

Participatory Budgeting in Pune: A critical review

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Abstract

Pune has experimented with a form of Participatory Budgeting since 2006, when it was first introduced formally by the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC). Citizens' organizations have played an important role in initiating and shaping it.

A study was done in early 2013 by CEE as a critical reflection of the experience of participatory budgeting in Pune. The study reveals a few strengths as well as a number of weaknesses and opportunities. Some of the major achievements have been the simplicity of the process for citizens, that it has been take place regularly every year, a substantial quantum of funds has been allocated and there is some response to suggestions from the poor. Some of the major areas of improvement are in outreach, transparency of process, institutionalizing the processes in slum localities, institutionalizing the role of the corporator, enhanced practice and experimentation with public deliberation processes, and year-round engagement.

The study shows that there appears to be interest among both citizens groups and political parties to improve the PB process for varied reasons, and both would likely be important actors in the further evolution of PB in Pune.

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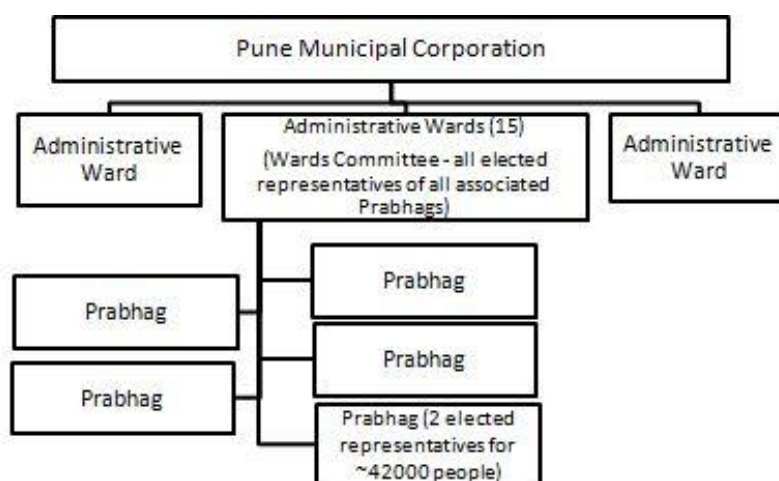
Introduction

Involvement of people in how their local government budgets and prioritizes spending can be a powerful way of deepening democracy and enhancing wellbeing, and there is a range of experiences and qualifications about the extent of people's involvement and institutional structures supporting such involvement. (See for example Souza, 2001; UN Habitat, 2002; Alegretti & Herzberg, 2004; Cabannes, 2004; Selee, 2005; Shah, 2007; Blair, 2010; Sintomer *et al.*, 2012). This study is about the Participatory Budget (PB) process in Pune, a city in the state of Maharashtra in western India.

About Pune

Pune, located close to Mumbai in western India, has a population of about 3.2 million and ranks as the ninth largest city in India, by population (Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 2011). The city government is the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC). The government, elected for five years in normal circumstances, has 152 elected representatives who form the PMC General Body, elected from 76 *prabhags* or electoral units. Each *prabhag* has a population of about 42000, and 2 elected representatives. There are 15 administrative wards. Each administrative ward caters to about 5 *prabhags*. Wards Committees are the decision-making bodies at the Administrative Ward level, comprising elected representatives of all *prabhags* associated with the administrative ward. Each Wards Committee prepares the budget for its administrative ward and forwards it to the Municipal Commissioner and the PMC Accounts Dept who incorporate these into the budget for the whole city.

Figure 1: Organization Structure of the Pune Municipal Corporation



Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting (PB) originated in Porto Alegre, Brazil in the late 1980s. This significant innovation in Latin America has been much written about (see for example, Souza, 2001; Cabannes, 2004; Selee, 2005; Shah, 2007). It has emerged as a form of deliberation and citizen engagement in budget related decision-making; it can help enhance participation, pro-poor expenditures and local government accountability. In Brazil, citizens' assemblies in each district of a city and for various themes determine priorities for the use of a part of the city's revenues (Cabannes, 2004; Acharya *et al.*, 2004).

While there have been limitations (such as some groups are still excluded) PB has helped to reduce 'clientelist practices' (providing services in exchange for political support) and to build democratic institutions (Cabannes, 2004). Participatory Budgeting in different forms is being carried out in over 250 cities in the world (Alegretti & Herzberg, 2004). A generally accepted view is that Participatory Budgeting, when carried out with certain defining characteristics, can be a powerful way of deepening democracy at the local level.

A form of Participatory Budgeting (PB) was introduced in Pune in the year 2006 by the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC).

Prior to the initiation of participatory budgeting in Pune in 2006-07, there was no formally instituted method for all citizens to directly make suggestions to the municipality for projects, developmental work, and civic services enhancement. However, a variety of formal and non-formal experiences and forms of participation exist in Pune, such as in:

1. Provision of improved housing for 30 slums, where beneficiaries have been consulted in designs, materials, time frames etc
2. Design and construction of an iconic pedestrian space in Aundh, in western Pune, in discussion with a residents' association, elected representatives and the municipality
3. Processes undertaken by the Urban Community Development (UCD) Dept of the PMC, for deciding on beneficiaries of various schemes including grants, in kind benefits, loans, scholarships, etc among individuals who are members of the Neighbourhood Groups or Self Help Groups formed under the UCD.

4. Formation of Mohalla (neighbourhood) Committees by residents in various localities as a way of addressing common civic issues, though these committees are not 'legal' entities or formal institutions, and also not inclusive of the poor
5. Waste management efforts, in which a local waste pickers' union has, through its collective strength and advocacy, evolved a door step collection system now supported and funded by the municipal government as a Cooperative of waste collectors (called SWaCH)

Such associations provide lessons in civic engagement, and reflect the enthusiasm that citizens have to participate in civic issues. The first two are examples of a participatory approach to provision of civic amenities, while the PB work has actually been linked with the last 3 groups. The PB effort in Pune builds upon these various forms of associational activity but goes beyond, to provide a city-level, city-wide institution, open to all. This in itself is a significant step forward for deepening democracy.

Centre for Environment Education (CEE)⁴, has been involved in the PB processes right from when they first formally began in Pune. This involvement has included orienting community mobilizers, inputs in the design of processes for citizens' suggestions, facilitating volunteering by students from engineering colleges for assistance in costing of works, facilitating data entry volunteers, inputs in developing the system of online forms submission with Janwani and KPIT Cummins in 2010-11, and outreach and process documentation over the years.

As such, CEE sees enhancing participatory governance as an important component of CEE's work in Education for Sustainable Development in urban areas.

The study provided an opportunity for pausing and reflecting on the experience of the past six years, and has yielded insights to help shape CEE's future work in this sector. It is hoped that this research work will be a useful contribution to the process of deepening democracy in Pune, and other local governments in urban India.

⁴ CEE is a registered Society (or a non-governmental organization), supported as a centre of excellence by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. More information at <http://www.ceeindia.org/>

Participatory Budgeting Around the World

UN-Habitat specifically mentions 'Participatory budgeting' and participation opportunities, and suggests 'Regular, organized and open consultations of citizens on city financial matters and other important issues, through such mechanisms as the participatory budget', to operationalize transparency and accountability. (UN-Habitat 2002)

These crucial elements of democracy - equity, active citizenship, participation and deliberation are a part of the phenomenon of Participatory Budgeting. The experience is somewhat varied around the world (Sintomer *et al.* 2012), it appears. However, a specific status is given to the importance of financial instrumentality in governance and participation. For example, Boonyabancha and Mitlin (2012), drawing lessons from recent urban community efforts for poverty reduction emphasize that financial systems are key for the urban poor to address their problems and for creating synergy with state or city governments.

Renzio and Krafchik (undated) underline that traditional budget related decision-making excludes citizens, civil society organizations and media, and that public budgeting processes are still guarded as state secrets. They link the weakness of budget transparency and accountability to the extent of poverty and inequality. Non-transparent and exclusionary public budget making processes result in massive leakages of public resources into unnecessary projects, corruption, and ineffective service delivery. Ineffective use of public funds undermines efforts to reduce poverty, improve governance, and to consolidate democracy, they say.

The growing interest in participatory budgeting is evident with not only civil society or citizens groups pushing for it and claiming their place in budget making. Governments at different levels too have started to put such mechanisms in place. Announcing a PB scheme in UK (July 2007), the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears (2007) said,

"The public will be able to decide whether their priority is play areas, youth facilities, traffic calming or more community wardens. Participatory budgeting is not just consultation. It is where people come together, set priorities and vote on what is going to happen."

Acknowledging that there is a shift from representative democracy and that this has attendant issues, she said,

"I think the world has changed. I think voting every four years and basically handing over responsibility and power to other people and then doing nothing again for four years, I think our democracy is not like that anymore. Councillors must not feel their democratic mandate is bypassed, and instead recognize that it will strengthen their relationship with their local community".

Aleggretti & Herzberg (2004), in a review of PB models in Europe, state that there is no universal way of describing 'participatory budgets', that there are different families of experiments, rather than models. According to them, the power of Participatory Budgeting lies in the capacity of the process to create a 'space' governed by regulations, which protects equal access by every citizen to decision-making on spending priorities in a local authority. It breaks away from the practice of reserved access for the strongest social-economic organisations as was the case in many countries using traditional forms of 'planning' and 'negotiation' after the Second World War.

The importance of the PB phenomenon unfolding in many cities across the world, since the experiences of Porto Alegre, say Aleggretti & Herzberg (2004), is in the opportunity Participatory Budgeting provides 'to rebuild - over time and collectively - the concept of 'common assets', transforming social tensions into 'shared projects', within spaces self-managed by civil society but marked by healthy dialogue with the institutions concerned'. In their review, the process of evolving PB in a city can also become the place where 'ethical development of the institutions' can happen, which can help to 'increase in the civic spirit of residents and their ability to maturely interpret the complexity of the local area'.

