Diverse Types of Slums in Bangalore: Studying Policy-Relevant Differences

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Abstract
Combining a study of satellite images with on-the-ground neighborhood surveys helped identify five separate types of slums in Bangalore. Detailed interviews with more than 2,000 households in a sample of two types of slums – the best and the worst – helped confirm that there are clear differences. Migration patterns, length of residence in Bangalore, living conditions, asset holdings, investments in education and health care, and prospects for the future vary widely. Higher and lower degrees of informality are associated with different slum types. All types of slums are poorly served by the kinds of institutions that help make Bangalore a source of economic dynamism for others, but the extent of institutional disconnect is greatest for the worst type of slum. Connecting slum settlements with more robust institutions is an essential aspect of long-term policy formulation. More fine-grained policies recognizing the diversity of slum types will more effectively help improve the prospects for slum residents.