



# LIVING IT DOWN: LIFE AFTER RELOCATION IN COLOMBO'S HIGH RISES

A SURVEY OF HOUSEHOLDS RELOCATED BY  
THE URBAN REGENERATION PROJECT

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The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) is an independent, non-partisan organisation that focuses primarily on issues of governance and conflict resolution. Formed in 1996 in the firm belief that the vital contribution of civil society to the public policy debate is in need of strengthening, CPA is committed to programmes of research and advocacy through which public policy is critiqued, alternatives identified and disseminated.

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Cover photo of Sirisara Uyana, Sahaspura and Methsara Uyana by Devaka Seneviratne

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The findings of this survey question many narratives created around the working class poor of Colombo living in “underserved settlements” as described by the Urban Development Authority. That the affected communities live in slums and shanties, in unhygienic, unsanitary flood prone environments surrounded by drug dealers are narratives that serve the purpose of a Government looking to “liberate” commercially valuable property in Colombo by relocating communities to high-rise complexes built by the Urban Development Authority (UDA) in the North of Colombo since 2010. If the upliftment of the communities was really at the heart of the project, the Urban Regeneration Project (URP) should champion a people centred approach to housing that Sri Lanka is not a stranger to, if one takes programmes like the Million Housing Programme and the relocations in Lunawa and Badowita in the past decade into consideration. Unfortunately the URP lacks a comprehensive framework of entitlements and an involuntary resettlement policy in line with national and international standards, essentially making accepting relocation to a high-rise apartment a pre-condition for access to better housing and services.

This survey builds on CPA’s work since 2013 on evictions in Colombo under the previous regime. The three complexes selected for this survey were Mihindusenpura, Sirisara Uyana and Methsara Uyana, all located in Dematagoda (Colombo North). The three complexes were selected because residents were moved there prior to November 2014 which meant that they had been living in the buildings for more than one and half years.

The findings raises many concerns about the future of those living in the UDA high-rise complexes and demands a complete review of the URP. In less than three years of occupation, we see a considerable deterioration in the quality of life, income mismatch leading to debt, high expression of desire to move, disconnect with the built environment. For communities who in fact did not live in slums or shanties previously, and thrived on their social networks, organically formed over decades of residing in Colombo, high-rise living was something that was imposed upon them with no consultation or due process<sup>1</sup>. Those with title to their land were not compensated and households have to pay Rs one million for their new apartment over 20 - 30 years.

The three survey sites present issues common to each complex, as well as ones unique to each complex based on location and the variety of populations now forced to live together. The conditions of Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana, two complexes that CPA has extensively documented since they were opened in 2014 have rapidly deteriorated in the two years with reports of crime, drug abuse and drug peddling, filthy and unkept public areas,

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<sup>1</sup> See ‘Forced evictions in Colombo: the ugly price of beautification’, Centre for Policy Alternatives, April 2014



breakdown of maintenance including that of the lifts that services 12 floors - all indications of the creation of vertical slums. While survey data and CPA's own qualitative work does show that relocation has improved the housing conditions and lives of some families, the negative effects experienced by others is extremely disturbing.

Unfortunately, even under the *yahapalanaya* Government and new management of the UDA we see no concrete effort on the part of the UDA to address the critical issues arising from the URP, whether they be related to the buildings, resident issues or even the provision of documents and information residents are entitled to, in their language of preference. The *yahapalanaya* government is continuing the URP activities, with another 15,000 - 20,000 apartments being built at present. It is therefore crucial to learn from the lessons and experiences of those already relocated to ensure that communities relocated in the months to come will be spared the negative experiences of the families already living in the high-rise apartments.

While those living in the three survey sites were relocated under a militarised UDA and faced harassment, intimidation and threats in the relocation process, the current Government must not assume that those relocated in the future will fair better. The very involuntary nature of the relocations, the lack of consultation and entitlements to the affected communities will deeply affect them post relocation, even in the absence of military involvement. There are a lot of changes that needs to take place in the URP process and the Government must seriously reconsider high-rise apartment complexes as their solution to providing better living conditions for the working class poor. It is also long overdue for this Government to deliver on their promise to legislate the National Involuntary Resettlement Policy.

Policy makers and the UDA must move away from an approach that views people, especially the working class poor, as impediments to adding social and economic value to the city to one that acknowledges them not only as partners but, in keeping with the letter and spirit of the Constitution, as sovereign.

## ***Highlights from the survey***

### ***1. Previous home***

Majority of the surveyed respondents (70.3%) previously lived in a permanent house (permanent house constitutes solid floor, brick/ block walls and a ceiling with roofing sheets), 16.9% in a semi-permanent house (where one of three above mentioned elements were not there) and 11.8% in a temporary construction. With regard to tenure, 40.5% lived on State land, 20.9% had a deed and owned their land while 20% had a 'green card' or a municipal council card.

A majority of respondents (94.5%) had been registered to vote in their previous location. 24.4% had lived there for 1-10 years, 26.8% for 11-20 years, 20.9% for 21-30 years and 25.8% for more than 30 years. 23.8% had houses that were 100-500 square feet, 41% had houses that were 501-1000 square feet and 10% had houses that were 1000 - 2500 square feet. While most (77.5%) were single storey houses, 18.3% had two storied houses. 48.8% had indoor bathrooms while 23.3% had bathrooms that were shared by the community. 78% of houses had pipe borne water while 90.4% had electricity from the national grid.

54.4% said that they never experienced floods while 21.6% said they experienced it several times a year and 9.8% said twice a year. 62.7% have never suffered from mosquito borne diseases while 77.3% said their family had never suffered from diarrhea as a result of their living environment.

### ***2. Relocation process***

While the process followed by the UDA when relocating communities looks voluntary on paper, the reality was that majority of those currently living in the UDA complexes were involuntary relocated or forcibly evicted there. Irrespective of occupation status, type of house etc, communities were given very little time to relocate and had no say whether or not they wanted to move to a high-rise.

Only 26% of surveyed respondents stated that they were fully informed prior to relocation regarding moving, terms and conditions, nature of the house, location etc. 35.4% said they were somewhat informed and 25.3% said that they did not have enough information.

94% of the respondents had paid the Rs 100,000/- payment that had to be made to the UDA prior to moving in. When asked how they put together this amount, respondents gave a variety of answers. 22% said that they borrowed from a money lender, 13.3% from their

monthly income, 13.2% borrowed from family members, 12% borrowed from friends or neighbours, 11% pawned jewellery and 10% used their savings. Almost 80% of respondents said that they did not get any financial assistance from the UDA or any organisation to help pay the moving costs.

### **3. Apartment life**

An apartment in every UDA complex is 400 square feet in size, with a living room, kitchen, bathroom and 2 bedrooms. The policy of the Urban Regeneration Project is a house for a house, and not a house for a family nor does it take into account the size of the previous home. This means that families who had houses bigger than 500 square feet or those with houses that had more than one family living in it, as is usually the case, were entitled to only one apartment. CPA has met several households that have more than 6 people living together due to this policy.

In this survey, respondents were asked if their apartment has sufficient space to accommodate all their family members. 50.2% said yes while 49.2% said no. When asked what problems they have with the quality and design of the apartment, 46.5% said that the size of the apartment was too small. 26.8% said that the walls are already cracked, 14.3% was not happy with the design of the kitchen while 13.3% had a problem with the fact that toilet is next to the kitchen.

68% of respondents said that they have access to place of worship at a convenient distance while 31.1% said that they do not. Looking at those who do not have access to a place of worship at a convenient distance, 50% from Methsara Uyana and 34.4% from Sirisara Uyana said that they do not have access. Interviews done with residents of Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana revealed that relocated Muslim communities have been badly affected as there is no mosque close by. The closest mosque in Borella is not within walking distance and not everyone is able to afford daily trips to the mosque and back.

36.7% of respondents are happy living in the UDA complex with almost 12% saying that they are very happy. Overall satisfaction living in the UDA complex is rated higher at Mihindusenpura when compared to Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana. At Methsara Uyana, almost 50% say that they are unhappy living at the apartment, with 15.6% being very unhappy.

Almost 40% of respondents say that the relocation has deteriorated the quality of life of their family, with 13.2% saying that it has greatly deteriorated. 32.4% say that there has been no change while 17.9% say that their quality of life has somewhat improved.

#### **4. Income and expenditure**

47.1% say that the move has had no effect on their earnings while 36.8% say that their earnings have decreased. However, majority of respondents (79.9%) say that their total monthly expenses are higher now while 18.9% say that it is the same. That their water and electricity bills are much higher than what they used to pay at their previous home has been a common complaint since communities started moving into the apartments. Some households have even received water bills as high as Rs 7000, something which is almost impossible. These issues have been raised with the UDA by the communities, however nothing has been done yet to solve this issue. Around 70% of surveyed respondents said that their electricity and water bills are higher now.

71.2% say that they are unable to save an amount every month while 27.7% say that they can save every month. When asked why they are unable to save every month, 93% said that they spend all their income on household related expenses such as food and bills.

#### **5. Security**

For the communities relocated to the UDA complexes, high-rise living is a completely different way of life that disturbed or changed life as they know it - whether it was their social networks, their built environment or the security that their neighbourhood provided. Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their sense of security about their immediate surroundings as well as of the larger built environment. For most of the communities, the community or *watta* they had lived in previously brought with it its own system of security and surveillance, which was what enabled most of them for example to leave their front doors open during the day, for their children to play freely outdoors after school. Its very rarely that a stranger can walk around without someone asking who they had come to see. This system also helped them keep their community crime and drug free - something that they were very proud of - despite the stereotype that all *wattas* are dens of drugs, crime and prostitution.

