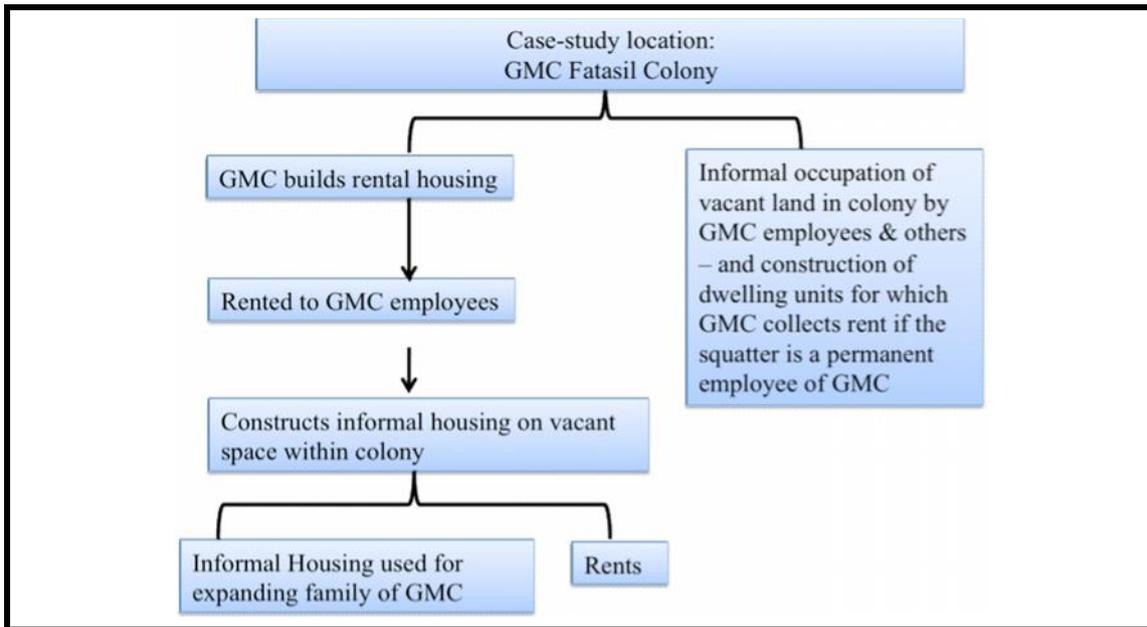
tenants of these agencies. For instance, in the staff colonies of the Indian Railways, the formal residents of the colonies have built informal housing in their compounds (as in the case of Central Gutannagar's Railway colony in Ward 9, where each formal resident's house is set in its individual compound) or in the inbetween vacant spaces of the colony (as in the case of the Bamunimaidan Railway Colony in Ward 41, where the colony comprises of three-storey buildings interspersed with small vacant spaces). They have rented these out for Rs.500-1000/month. In Central Gutannagar, where we carried out only preliminary research, the formal resident's extended family resided in this informal housing and insisted that they did not pay rent to anyone. It is possible that tenants related to their landlords might have different rental arrangements with them. In GMC's Fatasil Colony, the residents of the informal housing are mainly tenants of the GMC. They have built these units themselves and they pay rent to the GMC if they are permanent GMC workers.

For all of GMC's permanent workers living in GMC colonies, rent is collected by GMC through deductions from worker salaries. Different tenants pay different rents, the reasons for which are not clear. Some residents attributed it to how long they have lived there, others to the level of their salaries. Many did not know how much rent was deducted from their salaries while the GMC was not able to give us a record of the rents it collects. Moreover, whereas in the Railway colonies, an employee's family is not allowed to stay on after the employee's retirement, families of retired GMC employees have not been asked to vacate their house and nor is rent collected from them any longer. The tenure status of such families is unclear – they are neither tenants anymore but nor are they owners. The GMC has, however, stated that it will resettle all residents of its colonies when these are redeveloped under BSUP / RAY, thus giving tenure security to all residents of their colonies. There is no such tenure security for the residents of the informal housing in the Railway colonies. The Indian Railways has, in fact, instituted a new rule whereby the out-going employee has to clear all the unauthorized housing from his compound before he gets clearance from the Railway authorities.

Photo 17: Informal houses built in GMC Fatasil colony



**Figure 5: Housing supply mechanism in GMC Fatasil Colony
(Employer-provided housing - encroached)**



**Map 11: GMC Fatasil Colony, showing ground built-up of dwellings and
number of dwellings**

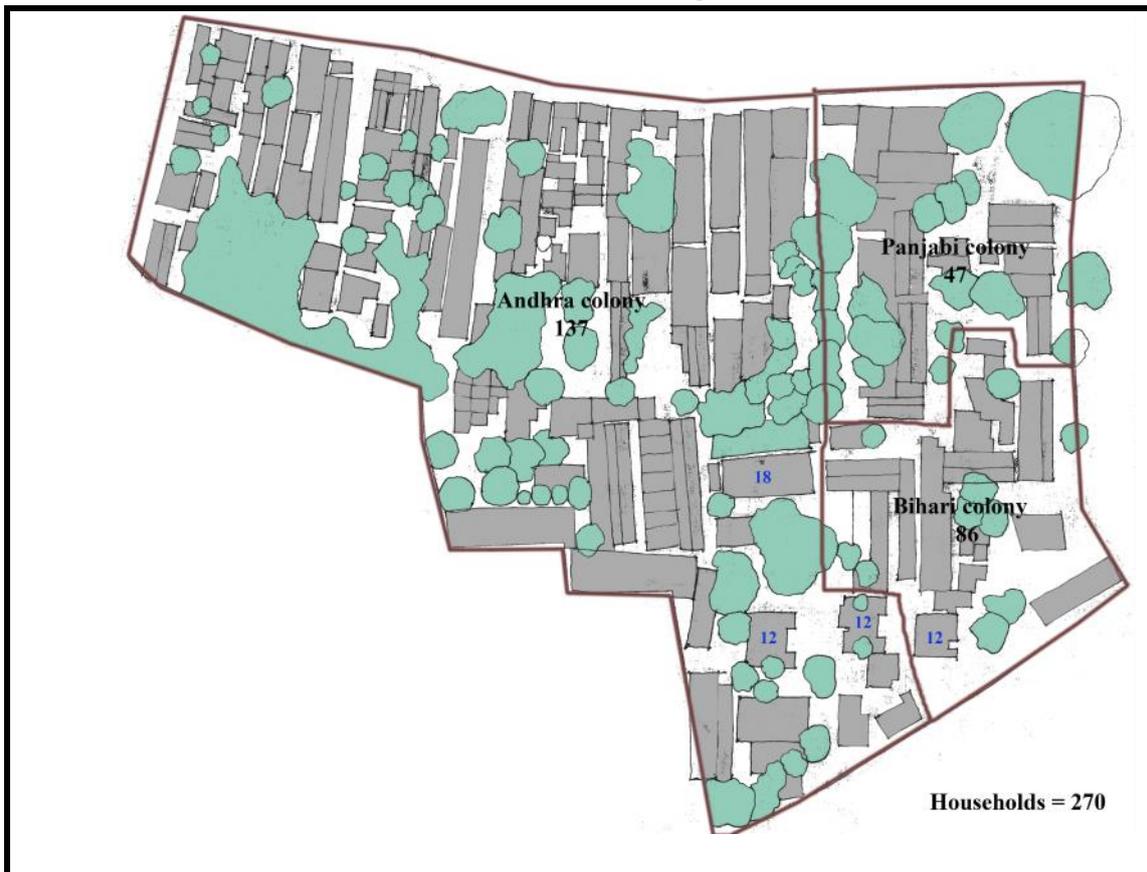


Photo 18 (left): Water and sanitation inadequacy at GMC Fatasil Colony
Photo 19 (right): Toilet block and unsanitary conditions at GMC Fatasil Colony



All the residents of the GMC Colony are Hindus and the majority are from Scheduled Castes. Ethnicity plays an important role in the GMC colonies and the Fatasil colony comprises of three sections based on the ethnicity of its tenants: Punjabi Colony comprises mainly of Punjabis, Andhra Colony of people originally from Andhra Pradesh, and Bihari Colony of Biharis. Many of these families have been living in Guwahati for two generations or more.

5.1.3.2. Public housing

The Assam State government enacted the Assam State Housing Board Act in 1972,¹³ and ASHB was established in 1974. ASHB constructs public housing in Assam through a number of schemes. ASHB is required to pay for the land on which it would construct a housing scheme, however the State government assists it in buying land at cheaper rates. ASHB has its own fund consisting of grants, subventions, donations and gifts received from the Central or State Government or a local authority or any individual or body. However, it is required to submit its internally sanctioned budget to the State government for approval. In Guwahati, most of the public housing constructed by ASHB is through its rental housing schemes for Grade III and Grade IV government employees (including for those retired from such employment). So far, ASHB has built housing at several locations for a total of 1824 households on a rental basis. This includes flats for EWS, LIG and MIG households as well as Assam-Type (AT) units (See Table 20 & Table 21).

Many of ASHB's housing sites are on Guwahati's hills, and since ASHB does not provide any other facilities at the sites, residents incur costs on transportation to access everything – education, medical care, work, ration, cultural facilities. Since there is no public transportation on the hills, residents have to use rickshaws and thus transportation costs are very high. The secretary of the Kharguli Hills Housing Building Tenant Association emphasized that although the residents paid very low

¹³ Assam State Housing Board Act, 1972, Available online at: http://www.neportal.org/northeastfiles/Assam/ActsOrdinances/Assam_State_Housing_Board_Act_1972.asp (accessed on April 29, 2012).

rents for the houses (Rs.268/month for a EWS unit and Rs.544/month for a LIG unit), they actually incurred many indirect costs because of the hilltop location of the housing.

