FOREWORD

by Devendra Fadnavis
Mayor
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Convergence of thoughts and efforts, of ideas and goals, and of ways and means is the key to promoting sustainable development.

To promote access of the urban poor to water and sanitation services, all the key players need to work together to identify the tasks required and deliberate on factors promoting or hindering access to services. This will be the best approach to creating accessible infrastructure.

There is a need for effective planning and community participation at all levels, while access to technical and financial options along with the building of institutional and attitudinal capacities plays a very important role in this effort.

The Think Tank facilitates the identification of entirely new and clear paths towards solving urban infrastructure problems; it is a great experience to be associated with the Think Tank.
The Urban Think Tank

The Urban Think Tank is a forum where people working in various areas of provision of water supply and sanitation services come together for an informal discussion on a wide range of issues. The Water and Sanitation Program-South Asia (WSP-SA) has been hosting regular meetings of the Think Tank since December 1994.

The Sixth Urban Think Tank was organized in Nagpur on September 17, 1998, on invitation from the Nagpur Municipal Corporation. The Urban Think Tank directly focuses on issues facing municipal managers and is a collaborative effort of the WSP-SA and the Department for International Development (DFID).

Why Community Participation Is Only A Partial Solution

The Think Tank discussed experiences from Nagpur, Ahmedabad and Lucknow which highlighted the efforts of both communities and municipalities to provide better services to poor communities.

The Think Tank discussions highlighted the following key requirements for a successful program of delivery of urban services, particularly to the poor:

- community participation;
- attention to financial viability;
- development and use of cheaper or appropriate technologies; and
- focus on operation and maintenance in planning.

Why does community participation appear on this list, when it has traditionally been assumed that engineers and administrators know what is best for people and can most effectively deliver the ‘best’ solution? There is a growing realization that the community, or the users of any service, have a crucial role to play in the planning, implementation, use, and maintenance of that service. Fundamentally, it is the users who can express demand for services, possess knowledge about how services can best be planned and managed at the local level, and determine what financial and organizational support will be available at the local level to fund and manage their proper use.

However, the inclusion of ‘community participation’ in a municipal program does not guarantee its success. This is because all urban services have, basically, two elements: the ‘local’ or ‘internal’ element, which can be controlled by users; and the ‘city level’ or ‘external’ element, which can not. Thus a user-managed solid waste system can move garbage from a local colony to a secondary collection site, but cannot meet the need for an effective secondary collection and disposal system. Similarly, a community group in a low income area may be able to maintain a local standpost or community latrine, but if the city does not finance the provision of trunk water mains or sewers, the community facility may never function.

Thus there is a need to include users of services in the planning, implementation and management of any city system, but this is only part of the planning process. Local needs and demands, and local potential to participate and willingness to pay for services must be matched up with overall city plans.

City-level planning must take into account wider technical constraints (investments in bulk water services, construction of trunk sewers, etc), and should find room for exploring innovative and appropriate technological solutions that can reduce costs and improve the potential for good maintenance and proper use. City-level planning must also link individual investments to the city’s wider financial situation. Crucially, the planning process must consider the future organizational and financial burdens of operating and maintaining services before making commitments to new investments. These ‘city-level’ issues cannot be handled by local users of the service, but require the inputs of city-level administrators and technical staff who have the full information available to them.

Thus there is a role for both users and city-level administrators/technical staff in the delivery of urban services. The key lessons for municipal managers are:

- integrate users, especially poor users, into the planning and service delivery process;
- recognize the poor as a resource, with good local knowledge, constructive attitudes and willingness to participate in and pay for services;
- coordinate between different departments to ensure coherent planning and implementation of investments;
- develop flexible strategic plans which can respond to changing demand rather than rigid long-term master plans; and
- ensure that operation and maintenance considerations vis-a-vis existing assets are given priority over the drive for new investments.
Municipal Corporation (NMC), a required to carry out systematically urban development plan for Shantinagar, one of the notified community for providing equal monitoring role within the necessary planning and of infrastructure; jhopadpattis. render NMC capable of providing the system for operation and maintenance inner-city housing, illegal layouts, and drinking water; consensus building between the city and past experimental, and after deliberations with slum communities, officers, Corporators, other government departments and NGOs operating in Nagpur. It is expected that the participatory slum development principles would serve the purpose of providing:
- a consistent framework within which slum development activities can be carried out with NMC coordination;
- a platform for synthesizing the interests of different groups operating in the program; and
- a set of reference points for evaluating slum-related governmental and non-governmental interventions.