Compared to their previous location, 39.1% of respondents say that they feel somewhat safe in their current location while 27.3% feel very safe. 32% say that they feel unsafe out which 17.9% said they feel very unsafe in their current location. Almost 40% of respondents feel somewhat safe being out alone in the parking lots, the lawns, streets and sidewalks right outside their building at night and 23% feel very safe.

In the last 6 months, 41.8% of respondents were aware of incidents of theft where someone's purse, wallet or jewellery had been snatched from them. Reports of theft are



highest at Methsara Uyana (53.5% saying yes to theft in the last 6 months) followed by Sirisara Uyana at 45.6%. 55.8% of survey respondents stated that to their knowledge no one was threatened or beaten up in their apartment complex in the last 6 months while 39.4% said that someone was threatened or beaten in the past 6 months. Reports of people getting threatened or beaten up in the last 6 months is highest in Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana with around 50% of respondents saying yes.

Another issue that was highlighted is that of drugs and among the survey respondents, almost 60% said that people using drugs was a big problem in their apartment complex 17.4% said that it was not a problem. Issues with people using drugs is high in Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana with around 73% stating that it is a big problem. 55.8% of respondents also stated that people selling drugs is a bit problem, with this figure being as high as 68.1% in Methsara Uyana and 74.1% in Sirisara Uyana.

## **6. The built environment**

Majority of the surveyed respondents (77.2%) prefer to live in detached house while 14.4% would prefer to live in a low-rise apartment that doesn't require elevators. Only 6.9% of respondents said that they would prefer to live in a high-rise apartment. 38.1% of respondents do not like living in an apartment complex while almost 50% said that they like it somewhat. 12.2% said that they like it very much.

When asked about what aspects of the built environment they like, 36.5% said they liked that there were no flood issues. 30.7% like the facilities available like electricity, water, drainage etc, 18.9% liked that its a secure place and 16.2% like the clean surrounding. Interestingly, 26.9% of respondents said that they do not like anything about the built environment. 37% from Methsara Uyana and 33% from Sirisara Uyana said that they do not like anything about the built environment.

The noise is what most do not like about the built environment with 56.9% of surveyed respondents identifying this as a key reason. 39.2% do not like the lack of space, 20.5% does not like the lack of security while 16.5% do not like the use of the lift. When asked what could be done to improve their built environment, two suggestions that were mentioned were increase the size of the apartment and increasing the level of security.

## INTRODUCTION

Following the end of Sri Lanka's 30 year civil war in May 2009, the Government of Sri Lanka prioritised infrastructure and urban development in its rebuilding process. War affected areas in Northern Sri Lanka aside, the city of Colombo received the most focus in terms of development, with the aim of making it a "world class city". To carry out Sri Lanka's development plans, urban development was brought under the purview of the Ministry of Defence in 2010, thereby creating a new Ministry, the Ministry of Defence and Urban Development. The state institution for urban development, the Urban Development Authority (UDA), therefore came under this new Ministry.

The creation of this world class city involved two key projects – (a) the Urban Regeneration Project to be carried out by the Ministry and (b) the Metro Colombo Urban Development Project, a 5 year US\$320 million project by the World Bank and the Government. The Urban Regeneration Project (URP) activities primarily involved beautification of the city, and creating a "slum free Colombo" by "liberating" commercially valuable property across the city that were home to the working class poor of Colombo by building high-rise apartments in the outskirts of the city.

The vision of the URP is *"to eliminate slums, shanties and other dilapidated housing from the city of Colombo by relocating dwellers in modern houses to upgrade the living standards of the Citizens."* According to the then Ministry of Defence and Urban Development, the economic and social benefits of "relocating underserved settlements in Colombo suburbs", include -

"Legal right and prestige of being an owner of a house, Entrepreneurship development among people, Recognized job opportunities

Social recognition, a permanent address, better society, Elimination of illegal activities

Children will have better access to proper females and youth education. Recognition in the society for females for better marriage prospects." (*Formatting and language as in original*)

Colombo's working class poor need significantly higher levels of service provisioning, and the lack of adequate housing, secure tenure and title are a concern. However, the URP lacks a comprehensive framework of entitlements and an involuntary resettlement policy in line with national and international standards, essentially making accepting relocation to a high-rise

apartment a pre-condition for access to better housing and services<sup>2</sup>. It also does not take into account that many of the communities are in fact not slums, and are permanent houses with water and electricity connections, sometimes spanning several floors housing several extended families, and importantly, that a fair percentage of homes have title to their land. However, a combination of military intimidation, use of force and people's legal illiteracy saw thousands of families evicted or involuntarily relocated to the UDA high rise apartments between 2010 – 2014, with no compensation and no due process being followed. The breakdown of Rule of Law during the Rajapaksa regime during this time meant that even for those who sought legal options saw little or no redress.

Given that the political environment prior to January 2015 did not lend itself to quantitative surveys of relocation sites, the information that exists today on relocated communities is largely qualitative. Findings from CPA's ongoing work with relocated communities show a clear deterioration in quality of life, income generation and a disconnect with the built environment. People do not have a sense of home or ownership in their new surroundings, express high levels of desire to move, thereby making it impossible to form any sense of community or connection with their new home<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, apartments are not given to people for free - they in fact have to Rs one million for the apartment over 20 - 30 years in order to receive title, and this condition is irrespective of whether people had title previously..

This first survey will serve as a baseline study of these relocated communities and gathered perspectives of residents on life post relocation and what impact it has had on their quality of life, livelihood and income generation. It also looks at how residents view and use the public areas of the buildings, perceptions on security - going beyond how safe they feel in their apartments to how many people feel they have a right to question strangers in their building. The objective of this survey is not only to gauge changes experiences by affected communities post relocation, but also to see over time whether the objectives of the Urban Regeneration Project itself is achieved.

The research team for this survey comprised of Iromi Perera, Shehara Athukorala and M. Krishnamurthy. Graphics for this report were designed by Thilini Perera.

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<sup>2</sup> [Forced evictions in Colombo: the ugly price of beautification](#), Centre for Policy Alternatives, April 2014

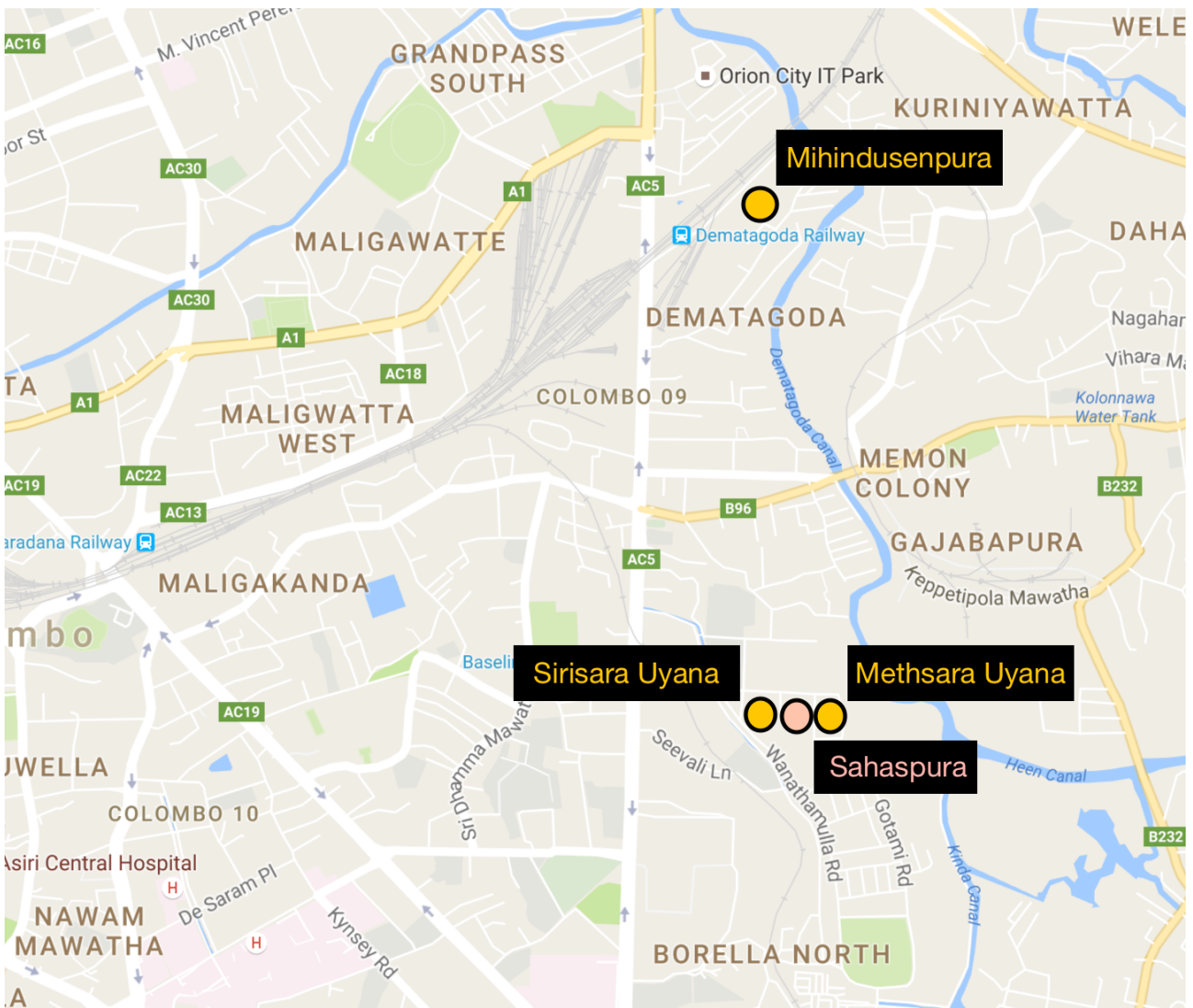
<sup>3</sup> [Forced evictions in Colombo: High-rise living](#), Centre for Policy Alternatives, May 2015

## METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews. Forty (40) trained Field Researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with 1222 respondents in both the Sinhala and Tamil languages across three UDA high-rise complexes.