Table 20: Details of ASHB Rental Housing Projects in Guwahati as of 2006-07

Location	Type	Area (sq.ft.)	No. of Buildings	No. of Dwelling units	Monthly Rent (Rs.)
Hengrabari	MIG (big)	1100	2	12	900
	MIG (small)	900	4	24	700
	LIG	750	10	60	450
	EWS	600	10	120	250
Krishnanagar	MIG (small)	-	4	16	1061
	LIG	-	3	18	830
Chandmari Colony	MIG (big)	-	2	8	1529
	LIG	-	3	36	815
Kharguli Hills	LIG	-	1	6	544
	EWS	-	8	96	268
Total			47	396	

(Source: ASHB, Annexure III, 2006-07)

Table 21: ASHB Rental Housing Stock in Guwahati as of January 2012

Type	No. of Buildings	No. of Dwelling Units
Assam Type (AT)		
AT	107	504
RCC Type		
MIG (big)	4	24
MIG (small)	9	42
LIG	58	858
EWS	28	396
Total	206	1824

(Source: Compiled from official records at the Assam State Housing Board office)

Map 12: Assam State Housing Board EWS and LIG housing in Kharguli Hills, showing ground built-up of dwellings and number of dwellings

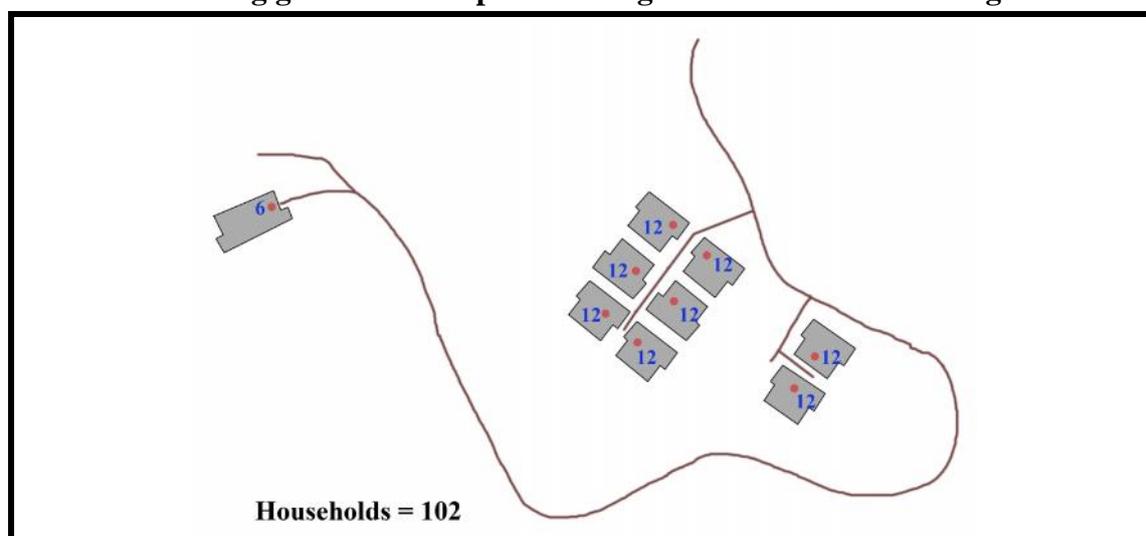


Photo 20: EWS housing by Assam State Housing Board at Kharguli Hills



ASHB has also not provided adequate infrastructure to the rental housing that it has constructed. For instance, at the EWS and LIG housing at Kharguli Hills which was built in 1990, ASHB did not provide water or electricity for a number of years. Tenants had to obtain water from springs and ponds in the hills. ASHB arranged for water supply only in 1996-97, by purchasing water from the GMC. Tenants in the EWS housing now pay Rs.70/month for water, while tenants in the LIG housing pay Rs.100/month. Water is still inadequate and is supplied on alternate days. ASHB began to provide electricity in 1994 by purchasing electricity from the Assam State Electricity Board (ASEB). Today, ASHB is not involved in electricity provision, and ASEB provides electricity directly to the residents. Maintenance is an issue at the EWS and LIG housing. ASHB seems to lack the funds to carry out maintenance and the rents are not adequate to meet maintenance costs.

The majority of ASHB tenants at Kharguli are Assamese Hindus. Half the surveyed tenants had household incomes in the range of Rs.10,000-20,000/month. This reflects the fact that one of the problems facing ASHB's rental housing is that it does not succeed in targeting EWS and LIG families.

6. Supply and Demand of Rental Housing

Rental housing is produced in almost all the housing sub-markets in Guwahati. Two main types of suppliers were found to be producing rental housing for the urban poor: public-sector agencies such as the Assam State Housing Board and the Guwahati Municipal Corporation, and private owners in different kinds of informal settlements. The types of rental housing, the types of suppliers, and the types of tenants are varied within and across the housing sub-markets / case-study settlements.

6.1. Types of rental housing

Rental housing for the urban poor and low-income groups in Guwahati can be categorized in a number of different ways. Broadly speaking, we categorize it into formal and informal rental housing. But within an informal settlement, different types of informal rental housing are found. Rental housing can thus also be categorized by the type of tenants inhabiting it (for instance, family households versus sharers), housing quality of rental units, size of rental units, level of basic services, level of rents, and so forth. Here, we discuss some of the different types of rental units and examine the extent to which these different types are found in each of our case-study settlements. We also briefly compare the characteristics of rental dwellings to those of owner dwellings.

In terms of construction materials and housing quality, rental housing in Guwahati is of four types. The first is very poor quality temporary rental housing comprising of walls and roofs made from plastic sheets / bamboo-mats. We also find semi-permanent rental housing which are of two types: that which is made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofs and that which is more *pucca* as it is made from brick/stone walls and tin-sheet roofs. Finally, we find permanent rental housing made from brick walls and RCC roofs.

In our sample of informal housing, maximum rental rooms are made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing (67.2 per cent) while most of the remaining are built from brick/stone walls and tin-sheet roofing (28.1 per cent). Very few tenants live in either very poor quality housing (2.4 per cent live in houses made from plastic sheets and/or bamboo mats, a sign of very low tenure security) or good quality / *pucca* housing (2.4 per cent live in houses made from brick walls and RCC roof). If we look at each informal housing sub-market case-study separately, then this reveals that in the commercial informal sub-divisions there is an almost equal proportion of rental rooms out of bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing (45.6 per cent) and brick/stone walls and tin-sheet roofing (49.1 per cent). Also, it is in the commercial informal subdivisions that one finds the highest proportion of houses made from brick walls and RCC roofs (5.3 per cent). This is because of the relatively higher proportion of better-off tenants in the subdivisions. As expected, in most of the informal settlements, the majority of owners have better quality housing compared to the tenants. However, it is noteworthy that in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, the case-study

for informal occupation on State government land in the plans, almost an equal proportion of owners and tenants live in housing made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofs (Table 22). Since the owners here are not as poor as the tenants (Table 8), this is likely to be because the settlement is built on a waterbody and owners would have to incur much higher expenditures in building better quality houses on such swampy land. Therefore, they make do with relatively poor quality houses as compared to owners in other informal settlements.

There are different kinds of rental units in terms of construction materials and housing quality in the formal-sector housing sample as well – from houses made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing (20.5 per cent) (because of poor quality encroachments made in Employer-provided housing) to houses built from brick/stone walls and tin-sheet roofing (22.7 per cent) to houses made from brick walls and RCC roofs (56.8 per cent) (Table 22).

Table 22: Percentage Distribution of Owners and Tenants by Housing Quality

Housing sub-market	Tenure status	Housing Quality			
		PP/PBA	BAT	BRST	BRCC
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	Owner	100.0	0	0	0
	Tenant	100.0	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	Owner	0	86.7	6.7	6.7
	Tenant	0	90.7	9.3	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	Owner	0	20.0	80.0	0
	Tenant	0	76.0	20.0	4.0
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	Owner	0	28.6	67.9	3.6
	Tenant	0	63.3	34.4	2.2
Commercial Informal Sub-division	Owner	0	13.3	40.0	46.7
	Tenant	0	45.6	49.1	5.3
Informal housing	Owner	16.1**	29.0	45.2	9.7
	Tenant	2.4	67.2	28.1	2.4
Employer-Provided Housing	Owner	0	75.0	25.0	0
	Tenant	0	37.5	41.7	20.8
	Other*	0	22.2	77.8	0.0
Public Housing	Tenant	0	0	0	100.0
Formal housing	Owner	0	75.0	25.0	0
	Tenant	0	20.5	22.7	56.8

* The owner/tenant status of one-fourth of the sample households in Employer-Provided Housing (GMC Colony at Fatasil) is unclear for reasons explained earlier in the research methodology.

** It seems odd that a higher proportion of owners than tenants in informal housing live in houses made from plastic sheets and bamboo-mats. This is only because of the houses built by owners on Railway land, where threat of eviction is very high.

PP = Walls: Plastic, Roof: Plastic

PBA = Walls: Plastic / Bamboo, Roof: Plastic / Bamboo

BAT = Walls: Bamboo, Roof: Tin/ asbestos sheets

BRST = Walls: Brick / Stone, Roof: Tin/ asbestos sheets

BRCC = Walls: Brick, Roof: RCC

Our sample reveals different types of rental units in terms of size. 70 per cent of rental units in the informal housing are very small units with a built-up area of less than 15

sq.m. There is a significant percentage (22 per cent) of rental units in the range of 16-30 sq.m, and most of these are found in the commercial informal sub-divisions and informal settlements on State government land in the hills (Table 23). If we look at each informal housing sub-market case-study separately, then this reveals that in the commercial informal subdivisions, a substantial proportion of tenants (24.6 per cent) live in even larger rental units with a built-up area of more than 30 sq.m. This is a reflection of the fact that many tenants in the subdivision case-study of Shahnagar are better-off than tenants in other informal settlements. The average built-up area of rental units in informal housing is 18.5 sq.m. As expected, in most of the informal settlements, the majority of owners live in larger houses as compared to the tenants. The average built-up area of owners' houses in informal settlements is 58.6 sq.m. The rental units in the formal housing, that is, public-sector housing, are larger in size, with 53.2 per cent of these units having a built-up area of 16-30 sq.m. The average built-up area of rental units in formal housing is 19 sq.m. Across formal and informal housing, the average built-up area of rental units was found to be 18.6 sq.m. (Table 23).

Table 23: Percentage Distribution of Owners and Tenants by Total Built-up Area

Housing sub-market	Tenure status	Total Built-up area (sq.m.)				Average (sq.m.)
		<= 15	16 - 30	31 - 60	61+	
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	Owner	78.5	21.4	0	0	11.7
	Tenant	83.3	16.7	0	0	12.3
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	Owner	0	33.3	53.3	13.4	45.0
	Tenant	81.3	18.7	0.0	0	11.9
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	Owner	0	10.5	52.6	36.9	60.1
	Tenant	69.2	26.9	3.8	0	18.4
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	Owner	20.0	5.0	50.0	25.0	52.5
	Tenant	79.3	15.6	3.9	1.3	14.5
Commercial Informal Sub-division	Owner	0	7.7	0	92.3	131.9
	Tenant	42.1	33.3	12.3	12.3	33.3
Informal housing	Owner	18.5	14.8	34.6	32.1	58.6
	Tenant	70.1	22.0	4.6	3.3	18.5
Employer-Provided Housing	Owner	0	50.0	0	0	19.8
	Tenant	55.5	40.7	3.7	0	17
Public Housing	Tenant	0	70.0	30.0	0	21.6
Formal housing	Owner	50	50	0	0	19.8
	Tenant	31.9	53.2	14.9	0	19.0
Total (Informal and Formal housing)	Owner					56.7
	Tenant					18.6

In terms of level of basic services, in our sample of informal housing, we find that a high proportion of rental units have electricity connections (76.2 per cent), but very low proportion have individual water connections (only 7.6 per cent) or individual toilets (6.9 per cent) (Table 24). Tenants in commercial informal sub-divisions have a higher proportion of individual water connections (18.6 per cent) and individual toilets (22 per cent) than in other informal settlements. For instance, in the informal

settlement on State government land in the hills, none of the tenants have individual water connections and only 3.8 per cent have individual toilets. As expected, the level of basic services is better for the owners than the tenants. However, it is noteworthy that only 28.7 per cent of owners in informal housing have individual water connections. In formal housing, that is, public-sector housing, the proportion of tenants with electricity connections and individual water connections was high. However, the proportion of tenants with individual toilets was lower (59.6 per cent) than expected because of the inadequacy of toilets in employer-provided housing in GMC Colony at Fatasil.