Aleggretti & Herzberg (2004) also explore nuances of participation in the European experiences, which are relevant in Pune as well. They highlight two issues: how to invest in forms of communication and in rules of organisation that favour an increase in the response of citizens to convocations; and secondly, how not to lose the added value that the already organised social networks represent. Certainly, these observations are pertinent in some ways to the case of Pune, especially so since society is fragmented and heterogeneous. On the one hand is the difficulty of attracting those who are well off and have a reduced

dependence on civic services, and on the other is the issue of the poor finding the time and wherewithal to participate in long drawn out negotiations. Certainly, there are other legitimate processes, which may not be as wide in scope as participatory budgeting across the spectrum of municipal services, and certainly the existing system of representative democracy is also working to some extent.

Aleggretti & Herzberg (2004) also highlight the lack of measures and resources to include some of the most disadvantaged, such as immigrants and disabled people (multilingual material and/or written in Braille, sign language translators, meetings in disability-friendly places etc.) They also highlight that technological instruments such as email, votes via Internet, etc. may in fact reinforce the digital divide and differences in culture and age.

While acknowledging that there is no recognized definition of participatory budgeting, Sintomer *et al.* (2013) (in Sintomer *et al.* (2012)) nevertheless suggest some minimal requisites but which also leave enough room for locale-specific forms of PB to evolve:

1. PB is about discussion of financial/budgetary processes
2. The city level is involved, or a (decentralized) district with an elected body and some power over administration and resources (the neighbourhood level is not enough).
3. It is repeated over the years (and is not, say, a one-off meeting or referendum on financial issues)
4. PB should be based on some kind of deliberation
5. Accountability on the results of the process, where organisers provide information about the realization of the projects proposed by citizens

This is helpful in preparing a framework to assess the PB process in Pune.

The CEE study aimed to uncover the experience and performance of PB in Pune. The lessons from Pune may be helpful in future advocacy efforts for institutionalizing public participation at the electoral ward level.

Study Methodology

A combination of methods – qualitative interviews, review of documentary sources, and a physical survey – helped gain a variety of insights about participatory budgeting in Pune.

Documentary sources for information, in-depth interviews, and a field survey are the main tools used. Information for the historical account of Participatory Budgeting in Pune has been drawn from documentary sources, both published, such as the PMC budget, and unpublished material though in the public realm, such as emails on open e-discussion groups.

The main tool used for reflection on and evaluation of the PB process is interviews with five persons, of which three have been very closely associated with the evolution of PB: Mrs Ulka Kalaskar, Accounts Officer of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC); Mr Vishal Jain, a Governing Board member of Janwani; Mr Ranjit Gadgil, former Programme Director of Janwani. Mrs Vandana Chavan is currently a Member of Parliament and has earlier been an elected corporator and the Mayor of Pune. Mrs Zigisha Mhaskar leads a project for participatory assessment and planning in a few slum localities in Pune. Certainly, a sample of five persons, as used for this study, is quite a small sample. It would have been very useful to interview several more persons, especially municipal officials and elected representatives or corporators. Time constraints were a limiting factor.

Part of the assessment of the performance of PB, though in a very limited way, has been done using a field survey. This was done by Ms Niloofar Roshani, who interned with CEE as part of her MA Sociology course at University of Pune.

The purpose of PB is that people finally get the civic amenities they have asked for. The element surveyed was whether the works suggested and included in the budget book actually got implemented. The survey was carried out in 3 electoral wards (24, 27 and 34) in a single administrative ward (Aundh). It would have been useful to consider a much larger sample, more representative of different communities, political parties and administrative wards. However, this was not possible due to time and financial constraints. It would be very meaningful to take up a larger study to assess the completion and quality of works, through future research, and indeed as citizens' participatory assessment about PB. The list of budgeted projects in the selected electoral wards was extracted from the budget books of PMC. The surveyor visited each location mentioned in the list of projects, observed whether the suggested work has been completed, and whether it seemed to have been constructed properly.

Participatory Budgeting in Pune

This section presents the data and views gathered for this study, an analysis of this material and the main findings. The first part re-constructs the major events and highlights of the PB process in Pune as carried out in the years from 2006 to 2012. This documentation is based on interviews with the staff of Janwani and Centre for Environment Education (CEE), two organizations in Pune that have facilitated the initiation and conduct of PB every year.

It also draws upon some relevant printed materials, photographs, email exchanges, published and unpublished text and video sources for the reconstruction.

A summary of the number and types of items budgeted through the PB process over the years is presented, as well as the results of the field survey / physical survey of works that were requested through the PB process for execution in a few electoral wards in Pune.

The next part is the framework for the critical review, developed using ideas about good governance and deliberative democracy from the literature reviewed, and the suggestions from the interviews. Pune PB is reviewed to draw out:

1. Pune's performance against the identified criteria
2. Perceptions about the gains and problematic aspects of PB in Pune, in the opinion of the persons interviewed

Finally, ideas about the way ahead as perceived by the people interviewed, are presented.

Part 1 – A Historical Overview of Participatory Budgeting in Pune

Initiation

In 2005, at the request of local citizens groups, Nagrik Chetna Manch and the National Society for Clean Cities (NSCC)⁵, a meeting was arranged where the Municipal Commissioner

⁵ The NSCC is a citizens group in Pune, which encourages the formation of Mohalla Committees. These are associations of citizens in different localities. (The Hindi word 'mohalla' means 'neighbourhood'). Each Mohalla Committee is an organization by itself (not necessarily legally registered). The Mohalla Committees are generally vigilant about civic issues, especially in their own localities. As generally observed (by participation in one meeting and interactions with members of various Mohalla Committees), the membership of these organizations is primarily from the middle and upper middle class. The NSCC is an association of several Mohalla Committees.

and various other officials of the PMC described the process of making the municipal budget and invited suggestions from citizens. The meeting was attended by the members of various Mohalla Committees and other NGOs and citizens groups. After the meeting, the members of the various Mohalla Committees and other NGOs like Nagrik Chetna Manch submitted their suggestions and requests for various projects or improvements in infrastructure or management to be carried out. The experience helped lay a base for citizen engagement in ward level budget processes of the municipality⁶.

In 2006–07, a more detailed and formalized process was evolved by the then Municipal Commissioner, Dr Nitin Kareer, with facilitation support provided by Janwani⁷ and CEE. Discussions between Dr Nitin Kareer, IAS and Vishal Jain, one of the founders of Janwani led to a visit to Bangalore by Dr Kareer to see and discuss various tools such as PROOF - Public Record of Operations and Finance⁸. The experience of mobilizing citizens' suggestions in the municipal budget of Bangalore was also shared with Dr Kareer by Janaagraha. These exposures probably helped enhance interest in initiating PB in Pune.

In 2006, Dr Kareer discussed the idea of citizens' involvement in budgeting with the PMC Standing Committee members. However, the idea was not accepted, with one of the members even terming the proposal as the 'death of democracy'⁹. The Municipal Commissioner therefore suggested to the Janwani and CEE team that the process could be carried out after the forthcoming municipal elections were announced, and the current elected body dissolved.

Through discussions among the Municipal Commissioner (Dr Nitin Kareer, IAS), the PMC Accounts Officer (Mr Ambarish Galinde), and the head of the PMC Urban Community Development Dept (UCD) (Mr Ashok Kalamkar), and Janwani and CEE, a basic process to carry out the PB through the PMC ward offices and the UCD was worked out. An amount of

⁶ Satish Khot, pers comm., 2007

⁷ Janwani is an initiative of the Mahratta Chambers of Commerce Industry and Agriculture. It was set up in 2006 and is modelled on Janaagraha in Bangalore.

⁸ PROOF (Public Record of Operations and Finance) began in 2002 as a campaign for public financial disclosure, led by Janaagraha, for the quarterly public disclosure of the erstwhile Bangalore City Corporation's financial records. <http://www.janaagraha.org/content/program/proof-public-records-operations-and-finance>

⁹ Nitin Kareer, pers comm., 2006

INR 2 million per electoral ward was decided by the Municipal Commissioner to be allocated for suggestions for works to be received through the new Participatory Budgeting process. Of this, INR 0.5 million was to be allocated for suggested works to be done in slum areas. At that time, in 2007, there were 144 electoral wards in Pune. This meant that for the first in Pune, an allocation of INR 288 million was made for works suggested by citizens.

The processes carried out the first time, when PB was introduced in Pune are described in the next sections. Much of this information is from un-published process documentation reports of CEE and Janwani (CEE 2007) as well as an earlier article by the author (Menon 2007).

Process in Slums in 2006

In 2006, citizens' engagement in the slums was done through the Urban Community Development Dept (UCD) and the Community Development Society (CDS) structure promoted under the Urban Self Employment and Wage Employment schemes¹⁰. Community volunteers were trained to conduct the budgeting meetings with members of the self-help groups and neighbourhood groups. A two-hour orientation session was organized for RCVs in early December 2006 by the UCD, in which late Mr Ashok Kalamkar, the then Head of Department of UCD, explained the following:

A new method of preparing the budget for works in slum settlements was being tried out through the Participatory Budget process. Projects requested should fulfil a local need; they could be ones that are usually overlooked by the ward officer/ PMC staff while preparing the ward works/ UCD / slum budgets; suggestions could include repairs of toilets, tanks, drains, construction of meeting halls etc. The NHG meetings for discussing the local needs and recording requests should be done as part of the

¹⁰ Under the Government of India's urban employment programme, Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), the Urban Community Development Department (UCD) of Pune Municipal Corporation has facilitated the formation of Neighbourhood Groups (NHG) and Self Help Groups (SHG). Each Neighbourhood Group (NHG) consists of about 20 families residing in the same geographical area. This group selects a Resident Community Volunteer (RCV) from them. The RCV is usually a lady who is by and large acceptable to the entire group, literate and active. In 2006-07, there were about 2400 NHGs and 5000 SHGs in Pune with a membership of about 70000 participants, volunteered by 1500 RCVs.

usual monthly meetings of the NHGs and without drawing too much attention since the code of conduct during the election period prohibits political public meetings

Neighbourhood group meetings were conducted through December 2006 and January 2007.