### Survey sites

The three complexes were Mihindusenpura, Sirisara Uyana and Methsara Uyana, all located in Dematagoda (Colombo North). These three complexes were selected for this survey because residents were moved there prior to November 2014 which meant that they had been living in the buildings for more than one and half years. In order to gauge change since relocation it was important to interview those who had spent some time in the buildings and were not newly relocated.





<b>Mihindusenpura</b>	<b>Sirisara Uyana</b>	<b>Methsara Uyana</b>
The first apartment complex to be built under the Urban Regeneration Project, Mihindusenpura was formally opened in November 2013. This complex consists of 820 apartments and is designed to be a series of separate apartment blocks with space for parking, outdoor areas as well as separate area for shops. While a separate block at Mihindusenpura houses families who were living in Ceylon Government Railways (CGR) quarters in Dematagoda, the other blocks are occupied mainly by those who were relocated from Narahenpita and Kompannyaveediya (Slave Island).	A 'U' shaped complex that are actually three separate blocks, Sirisara Uyana was formally opened in November 2014 and has 718 apartments. This high-rise complex has 12 floors and those who were relocated here were mainly from Narahenpita and Wanathamulla. The courtyard in the center has a basketball court and parking space.	Opened in November 2014, Methsara Uyana is located just past Sirisara Uyana and has 430 apartments and those who were relocated here were mainly from Wanathamulla and Maligawatte. Completed in 2001, Sri Lanka's first high-rise housing project for low income communities, Sahaspura, is located in between Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana.

## **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire for this survey was informed by the qualitative work done by CPA at the survey sites over the last two years. Furthermore, several questionnaires used for other studies on housing, relocation, neighbourhoods, relationship with the built environment etc were used to guide this questionnaire - two such studies we found useful were the Centre for Poverty Analysis and Sevanatha study of Muwadora Uyana (conducted together with the UDA in October and November 2015) and the Urban Institute's studies on HOPE VI<sup>4</sup>. The questionnaire was translated into Sinhala and Tamil and a pilot survey was conducted by senior field staff. Findings from the pilot survey were taken into account in the finalisation of the questionnaire.

## **Fieldwork**

For this survey, there was no sample selection from each survey site and instead every single apartment in all three complexes were included in this study. Out of a total of 1968 apartments across all three sites, we interviewed respondents living in 1222 apartments. Those who were not interviewed fell into three categories - refused to participate in survey, not at home/ unable to meet at any time during fieldwork, moved away from the apartment and living elsewhere leaving the apartment unoccupied. 539 heads of household in Mihindusenpura, 401 in Sirisara Uyana and 282 in Methsara Uyana were interviewed.

Fieldwork for the study commenced on the 9th of July 2016 and concluded in early August.

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<sup>4</sup> Created by the US Congress in 1992, the HOPE VI Programme was an effort by the federal government to address the problems of severely distressed public housing.

### ***Training of Field Researchers***

A total of 40 Field Researchers participated in this study. The Field Researchers consisted of both male and female enumerators from three ethnic communities – Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim. Prior to starting fieldwork, they were given an extensive training on the study, the survey instrument and field techniques. In order to ensure the quality of field research, SI deployed a group of Supervisors to conduct quality control processes during and after fieldwork such as accompanied visits, spot-checks and back-checks to ensure the quality of the data collected.

### ***Data Processing and analysis***

All the completed questionnaires were scrutinised, checked and entered into a database designed for the survey. The dataset was further cleaned prior to it being analysed. Before starting the analysis process, the dataset was weighted in order to reflect actual geographical and ethnic proportion. The data set was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

### ***Profile of respondents***

46.4% of households have been residing in the UDA complex for 2 years, 30% of households for 3 years and only 6.4% for 1 year.

Only 3.4% of households had no family members who were employed, while 43.9% of households had 1 employed family member, 33.1% had 2 employed member family members and 13.3% had 3 employed family members.

## 1. PREVIOUS HOME

Despite the UDA narrative that most of those who were relocated to the UDA complexes were living in slums and shanties in flood prone, unsanitary environments, CPA's documentation over the years have showed that not all relocated communities lived in such environments and the survey data is further evidence.

Majority of the surveyed respondents (70.3%) previously lived in a permanent house (permanent house constitutes solid floor, brick/ block walls and a ceiling with roofing sheets), 16.9% in a semi-permanent house (where one of three above mentioned elements were not there) and 11.8% in a temporary construction. (Figure 1.1) With regard to tenure, 40.5% lived on State land, 20.9% had a deed and owned their land while 20% had a 'green card' or a municipal council card. CPA has previously come across households living on State land where they had bought the land from a previous owner and have a deed that had been drawn up for the transaction. The deeds include the clauses of a title deed, except it mentions that the land is State owned. In this survey, 6.1% of respondents fell into this category. (Figure 1.2)

Figure 1.1

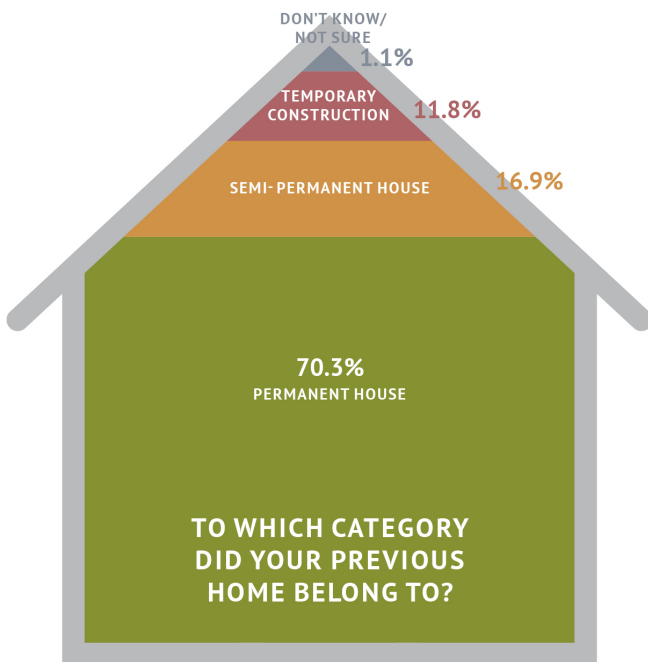
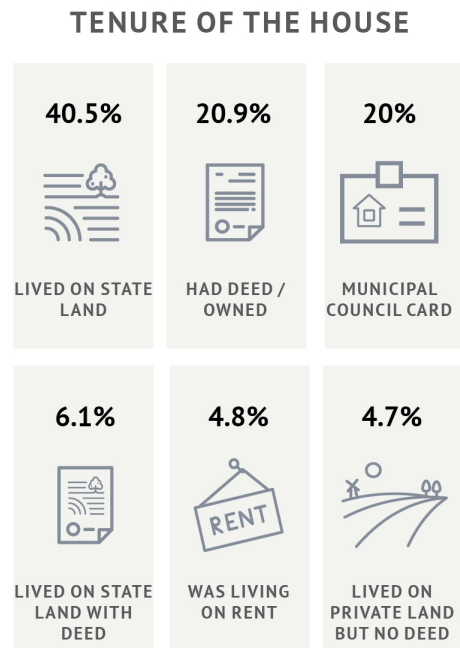


Figure 1.2



A majority of respondents (94.5%) had been registered to vote in their previous location. 24.4% had lived there for 1-10 years, 26.8% for 11-20 years, 20.9% for 21-30 years and 25.8% for more than 30 years. 23.8% had houses that were 100-500 square feet, 41% had

houses that were 501-1000 square feet and 10% had houses that were 1000 - 2500 square feet. While most (77.5%) were single storey houses, 18.3% had two storied houses. 48.8% had indoor bathrooms while 23.3% had bathrooms that were shared by the community. 78% of houses had pipe borne water while 90.4% had electricity from the national grid.

