

Project Proposal

Improving Service Delivery by Urban Local Government in the City of Jaipur through Enhanced Civic Engagement

Objectives:

- To assess the status and quality of service delivery by urban local government in the city of Jaipur through generating citizen report cards (CRC) and by engaging stakeholders;
- To create a Public Services Index (PSI) of each of select wards based on delivery against key services;
- To advocate with various levels of urban local government for improving the quality of service delivery.

Rationale:

The quality of life in a locality or a city to a large extent depends upon the availability of suitable infrastructure and services. This becomes particularly important in urban areas where the demand for infrastructure and services is high and often cannot cope with the pace of rapid migration, urbanization, and development. Nearly half of the world's population now lives in cities. Rapid urbanization has also occurred in India over the past two decades. Nearly a third of its people, about 350 million, now live in urban centres. As the pace of economic growth advances, this number continues to increase. However, urban governments have been unable to keep pace with this rapid expansion. Lack of access to basic services and poor service delivery are increasingly affecting the lives of citizens in urban areas. Urban local governments (Municipal Corporation/Municipality) have to a large extent been unable to meet the expectations of the public. One of the reasons for the poor performance of urban local governments is low civic engagement. There is a growing need to enhance community participation in urban local bodies to improve the quality of service delivery. Hence, measures to mobilize, engage, and empower citizens are required.

Worldwide there is increasing recognition that citizens' involvement is critical for enhancing democratic governance, improving service delivery, and fostering citizen empowerment. The ability of citizens, civil society organizations, and other non-state actors to hold the state accountable and make it responsive to their needs comes from the consistent involvement of citizens in the processes of governance. The Government of India has also recognized the potential of civic engagement and introduced provisions to foster citizens' participation in several flagship schemes such as the SSA, MGNREGS, NRHM, etc. These provisions recognize citizens as the ultimate stakeholders and include activities relating to information disclosure, beneficiary/user participation, and participatory monitoring.

In urban areas, while citizen charters, etc. were formulated with the engagement of citizens and community-based organizations, service delivery remains an area where citizen engagement continues to be limited.

In India, citizens' participation in municipal or urban governance is almost non-existent. In rural areas under the Panchayati Raj System, citizens have an opportunity to participate in local governance processes through the institution of the '*Gram Sabha*'. While the 74th Constitutional Amendment made provisions for the setting up of Ward Committees in cities

with a population of more than 300,000, in many states the amendment has not been implemented effectively and/or Ward Committees have not functioned effectively.

Urban governance in the city of Jaipur:

Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan, is the 24th fastest growing city of the world. The Pink City has secured 3.4% growth annually and 7th place in the country in the same category. Jaipur's population has increased by more than 10 times in the last 50 years. In 1900, the population of Jaipur was only 160,000. In 2001, Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) covered a population of 2.3 million, and now in 2011 the population under JMC is 6.7 million. With the exponential increase in population, the need for services has also increased manifold and requires immediate attention.

The Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC), or Jaipur Nagar Nigam, is the apex management body of Jaipur city. There are 77 wards in the Corporation, which is divided into 8 zones, namely Moti Dungri, Hawa Mahal East, Hawa Mahal West, Vidyadhar Nagar, Civil Line, Sanganer, Amber, and Mansarovar. The essential municipal services provided by JMC include: roads, water supply, public health and sanitation, solid waste management, provision of urban amenities and facilities such as parks, gardens, playgrounds, street lighting, parking lots, bus stops and public conveniences; protection of the environment and promotion of ecological aspects; etc.

To improve the quality of services provided by urban local governments and enhance citizens' engagement in the city of Jaipur, CUTS proposes to develop a Public Service Index (PSI). The PSI will be used to generate ward level report cards of urban services provided by the JMC in select wards. The PSI and report cards will provide information on the quality of key urban services and amenities and seek to focus the attention of JMC officials, elected representatives, implementers, and other appropriate authorities on the need for improvements. This will also help determine the reasons for the quality of existing service delivery. CUTS has extensive experience in utilizing Citizen Report Cards (CRC) as a tool in various sectors and in assessing the effectiveness of various flagship schemes of the government in rural areas, and has recognized the potential of the tool for civic engagement and advocacy purposes.

