

## **ABSTRACT**

**The entire work is divided into seven chapters. Chapter -I is Conceptual and theoretical framework, Chapter-II is review of related literature, Chapter –III presents the Research Methodology, Chapter-IV gives an overview of the Slum profile of Silchar, Chapter- V narrates the government policies and NGO’S initiatives for slum development, Chapter-VI deals with the Participation of women in slum improvement programmes and Chapter- VII is findings and conclusion.**

## **CHAPTER – I**

### **CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Chapter one deals with introduction, Concept and theory of Slums and urbanization, and an over view of slums in the world including India and North-East India. This chapter also presents the framework of the study which includes rationale of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study.

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Urbanisation is one of the major processes of social change sweeping all over the world, especially in developing countries, where urban growth rate is rapidly increasing. The formation of slums is closely linked to urbanization. The phenomenon of slum is regarded as a major problem of Urbanization. There is hardly any city in the world without any slums. Renowned cities of the world like Mexico city, Buenos Aires, Medellin, Calli etc have slums and shanty

towns. Slum is a heavily populated urban informal settlement characterized by substandard housing and squalor. While slums differ from country to country either in size or in characteristics, most of them lack reliable sanitation services, supply of clean water, electricity, timely law enforcement and other basic services. Slum residences vary from shanty houses to professionally-built dwellings that because of poor-quality design or construction have deteriorated into slums.

Slums are the enforced habitat of families which are economically, socially and educationally weak. The worst slums comprise of shanties, or make-shift structures of tin sheets, plastic sheets, even old gunny bags, mud or brick walls, without any plan or pattern and are unauthorised structures on encroaches Government land. The Encyclopaedia of Social Work defines a slum as a 'squalid, festering morass of lost hope, debased standard and despair', which 'generates a morbid mentality and blunts community consciousness and aesthetic values'.

#### **SLUMS: INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO**

Desai and Pillai (1972) in their attempt to draw a picture on slums situation all over the world, has stated that the slum has come to be accepted as a living reality, an inevitable phenomenon accompanying urban growth in all countries. Even the United States, the richest and technologically the most advanced country in the world has slums.

According to UN-HABITAT, around 33% of the urban population in the developing world in 2012, or about 863 million people, lived in slums.

The proportion of urban population living in slums was highest in Sub-Saharan Africa (61.7%), followed by South Asia (35%), Southeast Asia (31%), East Asia (28.2%), West Asia (24.6%), Oceania (24.1%), Latin America and the Caribbean (23.5%), and North Africa (13.3%). Among individual countries, the proportion of urban residents living in slum areas in 2009 was highest in the Central African Republic (95.9%). Between 1990 and 2010 the percentage of people living in slums dropped, even as the total urban population increased. The world's largest slum city is in Mexico City

#### **FIVE BIGGEST SLUMS IN THE WORLD**

With around four million residents, *Neza-Chalco-Itza* barrio has been considered the largest slum area in the world. Unique to this area is its diversity in housing arrangements. In recent years, *Orangi* has crept up in notoriety as the largest slum in Asia, Orangi was once the center of ethnic conflict between the Pathan and Bihari gangs. Since then, the area has become known for its self-financed sewage system and its booming cottage industry. *Dharavi Slum* in Mumbai India, spreads out over parts of the Sion, Bandra, Kurla, and Kalina suburbs of Mumbai. Dharavi exports goods around the world, and the total turnover of these exported goods is estimated to be more than \$650 million US dollars each year. A neighborhood in Nairobi, Kenya, the *Kibera slum* is the second largest in Africa, Kibera is often used as the model for the

environmental impact of informal settlement. Cape Town, South Africa is a huge, sprawling city that has given rise to a number of new neighbourhoods and townships over the past decade. *Khayelitsha* is now the biggest of these and the community had a population explosion after apartheid ended and blacks rushed into Cape Town for jobs.

### **SLUMS IN INDIA**

Slums have come to form an integral part of the phenomena of urbanization in India. All four Metropolitan city in India viz Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai have slums. According to 2011 slum population Survey of India, Mumbai has 40%, Kolkata has 30%, Chennai has 29% and Delhi has 15% slum population.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the present study are:-

1. To study about the various developmental programmes introduced by government and various NGOs for benefit of slum areas.
2. To know awareness of slum women about the various developmental activities.
3. To examine the implementation of various development programmes and participation of women in the programmes.

