

Editorial

Dear friends,
Another six months have gone by since we last communicated with you. In this period, CIVIC's work can be summarized as an effort to give a practical shape to the much-talked about ideas of good governance – of ensuring transparency, accountability and people's participation.

We are trying to ensure transparency by working with public authorities to make their suo motu disclosures under the RTI Act comprehensive and effective. For instance, we are attempting to make them disclose to the public their aims, functions and duties; the job descriptions of each of their officials; the standard procedures followed by them in decision-making; their norms of service delivery; the subsidy programmes implemented by them, the criteria for eligibility and the list of beneficiaries of these programmes; their budgets and expenditures; the means available for people's participation in decision-making bodies constituted by them, the means of obtaining information from them, etc. We empower citizens in the areas where we work with this information which enables them to know what their entitlements are.

To ensure accountability, we organize grievance redressal melas wherein we bring citizens, concerned officials and even elected representatives face to face so that citizens, who are now empowered with knowledge of their entitlements, can question officials about the deficiencies in the delivery of services to them. These grievances of citizens and the commitments made by officials to remedy the deficiencies are recorded and submitted to higher officials for their action. If no action follows, we again use RTI to ask for Action Taken Reports on the grievances submitted. This often makes officials attend post-haste to the grievances and the oral commitments they had made. We find that this strategy results in some amount of accountability.

To strengthen people's participation in decision-making, we seek to activate or strengthen the usually dysfunctional platforms for people's participation already foreseen but existing only on paper in most

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PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

Public hearing at Ward 60 (Sagayapuram) on Ward Works on 23rd December 2010



**Community does social audit of BBMP works
Mr. Shivashankar, Joint Commissioner, BBMP (East)
on the dais at the public hearing on ward works
organized at Sagayapuram ward**

Conducting social audits is one of the strategies being employed by CIVIC to bring in accountability in governance. A public hearing on the ward works of Sagayapuram ward of BBMP during the period 2009-10 was planned. Preparatory meetings in the months of September and October 2010 were held with the Federation of Civil Societies of Sagayapuram (FCSS) members on the process of conducting social audits and public hearings. The information on ward works needed for the social audit and public hearing was obtained under the RTI Act from BBMP. After obtaining the list of works sanctioned and implemented in the ward, the works to be taken up for social auditing were prioritized. Two major works that were prioritized were the development works in Richards Town Park and the housing for SC/STs under the SC Sub-Plan at New Bagalur. The activities to be undertaken to conduct social audit of these two works were listed. Spot inspections and cross verification of the documents were conducted on both the works by teams of FCSS members and the analytical report was shared between the members during meetings.

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departments, be it the School Development & Monitoring Committees (SDMCs) in schools, the Arogya Raksha Samitis or Rogi Kalyana Samitis in hospitals, the vigilance committees attached to each ration shop, the Community Development Societies under the SJSRY scheme, etc. When these bodies are activated, the community itself is able to take charge of bringing in changes in policies and plan, execute, monitor and audit programmes. These bodies also become a platform for grievance redressal.

Where such platforms are still non-existent, as in the planning and execution of ward works in the BBMP, we attempt to create informal platforms which prepare their own plans and lobby with the elected councillor and officials for their implementation. We also use these informal platforms to conduct social audits of implemented works.

We also use the grassroots experience that we gain from these interventions to advocate at government level for additions or amendments to policies to bring in systemic change, be it through suggestions on the new Right to Education Rules, through identification of the gaps between the ground reality Vs. guidelines of the SJSRY scheme, the non-adherence to Indian Public Health Standards in hospitals, or the lack of community participation in the way vigilance committees for ration shops are constituted. In this edition of the newsletter, we give you a sample of some of these attempts at bringing in good governance.

Social Audit cont'd from page 1

At the public hearing on 23rd December 2010, Mr. Shivashankar, Joint Commissioner, BBMP (East Zone) was present with other BBMP officials - Mr. Chandrasekhar, Superintendent, Horticulture Department, BBMP, Mr. Nagaraj, Zonal Health Officer, Mr. Manjunatha, Assistant Engineer, BBMP, and Mr. Jayaram, BBMP.



Public participating in the public hearing at Sagayapuram ward

The Programme of Works (POW) that was prepared by the citizens through participatory budgeting activity was presented and compared with the POW of BBMP for the year 2010-11 showing the disparities between these two POWs. Both works that were socially audited were also presented before the officers highlighting the lacunae that existed in implementing these works.