Process for non slum areas in 2007

For citizen engagement through the ward offices, a different process was needed as there is no outreach mechanism parallel to the CDS structure.

CEE undertook to initiate a partnership with the University of Pune¹¹ Economics Department and train post graduate students and other volunteers as neutral facilitators, and who would help develop the tools of the PB process. Fourteen students from the Economics Dept of University of Pune were selected and trained as facilitators.

The main expectations from citizens were that they would identify works to be done in their neighbourhoods, submit suggestions about these in the specified format and attend a prioritization meeting. For PMC, the main tasks were their own preparedness, publicity about the process, fine-tuning the works in conjunction with the citizens who submitted the ideas, costing the suggested works, holding prioritization meetings and preparing the final lists.

The Participatory Budget process for the rest of the city (apart from the slum settlements already covered by the UCD process) was conducted from February to April 2007. It was formally announced after the local elections and formation of the new General Body. The PMC issued a press note which was carried by local newspapers on 12th or 13th Feb 2007. The announcement invited citizens to a meeting by the PMC at the zonal offices for participation in city budgeting. The form for suggestions from citizens in slum and non slum areas were different. This was because certain types of works may not be carried out in slum areas.

¹¹ For CEE, this partnership and those that emerged later with other institutions of higher learning, have been part of a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) recognized by the United Nations University-Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS). Other institutions included Sociology Dept, Political Science, College of Engineering, and Karve Institute of Social Science. More information about the UNU-IAS RCE programme is at http://www.ias.unu.edu/sub_page.aspx?catID=108&ddlID=183

The categories that in which citizens may suggest works are:

- Footpaths/ cycle tracks
- Road
- Street lights
- Traffic signals
- Bus stops
- Public parking
- Public toilets
- Solid waste management
- Water (supply)
- Storm water
- Gardens
- Public buildings
- Signage
- Others

The size of the projects that may be suggested was fixed at INR 500,000, primarily because that is the financial limit of projects that can be tendered at the PMC Ward Offices.

Orientation Meetings by PMC

Public meetings at the PMC's zonal offices (four in number, one at each of the zonal offices) meetings were organized on 17 Feb 2007. Each of these was attended by over a hundred people, and one meeting by over two hundred people. The halls arranged for the meetings proved too small at two locations. At these meetings, Dr Nitin Kareer, Municipal Commissioner introduced the concept of participatory budgeting. A translation of the transcript of a segment of his speech recorded by CEE on video¹² in the first year of PB is as below:

"We are trying to create a forum for the citizens. No citizen should feel that he has no opportunity to put up civic concerns. He should not feel that his voice is going unheard, unnoticed. Our country and our constitution have accepted that the candidate with highest number of votes will represent the people. We cannot change this system now. We have to accept what is given to us and continue/proceed ahead. But there are citizens who want to put forth their concerns and want to participate in budget planning. This endeavour seeks to provide them with this opportunity."

Process at each ward

The time available to citizens for identifying/ discussing projects/ works was from 17 February up to 5 March 2007. The following steps formed the process at each ward:

¹² Available on YouTube < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18MzWtKcJ2c>>.

A) Inviting citizens to participate in PB

The Janwani and CEE facilitators phoned and met citizens to help them understand the process, and be at hand to help clarify doubts, arrange meetings, survey neighbourhoods, provide information etc. Apart from the press coverage, the main tool to inform citizens about the process and invite them to the zonal and ward meetings was phone calls. The author was involved in preparation of the 'phone call' lists as well as in actual contact and conduct of a few meetings.

The 'phone call' list included housing society contact persons registered with the PMC, citizens groups of various types (senior citizens, Lions and Rotary Clubs, Laughter Clubs¹³, etc) by CEE and Janwani set up a calling desk to inform them about the PB process.

Information about the PB process was also sent out through Pune related e-groups including of software professionals, those interested in environment and ecology, urban transportation, Pune development planning etc.

Several organizations were contacted including *mohalla* committees, Waste-pickers Association, National Society for Clean Cities, Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, Chairperson/ Secretary of residential societies, senior citizens organizations, Area Representative of Nanasaheb Parulekar Trust, Nagrik Chetna Manch, Grahak Panchayat, etc. These groups organized meetings in their areas to identify project works, submission of forms etc.

B) Processing of forms received from citizens

The steps for processing of forms received by the PMC included:

1. Screening and classification as per electoral ward
2. Assessment of suggestions for their suitability as projects and classification as 'budgetable' and 'non-budgetable'
3. Whether budgeted last year
4. If the information was unclear, clarifications were sought on phone from the citizens

¹³ Laughter Clubs are groups of people who congregate at convenient community places, usually municipal parks, and use laughter as a method of healing and exercise. Laughter Clubs are well known in several Indian cities and have also been written about (See <http://www.hindu.com/fo0003/00030440.htm>). Laughter Yoga appears to have been initiated by Mumbai based physician Dr Madan Kataria.

The facilitators visited the PMC ward offices to monitor whether the process was being carried out in this manner and to help trouble shoot where needed.

C) Compilation and data entry

Each work/ suggestion was entered into an excel database and data entry was done using the following codes:


1. Budgeted – B
2. Suggestions- S
3. Duplicated – D
4. Incomplete – I
5. Complete – C
6. Original – O

The PMC requested and received assistance from Janwani for this additional data entry work.

D) Costing of project ideas

After the compilation of all project ideas or suggestions, every ward office prepared a rough costing of all suggested works and produced a list of requested works for each electoral ward. The volunteers were explained about costing of projects and why it is necessary to do it. After the compilation of all project ideas or suggestions every ward office prepared a complete rough costing of all suggested work.

Figure 2: Form for citizens to submit suggestions to PMC

पुणे महानगरपालिका सहभागी अंदाजपत्रक सन २०१२-२०१३ नागरिक सूचना अर्ज				PUNE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION Participatory Budget 2012-13 Citizen Suggestion Form	
प्रभागाचे नाव* Name of the Ward* :		अर्ज आवक क्रमांक (केवळ कार्यालयीन कामासाठी) स्थानदर्शक क्रमांक		तारीख अनुक्रमांक	
नागरिकाचे नाव* / Name of Citizen* :					
संपर्कासाठी पत्ता / Address :					
दूरध्वनी क्रमांक / Tel.No. :					
ई-मेल* / e-mail* :					
अ.क्र. Sr.No	कामाचे स्वरूप व स्थान Work Description and Location	कामाचा सांकेतिक क्रमांक* Work Code*	प्रस्तावित कामामुळे साध्य होणारा सार्वजनिक हेतू Public purpose served by the proposed work		
1	2	3	4		
इतर सूचना / Other Suggestions :					
दिनांक / Date :			स्वाक्षरी / Signature :		
पुणे महानगरपालिका, सहभागी अंदाजपत्रक सन २०१२-२०१३, नागरिक सूचना अर्ज पोच PUNE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION Participatory Budget 2012-13 Receipt for Citizen Suggestion Form					
नागरिकाचे नाव : Citizen Name :		स्थानदर्शक क्रमांक Location ID		तारीख Date	
				अनुक्रमांक Sr No	
पाने वहा / P.T.O					

E) Prioritization meetings/ Consolidation meetings at Ward Level

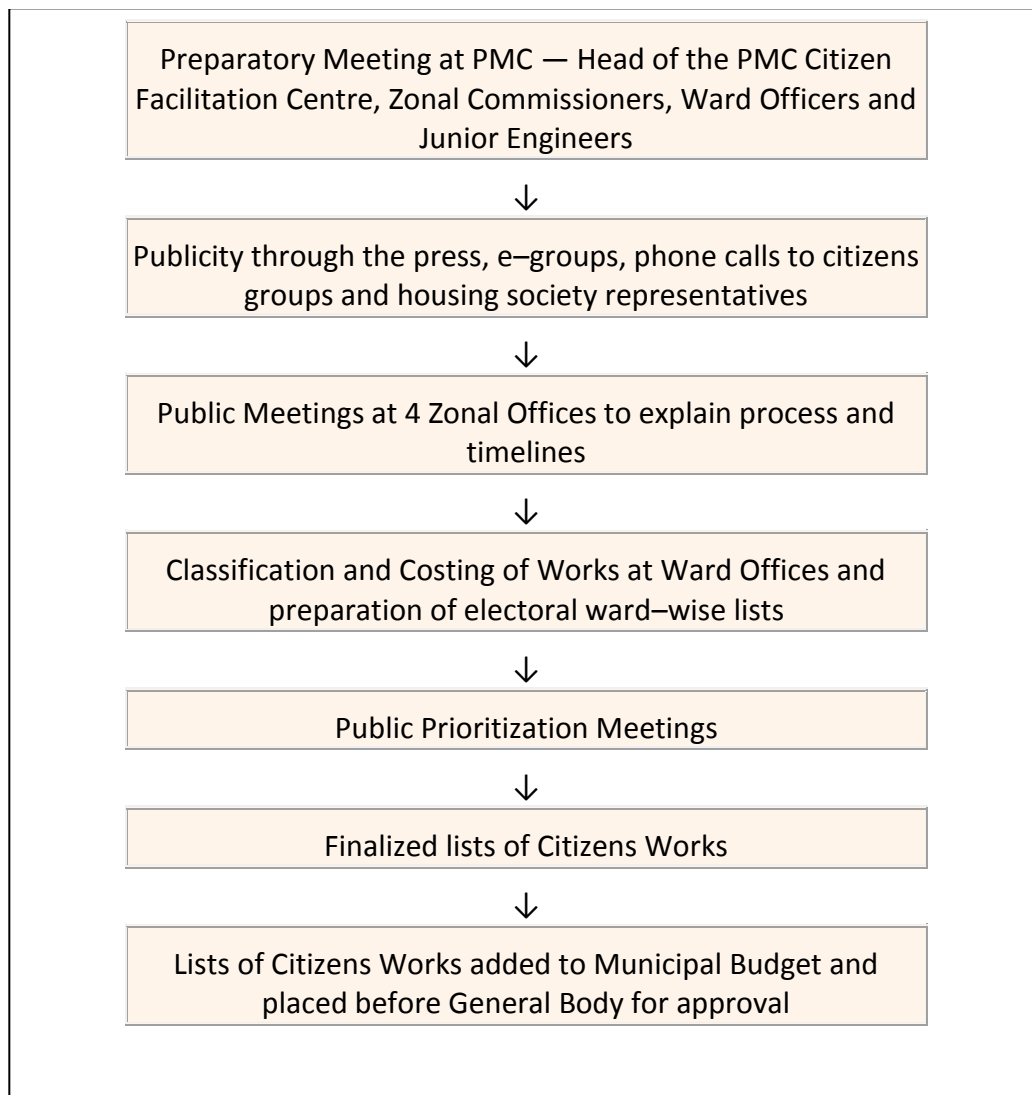
2006-07 was the only year when prioritization meetings were held in an organized manner.

In the week of 10 March 2007, public meetings were held at each of the 14 Administrative Ward Offices, by inviting all the citizens who had submitted works. The meetings were chaired by the Ward Officers. They provided an overview of the compiled list of the projects. At these prioritization meetings, citizens were grouped by electoral ward. The list of works for each electoral ward was given to the group of citizens from that ward, with the request that they review the list, and prioritize the works in case the total of the suggested works is more than the allocated amount of INR 2 million. The Ward Officers also provided information on works that would be taken up in the general ward or main municipal budget, so that these could be deleted from the list prepared by the citizens. Each citizens group as per electoral ward finalized and submitted their list of prioritized works to the Ward Officer for inclusion in the PMC budget. The sequence of activities was as indicated in Figure 3.

F) Incorporation of Citizens' Suggestions in Municipal Budget of 2007-08

The municipal elections were held in January 2007. The newly elected body took into consideration the Participatory Budget process and incorporated the full list of suggestions that had come through the administrative ward process. However, the suggestions received from the slum areas through the Urban Community Development Dept process were not incorporated straight away. A delegation of women from various SHGs went and appealed to a senior member of the Nationalist Congress Party, which in 2007 was the majority party in the newly elected local government. It was only after this appeal to his benefaction that the budget suggestions from the slum communities were incorporated into the PMC budget of 2007-08.

Figure 3: Sequence of Activities, Year 1 of Pune's Participatory Budget



PB Process 2007 to 2012

In the subsequent years, a few modifications of the process have taken place.

In October 2007, Janwani organized a meeting of the newly elected councillors as a way of enhancing their understanding and acceptance of the PB process and support to it. The meeting was presided over by the then Mayor, Mrs Rajalaxmi Bhosale of the National Congress Party. PMC Ward Officers and Zonal Officers who had been especially supportive of the process were felicitated. At this meeting, Mrs Bhosale said (available on video),

“The ward officers face a lot of pressure. They are constantly in contact with the citizens and have to solve their problems. Their work is very tedious. The endeavour of involving people in giving suggestions for the municipal budget is very commendable.

But it should be handled carefully. At times citizens tend to be very enthusiastic and they may even suggest works like building a bridge over the river. So the communication or information dissemination about this scheme should be such that clarifies the scope of projects that may be suggested. If a citizen's proposal is accepted then he will feel encouraged and will interact with the PMC and feel that there is a place for him and regard for his ideas. This will help consolidate the relationship between the citizens and the corporators. And the corporators will know that people are watching them and the works they are taking up, and so they will not engage in wrong doings.

In 2007, Dr Nitin Kareer was posted out and Mr Praveensinh Pardeshi assumed office as Municipal Commissioner in April 2007. Concerned about the role of elected representatives in the PB process, Mr Pardeshi directed that the suggestions from citizens would be considered by the Wards Committees for inclusion in the ward budget proposals to the PMC.

The PB process took place in 2007 in December, with the period for suggestions open only for 10 days.

Considering the feedback from ward offices about the extra work of estimation and costing for the projects suggested by citizens, CEE requested the College of Engineering Pune to announce a volunteering or internship programme for civil engineering students. A few students participated in the process in December 2007. They were placed with PMC Junior Engineers in various ward offices, visited the sites of the suggested projects, and assisted in the assessment of physical feasibility and costing of the works required.

A major difference between the process in 2006-07 and that in subsequent years, starting 2007 onward and continuing so far (up to 2013) has been that the electoral ward-level prioritization meetings did not take place in most wards. However, there are reports of some public meetings in Bhavani Peth ward¹⁴.

In 2008, the process was launched on 10th August 2008 with an advertisement or public announcement in the local newspapers (Figure 4).

¹⁴ Avinash Madhale (*pers comm.*).

The process was open for suggestions till 10th September 2008. There were at least two new features in this year. One was that the PB forms were made available for downloading on the PMC website. The printed PB forms were also available with the PMC main and Ward Offices, and the PMC's Citizen Facilitation Centres. The second was that CEE organized a facilitators' orientation workshop of half-day duration at PMC in September 2008. The PMC zonal and ward officials, representatives of NGOs willing to act as community facilitators, and students from the College of Engineering Pune attended this workshop.

Figure 4: Advertisement in a local newspaper by the PMC inviting citizens to suggest works for the 2009-10 municipal budget



जाहिरात क्र. ४/३५९/ दि. ७-८-०८

पुणे महानगरपालिका

शिवाजीनगर, पुणे ४११००५.

जाहीर प्रकटन

पुणे महानगरपालिका सन २००९-१० अंदाजपत्रक

नागरिकांचा सहभाग

पुणे महानगरपालिकेच्या सर्व प्रभाग समितींमध्ये सन २००९-१० चे अंदाजपत्रक तयार करताना नागरिकांनी सुचविलेली कामे विचारात घेण्याबाबतचा निर्णय घेण्यात आला. यानुसार नागरिकांना त्यांच्या प्रभागातील/वॉर्डातील कामे सुचविण्याबाबत जाहीर प्रकटन करण्यात येते.

प्रस्तुत प्रयोजनासाठी विशिष्ट नमुन्यातील 'नागरिक सूचना अर्ज' प्रत्येक क्षेत्रीय कार्यालयात कार्यालयीन वेळेमध्ये व प्रभागातील नागरी सुविधा केंद्रात, दिनांक ११ ऑगस्ट २००८ ते दिनांक १० सप्टेंबर २००८ पर्यंत विनामूल्य वाटपाकरिता उपलब्ध आहेत. तसेच पुणे महानगरपालिकेच्या www.punecorporation.org या संकेतस्थळावर (website) 'नागरिक सूचना अर्ज' उपलब्ध आहे. सदर 'नागरिक सूचना अर्ज' दिनांक १० सप्टेंबर २००८ रोजी सायंकाळी ५.०० वाजेपर्यंत प्रभाग कार्यालयात/ नागरी सुविधा केंद्रात स्वीकारण्यात येतील.

प्रवीणसिंह परदेशी
महापालिका आयुक्त, पुणे महानगरपालिका

Translation

Pune Municipal Corporation
Shivajinagar, Pune 411007

Public Notice
Citizens' Participation in PMC Budget 2009-10

It has been decided that all Ward Committees when preparing the budget for 2009-10 should take into consideration the works suggested by citizens. This public notice for citizens to suggest works in their prabhag/ ward is being issued in accordance.

The Citizens Suggestions Forms are available free of cost at the Ward Offices during office hours and at Citizens' Facilitation Centres from 11 August 2008 to 10 September 2008. The forms are also available at the PMC's website www.punecorporation.org. Forms will be accepted at Ward Offices and Citizens' Facilitation Centres till 5.00 pm on 10 September 2008.

Praveensinh Pardeshi
Municipal Commissioner

In 2009, a web-based application was developed and positioned on the PMC website for online submission of PB requests. The website of the software developer, KPIT Cummins, took up this task as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative¹⁵. The current version of the web application is at <http://tinyurl.com/PMC2013PBOnline>.

In 2010, Janwani and CEE developed a story-format booklet in Marathi to help enhance understanding about participatory budgeting among the PMC officials as well as the general public. The booklet titled '*Jan Je Vancheel*' (Marathi for 'what the people want')¹⁶ is a story of a retired government officer, Nivant Anna, who is initially indifferent but later gets involved in addressing various civic issues. The booklet aims to motivate citizens to be involved in civic issues and provides information about the Right to Information Act and participatory budget. The booklet was launched at a public event, covered by local press.

Janwani also held orientation events for members of the NSCC, other NGOs, senior citizens groups etc who expressed an interest in PB and being oriented for participation or volunteering.

CEE initiated work on a 'menu card' of items that could be requested /suggested through PB. The PB menu card booklet contains photographs of different designs of these items, such as

¹⁵ <http://kpitcummins.com/company/about-us/corporate-social-responsibility> says 'In collaboration with Janwani, we developed a web-based application for the participatory budget of the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) in November 2009. This application helps citizens register their suggestions without having to visit the ward office'.

¹⁶ Janwani and CEE, 2009, Jan je Vancheel

benches, tree-guards, footpaths, bus stops, street vending platforms, waste sorting sheds etc with typical costs. This menu card was provided to volunteers and introduced in orientation events with a view to assisting citizens in deciding about what they would like in their neighbourhood.

In 2011, the State Election Commission embarked on a process for delimitation of electoral wards afresh and reservation of certain wards towards affirmative action, wherein candidates of certain castes or minorities may only contest elections. The elections for the municipal government were to be held in early 2012.

It is not fully clear if there is a causal relationship, but these uncertainties may be one reason why the total budget for PB is lower in 2012-13. In 2012, new *prabhags* (sections) have been formed. Instead of the 144 electoral wards, now Pune has 76 *prabhags* (sections). Each prabhag has 2 corporators. The budgetary provision under PB in 2012 was INR 0.5 million per prabhag.

Extracts from PMC Budget Books

The PMC publishes its draft annual budget and accounts towards the end of the financial year. Usually, the Municipal Commissioner presents the draft budget based on the submissions from the different departments, special cells and ward office, in the middle of February. The General Body debates the budget provisions and may add or modify the budget as it sees appropriate. The finalized budget and accounts are then published soon after the beginning of the new financial year. The requests from citizens through the PB process are presented in a separate section. Each project is listed separately, and the entire list is organized according to prabhag and administrative ward, as well as by category (See Appendix). This makes it possible to count and summarize the number of suggestions being included each year in each category, and the total allocation to PB. At CEE's request, the Accounts Dept of PMC has also provided the information on expenditure actually made against the allocations. The tables below present an overview of the PMC budget and the PB.

Table 1: PMC Budget, 2006-07 to 2013-14

Financial Year	Budget in INR million*	Capital Expenditure*	PB Expenditure INR million**	PB expenditure as % of total CapEx
2005-06	1043.90	672.73	-	
2006-07	1157.21	530.70	-	
2007-08	1713.04	785.68	11.32	1.44
2008-09	1575.31	1321.99	20.75	1.57
2009-10	2031.64	1335.99	21.62	1.62
2010-11	2335.23	1202.24	16.55	1.38
2011-12	2776.56	1310.90	23.28	1.78
2012-13	3633.00 [#]	1900.71 [#]	16.67	0.88
2013-14	4167.48 [#]	2177.84 [#]	-	-
[#] Estimated. Sources: * PMC Budget Book, 2013-14 and ** PMC Accounts Dept				

Table 2: Pune Participatory Budget - An Overview from 2006-07 to 2012-13

Year of suggestions	Budget for the Year	Window for PB suggestions*	Number of days	Number of suggestions included	Number of suggestions for projects in slums	Outlay for projects suggested through PB INR million	Actual expenditure INR million**
2006-07	2007-08	UCD process in Dec 2006 17 Feb to 5 Mar 2007 for Ward process	17 days	575	55	17.62	11.32
2007	2008-09	12 Dec 2007 to 21 Dec 2007	9 days	831	144	27.27	20.75
2008	2009-10	10 Aug 2008 to 10 Sept 2008	31 days	699	105	35.00	21.62
2009	2010-11	26 Oct 2009 to 9 Nov 2009	14 days	917	160	30.16	16.55
2010	2011-12	9 Sept 2010 to 1 Oct 2010	22 days	927	141	34.73	23.28
2011	2012-13	8 Aug to 31 Aug 2011	24 days	704	102	26.24	16.67
2012	2013-14	9 Aug 2012 to 14 Sept 2012	36 days	854	120	29.52	-
Source: PMC Budget books, 2007-08 to 2013-14; *From CEE and Janwani; **From PMC Accounts Dept							

Table 3: Pune Participatory Budget - Distribution of the budget for citizens' suggestions over different categories, 2007-08 to 2013-14

Budget Year	Total INR million	% Road	% Electrical	% Bhavan	% Slum improvement	% Water	% Drainage	% Foot-path
2007-08	17.62	51.27	14.15	7.33	7.41	4.82	15.02	7.05
2008-09	27.27	41.74	10.38	3.72	20.54	8.01	13.06	2.55
2009-10	35.00	44.85	10.93	7.66	12.76	7.71	16.1	-
2010-11	30.17	40.91	15.09	10.32	18.37	6.51	8.81	-
2011-12*	34.73	51.3	12.3	6.13	14.65	0.88	14.73	-
2012-13*	26.24	42.46	15.07	6.67	14.59	4.42	16.8	-
2013-14*	29.52	37.15	17.01	12.33	13.85	4.74	14.92	-

*Plan and non-plan. Source: PMC Budget Books, 2007-08 to 2013-14

Field Survey of Selected Three Wards

Three electoral wards were chosen for site visits to see if projects suggested by citizens and included in the PMC budget were actually undertaken or not and their status. These electoral wards were chosen only on the basis of ease of visiting them. All three electoral wards were under the same administrative ward, that is Aundh Ward. The survey was done in the summer of 2010.

The location of each project was visited and visual observation made. Where needed, people in nearby shops and residences were asked about specific projects undertaken. The total number of projects visited 22. In fact, projects listed in the 2010-11 budget for these three wards were also visited. However, since most of the works of 2010-11 were yet to be commissioned, the data related to the status of projects budgeted in 2010-11 are not presented. There is a 68.18% rate of completion of projects, with 18.18% incomplete projects and 13.6% projects not done.

Table 4: Pune Participatory Budget - Physical survey of works in Wards 24, 27 and 34

Electoral Ward	Year of Project Budget	Done	Incomplete/ not done properly	Not done
ward 24	2007-08	2	1	1
ward 24	2008-09	3	2	0
ward 27	2007-08	3	1	1
ward 27	2008-09	2	0	1
ward 34	2007-08	2	0	0
ward 34	2008-09	3	0	0
Totals		15	4	3

Data collection by Niloofar Roshani, M.A. Sociology, University of Pune, under the guidance of the author.

Part 2 – Framework for Critical Review of Participatory Budget

According to Sintomer *et al.* 2012, basically, PB allows the participation of non-elected citizens in the conception and/or allocation of public finances. However, five further criteria need to be added (Sintomer *et al.*, 2013, quoted in Sintomer *et al.* 2012):

1. Discussion of financial/budgetary processes - PB is dealing with scarce resources and the participatory process is centrally based on the question of how a limited budget should be used.
2. The city level has to be involved; there is a growing number of neighbourhood funds where citizens can decide about a concrete amount of money, but without having any influence on issues that go beyond this level of a single neighbourhood.
3. It has to be a repeated process over years
4. Some forms of public deliberation must be included within the framework of specific meetings/forums; though PB deliberation may not necessarily directly lead to decision-making.
5. Some accountability on the results of the process is required, such as through annual meetings or publications where organisers provide information about the realization of the proposed projects

The criteria to assess the PB process, listed by some of the people interviewed in Pune for this study, include the following, and have some overlap with criteria suggested by Sintomer *et al.* 2013 (specifically points 4 and 5 of Sintomer *et al.*):

1. Whether there is participation from a very broad audience in the city, especially people from the lower socio economic strata
2. What percentage of people as a proportion of the voters list participate, for which the number of suggestions that come in could be a possible indicator
3. What is the quality of outreach undertaken by the city
4. What is the quality and the quantity of public consultations that happen, that is, are those discussions led by somebody who is the arbiter of that finalization, somebody who has the last say on it, or is that process completely democratized in the sense that participants themselves are able to prioritize that what should happen, what should

happen next year, making the trade-offs say between one large project and three small projects.

5. How decentralized are the public consultations
6. How involved are people in the finalization of the final project list, and the quality of those discussions
7. Is there full political participation in the process, or is it taking place because of an administrative order
8. Is adequate information available to citizens at various stages of the PB process, such as when the process gets underway, information about the wards including maps, lists of projects already underway, and what is already being planned
9. What is the conversion ratio of suggestions to actual budgeted projects
10. What is the proportion of budgeted projects actually realized
11. What proportion of the total discretionary budget of the PMC (that is non-establishment related, meant for projects, capital expenditure, O and M etc) is available for citizens inputs
12. What are the kind of suggestions that come forth, in terms of the scale of projects that are suggested from really small things which when fixed can really improve the quality of civic life; are the projects beyond what typically the Municipal Corporations tend to take on their own such as related to livelihoods, the environment, etc which often get ignored or lower priority when the city undertakes these projects
13. What is the level of transparency of the process - Do people know at every stage what have they submitted; what's being taken on board; why things that have finally not been accepted, why have they not been accepted.
14. Do citizens monitor the projects and do citizens have information on project inception, its design, implementation and completion

These criteria mainly come from the interviews done for this study, of Ranjit Gadgil (former Program Director of Janwani and now with Parisar, another NGO in Pune) and Vishal Jain (Board Member of Janwani and principally responsible for the introduction of PB in Pune).

Sintomer *et al.* (2012) suggest that the discussion should be about budgets / projects beyond the neighbourhood level. However, in Pune, a stated objective of the initiators of the PB

process has been that people should be able to suggest projects for their own neighbourhoods since it is these kind of needs that may remain neglected by the regular budgeting processes and these are possibly the ones which would make a bigger difference to people's immediate quality of life. This criterion of the Sintomer framework thus needs to be seen in a more locale-specific context.

Some of the criteria suggested by Jain and Gadgil (in the interviews done for this study), such as number of projects implemented and involvement of citizens in project design, are related to project implementation and may not be included in an assessment of the PB process.

