

CHAPTER: IV

URBAN POOR IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS OF SILIGURI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AREA (SMCA)

4:1 Introduction

Rapid urbanization and increasing economic opportunities in the cities like Siliguri Municipal Corporation Areas (SMCA) have attracted large numbers of rural migrants from neighboring districts, states and countries. Siliguri is not only the fastest growing towns in the state and the country, but the town is also the economic hub for the states of north east India. The high potential of the town to absorb migrant population in the informal labour market is the consequence of large number of squatter slums in the city. The purpose of the present chapter is to study the pattern of urbanization, migration and incidence of informal settlements in the municipal towns of Darjeeling district with special reference to Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC). The chapter is also an exploration of the socio-economic characteristics among the slum and non-slum population in the municipal areas.

4.2: Historical Backdrop of Siliguri Town

Siliguri is situated in the plains of Himalayas and on the banks of the river Mahananda. The city is popularly known as the gateway or the chicken neck of north east India because its corridor is connected with the north-eastern states to the rest of India. Geographically, Siliguri is situated at the latitude of 26° 72" N and the longitude of 88° 41" E (Basu and Saha, 2011). Siliguri village was situated on fairly high ground and the meaning of this village by its name is 'the Stony Site' because the Mahanadi flows near the city and deposits a mass of broken stone brought down from the hills. Siliguri was a tiny village with a population of 784 prior to 1901 (O'Malley). It grew from a small village of Saktigarh or popularly known as 'Puratan Siliguri' located near the Bardhaman road under Rajganj police station, Jalpaiguri district (Chattopadhaya, 2010). At present, the place is known as Saktinagar colony (Ward No. 31) under Siliguri Municipal Corporation. In 1907, Siliguri was declared as a subdivision (mentioned earlier). The importance of Siliguri increased just after declaration of this area as a town when the Coronation Bridge across the Tista River in 1934 linked Siliguri with Assam, Coochbehar and upper Duars (Chakraborty,

1990). Siliguri received its recognition as a Municipal town with a population of 32,480 with the area of 15.54 sq. km in 1951 and it extended further to 41.90 sq. km in 1994 when it was upgraded to Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC).

Siliguri town is bounded by international borders of Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. It is also linked with the traditional trade route of Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet (Map 4.2.1). During the initial period of its growth, Siliguri attracted migrants from its hinterlands like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Assam and with the passing of time Siliguri acquired a cosmopolitan character. This is an indicator of the rapid pace of urbanisation in Siliguri Urban Area (SUA), which comprises of the SMC (partially covering Darjeeling district with the area of 20.10 sq. km, and inhabited by 2,84,602 persons and partly covering Jalpaiguri district with the area of 20.81 sq. km, and inhabited by 1,87,772 persons) and the adjacent urban growth centers. Thus Siliguri Urban Area has an area of 117.54 sq. km out of which 68.90 sq. km falls under Jalpaiguri district and 48.64 sq. km falls under Darjeeling district (Census, 2001).

4.2.1: Location of Siliguri Town (Map)



Source: www.mapsofindia.com

The population strength of Siliguri increased by leaps and bounds within Siliguri Municipal area and there was a steady growth of population during the periods of 1951-61, 1971-81 and 1991-2001 compared to other periods. The notable point is that the annual growth rates of SMC in all the decades were far higher than that of the urban growth rate at the district level. The growth rate reached its zenith during 1991-01 at 8.09 percent which was about 3 times higher than the growth rate of the urban Darjeeling district (2.77 percent) and the Nation (2.77 percent) as well as 4 times higher than the growth rate of the state of West Bengal (1.83 percent).

Gradually, with the passing of time, Siliguri town displayed its vital potentiality and grew as a centre for trade between India and Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet. Assam rail link in 1950's, the NH-31 and other road networks made this town a gateway to North-East India (Ghosh et al, 1995). Finally, in the wake of national emergency in 1962, this town assumed a vital strategic importance from the national point of view. The growth of the town received momentum just after independence of India. First, there were thousands of refugees pouring in from East Pakistan after the country was divided. In 1960s, there were the refugees from Assam who lost their home in anti-Bengali riots. During this period there were several wars, where Siliguri was at the centre stage of the 1962 war with China, 1965 war with Pakistan, 1971 war for creation of Bangladesh. Each of these events contributed to a major inflow of refugees to the town. Thus, an important component of this increasing share of population was the inflow of migration into the city. During 1971-81, the Bangladesh war further added huge number of refugees to the town. After 1981, some important State Government offices were established in Siliguri to meet the growing commercial needs thus attracting employment in the tertiary sector. Moreover, as a gateway to the Himalayas, Siliguri is a point of important tourist activities which stimulates the economy of the town (Ghosh et al, *op.cit*).

4.3: Urbanisation in Siliguri and other Municipal Towns in Darjeeling District

Exploring the urban scenario, it is evident that between 1901 and 1951, the proportion of urban population has remained static at about 7 percent in North Bengal region. Since 1951, the proportion has increased marginally (Census: 1961). From a tiny village, Siliguri grew as a city of around 4.3 lakhs of population (2001) within a span of 50 years and slowly but steadily grew as a major centre of transport and

commercial activities in relation to its hinterland spread over the districts of North Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Sikkim and Bhutan. Siliguri town, due to its locational advantage is the only major commercial and distribution centre in the North Eastern region.

Siliguri shows consistently high growth rate of population over the 60 years of its existence. From 1951 onwards, the demography of Siliguri and its adjoining areas changed rapidly due the influx of refugees from the neighboring districts, states and other countries. In absolute terms, the population of four Municipal towns in Darjeeling district has increased rapidly but the increase in population of Siliguri Municipal Corporation has reached sky high over the period between 1951 and 2001. According to census data, the population of Siliguri Municipal Corporation has increased by 15 times between 1951-2001, followed 3 times each by Darjeeling and Kurseong and Kalimpong by about 2.5 times.

In absolute terms, a population of less than 800 in 1901 has multiplied manifold to 32,480 in 1951, 216950 in 1991, and the figure reached at 4, 27,374 in 2001 due to the reclassification of the SMC area (Census Report 2001). It has also been projected that based on the growth rate of 1951-2001, the total population of SMC is expected to reach at 809 thousand by 2011, as against 135 thousand in Darjeeling Municipality, 52 thousand in Kalimpong and 51 thousand in Kurseong Municipality. According to Census 2001, among the four municipal towns in Darjeeling district, the population of SMC was about 4 times higher than the Darjeeling Municipality, 11 times higher than the Kalimpong Municipality and 12 times higher than the Kurseong Municipality. From Table 4.2.1, it has also been observed that out of four municipal areas and the urban Darjeeling district, the SMC has recorded the highest relative increase in population during all the decades. The highest relative increase has taken place (117.51 percent) during 1991-2001, partly due to reclassification of the municipal area among other reasons, followed by (103.13 percent) in 1951-61, possibly because of huge immigration due to partition of India in 1947, 58.76 percent in 1971-81, primarily due to further immigration during and after Bangladesh war of liberation in 1971, and between 1981-91, the relative increase in population was the lowest (40.91 percent). *[Relative Change in Population = {(Population in the Current Year- Population in the Previous year) / (Population in the Previous Year)} x 100]*

4.3.1: Urban Population and its share to the Total Population in the District.