54.4% said that they never experienced floods while 21.6% said they experienced it several times a year and 9.8% said twice a year. (Figure 1.3). 62.7% have never suffered from mosquito borne diseases (Figure 1.4) while 77.3% said their family had never suffered from diarrhea as a result of their living environment. (Figure 1.5)

Figure 1.3

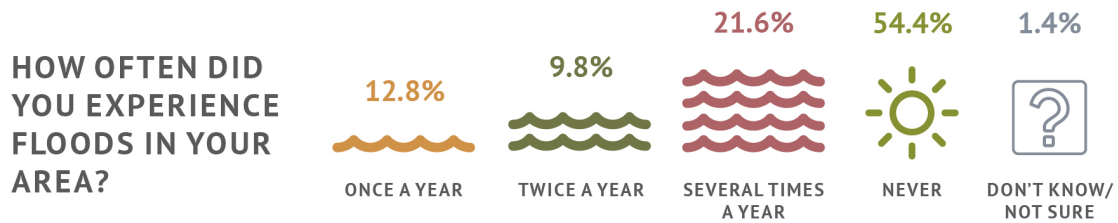


Figure 1.4

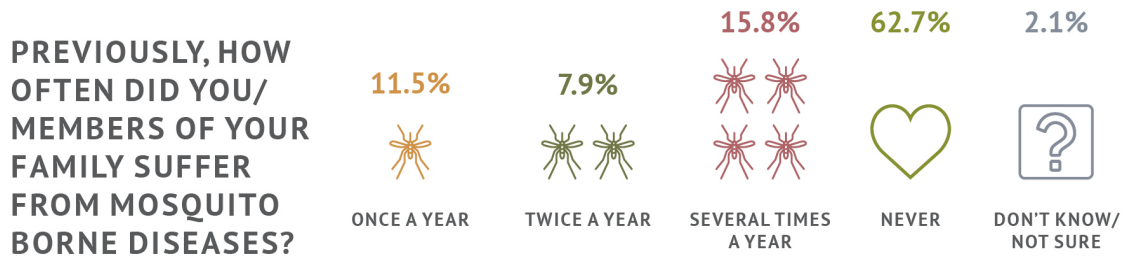
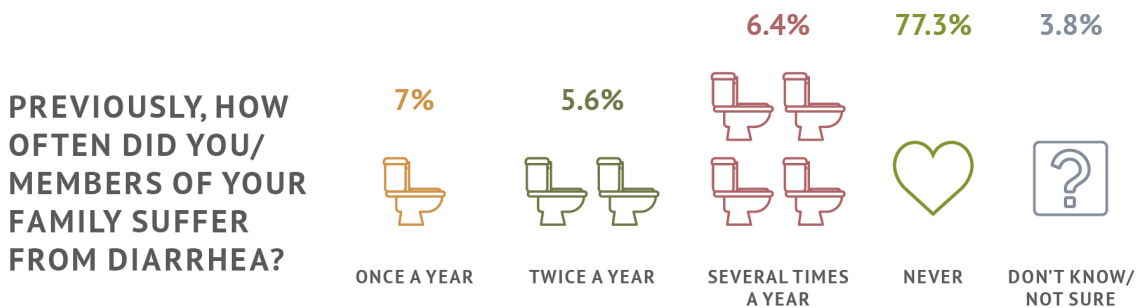


Figure 1.5





## 2. RELOCATION PROCESS

While the process followed by the UDA when relocating communities looks voluntary on paper, the reality was that majority of those currently living in the UDA complexes were involuntary relocated or forcibly evicted there. Irrespective of occupation status, type of house etc, communities were given very little time to relocate and had no say whether or not they wanted to move to a high-rise.

26% of surveyed respondents stated that they were fully informed prior to relocation regarding moving, terms and conditions, nature of the house, location etc. 35.4% said they were somewhat informed and 25.3% said that they did not have enough information. Through whatever notifications of relocation information that they received, 44.4% said that they received information containing a justification for the decision to relocate them, 42.7% said that they received an explanation as to why there was no alternative to the eviction/ relocation and 53.8% said that they received information about the relocation. 60% said they did not receive any information about compensation and 55.7% said did not receive information on legal recourses available to challenge the decision. (See Table 2.1)

**Table 2.1: Did you receive the following prior to relocation?**

	Yes	No	Don't know/ Not sure
1. A justification for the decision	44.7%	38.5%	17.1%
2. An explanation of why there was no alternative to the eviction/ relocation	42.7%	39.3%	18%
3. Information on relocation	53.8%	29.5%	16.8%
4. Information on compensation	18.6%	60%	21.4%
5. Information on legal recourses available to challenge the decision	19.6%	55.7%	24.7%

94% of the respondents had paid the Rs 100,000/- payment that had to be made to the UDA prior to moving in. When asked how they put together this amount, respondents gave a variety of answers. 22% said that they borrowed from a money lender, 13.3% from their monthly income, 13.2% borrowed from family members, 12% borrowed from friends or neighbours, 11% pawned jewellery and 10% used their savings. Almost 80% of respondents said that they did not get any financial assistance from the UDA or any organisation to help pay the moving costs.

### 3. APARTMENT LIFE

An apartment in every UDA complex is 400 square feet in size, with a living room, kitchen, bathroom and 2 bedrooms. The policy of the Urban Regeneration Project is a house for a house, and not a house for a family nor does it take into account the size of the previous home. This means that families who had houses bigger than 500 square feet or those with houses that had more than one family living in it, as is usually the case, were entitled to only one house. CPA has met several households that have more than 6 people living together due to this policy.

In this survey, respondents were asked if their apartment has sufficient space to accommodate all their family members. 50.2% said yes while 49.2% said no. (Figure 3.1) 61.1% believe that the apartment provides them with adequate privacy while 36.7% said that it does not. (Figure 3.2) When asked what problems they have with the quality and design of the apartment, 46.5% said that the size of the apartment was too small. 26.8% said that the walls are already cracked, 14.3% was not happy with the design of the kitchen while 13.3% had a problem with the fact that toilet is next to the kitchen. (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.1

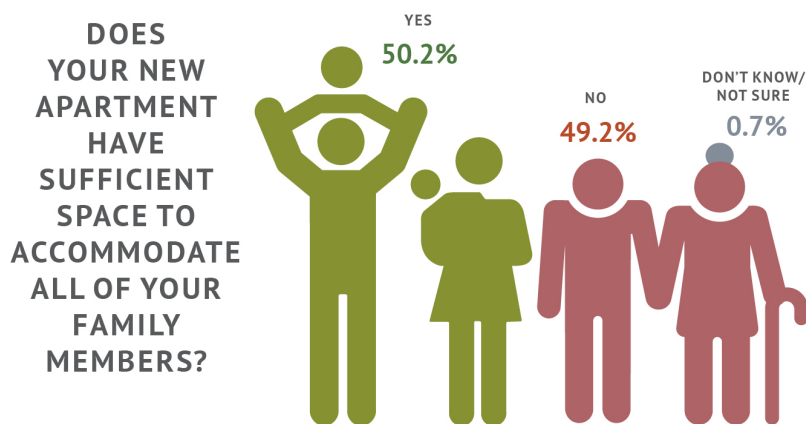


Figure 3.2

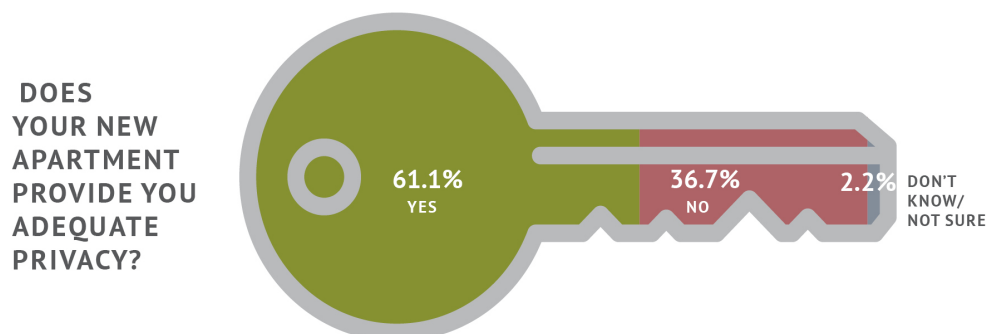


Figure 3.3



Figure 3.4

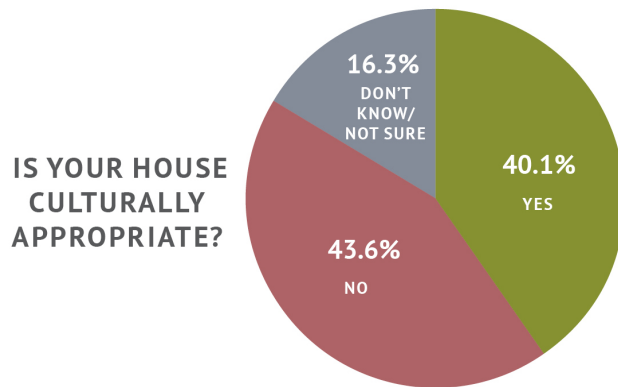


Figure 3.5

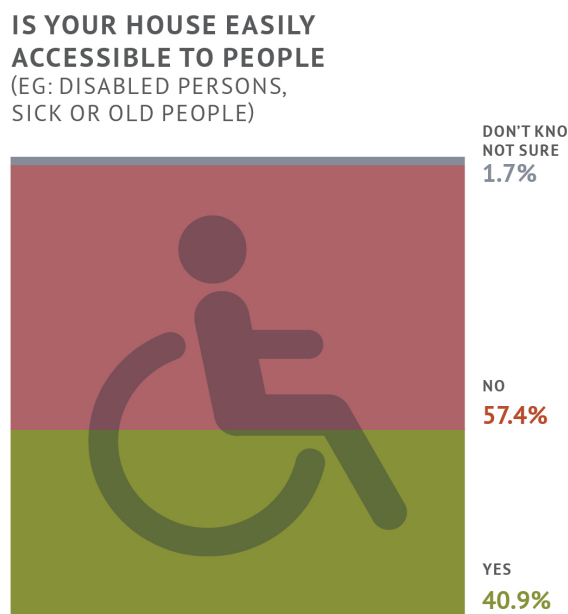
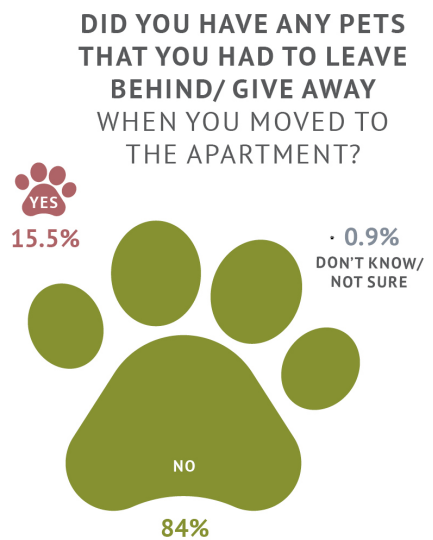