Mr. Shivashankar, JC, in his speech, said that in a representative democracy, the elected representatives are the mouth-piece of citizens. Most of the decisions are taken as per their will and officers merely follow their directions. Thus NGOs should approach their elected representatives to bring in any changes in the system. With these few words, he left the meeting abruptly saying that his tight schedule did not allow him to stay throughout the programme. Other officials also followed their officer and left the programme.

The jury members at the public hearing, Mr. Anil Kumar of Forward 68, Mr. S.R. Venkatram of Supraja, Mr. Ramakanth, President, Kumara Park West Association, Mr. Venkatesh, Dalith Bahujan Movement and Mrs. Kathyayini Chamaraj of CIVIC made the following recommendations :

To display boards on all major/minor works that are undertaken by the BBMP, giving details of the starting and closing dates of the project, names and contact numbers of the AE/AEE, contractors, amount of tender, etc. Also, these details should be displayed at the ward office.

Mr. M. Venkatesh, speaking on behalf of the jury, said that the people were the true sovereigns in a democracy and that elected representatives to truly represent the people's interests had to listen to their voices in planning and implementing works.

Project under the SCP Sub-Plan (22.75%) in BBMP: Experience in New Bagalur Layout of Sagayapuram ward (Ward-60);

Under the Sub-Plan for SC/STs, a housing project is being implemented by BBMP in New Bagalur layout of Sagayapuram Ward. 547 houses were sanctioned under the project during 2009-10. The information on the housing project was obtained from the department by CIVIC through RTI. 9th Main of New Bagalur Layout was selected for conducting social audit. Sagayapuram Workers' Welfare Association (SWWA) was assigned the responsibility of spot verification and first-hand observation. Social audit was conducted in three stages, namely: (a) spot inspection and listing of

houses under construction in the street with photo documentation; (b) Verification of ground-level data with agreement copy and work order copy and (c) interaction with beneficiaries, the Assistant Engineer (Civil Works) and contractors. The exercise illustrated differences between ground realities and work order provided by the department.

Differences between work order and ground data

The work order stated that 30 houses were sanctioned in the street. However, from the list of 30 beneficiaries provided by the department, only two were found on the street. As per the work order, work should have been started by January 2010 and completed within 120 days. But on the ground, work was started only in June 2010 and was still under progress in December 2010. Not even a single house was completed in the stipulated time.

Only 6 beneficiaries were available for interaction and only a few of them were aware that the houses were being constructed under a government scheme; but they did not know even the name of the scheme. Four out of the six beneficiaries thought that the houses were being constructed by the Councillor. Only two beneficiaries had filed applications for a house out of whom one had submitted it to the ward office and the other to the Councillor. None of them had received an acknowledgment. They were unaware of the time line for completion of the project, the name of the monitoring officer and the details of beneficiary contribution.

Discussions with the Assistant Engineer revealed that the beneficiary list had been prepared by the elected representatives, namely, MLAs and councillors of the area, which BBMP had accepted after verification of beneficiary records. He said that delay in the work was due to the beneficiaries lacking proper documents and non-clearance of the site by the community. Since officials themselves did not have clarity on how the beneficiary contribution was to be collected, they had stopped asking the beneficiaries for it. There has been no information provided to the beneficiaries on the manner of selection of beneficiaries, the facilities provided under the project, conditionalities for availing the benefits, procedure for clearing and handing over the land for construction, etc. When questioned, the contractor said that the delay in construction work is due to non-clearance of sites in time by the beneficiaries.

From the observations on site, the team made the following suggestions:

1. Community should be given awareness on the

scheme.

2. One person should be designated in the ward office to receive applications from beneficiaries and for officially communicating with the community regarding details of the projects.
3. The specific terms and conditions and procedure for site clearance should be communicated to beneficiaries at least three months before site clearance date.
4. A proper mechanism should be evolved to identify beneficiaries and collect beneficiary contribution from them and to issue them receipts.
5. The housing project should be integrated with the provision of basic amenities such as bathrooms, toilets, water, power, etc.
6. BBMP should make arrangements for transit stay of beneficiaries and should adhere to time-lines in construction to complete the work in the stipulated time.
7. Quality of the materials and work should be tested by BBMP on the spot.

