

BUILDING SAVDA GHEVRA

Life at margins

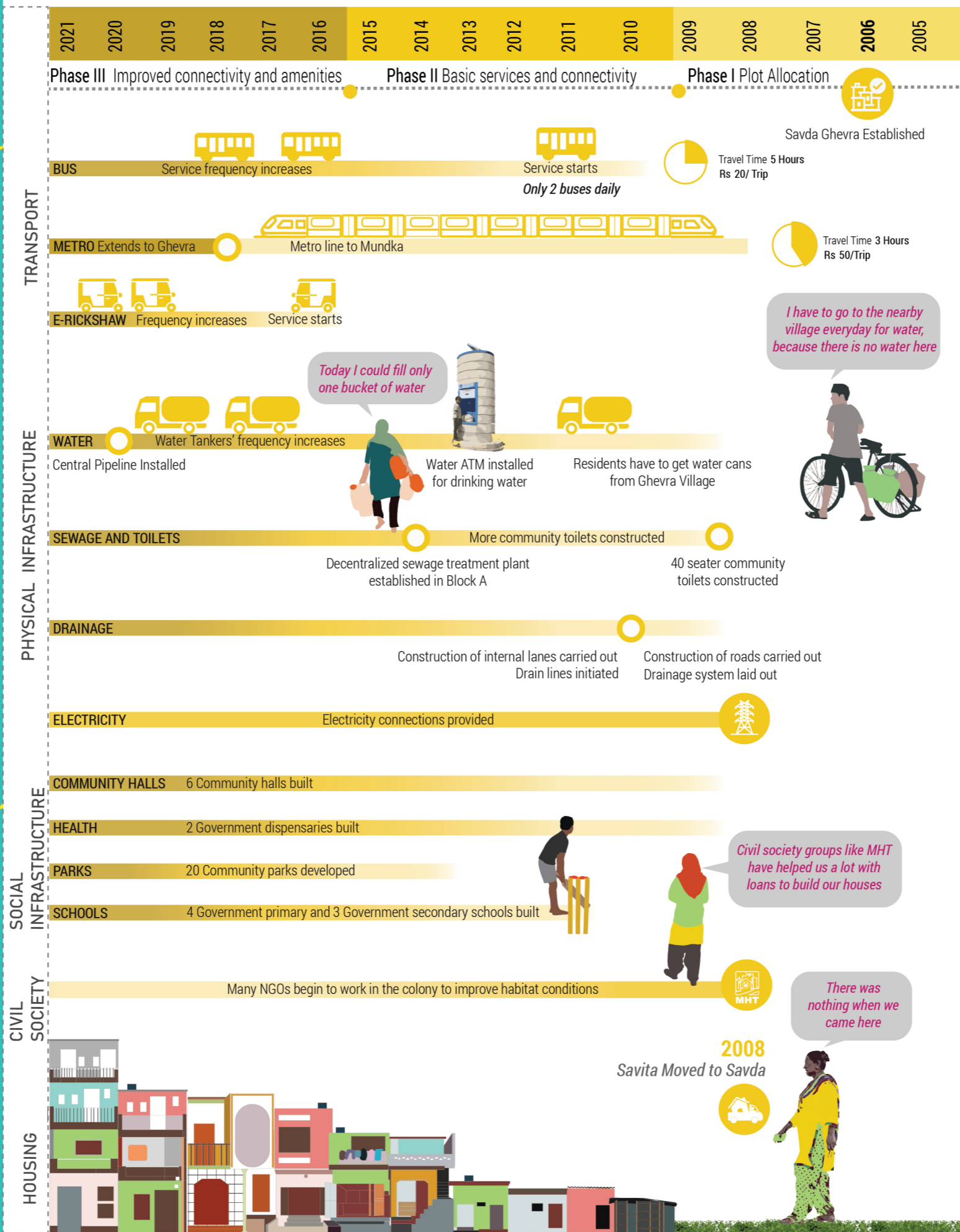
After being pushed further into poverty due to the sudden resettlement, the residents of Savda Ghevra have created a bustling neighborhood over the years. This timeline captures the gradual growth of the neighborhood.

25 kms

Savda Ghevra, Delhi



RESTARTING FROM SCRATCH...



0 km
Paharganj, Delhi

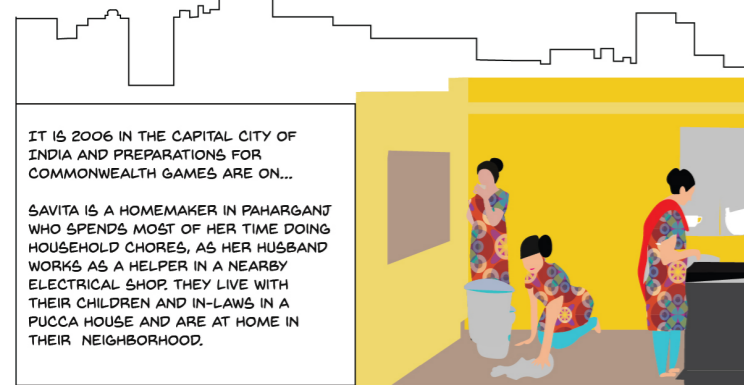


When first established, Savda was surrounded by agricultural land with no basic amenities available nearby – no schools, health clinics, shops, public transport...