From Table 4.3.1, it is clear that the share of population of SMC to the total urban population of the district was comparatively higher than that of the share of all other Municipalities in the district from the period of 1951-2001 except 1951, when the share of population in Darjeeling Municipality to the district's total urban population was higher than the share of population in SMC. Siliguri municipal town accounts for not only the largest share of urban population among the towns of Darjeeling district but accommodating more than half the total urban population of the district since 1971.

Table 4.3.1: Urban Population and its share to the Total Population in the District

Municipality/Corporation	Total Population ('000)							Share of Population to the District's Total Urban Population					
	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011 (P) ^a	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Darjeeling	34	41	43	58	73	107	135	35.57	28.11	23.79	20.42	18.45	20.60
Kalimpong	17	25	23	29	39	43	52	17.65	17.36	13.00	10.24	9.80	8.26
Kurseong	12	13	16	18	27	40	51	12.40	9.27	9.11	6.38	6.76	7.69
Siliguri (MC)	32	65	97	154	217	472	809	12.40	45.27	54.09	54.71	54.78	90.77 ^b

Source: Compiled and computed from Mitra et al (1990): "Population and Area of Cities Towns and Urban Agglomerations 1872-1971" ICSSR, District's Census Handbook of 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 ((Village and Town Directory), Census of India-2001, WB, Series-20, Vol 1, ^a Note: projected population based on the AGR of 1951-2001. ^b Note: SMC has been considered in Darjeeling district as because the smaller proportion of population belong to Jalpaiguri district.

From the above table, it is observed that the share of population has reduced substantially in almost all the municipal towns/cities except SMC during the period of 1951-1981. Between 1981 and 2001, the share of population increased marginally in Darjeeling and Kurseong Municipality. On the other hand, in SMC, the share of population to the district's total urban population has increased significantly since 1951. [As mentioned earlier, it has been noted that SMC has two parts; part-I belonging to Darjeeling district with 54.69 percent population to the total urban population of Darjeeling district and part-II belonging to Jalpaiguri district with 30.94 percent population to the total urban population of Jalpaiguri district. As a small proportion of population in SMC belongs to Jalpaiguri district, hence SMC as a whole has been considered under Darjeeling district and that's why the share of population in SMC to the total population of Darjeeling district in 2001 shown the figure of 90.77 percent and as a result the total percentage of population in all the municipal areas has crossed 100 percent].

4.3.2: Density, Urban Concentration and Annual Growth Rate of Population in Municipalities of Darjeeling District

Table 4.3.2 depicts the density, urban concentration and annual growth rate of population in the municipal town of Darjeeling district, where it is found that the density of population in Siliguri Municipality area was substantially high over the decades. The alarming point is that the density of population in the SMC was much higher than that of the density in all other Municipalities of the district and the state since 1951. On the other hand, compared to other municipal corporations in the state, the density of population in SMC was significantly higher than that of the density in othe municipal corporation in the state except Kolkata and Howrah Municipal Corporation, where the density of population were much higher than the density of Siliguri Municipal Corporation in 2001.

Table 4.3.2: Density, Urban Concentration and Annual Growth Rate of Population in Municipalities of Darjeeling District

Municipality/ Corporation	Density Per Sq. Km						Index of Concentration*				
	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	1951-61	61-71	71-81	81-91	91-01
Darjeeling	3164	3846	4065	5450	6912	10142	-7.46	-4.32	-3.37	-1.97	2.15
Kalimpong	1789	2892	2699	3328	4474	4954	-0.29	-4.36	-2.76	-0.43	-1.54
Kurseong	3020	2655	3252	3566	5299	7847	-3.13	-0.16	-2.73	0.37	0.93
Siliguri (MC)	3485	4213	6273	9934	13961	11274	10.89	8.83	0.62	0.06	35.99
Municipality	Annual Growth Rate										
	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-01						
Darjeeling (M)	1.92	0.53	3.00	2.41	3.91						
Kalimpong(M)	4.18	-0.69	2.12	3.00	1.02						
Kurseong (M)	1.36	2.05	0.92	4.04	4.11						
Siliguri (MC)	7.26	4.06	4.70	3.46	8.09						

Source: District's Census Handbook of 1971, 1981, 1991 (Village and Town Directory), Census of India-2001, WB, Series-20, Vol.1. **Note:** * Index of urban concentration = share of urban population to the total urban population of the district in the current year- share of urban population to the total urban population of the district in the previous year

Again, it is abundantly clear from the above table that among the four municipal towns in Darjeeling district, the index of concentration of urban population (a process in which an increasing proportion of urban population is concentrated in a particular area i.e. the higher the degree of urban concentration the higher is the inflow of migration in that area) in SMC was the highest over all the decades. Of the four municipal towns, in terms of urban concentration SMC alone accounted for around 55 percent of the total urban population between the periods of 1971 to 2001. From the table it is also observed that during the periods of 1951-1991, the degree of urban

concentration was declining in all the municipal towns, but in 2001, the index of concentration increased further in Darjeeling, Kurseong and SMCA.

The annual growth rates of the four municipal towns in Darjeeling district showed that the growth rates were exceptionally higher in SMC compared to the growth rates of all other municipal areas in the district for all the decades. The annual growth rate of SMC during the period 1991-2001 was not only higher (8.09 percent) than the north Bengal region (2.51 percent), rest of Bengal region (1.76 percent) and the state (1.83 percent) but was also higher than the growth rate of all the municipal corporations in West Bengal (the State) namely AMC (6.13 percent), DMC (1.48 percent), CMC (3.03 percent), HMC (0.59 percent) and KMC (0.39 percent) in West Bengal as well as the million plus cities like Greater Mumbai (2.70 percent), Kolkata (1.82 percent), Delhi (4.34 percent) and Chennai (1.92 percent) (NIUA, 2008).

It has also been seen that the inflow of population among the towns/cities of Darjeeling district was highest in SMC during the period 1991-2001 with 8.09 percent urban growth rate, which was largely due to the reclassification of the municipal area and immigration from the neighboring districts and from within the district. As earlier mentioned, owing to Partition of India in 1947, there was a large movement of Displaced Person from East Pakistan to this region registering an annual growth rate of 7.26 percent between 1951 and 61. In the third phase, there was huge influx of population in SMC with the growth rate of 4.70 percent between 1971 and 1981 following the Bangladesh war of liberation in 1971.

Various studies stated that on the whole, during the period 1951-71, the huge influx of population to SMC was of immigrant refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan. A point should be noted that the immigrant refugees were mostly Bengali Hindus from erstwhile East Pakistan. In addition to this a significant number of refugees from Assam moved in to SMC, who were forced to leave Assam due to communal riots. Large number of refugees from border areas due to Indo-China border conflict coupled with construction of military establishments and increase in communication facilities, all contributed to the steady growth of migrant population. They came to occupy a quantitatively important segment of population in the district with the majority having settled in the plains of Siliguri sub-division. Further in 1971-81, the Bangladesh war added to the already broad population base but after 1981, important

state government offices were established in Siliguri to facilitate administration while attracting employment in the tertiary sector.