Richards Park-Ward 60 Social audit Findings of audit on spillover works 2009-10



Status of decorative benches and play equipment of Richards Town Park during social audit

The responsibility of auditing the works of Richards Town Park was assigned to Richard's Town Citizens' Association and Richards Town Residents' Association. The social audit was conducted in three stages, namely, (a) listing of facilities and qualitative and quantitative analysis with photo documentation; (b) preparing a report on all play equipment that were fitted in the park; and (c) inspection based on the technical specifications that were listed in the POW of the department.

Social Audit of the works undertaken in the park revealed that:

1. Work code 050-10-NGHP-M1-00: New dust bins

to be provided – The work code had no mention of the number of dust bins that should be provided. The spot inspections revealed that no new dust bins were fitted. Only twenty six old bins were found with corroded and hanging bottom.

2. Work code 050-1-N-G-H-P-MI-003: New ornamental benches to be provided - No mention of the numbers. Estimated cost was Rs. two lakh, while the amount paid was Rs 2.1 lakh. No new ornamental benches were found in the park.
3. Work code 050-10-M-G-H-P-MN-004: Repair and painting of chain-link fence - Estimated cost was Rs. three lakh, while the payment was Rs. 3.23 lakh. Only a part of the work is complete.
4. Work code 050-10 NGHP-MI-004: Provision of children's play equipment with estimated budget of Rs 6.00 lakh. But Rs 6.47 lakh has been paid to the contractor. On verification it was observed that the quality of equipment and work were not as per the specifications laid down in the work order. The play equipment was worn out within a year posing dangers to children.
5. Work code 050-10-M-G-H-P-MN-003 - Rs 2.95 lakh was budgeted for the maintenance of the park while the amount paid was Rs 3.17 lakh. The overall condition revealed that there was no proper maintenance of the park.

CIVIC is continuing its work in two wards (Sagayapuram and Devasandra), and two slums (Desiyanagar and Rajiv Gandhi Nagar), also focusing its main agenda of working under the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) framework on mainstreaming urban poor issues through democratic platforms such as grievance redressal melas (GRMs) and public hearings /social audits / area sabhas. With the experiences and outcomes achieved so far, CIVIC envisages playing an intermediary role of extrapolating field experiences to push for necessary policy changes with the government.

CITY-LEVEL WORKS

Objections filed against BESCO's proposed tariff increase – 25th October 2010

Civic organized a meeting on 25th October 2010 to discuss and get feedback and suggestions of citizens on the proposal of BESCO to increase the tariff by 75 paise per unit for the financial year 2011-12 under the multi-year tariff scheme. BESCO had asked stakeholders to file objections by 4th November'10. The proposal of the BESCO was presented by

Sri A. Raja Rao, Former Executive Director, BHEL, and Sri Y.V. Aswathanarayana, Former Advisor - Works, Railway Board, Ministry of Railways. As the outcome of this meeting, CIVIC filed objections to the increase in the first two tariff slab rates which would directly affect the poor.



Sri Raja Rao, Former Executive Director (centre) and Sri Y.V. Aswathanarayana, (right) Former Advisor – Railway Board and Mr. Harish Poovaiah (left) at the meeting on increase in the tariff of BESCO

Planning for state-level seminar with city representatives/councillors of other cities of Karnataka - 18th December 2010

A preparatory meeting was organized for city representatives of eight city corporations of Karnataka to discuss the objectives of the proposed state-level seminar on 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (74th CAA). Ms. Kathyayini Chamaraj made a presentation on the 74th CAA leading to a discussion on how well the 74th CAA has been implemented in their respective corporations. They were also provided with a questionnaire to collect information on how their corporations were functioning, starting from conduct of elections, devolution of functions, functionaries and funds, setting up of district planning committees and ward committees, reservations for SC/ST/OBC and women, etc. Representatives assured CIVIC that they would collect the information and forward it to Mr. Gururaja Budhya of Urban Research Centre, who would analyze the data.

WARD-LEVEL WORKS

Awareness on 74th CA and RTI Act - 7th August 2010

To create awareness on the 74th Constitutional

Amendment and the Right to Information (RTI) Act to the members of FCSS (Federation of Civil Societies of Sagayapuram), an awareness programme was organized at Anbillam Training Center, Sagayapuram, on 7th August 2010. Mr. Harish of CIVIC gave the orientation on the two Acts to the members. The objective of this awareness programme was to enable the federation to participate in local governance and to promote and encourage them to use RTI to get their work done.

