

Participatory Budgeting in Pune Citizens Workshop to Strengthen Participatory Budget Procedures

August 2014

A Report

Participatory Budgeting in Pune

Pune Municipal Corporation has been conducting the citizens Participatory Budget process since 2006. Every year, the process is as follows:

1. **Announcement by PMC** inviting citizens to give in suggestions for small works to be taken up at the ward level
2. **Citizens fill out the Participatory Budget form** and submit it in the respective PMC administrative ward office
3. **Ward Office Review of suggestions** to scrutinize whether suggestions are public works, feasible and within the budget limit of Rs 5 lakh
4. **Ward Office PrabhagSamiti meetings** for approval or rejection of works suggested by citizens. Projects approved by the PrabhagSamiti are sent by the administrative ward office for incorporation in the city budget.

A review of Pune Participatory Budgeting process by Centre for Environment Education (CEE) in 2013 revealed advantages such as:

- The process is simple for citizens to participate in
- It has been conducted regularly every year by PMC
- A substantial quantum of funds has been allocated
- There is some response to suggestions from the poor

Some of the major areas of improvement are:

- Publicity so that many more citizens can participate and benefit from PB, especially from disadvantaged groups
- Bringing citizens, administration and elected representatives closer in the ward level democratic governance process
- Trackability of the PB process so that citizens can know what happened to their suggestions
- Year-round engagement of citizens in discussions on ward-level needs, preparation of citizens suggestions, prioritization of suggestions, incorporation of suggestions into municipal budget, implementation of suggestions, social audit of implemented works, followed by next cycle of discussions on ward-level needs.

Citizens Deliberation on Participatory Budgeting

CEE organized a workshop for citizens on 22 August 2014, with a view to developing / refining the protocols for PB in Pune, so as to make this innovative process more effective in meeting its social and environmental aims.

The workshop agenda was

- Study of successful PB processes in different cities of the world
- Review of Pune PB process
- Identification of procedures to strengthen Pune PB process

Participants

Citizens and representatives of different segments of society, including youth, women, elderly persons, informal economic occupations, people with disabilities, urban poor etc. participated in the workshop.

A conscious effort was made by the organizers to ensure representation of societal segments that may be otherwise excluded from such processes and who may benefit from such improvement in governance of civic amenities.

Workshop Methods

The workshop methods were designed to be inclusive and deliberative, with facilitators trained to elicit participation from everyone.

The methods included:

1. Input presentation on the experience of PB in Pune and good practices from Kerala, Brazil and Australia
2. Group deliberations and inputs on the main question: **“How can Pune PB be strengthened?”** and **the following sub-questions**
 - i. How should **assessment of needs be done by citizens**, including of different segments of society and level of facilities in the area
 - ii. How should needs be converted into **technically sound and feasible proposals?**
 - iii. How should **proposals be selected** for implementation (including prioritization)?
 - iv. How should people be involved in **Implementation/Audit/Review** of projects?
 - v. **What should be the year round PB Sequence?**

The inputs received on each of these questions are presented in the following section.

Suggestions for Strengthening Participatory Budget Procedures

“How can Pune PB be strengthened?”

1. How should **assessment of needs be done by citizens**, including of different segments of society and level of facilities in the area

- The definition of the surrounding area should be done. (ward, electoral ward/ prabhag, lane), options for which may be:
 - The citizens can mutually decide
 - Polling booth
 - Electoral ward
- The issues and needs of the people with disabilities should be looked into as per their disability based requirements.
- Resource availability and needs should be enlisted
- Photo documentation
- A mixed group of elected representatives, administrative officers, citizens’ representatives, NGO should undertake the need assessment.
- The meetings should happen at *prabhag* level:
 - Like *gram sabha*
 - Polling booth level
 - Meeting of Citizens’ representatives
 - *Mohallasabha*
- The report should be presented by the representatives of different sectors of the society.
- There shouldn’t be any restriction on the boundary of area for accepting PB Suggestions from citizen. (open to all)
- The preference should be given to the locals.
- The need assessment report should be made available in public and explained.

2. How should needs be converted into **technically sound and feasible proposals?**

- Preliminary data about the complete requirements should be gathered and the site feasibility assessment should be done.
 - The ward infrastructure index should be present/ available in the ward office.
 - Suggestions should be marked on a map and be published/ in public domain.
 - Information can be collected under RTI (Right to Information)
- With the help of this information, a group of citizens could write a formal proposal to the Corporator and take an appointment to meet.
 - Also, a copy of the same should be submitted to Administrative Ward office.
- There should be a follow up after the stipulated time with reminders. A pressure should be built and the process followed.

- Once the site of work is finalized, the concerned junior engineer should make the technical plan/ drawing which should be seen by the Corporators before the tender is out.
- The cost of work should be known to citizens along with the pictures of proposed infrastructure. This information could be given in the suggestion form itself and on website, in the ward office, ERs' (Elected representatives') office etc.
- There should be more time spent on public awareness with thematic perspective.
- A copy of the follow up with commissioner and the quarterly review of work should be sent to ward office as well as to citizens.
- There should be planning for 'Development for all.'
- While new work is being done the good old footpaths/ other infrastructures shouldn't be destructed.
- There should be rules in place for complete 'No - Nos'.