4.4: Migration Characteristics in SMC and other Urban Agglomerations (UAs) in North Bengal

4.4.1: Total Population, Migrants and Annual Growth Rate of UAs / Cities in North Bengal

The six districts of North Bengal have experienced phenomenal growth in urban areas over the past two decades. The growth experienced by Siliguri Municipal Corporation however has been overwhelming, outweighing all the other UAs. According to Census 2001, the absolute number of migrants was the highest at 231 thousand in SMC, followed by approximately 70 thousand in English Bazaar UA (Malda district), 50 thousand in Raiganj UA (Uttar Dinajpur district), 46 thousand in Balurghat UA (Dakshin Dinajpur district), and around 39 thousand in Alipurduar UA (Jalpaiguri district) The percentage of urban migrants to the total population in the Urban Agglomerations/ Cities of North Bengal, SMC has recorded significantly higher percentage of migrants (81.63 percent) in 1991. The percentage of migrants in SMC was higher than that of the proportions in all other UAs of North Bengal region. The percentage of migrants to the total population in all the UAs of North Bengal have also decreased sharply between the period of 1991-2001, except Balurghat UA, where the proportion of migrants increased marginally from 29.76 to 31.93 percent in 1991-2001. But, the notable point is that the proportion of migrants reduced significantly by around two times during the same periods of time in SMCA.

Table 4.4.1: Total Population/ Migrants and Annual Growth Rate to UAs / Cities in North Bengal by Place of Last Residence

Urban Agglomerations (UAs) / City	Total Population (in '000)		Total Migrants (in '000)		Percentage of Migrants		Annual Growth Rate of Population	Annual Growth Rate of Migrants
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	(1991-01)	(1991-01)
Alipurduar UA	102.80	114.00	37.30	39.40	36.30	34.52	1.04	0.54
Siliguri MC	217.00	472.40	177.10	231.30	81.63	48.96	8.09	2.71
Balurghat UA	126.20	143.30	37.60	45.80	29.76	31.93	1.28	2.00
Raiganj UA	159.30	175.00	46.10	50.20	28.97	28.68	0.95	0.85
English Bazar UA	177.20	224.40	70.30	78.80	39.66	35.12	2.39	1.16

Source: Census of India-1991, WB, Series-26, part- VA & VB, D Series, Migration tables, Census of India-1991, WB, Series-26, part-II, A Census of India -2001, WB, (Migration tables in electronic Media) Census of India - 2001, WB, Series-20, Vol.1, table A5, A6 & A7.

The annual growth rates of total population and migrant population in SMC were substantially higher than all other UAs of North Bengal during 1991-2001. The growth rate of population and migrants in SMC were about 7.8 and 1.4 times higher than the growth rate of Alipurduar UAs, 6.3 and 1.4 times higher than that of the growth rates of Balurghat UAs, 8.5 and 3.2 times higher than that of the growth rates of Raiganj UAs and 3.4 and 2.3 times higher than that of the growth rates of English Bazaar UAs (Table-4.4.1). One point should be noted that the annual growth rate of population in all the UAs and cities of North Bengal were higher than the growth rate of migrant population except Balurghat UAs, where the annual growth rate of migrant population was higher than the growth rate of urban population during 1991-2001.

4.4.2: Migration by Reasons to UAs/Cities

The distribution of migrant population by reasons as enumerated in Census (Table-4.4.2) for the UAs and cities of North Bengal during the period of 1991-2001 shows that in SMC, a greater proportion of population migrated primarily owing to family movement, followed by other reasons such as employment, marriage, business and education.

From Table 4.4.2 shown later, it has also been seen that the proportion of migrant population by reasons in all categories of SMC has reduced sharply during the period 1991-2001, except migration due to other reasons. The decline in migration was highest in case of nuptial migration, followed by family movement, employment, business and education. In contrast, the proportion of migration due to other reasons in SMC increased from 19.36 percent in 1991 to 34.30 percent in 2001. Among all the UAs, the proportion of migration due to employment reason was highest in SMC during 1991-2001. Similarly, percentage of migration due to business reasons was also highest in SMC among all the UAs in north Bengal region. From the Table 4.3.2, one of the important features that deserve attention is the high percentage of migration owing to education in Raiganj UA, followed by Balurghat UA during the period 1991-2001. But in contrast, the proportion of migration was lowest for education in SMC over the same period.

4.5: Social Characteristics in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

4.5.1: Literacy Rate and Sex Ratio

As noted in the earlier chapter, literacy rate of Darjeeling district have consistently remained the highest among the 6 districts of North Bengal. As such, the district also has a favourable sex ratio compared to the other 6 districts. However, the favourable sex ratio is not uniform throughout the district as is seen in Table 4.5.1. The Table depicts the sex ratio and literacy rate in the municipal towns of Darjeeling district, where, the sex ratio (male per 1000 females) in SMC was not only lower (885) among the other Municipal towns of the district, but also lower than that of the other municipal corporations in the state namely AMC (895), CMC (927) and the state (893) (Census, 2001). On the other hand, it is also observed that the sex ratio of SMC was much higher than that of the sex ratio of million plus cities namely greater Mumbai (822), Kolkata (869), Delhi (822) (NIUA, 2008). The low sex-ratio may be due to the poor health of women and hence lower life expectancy in addition to increasing male migration, among other reasons.

Education is one of the most important indicators of social development. It plays a significant role in devising the livelihood strategy of the people. Table 4.5.1 clearly shows that among all the municipal areas of Darjeeling district, the highest literacy rate has been recorded by Kurseong Municipality, followed by Darjeeling Municipality, Kalimpong Municipality and SMC with 74.23 percent literacy rate has registered the lowest position in 1991. But in 2001, the highest literacy rate has been registered Darjeeling Municipality, followed by Kurseong Kalimpong Municipality and SMC again recorded a far lower level of literacy rate (68.81 percent) in 2001. Female literacy rate was very low (63.25 percent) in SMC representing the general characteristics of the state. The notable point is that the gender gap in education was much lower in SMC compared to the other municipal areas in 1991, but in 2001, the highest gender gap in education has been observed in Kalimpong Municipality, followed by SMC.

Table (4.4:2): Percentage Distribution of Migrants (Place of Last Residence) by reasons to UAs/Cities of North Bengal by Reasons

Urban Agglomerations / City	Employment		Business		Education		Family Moved		Marriage		Others	
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
Alipurduar U.A	13.12	11.08	2.49	2.41	2.87	1.18	33.12	35.46	21.87	23.69	26.53	25.47
Siliguri MC	20.28	17.37	6	4.47	2.01	0.68	34.13	29.56	18.22	13.61	19.36	34.3
Balurghat UA	8.57	8.64	1.52	1.94	3.14	2.78	33.46	35.8	33.99	22.48	19.31	28.37
Raiganj UA	9.3	12.35	2.67	3.31	5.27	4.66	22.62	33.46	20.9	22.62	39.25	23.62
English Bazar UA	16.9	11.21	2.9	3.07	2.25	1.52	30.14	30.73	23.44	20.09	24.37	33.37

Source: Computed from Census of India-1991, WB, Series-26, part- VA & VB D Series, Migration tables, Census of India -2001, WB.