Grievance Redressal Mela (GRM) at Devasandra ward - 18th August 2010



Janaspandana meeting held at Devasandra ward

BBMP issued a circular stating that 'Janaspandana' should be conducted in every ward twice a month, on every first and third Saturday from April 2010. Based on this circular, CIVIC, with support of BBMP, organized a GRM in Devasandra, Ward No. 55, on 18th August 2010. The Assistant Engineer and the Jr. Health Inspector of the ward and the Assistant Engineer-Electrical from BBMP participated in the programme. Major grievances that emerged were related to engineering works (road), drainage and street lights. As this was a new BBMP ward, it lacked these basic facilities. The grievances were submitted to officials to resolve them. After the event, CIVIC submitted the event report to BBMP and after one month, a follow-up RTI application was filed asking for an action taken report on the grievances. Officials responded to the RTI application saying that all the issues have been resolved. But when this information was cross-checked with the community, they informed that problems have remained unsolved. CIVIC will follow-up on the grievances again with BBMP.

SLUM-LEVEL WORK

PDS - Commissioner orders Grievance Redressal Meetings under PDS

Several circulars issued by the government require officials of the Food & Civil Supplies Department to conduct regular grievance redressal meetings for citizens. But citizens are

unaware about when and where these are held. CIVIC filed RTI applications with the Commissioner, Food & Civil Supplies, on the number of grievance redressal meetings (Ahara Adalats) conducted by officials in the Bangalore informal rationing area. Information received showed that no adalats had been held by the Deputy Directors (DDs) during the particular period asked for. A First Appeal under the RTI Act was filed with the Commissioner on this. At the hearing of the appeal on 03.08.10, the Commissioner issued a directive to all the DDs to prepare an action plan for regularly holding the adalats twice a month till the end of the year in each of their zones.

Right to Food Campaign gives inputs to National Food Security Act

CIVIC is working with both the state and national-level Right to Food Campaigns. As part of this activity, Mr. K. V. Ramamurthy, project coordinator, CIVIC, and Ms. Kathyayini Chamaraj, Executive Trustee, participated in the National Convention on Right to Food & Work organized at Rourkela, Orissa, between 6th and 8th August 2010. The Convention discussed issues related to hunger, food security and its determinants, control over resources such as land, forests and water, the proposed National Food Security Act of the Government, food and livelihood schemes of government and right to food in areas of conflict and displacement. The resolutions passed at the Convention were submitted to the National Advisory Council (NAC) headed by Ms. Sonia Gandhi to take necessary measures. The resolutions drafted for PDS have been listed below:

1. The Public Distribution System must be universal and the State must guarantee, by law, subsidized food grains to all the citizens of this country. Citizens who are vulnerable must get additional benefits under Antyodaya. This is a non-negotiable for the RTF Campaign.
2. All entitlements must be on an individual basis (14 kg per month for every adult member in the family) even if one ration card is issued for the whole family. Ration cards must be in the name of women.
3. Food grains should be made available based on local production, food habits and preferences of the state. Fortified flour should not replace wheat in the PDS. Nutritious millets should be made part of PDS food grains.
4. Apart from rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene, other items like pulses and edible oil should be made available through PDS, as is being done in some states.
5. All entitlements within the PDS should be available to all individuals irrespective of their location, and migrant workers, especially inter-state migrant workers, should be able to draw all

their rations at any place, irrespective of where their ration cards were issued.

6. Technology can play a potentially important role in the management of the PDS and it must be harnessed appropriately to improve the efficiency of the PDS. End-to-end computerization of the entire PDS network from procurement by farmers to collection by the household should be mandatory.
7. Government must make full disclosures, through on-line or any other means, of the lists of people identified for benefits under the PDS, movement of trucks, redressal of complaints, allocation and off-take details. However, all technology must be pro-poor, non-exclusionary and non-discriminatory.
8. Any new technology developed in the name of ensuring de-duplication and portability, including the UID/biometric cards, should not be allowed if they undermine people's civil liberties by becoming a means of tracking and surveillance.
9. Grievance redressal systems should be effective, transparent and monitored closely. Toll-free help-lines and administrative redressal through existing mechanisms should be strengthened.
10. All fair-price shops should be de-privatized, and should be run with the help of public bodies including panchayats, women's groups, credit co-operatives, and other appropriate village-level institutions.
11. Cash transfers must not replace food transfers under any nutrition-related scheme.

