

Urban Local Governance in Rajasthan

Challenges and Opportunities – An Overview



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Published by



CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART)

D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302016, India

Tel: +91.141.2282821, Fax: +91.141.2282485

Email: cuts@cuts.org, Web site: www.cuts-international.org

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Supported by:



The Asia Foundation

Printed by UniqueE Print In, Jaipur, India

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Citation: (2021), 'Urban Local Governance in Rajasthan: *Challenges and Opportunities – An Overview*', CUTS International, Jaipur, India

Authors:

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International

Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer, CUTS International

Simi T.B., Policy Analyst, CUTS International

This report was funded by The Asia Foundation and for as part of the project entitled 'Rajasthan City Mayor's Learning Platform. The opinions expressed here are solely of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Foundation.

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2018 highlighted that India's urban population size would nearly double between 2018 and 2050, from 461 to 877 million, almost adding up to 416 million urban dwellers. Such a rise in urban population implies increased demand for goods and services and efficient urban planning, management, and governance systems. Therefore, addressing urban development and transformation, urban inequalities and bringing in suitable reformation within the urban governance system to address these changes is undoubtedly India's most important political and intellectual challenge.

This Brief Report, focusing specifically on the State of Rajasthan, attempts to understand the glitches and the challenges faced by the urban local bodies (ULBs), specifically municipal corporations (MCs), due to the rapid scale of urbanisation and suggest ways for improvement.

Introduction

India's share of urban population from its overall population might be lesser when compared to countries, such as the US, UK, Russia, Japan and even countries like Malaysia, China and Brazil. But the rate at which the size of the urban population grows in India is astounding. The National Commission on Population (NCP) in India predicts that in the next 15 years, the country's urban population will increase from 377 million in 2011 to 594 million in 2036, i.e., a growth of 57 percent.

Similarly, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2018 highlighted that India's urban population size would nearly double between 2018 and 2050, from 461 to 877 million, almost adding up to 416 million urban dwellers. These prevailing trends and future projections indicate that the country is steadily moving along the path of urbanisation.

Such a rise in urban population implies increased demand for goods and services and efficient urban planning, management, and governance systems. Therefore, addressing urban development and transformation, urban inequalities and bringing in suitable reformation within the urban governance

system to address these changes is undoubtedly India's most important political and intellectual challenge.

Besides, the Sustainable Development Goal on sustainable cities and communities (SDG11) urges countries to have a renewed focus on urban governance and make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The goal aims to set the basis for urban planning techniques and policies for the future. So for the practical implementation of sustainability policies related to SDG 11, the policies will have to be executed directly through urban planning interventions.

Most importantly, the development of cities includes the growth of physical infrastructure. It also deals with several other functional areas, which includes town planning, land use, construction of buildings, economic and social development, roads, highways, bridges, water supply, sanitation, public health, solid waste management, etc. In India, while numerous policies and programmes are there to address several issues associated with urbanisation many glitches remain to be effectively addressed across different States.

This Brief Report, focusing specifically on the State of Rajasthan, attempts to understand the glitches and the challenges faced by the ULBs, specifically MCs, due to the rapid scale of urbanisation and while fostering the incorporation of public policies into urban planning actions.

The report also helps in identifying the perceived opportunities due to urban growth within the State. Apart from the literature review, for preparing this report, the Mayors and deputy Mayors of all the MCs of Rajasthan were personally interviewed and required information was gathered and discussed.

Rajasthan: Growth and Role of Cities

The State of Rajasthan has a geographical area of 3.42 lakh sq km and is one of the largest states in the country. According to the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), in 2020, Rajasthan's total population is over 8 crores. Though as per Census 2011, its total population is 6.85 crore, with one of the lowest densities of population in the country. Regarding region-wise break-up, Rajasthan's urban population is 1.70 crore, 24.9 percent of the total population. In contrast, the rural population stands at 5.15 crore, 75.1 percent of the total population.