Target Area:

8 wards spread across 8 zones (1 ward per zone) of Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC)

Proposed Methodology:

One of the first activities under the project will be to conduct scoping visits to each of the identified wards to meet with local citizens, elected representatives (Councillors), and other stakeholders in the project area to build rapport and take them on board. Through this scoping exercise, local community based organizations will be identified in each zone of the JMC to provide support in coordinating ward level activities. Thereafter, an Inception Meeting will be organized to inform stakeholders about the goal, objectives, and activities of the project, and also to bring key policy makers, JMC officials, local authorities, and officials on board.

Eight wards (one ward from each of the 8 zones) from out of 77 wards of the JMC will be chosen based on the enabling environment for successful intervention. In assessing the

enabling environment, CUTS will consider factors such as the presence of active citizens and CSOs, proactive councillors and local officials, etc. where there will chances for successful advocacy and implementation of measures to improve service delivery and quality of life. The wards will be selected after various meetings under the project scoping. Local bodies connected to the wards and selected citizens of the ward will be interviewed by local CBOs and data will be analysed to know the quality of service delivery. For this purpose, the Citizens Report Card (CRC) process will be used and the sampling will be done on a random basis. This exercise will also provide an opportunity to engage and make citizens more aware of local government processes. A Citizens Action Group (CAG) will be created in each zone to provide continuous feedback about the quality of services and amenities. The CAGs will continue to advocate with local authorities for ward level improvements in service delivery during and beyond the intervention period. The local CBOs involved in the community mobilization and other activities of the project will lead this process

For each of the selected wards, certain key services such as roads, sewerage, solid garbage, water supply, amenities such as parks, playground, etc., and environment will be identified for which indicators will be developed (*Services/amenities will be added or removed based on the information gathered through project scoping*). For each indicator, certain criteria/benchmarks for scoring will be developed through physical verification. Each indicator will be scored between 0 and 10 based on specific benchmarks. Wherever possible, the benchmarks will be the standards defined by the central/State law, such as water quality, air pollution limits, etc. The Public Services Index (PSI) of each ward will indicate the quality of life in various wards by its quality of services/amenities. The scores will give the residents and municipalities an indication of how their wards measure up against standard benchmarks set by the government.

Once the scores are available, the scores along with the findings of CRC will be presented before the citizens and service providers through interface meetings, and feedback will be collected. The feedback will be incorporated into the findings, and final findings will be disseminated among relevant stakeholders at the corporation level. Through this data, citizens will have access to information about the quality of ward level services which they can use to hold local administration and elected representatives accountable, and the same will be used to advocate with the Municipal Councillors/officials to improve the quality of services/availability of amenities. The data will also provide valuable information to urban planners and decision makers to streamline delivery of services and provision of amenities.

A Citizen Action Group (CAG) will be formed by identifying the active citizens from each ward. The identification of citizens will be done during the process of project scoping, citizen report cards, and formulation of the Public Service Index. A formal announcement of the CAG will be made during the first interface meeting. The CAG will continue meeting with the officials of JMC and elected representatives of local government to monitor the services beyond the project period.

Project Activities:

Project Scoping

Immediately after receiving a formal approval of the project, scoping visits and meetings will be conducted separately for various groups of stakeholders to build rapport with them in the area and to take them on board for seeking their cooperation during and after the project. This will also help in developing the understanding about the mandatory services of the Municipal

Corporation and in identifying the community based organizations to partner with. The scoping meetings will provide an opportunity to screen and select the wards and help in identifying pro-active and interested citizens, who could be part of the CAG. The visits also will be made to the zonal and head office of the JMC to gather relevant information related to the execution of activities for providing services to citizens. It will be a continuous activity under the project in order to maintain rapport with all concerned stakeholders. The frequent visits will be made in the project's geographical spread.

Inception Meeting

The Inception Meeting will provide a platform to discuss the goal and objectives of the project among more than 50 relevant stakeholders including ward members, government officials, CSOs representing the 8 target wards, as well as representatives from nearby wards from all of the 8 zones of the JMC. This meeting will be an opportunity to better understand the proposed intervention and provide the participants an opportunity to ensure their active participation during execution of the project. The media will also be invited to participate and help the project by disseminating its objectives among citizens.

Citizen Report Cards (CRC)

Citizen Report Cards (CRCs) are participatory surveys that solicit user feedback on the performance of public services. CRCs can significantly enhance public accountability through the extensive media coverage and civil society advocacy that accompanies the process. Citizen Report Cards are used in situations where demand side data, such as user perceptions on quality and satisfaction with public services, is absent.