4. To find out the constraints faced by slum women in participation of slum improvement programmes.
5. To assess the impact of slum improvement programmes on women.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

No hypothesis is formulated here. Rather, the study is designed to be descriptive, therefore the proposed study will try to answer the following research questions:-

1. How far are slum women aware of the various improvement programmes?
2. Is education an important factor of participation in the developmental programme?
3. Do slum women participate in implementation of improvement programmes?
4. Do slum women participate in monitoring and evaluation of improvement programmes?
5. Do slum women participate in sharing the benefits of development?

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter deals with review of literature on problems of slum in India and abroad. Empirical studies related to problems of slums, slum developmental programmes initiated by government and NGOs as well as participation of slums in development programmes in India and abroad are reviewed. Review of following books and articles have been made for the purpose of identifying research gap and bridging up the same to the possible extent.

The empirical studies show that slums in Indian towns and cities are confronted with several problems pertaining to their basic amenities of life. Government measures are being taken to eradicate slum problems by providing them with minimum necessary things like housing, sanitation, water supply etc. But improvement of slum community by involving them in their improvements programmes is not taking place everywhere. The recent trend of community development is to involve the community people in the process of development. It is important to note that participation of slums in slum improvement programmes is not taking place properly and there is scanty empirical works on this particular issue. **K.N. Venkatarayappa's** study (1972), **R.P. Misra's** study (1978), **Walter Fernandes'** (1991) work '*Urbanisation, Coping Mechanisms and slum women's status*', **Susanne Thorbek's** (1994) study '*Gender and slum culture in Urban Asia*', **Vandana Desai's** (1995) study '*Community participation and slum housing*', **Hans Schenk's** work (2001) in his

study '*Living in India's Slum: A case study of Bangalore*', **P.V.L. Ramana's** (2002) study on '*Women in slums: A Study of women in Muslim slums of Visakhapatnam*', **Jean Dreze's** and **Amartya Kumar Sen's** (2002) study '*India: Development and Participation*', **Sundar Burra, Sheela Patel and Thomas Kerr's** (2003) study '*Community designed, built and managed toilet blocks in Indian cities*', **Jeff Ruster and Ivo Imperato's** (2003) work '*Slum Upgrading and participation : Lessons from Latin America*' and many other studies are of immense importance.

## **CHAPTER - III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deals with the research methodology of the present study. Research is systematic collection and analysis of data pertaining to the problems of our concern. A scientific research is conducted in different stages. The present study is also conducted in different stages which are discussed in this chapter. At the very outset the design of the research is formulated by the researcher by defining the problem. The researcher systematically describes the selection of universe, sampling, selection of suitable tools and technique for collecting data and finally analysis of data is discussed in the chapter. The researcher also highlights her experience of field work in slum areas of Silchar town.

## **THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Urbanisation and industrialisation is one of the important features of modern civilisation. Towns and cities are increasing in number and size day by day throughout the globe. Migration of people towards towns and cities is also increasing as ample of employment opportunities are available for divergent group of population. Multiple studies are conducted on various issues on slums throughout the globe. R.D. McKenzie, Charles Stokes, John Seeley, Herbert Gans, Oscar Lewis and many other western social scientists highlight various issues pertaining to slum problems. In India too scholars like A.R. Desai, S.D. Pillai and many others put attention to study problems of slums in India.

Participation of women is also a vital aspect of development in general and for slum development in particular. Women constitute all most half of the total population of the country. Therefore, their opinions and views are important for implementation and formulation of policies and programmes. Therefore, the present study '**Participation in Slum Improvement Programmes: A Study of Slum Women in Silchar Town**' is selected to understand the level of participation of slum women of Silchar town in slum improvement programmes.

## **DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

Slums are mainly found in towns and cities. In Silchar town there are fourteen slum pockets as per record of (Town and Country Planning Office) where thousands of slums have migrated and settled in search of livelihood. The



present study is delimited to participation of slum women of three selected slum pockets of Silchar town towards participation of slum women in slum improvement programmes initiated by government and NGOs.