In fact, the percentage share of Rajasthan's urban population in its total population increased from 16.28 percent (1961) to 23.39 percent (2001) and later to 24.9 percent in 2011.¹ In terms of the

urban population in Rajasthan, districts including Kota (60.31 percent), Jaipur (52.40 percent), Ajmer (40.08 percent), Jodhpur (34.30 percent) and Bikaner (33.86 percent) are the most urbanised districts, whereas Jalore (8.30 percent), Pratapgarh (8.27 percent), Banswara (7.10 percent), Barmer (6.98 percent) and Dungarpur (6.39 percent) are the least urbanised districts.²

As per the data available in Census 2011, the male population within the State primarily migrated from rural to urban areas to seek employment opportunities, while females migrated due to marital reasons. While the Census indicates that 794 lakh people migrated from rural to urban areas at the national level, in Rajasthan, 32 lakh people migrate from rural to urban areas, contributing to four percent of total rural-urban migrants in the country.

To fulfil the basic needs of this growing urban population in a systematic and integrated way, the State Government has constituted development authorities, Urban Improvement Trusts, Rajasthan Housing Board, Town Planning Office, Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation. Three development authorities, namely Jaipur, Ajmer and Jodhpur, 14 urban improvement trusts (Alwar, Abu, Barmer, Bharatpur, Bhilwara, Bikaner, Chittorgarh, Jaisalmer, Pali, Kota, Udaipur, Sri Ganganagar, Sikar and Sawai Madhopur), Rajasthan Housing Board and Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation Limited are all engaged in the development of civic amenities for the public.





The State being a mineral-rich region has a diversified economy having agriculture, mining and tourism as its main engines of growth. It is the second largest producer contributing around 22-23 percent of total crude oil production in the country³ and is also the sole producer of Lead & Zinc ores, Selenite, Wollastonite and principal producer of Silver, Calcite and Gypsum, copper and lignite and many other minerals.⁴ It is one of the largest producers of cement and contributes one tenth of the salt produced in India.

With abundant resources, rich minerals, handicrafts, handlooms and outstanding skills the State provide ample opportunities for manufacturing, processing activities and services in allied sectors.⁵ The State also has rich deposits of precious and semi-precious stones, such as emerald, garnet, agate, amethyst, topaz and lapis. It is one of the leading manufacturers of gems and jewellery, food processing, auto components, textiles and leather.

The north-eastern urban districts Alwar, Jaipur and Ajmer that are bordering Delhi and linked with National Highway - NH8, are the main drivers of industrial growth. These districts have been transformed rapidly into bustling industrial zone.⁶

Jaipur has the highest percentage of pucca houses, the second-highest percentage of bank branches per 10,000 population, the second-highest percentage of households with electricity connection and the second-highest percentage of households with a landline.⁷

In the last few years, the city has witnessed the highest growth in the real estate sector across the county, which has been mainly due to significant infrastructural developments and connectivity improvements.

The most important driver of economic activity in Rajasthan will be the upcoming Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor which passes 39 percent of its total length through the State and the Smart Cities Mission, wherein Jaipur, Udaipur, Kota and Ajmer have been selected. The government, through such initiatives, is making cities citizen-friendly and sustainable, thereby adding immense value to tourism.

Due to such developmental activities happening within the State, a more rapid rate of urbanisation is expected to set soon. Therefore, to reap benefits from such rapid growth, the State needs to identify the existing challenges and address them to make urbanisation an opportunity for growth and development rather than a missed opportunity.

Local Governance: Policy Initiatives

The government, both at the Centre and State, has taken a number of initiatives from time to time to strengthen the local governments and to improve service levels in urban areas. The 74th Constitutional Amendment in 1992 formally recognised ULBs as the third tier of government and mandates state governments to transfer to

local governments a set of specified functions under the 12th Schedule.

Therefore, the ULBs within the State is governed by the provisions of the Rajasthan Municipal Act, 2009 and some of the principal functions as enlisted in the Act includes public health and sanitation, solid waste management, establishment and maintenance of health institutions, public works, promoting education, sports and cultural activities, establishing a communicating system and transport system, urban planning and development and administration.

However, the provision of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009 also empowers the State to constitute, in addition to the Municipality, development authorities to exercise powers and functions as it may think appropriate for the proper, rapid and planned development of an urban area. This empowers the state government to take over the power of Municipality to govern and develop an area directly and hand it over to a parallel development authority constituted by it.

Currently, several agencies are bestowed with such overlapping functions within the State that are working to fulfil the assigned tasks with their defined roles.

The major urban development agencies working in Rajasthan are the Urban Development and Housing Department (UDH), Development Authority (Jaipur, Jodhpur and Ajmer), Urban Improvement Trusts (UITs), Rajasthan State Industrial Development & Investment Corporation (RIICO), Rajasthan Housing Board (RHB), Town Planning Department, Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)-Smart Cities, Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC), Public Works Department (PWD) Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED), Rajasthan Urban Sector Development Investment Programme (RUSDIP), Rajasthan Urban Drinking Water Sewerage & Infrastructure Corporation Limited (RUDSICO) and State Pollution Control Board (SPCB).

Urbanisation and Challenges

Rapid urbanisation brings along with it many challenges. This includes increased demand for affordable housing, well-connected and affordable transport systems and other local infrastructure and essential services, and jobs to ensure that the rising population is well-absorbed and integrated into the city. The State is currently at the forefront of fighting the pandemic, and much of its focus is on addressing the health crisis and related impacts. The uncertainty and severity of the pandemic are

challenging the public health infrastructure and the economy and social fabric of the State.

The pandemic exposes how well the cities are planned and managed and its impact on them. The discussions with Mayors and deputy Mayors during the scoping visit for this study point to the fact that the efficiency and effectiveness of MCs are not matching with the growing demand of cities. MCs face a deficiency of resources due to lack of adequate funds, financial autonomy, complexity and overlap in the delegation of powers. Most of the functions of MCs and development agencies intersect, and there is an absolute lack of clarity and coordination, resulting in poor efficiency of urban bodies.

The majority of MCs fall behind regarding handling vital city infrastructures, such as water supply, solid waste management, public transportation systems, and marginalised social and economic groups.



Solid Waste Management

An effective and practical decentralised and integrated system of solid waste collection, treatment, and disposal remains a challenge in almost all urban sectors. Like in other parts of the country, most of the cities in Rajasthan practice mere 'collect and dump' type model. The streets remain littered with domestic waste, mounds of rotting rubbish are found routinely on footpaths near markets and commercial areas. With plastic shopping bags fluttering all over in the wind, sewerage and rainwater drains are choked with full of trash and plastics. Hospitals, restaurants, office buildings, factories all produced waste and are mainly disposed of in ways that can best be described as irresponsible. This has also resulted in cities struggling to find space for waste and increasing eviction from spaces in outside settlements.

In September 2018, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India did a performance audit of 22 ULBs from 2012-13 to 2016-17 and trashed the efforts of ULBs in Rajasthan on waste disposal and said there were no adequate plans for reducing, reusing and recycling of the waste in most of the ULBs.

According to that report,⁸ while the Rajasthan government had released ₹292.81 crore to ULBs in 2015-17 for solid waste management under the Swachh Bharat Mission, the ULBs could use only 20.69 percent of it. It was also found that door-to-door collection of municipal solid waste is not done in 55.41 percent of urban wards of the State in 2016-17.

The report further points out that solid waste was neither segregated nor processed in any of the ULBs and *Gram Panchayats* (GPs) and unprocessed municipal solid waste was dumped on open land. This situation remains the same and nothing much have changed across the State.

Though adequate Acts, Rules and Policies were available, there were no effective strategies/plans

for 'Reducing, Reusing and Recycling' of waste in most ULBs. Most of the efforts were directed at disposal strategies rather than 'Reducing, Reusing and Recycling' of waste. Further, in the absence of bye-laws and designated authorities to levy penalties, imposition of penalty for violation of waste rules has never happened.

Monitoring the implementation of solid waste, plastic waste and e-waste rules has always remained lax and ineffective. To make it worse, now the ULBs are struggling to effectively dispose of biomedical waste more safely during this ongoing pandemic.⁹ There is a massive surge in biomedical waste and the absence of strategy threat of spreading infection in cities looms large.

Water Supply and Sanitation

Water supply and sanitation facilities that are crucial to the sustenance of urban life regardless of income status are also in a dismal state. As of today, though almost 2.9 million people are connected through a piped water network in Jaipur city, low water deficit and low pressure have become a norm. In many places, people get water once in two days and for less than half an hour.