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Emergency Water Supply And Sanitation Scheme
Shantinagar, Nagpur

YUVA, or Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, is a voluntary development organization working on developmental issues in the urban and rural sectors since 1984 in Mumbai. YUVA now works in three cities – Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur – tackling the impact of urbanization on urban poor. YUVA initiated its activities under the Slum Improvement Project, to cover the remaining area. The Mahila Mandal is actively involved in the maintenance, security, and monitoring of the water distribution system.

As far as the clearing of the space is concerned, garbage disposal proved to be a major problem in Shantinagar. The Municipal Corporation workers did not come regularly to remove the garbage. Further, there were no disposal bins for collection of garbage. The Mahila Mandal made several representations to the Municipal Corporation for working out viable solutions to this problem. Inspired by the success story of the water supply system, they demonstrated their commitment to a better sanitation scheme by installing dustbins purchased out of the interest amount accumulated in the SHGs. This has led the NMC to offer additional bins to cover the remaining area. The members of the Mahila Mandal play a major role in the collection of garbage; they enhance the confidence to negotiate with local authorities and take on more sensitive and complex issues of the community.

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Integrated Slum Development, Nagpur

A challenge for urban change, a change in attitude

Initiated by a request from Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC), a bilateral agreement between the Government of India and the Federal Republic of Germany for the first phase of an Integrated Slum Improvement Project in Nagpur was signed in November 1996. The executing agencies are the NMC and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). In principle, an eight-year cooperation horizon is envisaged. Phase One, which will specify the components for Phase Two, is scheduled to last till the end of June 1999. According to the agreement:

- The aim of the first phase is to render the slum habitat by providing the necessary planning and organizational conditions which are required to carry out systematically extensive improvement measures and to monitor slum development activities efficiently. For transition into the second phase of the project, the following set of results has to be achieved during the first phase:
  - the establishment of an efficient organisational structure to coordinate and monitor all slum development activities in the NMC;
  - the commitment of NMC and the willingness to try a participatory approach encompassing the slum dwellers, NGOs and the private sector;
  - an agreement on a viable financing system for operation and maintenance of infrastructure;
  - an agreement on the prioritisation of slums: where to start, which slums to select, what kind of activities to take up and when;
  - the integration of slum development activities into a sustainable urban development plan for the city;
  - the provision of facilities only to the extent of constructive pilot measures; and
  - the establishment of a continuous learning process for NMC staff, Corporators, slum dwellers and other stakeholders.

Issues Regarding Water and Sanitation in Shantinagar

The following issues affect the lives of people residing in Shantinagar:
- continuous tensions between women due to inadequate and unequal distribution of water;
- problems of contamination, drainage, garbage disposal, and water leakage; and
- taps are located below ground level due to low pressure in the system; stagnant water collects in the sump and becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes and flies; and
- the provision of water, sanitation and waste disposal are issues of the community.

It's the view of the executing agencies that:
- the city cannot optimally 'function' without the slum dwellers;
- 'informal settlements' will continue to form part of the urban structure for the next decades; and
- there is potential for self help development within slum communities which should be promoted.

NMC and GTZ have agreed on a set of basic principles for participatory slum development. The principles have been derived from the evaluation of current slum improvement activities in the city and past experimental, and after deliberations with slum communities, officers, Corporators, other government departments and NGOs operating in Nagpur. It is expected that the participatory slum development principles would serve the purpose of providing:
- a consistent framework within which slum development activities can be carried out with NMC coordination;
- a platform for synthesizing the interests of different groups operating in the program; and
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Financial contribution, consultation for urban design, clearing an existing construction (kept at a minimum), and assisting AMC in day-to-day interaction with the slum residents’ association. This is in addition to community development.

In this partnership project between a civic body, slum residents, NGOs, corporate houses and banks, there were bound to be difficulties in management and implementation. As a facilitator, SAATH had to interact with all partners to ensure smooth implementation.

To enable smooth implementation, SAATH decided to understand the objectives of the various partners as it was clear that the objectives were different. Similarly, SAATH tried to understand the working methodology of each partner.

This critical issue – between a highly target-oriented corporate approach (the private sector), a bureaucracy (AMC), process-oriented NGOs (SAATH and SEWA), and civil societies (among other residents) – SAATH also tried to understand different motivations of the partners and how they interacted. The different challenges were, however, different, was able to facilitate without too much difficulty.

SAATH found that not only in the Slum Networking Project, but also when working with the Municipal Corporation in other programs, that the bulk of the work is done by the middle and lower management staff. However, these critical staff rarely get recognition for their efforts. SAATH endeavors to appreciate the efforts of the municipal staff that diligently work at the grassroots. This recognition has considerably increased the sensitivity of the municipal staff towards slum residents and SAATH.

This results in humane implementation and fewer hurdles.

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