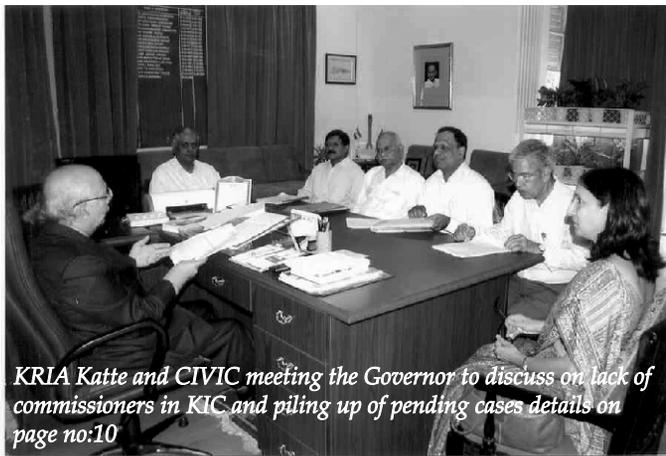


Dear Friends,

CIVIC is into a new cycle since January 2009. While CIVIC's engagements in the previous cycles were mostly at the city level – trying to advocate with the government machinery – now it is also on the ground, using the grassroots data and experiences to advocate at city and state level for better policies/processes. In this short period, it has become clear that the government machinery, including the Information Commission, is more favorable towards the government functionaries when it comes to choosing between the rightful demands of the public and guarding government powers. The engagement of CIVIC so far stresses the need for a constructive dialogue with the government, while at the same time keeping the pressure buttons working on officials



KRIA Katta and CIVIC meeting the Governor to discuss on lack of commissioners in KIC and piling up of pending cases details on page no:10



Hon'ble Justice Sri Santosh Lokayuktha, Sri K. K. Mishra, SCIC, Mr. Thippeswamy, SIC, Mr. Tapan Senapathy, Principal Secretary, DPAR-Chief guests for RTI day celebrations -Details on Page no:11

However we discover that no officer can be fixed with any accountability, as there is no job chart for anyone in the system, conveniently making it more opaque and irresponsible. We also discovered that there is no real-time grievance redressal mechanism. These discoveries from the field have made us re-invent RTI's uses. While RTI is used as an information tool to bring in transparency in the governance process, we discovered that it could be used as a real-time accountability mechanism to also put in place a pro-active grievance redressal system.

We have started job chart campaigns and grievance redressal mechanism campaigns using RTI with various departments. We are also launching a performance appraisal campaign for officers through which we wish to bring more accountability and arrest wastage of public money. All these efforts are focused on six domains – local government, food, water, education, health and SJSRY.

We realize that if a systemic change needs to be brought in a domain, it has to be addressed vertically and horizontally. Piecemeal approaches give temporary relief. And therefore our efforts should not stop till the entire system is addressed. We are in for a long haul.

While working on the ground, we recognize now that in addition to the three elements - transparency, accountability, platforms for public participation - there needs to be a fourth element working in tandem – a grievance redressal system - to make the system deliver vertically. RTI is extensively used to press for transparency and it forces the system to put as much information as possible in the public domain.

For people's participation, platforms like the Community Development Societies (CDSs) under SJSRY, School Development & Monitoring Committees (SDMCs) and Boards of Visitors for hospitals under BBMP exist. We are working on their effective functioning.

Intervention in two urban poor areas

Unexpected challenges faced

CIVIC is working intensively in two urban poor settlements in two wards, namely, Deshyanagar urban poor settlement in Sagayapuram (Ward No. 60) and Rajiv Gandhi Nagar urban poor settlement in K.R. Puram (Ward No. 55). To understand the living conditions, including the earnings and livelihood, of the residents of the two settlements, a base-line survey of all households was conducted with a standard questionnaire. The analysis of one site, Deshyanagar has been completed and of Rajiv Gandhi Nagar is underway.



Meeting with Rajiv Gandhi committee members

View of Deshyanagar-before NURM project

Our work there has thrown up unexpected challenges. At Deshyanagar site chosen for the implementation of a JNNURM-BSUP in situ housing project, there was an absence of transit stay arrangements that pushed the families to the pavement. At Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, it was found that the site, believed to have been notified as a slum by the Karnataka Slum Clearance Board, had in reality not been so declared at all officially. However CIVIC's engagement with these felt needs of the communities resulted in our greater bonding with the communities, better understanding of government structures and processes and enhanced coordination with our network partners. To make the community intervention sustainable, "people's committees" for different issues have been formed at both project areas which are actively participating.