Table 24: Percentage Distribution of Owners and Tenants by Level of Basic Services

Housing sub-market	Tenure status	Level of Basic Services		
		Electricity Connection	Individual Water Connection	Individual Toilet
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	Owner	0	0	0
	Tenant	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	Owner	93.3	6.7	86.7
	Tenant	78.7	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	Owner	95.0	22.2	80.0
	Tenant	96.2	0	3.8
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	Owner	80.0	37.5	51.7
	Tenant	70.0	9.1	3.4
Commercial Informal Sub-division	Owner	93.3	73.3	78.6
	Tenant	81.4	18.6	22.0
Informal housing	Owner	74.7	28.7	68.8
	Tenant	76.2	7.6	6.9
Employer-Provided Housing	Owner	0	0	0
	Tenant	96.2	85.2	29.6
	Other*	40.0	20.0	20.0
Public Housing	Tenant	100.0	100.0	100.0
Formal housing	Owner	0	0	0
	Tenant	97.8	91.5	59.6

* The owner/tenant status of one-fourth of the sample households in Employer-Provided Housing (GMC Colony at Fatasil) is unclear for reasons explained earlier under research methodology.

To understand the types of rental units available in terms of monthly rents, we look at the monthly rents paid by family households only (the monthly rent paid by a sharer does not correspond to the monthly rent of the rental unit they occupy since they split the rent with other single migrants). In informal housing, the largest share of rental units are in the monthly rent range of Rs.751-1000 (29.7 per cent), followed by rental units in the range of Rs. 501-750 (27.9 per cent), followed by rental units in the range of Rs. 251-500 (19.8 per cent), followed by rental units in the range of Rs.1000-1500 (16.2 per cent) (Table 25). The predominant type of rental units varies in different informal housing sub-markets. For instance, in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki (an informal settlement on State government land in the plains) almost 70 per cent of rooms are in the monthly rent range of Rs. 251-750, whereas in Shahnagar (an informal subdivision) almost 70 per cent of rooms are in the monthly rent range of

Rs.751 and above. In Bhaskarnagar, we find that the settlement has a relatively even distribution of different kinds of rental rooms: 20.5 per cent in the Rs.251-500 range, 25.3 per cent in the Rs.501-750 range, 30.1 per cent in the Rs.751-1000 range and 24.1 per cent in the Rs.1001-1500 range. The distribution of these different types of rental units across different settlements depends on a number of factors such as the settlement's location in the city; types of employment opportunities in the surrounding area (and thus, the kind of tenants looking for rental housing in the area); level of tenure security; level of physical access to the settlement, housing quality and level of basic services; etc.

Table 25: Percentage Distribution of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by Monthly Rent

Housing sub-market	Type of Tenant	Monthly Rent (Rupees)						Average monthly rent (Rupees)
		<= 250	251 - 500	501 - 750	751 - 1000	1001 - 1500	1501+	
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	Family HH	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	180.00
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	Family HH	0.0	26.4	43.4	22.6	7.5	0.0	699.10
	Sharer	72.7	22.7	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	251.80
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the hills	Family HH	0.0	16.0	36.0	32.0	16.0	0.0	758.00
	Sharer	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	500.00
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	Family HH	0.0	20.5	25.3	30.1	24.1	0.0	840.40
	Sharer	71.4	28.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	242.60
Commercial	Family HH	1.8	14.3	16.1	37.5	14.3	16.1	1133.00
Informal Sub-division	Sharer	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	316.50
Informal housing	Family HH	2.3	19.8	27.9	29.7	16.2	4.1	856.30
	Sharer	68.8	28.1	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	261.60
Employer-Provided Housing	Family HH	0.0	37.5	31.3	12.5	12.5	6.3	640.60
Public Housing	Family HH	0.0	70.0	25.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	3.30
Formal housing	Family HH	0.0	55.6	27.8	5.6	8.3	2.8	514.90
Total (Informal and Formal housing)	Family HH							808.70
	Sharer							261.60

It is also useful therefore to cross-tabulate monthly rent in informal housing with level of basic services and housing quality to understand whether and how rent increases as housing quality and level of basic services provision improves. This cross-tabulation in Table 26 shows that there is a clear correlation between level of rent and provision of electricity as well as better housing quality (that is, rental units made from brick walls and tin-sheet roofing fetch a higher rent than rental units made from bamboo walls and tin-sheet roofing). However, the effect of individual water connections and individual toilets on level of rent is not clear. Table 26 does show that the proportion of individual water connections and individual toilets is quite high (55.6 per cent and

66.7 per cent, respectively) in rental units which fetch a rent of more than Rs.1500. However, Table 26 also shows that rental units in the Rs.751-1000 range have greater proportion of individual water connections and individual toilets than those in the Rs.1001-1500 range. In fact, the total proportion of rental units with individual water connections and individual toilets is so low (8.8 per cent and 7.9 per cent) that it makes little sense to try and correlate rent levels with individually provided basic services. One might conclude that there are other factors that influence the level of rent much more than the provision of individual water and individual toilets. It might also be more useful, for example, to see if there is a correlation between rent levels to the number of families that a rental unit has to share these basic services with.

Table 26: Level of Basic Services and Housing Quality in Informal Housing by Monthly Rent paid by Tenant Family Households

Monthly rent paid	% Individual Water Connection	% Individual Toilet	% Electricity Connection	% BAT	% BRST
<= 250	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
251 - 500	6.8	4.8	52.3	95.5	2.3
501 - 750	1.6	0.0	75.8	85.0	13.3
751 - 1000	10.9	10.6	87.9	63.6	34.8
1001 - 1500	5.7	5.7	100.0	30.6	61.1
1501+	55.6	66.7	100.0	0.0	88.9
Total	8.8	7.9	77.9	66.7	28.3

Table 27: Percentage Distribution of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by Monthly Rent per square metre

Housing sub-market	Type of Tenant	Monthly Rent per square metre (Rs/sq.m.)					Average Rs/sq.m
		<= 22	22 - 38	38 - 56	56 - 75	75+	
Informal Occupation of Railway Land	Family HHs	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.9
	Sharers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Informal Occupation of State Govt. Land in the plains	Family HHs	0.0	1.9	34.0	22.6	41.5	67.9
	Sharers	0	9.1	27.3	9.1	54.5	19.5
Informal Occupation State Govt. Land in the hills	Family HHs	8.0	32.0	32.0	16.0	12.0	47.5
	Sharers	0	0	0	0	100	41.7
Informal Occupation of Private Lands Earmarked for Acquisition	Family HHs	2.9	15.7	18.6	28.6	34.3	67.6
	Sharers	0	0	57.1	14.3	28.6	25.4
Commercial Informal Sub-division	Family HHs	13.2	28.3	18.9	30.2	9.4	45.6
	Sharers	0	50	50	0	0	13.9
Informal housing	Family HHs	7.3	17.5	23.8	25.2	26.2	58.3
	Sharers	0	9.4	34.4	9.4	46.9	21.1
Employer-Provided Housing	Family HHs	12.5	43.8	18.8	18.8	6.3	42.3
Public Housing	Family HHs	95.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.0
Formal housing	Family HHs	58.3	22.2	8.3	8.3	2.8	29.4
Total (Informal and Formal Housing)	Family HHs						54.0
	Sharers						21.1

A comparison of the monthly rent paid by family households in informal housing and formal housing shows that while in the former, the average monthly rent is Rs.856, in the latter it is Rs.514 (average monthly rent in informal housing is thus higher). Across formal and informal housing, the average monthly rent paid by family households is Rs.808.7. In contrast, sharers (who are found only in informal housing) pay an average rent of Rs.261 (Table 25). A comparison of the rent per square metre for family households in informal housing and formal housing shows that while in the former, 7.3 per cent of households pay less than Rs.22/sq.m., in the latter 58.3 per cent of households pay less than Rs.22/sq.m (Table 27). Thus, rent per square metre in informal housing is substantially higher than in formal housing. The average rent per square metre for family households in informal housing is Rs.58/sq.m and for sharers it is Rs.21/sq.m. The average rent per square metre for family households in formal housing is Rs.29/sq.m. Across formal and informal housing, the average rent per square metre for family households is Rs.54/sq.m and for sharers it is Rs.21/sq.m (Table 27).

While the types of rental units available for the urban poor and low-income groups in Guwahati's informal settlements are thus somewhat diverse in terms of housing quality, total built-up area, level of basic services and rent, we can identify two main types based on the type of tenants they cater to:

(i) Single rooms for family households and small groups of sharers (single male migrants):

This type of rental housing is the most common across all the informal settlements. Such rooms are given out on rent to families or single male migrants who might prefer to live on their own or share with 1-3 other single-male migrants. Many of these rooms are built out of bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofs, although they are also found to be built out of brick walls or half-brick and half-bamboo-mat walls. Floors may or may not have a plinth, and may be *katcha* or *pucca*. The size of such rooms is generally small, usually less than 15 sq.m. They lack any kind of ventilation. Often, they are built as part of an owner's incremental development of brick and RCC buildings – thus, the owner is able to incrementally develop a building as well as obtain some rental income

from it during this long-drawn out process. Once the building is fully constructed, these cheaper single rooms are removed (

Photo 23). Some have a small semi-partitioned space in the rear that serves as a kitchen, although the majority of such rooms do not have thus separate kitchen space. The landlords usually provide shared baths, toilets and water sources (open well, bore well with handpump, bore well with a tap or tap connected to GMC supply) for their tenants, although the adequacy and quality of such infrastructure varies widely. In the case of poorer landlords, these are shared by the landlord's family as well. The monthly rents for such rooms vary widely between Rs.200-1000, depending on the location of the settlement, size, construction material, level of basic services, whether the room has a plinth (and thus whether or not it gets flooded when it rains), etc. The rent levels also depend on the demand and supply of such rental rooms in the area.

(ii) Single rooms for large groups of sharers (single male migrants):

Single rooms for groups of 8-25 single male migrants are found in certain areas of Guwahati such as the Bhootnath area. These migrants live in such shared arrangements because they are migrant labourers from Bihar who work under a single *sardar* in the loading/unloading of goods in the nearby wholesale market. The *sardar* and *mohri* (a kind of accountant who is attached with the group) obtains work for them, pays them their wages, collects rent from them, employs a cook to make their meals, and so forth. These rooms are sometimes provided with their own bath, toilet and water source and sometimes the men have to share these with the landlord's other tenants (who could be families). The size of such rooms ranges between 21-30 sq.m. Their monthly rent ranges between Rs.3,000-4,500 with the rent for each migrant ranging between Rs.150-500/month. The landlord's verbal rental agreement is with the *sardar* and the *mohri*. Thus, if a couple of labourers leave the group and return to their villages, the monthly rent to be paid for the room remains the same, and thus each migrant has to then pay a higher rent.