Figure 3.6

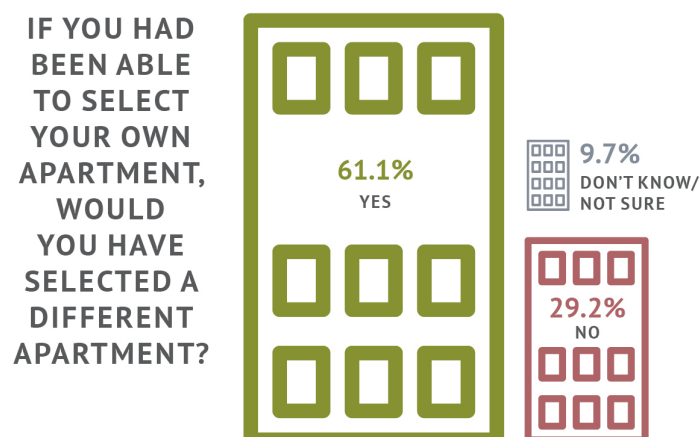


43.6% of the surveyed respondents believe that the design of the apartment is culturally inappropriate while 40.1% believe that the design is culturally appropriate. (Figure 3.4) It is noteworthy that 60% from Methsara Uyana believe that the apartment is not culturally appropriate. Almost 60% of all surveyed respondents stated that their apartments were not easily accessible to people with disabilities, sick or old people while 40.9% said that it is accessible. (Figure 3.5) Almost 70% from Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana stated that their apartments are not easily accessible to people. 15.5% of respondents also said that they had to leave behind or give away their pets when they moved into the apartment. Initially, the UDA had a no pet policy which not every household adheres to, although given the small size of the apartment and lack of outdoor space also meant that it was just not feasible to keep a pet in the apartment for some families. (Figure 3.6)

68% of respondents said that they have access to place of worship at a convenient distance while 31.1% said that they do not. Looking at those who do not have access to a place of worship at a convenient distance, 50% from Methsara Uyana and 34.4% from Sirisara Uyana said that they do not have access. Interviews done with residents of Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana revealed that relocated Muslim communities have been badly affected as there is no mosque close by. The closest mosque in Borella is not within walking distance and not everyone is able to afford daily trips to the mosque and back.

Most apartments were allocated to families randomly and communities were not relocated together on the same floors, which meant that neighbours and families were separated and scattered over 12 storey buildings. From the survey respondents, 70.1% stated that the UDA allocated their apartment 61.1% of respondents said that had they been able to select their own apartment, they would have selected a different one. (Figure 3.7) 42.7% of respondents stated that the move to the apartment had separated them from their friends and relatives, with Methsara Uyana being the highest with those who agreed (57.1%).

Figure 3.7





When comparing the apartment to their previous home, 35.7% say that their living space has got better while 29.2% say it has got worse. 45% from Methsara Uyana say it has got worse while almost 40% from Sirisara Uyana and Mihindusenpura say it has got better. Living in apartment complexes brings with it unique experiences and noise level is something that is noticeable in all the buildings, especially in the evenings and weekends. Almost 60% say that the noise level is worse compared to their previous home. According to 73.1% of respondents, access to public transport was better at their previous home and 62.3% say that access to schools was better as well. Furthermore, 40.9% of respondents state that the distance they have to travel work has increased while 41% say that there is difference in the distance due to relocation.

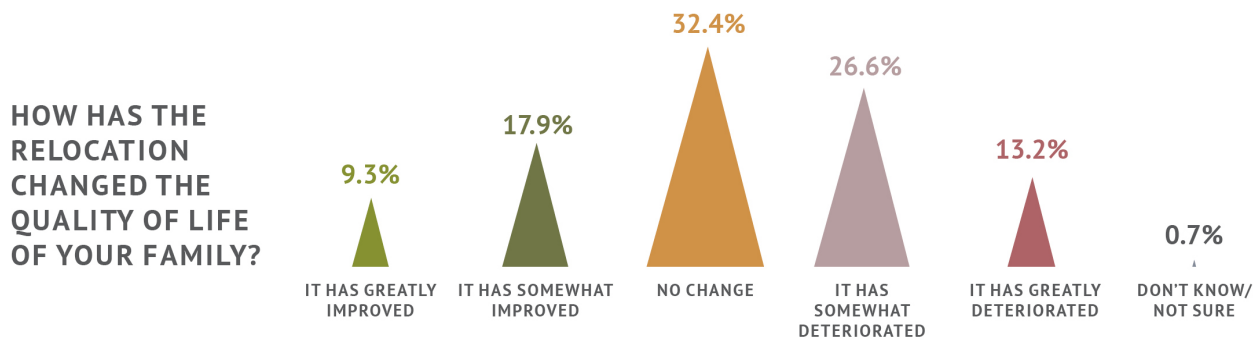
Garbage clearance and sanitary facilities are satisfactory overall at Mihindusenpura, with 90.9% stating that garbage clearance is good and 89.6% stating that sanitary facilities are good. At both Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana, the lack of cleanliness in the common areas is quite visible. Furthermore, at Methsara Uyana the UDA officials imposed an arbitrary rule earlier in year stating that garbage cannot be taken in the elevators. This has meant that people resort to throwing their garbage down from top floors or placing them on the ground floor when they can as the daily garbage truck does not come at a particular time every day. Almost 40% at Methsara Uyana and almost 30% at Sirisara Uyana say that garbage clearance is bad. 30.5% at Methsara Uyana and 21.7% at Sirisara Uyana say that sanitary facilities are bad.

36.7% of respondents are happy living in the UDA complex with almost 12% saying that they are very happy. Overall satisfaction living in the UDA complex is rated higher at Mihindusenpura when compared to Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana. At Methsara Uyana, almost 50% say that they are unhappy living at the apartment, with 15.6% being very unhappy. At Sirisara Uyana, 35.2% expressed unhappiness with 15.5% being very unhappy. (Table 3.1) Further analysis revealed that those who expressed happiness regarding living in the UDA complex were mostly those lived in a semi permanent or temporary home, while around 40% of those who previously had a permanent home said that they were unhappy.

Almost 40% of respondents say that the relocation has deteriorated the quality of life of their family, with 13.2% saying that it has greatly deteriorated. 32.4% say that there has been no change while 17.9% say that their quality of life has somewhat improved. (Figure 3.8)

**Table 3.1: Overall satisfaction living at this location**

	Overall	Methsara Uyana	Sirisara Uyana	Mihindusenpura
Very happy	11.9%	6.4%	9.2%	16.7%
Happy	24.9%	16.3%	20.0%	33.0%
Somewhat happy	31.6%	28.7%	34.7%	30.8%
Unhappy	20.1%	31.6%	19.7%	14.5%
Very unhappy	10.3%	15.6%	15.5%	3.7%
Don't know/ Not sure	1.2%	1.4%	1.0%	1.3%

**Figure 3.8**

Respondents were asked if they thought their apartment was suitable for living - this included anything that respondents felt overall constituted as suitable, including adequate space, effective protection against natural disasters, etc. 54.8% of respondents said yes, that they thought their apartment was suitable for living while 41.6% disagreed. 55.3% in Methsara Uyana believe that their apartment is not suitable for living while 42.4% from Sirisara Uyana stated the same.

## 4. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Almost 50% of surveyed respondents receive a monthly income while 41.5% are daily wage earners. 26% of households have more than one income earner in the family. 28.5% have a monthly household income between Rs 10,001 - 20,000, 31% have a monthly household income between Rs 20,001 - 30,000 and 15.7% have a monthly household income between Rs 30,001 - 40,000.

47.1% say that the move has had no effect on their earnings while 36.8% say that their earnings have decreased. (Figure 4.1) However, majority of respondents (79.9%) say that their total monthly expenses are higher now while 18.9% say that it is the same. (Figure 4.2) That their water and electricity bills are much higher than what they used to pay at their previous home has been a common complaint since communities started moving into the apartments. Some households have even received water bills as high as Rs 7000, something which is almost impossible. These issues have been raised with the UDA by the communities, however nothing has been done yet to solve this issue. Around 70% of surveyed respondents said that their electricity and water bills are higher now. (Figure 4.3 and 4.4)

When asked if the moving to the UDA complex affect their family's savings, almost 50% of respondents said that their savings had reduced. 37.2% said that there is no difference while 3.8% said that their savings have increased. (Figure 4.5) 71.2% say that they are unable to save an amount every month while 27.7% say that they can save every month. (Figure 4.6) When asked why they are unable to save every month, 93% said that they spend all their income on household related expenses such as food and bills. (Figure 4.7)

Figure 4.1

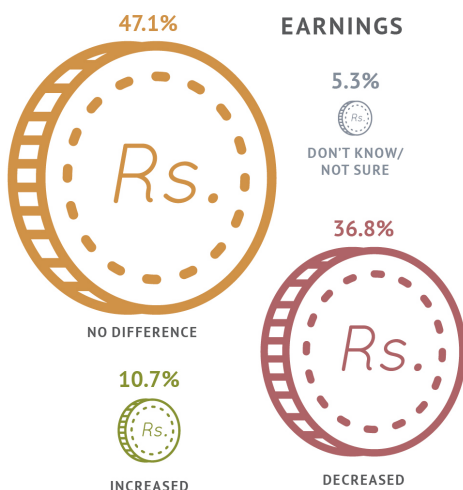


Figure 4.2

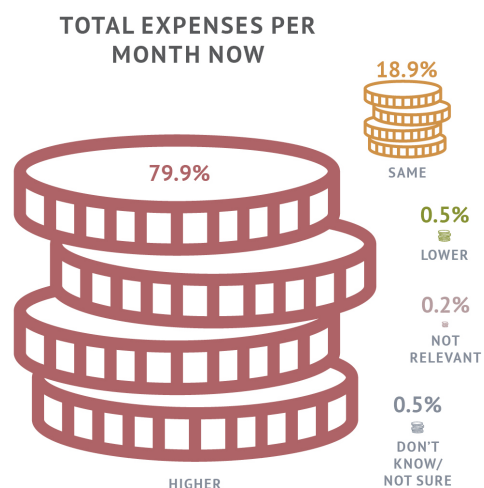


Figure 4.3

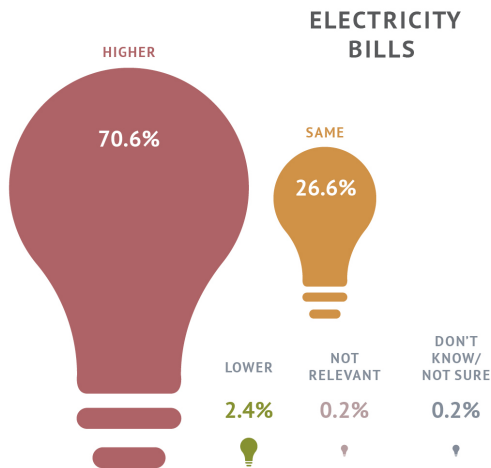


Figure 4.4

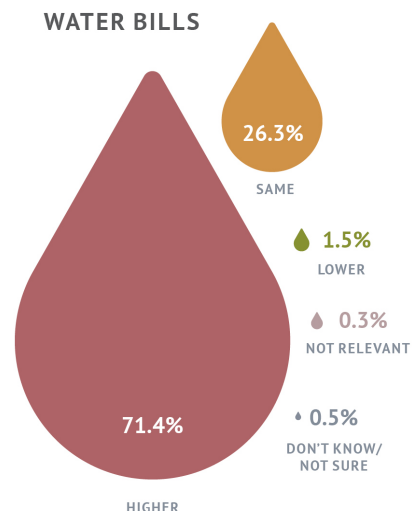
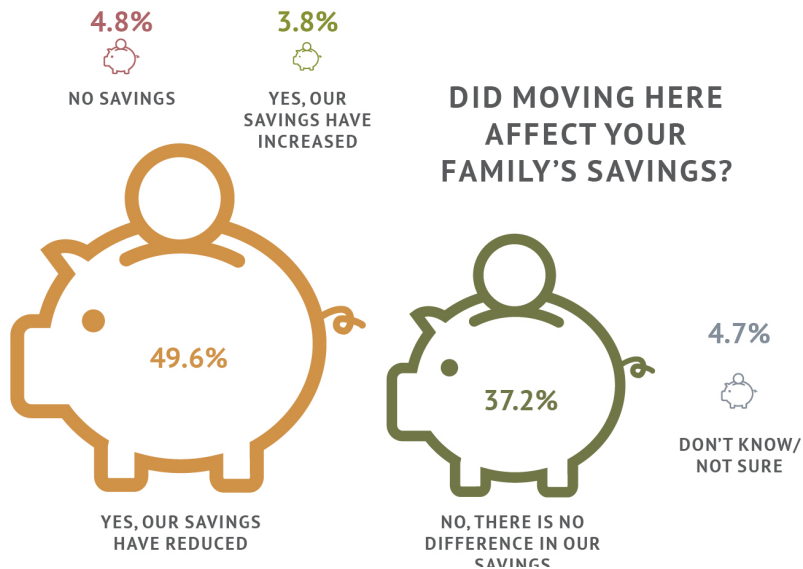


Figure 4.5



ARE YOU ABLE TO SAVE AN AMOUNT EVERY MONTH?

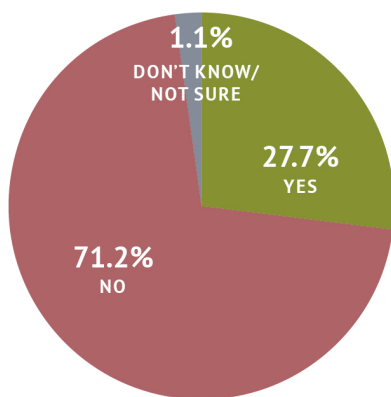


Figure 4.6

### REASON FOR NOT SAVING

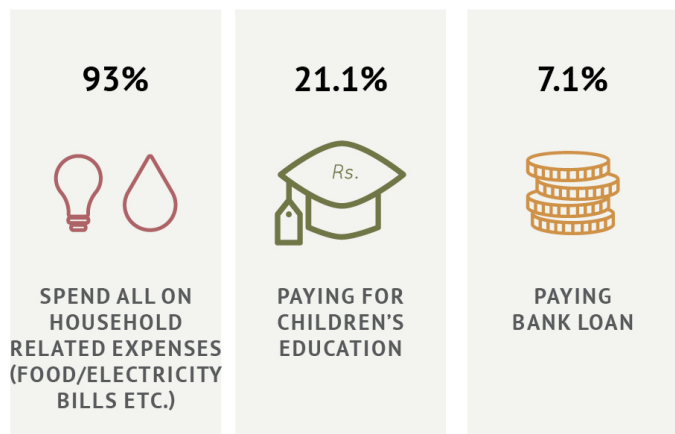


Figure 4.7

## 5. SECURITY

For the communities relocated to the UDA complexes, high-rise living is a completely different way of life that disturbed or changed life as they know it - whether it was their social networks, their built environment or the security that neighbourhood provided. Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their sense of security about their immediate surroundings as well as of the larger built environment. For most of the communities, the community or *watta* they had lived in previously brought with it its own system of security and surveillance, which was what enabled most of them for example to leave their front doors open during the day, for their children to play freely outdoors after school. Its very rarely that a stranger can walk around without someone asking who they had come to see. This system also helped them keep their community crime and drug free - something that they were very proud of - despite the stereotype that all *wattas* are dens of drugs, crime and prostitution.

Compared to their previous location, 39.1% of respondents say that they feel somewhat safe in their current location while 27.3% feel very safe. 32% say that they feel unsafe out which 17.9% said they feel very unsafe in their current location. (*Figure 5.1*) Looking at the different complexes, Methsara Uyana (32.6% said very unsafe) and Sirisara Uyana (19.7% said very unsafe) show higher levels of insecurity compared to Mihindusenpura (8.9% said very unsafe).

38.4% respondents feel very safe being alone inside their apartment at night when compared to their previous location while 34.5% feels somewhat safe. (*Figure 5.2*) 25.1% however, do feel unsafe to be inside their apartment alone at night, with high levels of insecurity expressed at Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana. 40.8% at Methsara Uyana feel unsafe (with 24.5% stating feeling very unsafe) and 26.9% at Sirisara Uyana feel unsafe (with 12% feeling very unsafe).

Almost 40% of respondents feel somewhat safe being out alone in the parking lots, the lawns, streets and sidewalks right outside their building at night and 23% feel very safe. (*Figure 5.3*) Again, high levels of insecurity was expressed at Methsara Uyana with 51.4% saying they feel unsafe, out of which almost 30% said they feel very unsafe. Almost 40% feel unsafe in Sirisara Uyana with 21.2% saying they feel very unsafe.

59.2% of respondents believe that if they see someone they have never seen before in the immediate vicinity of their apartment, they are able to ask them who they are while 37.7% say that they do not they are able to ask. (*Figure 5.4*) Methsara Uyana showed a higher level of insecurity compared to the other two complexes, with almost 50% stating that they feel they are unable to ask.

