Report of JMC Officials Consultation

MyCity

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

Hotel Vesta Maurya Palace, Jaipur, December 31, 2014

Background

CUTS International in partnership with The Asia Foundation implemented 'MyCity' project to improve governance and service delivery through enhanced civic engagement in city of Jaipur by using social accountability tools. Public Service Index (PSI) was used to generate ward-level report cards of urban services provided by the Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) in eight wards of Jaipur city.

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 etc. were considered for developing PSI. A tool of Citizen Report Card (CRC) was also utilised for gathering feedback of citizens on the status of services and engaging them in demanding better delivery of services. Various community meetings and interfaces with service providers were organised for resolving specific issues in various service delivery. To advocate improving services emphasising the need for strengthening mechanisms of citizen participation and provisions of 74th Constitutional Amendment (CA) is essential.

Objectives
The objectives of the consultation were to share objectives and activities of MyCity intervention and also provide an opportunity to understand MyCity project
Participation

More than 25 participants attended the consultation. 10 JMC officials from different zones of Jaipur city were present and shared their views. Nine partners of 16 wards were also present who exchanged their opinion in making the project successful.

Proceedings

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Amrat Singh, Assistant Director, CUTS welcomed the participants and briefly mentioned about the background and activities of MyCity project and objective of the meeting.

Overview of the Intervention

Amar Deep Singh, Project Coordinator, CUTS provided a brief overview of the project. He mentioned that its objective is to improve the service delivery by urban local bodies (ULBs) in the city of Jaipur through enhanced civic engagement. Third phase of the project commenced successfully after completing the first and second one. He shared that growing urbanisation and

implementation of 74th CA are two important aspects behind initiating MyCity intervention in the city.

Further, he explained that country is growing and urbanisation is rapidly increasing. Rural to urban migration is major factor due to attraction of better employment opportunities, infrastructure, communication, and medical facilities, etc. It is resulting in challenges, such aspollution, increasing slums, rising crimes, shortage of infrastructure and unequal distributions. Jaipur is also a victim of growing urbanisation. It is 24th fastest growing city of the world. By 2030 Jaipur's population will be 5 million.

He added that 74th CA Act (1992) was a land mark amendment aimed at decentralisation in urban governance and providing political, functional and financial powers to ULBs. But, at present, the Act is poorly implemented at the ground due to the absence of many provisions. One of the major factors is the absence of ward committees. There is no space for citizens to engage themselves in the urban governance. While highlighting specific issues of ULBs, he mentioned that these are struggling to get powers for its proper execution of services. There are severe resource crunches. Parallel departments have been bestowed with development work. Management of revenue earning assets is given to ULBs. State government and elected members of the State Assembly are involved in the local development work. He emphasised on the role of CSOs in present context of ULBs. MyCity has created space for CSOs to come forward to raise the issue of ULBs and get involved in urban governance issues.

Under the project, local issues can be highlighted at different levels from wards to city. He also presented an overview of the project during Phase I and II. He briefly mentioned about the intervention, project activities, area and findings that emerged out of the project. He also discussed in brief about the community and interface meetings, CRC and PSI findings that were conducted during Phase II and of the project.

JMC officials appreciated the project and stated that it had created a platform where people can extend their support and engage themselves for the betterment of society. It also allow people to participate in problem-resolving process. JMC officials were asked to share their experiences related to issues they are facing while delivering services.

Highlights of Responses from JMC Officials
- Local people instead of providing support to JMC blame them
- JMC do not have sufficient power and earning sources in comparison to other line departments
- JMC provided garbage boxes at each ward of Jaipur city, but local public always throw garbage nearby homes and outside the box
- Local people directly call other known persons for problems of JMC services and never compliant to JMC officials and also on to official website
- JMC do not have sufficient infrastructure, manpower, garbage depot etc.
- JMC increased wards at Jaipur city, but was unable to increase budget for ward development
- JMC has constructed official website for registration of complaints regarding JMC services, but public do not lodge complaints on to the said website
- JMC do not have small vehicles for door-to-door garbage collection at Jaipur city
- JMC has been trying to collect house taxes but people are not supporting

Highlights of Responses on how CSOs Can be Benefited at Ward-level in Improving Service Delivery
- Active RWAs, CSOs, active community members and JMC officials should work together for development of wards
- Public partnership system would be beneficial for the betterment of JMC service delivery
- CSOs should find out problems related to JMC services and update about the same to JMC zone officials
- Local CSOs should monitor JMC zone employees' working schedule and update about the same to JMC zone commissioner
- JMC should share ward development plan with ward-level RWAs, CSOs and active community member

During the meeting, specific issues were raised and project partners shared experiences of MyCity project. JMC officials answered to queries raised by partners and team members. The meeting was very helpful in understanding issues of JMC services from officials.

Vote of Thanks

Vipin Chawla gave a formal vote of thanks towards the end of the consultation.