Table 4.5:1: Literacy Rate and Sex Ratio in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Municipality/ Corporation	Sex ratio						Literacy rate (Excluding 0-6 age)							
	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	1991				2001			
							P	M	F	Gender Gap	P	M	F	Gender Gap
Darjeeling (M)	825	788	865	862	935	915	83.04	88.14	77.56	10.58	89.81	93.49	85.79	7.70
Kalimpong (M)	811	800	848	932	944	928	79.12	84.17	73.73	10.44	86.11	91.54	80.26	11.28
Kurseong (M)	835	862	887	915	913	961	83.8	88.53	78.55	9.98	89.59	93.66	85.35	8.31
Siliguri (MC)	554	651	736	794	824	885	74.23	78.6	68.81	9.79	77.93	82.79	72.38	10.41

District's Census Handbook of 1971, 1981, 1991 (Village and Town Directory)
Census of India-2001, WB, Series-20, Vol.1

4.6: Economic Livelihoods in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

4.6.1: Work Participation Rate

In the vast area of Darjeeling district, the only existing tea industry was unable to accelerate economic development and it has also been associated with poor industrialisation in the area. A majority of the urban dwellers earn their livelihood from the service sector. Lack of expansion of the formal sector employment associated with the ever expanding informal sector resulted in serious unbalanced economic growth. This sector primarily absorbs the poor rural migrants. The majority in the informal sector in Siliguri are the street vendors, hawkers, rickshaw pullers, construction workers, labour in a wholesale shops, repairing, domestic helps, drivers, etc (Ghosh et al, op cit). According to Dasgupta (1988), retail trade is the most important source of employment in most of the towns of North Bengal. In terms of population-employment ratio for the wholesale trade, the North Bengal region can be termed as wholesale oriented town.

Table 4.6:1 Work Participation Rate (WPR) in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Municipality WPR	1971			1981			1991			2001		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Darjeeling	28.69	43.77	11.25	29.40	45.52	10.71	25.08	39.17	10.00	30.98	44.90	15.78
Kalimpong	27.89	44.62	8.17	27.01	42.33	10.56	26.04	41.43	9.73	31.12	48.58	12.32
Kurseong	25.12	39.16	9.29	26.49	41.40	10.19	24.65	37.87	10.16	25.16	36.63	13.22
Siliguri (MC)	30.93	51.57	2.91	31.68	52.95	4.89	33.53	54.36	8.25	33.46	54.08	10.16

Source: Computed from District's Census Handbook of 1971, 1981, 1991 (Village and Town Directory), Census of India-2001, WB, Series-20, Vol.1

Table 4.6.1 illustrates the work participation rate in the municipal towns of Darjeeling district, where it is found that over the period 1971-2001, the WPR in SMC was not only higher among municipal towns in Darjeeling district but also higher than the WPR of urban Darjeeling district, North Bengal region and the State. The higher growth rate of population in SMC may be partly due to greater employment opportunities in the informal sectors. The gender disparity i.e., the difference between male and female WPR is clear from the Table 4.5.1. During the period between 1971-2001, the female WPR in SMC was lower not only among all the municipal towns in the district but also lower than the WPR of north Bengal region, rest of Bengal region and the State except 1991, when the female WPR was much higher in SMC compared to the male counterpart.

4.7: Demographic and Social characteristics of Slum & Non-Slum Populations in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Generally, cities are the engine of economic growth. Rapid pace of urbanization and growth of new towns/ cities to an extent has experienced the excessive demand for basic services and lack of these services cause deterioration of the physical environment. The quality of life suffers due to continuous inflow of migrants and as a result the gap between demand and supply of basic services and other infrastructure increases in these areas. Unchecked population growth in the cities creates housing problem due to high land prices which forces the urban poor to settle for informal solutions resulting in mushrooming of slums and squatter settlements.

The expanding economic opportunities in the tertiary sector of Siliguri have influenced the inflow of migration from the neighboring districts and the state. As Siliguri is becoming the fastest growing town in the state as well as in the country, consequently slum population are also growing at an alarming pace. A majority of the slum dwellers are engaged in unskilled, low paid jobs and if self employed, living at subsistence level of income. They are not only low skilled but also illiterate. Employment generation programmes in the informal sector are very often threatened by the lack of skills of the poor. The status of health, particularly that of mother and child is also very poor in the slums. Any programme on slum development thus should concentrate not only on improving the level of earning but also on improving the social and physical infrastructure simultaneously so that there is overall improvement in the quality of life which will help in pulling the slum dwellers out of the vicious circle of poverty (Ghosh et al, 1995). SMC has been attaching priority in its budget on the welfare of the economically weaker section of the people generally living in slum areas. According to Census 2001, there were 154 notified slums in 47 wards of SMC with 1, 75,012 slum populations in 33,230 families; whereas in Darjeeling municipality, the total number of slum population was only 8,329 comprising 4,360 males and 3,969 females. With the objective of involving poor people for whom most of the developmental activities have been planned, with the passing of time 15 Community Development Society (CDS, registered under Society Act) and Resident Community Volunteer (RCV) have been formed in SMC. Out of 33,230 families, the number of BPL families was 26,000 (Report of SMC, 2005).

A total of 0.38 million population comprising 0.20 million male and 0.18 million females have been enumerated in the slums of 7 cities/towns spread across 5 districts of North Bengal region. The slum population constitute more than one third (31.46 percent) of the total urban population in the North Bengal region, as against 1/4th slum population in the State (27.1 percent) i.e., concentration of slum population in North Bengal was much higher than the concentration of slum population in rest of the State (26.73 percent).

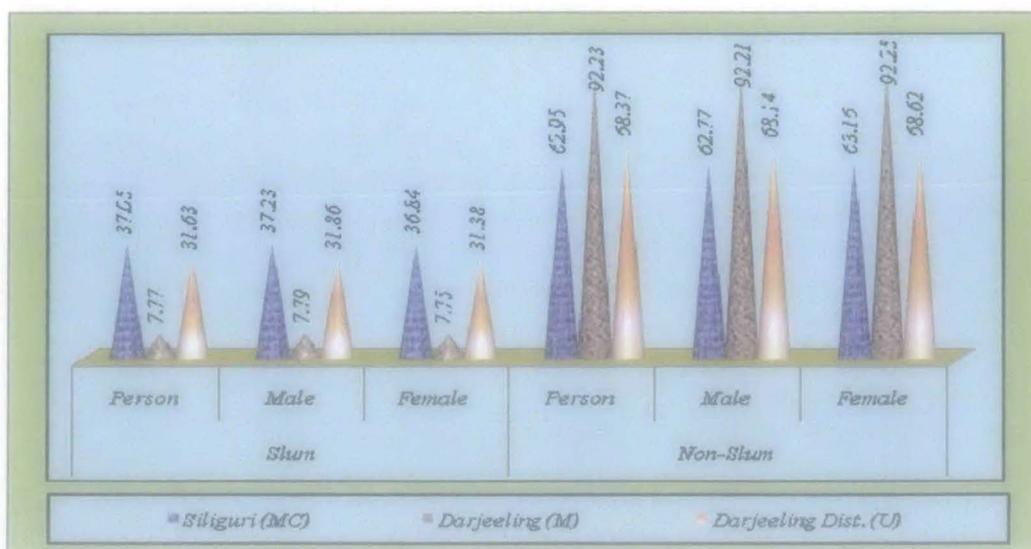
According to Census 2001, the concentration of slum population in 6 large cities of West Bengal is evident from the fact that about 52 percent of the total slum population (Cities/Towns reporting slums, Census 2001) in West Bengal lives in these cities. As an absolute number the highest slum population has been registered by Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) about 1485 thousand (32.48 percent of the total population), followed by Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC) about 175 thousand (37.05 percent), Asansol Municipal Corporation (AMC) about 158 thousand (33.30 percent), Durgapur Municipal Corporation (DMC) about 147 thousand (29.79 percent), Howrah Municipal Corporation (HMC) about 118 thousand (11.74 percent), and Chandannagar Municipal Corporation (CMC) about 43 thousand (26.45 percent).