Some of the quantitative indicators, such as how many people know about that a PB process takes place in the city, or how many suggestions come in, may be used to understand the reach and effectiveness at a very broad level. The purpose of developing a framework to assess the PB process is primarily to provide some guidance towards strengthening the PB process in the future.

With this in mind, the various criteria listed are grouped and somewhat re-worded to be more usable, as shown in Box 3.

Box 1: Framework to Assess the Pune PB Process

Framework to Assess the PB Process

Indicators related to the Nature and Scope of the Process

1. Participation is about use of a limited budget
2. It is repeated over the years
3. There is political acceptance about the process
4. The process is proactive and invites/ facilitates participation
5. Disadvantaged persons are able to easily participate
6. Adequate information is available to citizens at various stages of the PB process, such as when the process gets underway, information about the wards including maps, lists of projects already underway, and what is already being planned
7. Public deliberation is part of the process
8. Public deliberations are easily accessible, fair and facilitate public decision-making on the budget or at least the priorities
9. The results at various stages of the process are known/ transparent (what has been submitted; what's being taken on board; reasons why suggestions are accepted or not accepted).
10. Projects suggested and agreed upon in public deliberations are actually included in the city's budget

Quantitative Indicators

1. Proportion of population in the city aware about the process and can participate easily if they wish to
2. Numbers of people participating
3. Numbers of projects being submitted
4. Numbers of projects getting included in the budget
5. Proportion of the total discretionary budget (that is non-establishment related, meant for projects, capital expenditure, O and M etc) available for citizens inputs

Part 3 – An Assessment of Participatory Budgeting in Pune

This section uses the framework developed above to discuss the performance of the PB processes in Pune.

Participation is about use of a limited budget

Each electoral ward has had an outlay of INR 2 million in the first year and INR 2.5 million from the second year of PB in Pune. In 2012-13, after the formation of *prabhags*, each *prabhag* had an outlay of INR 5 million which may be used for addressing suggestions made by citizens through the PB process. Thus, a limit has been imposed by the municipal government.

It is repeated over the years

This could well be regarded as an achievement, since in the face of political opposition, the municipal government has persisted in undertaking the PB process every year.

Political acceptance about the process

There is some tacit political acceptance that the PB process continues in Pune year after year, according to Mrs Vandana Chavan, MP and former corporator and Mayor of Pune, interviewed as part of this study. While the importance of public participation in budget related decision making is well appreciated politically, there is a feeling that corporators they have been kept out of the process and that PB is predicated upon mistrust of corporators, according to Chavan. In fact political parties should encourage their corporators to conduct public meetings at neighbourhood level where the technical staff from the municipal ward offices should be present. It is at these meetings that needs assessment may be done of works to be taken up in each neighbourhood, suggests Chavan, in her interview. Going forward, the Area Sabha bill may institutionalize such processes and facilitating participatory budgeting through public meetings would be a part of the corporators' work.

Each elected representative has a 'discretionary budget' allocation of INR 0.10 million for their electoral ward. Gadgil, in his interview for this study, expressed that since there is the likelihood of corruption in the allocation of contracts for implementation of the ward level projects, the additional funds available through the PB process provide for more opportunities for kick backs. This is the reason that even though elected representatives may

feel left out of the PB process and see PB as in conflict with their status as a public representative, they still accept it and allow it to continue.

Jain, Gadgil and Chavan all suggest in the interviews done for this study, that in order to fully realize the potential of PB in Pune, it is essential that the role of elected representatives *vis a vis* PB needs to be made integral and institutionalized.

The process is proactive and invites/ facilitates participation

An advertisement announces the commencement of PB every year, the last date for suggestions and how people may obtain and submit forms. This is an important aspect and all the subsequent outreach that is done by civil society organizations and newspapers refer to the annual public announcement about the PB process for the year.

The municipal administration put up notices and banners announcing the process and information on submission of forms.

The major role of facilitation of citizens' participation has been done by civil society organizations. This includes spreading the word about the dates for the PB process through meetings, phone calls, emails, posters etc; conduct of locality level orientation and assistance in filling the suggestion forms; gathering up and submitting forms at the ward offices, etc. The development of the online submission facility was done as a CSR initiative.

Disadvantaged persons are able to easily participate

For at least 2 years a very specific attempt was made to have suggestions from slum areas. Subsequently, no particular attempt has been made to reach out to slums or any other disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.

The participation of the poor is also separately discussed a little later.

Adequate information is available to citizens at various stages of the PB process, such as when the process gets underway, information about the wards including maps, lists of projects already underway, and what is already being planned

Some of this information is in the public realm, such as the previous year's budget and list of projects for each electoral ward, the start and end dates, the final list of projects accepted into the budget. The development plan (master plan) is also available in the public realm.

However, the municipal government has not made any particular attempt to put ward level information together in an easily understandable manner which may facilitate local level assessment of needs and decisions related to fulfilment of those needs.

Some types of municipal services such as water supply, waste collection, street lighting, etc are in the direct experience of citizens and shortfalls clearly visible. However, projects supposed to take place through the master plan, say development of gardens for which reservations have been made in the plan, or the actual state of sewerage systems, air and water quality are not easily understandable.

Public deliberations are part of the process, are easily accessible, fair and facilitate public decision-making on the budget or at least the priorities

Deliberative discussions were done only in the first year in almost all wards, for discussing the suggestions that had come in and prioritizing them. Deliberation is required to understand needs of the community or individuals within the community who may need public support, to arrive at which types of projects or interventions would help meet those needs, and to prioritize the projects. Such deliberations are not at all part of the PB process.

The results at various stages of the process are known/ transparent (what has been submitted; what's being taken on board; reasons why suggestions are accepted or not accepted) Decisions about why certain suggestions are not included and also who suggested the ones that do get included, are not transparent. In fact there is apprehension that elected representatives are themselves putting in project ideas and using up the budget allocation for the citizens PB.

Projects suggested and agreed upon in public deliberations are actually included in the city's budget

Several hundred projects are listed in the PMC budget book in a separate section titled 'Citizens suggestions scheme to be implemented through ward offices' (however it is not clear who has suggested them, nor is there any public deliberation around which projects should be suggested or recommended)

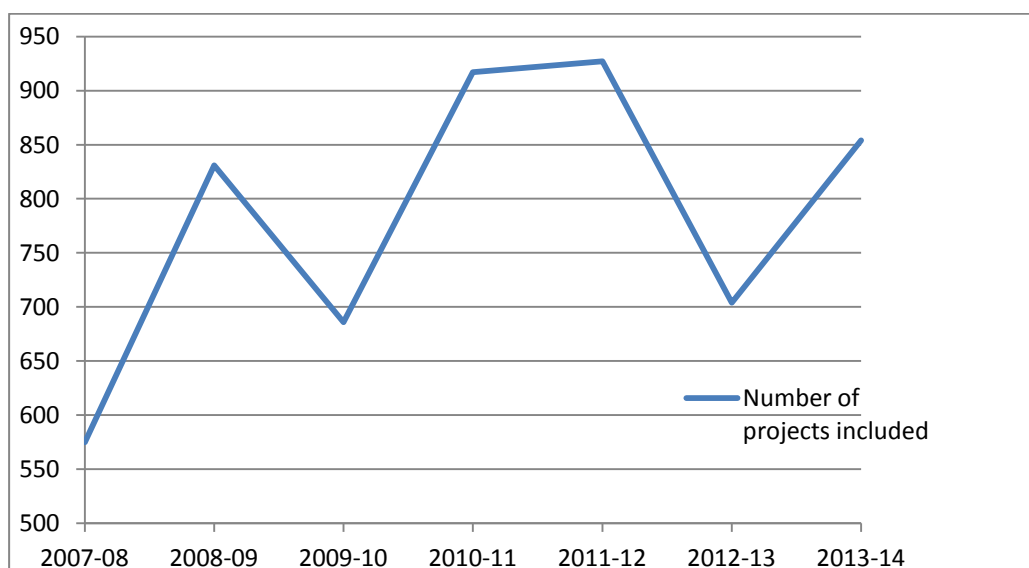
Quantitative Indicators

It was not possible to collect information against most of the quantitative indicators such as proportion of population in the city aware about the process, numbers of people participating and numbers of projects being submitted.

As can be seen from

Table 2, the number of projects getting included in the budget has generally gone up, except in the years 2009-10 and 2012-13.

Figure 5: Number of projects suggested through PB included in annual municipal budgets, 2007-08 to 2013-14



However, the comparison of expenditure to outlay shows a different picture, with only 55% to 76% usage of funds.