3. How should **proposals be selected** for implementation (including prioritization)?

- There should be citizens' representative present for the *prabhag samiti* meeting. There should be citizens' representatives of different sectors of the society especially for the PB related *prabhag samiti* meeting.
 - There should be a citizens' representative for every polling booth.
 - There should be third party screening committee.
- The proposals should be displayed in front of citizens through *area sabhas* and there should be prioritization by the citizens.
 - In the *area sabhas* forms can be filled up together in group and the prioritization can be done there itself.
 - There should be experts from different/ all fields present for the meetings.
- Public hearing for selection of proposals
 - Area sabha and public hearing should come together
- There should be guidance for preparing and writing technically sound proposals.
- Number of proposals should be counted for the same suggestions based on the need as well as neglected areas.
 - More the number proposals of the same suggestion, it should be prioritized.
 - The proposals having suggestions for fulfilling basic needs should be prioritized.
 - The areas which are completely neglected should be prioritized.
- The selection committee should have all the details of the *prabhag* on the basis of which proposals can be selected.
- Proposals consistently suggested over last few years but not yet done should be prioritized.
- Instead of prioritizing one work worth Rs. 5 Lacs, many small works should be done.

4. How should people be involved in **Implementation/Audit/Review** of projects?

- The works to be done at *prabhag level* and related information like the time required for work, contract, tender etc. should be publicized by different means: in ward office and ward with flex boards, internet, newspaper, through meetings like *prabhag level janasabha*.
 - The Corporator should publicize the *janasabha*.
- The unions, organisations, institutions should ask questions.
- Citizens from the *prabhag*, citizen who has suggested the work, *Mohalla* committee should take initiative.
- Citizens should take initiative in doing the technical review for instance good design, good material etc.
- The contractor should commit about/ mention the life of the work and should guarantee its quality. If the infrastructure needs any repair before the stipulated time, it should be done free by the contractor. Such a contractor's name should be publicised/ blacklisted in newspaper.
- The unspent money under PB should be planned (?) by citizens of that *prabhag* itself. It can be used in the same *prabhag* or any other *prabhag* by citizens' consent.
- The social audit should be published at least once a year.
- The media used for publicising PB related things should be all inclusive for instance Braille, pictures, internet
- The PB monitoring shouldn't be assigned to just any one organisation. But there should be third party evaluation of the completed work.
- There should be committee at *prabhag* level which includes sector experts, representatives of all sectors of the society etc. They shouldn't be affiliated to any political background.
- A neighbourhood committee should be formed at polling booth level. It should be all inclusive.
- As a tender is published in the newspaper so the completion of the work shall be published.
- A board "this work is done under PB" should be put on all the works done under PB.

5. **What should be the year round PB Sequence?**

April

1. The complete list of suggested and approved PB works should be published and should be easily accessible to everyone.
2. Cost or / and other details should be available online throughout the year.
3. Suggestions should be accepted throughout the year and those received by September should be considered for the coming financial year.
4. A survey of disabled people in the area should be done for utilizing the budget for the disabled.
5. Need assessment by all inclusive committee
6. Tallying needs and the works done

Ways to check success:

1. Which and how many suggestions get included under PB.
2. How much money will be spent
3. Which kind of work get included

April – May

1. There should be *prabhag* level meeting.
2. The works to be done in the given year should be announced in the *prabhag* level meeting.
3. Social media, newspaper should be used to publicize the announced works.

April – May – June

1. An organization/ union should be formed at *prabhag* level.
2. There should be meeting at *prabhag* level.
3. Need assessment and issues/ trouble spots should be identified by doing *prabhag* level surveys.
4. Need prioritization should be done through citizens' meetings.

May

1. Understanding citizens' feedback on budget through *prabhag* level citizens' meetings.
2. According to the needs of disabled, the required resources and the allotted budget for the same lists should be made.

Ways to check success:

1. Citizens' voting through various media like meeting, poster etc.

June

1. The duration of accepting the suggestions should be increased and should be started from June.
2. Participatory budgeting should be publicized through T.V. and Radio news as well as the F.M. channels on radio. The announcement of onset of PB (accepting suggestion forms) should be made using the same.
3. There should be special meetings conducted of the disabled persons to understand their needs and their suggestions for PB.

June – July

1. The tender process should be watched for.
2. The works suggested under PB should be publicized.
3. The works done under PB in the previous cycle should be audited by citizens to understand the quality of the work.
4. Advertisement in the newspaper for asking citizens' suggestions for PB work

July

1. Citizens' meetings at society or neighbourhood level should be taken in the *prabhag* so that the suggestions can gather and the prioritization would be easier.
2. The social audit meetings can also be conducted during the same period.
3. Ensure that the PB forms reach everyone.