All existing water sources, including the Bisalpur dam, were found insufficient and the abstraction of groundwater was at maximum. Also, the amount of Non-Revenue Water, which means water unaccounted for (i.e. leakages, stealing, unauthorised connections, collection inefficiencies, etc.), is incredibly large, at anywhere between to 40-50 percent.¹⁰

While some improvement is seen in sanitation infrastructures across the cities, more progress needs to be achieved. Often urban sanitation projects, particularly sewerage, have typically benefited the commercial and more affluent areas, and many communities and marginalised groups still lack access to safe sanitation facilities and services. In places where sewerage services exist, there may be other barriers, such as lack of proper maintenance, etc.

Public Transportation

The situation about public transportation systems and transit-oriented development is similar. Few cities like Jaipur and Udaipur have taken initiatives to improve the overall mobility scenario, such as introducing city bus service, Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS), metro system, and Public Bicycle Sharing (PBS). But, there is still much more that needs to be done.

As per reports,¹¹ the electric buses that were supposed to start on the Jaipur-Delhi route earlier this year are yet to go on roads as they do not have adequate infrastructure, including charging points.

Besides, the state capital, with a population of 30 lakh, has only 273 Jaipur City Transport Services Limited buses against a requirement of 2,000. Though there are 369 buses, around 100 are either defunct or have been condemned by the government.¹²

The aging of buses is further aggravating the situation as in 2018, around 215 buses had to be phased out. Also, the buses get overcrowded during peak hours, face competition with private minibuses due to poor rationalised routes and poor operational performance. Despite walking being a significant mode of movement, only 19 percent of the city roads have footpaths that are majorly encroached.¹³

Similar is the situation in other urban districts. For instance, the private minibuses, taxis, and autos operated in Jodhpur are inadequate and often overcrowded. The available buses per lakh population are 49 which are less than desirable.¹⁴ Roadside parking, increased private vehicle ownership, inadequate public transport and terminals, undisciplined driving, and the lack of parking and non-motorised transport infrastructure has aggravated traffic woes in Jodhpur city.¹⁵



Urban transport governance is also a complicated affair. All planning and development within the transportation system at Jaipur remains majorly under seven different departments – Jaipur Development Authority, Jaipur Municipal Corporation, Public Works Department, Jaipur City Transport Service Limited, Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation Limited, Traffic Police and Transport Department and Unified Metro Transport Authority.¹⁶

Besides, the Government of Rajasthan has also set up a Unified Urban Transport Fund to support the transportation system. However, all of these departments overlap authority and work independently with limited coordination and often prepare individual complex plans. Moreover, more than a dozen other government agencies influence the development of the transportation facilities to

some extent and there remains no common law regarding urban transport management.

Gender Responsive Planning

For decades, women in the State are continuously denied their fundamental rights, including education, choice in marriage, land rights, etc. The State's unemployment rate for urban women is 142 per 1000 head, while the overall unemployment rate at the urban level is 95 per 1000. The very recent controversial press statement made by a Tehsildar in Kota district encouraging renouncement of women's property rights sums up the situation of the State and the mindset of at least a few of the ruling class.¹⁷

This is despite various legislations and Supreme Court ruling that underlines that daughters cannot be deprived of their right of equality conferred upon them by Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act.

Even when women are encouraged and empowered to hold important positions, they are often found to discharge their role as dummies for their husbands, who primarily oversee the duties and responsibilities of their official position. For instance, during the scoping visit by CUTS, a lady mayor was overshadowed by her husband, who did most of the talking regarding CUTS queries on various topics. Such practices are common across the country where, one way or other, women would be unable to exercise powers as administrators either because of her ignorance or other limitations imposed on her by age-old society norms and domestic duties.

This ignorance, to a considerable extent, is mainly due to a lack of adequate education. Based on a UGC study report, the Centre has also very recently listed 30 districts of Rajasthan under the educationally backward districts, thus demolishing the claims made by the State as an emerging education hub of the country. In fact, Rajasthan is the only State whose 90 percent of districts have appeared in the grey list of education.¹⁸ Besides the

enrolment of women in the State has also been traditionally poor, where the female literacy rate is a mere 57 percent.

The ongoing health crisis has also added woes to the life of migrant women workers in State, like elsewhere. According to the Rajasthan Mahila Kamgar Union (RKMU), nearly 90 percent of domestic workers in Jaipur are women migrant workers, the most significant number from West Bengal, followed by Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.¹⁹

They generally lead a life of low wages and difficult survival, but they now face even worst in this unprecedented crisis. Periodic lockdowns have led to widespread loss of work and income. Also, the ratio of male-female migration in Rajasthan is 79:21,²⁰ implying that the majority of the women are left behind when men migrate in search of livelihood. These women are left alone to manage the home, children, and other responsibilities with limited amounts that their husbands would send home.

Rapid urban transformation across the State exceeds the capacity of cities to provide for adequate infrastructure and essential services for the inhabitants, causing a rise in proportions of urban poor, a chunk of which happen to be women. The high cost of urban land and lack of sufficient affordable low-cost housing for the urban poor has resulted in the growth of slums. This,

apart from the lack of enabling infrastructures like adequate street lighting, public toilets, efficient water supply and transport, has severely constricted women's accessibility to urban space.

The only hope left now for this gender in the State is the recently approved New Women Policy, 2021, which is proposed for the overall development of women and girls.²¹ The policy will help establish better coordination between various departments for the welfare of women and girls while ensuring their safety and empowerment.

Gender Responsive Budgeting

Gender Responsive Budgeting is a way to ensure that public resources are allocated equitably so that the pressing needs of specific gender groups are satisfied. The logic behind the need for gender budgeting arises from recognising that national and state budgets impact men and women of the country differently through the pattern of resource allocation.

As per recent figures percentage of the female population is 48.04 percent of India's population, but they lag behind men on many social indicators like health, education, economic opportunities, etc. This pushes the need for the government to give special attention to address their vulnerability and lack of access to resources. World over it has been recognised that the way government budgets allocate resources can transform these gender inequalities.

Over the last 15 years, if one looks at the size of the gender budget in the Union Budget, it has always remained below five percent. However, the figure is apart from several other programmes that benefit women and girls, which are not reported in the gender budget statement.²²

During the Budget speech of 2009-10, the Government of Rajasthan also announced the preparation of gender-responsive budgeting, facilitating gender-based budget analysis of each department. For the same, during August 2010, Gender Desks were also constituted in various

departments to implement gender-responsive budgeting initiatives.

Gender budgeting in the State is regulated as per provisions contained in paragraph 13.27 of the State Budget Manual. Budget Controlling officers of specified departments must provide information in the format given in the budget circular issued by the Finance Department to prepare the annual Gender Budget Statement. This format requires the classification of plan schemes/Programmes targeted at women into four categories.

Table 1: Allocations Reported in (Union) Gender Budget as a Percentage of Total Expenditure

Item	2018–19 Actuals	2019–20 Budget estimates	2019–20 Revised estimates	2020–21 Budget estimates
Gender budget as a percentage of total budgetary expenditure	4.98	4.91	5.29	4.72

Source: Aasha Kapur Mehta, Union Budget 2020–21: A Critical Analysis from the Gender Perspective, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 55, Issue No. 16, April 18, 2020. Accessible at www.epw.in/engage/article/union-budget-2020-21-from-gaender-perspective

Table 2: Category wise Budget Estimates and Actuals of Gender Budgeting

Year		Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	Total (in crore)
2014-15	Budget Estimates	4,241.11	21,143.72	2,887.26	38.49	28,310.58
	Actual Expenditure	5,767.98	18,329.41	1,093.63	1,315.92	26,506.94
	Actual in percent of BE	136.0	86.7	37.9	3,418.9	93.6
2015-16	Budget Estimates	5,963.18	30,381.26	2,264.05	42.63	38,651.12
	Actual Expenditure	7,814.04	20,263.82	2,176.33	49.76	30,303.95
	Actual in percent of BE	131.0	66.70	96.1	116.7	78.4
2016-17	Budget Estimates	5,771.71	37,876.75	3,251.84	40.64	46,940.94
	Actual Expenditure	3,524.88	23,211.34	2,450.84	89.69	29,276.75
	Actual in percent of BE	61.1	61.3	75.4	220.7	62.4
2017-18	Budget Estimates	5,870.89	44,428.87	2,372.26	118.19	52,790.21
	Actual Expenditure	8,138.65	36,910.61	225.33	34.06	47,308.65
	Actual in percent of BE	138.6	83.10	93.8	28.8	89.6
2018-19	Budget Estimates	4,418.46	54,651.13	1,882.37	51.98	61,003.94
	Actual Expenditure	4,745.99	42,577.04	1,994.14	44.45	49,361.62
	Actual in percent of BE	107.4	77.9	105.9	85.5	80.9

Source: CAG Audit Report 2020 - Finances of the State Government of Rajasthan. Accessible at https://cag.gov.in/uploads/download_audit_report/2020/Chapter_1_Finances_of_the_State_Government_of_Report_No_3_of_2020_State_Finances_Government_of_Rajasthan.pdf

Category A - Schemes were expenditure targeted at women is more than 70 percent.