JNNURM-BSUP project- Intervention in Deshyanagar



Transit stay of Deshyanagar community on the pavement

Soon after our involvement in Deshyanagar, we realized that the residents had no information about the proposed JNNURM-BSUP housing project and that the KSCB had not followed the Central toolkit guidelines while preparing the DPR, especially on community participation. Failure of the KSCB to provide transit housing to the residents while asking them to vacate the site was the major concern of the community. To redress this lacuna, CIVIC organized a meeting to explain the salient features of the DPR to the community. Later, KSCB officials were invited to explain the issues raised by CIVIC about the DPR, hear the concerns of the community and respond to them. A beneficiary committee was formed to engage with the authorities.



Meeting with technical Director Mr. Sanna Chittaiah on transit stay arrangement for the beneficiaries of NURM-Housing project at Deshyanagar

Though the officials promised transit stay arrangement nothing materialized and the residents were forced to occupy the pavement. CIVIC was forced to go to the Karnataka Information Commission and the Karnataka Human Rights Commission. Meanwhile a local RWA took the matter to the local MLA and police and asked that pavements be cleared of the slum-dwellers. Upon being briefed by CIVIC, the MLA and RWAs understood the situation and supported and stood with CIVIC. Now KSCB officials have allowed the slum-dwellers to stay temporarily in the partly completed first block of buildings.

A landmark direction came from the Information Commission which made it mandatory for KSCB to budget for transit stay arrangements in all their future projects.

What is significant is that KSCB officials now portray at their state-level meetings the facilitating role played by CIVIC in Deshyanagar as a model for civil society engagement and state that if there were similar interventions by civil society in all other slums, their work would be made much easier.

NURM-BSUP study and documentary film - To bolster advocacy efforts, it was decided to do a study and a short documentary film on the implementation process of JNNURM-BSUP implementation at 20 sites – 10 of KSCB and 10 of BBMP

Ward-level participatory planning and budgeting in Sagayapuram Ward

Bringing different stakeholders on a common platform - There are a number of stakeholders who need to be brought together for 'Participatory Planning' at the ward level -



Map of the ward no: 60 -Sagayapuram

people/communities, organized groups, elected representatives, ward officials, etc. It is a challenge. We have started with one ward – Sagayapuram (Ward 60). The idea of creating a model ward through bottom-up participatory planning was shared with Bruhath Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) officers – the zonal commissioner, chief engineer and others. We were encouraged by their positive response. Then we identified active RWAs in the ward, such as RTRA, RTCA, SSWA, BEST, HRPD and federation such as JAGO. CIVIC formed a new federation which included all these RWAs and federation and named it as Federation of civil societies of Sagayapuram. We arranged for an interactive session between this federation and BBMP officials.

While the RWAs are active in the southern part, it took a while to convince them that a plan for the ward can't be a plan drawn only by them but that people and communities from different areas of the ward need to be involved. They appreciated this point and agreed to work with groups from northern sections. The first hurdle was crossed.

This was the beginning of the next challenge – bridging the social divide in the ward. The social composition of Ward 60 is a complex matrix. While the southern part is well developed and inhabited by middle/upper class families, the northern part is underdeveloped and inundated with little dwellings – as can be seen from the ward map. The biggest challenge was in bringing different sections of society on a single platform to collectively plan for the ward.

Residents of Sagayapuram ward submitting budget prepared by them to the BBMP Engineer



The second step was to identify individuals/groups in the northern part, who were unused to the idea of 'participation', and bring them around to sit with organized RWAs. We succeeded after numerous forays into the northern area, known for notorious activities. Collectively the northern and southern portions formed a Federation of Civil Societies of Sagayapuram – Ward 60 (FCSS-Ward 60). The RWAs from the south agreed that, from the budget meant for the ward, their already developed portion needs only maintenance work while the bulk of it has to go to the poorer portion, the northern portion, for development works.