PDS shop owner agrees to keep shop open throughout the month

A Grievance Redressal Mela (GRM) was organized on 17th July 2010 on the PDS for the Desiyanagar community to address the problems they were facing in getting their entitlements. Food Inspector Mr. Sadashiva Murthy, shop owner Mr. A. Jeriaum, and community members participated in the programme. A key grievance raised by the community was that PDS shops are open only for 2-3 days of a month. Due to this limited time of functioning, all families in the community rush to get their quota and this leads to jostling and quarrels between the families. As they are unaware of when rations will be given, they leave their cards with their neighbours to collect the grains on their behalf. There is no representation of the

community on the vigilance committee.



Community member of Desiyanagar speaking to the food inspector Mr. Sadashiva Murthy and shop owner Mr. A. Jeriaum, during a grievance redressal mela (GRM). Mr. Bosco Antony of GRACE is also on the dais

The shop owner assured them that the shop would henceforth be open the whole month and would not create any further problems to the community. The food inspector told the community that ration cards should not be given to others and only the cardholders should go and fetch their grains. Also, a few names were recommended on the spot for the posts of vigilance committee members.



Ms. Manjula Devi, Councillor of Devasandra ward participated in the GRM on PDS

Similarly, a follow-up GRM was conducted in Rajiv Gandhi Nagar on 31st August 2010. This GRM intended to discuss the grievances that were still unresolved after the first GRM conducted during February. Along with the food inspector, Ms. Manjula Devi, councillor of Devasandra ward, participated in this event. Families of Sanjay Nagar and Triveni Nagar were also present to share their grievances.

The key issues raised by the people were that they had been given APL cards though they belonged to BPL families and that they were thus deprived of some other facilities that were accessible only on producing a BPL card. The food inspector clarified that this issue could be sorted out only when the new survey was conducted and fresh cards were issued. Other major grievances raised were the misappropriation in weighing and measuring grains and kerosene, non-display of the list of commodities available and the date when the commodities such as kerosene would be distributed.

The food inspector assured that he would look into all these issues. Mr. Harish responding to the statement of the food inspector pointed out that no rules prohibit them from issuing fresh BPL cards. In fact, as per the departmental charter, it is the responsibility of the department to issue BPL cards within 30 days after a family applies for it. Ms. Manjula Devi supporting the grievances of Sanjay Nagar residents said that all families residing in those areas should be provided with BPL cards.

WATER

BWSSB solves long-standing problem of drainage



Ms. Manjula Devi of Devasandra ward, Ms. Poornima of Basavanapura ward and Ms Tejaswini of Horamavu Ward, Assistant Executive Engineer Mr. Murali and Assistant Engineer, Mr. P. Ramesh, BWSSB, Mr. Shivasanakaran of JAGO on the dais during a grievance redressal mela on water

A GRM was conducted in KR Puram on 20th July 2010 with BWSSB officials of Sub-Division V of East Zone, with regard to water supply. In order to extend the work to a larger geographical area, three wards were included for this programme, namely, Devasandra, Horamavu and Basavanapura. All the three councillors

representing these three wards namely, Ms. Manjula Devi of Devasandra ward, Ms. Poornima of Basavanapura ward and Ms Tejaswini of Horamavu ward attended the event. Assistant Executive Engineer Mr. Murali and Assistant Engineer, Mr. P. Ramesh, represented BWSSB. As these areas fall in the new BBMP area, a majority of the people are dependent on private water supply. Also there was clogging of open drains which created a lot of problems to residents. 52 grievances were submitted to the department before the GRM out of which 43 were resolved by the department before the GRM was held. Major issues that were flagged during the meeting were irregular water supply, supply of non-potable water contaminated with sewage, bad odour and presence of worms in the water supplied, problems with the valve-men. One of the freshly-elected councillors defended herself against all grievances that were expressed about her ward rather than asking officials to address the issues raised. Later, she gave a press statement stating that there was no water problem in her area.

The grievances that were raised during the GRM conducted in Sagayapuram ward were listed and a report on it was submitted to the department to take action on all grievances. Later, an application was filed under RTI seeking the action taken report on the submitted GRM report. This application triggered action by the department. Water seepage had damaged 11 houses of Giddappa Block in Ward 60. Residents had been forced to construct a drain inside their houses to drain out the water. The department solved this long-standing problem of 5 years.

HEALTH

Awareness programme enables Pregnant women to access benefits

In both Desiyanagar and Rajiv Gandhi Nagar people accessed private health services though public health service centers were located close to them. The communities were totally unaware of their entitlements and the facilities provided in these health centers. As the first step of our intervention, awareness programmes were organized in both slums on the public health services due to them.