Category B - Schemes were expenditure targeted at women lies between 70-30 percent.

Category C - Schemes were expenditure targeted at women lies between 30-10 percent.

Category D - Schemes were expenditure targeted at women is less than 10 percent.

The category-wise allocation during 2014-19 as per budget presented in the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly is shown in Table 2.

It is evident from Table 2 that the total expenditure against gender budgeting decreased

from 93.6 percent to 80.9 percent during the period from 2014-15 to 2018-19. The CAG report has revealed a grim picture of the implementation of gender budgeting in Rajasthan, where several irregularities, including non-implementation of schemes aimed at women empowerment, have been found.

The nil expenditure in Mission Gramya Shakti Scheme developed to strengthen and stabilise women Self Help Groups and paltry expense of just 25 percent in Integrated Child Development Services System, Strengthening and Nutrition Improvement Project and 42 percent in National Rural Livelihood Mission schemes in the report²³

Table 3: Few of the Major Project/Policy Initiatives Relevant to Urban Sector Development and the Status of Action

Name of Department	Brief of announcements made in Budget Speech	Status of Follow Up action taken by the Department
Transport	State Level Road Safety Training Centre will be established at a cost of ₹10 crore for capacity building to reduce road accidents and fatality.	No budget was allotted in 2018-19. Even land has also not been allotted so far (August 2019).
Water Resources	To increase the inward flow of water in the Bisalpur Dam Brahmani Banas, project costing ₹6,000 crore was proposed. Jaipur, Ajmer and Tonk districts were to be benefitted from this project.	Department stated that Expression of Interest (EOI) for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) is yet to be called for (July 2019) due to non-receipt of Administrative and Financial Sanction.
Employment	Provision of ₹45 crore is being proposed to convert employment offices as Model Career Centre in 29 districts.	No Budget was allocated.
Archaeology and Museum	Expenses of ₹33.25 crore is proposed to be incurred in ensuing year for protection and renovation of 19 memorials situated in Kota, Bhilwara, Ajmer, Jhalawar, Barmer, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Churu, Bikaner, Baran, Udaipur and Bharatpur.	Budget of ₹22.17 crore was allotted out of which ₹6.81 crore was spent in 2018-19
Medical Education	In view of increased patient load in associated hospitals of SMS Hospital, it is proposed to install a new Cath Lab at a cost of ₹6 crore.	No expenditure was incurred in 2018-19. Due to delay in administrative process, purchase of new Cath Lab could not be made.
	Also in view of the increased patient load in Medical College, Bikaner, it is proposed to install a new Cath Lab at a cost of ₹6 crore.	Tenders were invited but bids were rejected on technical grounds. Now tenders have to be invited afresh (August 2019).

Source: CAG Report No.3 of 2020 - State Finances, Government of Rajasthan, August 21, 2020. Accessible at https://cag.gov.in/uploads/download_audit_report/2020/Chapter_1_Finances_of_the_State_Government_of_Report_No_3_of_2020_State_Finances_Government_of_Rajasthan.pdf

shows the lack of emphasis on the part of the state government in the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting.

Allocation of Resource

When it comes to administrative issues, ULBs within the state face shortage of specialised and technical staff. These local bodies also have limited capacity to raise resources through their sources of revenue and taxes and are all working under severe financial constraints. They are heavily dependent on funds from the Central and State government.

Every year during budget presentation, the State Government announce several schemes and policies for the upliftment and development of infrastructures in the urban sector. But often, the Audit report shows that most of these schemes are stuck midway due to a lack of adequate funding. For instance, some of the major project/policy initiatives relevant to urban sector development and the status of action taken on Budget Speech 2018-19 is summarised below:

CUTS Scoping Visit

The Rajasthan government recently decided to create other MCs in the cities of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Kota. With this, the State has 10 MCs, with Jaipur, Kota and Jodhpur having two each. The decision to create additional civic bodies was taken in view of the rising population. All the three cities having two MCs have a population of over 10 lakh.