Figure 6: PB Outlay and Expenditure

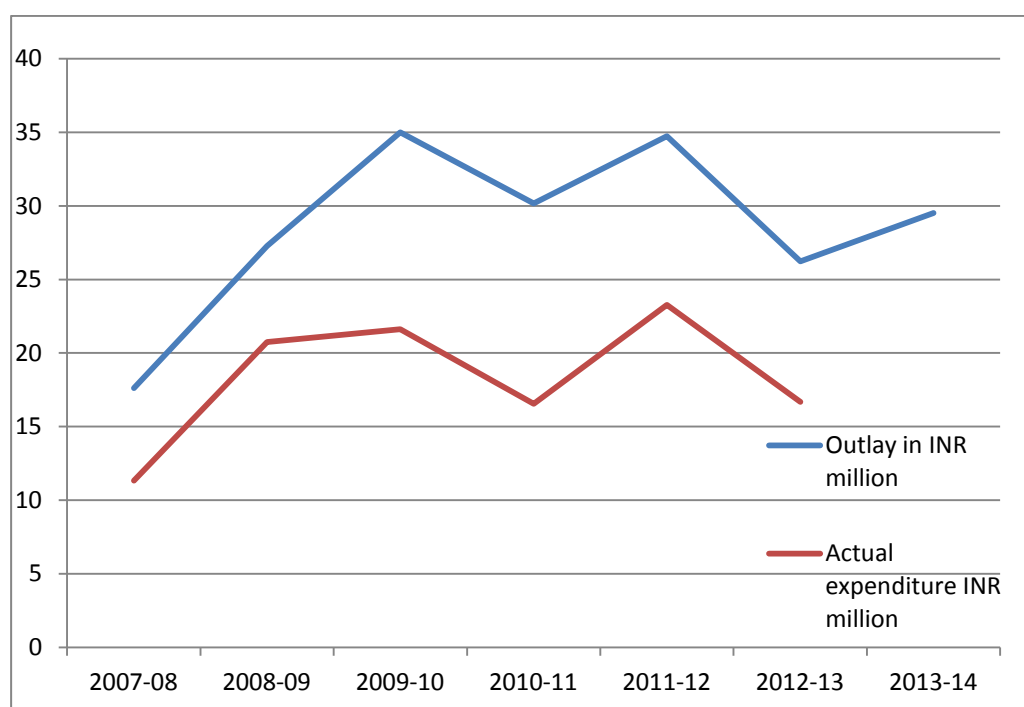


Table 5: Utilization of funds allocated for PB

Budget for the Year	Outlay in INR million	Actual expenditure INR million	% usage of funds
2007-08	17.62	11.32	64%
2008-09	27.27	20.75	76%
2009-10	35	21.62	62%
2010-11	30.16	16.55	55%
2011-12	34.73	23.28	67%
2012-13	26.24	16.67	64%
2013-14	29.52	-	

That works actually get commissioned and completed will require citizens' oversight and round the year monitoring. This has been especially noted by Gadgil, Jain and Kalaskar.

Another aspect is how much of the budget is finally decided through participatory processes.

As

Table 1 shows, the quantum of expenditure on the PB projects has been between 1 and 2% of the total capital expenditure of the PMC. Gadgil suggests that, going forward, the Pune PB

process should include not only discussions/ participation on the ward level allocations, but on the overall PMC budget too.

Implementation of budgeted projects

A very small sample of the budgeted projects was taken for a field survey, the results of which have been presented earlier in Table 4. This shows that about 68.18% of the citizens suggested projects which were budgeted were actually completed. About 18.18% were incomplete or the execution was of poor quality, and 13.6% of the projects were not done at all. This rate of completion also generally matches with the percentage utilization of the budget, which over six years averages out to 64%. Clearly, the rate of implementation of projects has to improve. This shows the need for citizens' engagement in monitoring of project implementation as well.

Major Gaps

All those interviewed for this study agree that there has been a lack of public awareness about PB and poor outreach, therefore the number of people participating has come down. According to them, the biggest gap is outreach. Kalaskar's (Chief Accountant of PMC) view is that a lot more publicity is needed so that people know about the opportunity and can make use of it.

Jain (Board member of Janwani) suggests that other parties (such as civil society organizations, citizens groups, corporate groups, media etc) could themselves get involved for outreach, but it has remained a critical gap. He says "if one takes a poll in the city and at least 50% know about PB, now that would be success."

Jain feels that PB has achieved only a fraction of its potential given the good start it had. While PMC has taken ownership of organizing PB regularly, it has stopped taking the help of other constituents. It has not had the full visibility in terms of impact of conversion of ideas. Highlighting the importance of assessing and keeping a score card of how many suggestions get implemented, Jain suggests that PB could have kicked off a virtuous cycle: if participation had continued to increase, it could have led to forums for citizens and elected representatives to openly discuss priorities.

Another process gap is the regulation at the back end, according to Jain. The information systems currently being used does not allow for tracking the implementation of suggestions into projects.

Gadgil (former Program Director of Janwani and now with Parisar, another NGO in Pune working on civic issues) is much more critical, and says that if one went through the metrics (for assessment of PB) one by one, essentially other than inviting suggestions from people, Pune would score a zero. Information hasn't been available, awareness about the projects is not high, there are no discussions, there are no year-long processes, there is no transparency in the finalization of the list, or on the decisions that happen on the projects. Essentially largely one would say that it is not a PB process. It is simply an invitation for citizens to submit ideas for the budget.

In a further reflection, Gadgil states that the reason why PB isn't working is that even in the absence of PB, the budgeting process itself, even for elected representatives is fairly non-transparent and hard to understand. The fact that the city itself does not follow any prescribed processes for allocating budget, they are not based on the provisions in the master plan, not related to the alarms sounded in the Environment Status Report, there are no indicators, and no performance audit of the budget itself, or the outcomes related to the budget. He feels that the severe lacunae in the budgeting process itself are spilling over into PB. PB could in fact help address some of these issues also. But to begin with, that the main budgeting itself is an arbitrary and ad hoc process means that it is that much harder to generate enthusiasm for PB.

Adverse Impacts of PB

Gadgil also points to some of the negatives impacts of PB. Firstly, that the city says it is undertaking PB when it actually is not. Secondly, PB in its current form has become an exclusionary process with only a very narrow segment participating. The result is that even more resources are being allocated to the middle class, upper middle classes, literate and aware sections of society when actually it was supposed to do the opposite.

More seriously, and this sentiment is also echoed by Chavan, the PB process has increased the tensions between the middle class and the elected representatives. One of the outcomes was supposed to be bringing citizens closer to the elected representatives, but the opposite

has happened. Partly because citizens don't see their suggestions being taken up, they see the elected representatives as having hijacked the process and this has widened the rift between them. The Elected Representatives in fact have hijacked in the process and essentially managed to create an even more nepotism-based manner of allocating money for projects.

And so, a badly implemented PB has actually created some tensions or some strife within groups that are currently involved in the process. For those who perhaps went through the process once they have been disappointed, and this has led to an even greater cynicism about the ability of such processes to genuinely address their needs.

Participation of the Poor

As such, after the first couple of iterations, no particular attempt was made to seek out participation from the slum communities. Even so, a number of proposals for infrastructure improvements in slums are included in the 'citizens' budget'. For example, in the 2013-14 budget, out of 854 projects listed in the budget book under citizens budget, over 80 projects pertain to various slum infrastructure improvements such as for street paving, creation or repair of public toilets, repair or construction of drainage lines, storm water drains etc. A waste sorting shed has also been budgeted (in Sangamwadi).

There are a few other participatory processes in slum localities, which PB could link with more strongly. The main channel for social welfare schemes of the government is the UCD. At the beginning of the PB process in Pune in 2006, Mr Ashok Kalamkar, then head of the UCD, had pointed out that the implementation of many of the welfare schemes such as grants, loans, scholarships etc is done through a participatory process in the SHGs and NHGs¹⁷.

Zigisha Mhaskar, Program Manager at CHF International, has facilitated participatory appraisal of municipal services in slum communities as part of a project with the PMC. Suggestions for slum improvement were prepared on the basis of these appraisals. The project was implemented by Mashal and CHF International in 30 slum localities. Mhaskar, in her interview for this study, has opined that PB should in the future explore the possibility of

¹⁷ Ashok Kalamkar, Pers. Comm., Nov 2006

neighbourhood level meetings with the technical staff of the PMC, the corporator, and suitable facilitators who can help arrive at the appropriate mix of management and infrastructure in service provision.

Writings about participatory processes, such as of Dove (2004) have highlighted that poor women often find it difficult to make the time to participate in planning processes, in addition to their domestic and wage-earning responsibilities. In Pune, attention was drawn to this by representatives¹⁸ of the rag pickers union, the Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Sanghatan (KKPKP) when the timings of the Neighbourhood Group Meetings were revealed, as part of the process for slums. Since the overall focus of the requests was to be localized neighbourhood improvement or repair works, KKPKP felt that it wasn't a big disadvantage that rag-picker women were not present in the meetings. On the other hand, being able to submit requests for sorting sheds in the areas where they work for scrap collection could have been a valuable opportunity. As it now appears from the 2013-14 budget, sorting sheds are being proposed and included in the budget.

Figure 7: Sorting sheds for recyclable waste



Recyclable waste is sorted on footpaths in the absence of designated spaces



PMC has started to provide designated sorting sheds for waste handlers

The city is also a work place and should be conducive to a range of economic activities. While commercial spaces are generally planned for, informal economic activity often survives on 'informal occupation of city spaces'. City planning, and therefore neighbourhood

¹⁸ Laxmi Narayan, General Secretary, KKPKP, pers. comm., 2007

planning has to take into account the role of a range of informal economic activities, and allocate space for these. These could be some of the livelihood related projects that could be budgeted.

It appears that some of the objectives of Participatory Budgeting are already being achieved in Pune through such initiatives. Further research may be needed to assess extent of participation, benefits, and institutionalization of these existing processes, as well as to explore if there may be the possibility of beneficial linkages between these and the formal PB process in Pune and institutionalizing the participatory slum infrastructure assessment and planning as part of the PB process.

The Corporators' Role

According to Gadgil, given the experience of PB in Pune, perhaps unless the Corporators are made the centrepiece of the exercise, PB will not work effectively. At the moment PMC departmental heads enjoy a very large amount of autonomy when it comes to deciding projects. Elected representatives actually have little say in deciding the overall municipal budget. Corporators have more control over the ward level budgets and especially the discretionary budget. Corporators certainly like the system where people have to approach them and get their projects done rather than through the PB process. In the current situation, both PMC officials and corporators view the PB process as detrimental to the status quo. There is also mistrust between the corporators and the PMC administration. In their tussle of who controls the city's resources, PB has brought in citizens as a third block in the system to be negotiated with in order to decide the budget.