#### **UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

There are fourteen slum pockets in Silchar town which constitutes the universe of study. From a thorough understanding of the slums of Silchar town through official records and literatures and by conducting survey in slum pockets before commencement of the field work, it is observed that Slum pockets of Silchar town are all most homogeneous except few elements of heterogeneity like difference of location and size of population. Out of fourteen slum pockets of Silchar town three slum pockets have been randomly selected. The slum pockets selected for the purpose of field work are *Kalibari Char* slum, *Itkhola Ghat* and *Madhura Ghat*.

Total households in these three selected slum pockets are 3186, 20% of the total households from each slum pocket have been selected randomly for the study. Since the unit of the study is slum women therefore one woman from one household has been taken as respondent. From *Kalibari Char* slum pocket total household selected for the study are 476, from *Itkhola Ghat* and *Madhura Ghat* 104 and 58 respondents have been selected respectively. Thus the total sample size is 638.

## **TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION**

This study comprises of both primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected from three selected slum pockets of Silchar town. Considering the feasibility of the study, quality and quantity of respondents vis-a-vis to make the study more intensive and qualitative, observation and interview schedule are selected as appropriate tools for collection of primary data from the field. Secondary data is collected from books, journals, Government Records, Magazines, published and unpublished research studies and internet. Records are also collected from office of the Silchar Municipal Board and Town and Country Planning Office.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The large volume of data collected in course of field work through interview Schedule and observation method have been fully processed and analysed scientifically. Simple statistical techniques have been used for analyzing the data. All the findings of the study are described in a systematic and sequential manner rather than explaining or establishing any cause and effect relationship among variables.

## **CHAPTER - IV**

### **SLUM PROFILE OF SILCHAR**

Chapter IV presents firstly, an overview of the slums in Silchar town. Secondly, it throws light on the socio-economic background of the respondents. The primary materials forming the basis of the present chapter have been collected with the help of observation and interview.

There are 14 Slum pockets in Silchar town according to Town and Country Planning Office. Out of these 14 slums, it has been observed that some slums grow on the bank of river Barak, while the others grow in the threshold of the Urban and rural areas and a good number of small slums pockets appeared in the different urban mainland of Silchar.

Slum area in Silchar is characterized by poor housing condition. Majority of the houses in slum pocket are kutcha with tin sheet and kutcha with polythene and bamboo roofing. RCC (Reinforced Cement Concrete) houses are less in number. But Biswanath Colony and Joy Durga Colony presents a very different picture, all the houses are concrete. There is existence of both joint and nuclear families in the slums of Silchar town, but nuclear families are more in number.

The social composition of different slum pockets shows that people of all caste viz., General, Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe, Other Backward Caste (OBC) are residing in the slum pocket. Majority of the people are Hindu by

religion and belong to Bengali community. Only in some slum pockets like Itkhola Ghat and New Colony some Muslims are residing. Kalibari Char which is the largest slum in Silchar town has all Hindu inhabitants.

Education of the people is also low. Children of the slum areas go to the neighbouring schools. People are earning their livelihood by engaging in activities like business, driver, day labour, govt and private service. Women are house wives, domestic servants in the neighbourhood, Ananganwadi workers etc.

In the slums of Silchar some people have migrated and some are residing since many generations. Many of the people have migrated due to poverty, for better education, for good employment opportunities and due to marriage.

People use LPG, Kerosene stove and firewood for cooking purpose. People use katcha latrine, only few of them have sanitary latrine. Participation of people in voting for election is high. All most all these slums have similar civic problems but their degree differs.

The principal predicament that confronts the slum pockets is that of drinking water, sanitation, water logging, improper roads, and lack of proper electric connection etc. The road condition of slum area is very poor. Slum dwellers of Silchar town face tremendous problem during rainy season. The condition becomes so severe that they cannot move freely outside their house

during the rainy season. Improper drainage is also another problem of slum of Silchar town. There is lack of proper drainage system in all the slums pockets

Thus slums in Silchar are confronted with several problems, and to improve their poor living condition, several improvement initiatives like National Slum Development Programme (NSDP), Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF), Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) and many more have been introduced. Thus government and different NGOs must work for the improvement of the slum areas.

## **CHAPTER - V**

### **GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND NGO'S INITIATIVES FOR SLUM DEVELOPMENT**

This chapter focuses on various development programmes and implementation of different schemes under the programmes introduced by the Govt. for the benefit of the slums in India in general and for slums of Silchar town in particular. Besides this, the chapter also highlights the various improvement initiatives taken by the NGO for upliftment of the slum people.

