

Minutes of meeting - Participatory Urban Governance

Date: Monday, 15/06/2020

Time: 5:00-6:30 pm

Venue: Google Meet (online)

Attendees:

1. Dr. Rajan Chedambath, Director, C-HED, Kochi
2. Dr. Tathagata Chatterji, Professor, XUB, Bhubaneswar

From CEPT Research and Development Foundation (CRDF):

1. Mr. C. K. Koshy, Senior Advisor, CRDF
2. Dr. Saswat Bandopadhyay, Professor, CEPT University
3. Dr. Sejal Patel, Professor, CEPT University
4. Ms. Vijaya Salanke, Research Associate, CRDF
5. Ms. Priyankita Pant, Research Associate, CRDF

Presentation/ Questions:

- Meeting started with Dr. Bnadopadhyay introducing all the attendees.
- Dr. Sejal Patel gave a brief presentation explaining the two cases of participatory platforms;
 1. Ward committees and People's Planning Campaign (PPC) in Kerala, role of Kudumbashree within them
 2. Participatory platforms in JAGA Mission, Odisha
- The position of both the cases in the global discourse on participation was explained. Ward committee is an institutionalized platform for participation in urban governance, whereas Slum Dwellers' Associations (SDAs) in JAGA mission is a programmatic platform for participation in the programme.
- The study seeks answer to the central question 'how effective are the participatory platforms in improving access to shelter and basic services for urban poor?'

Sub-questions:

 1. How does Government enable participation of the urban poor within these participatory platforms?
 2. How do participatory platforms enable local Government to improve delivery of goods & services to the marginalized groups?
- Available data and analysis with relation to sub-question-1 was presented (to be validated by Dr. Rajan and Dr. Chatterji) followed by key-questions appertaining to sub-question-2 for the guests.

Discussion/ Comments :

- In case of JAGA Mission, along with theories of participation, Dr. Chatterjee suggested to also consider literature on Right to City theory and De Soto's theories as the programme deals with the land tenure to slum dwellers.
- In Odisha, though there is a top-driven Governance, it gives weightage to welfare on ground. In case of JAGA Mission too, the approach in implementation has been bottom-up.

- Odisha does not have culture of political mobilization at grassroot level and hence, SDAs are formed only with the help of NGOs and not by themselves. The role of NGOs and SDAs has only been limited to validating drone surveys, finalizing boundaries etc. The next level of engagement is yet to be achieved.
- Formation of ward committees in ULBs in Odisha is very rudimentary. For instance, not all wards in Bhubaneswar have formed ward committees.
- In case of Kerala, Dr. Rajan explained that the ward sabhas/ ward committees are very well-established and well-empowered.
- This smallest unit of local governance has played a major role in tackling Covid-19 situation in Kerala.
- The role of Kudumbashree in local governance is very important as out of 50% reservation for women, 70-80% are from Kudumbashree Neighbourhood groups.
- Dr. Rajan also validated the interlinking triangle of Ward committees, PPC (Development Seminar) and Kudumbashree in the process of Annual development plan and budget formation.
- Both Dr. Rajan and Dr. Chatterji suggested names of experts for further exploration in the two cases.