CUTS is working towards improving urban governance in Rajasthan and has MoU with the Department of Local Self Governments, Government of Rajasthan since 2015 on capacity building of ULBs. To take the agenda forward, CUTS, with the support of The Asia Foundation, initiated the project named 'Rajasthan City Mayors' Learning Platform'. The specific objective of this platform is to create space for the Mayors to discuss the common issue of ULBs towards improvement on a sharing and learning basis.

As a part of this initiative, CUTS visited all the 10 MCs to discuss the proposed Mayors' conference with Mayors and deputy Mayors and gather inputs on current urban challenges, priority areas of working and how they see their role, etc. Table 4 summarises the discussions that CUTS had with them:

Rising Urbanisation Opportunities

Urbanisation is essential for economic development and the role the cities play in reducing poverty has become increasingly prominent. Cities can achieve competitive advantages by allowing market forces to operate so that local natural assets or advantages are utilised to develop specialisations.

Any growth of economic activity within the cities will positively impact the urban areas and have spillover effects on the surrounding rural regions. However, cities' thriving depends on their potential to keep attracting investments in economic activities and the government's efficiency in spending effectively for the development of basic infrastructure for the welfare and well-being of the society.

The most important driver of economic activity in the State will be the upcoming Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor that will largely pass through Rajasthan. The project is expected to double employment potential, triple industrial output and quadruple exports from the region.

Besides, the urban development will have the ability to take in the surplus labour from agriculture caused by higher levels of education and the use of mechanisation and technology on the farm. These labourers with adequate skill and training could be effectively utilised to develop and better the city. Now that the concept of sustainable cities has become increasingly acceptable, there are opportunities to build environmentally and economically sound urban organic agriculture systems involving waste and water management.

Table 4: Challenges and Opportunities as Highlighted by Targeted MCs of Rajasthan during the scoping visit by CUTS

City	Challenges	Opportunities
Ajmer Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of Funds ✓ State not delegating power to ULBs ✓ Lack of interdepartmental coordination ✓ No specific gender responsive planning but all the planning includes the concern of women and even disabled persons. For instance, city government installing sanitary machines in the girls' schools and colleges to promote health and hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tourism. ✓ Lake can be developed for tourism ✓ City can be developed as education hubs as there are well known educational institutes. Some of the institutes are century old
Bharatpur Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State do not want to delegate powers to the ULBs ✓ There is big coordination problem between the departments engaged on civic issues ✓ Lack of funds ✓ Due to political interference, unable to deliver best services ✓ No specific gender planning and gender responsive budget. However, all the schemes and programme include the concerns of women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keoladeo National Park, earlier known as Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, is very famous bird site. It attracts tourist and bird lovers to the place. City government can work to improve the facilities around the park. ✓ Bhartapur also falls between other famous Ranthambore National Park of Sawai Madhopur and Sariska Tigar Reserve, Alwar. A tourism corridor can be developed which will help city to improve its revenue and employment. ✓ Smart toilets will be introduced for women in the city as well as in girl colleges ✓ Need to enhance capacity of elected representatives as well as ULB officials
Bikaner Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of dedicated municipal officials ✓ Sate not delegating powers to the ULBs ✓ Lack of funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Door to door garbage collection need to be improved ✓ Beautification of city one of the priorities ✓ Electric crematorium needs to established ✓ Women specific interventions such as Pink Auto Rickshaws and proposed pink toilets
Jaipur Municipal Corporation (Greater)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of fund ✓ Delegation of power to local bodies ✓ Lack of interdepartmental coordination ✓ Lack of dedicated officials ✓ Solid waste management ✓ Political interference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work towards the empowerment of local urban governance as it is not much progressing in the State ✓ Capacity building of elected ULBs representatives such as ward councillors
Jodhpur (North) Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of funds ✓ Solid waste management ✓ Lack of interdepartmental coordination ✓ Not aware about the gender specific planning and gender responsive budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tourism has great potential for Jodhpur City as there are many historical places. More beautification work can be done in the city to attract tourists
Jodhpur (South) Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Political Interference ✓ Lack of funds ✓ State not delegating power to ULBs ✓ Lack of interdepartmental coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tourism has several opportunities for Jodhpur City. State needs to provide proper financial support to develop the city ✓ Need of capacity building for elected repetitive and officials of ULBs on regular basis
Kota Municipal Corporation (North)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Solid waste management ✓ Lack of funds ✓ Lack of committed officials ✓ Lack of interdepartmental coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More development work can be done in Kota as the entire city area comes under the smart city project ✓ Work towards promoting gender responsive planning in the city by providing equal social and economic opportunities to women in the city ✓ Capacity building of ULBs on gender budgeting other than ward committees and citizen participation