In Desiyanagar slum, Dr. Chetana, Medical Officer of the BBMP Maternity Hospital located at Cox Town and Mr. Venu, Health Visitor of the BBMP's Urban Family Welfare Centre attended the programme on 17th July 2010 and gave awareness on the facilities available in both centres. 50 members from Desiyanagar community, Ms. Kathyayini Chamaraj from CIVIC and Mr. Bosco Antony from GRACE attended the

programme. Similarly, an awareness programme was conducted on health schemes of the government, such as Prasuthi, Janani Suraksha Yojana, Madilu and Bhagyalakshmi implemented by the K.R. Puram General Hospital and Primary Health Center for the Rajiv Gandhi Nagar community on 25th July 2010.



Dr. Chethana, Medical Officer of the BBMP Maternity Hospital and Mr. Venu, Health Visitor, of Cox Town participated in an awareness programme on the facilities provided by the maternity hospital

After these two awareness programmes, Grievance Redressal Melas (GRMs) were organized at both locations involving concerned officials. Grievances were read out on the stage in the presence of the member who gave the grievances. Officials responded positively assuring that all problems would be solved in the next few days.



Dr. Ansar Ahmed, Administrative Medical Officer, Mr. Shivakumar, District Health Education Officer, Mr. H.S. Sudarshan, Senior Health Assistant, Mr. V.E. Parameshwar, Junior Health Assistant, Ms. Asha Kilaru, Trustee of CIVIC during the GRM on KR Pura General Hospital

Impact of the GRM conducted on the primary health centre and BBMP maternity home of Cox Town :

A majority of the grievances were about doctors not attending to patients. Most of the time doctors would just refer patients to the tertiary hospital (Bowring Hospital) irrespective of the health status of patients. Concerned officials replied that due to shortage of staff, it was difficult to them to attend to patients round the clock. Community members also complained that there are no area visits to the Desiyanagar slum by the Health Visitor (ANM). The same reason of shortage of staff was repeated for this grievance also. Officials gave an assurance that action would be taken on all grievances submitted in the programme.



Ms. Kathyayini Chamaraj speaking at a GRM conducted at Cox Town

The GRM with KR Puram Government Hospital staff members conducted at Rajiv Gandhi Nagar was very fruitful. During the GRM, the community blamed that though the general hospital is 20 years old and all the poor of that area depend on the hospital, doctors are not providing quality service to the poor. Drivers of emergency ambulance-108 demand money from the patients. Doctors don't even touch the patients while examining them. Instead, they just listen to the patient and give some tablets. And another major complaint was about the defunct scanning facility in the hospital. Any patient, who needed to be scanned, was referred to a private centre. To this complaint, the AMO informed that there was a shortage of scanning staff and hence scanning is done only on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the hospital. After the GRM, this information was displayed on the wall in front of the scanning room of the hospital.

A boy named Jemshad and his parents complained that the doctors demanded Rs 300 to treat the boy for dog bite. The family didn't have a BPL card but obviously belonged to the BPL category. Having no money with them, they had returned without getting the boy treated. The Administrative Medical Officer

(AMO) explained that anti-rabies treatment is given charging the user fee of Rs 100 even for BPL families. Next day itself, the boy was treated for dog bite in the hospital. Another 13 year-old boy, Mahadev, who suffered from throat pain, complained that even after one year of treatment, the problem had not been solved. Recently, the doctor had stated that Mahadev needed an operation for which his parents would have to pay Rs. 5000, though the parents were BPL. The boy was asked to come the very next day and is now undergoing treatment without his parents having to pay for it and follow-up action is being continued by CIVIC. Five grievances were attended to next day itself.

Impact of GRMs - K R Puram Hospital agrees to set up Rogi Kalyan Samithi

The absence of the mandated Rogi Kalyan Samiti, a people's participation platform at the hospital for participatory decision-making, and the non-holding of the mandated grievance redressal meetings by it were highlighted. At the end, hospital officials admitted that the Rogi Kalyan Samiti was dysfunctional though it had been constituted. They agreed to constitute it afresh with representation to Rajiv Gandhi Nagar residents. They also agreed that a grievance redressal mechanism at the hospital was necessary and agreed to hold the next grievance redressal meeting on their own in the hospital premises itself. They asked CIVIC to push government to institutionalize these platforms. CIVIC with its follow-up action with the hospital is trying to institutionalize the Rogi Kalyan Samiti and the grievance redressal mechanism within the hospital as assured during the event.