#### **Slum Development policy in India**

The Government of India (GOI) has taken several efforts for improving the dismal conditions of slum inhabitants. Several programmes for the improvement of the slum dwellers are also introduced from time to time by successive governments. These programmes are - Slum Clearance programmes

announced in the Second Five Year Plan of the Government of India. Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) was introduced to provide subsidy by the central government. The Urban Basic Services (UBS) Programme in India was initiated also. Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS), Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY) and Low Cost Sanitation (LCS), National Slum Development Programme (NSDP) was launched for the improvement of the slums. Additional Central Assistance (ACA) was allocated by the Planning Commission. Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programmes (IHSDP) Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) and The Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) are also introduced.

### **Slum Development in Assam and Silchar Town**

Assam government has also introduced several schemes for the improvement of slums in the state of Assam. Many government programmes are implemented at Cachar district to eradicate slum problems. Construction of roads drains, electricity, water supply etc. are provided to slum pockets but these are not sufficient to improve the conditions of slums of Silchar town.

**CHAPTER-VI**

**PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN SLUM  
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES**

This chapter deals with the awareness level of the respondents, their participation at the formulation and implementation level, participation at the beneficiary level and participation at the assessment level. The chapter is summarised below:

1. It is observed from the study that the female respondents are aware of the vital glitch that confronts them every day. When the basic problems were placed before them, they could effortlessly recognize them.
2. Respondents are more familiar with the Ward Commissioner than any other political representatives.
3. Respondents in all the slum pockets are more familiar with the schemes than the programmes were aware about the improvement initiatives under different programmes in Madhura Ghat majority are aware about Water supply followed by respondents aware towards improvement of road, towards construction of drain. Only few of them said that they are completely blank. The awareness of about the different programmes is poor.

4. When the respondent were asked the reason of unawareness they gave various reasons, some of them say that they stay at home that is why they are unaware, others say that they are busy with their own work, some respondents also added that the male member knows.
5. The role of NGO in the improvement initiative is not that sound, very less women are aware of the improvement initiative taken by Various NGOs. The women are aware about the various NGOs when their name was asked, but they are not familiar with their improvement activities.
6. When the women were asked whether government officials/ward commissioner/NGO take up any plan to arouse their interest in the slum development activities, majority respondents replied in positive.
7. Majority of the respondents are aware about how different schemes under various improvement programmes launched by the government are formulated in the slum pocket.
8. Out of 638 women only 17.24% said that they participated in scheme formulation and 82.76% replied negatively. Among the three slum pockets highest number of participation in the scheme formulation is in *Madhura Ghat* 27.59%, followed by *Itkhola Ghat* 16.35% and *Kalibari Char* 16.18%.



9. The key person in the formulation of improvement programmes are Ward Commissioner in all the three slum pockets,
10. The participation of women in the implementation of improvement programmes is very poor. In *Madhura Ghat* and *Kalibari Char* none of the women participated in any scheme implementation.
11. The various reasons that are put forward by the respondent for not participating in the implementation of improvement programmes are viz., male dominates, pre-occupied with own activities, leaders dominate, they feel that their voice is ignored and many more.
12. Ward Commissioner acts as the key person in the implementation of improvement programmes or schemes.
13. Development is always accompanied by constraints and slum development programmes is no exception to that. Majority have expressed that there are constraints in the implementation of slum improvement programmes.
14. Majority are benefitted by slum improvement programmes. People are benefitted by improvement in the road condition, electrification, Ration Card, BPL Card, Water Supply, Kerosene Card, drain construction and other benefits.

15. Majority of respondents approached the higher authority for getting benefit. They approached the Ward Commissioner, leader of the slum and others for getting benefit.
16. Self Help Group have always played an important role in improving the living standard of people, but the role of Self Help Group in the three Slum pockets is not sound.
17. The picture of the three slum pocket is similar, respondents in the three pockets prefer to approach the ward commissioner first to solve their issues,
18. Majority of respondents said that they get relief during flood, but utmost number of respondents was dissatisfied with the quantity of relief, they feel that the relief was only name sake.
30. Officers at the district level inspect and monitor all aspects of programmes through visit to the worksites Majority respondents think that the people of the area have been benefitted by various slum improvement programmes introduced by the Govt and NGOs.
31. The women who were not benefitted by slum improvement programmes said that slum improvement programmes should be withdrawn. Besides this, the respondents who did not give clear answer were also not highly satisfied with the benefits.

32. When the respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with the slum improvement programmes majority of the respondents reveals that they are not satisfied with the slum development programmes in their respective slum pockets. The respondents who were satisfied with the slum improvement programmes were further asked to denote whether govt programmes are better or NGOs programmes are better. In *Madhura Ghat* all the respondents said that govt programmes are better. In *Itkhola Ghat* respondents said that govt programmes are better and in *Kalibari Char* all the women said that govt programmes are better. The respondents who were unhappy with the slum development programmes were further enquired if they had redressed their grievances.
33. When the respondents were asked whether any one is misutilising any sanctioned scheme majority of the respondent refused to comment.
34. The future needs of the three slum pockets are similar but when the future needs are placed before them, the weightage given to the various needs differs from respondents to respondents and from pocket to pocket.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss in detail slum women's participation in the improvement initiatives that were introduced for them. The study clarifies that female respondents are well aware of the various

improvement programmes/schemes that are introduced by the government and NGOs from time to time for the benefit of the slum areas.

The various government development programmes are implemented by the Ward commissioner, Leader of the slum, males of the slum and other key persons. As regarding the programmes of the NGOs, all the programmes are implemented by the NGOs themselves. The female have a very little role in the implementation of various development programmes.

The slum women faced constraint to participate in the formulation and implementation of slum improvement programmes. The faced constraints because, male members dominate, leaders also dominate, their voice is ignored in the formulation and implementation process. The slum women are also pre-occupied with their own activities. They said that the ward commissioner act as the key person in the formulation and implementation process and regarding the NGO programmes, the NGO workers only decide.

The slum development programmes have good impact on women, they are benefitted by the programmes that were introduced for them by the government and NGOs. The respondents also feel that the people of the area have also been benefitted by the improvement initiatives.

## **CHAPTER – VII**

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter deals with the summary of the study. Major findings of the study are also discussed in this chapter. The researcher has also highlighted recommendation and conclusion of the study in this chapter. Besides, in this chapter the gist of every chapter is summarised. The major findings of study are discussed below.

#### **MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. The majority (33.54%) of respondents are in the age group of (29-39) years.
2. In all the slum pockets the numbers of schedule caste respondents are the majority (57.84%), followed by General 26.80% and then Other Backward Caste 15.20%.
3. Majority (98.59%) of slum population of Silchar town are Hindus. There are very few slums that are Muslims.
4. Majority (52.19%) of respondents are married followed by unmarried, widow and divorced respondents.
5. Majority of respondent's husband are day labour followed by drivers and petty businessmen. Very few are engaged in private jobs and other activities.

6. The level of education of the respondents is very low. Majority of (50.31%) respondents have only crossed lower primary level of education.
7. In Madhura Ghat (58.62%) and Itkhola Ghat (49.04%) majority of respondents are housewife but in Kalibari Char majority (50.63%) of respondents are domestic servants.
8. Majority respondents have migrated due to poverty, employment, marriage and other reasons, but apart from marriage there has been no instances of individual migration, all of them have migrated with their families
9. Greatest numbers of respondents live in nuclear family and their family size is medium.
10. Slum area is characterised by poor housing and all the three slum pockets taken for the purpose of study is no exception to it. In all the three slum pockets majority of the respondents live in kutcha house with tin Sheet.
11. Though large numbers of respondents are getting supply water for drinking, but the respondents in *Itkhola Ghat* are not happy as they have to walk few distance to fetch drinking water and some respondents in *Kalibari Char* have to buy drinking water.

12. Majority (50.63%) of the respondents use LPG for cooking. But there are respondents who use firewood also.
13. Majority of the respondents use Kutcha latrine, thus lack of adequate sanitation facilities is one of the serious area of concern that seeks proper attention of the government and NGOs.
14. Participation of women in voting in the election is high.
15. Many basic problems are identified by the respondents. The basic problems of the slum pockets are more or less similar but their priority is not the same in all the pockets.
16. The respondents are aware of the different political representatives of the area. But they are more familiar with Ward Commissioner comparing to other political representatives.
17. The respondents feel that Ward Commissioner is near to them and he is quite reachable to them in time of need. Besides there is no legal formalities in meeting the Ward Commissioner, people can directly share their grievances with the Ward Commissioner.
18. The awareness of women respondents about the different government programmes like APHED, SJSRY and other programmes is very low.
19. It is observed that their unawareness is mainly because of male domination in the family.

20. The wakefulness of women about the different NGOs is sound. But majority of the respondents are not aware of NGOs programmes for slum improvement.
21. A small percentage of respondents said that official agencies have taken up initiatives to arouse people's interest in slum developmental activities. Thus the role played by the official agencies in this regard is not very encouraging.
22. It is also important to note that no NGO has taken any step to arouse people's interest all such initiatives were taken in case of government programmes.
23. The female population of the sample slum pockets have little to say in the formulation process.
24. The participation of women in implementation process is worst than their participation in the formulation process, only few women participated in the implementation process.
25. The women who could not participate in the implementation process said that they could not participate because male dominates, they were pre-occupied with their own activities and they also felt that their voice is ignored.



26. Ward Commissioner acts as the key person in both the formulation and implementation of improvement initiatives followed by the leader of the slum and the male members of the slum.
27. Every programme is implemented under the dominance of males which in turn gives the impression that women are not at all empowered and their participation level is low.
28. Majority (61.60%) of respondents have admitted that they are benefitted by various slum improvement programmes. They are benefitted in terms of road improvement, electricity, water supply, Kerosene Cards, drain construction and others.
29. Majority (88.24%) of respondents approach the higher authority for getting benefit. They approached the Ward Commissioner, Leader of the Slum, and others.
30. The role of self-help group in the three slum pockets is not sound. Few women are members of Self-help group. It seems that the women are not aware about the benefits of self help group and the self help group still needs to gain ground in the three slum pockets.
31. The respondents who were benefitted in the three pockets due to SHG added that they get financial benefits for the construction of house, for employment generation and for other purposes.

32. The ward commissioner along with the developmental activities also settle disputes, gives financial assistance in times of need, provide them an address proof when required. He also helps them to perform the death rituals, gave them job etc. Thus majority of the respondents are pleased with the Ward Commissioner.
33. A very interesting thing comes out in *Kalibari Char* is that there are some women leaders who are very active in solving the problems of their fellow friends, such type of women leadership is not seen in the other two pockets.
34. The three slum pockets are the regular victims of periodic floods as these slum pockets are located near by the biggest river i.e. *Barak River*.
35. Majority (76.33%) of respondents say that they get relief during flood but the respondents expressed their displeasure with the quantity of flood relief, they feel that the relief was only for name sake.
36. NGOs are not that active in giving flood relief, 81.93% of respondents said that only government provides them relief.
37. A significant percentage of respondents has uttered that various officers visit the area for monitoring the programmes and schemes.

## **Conclusion**

In any developmental and welfare activity people's participation is a very essential component. People's participation is currently recognized as a pivotal element for the welfare programmes. As women constitute almost half of the total population, therefore their participation in development programmes is sine qua-non. Women's participation thus becomes indispensable. Genuine and unfailing involvement of the women right from the initial stage ensures the success of different programmes. Thus the slum women in Silchar town must be involved in the improvement programmes right from the beginning, so that the programmes reached its desired goal. Enthusiastic women's participation can play an appropriate role in the development and increasing community awareness, creating a sense of responsibility, including a pride of ownership.

Efforts must be taken by the government and NGOs so that more women can participate in the different process of .development. It is observed that in slum pockets of Silchar town women are practically away from participation in the formulation and implementation process. Various constraints that come in the way of women's participation must be removed and women must be encouraged to participate in the improvement initiatives because various government development programmes like District Development Plan have also provision for people's participation at the grass root level.

## **Recommendation**

Efforts may be taken by the government and NGOs so that more women can participate in the decision making process of formulation and implementation of the programmes. Role of NGOs in slum improvement programmes is almost negligible in Silchar town. NGOs should start awareness programmes for participation of women in improvement programmes also. Initiatives should be taken to educate large number of slum women of Silchar town so that in future they can actively participate in development process. Self Help Group is an important organisation which makes women self-sufficient and increases status of women in family and society. Self Help Groups must be increased and women should be motivated to involve themselves in it.