



***Consolidated Report
On
National Round Table of Civil Society
Organizations
Inclusive Urban Governance: Opportunities
and Challenges***

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INTRODUCTION

The urban landscape in India varies greatly from a small town with a few thousand people to a big mega city with several million people. The responsibility of providing basic urban services and that of governance is entrusted primarily to municipalities. Although population size, geographical spread, institutional structures, processes and capacities vary across these towns and cities, they have one thing in common—chaotic governance. In India, while cities and towns have literally become the ‘engines of economic growth’ contributing 60 per cent of national GDP, they have also become the bedrock of exclusion, poverty, marginalisation and all forms of violence. The principles of ‘good urban governance’ including ‘participation’, ‘accountability’, ‘transparency’, ‘efficiency and effectiveness’, ‘equity and inclusiveness’, ‘responsiveness’ and ‘rule of law’ still remain elusive and rhetoric to the ordinary citizens of India.

The first six decades after independence saw almost no progress or programmes in terms of governance reforms of urban institutions and policies. The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) passed in 1993 laid the foundation for democratic local governance in urban areas. All urban areas in the country, except some Scheduled Areas in the North East, are now governed by elected urban local bodies (ULBs). The most serious urban governance reforms started only in late 2005 with the launch of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). Notwithstanding the fact that much of the reforms under this programme support the neo-liberal frameworks of the government, there are reasons to believe that many of the reforms, if undertaken with greater seriousness, may bring the desired changes in urban institutional spaces. It is envisaged that along with supporting the growth agenda of the government, city governance will be more accountable, transparent, participatory and efficient. In other words, such reforms have the possibility of bringing about inclusive good governance in municipalities. However, only 40 per cent of the urban population in the country (through 63 larger urban agglomerations) is targeted through JNNURM. What happens to the other 4,500-plus small and medium towns remains a matter of policy concern.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are making efforts to make urban self-governing institutions transparent, accountable, participatory and inclusive. Each one of these organizations has made significant contributions in terms of innovative and problem solving approaches. However, collective civil society voices in the urban policy arena are largely missing. There is a need to strengthen the collective voice of CSOs to make positive impact on policy making institutions, to scale up and mainstream isolated success stories, and to create institutional space for debate and deliberation on public policies, institutions and programmes.

It is with this backdrop that PRIA organized a National Round Table of Civil Society Organizations on ‘Inclusive Urban Governance: Challenges and Opportunities’. This national consultation was in response to many informal deliberations with a variety of civil society groups working on the issue of urban governance where the need for coming together was voiced. This consultation was undertaken as an effort to shape the civil society debate within and also to find ways to engage with key policy making institutions and actors in shaping the policies and programmes from a citizen’s perspective, to discuss ways to up-scale and mainstream civil society innovations addressing urban governance related issues and problems, and to create institutional platforms of urban stakeholders for regular dialogue, exchange and communication.

The two-day consultation held at the PRIA campus brought together CSOs, policy makers, urban planners, researchers and media professionals. Discussions were held under four round table sessions:

Round Table-1: Deepening devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to urban local governance institutions

Round Table-2: Institutionalizing citizen participation and social accountability in urban local governance institutions

Round Table-3: Realizing citizens' rights to basic urban services with special emphasis on urban poor

Round Table-4: Planning spaces for informal city and addressing urban poverty

Closing Session: Future civil society action: Ideas for coalition building, knowledge harvesting and policy engagement

The deliberations in the above mentioned round table sessions were centered around the following questions:

Round Table 1: Deepening devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to urban local governance institutions

Democratic decentralization implies the transfer of power over decision-making to local governance institutions. Empowering local governance institutions to make decisions and manage resources without intervention from the higher tier of governance is a necessary condition of devolution.

- Tracing the history of devolution in India, brings to the fore pertinent questions about its degree and progress in all these years since the enactment of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. Are there any structural or strategic differences in urban and rural governance systems that have resulted in distinct trajectories in terms of decentralization reforms?
- What has been the impact if any of JNNURM on the quality of devolution in India?
- Decentralization may be a universal concept but it takes different forms in different contexts. How can its benefits be ensured amidst this diversity (variably performing states in India/variably sized towns)?
- Devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to local governance institutions has been seen world over as deepening democracy, modernization of public administration, bringing in efficiency and accountability at local levels. Have these been achieved?
- How can the extent and quality of devolution be measured? What could be the best indicators for this?

Round Table 2: Institutionalizing citizen participation and social accountability in urban local governance institutions

The reassertion of democracy at grassroots levels has become a new reality. Citizens around the world are demanding and demonstrating new ways of relating with state institutions. This has led to the emergence of new contours of citizen participation as well as mechanisms of accountability of local governments towards the citizens.

- What kinds of spaces for citizen participation are enabling their voices that demand accountability of governance institutions?
- How do ‘invited and structured’ spaces interact with ‘emerging and spontaneous’ spaces?
- What functions do Civil Society Organizations perform in enabling citizens to secure democratic accountability?
- Will institutionalization/legalization of citizen participation and social accountability ensure these?
- What, if any, would be the impact of having many different avatars of legislations like Community Participation Law and Public Disclosure Law in different states?
- What are the various mechanisms that can be put in place to enhance social accountability of ULBs?

Round Table 3: Realizing citizens’ rights to basic urban services with special emphasis on urban poor

Development can be inclusive—and reduce poverty—only if all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and participate in decision-making.