Achievements under health

Information on the Bhagyalakshmi scheme of the Dept. of Women & Child Development through the awareness programme led to identification of eight mothers as beneficiaries under this scheme. Women were also able to get the benefits of Prasuthi, Madilu and Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) from the hospitals.

Anganwadi sanctioned for Desiyanagar

At Desiyanagar, many parents were not inclined towards utilizing the facility of the anganwadi. An awareness programme was organized to explain the functions and duties of an anganwadi and its benefits to children and the community. But change is happening slowly in this community.

Local livelihood opportunity: A permanent post of an Anganwadi worker was sanctioned to Rajiv Gandhi Nagar Anganwadi. The community was told about the opportunity available for a woman of the community to get a job as helper at the anganwadi. A woman came forward and her application for the post of Anganwadi worker was formally submitted to the Department of Women and Child Development. She is now waiting to receive the official appointment letter from the department.

EDUCATION

CIVIC gives suggestions on framing RTE Rules

CIVIC met the Principal Secretary, Primary Education, Mr. R.G. Nadadur, regarding the lack of a protocol in the education department for bringing the large number of drop-outs, as in Deshyanagar, back to school. He requested CIVIC itself to prepare and submit a draft protocol for bringing drop-outs back to school and also to get involved with SSA in the framing of rules under the RTE Act. CIVIC submitted the drafts asked for and has also been interacting regularly with SSA and other child rights groups in giving suggestions on the RTE Rules.

CIVIC imparts RTI training to head-teachers of schools



Mr. Venkatesh giving training on the RTI Act to HMs /PIOs of primary schools of North Zone-3, in the presence of Mr. Ashwath Gowda, BEO, and Ms Kathyayini Chamaraj.

CIVIC's applications to schools in its working area for their suo motu disclosures under Section 4(1) of the RTI Act had revealed that schools were unaware of the Act. On CIVIC approaching the Karnataka

Information Commission (KIC) on this, the KIC directed the Principal Secretary, Primary Education, to prepare a template for the suo motu disclosure under the RTI Act of all the 40,000 schools in the State. It also asked CIVIC in its order dated 1-6-2009 to provide training on RTI to all PIOs of schools. Consequently, an RTI training programme was conducted by CIVIC to all PIOs (head-teachers) of primary schools of North Zone-3 in the presence of the BEO, Mr. Ashwath Gowda, at his office in Shivajinagar. Participants appreciated the programme and said that they needed such trainings as it would help them in providing information about the school under RTI Act. They also recommended providing this training to all teachers, students and even citizens.

Residential Bridge Course for Deshyanagar drop-outs

A field visit to Sanjay Nagar Residential Bridge Course (RBC) School near Hebbal was organized for the children and community members of Desiyanagar to know more about RBCs and the facilities provided therein so that they could be convinced to send their own child drop-outs to the RBC that had been sanctioned for them. A few parents visited the centre and expressed their satisfaction with the facilities provided. They agreed to send their children to the RBC. However, they are yet to comply with this decision.



Desiyanagar school drop-out children along with their parents visited RBC near Hebbal

Parents' meetings at schools initiated by CIVIC

As per SSA Rules, conducting parents' meetings in schools is mandatory. However, schools used to just take the signature of parents on the registers and show that meetings were being conducted regularly. With the support of parents and the school authorities,

CIVIC initiated parents' meetings in an effort to institutionalize these in all the schools where it is working. Initial meetings discussed the importance of such meetings and the relevance of parents attending meetings regularly. Parents too accepted that such meetings are essential to monitor the progress of their children in studies and also to sort out problems their children faced. Now, the schools are themselves conducting parents' meetings where issues related to teaching and facilities, such as drinking water, toilets, etc. are being discussed. A majority of the problems are also getting sorted out gradually.

SDMCs bring in transparency in school budgets

CIVIC has been involved as an SDMC member in two schools, namely, Triveninagar Primary School and KR Pura High School. In the Cox Town Government Primary and High Schools, SDMCs were defunct. CIVIC's intervention started by orienting the existing SDMCs on their proper constitution, roles and responsibilities which lead to the re-constitution of the SDMCs as per the norms during the open parents' meeting. Two students of the school are now represented on the SDMCs as per the SDMC circular.