The fact the PB is continuing over the years has less to do with belief in participation and democratic process and more to do with who is benefitting from it. A major and important finding, from the interview with Gadgil is that corporators have subverted the process and are now putting in their own projects in the guise of citizens suggestions. PB in effect gives corporators a chance to have an additional INR 2 million per ward.

However, going forward, the corporator's role could be made more legitimate. They should coordinate the ward meetings, have the information pertaining to the ward, the maps for the ward, etc. Corporators could even be assigned a budget to take up the deliberative

procedures themselves. Corporators should be able see this PB a winning proposition, not something that dilutes their control over the budget and its allocation.

According to Chavan, corporators who have been elected for the first time, are apprehensive about public meetings, not very confident about their skills to conduct such meetings, and especially apprehensive about members of the opposition disrupting the meetings. As of 2012, she is encouraging corporators from her party to start conducting neighbourhood meetings (Area Sabhas) and develop skills for facilitation and conducting public meetings. The suggestions that citizens have given in these meetings have been converted into budgeted projects. A completely differing view comes from Kalaskar who does not see any particular role for corporators.

Achievements of PB efforts in Pune

All the persons interviewed thought that PB in Pune is certainly a step forward. The notion of Participatory Budgeting in cities in India is new and so far it seems to be taking place in an institutionalized city-wide form in Pune alone. It is happening even though it is not mandated by law, which is rather unusual since the PMC is conservative in such processes.

According to Gadgil, PB has also contributed to the fact that the overall municipal budget is now being discussed in a public form, being reported upon in the media much more now than in the past. The budget is no longer as obscure a process as it perhaps once was. Secondly, it has made the more active citizens in the city more aware of their rights and increased demand for their inclusion in the process. This, though, is limited to a very few activists and civic groups.

According to Jain, the conversion rate has gone up. The quantum of funds for the PB process has increased though the number of participants has gone down. Even though the process has many gaps, over the last 5 years, ten to fifteen thousand citizens have engaged with the city in a way that others may not have. It has become a source for the administration to get a handle on citizens needs (not elected officials) as a standard procedure and part of the budgeting process.

Another advantage pointed by Jain is that though it does not proactively seek out disadvantaged individuals or communities, PB in Pune is open to all citizens. Further, access

to it is very simple – citizens only have to fill in a single form and give it in, and there are no proposals to write or multiple forms to be filled out.

From the point of view of the PMC Accounts Dept, Kalaskar feels that the fact that there is no objection to this and it is running in smooth way for many years is by itself an achievement. The PMC has made a separate schedule for this, in advance of the regular budget and it is being done also. There is no situation that the schedule is not being adhered to.

Suggestions for the future

Even though there are many process gaps, and even adverse impacts of PB, there is a strong support for continuance of PB, given the promise it holds for engagement, community building and accountability. The potential benefits are so large that it is worth investing in to fix the gaps. Gadgil and Jain both suggest that citizens group/ civil society organizations will have to take the next step forward in the further evolution of PB in Pune.

This could take the form of a bottom-up movement that enhances outreach, creates citizens assemblies to which corporators could be invited, compiles and makes available the relevant information to citizens, perhaps demonstrates deliberative processes for citizens to prioritize projects, follows through on monitoring of budgeted projects and demands accountability from representatives. Such a movement could proactively reach out to corporators who are willing to experiment and don't want to get into an adversarial position with their constituencies on this matter.

Advocacy could be done at the city level for PMC to adopt a resolution detailing out the procedures for PB. A critical aspect, in Gadgil's view though not in Jain's is the transparency of decision-making in the *prabhag samiti*, which finalizes the list of projects that make it to the ward budget. Another aspect of advocacy at the city level is to up the budget from INR 2 million so that a larger number of citizens' can participate and see their projects get included.

Gadgil also suggests advocacy at the state level for legislating PB as part of the Bombay Provincial and Municipal Corporations Act (which lays down the structures and processes of the urban local democratic institutions). Acknowledging that merely legislating it will not

make PB a reality, Gadgil points out that legislation gives the civil society groups a platform to stand on, to kick start the process. The legislation could detail out the process to some extent so that however the specific evolve, the basic structure is robust and democratic. The state government could also develop best practice documents or guidelines.

Chavan sees political parties taking their own steps to make use of the PB opportunity. Given the changing climate as regards governance, the push for reforms from the central government and especially for enacting the Community Participation bill (or Area Sabha bill), she feels that parties which are already experimenting with facilitating direct participation are likely to consolidate their own position better and be more responsible in their role as representatives. She feels that win win situations can be created. Given the positive experience of her party colleagues so far in conducting citizens meetings, there is increasing political interest in PB which could work synergistically with citizens' movements to push forward the PB agenda.

Summary

Pune has experimented with a form of Participatory Budgeting since 2006. Citizens' organizations have played a critical role in initiating and shaping it.

Some of the major achievements have been

- The process is quite simple
- It has taken place regularly every year
- A substantial quantum of funds including for suggestions from the poor is allocated

Some of the gaps relate to

- Outreach
- Transparency
- Inclusiveness
- Institutional arrangements

Conclusions and suggestions for the way forward

Some of the major areas of improvement are in outreach, transparency of process, institutionalizing the processes in slum localities, institutionalizing the role of the corporator, enhanced practice and experimentation with public deliberation processes, and year-round engagement.

Drawing upon ideas of good practice from the literature reviewed and from the interviewees, this section of the study provides some suggestions for improvement:

Improved Outreach – For outreach, the municipal government, media and citizens groups, already make some efforts. However, a much more proactive effort by these actors, as well as political parties may be needed if the ambition of ‘at least half the city knows about it’ is to be attained. Especially needed is outreach to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, as well as to children and youth for whom such engagement would possibly be good initiation into democracy.

Process Improvements – The process related improvements pertain to systems for tracking and making available information on suggestions right from receipt of forms to implementation of suggestions therein. Information needed for prioritization and decision-making, should be made available in easily understandable forms for citizens. This may include ward maps, lists of projects underway or already planned, civic service levels, environmental status, etc which are already in departmental annual reports, Environmental Status Report, budget etc. A critical improvement needed is transparency in decisions at various stages related to final inclusion of projects by elected representatives in the municipal budget, with reasoned responses on why certain projects are not included.

Institutionalizing the Process in Slum Localities – Pune has an enormous advantage of experience with the participatory nature of implementation of Urban Community Development (UCD) schemes, and participatory planning projects such as those taken up for slum housing and slum infrastructure planning in some localities. The PB process could take learnings from these, and institutionalize certain approaches which can serve to provide the opportunity to all slum localities. The UCD structure and associated human capacities is a strong base to build on, especially since the first two years of PB had already linked up with it.

Engagement with corporators – The role of the corporator should be as the chair of the PB process in his/ her ward. The corporator should invite the constituency to review the previous budget, the status of various developmental and civic projects and services, give inputs on gaps and suggestions for the projects to be taken up. These may pertain to the ward or to larger issues. For issues which go beyond the ward, it would be the corporator’s

role to escalate these for discussion in the city's elected General Body and with the city level Administration.

The local ward level suggestions should be discussed in public deliberative meetings to arrive at root causes and possible solutions along with their associated trade-offs. It would be the corporator's role to ensure that the viewpoints of all associated stakeholders, the technical staff of the municipality as well as any other experts are aired. The corporator may then appoint citizens committees on various themes to detail out projects that could be taken up. After the nature and scope of all the various projects are prepared, these should again be put for public deliberation to decide priorities. The corporator can then take these prioritized projects to the next level of municipal budgeting. The minutes of all such meetings should be available as public record.

Such a role may require considerable facilitation and leadership skills. However, laying down procedural guidelines, providing guidance on tools for deliberation as well as allocating a budget for undertaking deliberative processes would be useful to make the PB / deliberative processes productive irrespective of the facilitation skills of the corporators.

Enhanced practice and experimentation with public deliberation processes – The reservations of elected representatives, municipal officials and even civil society actors as regards public deliberative meetings are a stumbling block in the furtherance of democratic practice. Drawing lessons from old and new forms of deliberation being practiced locally and in other cities across the world, consciously building capacities, and experimenting with them in Pune is probably be a necessary step. Especially important would be tools and techniques for engaging different types of communities, such as children, youth, women, migrants, elderly and the disabled, in articulating their needs and suggesting and evaluating solutions for provision of civic services geared to their needs.

Year-round engagement – The implementation of the budgeted projects is an aspect that should be addressed regularly in quarterly meetings of the wards committees and those of corporators with neighbourhood groups. The ward offices could provide report cards of progress in implementation of suggested works.

Engagement with overall city budget - A longer-term project would be work towards enhancing citizen engagement with the overall budget process, thematic budgets (such as transportation, waste, housing, etc) and assessing budget response to larger human development and environmental goals, beyond the neighbourhood level.

There is interest among both citizens groups and political parties to improve the PB process for varied reasons. As explained by Chavan, at least one political party is locally responding to the changing urban governance climate in India and trying out public meetings at the electoral ward level. Capacity building of corporators may be needed so that they are able to facilitate public meetings to be more deliberative, productive and efficient.

As such, these recommendations are being placed for discussion among interested groups in Pune by CEE. Ongoing projects by CEE, Janwani and others for neighbourhood street design, waste management, stream restoration and biodiversity conservation etc also provide opportunities for experimentation with deliberative processes in conjunction with PB.

Many different actors have shaped PB in Pune so far, and further evolution will require even more conscious and deliberate collaboration among them and others. Further evolution will perhaps also require a willingness to be experimental, critical and reflexive on the part of these actors. Keeping these aspects in mind an action inquiry undertaken jointly by the PMC, elected representatives, researchers and civil society organizations, may be a useful approach to consider implementation of these recommendations.

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