- Are national and state level programs for poverty eradication/elimination really giving results?
- How can multiple marginalization and poverty be overcome by equitable access to basic urban services? Multiple marginalizations: *being poor in a city...being a poor disabled person in the city...being a poor disabled female in the city...being a poor disabled girl child in the city...being a poor disabled girl widowed after child marriage in the city...*
- JNNURM’s BSUP (Basic Services for Urban Poor) Reform needs to be integrated with the city level infrastructure provision projects instead of small, scattered projects all over the cities. Is this current ad hoc approach going to improve the quality of life of the urban poor?
- What happens to the urban poor in small and medium sized towns in absence of an umbrella scheme like the JNNURM?

Round Table 4: Planning spaces for informal city and addressing urban poverty

Over the last decades, it has become clear that the informal economy has a significant job and income generation potential. Therefore, appropriate policy frameworks and strategies aimed at the informal city must be developed, without hampering its potential for job creation and economic growth. The main challenge is thus to develop innovative and supportive policies that recognize the contributions of the informal economy and the challenges that its workforce faces.

- Why is planning not inclusive? If it is only for legal/formal citizens then what constitutes this legality/formality?
- In spite of high dependence of people on the informal sector and its substantial contribution to the urban economy, why is no space provided for them in city plans?
- What are the various characterizations of and differentiations and dynamics within the informal economy?
- How do the various forces arising out of urbanization, immigration and industrialization interact with each other and how do their resultant benefits and losses accrue differently to different groups?
- Women and children constitute a major portion of the informal workforce. What are the special security blankets/considerations been given/denied to them in the recent national policy decisions related to the informal economy?
- What is 'decent' work? How can focus be shifted from discussion on formality and informality to decency of work?

OPENING SESSION

Kaustuv Kanti Bandopadhyay began by outlining the objectives of the consultation, which included:

- Discussing emerging issues and challenges in urban governance.
- Sharing field experiences/innovations of different CSOs, academia, etc., working in the urban sector.
- Gaining visibility as a network/forum to influence state/national policies on urban reforms.

The last couple of years have seen the growth and predominance of CSOs working in rural areas to strengthen participatory and democratic governance. There are far fewer CSOs working in urban areas. While there have been innovations in mobilizing citizens and energizing Urban Local Governance Institutions (ULGIs), the work has remained fragmented. Not only does the presence of CSOs in urban areas need to be enhanced, the expectation from the round table discussions was to find agreement on the areas in which CSOs can influence urban governance policies and the ways in which increased accountability of ULGIs can be achieved.

The introduction was followed by a polling exercise to ascertain the mix of participants and their predominant train of thought. (See Annexure 1 for details of questions asked and the break-up of answers.)

- Majority of the participants were CSOs with a few academics and representatives from donor organizations.
- There was equal representation of males and females.
- The most important actors for deepening democratic devolution are elected representatives of ULGIs, followed by political parties and CSOs.
- The most important action that can deepen democracy is a campaign by a coalition of actors—elected representatives, CSOs, media, academia and political parties.
- Citizens' voices can be best represented in the urban governance process by citizens' own organizations and their leadership.
- Invited and legal structured spaces provided by the government for participation tend to be dominated by leadership of political parties, followed by development 'experts'.
- Majority agreed that the proposed community participation law (Nagar Raj Bill) is the only way forward to institutionalize citizen participation.
- Overwhelming majority agreed violation of own rights stimulates citizens the most to mobilize and engage.
- Governance institutions are most responsive when both elected leadership and government officials are directly accountable to citizens.

ROUND TABLE 1: DEEPENING DEVOLUTION OF FUNDS, FUNCTIONS AND FUNCTIONARIES TO URBAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS

Chair: Gangadhar Jha, Institutional Strengthening and Organization Development Expert, IPE, Patna

Panelists:

Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA, New Delhi

Manvita Baradi, Executive Director, Urban Management Centre, Ahmedabad

Archana Ghosh, Head of Urban Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, Kolkata



Gangadhar Jha, the chair, raised several issues related to devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to local governments. The process of devolution has, to some extent, been carried out in the institutions of rural local government, i.e., in panchayati raj institutions (PRIs), but not in urban local bodies (ULBs). Activity mapping has been done for the subjects listed in Schedule XI of the constitution but not for the subjects listed in Schedule XII of the constitution.

The formation of District Planning Committees (DPCs) and Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPCs) is merely done on paper. Talking about the financial condition of ULBs, Dr. Jha said that most municipalities are heavily dependent on the state government for their day-to-day expenditure. The role of the State Finance Commission (SFC) ‘to suggest measures to strengthen the financial status of the ULBs’ has remained insignificant because of poor functioning of the SFCs. The Central Finance Commission has also not been able to provide any concrete suggestions because of poor data and different formats of reports submitted by the SFCs. Again, the SFCs have not been able to generate any factual data related to municipal finance even after nearly two decades of the enactment of the 74th CAA.

Talking about the principles of public finance through which progress can be made in the field of financial devolution to ULBs, Dr. Jha suggested that they could be applied keeping the following factors in mind:

- Regional imbalances
- Spillover effect
- National priority for service standards
- Question of equity

Archana Ghosh made a presentation on 'Devolution of functions, functionaries and funds to urban local governments: Recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission on local government'. By sighting various recommendations made by the second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), on urban governance structures to municipal finance, urban poverty to urban planning and provision of basic services, she presented important pointers regarding the relationship between urban local bodies and state governments.



She argued that the ARC has been unable to provide any clear-cut suggestion for small and medium towns of which there are a very large number in India.



Manvita Baradi emphasised the significance of the municipality, from birth to death, for the urban people and shared her doubts about the process of decentralization in these institutions. On the basis of her experiences in Gujarat, she said that municipal data is fudged to show the state in a good light. She opined that state governments behave like patrons of the municipalities and given this, how civil society engages with municipalities becomes significant. Schedule XII mentions that planning would be done by the ULBs.