An interactive meeting was organized between two SDMCs, namely, of KR Pura High School and of Triveninagar Primary School. SDMC members shared their experiences of the interventions of CIVIC. They were able to observe a positive change in the attitude of teachers and SDMC members themselves. Members expressed the constraints they have in attending SDMC meetings regularly as they don't get leave at their workplace to attend meetings.



SDMC members verifying the accounts and documents of school.

A few significant decisions were taken for the better functioning of SDMCs: To display all the income and expenditure details of grants received under various schemes on the walls of the schools for public information; to verify all the records related to finances of the school; to have some alternative arrangement to provide food when the midday meal doesn't reach the school; and to write to higher officials on the problems of the schools.

Grievance meeting results in toilet at Triveninagar School

GRMs were conducted at each locality jointly for KR Pura High School and Triveni Nagar Primary School at KR Pura and Cox Town Primary and High Schools at Cox Town. Major grievances focused on the quality of the mid-day meal, and poor drinking water and toilet facilities in the schools. Parents complained that children were coming home with shit in their under-pants as the only toilet was always kept locked. Concerned officials present at the GRM assured the parents that all the grievances would be resolved. CIVIC insisted on their fixing responsibility on particular officials to attend to particular grievances within a fixed time-line. As a result, toilets are being constructed in Triveninagar school now.

SJSRY

Grievance meeting results in action plan on SJSRY for Mahadevapura - 25th October 2010



Ms. Asha Kilaru, Trustee of CIVIC, Mr. Lakshapathi, APSA, Mr. Heera Nayak, Joint Commissioner, BBMP (Mahadevapura Zone), Ms, Bibi Jaan, President, CDS and Ms. Shanthamma, Vice- President, CDS of Mahadevapura, participating in a grievance meeting on SJSRY

Awareness programmes on the SJSRY scheme were continued by CIVIC for different Community Development Societies (CDSs) in this period also. Along with this, trainings on the Right to Information Act (RTI) were organized for CDS members to empower them and GRMs were conducted to sort out their grievances with officials. Follow-up action on the grievances submitted was with RTI applications.

The following major grievances were listed during the GRM organized at Mahadevapura Zone on the SJSRY scheme :



Community members sharing their grievance they are facing in SJSRY in the GRM.

1. Non-sanctioning of loans and subsidies by banks. Inaction by CAOs and COs in motivating communities to apply under the scheme and in getting banks to sanction money.
2. The CAOs concentrated on other BBMP welfare programmes rather than SJSRY. Hence the Rs. 49.56 lakh released under SJSRY has remained totally unspent in the year 2009-10.
3. No awareness programme has been organized by the department for the community. This has resulted in keeping the community dark regarding this scheme.
4. In the financial year 2009-10, 29 people had applied for loans and subsidies out of which only 5 members have got their loans/subsidies sanctioned.
5. Mahadevapura zone CDS has not been formed as per the guidelines of SJSRY. Existing CDS also doesn't have representation from all 17 wards. Instead 3-4 members are being selected from one ward leaving other wards unrepresented.

6. Due to the huge geographical area coming under one CDS, members are finding it difficult to meet and hence regular CDS meetings are not being held. Even minutes of the meetings held are not being circulated among CDS members.
7. Mahadevapura zone CDS did not even have a letter-head or seal in its name.
8. Revolving funds are not being released to SHGs.

2. The plan was presented to the CDS for their inputs and then finalized.
3. Out of 24 members who were waiting for the loans/subsidies to be sanctioned, five of them have received them.
4. All meeting minutes are now being circulated to every CDS member. Resolutions have been passed to print letter-heads for the Mahadevapura Zone CDS and identity cards for the members.

Joint Commissioner, BBMP, of Mahadevapura Zone, Mr. Heera Nayak, assured APSA and CIVIC that if they submitted the grievances in writing, he would call a meeting with all concerned officials and take necessary measures to solve all the problems. He also said that a draft action plan would be prepared for all CAOs and COs working under SJSRY which would then be discussed with NGOs before being finalized. He also suggested that the president and members of CDSs should approach bank managers to get their loans sanctioned.

Outcomes of the GRM

1. Within one week after the GRM, a meeting was called by the JC, BBMP, to discuss the preparation of the draft action plan and by the end of the month, it was ready.

Details of CIVIC's interventions are available on the Official blog of CIVIC

<http://civic-bangalore.blogspot.com>

Domain-wise details are available at :

Ward Works :

<http://civiconurbangovernance.blogspot.com>

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