Figure 5.1

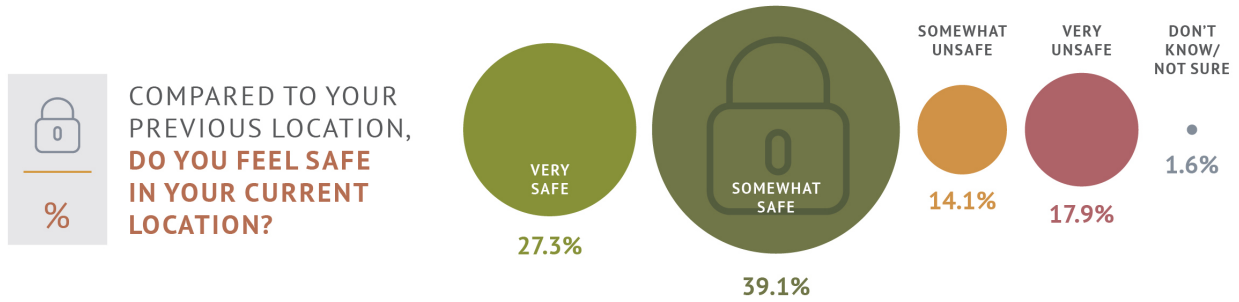


Figure 5.2

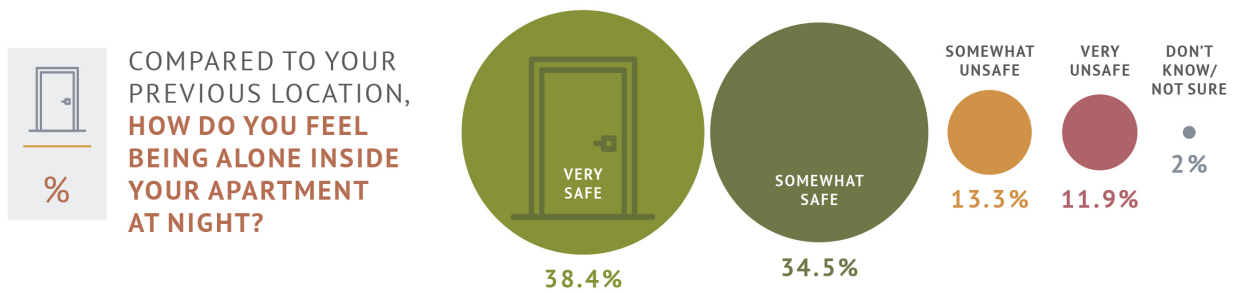


Figure 5.3

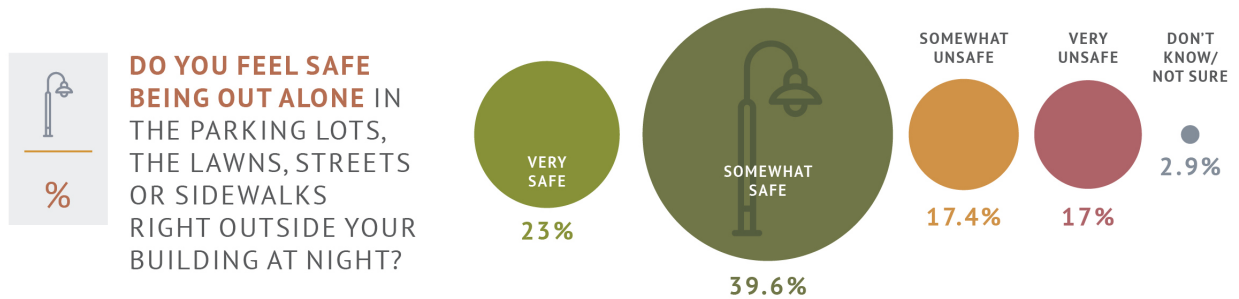


Figure 5.4



In the last 6 months, 41.8% of respondents were aware of incidents of theft where someone's purse, wallet or jewellery had been snatched from them. (Figure 5.5) Reports of theft are highest at Methsara Uyana (53.5% saying yes to theft in the last 6 months) followed by Sirisara Uyana at 45.6%.

55.8% of survey respondents stated that to their knowledge no one was threatened or beaten up in their apartment complex in the last 6 months while 39.4% said that someone was threatened or beaten in the past 6 months. (Figure 5.6) Reports of people getting threatened or beaten up in the last 6 months is highest in Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana with around 50% of respondents saying yes.

When it comes to children's security, survey respondents are divided on the issue with 43% expressing satisfaction and another 43% expressing dissatisfaction. (Figure 5.7) 53% from both Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana expressed dissatisfaction.

52.6% of survey respondents say that gangs are a big problem in their apartment complex while 23.5% say that it is not a problem. (Figure 5.8) 64.5% from Methsara Uyana and 70.1% from Sirisara Uyana say that it is a big problem, while at Mihindusenpura only 33.4% stated the same.

Another issue that was highlighted is that of drugs and among the survey respondents, almost 60% said that people using drugs was a big problem in their apartment complex 17.4% said that it was not a problem. (Figure 5.9) Issues with people using drugs is high in Methsara Uyana and Sirisara Uyana with around 73% stating that it is a big problem. 55.8% of respondents also stated that people selling drugs is a bit problem, with this figure being as high as 68.1% in Methsara Uyana and 74.1% in Sirisara Uyana.