City	Challenges	Opportunities
Udaipur Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Solid waste management biggest challenges for Udaipur city ✓ Lack of committed officials ✓ Lack of funds ✓ No specific gender planning and gender responsive budget. However, all the schemes and programme include the concerns of women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tourism ✓ Tourist places will be developed and more beautification work will be done. ✓ Traffic management will be focused ✓ Food courts will come up in the city to provide good and hygienic food to tourists ✓ E-rickshaw will be promoted in the city as green and clean transportation ✓ Number of public toilets will be increased in the city ✓ For women's' safety patrolling by police will be increased across the city ✓ Women SHGs are supported by the municipal corporation by providing employment

Such effective management can be incorporated from the initial stage and an integral part of urban planning. This, to a considerable extent, can help address the health and well-being of urban consumers, nutritional food scarcity among the urban population and help to effectively manage the city's waste by utilising it for organic fertilisers and creating jobs.

Besides, in most cities, the promotion of urban tourism has contributed towards quality infrastructure development within the city to meet the requirements of tourists. Given that the State thrives on this sector, any further push for urban tourism by the ULBs will employ many more, resulting in increased revenue and foreign earnings as the pandemic subsidies.

Most of the ULBs visited while preparing this report acknowledged that tourism is one of the best opportunities for their city as it has many historical and religious places. Some of the least developed places that have tourism potentials should therefore be given more focused attention.

For instance, in Bharatpur city, the Keoladeo National Park, earlier known as Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, is a very famous bird site that attracts tourists and bird lovers. But it would attract even more tourists if ULB could work to improve the facilities around the park. Since the city falls between the famous Ranthambore National Park of

Sawai Madhopur and Sariska Tiger Reserve, Alwar a tourism corridor can be developed to help the city improve its revenue and employment.

But if not well planned, such initiatives can also put massive pressure on the resources of the already crowded cities.

There is a need to encourage and promote investments in the tourism industry in a more sustainable manner that will increase livelihood opportunities as well as protect the natural environment as well.

Future of Cities

Given that the growing urbanisation is likely to reach its maximum and cities will become home to most citizens, it would be a shortfall if the State does not begin to prepare for that eventuality. Effective collaboration and cooperation among various departments and ULBs are vital for the successful implementation of developmental activities.

The government, at the Centre and State, recognises that ULBs are backbone of urban governance. These should be empowered with adequate power, financial support and independence, and skill enhancement. as it would otherwise result in stifling the growth and economy of the State as well as the nation.

Annexure 1:
List of all MCs of Rajasthan with Present Elected Heads, Population and Number of Wards

S. No.	Municipal Corporation	Name of Mayor	Name of Deputy Mayor	Population (Census 2011)	No. of Wards
1	Jaipur Municipal Corporation (Greater)	Sheel Dhabhai	Punit Karnavat	3,046,163	150
2	Jaipur Municipal Corporation (Heritage)	Munesh Gurjar	Mohd. Aslam Farooqui		100
3	Jodhpur Municipal Corporation (North)	Kunti Devra	Abdul Karim	1,033,776	100
4	Jodhpur Municipal Corporation (South)	Vanita Seth	Krishan Ladha		100
5	Kota Municipal Corporation (North)	Manju Mehra	Sonu Qureshi	1,001,694	70
6	Kota Municipal Corporation (South)	Rajeev Agarwal	Pawan Meena		80
7	Bikaner Municipal Corporation	Sushila Kanwar Rajpurohit	Rajendra Panwar	644,406	80
8	Ajmer Municipal Corporation	Braj Lata Hada	Neeraj Jain	542,321	80
9	Udaipur Municipal Corporation	Govind Singh Tank	Paras Singhvi	4,51,100	70
10	Bharatpur Municipal Corporation	Abhijeet Kumar	Girish Ji	2,52,838	65

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