We also find rental units in which part of the house is given on rent to family households. This was found in the commercial informal subdivision of Shahnagar, and the monthly rents for such units were usually more than Rs.1500. In some rare cases (also only in Shahnagar), we also found a full house given on rent to a family household. For example, in one case, a family had rented a full house comprising of two rooms, a kitchen, a bath and toilet, for Rs.2000/month. It is likely that for the family also served as a caretaker of the landlord's plot, protecting it from *dakhal*.

Formal rental housing for the urban poor comprises of public-sector housing. There were two types found in our case-studies, which are best categorized by the type of supplier:

(i) EWS and LIG units by the Assam State Housing Board:

This type of formal-sector rental housing is highly subsidized. Rents for ASHB's EWS units vary between Rs.250-268/month for a 600 sq.ft. (55 sq.m) dwelling unit comprising of one room, kitchen, toilet and bath. Rents for ASHB's LIG units vary between Rs.450-830/month for a 750 sq.ft dwelling unit comprising of two rooms, kitchen, toilet and bath. Water charges are additional and electricity charges are directly payable to the Assam State Electricity Board.

(ii) Employer-provided rental housing by Guwahati Municipal Corporation:

Employer-provided rental housing for GMC's lower-level staff comprises of dwelling units of built-up area of less than 30 sq.m. These may be one-room flats with individual toilet and bath in 3-storey RCC buildings or one-room Assam-Type (AT) units usually without an individual toilet and bath. Some tenants have extended their AT units to build an extra room or an individual toilet and bath. Despite rents of

Rs.600-1,200/month, the level of services is highly inadequate and often of an even poorer quality than for informal rental housing of the same rent.

6.2. Types of suppliers and rental housing development process in the informal sector

Informal owners who have turned to landlordism in Guwahati's informal sector are of different types and belong to a range of economic backgrounds. In the case-study informal settlements, some owners are poor and others more well-to-do, and many have developed rental housing. Across the case-studies, we find that maximum owners (45.2 per cent) live in houses made from brick/stone walls and tin-sheet roofing. A substantial proportion (29 per cent) are also found to be living in houses made from bamboo walls and tin-sheet roofing. This is owing to the fact that 86.7 per cent of owners in the undeveloped settlement of Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki live in such houses. Only 9.7 per cent of owners live in pucca houses made from brick walls and RCC roofs. Maximum owners living in pucca houses are in the commercial sub-division of Shahnagar (46.7 per cent) while in the remaining settlements, few owners live in such pucca houses (Table 22). This is one indicator that owners in the commercial informal sub-divisions are economically better off than in the other informal settlements. It was also found that some are resident owners/landlords while others are absentee owners/landlords. Broadly speaking, four types of suppliers can be identified from the qualitative research in the case-study settlements:

(i) Petty-bourgeois absentee landlords

Petty-bourgeois absentee landlords may be more or less well-to-do. Their primary aim is to ultimately occupy the land themselves. For many of them, one of the objectives of developing rental housing is to protect their land from *dakhal* by others. Another objective is to generate some income from rental housing. The most basic rental room made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing usually costs Rs.20,000-25,000 to construct. Depending on how much investment the landlord can afford to put into rental housing as well as how much rental income he/she wishes to earn, he/she may develop one or more rental rooms and accordingly provide tenants with a certain level of infrastructure. There was evidence of such landlords in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, Nizarapara and Shahnagar.

The rental income earned by landlords may contribute towards developing their land through land-filling, thus making it more habitable for their own family to move here in the future. In fact, this is often why they are absentee landlords – they do not live on their land because it is not yet considered habitable for their own use and because they do not have the required amount of money to make it habitable in a short time. They therefore follow an incremental process of developing the land and their house before they move to live there. Rental housing plays an important protective and economic role in this incremental process. Once the land is deemed habitable for themselves and they can afford to build their own house, such landlords may evict the tenants and demolish the rental rooms. However, many landlords, even after moving

to live on their land, continue to keep the rental housing (and may improve it) if they have space and if rental income continues to be of importance to them. Thus, while many petty-bourgeois absentee landlords see rental housing as a temporary measure (though it might last for many years), many others do not. The latter become petty-bourgeois resident landlords.

(ii) Petty-capitalist absentee landlords

Petty-capitalist absentee landlords are well-to-do. They see their land primarily as an investment and they seek to develop it for a profitable purpose rather than to live on it themselves. In Guwahati, their production of rental housing for the urban poor is a temporary measure until they can extract higher returns from the land. Higher returns become possible as the surrounding area, the settlement and its infrastructure develops, and land prices increase. Then such landlords evict their urban poor tenants and develop their land for non-rental purposes or as rental housing targeted at a higher-income group. Some of the landlords in Bhaskarnagar, Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki, the Bhootnath area and Shahnagar were found to be petty-capitalist absentee landlords (See Box 5, Box 6 & Box 7).

Box 5: Petty-capitalist absentee landlord: Case-study 1

T owns a furniture showroom in Guwahati. He owns two plots in Bhaskarnagar and is an absentee landlord. He had built rental rooms out of bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing on one plot. Then two years ago he moved his tenants into similar rental rooms on an adjacent plot that he owned, and rebuilt the rental housing as a two-storey RCC building with 8 rooms, a bath and two toilets on

Photo 21). He has also provided electricity meters for each room. He then shifted his tenants back into these rooms, and proceeded to build a furniture workshop on the other plot. The rent for each room is Rs.1500/month, and he thus earns a rental income of Rs.24,000/month.

Box 6: Petty-capitalist absentee landlord: Case-study 2

X is a government official and has built a large house for himself on a plot of land that is at the edge of the Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki. Residents of the Dolki pointed out that earlier his mother-in-law used to live on this plot of land in a bamboo hut, and after he married her daughter, he bought the land from his mother-in-law and then built a large house. He also owns a plot of land opposite this house, where he has developed approximately 20 rental rooms out of bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing (Photo 22). Given the rents in the settlement, we estimate that he earns approximately Rs.16,000/month as rental income, which would be less than his income from his primary occupation. However, given the centrality of the settlement, it is more than likely that with the settlement's development, Mr. X will seek to develop this plot of land for a more profitable purpose. As Shabana Begum, an occupier-landlord in Dolki, explained, many owners (occupiers and absentee) want the settlement to develop so that they can construct buildings on their plots or improve their house as well as build rental housing for a higher-income group.

Photo 21 (left): RCC building developed as rental housing by absentee landlord

Photo 22 (right): Well-to-do landlord's house across a fenced plot comprising rental rooms developed by him



Box 7: Petty-capitalist absentee landlord: Case-study 3

Ramkumar owns a ration-shop in the Bhootnath area. He is originally from Samastipur district in Bihar. His family was very poor. He used to write letters for people in his village and this is how he came to know of others who had gone to Guwahati from his village. Their money orders would come and he came to think of Guwahati as a city where one could make money. It is thus that he moved to Guwahati in the 1960s. At first he worked in a shop and also slept there. Later he moved to rental housing. He set up his own ration-shop and in the 1980s he bought his own house. In 1987 he bought a plot of land and developed four rental rooms for families and one large rental room for a large group of single-male migrants. He declined to reveal how much rental income he earns. He explained that his main interest is investment in land, and that the value of the plot has gone up since he bought it.

(iii) Petty-bourgeois resident landlords

Petty-bourgeois resident landlords may have been owner-occupiers from the beginning or petty-bourgeois absentee landlords who later moved to live on their own land but continued to keep the rental housing (See Box 8). These kind of landlords are found across almost all the informal housing sub-markets. Most petty-bourgeois resident landlords share bore-wells or open wells with their tenants, but many also construct piped water supply for their own houses while tenants manually fill water from a landlord-constructed bore-well. They do not usually share toilets or baths with their tenants. Many petty-bourgeois resident landlords have also followed an incremental process of improving their house on their land until there is no space for rental housing or rental income no longer remains of importance to them (see Box 9).

Box 8: Petty-bourgeois resident landlord: Case-study 1:

R is one of the oldest owners in Nizarapara and is a Bodo. He bought this land in 1959, however they moved to their land only in 1996. In the intermediate period, they rented out rooms to a few students who protected the land from encroachers. In 1996, when they moved here themselves, they constructed their house and also continued to keep tenants. Today, they have seven tenants who live in semi-*pucca* rental rooms.

Box 9: Petty-bourgeois resident landlord: Case-study 2:

Z is the owner of a small hardware shop in Hatigaon. He bought a plot in Shahnagar in 1996 but moved to live there with his family only around 2005. In the intermediate decade, he lived in rental housing in a better developed area, built rental housing on his Shahnagar plot and earned some income from this. Gradually he did land-filling on his plot until it was less water-logged. He estimates spending an average of Rs.50,000 every year on land-filling. Although he moved to his plot with his family in 2005, he has continued to keep the rental housing, although he did improve its quality. Today he earns rent from over 10 rental rooms. The rooms made from bamboo-mat walls are rented for Rs.700/month and the ones made from brick walls for Rs.900/month. He explained that just now his family comprises of himself, his wife and two teenage children, and that he would remove the rental housing when he wants to further expand his house.

Box 10: Petty-bourgeois resident landlord: Case-study 3:

P is a professor in Cotton College in Guwahati. For a number of years he had rental rooms built of bamboo-mat walls on his plot in Shahnagar. Several years ago, he demolished these rooms and began construction of a RCC building. Today, this is a partially-constructed 3-storey structure. He lives with his family in a completed flat on the first floor. On the ground floor, bamboo mats have

Photo 23). At first, six years ago, these were rented out for Rs.600/month, today the rent has increased to Rs.900. There is a toilet and a bath shared between the tenants, and they have access to a bore-well with a handpump. The bore-well supplies piped water to the landlord's flat. One of the tenants anticipated that the rent would increase by another Rs.100-200 over the next couple of years before further construction took place.

In some cases, the absentee landlord has also demolished bamboo-mat rental rooms from his/her plot and begun construction of a 2-3 storey RCC building which would house both the landlord's family as well as rental units for a higher class of tenants. Many landlords invest in this sort of construction incrementally, and rental housing for the urban poor might remain a part of this process of Photo 23). Thus, rental housing is not always a temporary measure, and it is rental housing *for the urban poor* that is seen as a temporary measure for landlords who are relatively well-to-do (See Box 10).

Photo 23: Rental housing in an incrementally-built Brick and RCC building: Landlord's family lives on the first floor, while rental rooms of bamboo-mat walls have been made on the ground floor within the RCC frame.