Figure 5.5

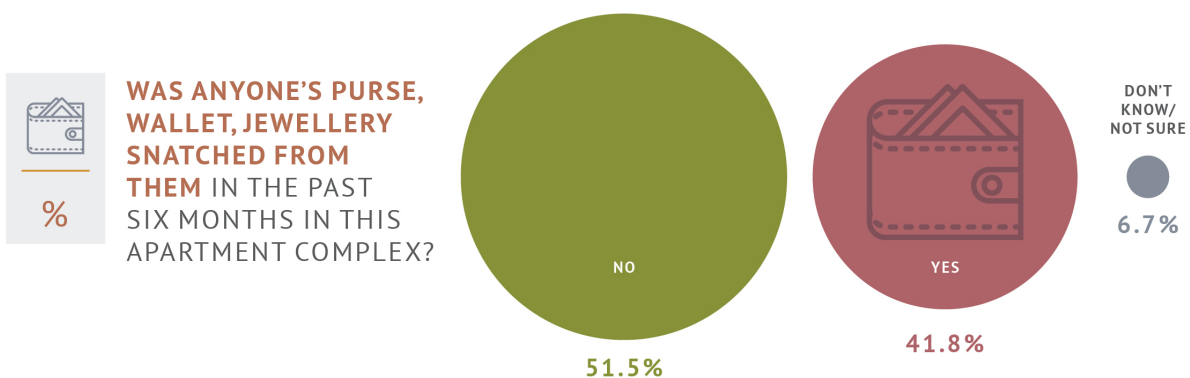




Figure 5.6

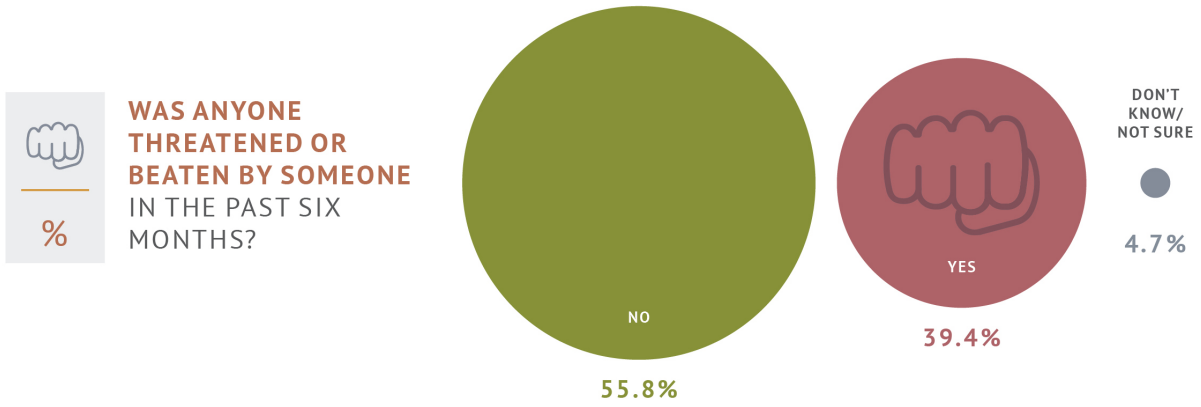


Figure 5.7

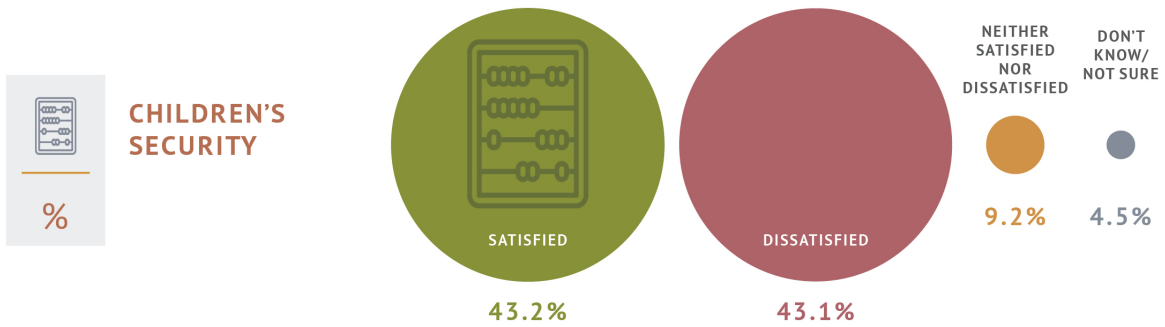


Figure 5.8

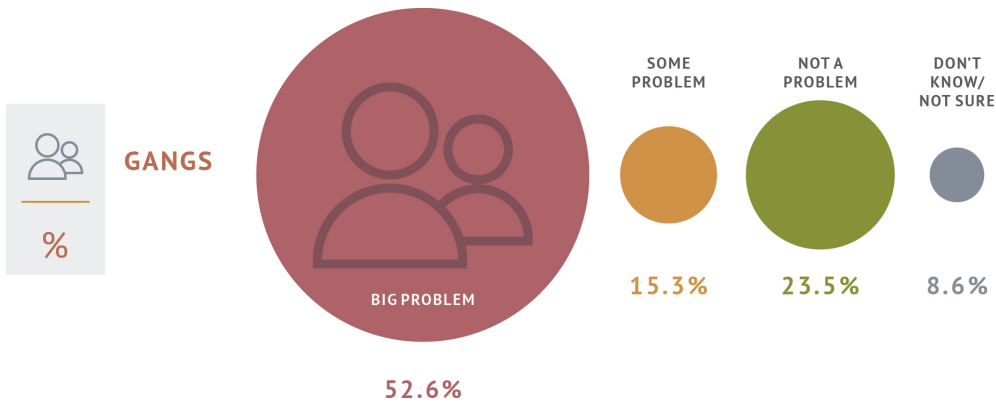
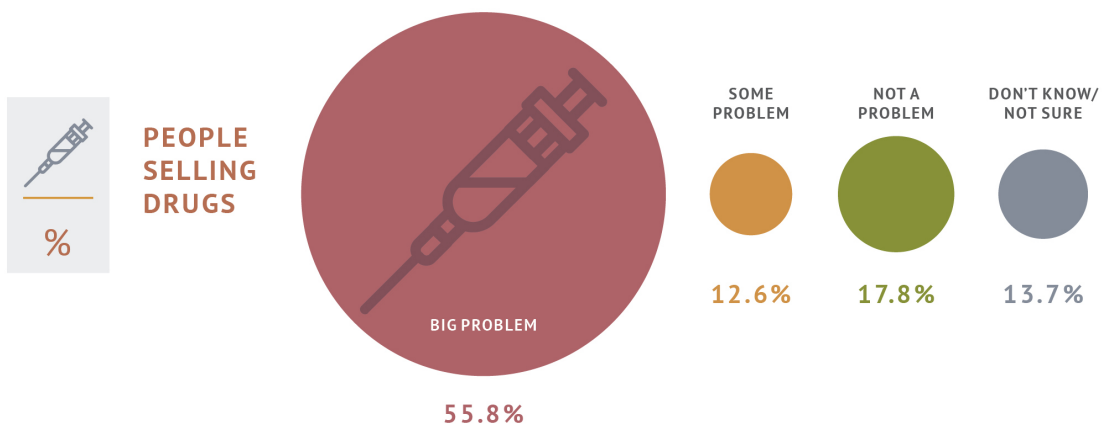


Figure 5.9



## 6. THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Majority of the surveyed respondents (77.2%) prefer to live in detached house while 14.4% would prefer to live in a low-rise apartment that doesn't require elevators. Only 6.9% of respondents said that they would prefer to live in a high-rise apartment. (Figure 6.1) 38.1% of respondents do not like living in an apartment complex while almost 50% said that they like it somewhat. 12.2% said that they it very much. (Figure 6.2)

Figure 6.1

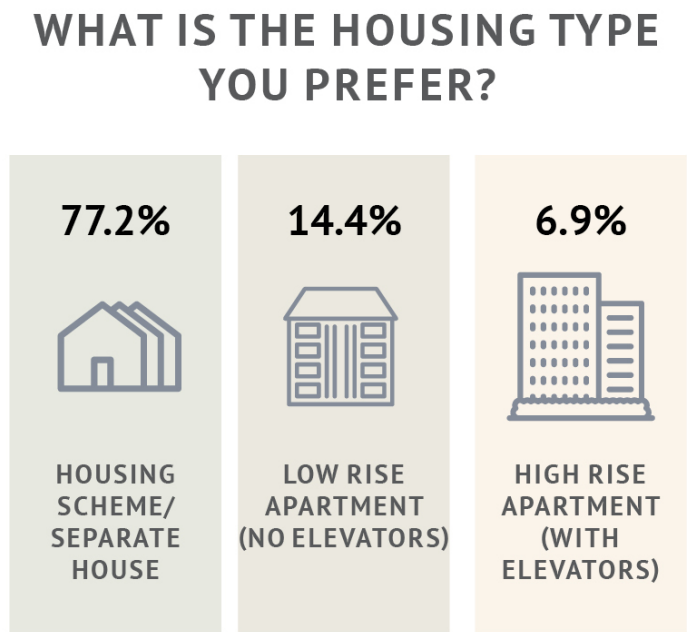
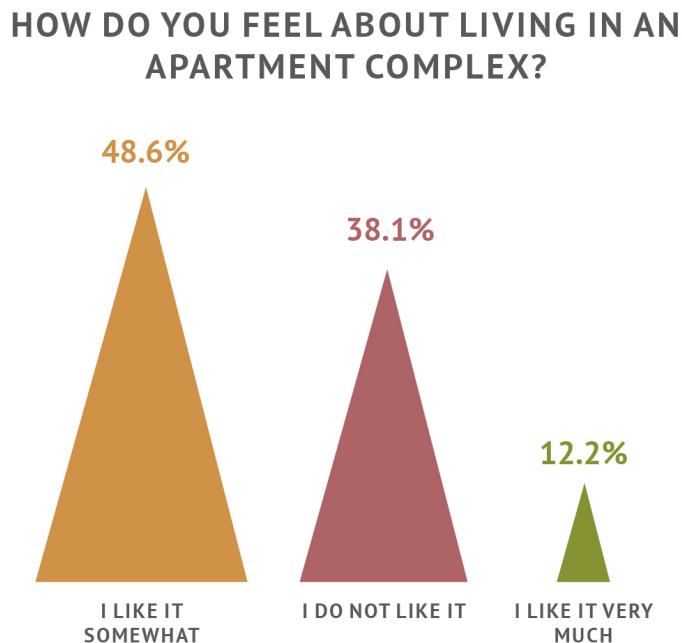


Figure 6.2



When asked about what aspects of the built environment they like, 36.5% said they liked that there were no flood issues. 30.7% like the facilities available like electricity, water, drainage etc, 18.9% liked that its a secure place and 16.2% like the clean surrounding. Interestingly, 26.9% of respondents said that they do not like anything about the built environment. (Figure 6.3) 37% from Methsara Uyana and 33% from Sirisara Uyana said that they do not like anything about the built environment.

The noise is what most do not like about the built environment with 56.9% of surveyed respondents identifying this as a key reason. 39.2% do not like the lack of space, 20.5% does not like the lack of security while 16.5% do not like the use of the lift. (Figure 6.4) When asked what could be done to improve their built environment, two suggestions that were mentioned were increase the size of the apartment and increasing the level of security.

Figure 6.3

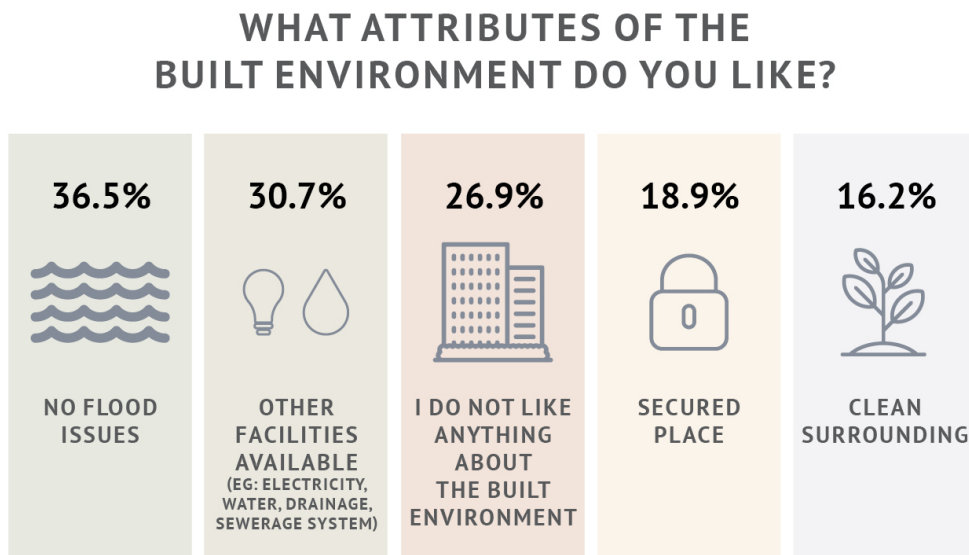
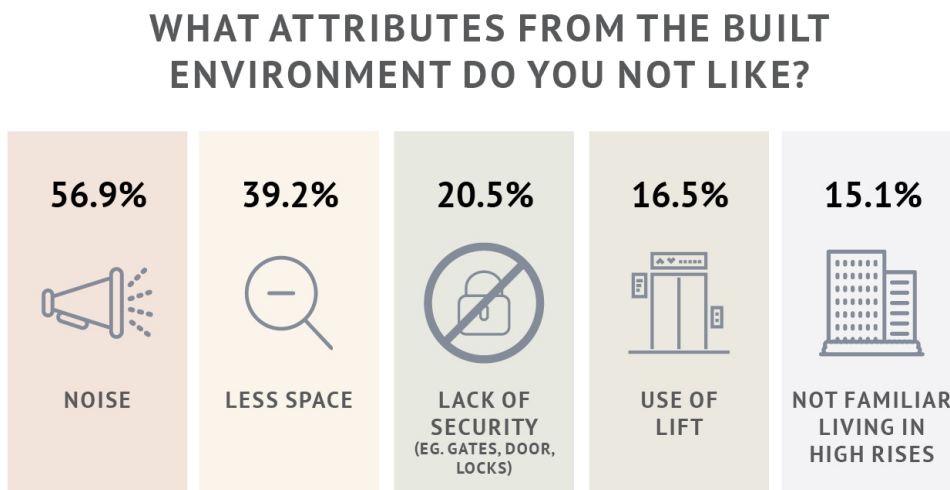


Figure 6.4





For photo essays and more information about the communities affected by the Urban Regeneration Project, please visit CPA's Right To The City initiative website.

[righttothecity.info](http://righttothecity.info)