However, most municipalities have been unable to appoint a single planner since 1993. The training institutions in the country have not been able to provide capacity building support to the elected representatives or government officials of a municipality. She concluded by saying that there is a large gap, in reality, in devolution to ULBs.

The last presentation was by K. K. Bandyopadhyay. He discussed the status of the first, second and third generation reforms as envisaged by the 74th CAA, and the issues confronting devolution. These included:

- Ensuring accountability towards constitutional obligations of the national and state governments. Sensitizing and capacity building of ERs (elected representatives) of ULGIs to express voice and demand devolution.
- Joining voice with ERs by civil society, media, academia and private sector. Making this an agenda of political parties. And Making devolution with accountability (institutional and social) work. Objective and transparent measurement of devolution and its impact.



He then presented a work-in-progress on developing a Devolution Index based on the status of devolution of functions, functionaries and funds in some municipalities of the country undertaken by PRIA.

Floor discussions:

K.K. Pandey observed that most of the state governments spend only 1 per cent of their total revenue expenditure on municipalities and a majority of this amount is spent on salaries. ULBs are not doing any significant work related to poverty reduction.

Alice Morris of Unnati said all towns could be categorized in three types—towns managed by urban development authorities, towns managed under different missions, and towns managed by corporations with support of big donor agencies. She also observed that in most of the towns planning is being done by the private sector and implementation is being done by contractors; monitoring, which is to be done by the authorities and citizens, does not find any place at any stage.

Sanjeev Chandorkar of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences opined that municipalities are made weak by design. The role of civil society is to find resources by which the condition of ULBs can be enhanced.

Srinivas Kowligi of Indian Urban Space said that it is important to discuss how civil society is going to influence policy makers. He opined that media houses and industries could be brought under the same umbrella, as they are the big actors in the current scenario.

Manoj Rai observed that devolution to ULBs would be achieved when it becomes a political agenda, because there are limited actors and limited owners of this issue.

Bishnu Mohapatra of the Ford Foundation observed that local government has remained the inferior domain of politics. He also said that the federal nature of the India administration talks only about centre and state, and not about local governments.

The session ended with the chair's closing remark that municipalities have to think about their internal resource generation capacities; otherwise it will be difficult for them to become autonomous institutions in the future.



ROUND TABLE 2: INSTITUTIONALIZING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS

Chair: Yogesh Kumar, Executive Director, Smarthan, Bhopal

Panelists:

Kathayayini Chamaraj, Executive Trustee, CIVIC, Bangalore

Kanak Tiwari, Senior Executive, PRIA, New Delhi

Meena Nair, Research Head, Public Policy & Research, Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore



The chair initiated the discussion by emphasizing the roles that may be played by CSOs to institutionalize citizen participation and social accountability in urban local governance. Participation is easier in the rural context; in urban areas it is a far more challenging task. Discussing the possible spaces to promote participation, he suggested two major intervention areas: (i) the institution and (ii) the planning process, e.g., preparation of city development plans, master plans, etc. He also put forward the fact that citizens living in urban areas are more capable of asking questions than those living in rural areas. The presentations of field-level work by the panelists could become the basis for finding possibilities to upscale the various tools used to institutionalize citizen participation and social accountability.

Kathayayini Chamaraj started her presentation with her experience of Bangalore, a city that did not have elected ULB representatives till a few years ago. Further, the Community Participation Law and the Public Disclosure Law do not think beyond what already exists. We need to remember that the 12th Schedule under the 74th CAA is not an exhaustive list of functions. It is just a suggestive list of 18 functions. Functions like PDS, housing, primary health, primary education, childcare, livelihood and labour laws, and social security should also be part of the functions. She discussed the possible spaces for citizen participation in Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPC). She also suggested that the one-third representation on the MPC that is to be decided by states could be filled by giving representation to organized groups of various stakeholders whose views need to be considered when planning for the city.



Further she suggested that sectoral committees that can be constituted under the MPC draw up sectoral plans for land use planning; water, sewerage and sanitation; health, education and early childhood care and development; urban poverty alleviation, food, housing and social security; economic development, livelihood, skill training; power, roads and transport, railways; and environment, wetlands and parks.

The panelist stressed that the most basic requirement to increase decentralization is to enhance accountability. She also pointed out that city plans are developed without citizen participation, which is not a good practice of planning.

On structured spaces of citizen participation, she opined that though people talk for their own ward or *mohallas*, decisions are taken at the city level. There is a need to represent the citizens directly or indirectly through NGOs and community-based organizations. It's the general view of the people that too many interest groups in decision-making distorts the process. To establish their 'legitimacy' NGO/CSO representatives should be nominated or elected and there should be associations of interest groups represented in citizens' involvement in decentralized planning processes.

Regarding representation of women in the urban governance structure, she elaborated that there are millions of women representatives at the gram panchayat level but hardly any in the urban context. She also emphasized that there is a need to have an updated database of the urban poor so that schemes can be tailor-made for them.



The next presentation was by Kanak Tiwari who outlined the challenges and opportunities of urban governance based on PRIA's work in the field. The emphasis of governance should be towards the involvement of people in the overall process, and people should be the focus of governance. In her view, the two main ingredients of good urban governance are 'direct accountability' and 'engaged citizenry'. The process of urbanization can be seen as an opportunity but the cultural, social and economic heterogeneity of urban citizens makes it a challenge. Further, there is no uniform agenda and every state has its own definition of what constitutes 'urban'. A 'one size fits all' programme or process is not the answer to meet these challenges. With respect to the challenges of implementing the 74th CAA, she mentioned that there is no historical structure (such as panchayats in rural areas) in urban areas to support implementation.

Discussing JNNURM, she mentioned that a city grows mainly due to private forces, not due to government initiative. Most of the CDPs (under JNNURM) have been prepared within a time span of three months. How much participation can one expect in such a short duration for its preparation? Further, the CTAG and AG committees rarely meet unless some external pressure is put. The JNNURM programme is limited to 63 cities and the component of 'people's participation' in it is suggestive and not mandatory. Our policies tend to have a very neutral approach.

As a part of civil society we need to empower citizens as well as make them aware. Capacity building efforts and knowledge sharing is however not a one-time activity and requires continuous and proper follow up. She shared PRIA's efforts in implementing proactive measures like setting up a single window system for programme beneficiaries in Raipur, and the positive progress made in Ranchi Municipal Corporation. The municipality's website earlier only had provision for complaint registration, but now complainants can also see the status of their complaints.

The final presentation in the second round table was by Meena Nair. She started her presentation by outlining the spaces available for citizen participation. She felt structured spaces were required for government programmes. Informal spaces could be created through accountability initiatives by individual citizens, CSOs and NGOs. The role of NGOs/CSOs in the public domain could be:

Direct service provision, advocacy (including rallies, consumer boycotts, sit-ins, letters to the media and government officials, meetings, petitions, public interactive platforms), acting as citizen representatives on regulatory and state asset holding company boards, citizen education.



To project the voice of citizens and demand accountability, CSOs could engage in community management of local services, right to information movements, and performance feedback to assess public service delivery through use of Citizen Report Cards, Community Score Cards, etc.

Floor discussions:

We need to be clear how we are using the term ‘urban citizen’. Defining urban citizenship is not an easy task. It is usually loosely used and defined. People migrate from rural areas to urban areas. We need to define citizenship at a particular time for a particular area. We have to take issues like income disparity, attachment to the city (in which one is working, but may belong to some other city), cultural diversity, etc., into consideration. We should not deny the fact that urban disparities are becoming more acute; we need to prioritize the available resources in a city.

We can’t compare all the cities on a similar scale as the participation and awareness among its citizens is quite different. There is a need to know how to deal with political alienation among urban citizens. Participatory planning, which can complement the weak capacities of the municipalities, is very limited. Citizen participation can be engaged in various ways, but there is no legitimacy to the demands made by citizens. In the case of Maharashtra, both the Community Participation Law and the Nagar Raj Bill have been passed. There is no legal binding on the regularity of meetings of DPCs and MPCs. There are no formal structures for participation. In some smaller towns we see stronger participation in terms of Durga Puja samitis, but they are not so productive in resolving urban issues.

CSOs also need to deal with political unwillingness. The most important ally in the whole process are the politicians, who need to give support and direction to participatory planning.

Out of the 63 cities under JNNURM there is not even a single city from the north-east region. Everything is guided from the centre, including the toolkit, under JNNURM. Even social auditing is centrally based and centrally decided; it is hardly a bottom-up approach. While there is social auditing in government schemes like the NREGS, under JNNURM there has hardly been any development and no audits. There could be more experimentation with the tools used, experimentation should be deepened, and more new methods, like electronic forms, use of mobile phone technology, etc., should be introduced. We should also deal with the impactability of these tools and how it can be enhanced.

‘Land’ has emerged as an important issue, especially with regard to low-income housing. The associated issues of legality and modality are also emerging. We also have to be aware of the issues related to land, development of infrastructure, legal considerations in planning, etc.

Media also plays an important role. It needs to be sensitized so that the right kinds of stories are written. There is a requirement to give importance to media, specially the electronic media, in the

overall process to assure citizen participation and social accountability in urban local governance institutions.

The issue of citizenship becomes sharpened in the urban context, especially because of lack of space. Identity is also an issue. Though land entitlement is important even in rural areas, the form changes in urban areas. In urban areas we need to identify whose participation really matters and whether the projects being implemented are really pro-poor. Most projects, which directly benefit the urban poor, are miniscule compared to large, citywide infrastructure projects.



ROUND TABLE 3: REALIZING CITIZENS' RIGHTS TO BASIC URBAN SERVICES WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON URBAN POOR

Chair: Debolina Kundu, Associate Professor, National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi

Panelists:

Sita Ram Shelar, Project Coordinator, YUVA, Mumbai

Pratima Joshi, Director, Shelter Associates, Pune

Mukesh Kanaskar, Program Director, All India Institute of Local Self Governance, Pune



Debolina Kundu kicked off the discussions with an overview of India's urban growth and JNNURM. India is the fastest growing economy. However, the growth has not been spatially uniform with growth concentrated in few large cities and lots of people living below the poverty line. JNNURM got cities and states to undertake reforms. Never before had larger cities received so much grant and attention through a central scheme. Most of the projects under JNNURM are designed to increase the capacity of the cities to deal with urbanization and effective service delivery. In spite of a parallel programme for the poor, most of the projects under JNNURM are for infrastructure being augmented for the non-poor. User charges are an important issue. If cities begin charging for social services like education and health, the urban poor will always be neglected due to their inability to pay for the same. Only earmarking land for urban poor will not suffice, we have to ensure that we solve the problem. There is also a lot of difference in per capita expenditure in mission and non-mission cities.

The first presentation was made by Pratima Joshi. She explained the work of Shelter Associates, an organization created with an aim of providing basic services for the urban poor. Showcasing their work in Sangli, she explained how information sharing could be of great help in successful interventions. Shelter Associates was engaged by the local government for the purpose of poverty mapping. The information was fed in GIS, and it was observed that access to sanitation was very poor in all the slums. Also, almost two-thirds of the slums did not have sewerage network. The government was going to provide community toilets but Shelter Associates put forward the case, based on the mapping they had undertaken, that since the poverty profile was diverse, one solution would not fit all the slums. MAGNET, a media and government engagement project, was then undertaken wherein meetings were held in small groups to enable participation. Consultations were held and the maps were shared with the communities to help in locating the new services.



The maps also helped in identifying which slums were on ULB land and those that were on private land, which meant they had to be relocated. The citywide approach to provision of basic services to slums based on GIS and remote-sensing maps was very successful. Detailed slum mapping is available on the organization's website.



Mukesh Kanaskar's presentation was on flawed conception of poverty. He talked about both radar/non-radar poor. The increasing homeless population is never on our radar. We don't have sufficient insight into their issues and the scale of these issues. If we are now undertaking G-Budgeting (Gender Budgeting) and P-Budgeting (Poor Budgeting), we have to know the various indicators for the same and the general premise. There is a need to look at the scientific premise for P-Budgeting. The surveys about basic facilities like sanitation and sewerage talk only about the quality and not the adequacy. We

talk about only economic factors like poverty line, whereas there is an increasing population, which is even below the line of dignity.

Sita Ram Shelar continued the discussion in his talk about the diverse profiles of people living in slums. It is not only the poor who live in slums. In slums, governments have a definite criterion based on which services are provided to houses. Often, the poor end up paying far more for water (from private suppliers) than the rich who pay hardly anything for municipal water supply. Yet, the well off in cities urge disconnection of water supply to slums as the poor 'steal' municipal supplied water. Even the exclusion of illegal slums from benefits is an issue. Owing to social exclusion, minorities are concentrated in ghettos and are denied services. The urban poor today have to prove their identity, which is again a problematic process for them in the absence of voter IDs and land tenure. All the major infrastructure projects lead to displacement that leads to rehabilitation. Today, these rehabilitation sites have become new slums. There are people, who listen to all these woes, but these are the people who cannot act and hence there is a need for a political agenda. It will be a one-sided effort if CSOs don't include political parties and media in their cause.



When we talk about inclusive governance, we talk about the poor not having rights. On the contrary, the poor have as much right as any citizen of India. What they are demanding are the rights of citizenship.

Floor discussions:

Exclusion of non-notified slums is a grave issue and we have to find ways to decide who gets the ration card, or any other means of proving identity. Up to 15 per cent is the core poor and it is this section that is left out due to lack of identity.

The government is not concentrating on poverty alleviation, which is the real problem. The critical reason is that the poor cannot pay for basic services. The 12th Schedule gives responsibility to local governments to provide livelihoods for the poor. The poor is under huge pressure owing to payment of high interest, and thus most of the money earned goes in paying back debt. Due to tight belting under JNNURM most of the welfare services provided earlier by the ULBs, like library, parks, etc., have been curtailed.

We have inadequate definitions for 'poor'. As per NREGA it is Rs 100/day/household. Thus, official poverty line is half the minimum wage. Income should not be the only criteria for defining the poor and vulnerable. There is need for a separate urban poor policy and incorporating

the same in budget preparation. However, merely making provisions in the budgets is not enough. Monitoring expenses is also important. Service level agreements should be encouraged, wherein only if the ULB spends where it was supposed to, will they receive funds.

Facilities like night shelters for increasing homeless populations in cities needs to be looked into. JNNURM does not provide for any such infrastructure. The rehabilitation policy is also not being effectively applied in the urban context.

Land has become more of a commodity for the elite and big real estate developers. Lots of ULGI reforms and projects have lead to displacement. Displaced persons are being rehabilitated by BUSP funds (of JNNURM). It has become a vicious cycle. Land, a valuable asset, is being wasted, especially in the urban context by in situ rehabilitation; they are ad hoc and low density. It would help if the city has a TDR bank and can develop slums through a citywide approach.

Apart from including the poor, we also need schemes for inclusion of the disabled. The poor are more visible and hence there are some programmes for them.

The challenge is huge, because there are around 4,100 towns left out of any project even after extension of the JNNURM to B and C towns.



ROUND TABLE 4: PLANNING SPACES FOR INFORMAL CITY AND ADDRESSING URBAN POVERTY

Chair: Darshini Mahadevia, CEPT University, Ahmedabad

Panelists:

Malati Gadgil, Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group, New Delhi

Sundar Burra, Advisor, SPARC, Mumbai

Dunu Roy, Executive Director, Hazard Centre, New Delhi



Setting the tone of the discussion, Darshini Mahadevia stressed that the session on urban planning can broadly delve on urban development regime. The debate on legal-illegal, formal-informal is gaining ground in contemporary discourse. But we must recognize that urban planning processes are creating informalities in cities that still continue as a legacy of British rule. We have now moved ahead from pre-modern cities to a new generation in the form of JNNURM cities. The starting point of planning is preparation of a vision document, followed by CDP and DPRs. New planning practices are trying to converge with the Master Plan.

Malati Gadgil gave an overview of her organization that works with rag pickers of Delhi. The city generates about 85,000 metric tonnes of waste every day and it is taken to three landfill sites that are already over capacity. About 80 per cent of the waste is compostible but where is the place for dumping and sanitary land fills? Rag pickers recycle about 22 per cent of waste and this eventually saves land for dumping. The waste is collected in different ways—door-to-door collection of kitchen wastes, selling of household junk to kabari walas and scavenging of rubbish heaps by rag pickers. There is a whole chain of junk dealers, from the small dealer to the wholesale dealer and ones who deal with specific types of junk in bulk. Here the informal rag picker is linked with the formal chain in the form of recognized dealers. These urban poor have three specific issues, i.e., space, mobility and identity. Chintan has demanded space for recycling/segregation for these waste pickers from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi in addition to storage space, because these pickers usually store certain types of junk till it is in considerable quantity before selling it at a better rate.



Dunu Roy's presentation was on planning for informality and urban poverty using the case study of Delhi. He emphasized that Master Planning process in Delhi had created illegality. In fact, the Master Plan of Delhi is a breeding ground for informality. For example, as per the Master Plan, the authorities were supposed to have built 16 lakh dwelling units but they built only 5.2 lakh units. Where will the rest of the people go? If legal spaces are provided, there is hardly any question of illegality. The magnitude of the informal sector can be gauged from the fact that about 34.3 per cent of the workforce is skilled.

Since the Master Plan does not allow the establishment of large industrial units, the obvious option for workers is to enter the informal sector. About 72.2 per cent of the population owns a voter ID. So while the government recognizes them as voters, because they belong to the informal (and not legalized) population in terms of entitlements, they are not part of the municipal services delivery. As many as 44.6 per cent of the population either walk or use two wheelers and are prone to hazards as there is hardly any space to walk. The concept of 'citizen' is diminishing and that of 'stakeholder' is gaining ground. The line between these two should be defined. Citizenship does not define your right any more, but being a stakeholder does. The city's government does not plan for the poor. By providing a flat for Rs 2.5 lakh the government believes it is making housing affordable for the poor. The poor have to contribute Rs 60,000 in order to avail of this benefit. But where will the poor find this money?

If the poor are not even citizens, how they can make use of RTI and the 74th CAA? Why are slums tagged as illegal even though those who live there work in the city and contribute to its economy? In the rural sector, the government guarantees employment through NREGS. In the urban sector, those who do not find jobs in the formal sector because the formal sector cannot accommodate them, earn livelihoods through informal activity, as the government does not guarantee a wage like in the rural sector. The first step is to recognize and register the contribution of the informal sector to the urban economy. Next, we need to enlist support for the Right to Work. People are living and working; they are planning their own lives. We have never understood how they plan.

Is the state for the people or for profit? Illegality and informality are important for those who are in it for profit—it's only when they can enforce the illegality of informality can they make profit. For example, as long as the labour is informal, they don't need to pay minimum wage, which feeds their profits. And they don't want informal sector people to get their recognition as citizens. Because, as citizens, these people can demand rights. Then, if the government stops them from undertaking their informal sector work, it would be the state's responsibility to pay them minimum wage.

Sundar Burra explained the work done by his organization with the poor of Dharavi in Mumbai. Dharavi is Asia's largest slum spread over 525 acres where 5-6 lakh people reside. The Dharavi redevelopment plan was prepared by a consultant who divided the entire area into five sectors. Developers bid for each sector, and each sector was given to a different developer, each of whom is supposed to provide free housing and infrastructure to 'eligible' dwellers. In return, the developer would get higher FSI. The plan envisaged building 30-40 storeyed buildings. Dharavi is a vibrant economy where 60-70 per cent of its residents work in Dharavi itself. It is the largest recycling site. In fact, if the waste of Mumbai does not reach Dharavi, Mumbai will be submerged. The Rs 15,000 crore redevelopment project also did not have scientific analysis, environmental impact assessments or socio-economic survey before preparation. There was no public participation in developing the plan. Further, if infrastructure of each sector were going to be developed by different developers, how would it be integrated and combined with existing city-level infrastructure?



The redevelopment plan of Dharavi is sophisticated land grab primarily due to its spatial and geographical location in the center of the city (the land rates are comparable to Tokyo and New

York and are the highest in Mumbai). There is also the larger issue of 'eligibility' as people who live on rent in Dharavi will be excluded from benefiting from the redevelopment.

Civil society groups nominated by the government for negotiations have suggested that instead of sectors there could be neighbourhood groups consisting of 300 households based on natural boundaries or social boundaries.



CLOSING SESSION: FUTURE CIVIL SOCIETY ACTION: IDEAS FOR COALITION BUILDING, KNOWLEDGE HARVESTING AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Chair: Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA

Panelists:

Sanjeev Chandorkar, Associate Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Alice Morris, Project Consultant, Unnati, Ahmedabad

Patricia Annez, Sr. Fellow, Brookings/NIUA, New Delhi

K.K. Pandey, Chairman, Centre for Urban Studies, IIPA, New Delhi

Summary Presentation: Key Points from Four Round Tables by Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay

Summary of issues raised during the round table discussions:

Round Table 1:

- General dissatisfaction and deep anguish about lack of progress in devolving authority and power to ULGIs.
- Encroachment of jurisdiction of ULGIs by the state governments through para-statal.
- Analysis of power and politics with regard to supportive and opposing factors of devolution will hold key to future action.
- Devolution Index could be a useful technical tool to measure the progress on devolution—whom we communicate it to and how we communicate it are equally important.
- Inferior quality of politics and leadership at the ULGI level has failed to attract attention to the demand for devolution.
- SFCs do not function independently and autonomously; there is lack of institutional support to SFCs.

Round Table 2:

- Differentiated approach and structure for citizen participation in various size/class towns is required.
- City Level Forum—to be represented by different interest groups.
- Decentralize representation—to area sabhas and ward sabhas.
- Concept of citizenship is contested resulting in conflicts and contestations. Whose participation is being represented is an important issue.
- Tested social accountability tools could be used by civil society to provide feedback and starting dialogue.
- We should look at the use of technology in promoting consultation and participation.

Round Table 3:

- Citywide information sharing, sustained dialogue and engagement with various stakeholders—keeping people and their representatives at the centre.
- Revisiting slum-centrism in poverty alleviation strategies.
- Identity and certification determines equitable access to services.
- Holding the ULGI accountable for discharging poverty alleviation functions (adverse effect of financial effectiveness).
- 'Land as prime resource' and poor people's access and entitlement to it.

Round Table 4:

- Expand the meaning of planning from physical and spatial planning to include other aspects of human lives.
- Regulatory planning frameworks define formal-informal and the issue of eligibility, leading to exclusion.
- Differential normative for the needs of poor and non-poor is a contested issue.
- Working with coalitions—people, their organizations, civil society and other development players.
- Linkage between micro and macro planning with appropriate use of resources.
- Planning with the people and not for the people.
- ‘Expertizing’ of urban governance, development and poverty alleviation is worrying.

Each panelist then summarized the areas going forward which CSOs as a collective should focus on.



Alice Morris started on an optimistic note that the consultation had proved that CSOs have numerous roles to play in the urban domain, such as policy research, civic leadership, and inclusive planning and governance. She said that we had to find ways to carry out these roles efficiently. She gave the example of Solution Exchange, an online community network started by UNDP, that has many issue-based communities people can become members of and interact about and share their work. She emphasized the importance of making the action and research of urban CSOs visible. She also stressed the importance of maintaining this newly forged relationship among the

participants of the NRT and how we could become a resource group for building and expansion of linkages of different experts and people working on urban issues.

Sanjeev Chandorkar also pointed out the miniscule space occupied by CSOs and people who are working in the urban sector without any private gain or agendas. The strength of the collective ‘we’ of the participants is questionable as today there are private solutions for every problem. At the risk of sounding pessimistic, he felt the time had not yet ‘arrived’ for urban issues/governance, which is why we are a very feeble voice right now and the surroundings are also non-conductive. He thus stressed the need to strategize both for long-term and short-term impacts, including engagement with political systems to get space for critique, conscientization of people on a large scale to be taken up as a challenge for civil society, building knowledge of processes through which solutions are reached, and attempting context specific solutions. Coalitions are important but must not only be multitudes of numbers; instead it must grow organically, strength by strength, and only then will any coalition sustain.





Patricia Annez elaborated upon the lack of government or other schemes for urban areas in India. She said that there were lavish funding programmes for rural poverty, employment and decentralization, all of which stop at the city gates. Urban areas are wrought with diverse problems such as housing affordability, dilapidated infrastructure and inadequate public services, and both government and civil society support are needed to improve these conditions. She praised the high levels of optimism and down to earth discussions in the round tables but expressed her fears of this discussion being confined to this select group. She asked the

group to think about whom to address these issues of governance and then collectively work towards making our voice heard at the most appropriate places. After years of working in India she has come to the conclusion that the main fight is between the national and state governments; only the crumbs fall to the ULBs. It was more important for us to focus on making governments work at any level. She went on to say that central programmes are strapped for solutions and we could offer some of these solutions as well as reality checks on various initiatives. The strength of CSOs has always been the process but we now need to measure outcomes and results and generate data. CSOs had to become more pragmatic in order to be able to change the state of affairs and overcome the ideological disadvantage that the urban sector has.

The thrust of K.K. Pandey's summing up was on urbanization as an irreversible process and thus the need to seriously support the spirit of the 74th CAA in order to partly solve the problems that accompany urbanization. CSOs need to work towards strengthening the three basic elements of political inclusion, financial inclusion and spatial inclusion of the third tier of government. He emphasized the need for a network of elected representatives, mayors, etc., rather than a coalition of CSOs. He laid out the main role of CSOs as intermediaries between the people and government and as knowledge banks for both governments and communities to tackle various issues of governance. As intermediaries, therefore, CSOs need to reinforce their backward linkages with the communities and also their forward linkages with the government in order to become a strong bridge to amplify not only their voice but the impact of their work as well.



Floor discussions:

Kanak Tiwari said CSOs need to accept the reality of competition and increase their visibility as solution providers rather than just critiquing the role of consultants.

Yogesh Kumar said political leaders need to be engaged. CSOs need to form working groups around areas of expertise and capacities. We must have many more such meetings at national as well as regional levels.

Meena Nair said what is required is informed advocacy. If we have data to prove certain inadequacies in the system, the government cannot deny it. We must lean on each other for building this knowledge.

Swati Dogre was of the opinion that we need to learn from the gender debate where after 20 years of working with women we realized that we should have worked equally with men. If we have to work with the urban poor, we also need to work with the non-poor to raise their sensitivity.

Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay said we need to continue this journey of learning, only then will we really come together.

Khatibullah Sheikh expressed the need to realize the importance of documenting all these experiences to be able to move towards informed advocacy.

Kathyayini Chamaraj stressed the need to use the legal route more vigorously by filing PILs, using RTI, etc., individually as well as a coalition.



Rajesh Tandon concluded the two-day discussions by encapsulating the four round tables and articulating an initial way forward for a coalition of CSOs. The round tables made visible the wide array of work that is already being carried out in the urban sector and also raised the need for collectivization and visibility vis-à-vis national, state and local governments as well as policy makers. There is a need to change the mindset regarding problems of cities as being limited to infrastructure. (For example, on the website of the Planning Commission, 'urban' comes under infrastructure.) We need to know and use the suggested constitutional structures and demand that they be set up. The five-year plans must recognize and support the importance of structures such as DPCs (district planning committees), MPCs (metropolitan planning committees), ward committees, etc. We need to learn to use policies and constitutional provisions and make the government implement them.

To gain visibility, we first have to be visible to each other and thus we must keep meeting and convene similar opportunities instead of launching an e-network that may or may not sustain. He underlined the sense of community (*biradari*) that we need to build and the social capital that we need to invest to raise the debate in numerous other contexts. Resources to support these activities for urban issues are very scarce and need to be demanded from the government (for example, push for the setting up of an urban counterpart of CAPART). CSOs must not forget that small and medium towns have different issues from those of metropolitan cities. The coalition needs to advocate for inclusive, accountable and transparent governance from the point of the common citizen.