On the other hand, among the six Municipal Corporations in West Bengal, the KMC alone accounts for about one third (36 percent) of the slum population to the total slum population in the State reporting slums in towns/cities (Census 2001). Next to KMC, the second highest share of slum population in the State has been concentrated in SMC (4.25 percent), followed by AMC (3.85 percent), DMC (3.57 percent), HMC (2.87 percent), and CMC (1.04 percent).

4.7.1: Slum & Non-slum Population in the Municipal towns of Darjeeling District

Census data on slums depict that among districts of North Bengal region, the highest share of slum population was in Darjeeling district (47.96 percent). On the other hand, 96.46 percent slum population to the total slum population in the district is housed by SMC alone and the remaining 4.54 percent housed by the Darjeeling municipality.

Figure 4.7.1: Percentage of Slum & Non-slum Population to the total Slum & Non-Slum population in the Municipal towns and Darjeeling District (U)



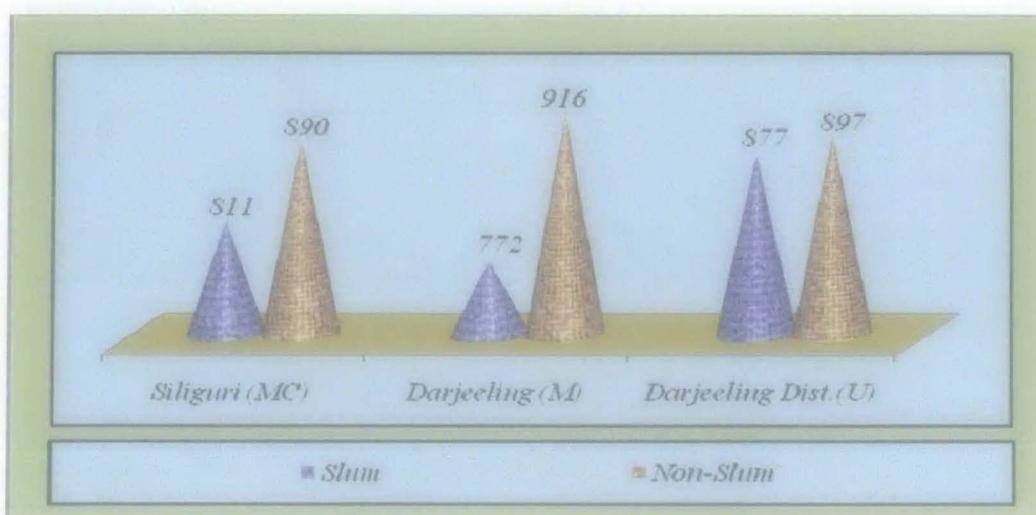
Source: Slums of India, Census 2001, Vol.1, Government of India

In terms of concentration of slums in the towns/cities of North Bengal region, it is found from Figure (4.7.1) that the SMC had highest concentration of slum population (37.05 percent), as against 7.77 percent in Darjeeling municipality and 31.63 percent in Darjeeling district as a whole. The Figure also shows that the proportion of non-slum female population in all the municipal areas and in the district were marginally higher than the proportion of males. But, in contrast, the proportion of female slum population was marginally lower than that of the males in the municipal towns and urban district as a whole. The alarming point is that the proportion of slum population of SMC (37.05 percent) was not only significantly higher than the municipal corporations in the State, the North Bengal region, and the rest of Bengal region but also higher than the million plus cities like Delhi (18.7 percent), Chennai (18.9 percent) and Kolkata (32.48 percent) to the total urban population (NUIA, 2008). The proportion of slum population in other cities and towns of north Bengal reporting slums were 40.66 percent in Raiganj Municipality, 35.99 percent in English Bazaar Municipality, 29.85 percent in Balurghat Municipality, 38.86 percent in Alipurduar Municipality and 4.77 percent in Jalpaiguri Municipality (Computed from slums of India, Census-2001)

4.7.2: Sex Ratio of Slum & Non-Slum population in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Sex composition, i.e., the distribution of population among males and females, there was preponderance of male population in the slum areas compared to non-slum areas. Figure (4.7.2) depicted the sex ratio of slums in the municipal towns and urban Darjeeling district as a whole, where, the sex ratio in the slums of SMC was 811 as against 772 in Darjeeling municipality and 877 in urban Darjeeling district. The sex ratio of slums was far below than that of the non-slum areas in all the municipal areas.

Figure (4.7.2): Sex Ratio of Slum & Non-Slum Population in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District



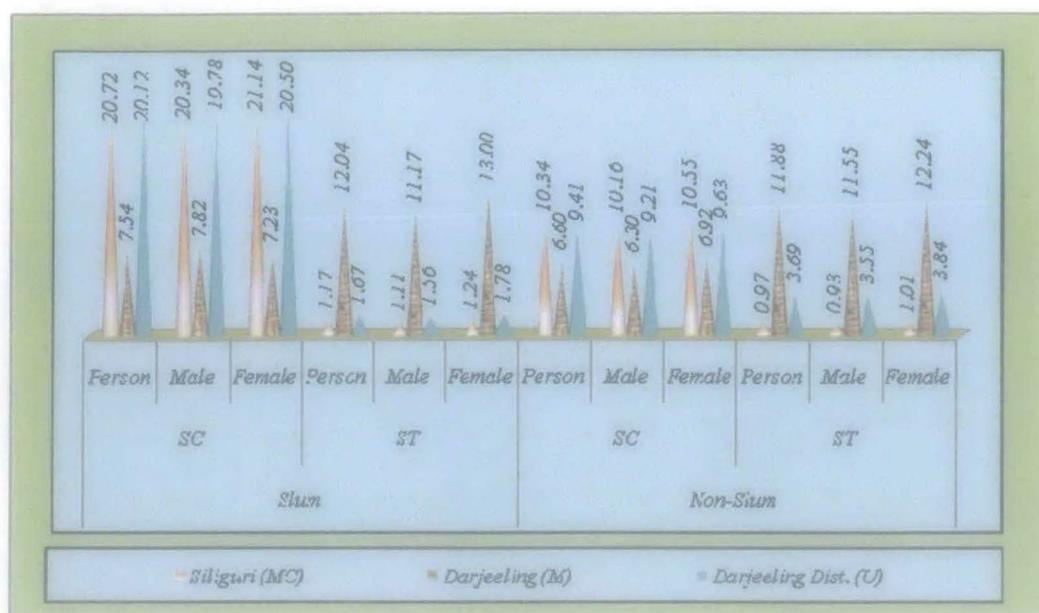
Source: Computed from Slums of India, Census 2001, Vol.1, Government of India

From the statistical data derived from the Census, it has been seen that except Balurghat and Raiganj Municipality, all other Municipalities in North Bengal region accounted for significantly lower sex ratio in slums. The lower sex ratio may be attributed to various reasons like poor access to healthcare by women, higher mortality rate of women, increasing male migration, etc.

4.7.3: Social Composition of Slum & Non-Slum Population in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Among the social characteristics, the proportions of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe slum population in the municipal areas of Darjeeling district were much higher than that of the proportions in the non-slum areas (Figure-4.7.3). In SMC, the percentage of SC slum and non-slum population was about 18 and 11 times higher than the percentage of ST population in slum and non-slum areas.

Figure (4.7.3): Percentage of SC and ST population in Slum and Non-Slum areas of the Municipal Towns/Cities in Darjeeling District.



Source: Computed from Slums of India, Census 2001, Vol.1, Government of India

On the other hand, the percentage of SC and ST population in the slums of Darjeeling municipality was higher than that of the non-slum population. In terms of social castes, the proportion of SC slum population was 3 times higher in SMC than that of the Darjeeling municipality and in contrast the ST population in Darjeeling municipality was about 10 times higher than the proportion of ST population in SMC.

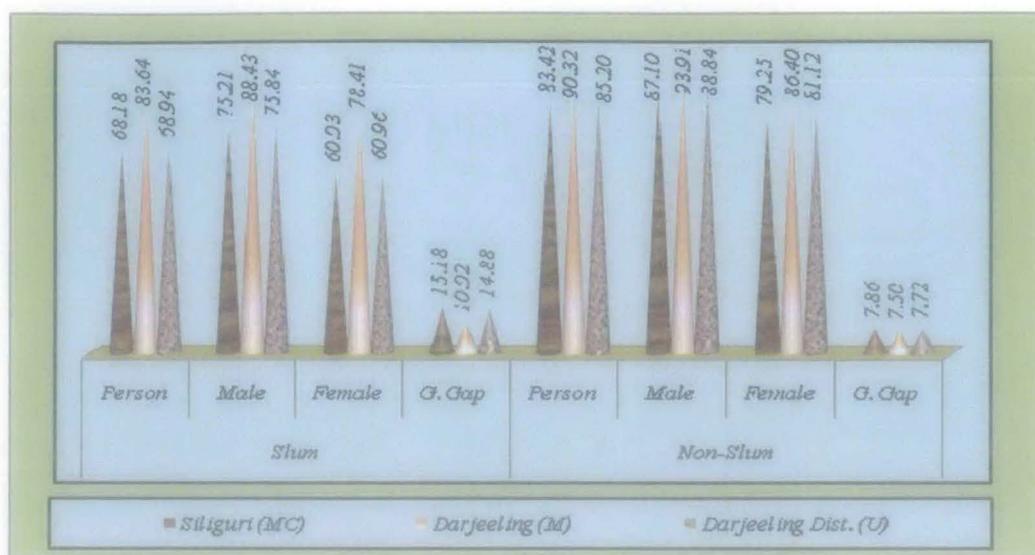
The proportion of female SC and ST in both the slum and non-slum areas to the total slum and non-slum population of SMC were slightly higher than the male counterpart. The only exception is Darjeeling municipality, while, the proportion of SC male slum population was slightly higher than the female counterpart. From the statistical evidences (Slums of India, Census, 2001), it has also been seen that the percentage of SC population in the slums of Jalpaiguri Municipality was more than two times higher (about 49 percent) than that of the proportion in Balurghat Municipality (about 22 percent).

4.7.4: Literacy Rate among Slum & Non-Slum population in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Figure (4.7.4) shows the literacy rate of slum and non-slum population in the municipal town and the district as a whole where it is found that the literacy rates among the municipal cities/towns of Darjeeling district in both the slum and non-slum

areas was much higher in Darjeeling Municipality compared to SMC and the Darjeeling district as a whole.

Figure (4.7.4): Literacy Rate among the Slum & Non-Slum population in the Municipal towns in Darjeeling District



Source: Computed from Slums of India, Census 2001, Vol.1, Government of India

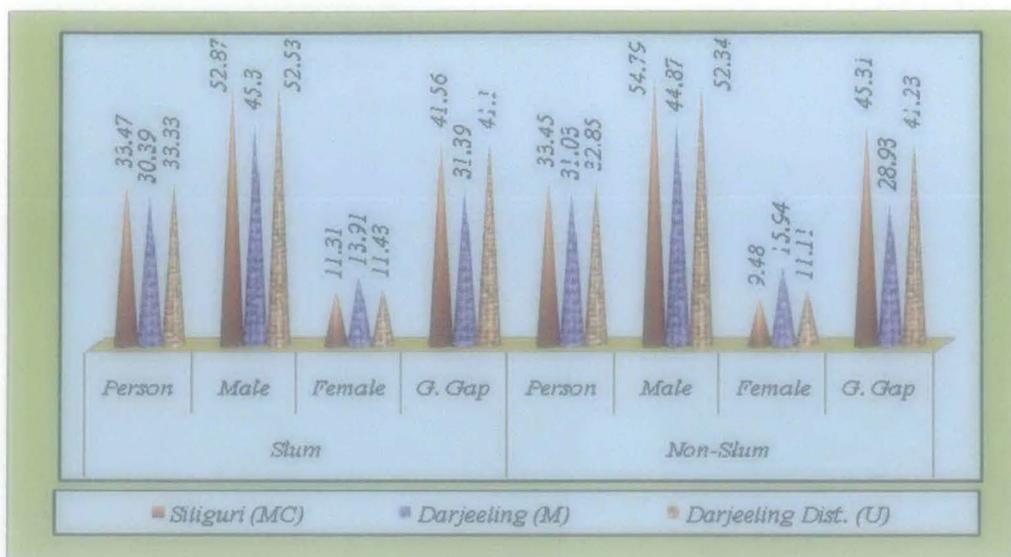
SMC accounts for 68.18 percent (75.21 percent male and 60.03 percent female) literacy rate in slums, as against 83.42 percent literacy rate (87.10 percent male and 79.25 percent female) in non-slum areas. The gender differentials in literacy rate in both the slum and non-slum areas is also evident from Figure (4.6.4), where the highest gender disparity in both the slum and non-slum areas has been observed in SMC compared to other municipal towns in the district.

4.8: Economic Activities of the Slum & Non-slum Population in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

4.8.1: Work Participation Rate of Slum & Non-slum Population in the Municipal Towns

Economic livelihood is reflected through the participation in the workforce. Table (4.8.1) shows that among the municipal areas in Darjeeling district, the WPR in SMC for both the slum and non-slum population was 33.5 percent, far higher than that of the WPRs of Darjeeling Municipality. To the total workforce in the slums of Darjeeling district, SMC alone contributes 95.86 percent, as against 4.14 percent in Darjeeling municipality.

Figure (4.8.1): Work Participation Rate (WPR) of Slum & Non-slum Population in the Towns of Darjeeling District



Source: Computed from Census 2001, Slums of India, Vol.1, Government of India.