From the selected 8 wards, a total sample of 600 citizens (75 from each ward) will be interviewed based on a questionnaire to generate a report on the services and the service providers will also be given the opportunity to share their views through interviews. A uniform questionnaire for interviewing all the 600 citizens will be developed and a different questionnaire will be utilized for service providers. The surveyors, with the help of 8 selected CBOs in each ward, will be selected and oriented for data collection. Data collection will be executed by the surveyors after field testing of the questionnaires under the supervision of team members. Data analysis will be done to find out the status of service delivery provided by the local government. Ward wise reports will also be generated for dissemination during interface meetings at the ward level. The CRC will help in identifying and finalising the key services for the purpose of PSI.

Preparation of Public Service Index (PSI)

A team of people (including a few members of the CAG from the particular ward and a member from the partner CBOs), i.e., those that are able to collect data based on the indicators and the benchmark set for each indicator, will be mobilized to consult citizens and verify the status of services and amenities. Based on the data and consultation report, the project team members will develop a Public Services Index (PSI). Indicators related to various services under the Municipal Corporation will be chosen for scoring based on coverage, quality, grievance, redress, etc. for each identified service. The PSI developed will be shared first at the interface meeting among local citizens and service providers to get feedback.

Interface Meetings

Two interface meetings between members of the community and local bodies/Councillors/Ward Committee members will be conducted in each of the 8 zones (total 16 meetings) of Jaipur city. The first interface meeting will be conducted after an analysis of

the data gathered and preparation of the PSI. The objective of the meeting is to inform participants about the results, examine the reasons for the scores obtained, discuss possible measures to improve the situation, and, finally, establish a line of communication between the community and service providers at the ward level. The feedback and comments gathered from the interface meetings will be incorporated in the findings of the research. The second interface meeting will be conducted after the final Dissemination and Advocacy Meeting. The meeting will be held by the CBO along with the members of the citizens' action group in order to monitor services, follow up on advocacy points, and identify further improvements in service delivery.

Dissemination cum Advocacy Meeting

The final findings of the CRC and PSI will be disseminated among all the relevant stakeholders and recommendations will be made to the appropriate authorities at the JMC level to bring about changes. In particular, CUTS will present the findings of the CRC and PSI and provide recommendations for improvements to senior officials in the JMC such as the Mayor and the CEO. Multiple advocacy strategies will be used, such as separate meetings with the high level authorities of JMC, using media connections, submitting memoranda to the government, etc.

Printing and Distribution of Advocacy Document

The final findings in form of an advocacy document will be printed in sufficient numbers and distributed to all partners under the project and other relevant agencies, including government officials, media, civil society organizations, etc.

Monitoring Plan:

A monitoring plan to measure the goals/objectives of the project will be developed by cultivating the progress markers for each of the expected outcomes. These progress markers will help early assessment of the progress, which can be measured through monitoring and observation. Further, the evidence will also be collected to support existence of progress markers. The strategy will be adjusted in case of non-indication of any progress. For example, the progress marker for civic engagement would be community participation in meetings and discussing a list of shared concerns, establishing a structure of cooperation for the services not available, lobbying for better amenities, etc.

Sustainability:

Engagement of the community members of the catchment area of each ward, especially the members of CAG, will sustain the process of citizen's engagement and monitoring of service delivery beyond the intervention period. The local partner CBOs will continue to advocate with officials, mobilize citizens, and keep on activating the CAG. The changes brought in the service delivery will also motivate the citizens to engage and demand for better service delivery.

Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced voice to urban citizens in local decision making
- Improved citizen participation in urban local governance and better services
- Strengthened strategy for advocacy with a credible index on basic services/amenities based on standard benchmarks set by the government

- 8 Citizens Action Groups in place, which will continue monitoring and advocacy, and ensure sustainability
- Valuable information/data to urban planners and decision makers

Timeline (One Year):

S.No.	Activities	Quarter			
		1	2	3	4
1	Project Scoping	√			
2	Inception Meeting	√			
3	Citizen Report Cards	√	√		
4	Preparation of Public Service Index (PSI)		√	√	
5	Field-level Activities	√	√	√	√
6	Interface Meetings			√	√
7	Dissemination cum Advocacy Meeting				√
8	Printing and Distribution of Advocacy Document				√
9	Monitoring and Periodic Reporting	√	√	√	√

Theory of Change