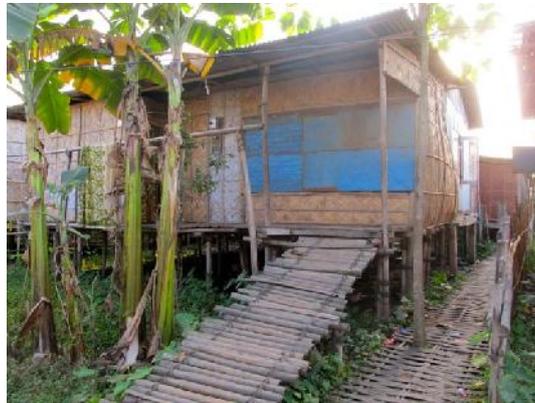
The upgrading of rental units for a higher class of tenants is not always possible, however, and depends on the development of the settlement at large. For instance, one of the owner-occupiers in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki explained that since many years she has been pressuring the GMC and political leaders to construct the road, but to no avail. She further explained that if the road was constructed, then she could build better rental housing and get Rs.1500-3000/month as rent for each room. Her present tenants are all labourers and while they have cordial relations (and she has even helped her tenant's child get admission in school), "there will always be a distance between my family and the tenant's family." She explained that she would instead like to have tenants of her own class. Since landlords in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki cannot upgrade their rental stock and target a higher income group because of the condition of the settlement, some of them seem to have turned to extracting more rent by reducing the size of the rental rooms as well as increasing the rent. For instance, one tenant who has been renting a room in Dolki since the past ten years explained that her room size had decreased. Six rental rooms were developed in the space earlier occupied by three rental rooms, and the rent for each room was also increased.

(iv) Petty-subsistence resident landlords

Petty-subsistence resident landlords were found across most of the informal housing sub-markets. They are relatively poor and rental income constitutes their main source of income (Box 11). These landlords often live in houses that are not of much better quality than those built for their tenants. They often share infrastructures with their tenants. There seems to be a greater number of such landlords in Bhaskarnagar (See Box 12).

Box 11: Petty-subsistence resident landlord: Case-study 1:

Rehana Begum is a resident landlord in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki. She earns more income from rent than she does from the small shop she runs out of her house. Her husband deserted her some years ago, and she lives with her two sons in a house built from bamboo-mats and tin-sheet roofing (Photo 24). One of her sons works in a mobile repairing shop and the other son studies in Class 12. She has 12 rental rooms (developed since approximately 10 years) built out of bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing, each of which she rents out for Rs.800/month. She thus earns a rental income of Rs.9,600 /month. Today, in the absence of her husband, this rental income is of significance for her in managing household expenses as well as in improving her family's material quality of life.

Photo 24: Poorer landlord's house**Box 12: Petty-subsistence resident landlord: Case-study 2:**

Sabina Begum is a housewife and her husband is a tailor. The income of Rs.3600/month which they earn from the six rental rooms they have constructed is their main income. While their house is larger than the rental rooms, the construction materials are the same, and they share the water connection and toilet with their tenants. A number of poorer landlords are also women-run households. For instance, P has been a widow since eight years. She is a domestic maid and also runs a small shop out of her house. She lives with her four sons: the eldest is a construction worker and the second eldest is a mechanic. She had begun to develop rental housing 10 years ago and the income from this helped her to educate her sons as well as gave her another source of income. Today she has six rental rooms and earns Rs.4,200/month from this. She intends to build five more rental rooms when she has the money.

6.2. Types of tenants

Different kinds of tenants are found in Guwahati's rental housing. This includes migrants from various districts of Assam as well as from other states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Many tenants have been living in Guwahati since many years and

yet have been unable to move from rental housing to ownership housing. There are two main types of tenants in Guwahati's rental housing:

(i) Family households:

The majority of tenants are families who are from diverse economic and occupational backgrounds. Most of them live in rental units comprising of a single room. Many landlords prefer to keep families as tenants, especially when they are resident landlords so that their own families may be safer. Family households also include women-headed households as well as families in which the husband and wife live separately for purposes of work for most of the time (see Box 13 & Box 14).

Box 13: Women-headed households: Case-study 1

H lives in Bhaskarnagar. She is a Bengali woman from Calcutta. She and her husband came to Guwahati 5 years ago. Her husband was brought to Guwahati by a shopkeeper who had a shop nearby. He also helped them get a room to rent. The shop, however, closed down after a year. Now her husband works in Tejpur as a cook and earns Rs.6,000/month. He lives in Tejpur and visits her when he can. She works as a part-time domestic maid and earns Rs.2,000/month. She hasn't moved to Tejpur because her children go to a nearby school. She rents a *pucca* room for Rs.1,500/month, and additionally pays electricity charges as well as Rs.200/month for electricity to pump water to the overhead tank. She shares 2 *pucca* toilets and a bath with 7 other tenants. She explained that she rented this particular room because of good basic services.

Box 14: Women-headed households: Case-study 2

J lives in Bhaskarnagar. She is originally from the Assam/Bangladesh border area. Her parents died when she was very young and she came to Guwahati where she was 8 years old since her uncle and aunt lived here. She worked as a full-time domestic maid till her marriage 12 years ago. Then she and her husband took a *katcha* rental room in Bhaskarnagar. There were water problems there and there was no drainage, so about 2 years ago, they moved to a *pucca* room since it had more facilities. She pays Rs.1500/month as rent, and additionally pays electricity charges as well as Rs.200/month for electricity to pump water to an overhead tank. She shares 2 *pucca* toilets and a bath with 7 other tenants. Her husband drives a school bus and lives at the school itself. He comes to visit her on Sundays. They have no children. He earns Rs.8,000/month while she works as a part-time domestic maid in four houses and earns Rs.4,000/month.

(ii) Single male and female migrants

Single male migrants who live as tenants in Guwahati are found to either live on their own in rental rooms, or share a room with 1-3 single male migrants, or share a room with a large group of 8-25 labourers. Most single male migrants are from Bihar and from Assam's Dhubri district. Those who share the room in small groups are often from the same village. Most work as cycle rickshaw drivers, street-vendors, thela-

walas (transporting goods on *thelas* or carts) and manual labourers. Most of them earn between Rs.100-300/day. Single female tenants were difficult to trace, although some landlords mentioned that they are found in Guwahati's rental housing.

For the purpose of an analysis of the rental units occupied by these two different kinds of tenants, we have actually considered single migrants who live on their own as family households comprising of one member. We would like to note here that out of a total of almost 70 single male/female migrants in our sample, about 50 per cent were single migrants renting on their own (that is, not sharing a rental unit with other single male/female migrants). This is significant as it suggests a possible preference amongst many single male/female migrants to live on their own. Let us proceed now to an analysis of the rental housing of these two type of tenants in Guwahati.

Sharers were found only in informal housing while family households were found in both formal and informal housing. Within the informal sector, sharers were found to pay lower monthly rents than family households (see Table 25), with 68.8 per cent of sharers paying less than Rs.250/month as rent, and another 28.1 per cent paying between Rs.251-500/month as rent. By contrast, 19.8 per cent of family households in informal housing paid between Rs.251-500/month and 57.6 per cent paid between Rs.501-1000/month. We also found that while the rent that family households in informal housing paid as a percentage of their income varied vastly, 77.4 per cent of sharers paid less than 6 per cent of their income as rent, suggesting that their priority is to save and send money to their families (see Table 28).

Although sharers pay lower monthly rents, as well as spend a lower percentage of their income on rent, most of them pay higher rent per square metre than family households (Table 27). What this also means is that for a landlord, renting out a room to a large group of single migrants is more profitable than dividing the same amount of space into smaller rooms and renting them to family households.

Table 28: Percentage Distribution of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by Rent % of Household Income

	Type of Tenant	Rent % of Household income					Average Rent % of HH income
		<= 6.00	6.01 - 9.00	9.01 - 12.00	12.01 - 15.00	15.01+	
Informal Housing	Family Household	10.4	18.5	26.1	21.2	23.9	12.9
	Sharer	77.4	12.9	0	6.5	3.2	4.9
Formal Housing	Family Household	66.7	11.1	11.1	8.3	2.8	5.9

Our sample also revealed that family households with lower incomes often pay a higher percentage of their income on rent. Thus, 50.6 per cent of family households earning less than Rs.5000/month pay more than 15 per cent of their income on rent, whereas only 7.1 per cent of family households earning between Rs.10,000-

15,000/month pay more than 15 per cent of their income on rent. None of the family households earning above Rs.15,000/month pay more than 15 per cent of their income on rent (Table 29). Similarly, 37.5 per cent of family households earning more than Rs.15,000/month pay less than 6 per cent of their income on rent, whereas only 2.6 per cent of family households earning less than Rs.5000/month pay such a low percentage of their income on rent (Table 29). The majority of sharers across income-groups pay less than 6 per cent of their income on rent, revealing that sharing is always a more affordable option.

Table 29: Percentage Distribution of Different Income Categories of Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers by their Rent % of Household Income

	Household income (Rs)	Rent % of Household income				
		<= 6.00	6.01 - 9.00	9.01 - 12.00	12.01 - 15.00	15.01+
Tenant Family Households						
Informal Housing	<= 5000	2.6	3.9	20.8	22.1	50.6
	5001 - 10000	12.2	26.8	29.3	21.1	10.6
	10001 - 15000	21.4	28.6	28.6	14.3	7.1
	15001+	37.5	12.5	25.0	25.0	0
Formal Housing	<= 5000	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
	5001 - 10000	58.8	11.8	17.6	11.8	0
	10001 - 15000	100.0	0	0	0	0
	15001+	83.3	16.7	0	0	0
Tenant Sharers						
Informal Housing	<= 5000	72.2	11.1	0	11.1	5.6
	5001 - 7500	100.0	0	0	0	0
	Above 7501	66.7	33.3	0	0	0

Table 30: Household Monthly Income and Rent % of Household Income for Tenant Family Households and Tenant Sharers

	Type of Tenant	Average Monthly Household Income (Rs.)	Average Rent % of income
Informal Housing	Family HH	8961.06	12.9
	Sharer	6403.23	4.9
Formal Housing	Family HH	10796.30	5.9
Total (Informal and Formal housing)	Family HH	9225.33	11.9
	Sharer	6403.23	4.9

Our sample further shows that in informal housing, family households pay an average of 12.9 per cent of their household income as rent while in informal housing they pay an average of 5.9 per cent of their household income as rent. Across formal and informal housing, family households pay an average of 11.9 per cent of their household income as rent. Sharers, who have a lower average income than family households, pay an average of 4.9 per cent of their income as rent (Table 30).

6.3. Factors that influence tenants' choice of rental housing

Various factors such as location and proximity to employment, proximity to kin and members of the same ethnic/religious community, rental price and affordability, and tenure security influence tenants' choice of rental housing. Here, we consider a few brief examples of tenants to discuss how tenure security and affordability did or did not influence their choice of rental housing.