The WPR among the female slum population in all the municipal areas was higher than the non-slum female WPR. The highest female WPR has been recorded by Darjeeling municipality in both the slum and non-slum areas (13.91 and 15.94 percent respectively) compared to the WPR of SMC (11.31 and 9.48 percent respectively) and the urban Darjeeling district (11.43 and 11.11 percent respectively). On the other hand, compared to the Darjeeling municipality and the urban Darjeeling district, the gender gap in the slum population of SMC was the highest (41.56 percentage points), as against the gender gap of non-slum population (45.31 percentage points).

4.8.2: Distribution of Workers of Slum & Non-Slum population by different Categories of Work in the municipal towns of Darjeeling District

Table (4.8.2) shows the distribution of various categories of workers among the Slum and Non-Slum population in the municipal towns and the district as a whole, where, it is clear that the percentage of main and marginal workers in the slums of SMC and Darjeeling municipality was more or less same (about 93 and 7 percent). In contrast, the proportion of main workers in the non-slum areas was highest in SMC (94.63 percent), followed by Darjeeling municipality (92.61 percent). On the other hand, the proportion of marginal workers in the non-slum areas was highest in Darjeeling

municipality (7.31 percent), and followed by SMC (5.37 percent). The percentage of female marginal workers in both the slum and non-slum areas was significantly higher than the male counterpart in both the municipal areas.

Table (4.8.2): Distribution of Main and Marginal Workers in various Categories to the total Workers in the Municipal Towns of Darjeeling District

Category of Workers		Siliguri (MC)			Darjeeling (M)			Darjeeling Dist.		
		T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Main	Slum	92.55	94.66	81.31	92.69	93.01	91.49	92.56	94.60	81.89
	Non-Slum	94.63	96.08	85.17	92.61	93.24	90.65	94.15	95.48	87.16
Marginal	Slum	7.45	5.34	18.69	7.31	6.99	8.51	7.44	5.40	18.11
	Non-Slum	5.37	3.92	14.83	7.39	6.76	9.35	5.85	4.52	12.84
Agriculture & Cultivators	Slum	0.54	0.39	1.37	2.25	1.37	4.71	0.62	0.43	1.56
	Non-Slum	0.63	0.49	1.54	1.25	1.07	1.87	0.78	0.61	1.66
Household Industry	Slum	2.39	1.96	4.70	2.88	2.53	4.17	2.41	1.98	4.67
	Non-Slum	1.49	0.92	5.20	4.87	4.83	4.96	2.29	1.75	5.12
Other	Slum	97.06	97.65	93.93	94.86	96.10	91.12	96.97	97.59	93.77
	Non-Slum	97.88	99.08	90.10	93.88	94.10	93.16	96.94	98.03	91.21

Source: Computed from Slums of India, Census 2001, Vol.1, Government of India

Among the municipal towns in Darjeeling district reporting slums, the proportion of workers engaged in agriculture and cultivation taken together was far lower in both the slum and non-slum areas of SMC, as against the proportions in Darjeeling Municipality, as well as the urban Darjeeling district. One of the striking features is that in both the slum and non-slum areas, the proportions of female workers in agriculture and cultivation taken together was significantly higher than the percentage of males.

In urban Darjeeling district, the proportion of slum workers engaged in household industry slums was higher than that of the proportion of non-slum workers. Among the municipal towns in the district reporting slums, the percentage of workers engaged in household industry was highest in Darjeeling municipality, followed by SMC. In terms of the workers engaged in household industry in both the slum and non-slum areas, the proportion of household industry workers in the slums of SMC was much higher than that of the non-slum area but the adverse scenario has been observed in Darjeeling municipality. From the Table (4.7.2), it has been seen that the proportion of female household industry workers in both the slum and non-slum areas were conventionally much higher than that of the male counterpart.

At the other extreme, the percentages of other category of workers in both the slum and non-slum areas of SMC were much higher than the percentage of Darjeeling municipality. The proportions of female workers of other category in both the slum and non-slum areas of SMC and Darjeeling municipality were far lower than the percentage of males.

4.9: Financial Scenario of Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC) Area

Due to its strategic location, employment opportunities etc., influx of large number of population to Siliguri continues from neighboring district, states and other places. As a result, Siliguri developed in an unscientific and unplanned manner with large number of informal settlements in the heart of the city and in the peripheral city. Therefore, there is an urgent need for raising the level of investment in all fronts to develop the physical infrastructure especially for the vast number of people belonging to the weaker section of the society.

4.9.1: Total and per capita Expenditure/Receipt under Different Heads in SMC between 1985-86 and 2009-10

For every financial year, SMC presents its budget for two major accounts (i) revenue accounts and (ii) capital accounts. Revenue expenditures are incurred out of the municipal revenue fund. The size of the revenue expenditure of SMC is mainly determined by the size of the available financial resources. These resources are generally classified into tax-revenue, non-tax revenue and state transfers to municipal bodies termed as grants or revenue grants. On the other hand, in the capital account, grants, loans and advances constitute the whole of capital income from which capital expenditure is financed.

With the rapid growth of population in SMC, the total receipt, both in revenue and capital accounts, has increased by about 52 times during the period 1985-86 to 2009-10. Since 2000-01, total receipt in capital accounts exceeded the total receipt in revenue accounts, except in 2004-05, where, the receipt in revenue account was higher than the capital account. Based on total receipt, total expenditure has also increased by about 61 times over the period 1985-86 to 2009-10. From Table 4.9.1 (Appendix B), it is also evident that the per capita expenditure was always lower than the per capita receipt in SMC, except in the year 1989-90, when per capita expenditure exceeded the per capita receipt. In per capita terms, both the revenue and

capital expenditure in capital account have increased sharply except in 2004-05, when per capita revenue and expenditure in capital account have decreased slightly from the previous period. Similarly per capita revenue receipt and expenditure have increased notably during the period 1985-86 to 2009-10. The fact is that the capital receipt consists of grants for various schemes for physical infrastructure and the capital expenditure consists of expenditure on development projects like water supply, drainage and other public works. The estimates of per capita capital expenditure in SMC exceed per capita expenditure in revenue account from 1989-90 to 2009-10, the only exception was 2004-05.

4.9.2: Expenditure under different heads by Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) & Slum Improvement Cell in SMC (1985-86 to 2009-10)

Again, Table 4.9.2 shows that total expenditure for Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) & Slum Improvement, and its percentage to the total expenditure in SMC, have increased by approximately 6 and 3 times respectively, over the decade 2000-01 to 2009-10. In per capita terms, the table clearly shows that the per capita expenditure for UPA and Slum improvement was far lower than the per capita expenditure as a whole for the successive years. Between the periods of 1985-86 to 2000-2001, per capita total expenditure as a whole increased substantially, but there was no available data on the expenditure of UPA and slum improvement. Thus, the data available over the periods of 2000-2001 to 2009-2010, it is observed that there was no steady increase or decrease in per capita expenditure for UPA and slum improvement and as a whole. For example, per capita expenditure as a whole and for UPA and slum improvement decreased significantly during 2004-05 and 2009-10, as against significant increase in 2008-09.

Total expenditure for UPA and Slum Improvement in revenue account was much lower than that of the total expenditure in capital account during the period of 2000-01 to 2009-10. Similarly, percentage of expenditures for UPA and Slum Improvement in capital account was far higher than the percentage of expenditure in revenue account. It has also been observed that per capita expenditure for UPA and slum improvement in revenue account was highest in 2000-01 and thereafter it has declined gradually during the period of 2004-05 to 2008-09, but in 2009-10, per capita expenditure for the same increased marginally. Per capita expenditure for UPA

and Slum Improvement as a whole was much lower in 2004-05, possibly due to discontinuing the disbursement of funds for certain development projects.

Table 4.9.2: Per capita Expenditure under UPA & Slum Improvement in SMC

Heads of Receipt and Expenditure in UPA & Slum improvement	1985-1986	1989-1990	2000-2001	2004-2005	2008-2009	2009-2010
Total Expenditure for UPA & Slum Improvement (in Lakh)	NA	NA	202.86	262.87	1385.82	1284.41
Percentage of Expenditure for UPA & Slum improvement to total expenditure of SMC	NA	NA	6.98	9.59	19.69	22.68
Per Capita Total Expenditure for UPA & Slum Improvement (in Rs)	NA	NA	115.91	106.41	429.86	369.11
Total Expenditure for UPA & Slum Improvement (in Rs) in Revenue A/C (in Rs)	NA	NA	17.66	24.91	27.86	34.78
Percentage of Expenditure in Revenue A/C for UPA & Slum improvement to total Revenue Expenditure of SMC	NA	NA	1.63	1.6	1.11	1.37
Per Capita Expenditure for UPA & Slum Improvement (in Rs) in Revenue A/C (in Rs)	NA	NA	10.09	10.08	8.64	9.99
Total Expenditure for UPA & Slum Improvement (in Rs) in Capital A/C (in Lakh)	NA	NA	185.2	237.97	1357.97	1249.63
Percentage of Expenditure in Capital A/C for UPA & Slum improvement to total Capital Expenditure of SMC	NA	NA	10.14	20.06	29.97	39.93
Per Capita Expenditure for UPA & Slum Improvement (in Rs) in Capital A/C (in Rs)	NA	NA	105.82	96.33	421.22	359.12

Source: Computed from various budgets and Reports SMC, ****Note:** Projected slum population in 1989-90 has been calculated from 63 slums in 30 wards when Siliguri was under municipality and the estimated/projected slum population of 2004-05, 2008-09 and 2009-10 has been calculated on the basis of A.G.R for the period of 1989-90 and census slum figure of 1991. All per capita figures are calculated from available data.

Total expenditure for UPA and Slum Improvement in revenue account was much lower than that of the total expenditure in capital account during the period of 2000-01 to 2009-10. Similarly, percentage of expenditures for UPA and Slum Improvement in capital account was far higher than the percentage of expenditure in revenue account. It has also been observed that per capita expenditure for UPA and slum improvement in revenue account was highest in 2000-01 and thereafter it has declined gradually during the period of 2004-05 to 2008-09, but in 2009-10, per capita expenditure for the same increased marginally. Per capita expenditure for UPA and Slum Improvement as a whole was much lower in 2004-05, possibly due to discontinuing the disbursement of funds for certain development projects.

4.9.3: Financial Status of the Schemes under Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP)

The financial status under UPA & Slum Improvement has already been discussed. The schemes under IHSDP are closely associated with the urban poor and the slum dwellers. Hence it is essential to discuss about the financial support of IHSDP and its progress in SMCA. From the Table 4.9.3 (Appendix B), it is clear that from 2007-2009, a sum of Rs. 9679.69 lakhs has been released in three different phases of IHSDP by the Central and State government, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), including beneficiary contribution for the development projects namely dwelling houses among the urban poor, slum infrastructural development, and other development projects. The time limit for implementing the project under IHSDP has also been mentioned for different phases. Out of total project cost in three phases, the highest fund has been made by Central Government with Rs. 6933.67 lakhs (71.63 percent), followed by the State with Rs. 1705.1 lakhs (17.61 percent), beneficiary contribution of 810.08 lakhs (8.37 percent), and ULBs with Rs. 230.88 lakhs (2.38 percent). As a whole, 52.31 percent of total project cost under IHSDP (all phases) during the period 2007-09 has been released for the dwelling units of the urban poor, followed by 'other' development projects (41.41 percent), and for slum infrastructural development project only 6.22 percent of the total project cost has been released during that period (Table 4.9.3).

4.9: Concluding Remarks

With more than one third of the total population under Siliguri Municipal Corporation Area residing in slums, it warrants research on the development of such areas and the quality of life that the population in these slums is subject to. While several development programmes aim at elevating the socioeconomic status of the urban poor, it actually falls short of reaching the ever growing slum population. In spite of the poor infrastructural facilities and the poor living conditions of the slum population, they devise their own strategies to survive the various odds. Of the various strategies, social networking in seeking employment opportunities and income generation is deemed to be an important strategy. The following empirical chapters deal with the survey results undertaken in several slums under the SMCA to justify the need for research on the slum population as well as to seek answers to the research questions and validation of the hypotheses.

References

- Basu, T & Saha, S (2011): "A Study on Factors Related to Urban Growth of a Municipal Corporation and Emerging Challenges: A Case of Siliguri Municipal Corporation", *Journal of Geography and Regional Planning* Vol. 4, No.14, (683-694).
- Budgets of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, 1985-86 to 2009-10.
- Census of India, 2001, West Bengal, (Migration Tables in CD format).
- Census of India -2001, West Bengal, Series-20, Vol.1, Table: A5, A6 & A7.
- Census of India-1991, West Bengal, Series-26, Part- VA & VB D Series, Migration Tables).
- Census of India-1991, WB, Series-26, part- VA & VB, D Series, Migration tables.
- Chakraborty, K A (1992): "Urbanisation Trend in Siliguri" Paper Presented at the Seminar on Siliguri's Development Perspective, Siliguri, 14-15th December, 1990, Institute of Local Government & Urban Studies (ILGUS), Dept. of Municipal Affairs, West Bengal.
- Chattopadhyaya, S (2010): "Siliguri Atit Diner Kichu Katha Abang Purosangsthar Cramobibartan", Purobarta, Siliguri Municipal Corporation.
- Das, G (1988), (*op. cit*).
- District's Census Handbook, 1971, 1981, 1991 (Village and Town Directory), West Bengal.
- District's Census Handbook, 1971, 1981, 1991 (Village and Town Directory) West Bengal.
- Financial and Physical Progress of IHSDP Scheme, Phase, I, II and III, Under Siliguri Municipal Corporation, 26th Nov. 2010.
- Ghosh, A; Ahmad, S.S and Mitra, S (1995): "*Basic Services for the Urban Poor: A Study of Baroda, Bhilwara, Sambalpur and Siliguri*" Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, pp: 188-265.
- Hand Book of Urban Statistics (2008), National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), New Delhi.
- Malley, L.S.S.O (1907), (*op. cit*).
- Mitra et al (1990), (*op. cit*).
- Perspective Plan 2025 (2004), Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area, Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority, Status Report, Vol. 1 & II.
- Urban Poverty Alleviation Report (2005): Siliguri Municipal Corporation, Government of West Bengal.