This was followed by area-wise meetings with people, identification and assessment of requirements, especially in the under-developed areas – Sagayapuram layout, Bagalur layout, Giddappa block, Pillanna Garden layout and MS slum area - with active participation of RWAs. A cumulative list of required works was prepared for each area. The list was prioritized for each area in a couple of ensuing meetings. And finally, the first, second and third priority list of works for the areas were finalized. Later the requirements were marked on the ward map and were budgeted.

This is only the beginning! We hope to build on this model and perfect it to suit various situations in different wards and push it through the council as a model process in other wards of Bengaluru. And in the mean time we hope an enabling piece of legislation in the form of Bengaluru Regional Governance Bill will be put in place to back this up. It is also noteworthy that the local government, state government and the central government have signed a tripartite MoA under JNNURM that a 'public participation law' will be enacted – a mandatory reform, which is due. We hope this process would help to realise the participation of people in governance as envisaged under the Nagarapalika Act (74th Constitutional Amendment Act).

The most satisfying achievement so far for CIVIC w.r.t ward-level interventions has been that of successfully bringing the different sections of society – Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) from the more affluent and developed areas and people's groups from less developed sections - together on one platform.

Presentation of Urban Poor Citizens' Charter for BBMP elections

Tuesday, 6th October 2009 at IAT, Queens Road, Bangalore

As is well-known, Bangalore had been without an elected council for more than three years. But foreseeing elections in the near future, CIVIC engaged several urban poor groups early in July 2009 itself to develop an Urban Poor Citizens' Charter for the BBMP elections. The NGOs were requested to have continuous meetings with urban poor communities and get their feedback on the draft Citizens' Charter of Demands before presentation to political parties for inclusion in their manifestoes. After finalisation of the Charter, 1,567 signatures were obtained in its support and it was presented to political parties on 6th October 2009 in the presence of NGO representatives and slum-dwellers. Dr. Jeevan Kumar, Prof. of Political Science, Bangalore University, presided over the meeting.



Discussion on Draft pro-poor charter with NGOs and NGO activists

Mr. Lakshapathi, Executive Director of APSA, presented the Citizens' Charter. He stressed the need for a uniform definition and indicators to identify the urban poor and to make only the genuinely poor access Government programmes / schemes. More awareness needed to be created among them about Government schemes. Ashraya Yojane should be made applicable to slum-dwellers and basic facilities should be provided to all slums. All slums more than five years old should be notified and political parties should facilitate the land rights of poor people. Mr. Harish, Chief Coordinator, CIVIC, presented legislation and measures needed for the effective implementation of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act.



Mr. Ramesh, Former mayor, Cong (I) and Mr. Prakash, CPI(M) speaking to audience on pro-poor manifesto

Mr. Prakash of CPI(M) said that his party agreed ideologically and in principle with the Charter, but differed with it, perhaps, on a few technical grounds only. He supported the demand for that at least 80 percent contribution from the Central and State governments to JNNURM to ensure that the Palike did not fall into a debt trap. Mr. Ramakanth of Loksatta spoke about the alternative politics being promoted by the new Lokasatta Party and accepted most of the demands put forth in the Citizens' Charter. The former Mayor, Mr. P. R. Ramesh exposed some false figures and promises being given out by the ruling party to the urban poor and expressed his overall support to the Charter. Dr. Ashwathnarayana of BJP and MLA of Malleshwaram said that while his party was making all possible efforts to bring development to the urban poor, it also needed active co-operation from slum-dwellers and others.

Key points of the Urban Poor Citizens' Charter presented to political parties

1. All policies/programmes of BBMP should include a pro-urban-poor component - ensuring them a minimum amount of free basic services.
2. Provide Sale Deed (Kraya Patra) to all slum residents and recognised homeless immediately. The earmarking of 50% (in terms of area) for EWS in all housing projects to be made mandatory.
3. No slum evictions and/or demolitions should be allowed. The right to transit housing in all cases of slum up-gradation or re-settlement has to be provided.