Illustrated by : Anushka Shahdadpuri

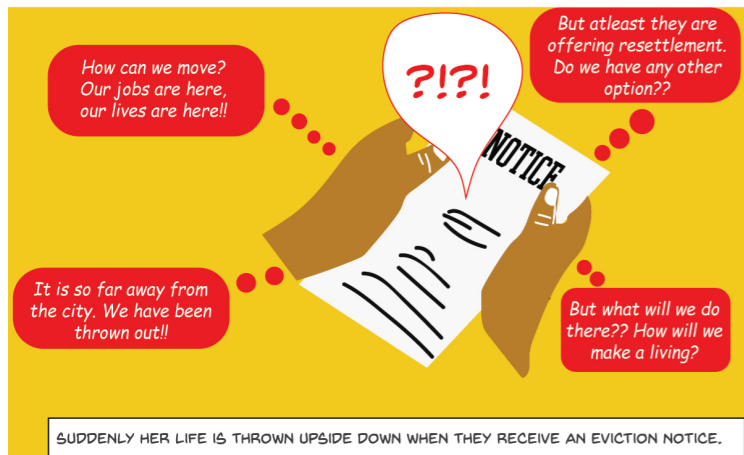
Rebuilding a Life in a Resettlement Colony

The story of Savita



IT IS 2006 IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF INDIA AND PREPARATIONS FOR COMMONWEALTH GAMES ARE ON...

SAVITA IS A HOMEMAKER IN PAHARGANJ WHO SPENDS MOST OF HER TIME DOING HOUSEHOLD CHORES, AS HER HUSBAND WORKS AS A HELPER IN A NEARBY ELECTRICAL SHOP. THEY LIVE WITH THEIR CHILDREN AND IN-LAWS IN A PUCCA HOUSE AND ARE AT HOME IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD.



How can we move? Our jobs are here, our lives are here!!

?!?!?

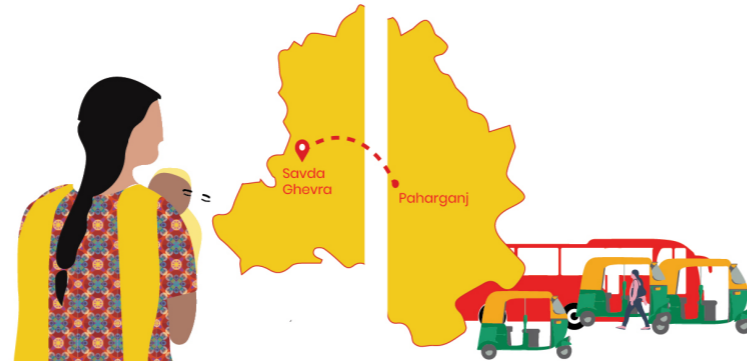
But atleast they are offering resettlement. Do we have any other option??

It is so far away from the city. We have been thrown out!!

But what will we do there?? How will we make a living?

SUDDENLY HER LIFE IS THROWN UPSIDE DOWN WHEN THEY RECEIVE AN EVICTION NOTICE.

THEY WERE RESETTLED TO THE EMPTY PLOTS OF LAND IN SAVDA GHEVRA IN 2008



There is nothing here at all, just wide expanses of farm land and jungle for as far as I can see...

The grass on our plot is as high as my shoulders, the land has not been serviced in any way. There are snakes and insects and I am so terrified all the time! My children are small and I am scared to put them down even for a minute!!

ON HER FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH SAVDA GHEVRA, SAVITA IS TERRIFIED.

THEY HAVE TO PAY RS.7000 TO GET A 10-YEAR LEASE FOR AN EMPTY 12.5 SQM PLOT. IN THE PROCESS, SAVITA'S HUSBAND LOSES HIS JOB AND THERE ARE NO OPPORTUNITIES AROUND IN THE NEW PLACE.

THE NEXT FEW YEARS ARE FILLED WITH HARDSHIPS FOR ALL THE FAMILIES RESETTLED TO SAVDA GHEVRA. SAVITA BUILDS A MAKE SHIFT HOUSE WITH A TIN ROOF AND FLIMS Y WALLS. THERE IS NO WATER SUPPLY AND VERY LIMITED TANKERS LEADING TO DAILY QUARRELS.



STATE OF HOUSING

STATE OF WATER

STATE OF TRANSPORT

Today, I have to get into the bus!

Arre, get in fast!!!

Every day I miss the bus; how will I earn money if I do not reach Paharganj?!!

STATE OF SANITATION

THERE ARE VERY FEW COMMUNITY TOILETS AND PEOPLE HAVE TO WAIT IN LONG QUEUES FOR THEIR TURN. IN THE NAME OF TRANSPORT, THERE ARE ONLY TWO DAILY BUSES TO THE CITY BECAUSE OF WHICH PEOPLE HAVE TO FIGHT WITH EACH OTHER TO GET SPACE ON THE BUS. MANY GET LEFT BEHIND.