A woman tenant who has lived in Guwahati since 20 years explained that earlier she used to live as a tenant on Railway land but her house was demolished in an eviction drive. Three years ago she and her husband moved to a rental room in a nearby settlement since they had young children and therefore wanted to live in more secure housing. They have incurred a rent increase from Rs.300/month to Rs.950/month (the latter includes electricity as well). They continue to live in this room even though her income has decreased as she doesn't currently have work. She explained that earlier she used to work as a 12-hour domestic maid and earned Rs.2000/month, but now with young children she can no longer work like this. Moreover, she explained, the domestic maid market has become more competitive as there are more women moving to the city who are willing to work as 24-hour domestic maids. Tenure security is a continuum and the households or individuals often start from highly insecure tenure and try to move up the ladder depending on the possibilities open to them and their priorities during different stages of their life cycle.

Affordability is a key factor influencing tenants' choice of rental housing. However, some tenants also pay less or more rent than they can afford because of various reasons such as their attempt to save some money for awhile, inability to get a more affordable rental room, etc. An example of a tenant who is paying less than he can afford is Aslam. As a GMC sanitation supervisor, Aslam earns Rs.8,000-10,000/month. He lives in Shahnagar with his family and rents a room made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofing. The room has no plinth and the infrastructure is very poor as well. There is no bath, the door of the toilet is broken and there is no electricity. He pays Rs.300/month as rent for this room. The GMC gives him a monthly allowance of Rs.1000 for housing, and he explained that while he could therefore pay a higher amount for rent, he was saving this money. At the same time, he has been pushing his landlord to improve the rental room and infrastructure to a certain extent. The improvements would push the rent upto Rs.600-700/month, which he would be willing and able to pay.

An example of a tenant who is paying more than he can afford is Ramnarayan, who is a cycle-rickshaw driver and earns about Rs.200/day (Rs.5,000-6,000/month). He is from Bihar and lived as a single male migrant for a number of years in a *katcha* room. Then 2 years ago he started renting a *pucca* room for Rs.2000/month because he had got married and wanted his wife to live in a *pucca* room. He explained that he had tried to find a *pucca* room for less rent, but he could not find one. *Pucca* rooms are

available in Guwahati for Rs.1000/month but, he explained, they get taken up very quickly. Today he owes his landlord Rs.5000 as rent because of backlog of unpaid rent. He explained that in the previous month he had bought a TV and he had also earned less in the last month or two, and this is why he had been unable to pay his rent.

6.4. Landlord-tenant relations

Since the urban poor and low-income groups rent mainly in the informal sector, tenants' rights are poorly protected since there are no formal agreements between the tenant and landlord. Unregulated rent increases are common, and evictions often take place when landlords decide that they want to build/expand their own house on the land or want to build rental housing for a higher-income tenant group. A number of tenants – both families and single male migrants – in Shahnagar and the Bhootnath area explained that they had moved to their current rental rooms after having experienced such evictions or getting priced out from other nearby settlements as the plots on which they lived as tenants were redeveloped (see Box 15).

Since deposits are not taken by most landlords, particularly for the cheaper rental rooms, if a tenant cannot pay rent on time, they are often evicted. However, this also often depends on the personal relations between the landlord and tenant and also how long the tenant has been with the landlord. For instance, one landlord in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki explained that if one of her older tenants does not pay rent on time or for a month, she would wait until the next month, but if a new tenant does not pay rent on time then she would ask them to leave. It was found that in the informal sector, the responsibility for all repairs and maintenance of the rental units and infrastructure lay with the landlords. There was a wide variation in whether landlords carried out repairs and maintenance. If they did not, there was no mechanism through which tenants could effectively pressure the landlord to do so.

Many tenants in the informal sector are also vulnerable because of ethnic politics and the anti-Bangladeshi attitude in particular. Landlords in Guwahati are required to register their tenants at the local police station with a photo and permanent address after personally checking all their documents. In certain settlements that have a high population of Muslim tenants, particularly from Dhubri district and other districts along the Assam-Bangladesh border, there are often police checks targeting the tenants as they are suspected of being Bangladeshi. One landlord in the Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki explained that the police comes 2-3 times a year to check on the tenants of the area. A landlord in Shahnagar also explained that earlier the police would come and arrest some single-male migrant tenants from the area who would then be kept in jail for a day or two and then released.

Box 15: Case-studies of tenants who have experienced evictions due to gentrification of rental housing:

G is a single male migrant sharing a rental room with 3 other men in a plot in the Bhootnath area. When he first came to Guwahati as a teenager, he used to live with his three brothers in the Anthgaon area. The land had been sold and they had to move; a *pucca* building was built there. Later he shared a room with three other men. The room was built of half-brick and half-bamboo-mat walls and together they paid Rs.1000/month as rent. They had to move out after the landlord improved the quality of their rental room and the rent increased to Rs.2000/month which was not affordable to them.

K lives with his family in Shahnagar. Earlier he lived in a nearby settlement and paid Rs.500/month as rent. His family had to move because the landlord demolished the bamboo-mat rental rooms and built a *pucca* building on the plot. The rents in this building increased to Rs.3000-4000/month as the rental rooms were *pucca*, bigger and there was better infrastructure such as piped water supply to each individual rental unit. Currently, K pays Rs.300/month as rent for a poor quality rental room. He anticipated that the absentee landlord of the plot on which he presently lives will upgrade this rental housing and at some point in the future his family will have to move once again. He explained that he can afford rent of up to Rs.600-700/month so he will continue to live on this plot as the landlord upgrades the rental rooms so long as the rooms do not get upgraded and priced beyond his affordability.

L is a female tenant who lives with her family in Shahnagar. Until a few years ago, she lived elsewhere in Hatigaon and paid Rs.600/month as rent. The landlord demolished the rental rooms and made a house for himself, so all the tenants had to move. She currently pays Rs.900/month as rent for a room on the ground floor of a partially-built RCC building, where the walls of the room are made from bamboo mats. She anticipates that in a few years the landlord will be able to complete the construction and her family will be priced out of the *pucca* rental rooms thus created.

In the formal sector where there are rental agreements, unregulated rent increases and evictions are not common. However, even here, the landlord (GMC or ASHB) does not fulfil its part of the agreement to maintain the housing. At the ASHB housing in Kharguli, the tenants therefore mobilized themselves into the Kharguli Hills Housing Building Tenant Association to bring pressure on the ASHB and other government authorities to address their concerns (see Box 16).

Box 16: Kharguli Hills Housing Building Tenant Association:

The association was established in 1990 when the tenants organized after the buildings were completed and people were given allotment. The association first confined its work to the EWS and LIG buildings in Kharguli Hills, but since last year they have been trying to expand their work all over Assam. The association has succeeded in a number of its negotiations with ASHB. For instance, earlier ASHB used to purchase electricity from the Assam State Electricity Board (ASEB) to supply

to its tenants through common meters. As a result, the tenants used to pay commercial rate for electricity and also used to pay for the electricity used to pump water on to the hill. The association succeeded in getting ASEB to supply electricity directly to them through individual meters, and now they are paying domestic rate for electricity. Currently ASHB purchases water from GMC, and the association has been pressuring the GMC to take over the water supply and augment supply since tenants get inadequate water, that too on alternate days. Since 1990, ASHB has also not carried out any repairs on the EWS and LIG buildings. A study done by an organization had informed GMC that two of the buildings were disaster-prone and unfit for human habitation. GMC had asked ASHB to make residents vacate the building. The association had opposed this and had argued that from outside the building might look damaged but that this was because of lack of repairs. This was finally accepted by the concerned authorities and ASHB subsequently asked for Rs.14 crore budget from the State government to carry out repairs. Although it has been allocated only Rs.1.5 crore, the association is hopeful since it has been told that the buildings will be repaired as early as possible. Recently, the association had also succeeded in getting a community hall, drainage, steps, etc built through JnNURM funds.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

A number of factors have shaped the extent and type of rental housing in Guwahati. In the first few decades after Assam's capital shifted from Shillong to Dispur in 1972, Guwahati became an important urban centre of Assam and the North-east, offering many employment opportunities. This led to high rural-to-urban migration, both from within Assam as well as from other states, and even from Bangladesh. This was also a period when Bangladesh attained independence from Pakistan and the long-drawn war brought influx of refugees into India. This was one of the important factors shaping the demand for rental housing in Guwahati. There are also factors other than the urban economy and employment opportunities that contributed to the development of rental housing, particularly for the urban poor and low-income groups, in the informal sector in Guwahati. We find that residents in large areas of Guwahati have informally occupied public and private lands, often by informally purchasing plots of land from middlemen who had informally occupied these lands. This, of course, is found in many other Indian cities as well. In Guwahati, one of the noteworthy characteristics of this informal occupation is that it has often involved relatively large plots of land where a family has enough space to build not only their own house but also a number of rental units. How this particular pattern of informal occupation was possible is a question that would need further research. One possibility is that during the early decades of Guwahati's development, land was not yet in high demand and thus middlemen not only appropriated large areas, but they also divided these into relatively large plots and informally sold them off to the urban poor and low-income groups. It is also not clear who these middlemen really were, and what kind of links, if at all, they had to local administration and local politics, and whether this aided their *dakhil*, that is, informal occupation, of land.

In any case, for many decades, neither the local government nor the State government attempted to evict such informal owners for most lands, thus providing some level of perceived tenure security for many. The informal occupation of relatively large plots of land along with the *de facto* tenure security is likely to have encouraged the owners to invest in the production of rental housing. Moreover, the State government has even provided some form of *de jure* tenure security through its patta system. As we have mentioned, in Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki and Bhaskarnagar, some owners had obtained miyadi patta and others had not. This did not have any noticeable impact on the rental housing supply, and we found that most owners have turned to landlordism regardless of whether they have obtained miyadi patta or not. In Nizarapara, despite none of the owners having obtained miyadi patta, many have developed rental housing. Having miyadi patta – which is considered to be permanent tenure – is thus not a determinant of rental housing, but the promise of ek sonia patta and eventually miyadi patta – which confers different levels of tenure security – seems to play an important role in the development of rental housing by informal owners. This is because the development of rental housing requires an investment on the part of owners, not only investment in constructing the rental units but often also in building some infrastructure such as baths and toilets for tenants. As a result, it usually takes a

couple of years to recover this investment through rent before the owner can begin to make an actual income from the rent. It follows from this that owners are unlikely to invest in developing rental housing unless they feel some level of tenure security. It is in this sense that the patta system has supported the development of rental housing for the urban poor and lower-income groups.

The fact that the government has carried out evictions in recent years on some of the hills and waterbodies and has suspended the granting of miyadi pattas is likely to affect the development of rental housing in areas where there is now a lower perceived tenure security. On the other hand, there has been a strong mobilization against such evictions and a powerful organized struggle to demand land rights from the Assam government for informal occupiers – known as settlers – who have been living on government lands for more than 15 years. As a result, it is difficult to predict how these land conflicts and struggles will impact the development of rental housing in Guwahati. It is possible that the development of rental housing will continue since the Assam government has so far been ineffective in evicting settlers in the face of such mobilization.

However, it is important to keep in mind that the organized struggle mainly focuses on the rights of Assam's indigenous people who are settled on Guwahati's hillsides. There are continuing tensions around "illegal immigration" and the notion that illegal immigrants (mainly from Bangladesh) are eating away into the resources and rights of the Assamese people and the state's indigenous people. As discussed earlier in this report, the identification of people as illegal immigrants or not is a complex one because of long and complex histories in the region. Furthermore, and partly as a result of these complexities, many poor Indians, particularly Muslims from the Assam side of the India-Bangladesh border, face the brunt of these tensions over illegal immigration. In Guwahati, the poorer of these so-called illegal immigrants live in informal rental housing and while tenants in general have no representation in the city, these political tensions further deepen the difficulties of organizing for tenant rights. As a result, while there are struggles for land rights of settlers in the hillsides but also on other government lands, there is no discussion of the rights of poor tenants in Guwahati.

We suspect that political mobilisation around the issue of rights of the ethnic Assamese might have disempowered inter-state migrants, particularly those suspected to be migrants from Bangladesh in the state's polity, leading to these groups opting for rental housing out of no choice. In fact, the other states in the neighbourhood, where the state legislation does not permit land access to those who are not the natives of the land, may also have influenced housing access for the migrants in Assam. Contrary to the national level trends, where the poor tend to seek ownership housing, in Guwahati they are confined to rental housing.

Another factor that has shaped the extent and type of rental housing in Guwahati's informal sector is the topography of the city's different areas, and the challenges that

this poses for access and infrastructure development, both of which impact rental housing in these areas. For example, Bhootnath Milanpath Dolki has been built over a waterbody and almost all built structures have to still be built on stilts since the land has not yet been developed into adequately solid ground by residents through land-filling. There is also no road and thus access into the settlement is a problem. One of the resident owners explained that if the road was constructed, the settlement would develop and then she could build better rental housing and get Rs.1500-3000/month as rent for each room. But because of the condition of the settlement, landlords like her cannot upgrade their rental stock and expect that a higher income group would move there. As a result, the rental housing in the settlement is not likely to gentrify yet, thus providing a rental housing stock for poor tenants. In Nizarapara, which is a hillside settlement, topography impacts access and infrastructure as well, although in a very different way. Difficult access to the upper parts of the hill and organizing water provision because of the hilly terrain are two important reasons for the relatively less extent of rental housing in Nizarapara. For the same quality rental room, rents at the base of the hill are higher than they are at the top of the hill. This also means that it takes longer to recover one's investments at the top before one can actually begin to earn an income from rent. As a result, there is less rental housing at the top of the hills.

Over the past decade or so, various changes have been taking place in Guwahati that have implications for rental housing for the urban poor and low-income groups. We find that the population growth rate in Guwahati has been declining in recent decades. One reason for this is likely to be the fact that employment opportunities are no longer expanding in the city at the same rate as before. Lower population growth rate suggests that migration rates are decreasing. With this we expect that the rate of demand for rental housing will decrease as well. Nonetheless, the fact that Guwahati already has a high extent of rental housing (and there will always be some demand for rental housing) raises questions about whether it provides (or will provide) adequate housing for urban poor and low-income tenants.

This study found that housing conditions for urban poor and low-income tenants in Guwahati are quite poor. The majority of the rental housing for these groups is made from bamboo-mat walls and tin-sheet roofs, and water connections and toilets are mostly shared, and drainage is often very poor. This is the case for many tenant family households as well as for many tenant sharers. Large groups of tenant sharers, in fact, live in large rooms which are developed for such groups of single male migrants from Bihar who work as unskilled labourers supervised by a *sardar*. While the rents that they pay are low, they are found to often pay more per square metre, thus revealing that they have access to very little space. Because the demand for rental housing is very high amongst the urban poor, landlords are under little pressure to improve the quality of housing and basic services. Thus, in some areas, tenant family households were found to be sharing a single toilet with more than 10 families. But this study also observed that in many cases, tenant family households shared services with only a few other families. The level of sharing of services, and thus inadequacy

of services, is thus quite varied. This raises questions around how the conditions of this rental housing stock and thus the housing conditions for urban poor and low-income tenants in the city might be improved.

This is a matter of concern also because, as we find in our research, many urban poor tenants are gradually getting priced out of rental housing over time as incremental improvements take place in informal settlements over time and landlords incrementally develop their plots, either for their own use or for more profitable residential (including rental) and commercial development. Also, the quantity of rental housing for the urban poor and low-income groups is no longer increasing in the public-sector housing as employers like the GMC and the Indian Railways are not building more housing for their employees and the Assam State Housing Board is also not building more EWS and LIG housing. In fact, the maintenance of the present public-sector housing stock is itself a matter of concern in Guwahati. Thus, in both the formal and informal rental housing sectors, there is a need to think not only about whether more rental housing stock will be required in the city and how best to increase its supply, but also how to improve the housing conditions of existing urban poor and low-income group tenant populations.

One of the main challenges lies in improving housing conditions of those – both owners and tenants – who live on Railway lands. Here, the level of tenure security varies widely depending on the proximity of the lands to railway tracks. Where tenure security is very poor, owners and tenants live in very poor housing conditions with a complete lack of basic services and frequent evictions. Where tenure security is higher, the housing situation for owners and tenants is better, and is relatively similar to some of the informal settlements on State government lands in the plains. However, it is still inadequate in terms of housing quality and the level of basic services. With neither the local nor the State government having jurisdiction over these Railway lands, the question is how housing conditions can be improved for the informal occupants on Railway lands such that housing and basic services improve for both owners and tenants.

The recent spate of speculative land markets are likely to have an impact on the rental housing supply. As mentioned earlier, gentrification in some parts of the rental housing sector is picking up. Tenants are getting priced out of the evolving rental market in areas like Shahnagar, where, as the larger area develops (with roads, etc), a better-off tenant population can be attracted into the area. Thus, owners begin to upgrade their rental housing to cater to this tenant population, in the process evicting their poor tenants. Furthermore, for the urban poor and low-income groups, the possibilities of becoming owners through informal occupation of land have increasingly reduced as a result of the impact that speculative land markets and rising land prices have even on informal land markets. This is likely to also impact the nature of landlordism (since only certain groups will become owners, and therefore landlords) and therefore the type of rental housing that is developed. While rental units for the urban poor might still be initially developed by better-off landlords, it is

likely that they will look to upgrade these rental units or make other kinds of more profitable developments on their land as soon as they can. Rents are also increasing in the informal rental housing sector for many amongst the urban poor while there does not seem to be a concomitant improvement in the level of urban services.

Rental housing has not been given adequate importance in housing policy in most cities of the developing world, including in India. However, there is an urgent need to think about approaches to support and improve rental housing, both in quantity as well as quality. In Guwahati, this study of the dynamics of rental housing seeks to be a first step in understanding rental housing and based on this, several recommendations are proposed so as to move towards supporting the rental housing sector and tenants.

With 46 per cent of Guwahati's residents living in rental housing, this market is clearly of great significance for meeting housing demands in the city. Rental housing is found in both the formal as well as informal sector. A very large proportion of rental housing is in the informal sector, with rental units to be found in each of the different informal housing sub-markets. There are also different types of rental units available in these sub-markets in terms of location, size, construction materials, level of basic services and monthly rent. For instance, rental housing units are of varying sizes, starting from 15 sq.m., which are very small, and where about 70 per cent of the surveyed rental housing belongs. Hence, there is a demand from the poor and low-income tenants for small-unit rental housing. But there is also a demand for larger rental units. The rental housing strategy for the city should take into consideration this diversity of existing demand for rental housing. There cannot be a "one size fits all" approach to rental housing in Guwahati.

Moreover, before a rental housing strategy can be discussed, there has to be an overall housing strategy for the city. An important aspect of this strategy would be to address the question of informal housing in the city. This necessitates addressing the question of tenure security by formulating a policy for tenure formalization. This process of formalization of tenure should not be seen as extension of property rights but extension of occupancy rights for a fixed period of time. Furthermore, in order to prevent tenure inequalities within urban poor and low-income groups within a settlement, tenure rights should be extended to the settlement and not to individual households.

For the purpose of formalization of tenure, a detailed study of all the lands under informal housing should be carried out. At the Centre of Urban Equity, we have prepared a manual to assist in tenure regularization. As mentioned in the first chapter of this report, tenure is not just linked to land ownership but to a complex matrix of ownership overlaid by actors in the market and planning legislation. These need to be unravelled to find a feasible option for extension of tenure. Once again, we reiterate that tenure extension is not giving of property rights as the latter is too tall an aim to keep when access to land in the cities is still denied. Rather, it is desirable that there is

incremental improvement in tenurial status, from insecure tenure to *de facto* tenure to a legal tenure, as argued elsewhere by Mahadevia (2010, 2011). The process of tenure formalization can, of course, take off only if the government accepts the presence of low-income migrants in the city and accepts that they are a part of the process of urbanisation and development.

The approach to tenure formalization would have to take into account the differences in land ownership and topography in Guwahati. For housing on State government lands in the plains and where ecological concerns are not paramount, extension of tenure security should be implemented. Clearing out titles of lands in informal occupation of private lands and commercial sub-divisions of private lands can be possible through issuance of rules by the State government. Informal housing on the railway lands cannot be covered under tenure formalization as it is not desirable to parcel out railway lands along the tracks for housing purposes. However, Guwahati has distinction of constructed railway housing lying vacant. These vacant units could be rented out to occupants of railway lands who are employed in the railways on a contractual basis. Additional units could be leased out to the GMC for renting out to other occupants of the railway lands. Regarding hill lands which are ecologically vulnerable areas, there might be a need to shift out hillside dwellers. However, this process should be undertaken through community consultation. If and where shifting the existing hillside dwellers is not feasible, as many of them have invested substantially in their housing, tenure rights should be extended to them and new housing formation should be controlled. A final point regarding tenure formalization is that we are aware that the process of formalisation leads to gentrification. Community participation and pro-active role of the local state, that is, the GMC, in regulating transfers after formalizing the informal housing, wherever possible, would be of significance.

Simultaneously, an important policy imperative that emerges from this research is the need to recognize the presence of tenants in informal housing. There will have to be both a policy recognition and an appropriate process to ensure that tenants are not displaced in the process of tenure formalization. Tenants, by their nature of being disempowered, might not be able to negotiate with their landlords. While the Rajiv Awaas Yojana (RAY) guidelines mention that the current occupants and not the owners of housing units would be the beneficiaries of the programme and that a participatory process of finalizing the beneficiary or occupants' list is mandatory, if left to their own devices, there are chances of the tenants being excluded. The process of listing the occupants is likely to get volatile if property rights are to be given as recommended under the RAY. Therefore, there is a need to set up a grievance redressal cell within the RAY implementing agency where tenants could approach in case of such irregularities. Granting tenure rights to settlements as opposed to individuals would also be useful in protecting the rights of the tenants in the process of tenure formalization.

There are two main types of tenants found in Guwahati: (i) families, and (ii) single male migrants who share a unit (we have called them sharers in this report). Our sample shows that in informal housing, families are paying an average of 12.9 per cent of their household income as rent while in informal housing they are paying an average of 5.9 per cent of their household income as rent. Across formal and informal housing, family households are paying an average of 11.9 per cent of their household income as rent. Sharers, who have a lower average income than family households, are paying an average of 4.9 per cent of their income as rent. Rental units that are built under any future policy must be considered in this context of affordability.

Moreover, this tenant population includes: (i) migrants who are unable to find access to ownership housing on account of local partisan polity, or (ii) migrants who are unable to afford the cost of ownership housing even after living in the city for long duration, or (iii) migrants who are not looking at permanent settlement in the city. For each of the three sub-groups, the housing solution is different. The first group should be assisted to transit into ownership housing through processes of RAY. The second group should be supported to transit into public or publicly managed rental housing. One or two room housing units on rent, like the chawls of Mumbai constructed in the early part of the last century, could be constructed. Or else, a slum upgradation programme can be implemented wherein it is ensured that the existing tenants also participate. This would require the institutional arrangements to address grievances, as mentioned earlier. The last group could be transited into a dormitory type of housing if they are single male migrants. The dormitory housing can be provided by employers, industries and construction firms as suggested in the national urban housing and habitat policy. The public or publicly managed rental housing could be the responsibility of the public authorities or the employers.

Currently, we observe large high-end housing projects under construction, which have sprawled on the city's periphery, and which is not a sustainable development scenario. Instead, the city should have a plan for increasing the supply of small lot and small unit housing that is affordable to the current informal housing occupants. A segment of these could be sold to low-income households wishing to move to ownership housing, and a segment of these could be owned by the public agency that could then rent them out to the low-income households. Regarding public or publicly managed rental housing, ASHB has constructed rental housing in the past. However, its current situation is quite dilapidated. The rents have been frozen in time. Any rental housing provision by the state agency, ASHB or the GMC should at the least ensure that the rents are indexed against the inflation to be able to cover maintenance costs.

These recommendations would be feasible only if the city changes its orientation towards housing. A multi-pronged approach is what might help in the existing situation.

References

- AC Nielson. 2011. "Hill Development Survey Guwahati," Report submitted to Kamrup Metropolitan District Administration by ORG Centre for Social Research, AC Nielson ORG Marg Pvt. Ltd., Bangalore.
- AlSaiyyad, Nezar. 2004. "Urban Informality as a 'New' Way of Life," in Roy and AlSaiyyad, *Urban Informality*, pp. 7-30.
- Ballesteros, Marife M. 2003. "Rental Housing for Urban Low-Income Households in the Phillipines," Discussion Paper Series No. 2004-47, Phillipine Institute of Development Studies, December.
- Baruah, S. 1999. *India Against Itself: Assam and The Politics of Nationality*. Pennsylvania: Oxford University Press.
- Bayat, Asef. 1997. "Radical Religion and the Habitat of the Dispossessed: Does Islamic Militancy have an Urban Ecology," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31:3, pp. 579-90.
- Bayat, Asef. 2009. *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Benjamin, Solomon. 2008. "Occupancy urbanism: radicalizing politics and economy beyond policy and programs," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32:3, pp. 719-29.
- Borghain, Parijat. 2011. *Socio-economic Disparities in Guwahati City, India*, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Durand-Lasserve, Alain and Harris Selod. 2007. "The Formalisation of Urban Land Tenure in Developing Countries," Background paper prepared for The World Bank's 2007 Urban Research Symposium, May 14-16, Washington DC.
- Edwards, Michael. 1983. "Residential Mobility in a Changing Housing Market: The Case of Bucaramanga, Columbia," *Urban Studies* 20:2, pp. 131-45.
- Ghertner, D. Asher. 2008. "Analysis of New Legal Discourse behind Delhi's Slum Demolitions," *Economic and Political Weekly* 43:20, pp. 57-66.
- Government of Assam. 1998. Report on Illegal Migration into Assam, November 8, 1998. Retrieved April 21, 2012, from South Asia Intelligence Review: http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/i_legal_migration_in_assam.htm#MIGRATION%20INTO%20ASSAM
- GMC. 2006. *City Development Plan*, Guwahati Municipal Corporation, July 2006.
- GMC. 2009. "Guwahati City Slum Policy-Phase 1, Identification of Slums," (Prepared with Technical support from AAPIL, Surat and Associated Builder, Guwahati), Guwahati Municipal Corporation, 2009.
- GMDA. 2009. *Master Plan of the Guwahati Metropolitan Area – 2025*. Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority, July 2009.
- Hansen, Eric and Justin Williams. 1988. "Economic Issues and the Progressive Housing Development Model," in Carl V. Patton, ed. *Spontaneous Shelter: International Perspectives and Prospects*, Philadelphia: Temple University, pp. 303-25.
- Holston, James. 2007. *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Hussain, Monirul and Pradeep Phanjoubam. 2007. *Status Report on Displacement in Assam and Manipur*, Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata.
- Institute of Applied Manpower Research and Planning Commission. 2011. *India Human Development Report 2011: Towards Social Inclusion*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Khanna, Sushil. 2005. "Economic opportunities or continuing stagnation," *Seminar*, June 2005. Retrieved March 8, 2012, from <http://www.india-seminar.com/2005/550/550%20sushil%20khanna.htm#top>
- Kumar, Anuradha. 2002. "A Controversial Eviction Drive," *Frontline*, Vol. 19, Issue 15, July 20-Aug 2, 2002.
- Kumar, Sunil. 1994. "In Recognition of Landlordism in Low Income Settlements in Third World Cities: A Critical Review of Literature," UCL Working Paper 65.
- Kumar, Sunil. 1996. "Landlordism in Third World Urban Low Income Settlements: A Case for Further Research," *Urban Studies* 33:4-5, pp. 753-82.
- Kumar, Sunil. 2001. "Embedded Tenures: Private Renting and Housing Policy in Surat, India," *Housing Studies* 16:4, pp. 425-42.
- Kumar, Sunil. 2001. "Social Relations, Rental Housing Markets and the Poor in Urban India," Report to the Infrastructure & Urban Development Department, Department for International Development (DFID), London.
- Lim, Gill-Chin. 1987. "Housing Policies for the Urban Poor in Developing Countries," *APA Journal* 53, pp. 176-83.
- Mahadevia, Darshini. 2003. *Globalisation, Urban Reforms and Metropolitan Response: India*, Manak Publishers, Delhi.
- Mahadevia, Darshini. 2011. *Tenure Security and Urban Social Protection in India*, CSP Research Report 05, Centre for Social Protection, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex.
- Mahadevia, Darshini. 2010. "Tenure Security and Urban Social Protection Links: India," *IDS Bulletin* 41:4, pp. 52-62.
- Mahadevia, Darshini and Trishna Gogoi. 2011. "Rental Housing in Informal Settlements: A Case Study of Rajkot," CUE Working Paper No. 14, September 2011.
- Mahadevia, Darshini and Sandip Sarkar (forthcoming). *Handbook of Urban Inequalities*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Misra, Udayon. 2011. "A New Edge to People's Protests in Assam," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XLVI, No. 28.
- MoHUPA. 2007. National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, 2007, Government of India, Source: <http://mhupa.gov.in/policies/duopa/HousingPolicy2007.pdf> (accessed on May 6, 2012).
- Neuwirth, Robert. 2005. *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, A New Urban World*, London: Routledge.
- NIUA. 1989. "Modelling a Rental Housing Market: A Conceptual Framework," Research Study Series, No. 36, National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi.

- NSSO. 2010. *Housing Condition and Amenities in India, 2008-09, NSS 65th Round (July 2008 - June 2009)*, Report No. 535 (65/1.2/1), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.
- Payne, Geoffrey. 2000. "Urban Land Tenure Policy Options: Titles or Rights?" Paper presented at the World Bank Urban Forum, Virginia, USA, April 3-5, 2000.
- Planning and Development Department. 2003. *Assam Human Development Report, 2003*, Government of Assam, Guwahati.
- Roy, Ananya and Nezar AlSayyad. 2004. (eds.) *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, South Asia and Latin America*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Roy, Ananya. 2009. "Why India Cannot Plan its Cities: Informality, Insurgence and the Idiom of Urbanization," *Planning Theory* 8:1, pp. 76-87.
- Soliman, Ahmed M. 2004. "Tilting at Sphinxes: Locating Urban Informality in Egyptian Cities," in Roy and AlSayyad, *Urban Informality*, pp. 171-208.
- The Sentinel. 2012. "KMSS and settlers' body to renew agitation for land rights," *The Sentinel*, March 11, 2012.
- The Telegraph. 2004. "GMC slaps tax on 'illegal settlers' - Move to help civic body mop up Rs 1 crore additional revenue," *The Telegraph*, March 1, 2004.
- The Telegraph. 2005a. "Fear prompts tax holiday," *The Telegraph*, March 29, 2005.
- The Telegraph. 2005b. "Fine system fills up hills with settlers - *Tauzi patta* draws flak," *The Telegraph*, August 30, 2005.
- The Telegraph. 2011. "Mafia rules 15000 *bighas*: NGO," *The Telegraph*, December 15, 2011.
- The Times of India. 2011a. "Owning land still a distant dream for many," *The Times of India*, July 7, 2011.
- The Times of India. 2011b. "Land patta plea for settlers living in city for over 30 years," *The Times of India*, August 1, 2011.
- The Times of India. 2011c. "Pattas for landless soon," *The Times of India*, September 20, 2011.
- Turner, John. 1968. "Housing Priorities, Settlement Patterns and Urban Development in Modernizing Countries," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 34:5, pp. 354-63.
- UN-Habitat. 2003. "Rental Housing: An Essential Option for the Urban Poor in Developing Countries," Un-Habitat, Nairobi.
- UNESCAP/UN-Habitat. n.d. "Quick Guide on Rental Housing."
- Yuen, Belinda. 2007. "Squatters No More: Singapore Social Housing," *Global Urban Development Magazine* 3:1, Source: <http://www.globalurban.org/GUDMag07Vol3Iss1/Yuen.htm> (accessed on May 6, 2012)

Centre for Urban Equity (CUE) advocates a human-centered and equitable urban development paradigm. The activities of CUE are research, policy advocacy, training and capacity building and data documentation and dissemination. The centre is a National Resource Centre of Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India.



**Centre for Urban Equity (CUE)
CEPT University**

Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus,
University Road, Navrangpura,
Ahmedabad - 380009. INDIA
Phone: (0) 91-79-26302470, 26302452 Ext: 149
Fax: (0) 91-79-26302075
E-mail : cue@cept.ac.in

**National Resource Centre for Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India
CEPT University
Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus, University Road, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad-380009**