ANNEXURE 1

Opinion poll conducted in the National Round Table of CSOs, 28 and 29 January 2010, organized by PRIA

- Question 1: Which constituency do you belong to:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Civil Society	28
2	Academia	3
3	Donor	2
4	Other	1

- Question 2: I am a:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Female	18
2	Male	17
3	Transgender	-

- Question 3: The most important actor for deepening democratic devolution is:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Elected representatives of ULGIs	16
2	Intermediary CSOs	10
3	Political parties	11
4	Media	-
5	Academia	-

- Question 4: The most important action to deepen democratic devolution is:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Mobilization of elected representatives of ULGIs	5
2	Campaign by larger coalition of elected representatives, CSOs, media, academia and political parties	28
3	Sustained media campaign	3
4	Evaluative and policy oriented research by academia	-

- Question 5: Citizens' voice could be best represented in the urban governance processes by:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Citizens' own organizations & their leadership	21
2	Intermediary CSOs	9
3	Elected representatives	2
4	Political parties	2

- Question 6: Structured spaces provided by the government (by law or invitation) for participation tend to be dominated by:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Development “experts”	10
2	Educated middle class	5
3	Leadership from political parties	17
4	Poor and marginalized	2

- Question 7: Proposed Community Participation Law (Nagara Raj Bill) is the only way to institutionalize citizen participation:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Strongly Agree	3
2	Agree	20
3	Strongly Disagree	-
4	Disagree	8

- Question 8: What stimulates citizens the most to mobilize and engage?

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Violation of own rights	23
2	Injustices to others	3
3	Corruption	7
4	Voluntarism/Humanitarian causes	4

- Question 9: Governance institutions are most responsive when:

S.No.	Options	Responses
1	Government officials (bureaucrats) are made accountable to elected leadership	2
2	Elected political leadership are made accountable to the citizens directly through election	4
3	Both elected leadership and government officials are accountable to the citizens directly	30

NATIONAL ROUND TABLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

**INCLUSIVE URBAN GOVERNANCE:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

*28-29 JANUARY 2010
PRIA, NEW DELHI*

Organized by PRIA, New Delhi

Date & Time	Content
28th January 2010	
09.30 am to 10.00 am	Registration
10.00 am to 11.15 am	<u>Opening Session</u> Welcome and Background of the Round Table by Dr. Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA
11.15 am to 11.30 am	Tea/Coffee
11.30 am to 01.30 pm	Round Table 1: Deepening devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to urban local governance institutions Chair: Dr. Gangadhar Jha, Institutional Strengthening and Organization Development Expert, IPE, Patna Panelists: Dr. Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA, New Delhi Ms. Manvita Baradi, Executive Director, Urban Management Centre, Ahmedabad Ms. Archana Ghosh, Head of Urban Studies, Institute of Social Science, Kolkata Open Discussion Comments and Observation by the Chair
01.30 pm to 02.30	Lunch

pm

02.30 pm to 04.30

pm

Round Table 2: Institutionalizing citizen participation & social accountability in urban local governance institutions

Chair: Dr. Yogesh Kumar, Executive Director, Smarthan, Bhopal

Panelists:

Ms. Kathayayini Chamraj, Executive Trustee, CIVIC Bangalore

Ms. Kanak Tiwari, Senior Executive, PRIA, New Delhi

Ms. Meena Nair, Research Head, Public Policy & Research, Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore

Open Discussion

Comments and Observation from the Chair

4:30 pm to 4:45 pm

Tea/Coffee

4:45 pm to 5:30 pm

Open Forum on Role of Civil Society Organization in Making Urban Governance Inclusive

29th January 2010

09.30 am to 11.15

am

Round Table 3: Realizing citizens' rights to basic urban services with special emphasis on urban poor

Chair: Dr. Debolina Kundu, Associate Professor, National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi

Panelists:

Mr. Sita Ram Shelar, Project Coordinator, YUVA, Mumbai

Ms. Pratima Joshi, Director, Shelter Associates, Pune

Dr. Mukesh Kanaskar, Program Director, All India Institute of Local Self Governance, Pune

Open Discussion

Comments and Observation from the Chair

11.15 am to 11.30

Tea/Coffee

am

11.30 am to 01.30 pm

Round Table 4: Planning spaces for informal city and addressing urban poverty

Chair: Prof. Darshini Mahadevia, CEPT University, Ahmedabad

Panelists:

Ms. Malati Gadgil, Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group, New Delhi

Mr. Sundar Burra, Advisor, SPARC, Mumbai

Mr. Dunu Roy, Executive Director, Hazard Centre, New Delhi

Open Discussion

Comments and Observation from the Chair

01.30 pm to 02.30 pm

Lunch

02.30 pm to 04.30 pm

Closing Session: Future Civil Society Action: Ideas for coalition building, knowledge harvesting and policy engagement

Chair: Dr. Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA

Summary Presentation: Key Points from Four Round Tables by Dr. Kaustuv K Bandyopadhyay

Panelists:

Dr. Sanjeev Chandorkar, Associate Professor, TISS, Mumbai

Ms. Alice Morris, Project Consultant, Unnati, Ahmedabad

Ms. Patricia Annez, Sr. Fellow, Brookings/NIUA, New Delhi

Dr. K.K. Pandey, Chairman, Centre for Urban Studies, IIPA, New Delhi

Open Discussion

Comments and Observation from the Co-Chairs

04.30 pm

Vote of Thanks and Tea

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