



(Regd., Public Charitable Trust No 599 / 94--95 IV)
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16th March 2020

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Sri L. Shreenivas
Chairperson
Taxation & Finance Standing Committee
BBMP
N.R. Square
Bengaluru 560002

Dear Sir,

Subject: Our inputs to the BBMP Budget for 2020-2021

Greetings! Thank you for inviting us to provide our inputs to the BBMP Budget for 2020-2021. I regret that I was unable to come personally to present our suggestions as I had a case in the Hon'ble High Court to attend precisely at 3PM on 16th March 2020. Attached please find our inputs.

Thanking you.

Yours sincerely,

Kathyayini Chamaraj
Executive Trustee
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- 1. Overall policy re-orientation needed:** The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations need to serve as the overarching goal towards which other aspects of governance are directed. The SDGs ought to be the concrete policy strategies aimed at realising human rights. They should serve as the minimal benchmarks, with indicators for judging the realization of international human rights. Every aspect of governance needs to be judged according to its contribution to the attainment of the SDGs. For human rights and development to receive the kind of attention they deserve in all aspects of governance, there is a need to place human rights and human development above every other norm.
- 2. Make meeting Human Development & SDGs the first charge on budgets:** A shift towards social infrastructure and human development is imperative in line with the expanded functions assigned to local bodies by the 74th CA, such as slum upgradation and urban poverty alleviation. The budget for the social infrastructure necessary to meet Human Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals – by estimating realistically the requirements for day-care centres for 0-6 year-old children, elementary schools, health care centres, slum housing and social security, need to be estimated realistically and made a first charge on the budget.
- 3. Performance Management System:** There is a need to collect city /ward-level base-line data to serve as the basis for a Performance Management System (PMS) to measure genuine development. The Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) in Karnataka has already made a beginning in this direction several years ago by developing data collection templates, setting targets and evolving 65 indicators for measuring service delivery effectiveness of usual municipal functions such as water supply and sewerage, solid waste management, property tax, etc.
- 6. Social Infrastructure Index:** It is necessary to go beyond this to bring about the necessary focus on social development as well. A ward Social Infrastructure Index needs to be

created based on the number and status of schools, hospitals, anganwadis, workers' facilitation centers, housing, etc.

7. **Human Development Index:** Data is also needed to create a ward Human Development Index (HDI) based on life expectancy, literacy and income levels. Further statistics required are on the BPL population, the homeless and slum-dwellers, IMR, MMR, malnourishment and nutrition status, SCs/STs, children in and out of school, numbers of wage-employed, self-employed & unemployed persons, eligibility lists for old-age, widow, physically-challenged pensions, etc.
8. **The Asha Kiran Mahiti** of the DMA has taken a major step by mapping notified and non-notified slums all over Karnataka and has the socio-economic data-base of each and every one of the six lakh slum households across Karnataka. Based on this, one needs to generate the social indicators, evolve plans and set targets for improvement in each of them and measure and audit outcomes periodically. Involving citizens in each of these processes through the ward committees and neighbourhood area sabhas is imperative, if inclusive growth and not mere GDP growth is to happen.
9. **Facilitate bottom-up planning through ward committees:** Based on the above data bases, BBMP has to facilitate the drawing up of integrated ward plans, for both physical and social infrastructure, through a bottom-up process involving Area Sabhas and Ward Committees and these have to be consolidated at the BBMP level and budgeted.
10. **Land for housing slum-dwellers:** It is estimated by an NGO that more than Rs. 13,000 crore are required for additional land required for housing 5.5 lakh urban poor families, housing them, doubling BBMP's current health and education infrastructure and providing cheap credit for the slum-dwellers. This has to be achieved within a fixed time-frame of five years.
11. **Migrants' colonies:** Thousands of homeless migrants are living on pavements, as per a recent survey. One migrant workers' social rental housing colony to house about 150 families would need about Rs. 750 crore at the rate of 150 houses per ward at Rs. 5 lakh per house. This would rid the city of its unsightly and unhealthy sheds and plastic tents.
12. **Day-care centres for children:** Another important component is the creation of day-care centres for children between 0-6. Currently, these children are left under the care of elder siblings or play dangerously at construction sites. UNESCO was planning to convert Early Childhood Care and Development into a human right at an international meet. If one

anganwadi at least is to be created for every 400 of the 15 lakh population in slums, as per the SC ruling, more than 3,000 anganwadis are needed which would cost Rs. 300 crore at the rate of Rs. 10 lakh per anganwadi.

13. Livelihood space for informal sector: The urban poor need, not just housing, but space and sheds for carrying on their livelihoods, hawking zones and food courts, parking space for vending carts, affordable kiosks for licensed vending are also needed. A micro-credit organization, vocational training centre, workers' facilitation centre, are also needed on per population basis to complete the social infrastructure.

14. Urban employment guarantee: A fund for an urban employment guarantee scheme, recognizing insecure livelihood of the urban poor and a scheme for social security are other needs. All this can be made into a five-year plan for the city, and every ward, for inclusive growth of the city.

Overall suggestions for the BBMP's 2020-2021 Budget

- 1. Put an end to unrealistic budgets:** BBMP has been framing unrealistic budgets year after year and achievement is less than 60%. This has to be avoided by framing budgets based on actual achievement in the previous year.
- 2. Follow principles in KLFAFR Act:** BBMP should follow the principles enunciated in the Karnataka Local Fund Authorities' Fiscal Responsibility Act (KLFAFRA) and prepare budgets that prioritise human welfare and not on non-essentials.
- 3. Prepare Medium-Term Fiscal Plan:** BBMP should prepare a Medium-Term Fiscal Plan with a rolling budget as required under KLFAFRA and spell out the rationale for its budget policies at two public consultations, along with putting its Annual Report and audited statements every year in public domain.
- 4. Avoid over-stating incomes:** BBMP budgets reveal a yearly overstatement of income. The 2018-19 income estimates were revised from Rs 10,129 crore to Rs 7,379 crore in July 2019, three months after the end of the financial year. Thus the BBMP sanctions works on the basis of these unrealistic estimates, which results in giving false hopes and making false promises to citizens.
- 5. Plug loopholes that lead to revenue leakages:** In 2017-18, the BBMP collected only Rs 2,384 crore, 56% of the estimated Rs 4,266 crore and only Rs 1,589 crore of property tax

against the target of Rs 2,600 crore. This results in BBMP not achieving the potential revenues which would make BBMP more self-reliant. Strengthen data-base of properties by using GIS technology.

6. **Cut discretionary grants:** Too much money is earmarked for discretionary grants, the expenditures under which are totally opaque and not based on actual people's needs as expressed through citizens' ward plans.

Hoping you will consider these suggestions while formulating the budget for 2011-
Thanking you.

Yours sincerely,

Kathyayini Chamaraj

Executive Trustee

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