July – August

1. Through citizens' meetings and trust building, incomplete projects/ processes should be completed.
2. Forms can be sent to each house through newspaper, postman etc.
3. Awareness could be raised through radio channels, exhibition etc.
4. The solutions to the issues around should come from people. The suggestions should come in writing as well as through public hearing.

August

1. Publishing the list of works accepted from the last year's suggestions.
2. Publishing the list of tendered PB works in the current year.
3. Publishing the completion time of the tendered works.
4. The minutes/ briefs of the meetings conducted at *prabhag* level and how the suggestions raised in these meetings were received by the administration should be given publicity through newspaper, radio, T.V. etc.
5. The suggested work and allotted money should be tallied.
6. Citizens should get involved by understanding the needs and the selection process.
7. Citizens should check the quality of work done in last year as per the proposed.

Ways to check success

1. Number of suggestion forms increased.
2. Suggestions from illiterates have also reached the ward office.
3. Illiterate people asking for help for form filling at the ward office.
4. List of work which can't be taken under PB but is important is considered for the city level budget.

September

1. Gathering of forms
2. The suggestions and the respective decisions by the junior engineer should be displayed on the notice board at the ward office and on the internet as well.
3. The action taken on the suggestion should be conveyed to the respective citizen latest by October – November.
4. There should be more publicity about PB and at every step during PB.
5. There should be more communication between the citizens and the ward office as well as among the citizens themselves.
6. Status of every suggestion should be updated so that citizens are not disappointed.

October

1. There should be an exhibition of proposals for discussing them.
2. The citizens who have submitted should be invited. It shouldn't be compulsory.
3. Evaluate impact of proposals.
4. Publish area/ number of people impacted per proposal.
5. Administration should publish information like: how many suggestions came in, how many got accepted.

November

1. Check for the possibility of getting the same proposed job done in cheaper way or using the existing government schemes etc.
2. Last year's Report of PB work should be published in newspaper.

3. The detail reasons of the accepted and rejected suggestions
4. Ensuring that the suggestions coming in are technically sound. Taking help of engineers and technicians for the same.
5. Implementing the works decided at *prabhag* level through ER and nominated members on the *Prabhag Samitee*

December

1. On the occasion of world disabled day, 3rd December, public awareness about PB among the disabled. Review of the schemes done for disabled.

January

1. Review of the final report on budget for presence – absence of citizens’ suggestions
2. Quality audit of all the work should be done and penalty and legal punishment to the contractor and PMC officers.

February

1. Conducting discussions among citizens to take their opinions about the works done.
2. Cross - checking the needs, published material and the budget.
3. Reviewing the PB suggested work done by the administration
4. Announce the total budget and 3 % of the total budget should be spent on disabled.

March

1. On the occasion of women’s day, 8th March, gender budget analysis should be done and published. A meeting should be organised to understand the needs of women.

General

1. Metrics
 - a. Total amount of PB spent per vasti
 - b. Suggestions which were included in city budget
 - c. Category of beneficiaries: urban poor/ middle class
2. Use PB for incentive like tax rebates/ competition/ prizes to promote good practices like waste segregation/ composting/ renewable energy etc.

Suggestions for Prioritization Process

1. What criteria should be used by the public while prioritizing proposals

Please ✓ yes or no for each criterion below	Yes	No
a. Project will help different segments of society	21	
b. Project improves the local environment	21	
c. Project does not harm of the livelihood of the poor	21	
d. The disabled should be thought about. E.g presence of ramp(<i>this was suggested additionally</i>)		

2. The following Information should be available about proposals presented for prioritization:

- What is to be done
- Where it is to be done
- Estimated cost
- How long will it take to be done
- How many and which groups will be benefited
- Number of people who will be impacted
- Whether this work has been done before

3. Proposals be presented in the following way, for citizens, so as to be able to prioritize

- Radio, T.V., Newspaper News
- Exhibition
- Local/area level newspaper
- Citizens' meeting, voting
- Maps, photo display

4. Proposals be presented for prioritization at the following forums:

Please ✓ yes or no for each forum listed below	Yes	No	Don't know
a. Neighbourhood level	12		
b. Prabhag level	17		1
c. Administrative ward level	6		

5. Who can participate in prioritization

Please ✓ yes or no for each option below	Yes	No
a. Only registered voters in prabhag	2	
b. All those who live in prabhag	15	
c. All those who work in prabhag	15	
d. All those who visit prabhag	4	
e. All city residents	3	
f. All citizens of the country	3	
g. Others including NRI, foreign students etc	3	

6. Citizens can make suggestions on proposals at the time of prioritization

Yes	No
21	

Remarks: Initially, the rules for giving suggestions and acceptance and rejection should be defined.

7. Citizens can indicate if they are opposed to a proposal at the time of prioritization (veto)

21	
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Remarks: with valid justification