4. All JNNURM projects must be in line with the guidelines laid down by the JNNURM tool-kits from the Central Ministry. Acceptance of multi-storied housing to be left to the decision of the local community. The Centre to increase its grants under JNNURM to at least 80% of project cost to prevent BBMP from getting into a debt trap.
5. All BSUP projects should adopt the "whole slum" approach and provide six mandatory rights to housing, water and sanitation, child care, primary health, primary education and social security.
6. The total cost of the upgradation and provision of basic services to all slums should be made the first charge on the BBMP budget and NURM funds and internally earmarked in BBMP budget as required under NURM conditionalities.
7. Priority in allocation of BSUP funds should be given for social infrastructure like construction of child care centres as per SC ruling, and for meeting international / national norms for infrastructure of schools and hospitals / health centres.
8. Not merely allocation, but expenditure of amounts for BSUP should be mandatory. Salary of officials should be linked to their performance with regard to spending of earmarked funds for BSUP, 18% SC/ST Sub-Plan, 3% for differently-abled, etc.,
9. An Urban Employment Guarantee Act (UEGA) for BBMP area to be passed assuring a minimum of at least 100 days of work for all those willing to do manual or other social sector work.
10. SJSRY staff to be placed in each ward for meaningful implementation of the Swarna Jayanthi Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY).
11. BBMP to create a single window system to streamline and implement all poverty alleviation schemes/programmes.
12. An area-based social security scheme for the urban poor assuring nine benefits under ILO Convention to be introduced.
10. The city-based NGOs working with the poor and urban poor community representatives should be consulted and included in all the committees/bodies/projects set up to address issues of the poor.

Facilitating discussion on a Policy for the Urban Poor

21st and 31st August 2009

ABIDe (Agenda for Bengaluru's Infrastructure and Development) had put up a draft urban poor policy for the city on its website and called for inputs. CIVIC took the initiative of asking for a consultation with groups working with the urban poor in the city to broad-base the policy formulation. Through the NGO representative in ABIDe, AVAS, CIVIC arranged for a preliminary discussion with NGOs on the issues facing the poor in the city and possible solutions on 21st August 2009. This meeting led to a formal discussion with ABIDe members on a policy for the urban poor on 31st August 2009. Subsequently, this resulted in the setting up of a sub-committee with broader representation to civil society under ABIDe that is formulating a comprehensive urban poor policy now.

CIVIC advocated the setting up of an Urban Poverty Alleviation Authority at state-level, conversion of the BBMP welfare department into an Urban Poverty Alleviation Department and a single-window delivery system for the poor in the city, cutting short the present system that makes the poor run from pillar to post, which takes so much from them. CIVIC also advocated a minimum 'lifeline supply' of free water to the urban poor. The above recommendations have been adopted in the Draft Urban Poor Policy for the city by ABIDe.

Interventions on SJSRY (Swarna Jyanthi Shahari Rozgar Yojana)

The Swarna Jyanthi Shahari Rozgar Yojana is one of the few programmes focusing on the livelihood issues of the urban poor. Our engagement with the SJSRY has revealed that people are totally unaware of their entitlements and the process of claiming them. The formal groups, the people's platforms set up under the SJSRY, such as the neighbourhood groups (NHG), Area Development Societies (ADS) and Community Development Societies (CDS), have

become tools in the hands of local political leaders. CIVIC has taken a conscious decision to involve itself directly in the SJSRY implementation process by becoming a formal member of the Community Development Societies (CDS).

Women members of the CDSs, are coming forward and relating which official took how much money for sanctioning a loan. Preliminary evidence suggests that even non-BPL families have been made beneficiaries. While the PDS system records close to 1.97 lakh BPL families in Bangalore, SJSRY records a mere 1.37 lakhs, that too enumerated more than a decade ago.

CIVIC has filed several RTI applications asking for the number and lists of beneficiaries and amounts spent through SJSRY in the zones where we are working, which has created ripples and some awakening in the moribund SJSRY system.

Awareness programme on BBMP's Welfare Schemes for 2009-2010

24th September 2009 at Shikshakara Sadana



Mr. Harish Kumar, Chief coordinator of CIVIC addressing the participants of the program

Lack of awareness of schemes is a major deficit hindering the poor from availing government benefits. Hence an awareness programme on BBMP's welfare programmes was organized by CIVIC for the poor in Sagayapuram, Ward 60, and Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, Ward 65. The Community Affairs Officer of the BBMP presented the details. It was recognized that there were many bottlenecks in the delivery of benefits. Hence, a half-day awareness programme for the NGO network in Bangalore on BBMP's welfare schemes was conducted at