

Case 1: Mansarovar Park

The *Gadia Lohars* are primarily a nomadic community, originally from the state of Rajasthan in west India. They mostly engage in blacksmith work related to making and selling iron tools and implements. Neglected by the state, they continue to live in abject poverty and inadequate conditions. In Delhi and its surrounding areas, the *Gadia Lohars* live in 90 settlements/clusters, without access to adequate housing and basic services. The settlement under the Mansarovar Park flyover consists of about 62 *Gadia Lohar* families, who claim to have been living at the site for over 60 years.

Forced Evictions in Mansarovar Park

On 22 August 2017, at 8 a.m., Delhi government authorities commenced the demolition of homes of the community in Mansarovar Park without any prior notice. Affected families were also not given any time to retrieve their belongings from their homes before they were demolished. The loss of their homes and personal possessions thus resulted in extensive losses.

Since the demolition of their homes in 2017, Housing and Land Rights Network India has been engaged with the affected persons, and has also helped them file a case in the High Court of Delhi for adequate resettlement and rehabilitation. However, the community has still not received any alternative housing or compensation from the state for its cumulative losses, and continues to live at the same site in precarious conditions without access to adequate housing, water, or sanitation.

The forced eviction and loss of housing has most severely impacted the 200 women of the settlement. Most of them, reportedly, have been living in the area since their birth. The loss of housing has rendered them homeless. All the families continue to live in the open or under makeshift plastic tents. The absence of adequate toilets forces women to bathe fully-clothed in the open, which violates their human rights to water, security, and privacy. The settlement has only four water taps, which are not sufficient to meet the needs of the 62 families living there.

Trauma related to the forced eviction and loss of homes led to early stress-induced labour for three women in the community, of whom one had to be admitted to a private hospital after being denied admission in the government hospital. Many children, especially girls, were forced to drop out of school after their homes were demolished. At present, close to 25 children in the settlement do not attend school.

Given the extensive losses suffered by the community and the continued failure of the state to provide restitution for violations of multiple human rights, HLRN believes that conducting an EvIA in this settlement will help to document and raise awareness about their losses, both quantitative and qualitative. The report of the assessment will also be submitted in the High Court of Delhi to assist the ongoing case and will also be shared with the media and the Delhi government.