AT FIRST, THE ONLY WORK AVAILABLE FOR SAVITA AND HER HUSBAND IS AS FARM LABORERS IN THE NEARBY FIELDS. LATER AS HER HUSBAND BECOMES A CONSTRUCTION WORKER, SHE BECOMES A FARM SUPERVISOR. BUT FARM WORK PAYS VERY POORLY AND TAKES A TOLL ON HER HEALTH.

SHE GOES ON TO WORK AS A CONSTRUCTION WORKER, A SECURITY GUARD, AS A HOUSE-KEEPER IN A HOSPITAL AND AS A WORKER IN A NEARBY FOOTWEAR FACTORY

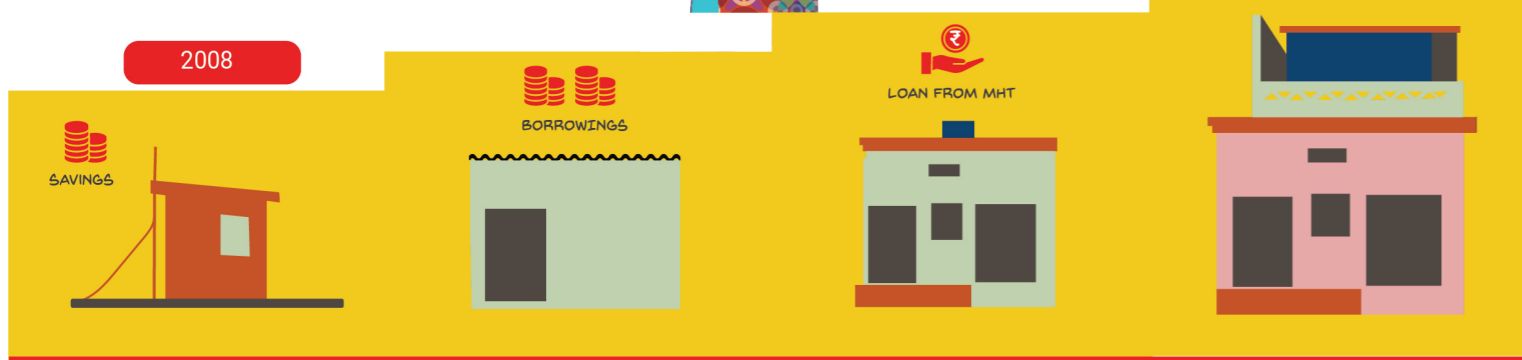
I need the work; we need the income to run the house. But it's so difficult to manage my home and look after my children; employers always expect you to do overtime. They don't think about how we will get back home safely and who will look after our children.

There is no work available here, how will we earn any money?

WHEN CONTRACTORS START BRINGING HOME-BASED WORK TO SAVDA, OCCASIONALLY, SAVITA ALSO TAKES IT UP

FAR REMOVED FROM THE SOURCE OF THEIR LIVELIHOODS, SAVITA AND HER HUSBAND ARE FORCED TO TAKE UP DIFFERENT KINDS OF JOBS TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND STRUGGLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET..

2018



2008

BORROWINGS

LOAN FROM MHT

SAVINGS



IN 2019, SAVITA JOINS MHT AS A COMMUNITY LEADER AND STARTS BECOMING AWARE OF HER RIGHTS.

There are so many things I didn't know before - what our rights are, what government schemes we are eligible for, and what we can do to access them.

If we work together, we will emerge stronger!!

SHE BEGINS TO EMERGE AS A STRONG VOICE IN HER COMMUNITY



नेहा बुटीक मटेरियल

दुआटे घाटो धामे फैकी बदन, केम, फॉर, वेड, बुकरन, अकरम, ए, सभो प्रगत के टेलरिंग मटेरियल उचित रेट पर मिलवे दे

AFTER HER STRUGGLE OVER THE YEARS, SAVITA GAINS MORE CONFIDENCE AND BEGINS TO EMPOWER OTHER WOMEN. TODAY, SHE HAS HER OWN SHOP IN SAVDA GHEVRA NAMED AFTER HER DAUGHTER AND IS A LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR.

LIKE MANY OTHERS, THEY INCREMENTALLY BUILD THEIR HOUSE FROM KUTCHA TO PUCCA OVER TEN YEARS WITH THEIR SAVINGS, BORROWING FROM FAMILY AND A LOAN FROM MAHILA HOUSING TRUST (MHT).

THE STORY OF SAVITA IS THE STORY OF COUNTLESS MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE PUSHED OUT OF THE CITY TO THE PERIPHERIES, LOSING THEIR HOMES AND LIVELIHOODS. THEY ARE FORCED TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES AT THE MARGINS. HOWEVER, EVEN TODAY MANY INSECURITIES OF TENURE AND LIVELIHOOD PERSIST, AGAINST WHICH THEY CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE.