

Rhetoric and Reality of Public-Private Partnerships in India: A case study of Bangalore Agenda Task Force

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Abstract

Evidences now reveal rising emphasis on the public-private partnership (PPP) approach to raise the efficiency and inclusion level of the development interventions. This paper reviews the characteristics of the PPP approach and examines its utility and viability through a case study of BATF created for the delivery of urban infrastructure. PPP is considered as an alternative service delivery model to achieve efficiency and address shortages of public resources, although unlikely to replace fully traditional service delivery approach of the welfare state. It is visualised that PPP would help to overcome impediments posed by state failure and institutional constraints, and distributing costs and risk among partners. Some observable positive outcomes are seen of such initiatives. But studies also indicate citizen repose little faith on such approaches as saviour of their problems and prefer the government (state) for solutions. Despite tangible accomplishments, the fact is that the approach does not by itself guarantee equity. PPP alone is not a panacea; rather it is one of the tools the State has at its disposal for service delivery, which needs careful application.

I. Public-Private Partnership for Service Delivery: Conceptual Framework

There is lack of consensus over the definition of Public Private Partnership (PPP). PPP is defined as 'working arrangements based on a mutual commitment between a public sector organisation with any organization outside of the public sector' (Gerrad, 2001: 49; Bovaid, 2004: 200). It is a contractual agreement formed between a government agency and a private sector that allows the latter in public service delivery towards financing, designing, implementing (Peirre, 1999:374; Osborne, 2000; Awortwi, 2004: 213; DEA and ADB, 2006: 17; Hodge and Greve, 2007:545; Rajan, 2007: 2).

PPP is innovative, flexible collaborations in which the partners are bound by shared values and mutual trust to share cost, risks, and benefits (Batley, 1996; Ghare, 2001:

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441; Teisman and Klijn, 2003: 197; Prosper Ngowi, 2006: 3; Bloomfield, 2006:400). PPP is also understood in terms of inherent power dynamics shared mutually among the partners (Lister, 2000:228). Power might be political information, or organizational power. PPP is alternative service delivery model to achieve efficiency and address shortages, although unlikely to replace fully traditional service delivery by governments. The partnership concept is linked to the network forms of governance, in which public actors co-opt other actors to solve the governance problems. PPP therefore, represent an innovative or new way of doing business to improve the quality and efficiency of public services.

Typology of Public-Private Partnership

PPP encompasses a range of partnerships based on (i) number of partnership involved (ii) governance level at which partnership is evolved and (iii) the objectives or purpose for which partnership is constituted (Sekar, 2002: 5). Other classification include: type of partnership, size of partner (measurable in terms of funding, revenue, investments etc), extent of collaboration/level of commitment, role and functions, stage of partnership, type of actors involved, area of intervention for output, scope of partnership, organisational form, capacity in partnership, and geographic location. All these forms of partnership imply some degree of complementarity or synergy or collaboration or co-production, dialogue, contracting, co-ownership, market friendly regulation and trust between public and civic actors in pursuit of common set of social objectives (Robinson and White, 2001: 107; Sansom, 2006:210)).

The classification includes public-public, public-private, and public- civil society and International- development partners. Partnership between public- public is most common to cooperate and coordinate in service delivery (Hall, et al, 2005: 7). The coordination between the Bangalore City Corporation (BCC) and Karnataka Slum Clearance Board (KSCB) can be mentioned in this regard. The partnerships between local and central or state governments for power sharing (for setting policy priorities, policy design or planning and policy implementation) are also come under this category.

PPP in partnership with 'private' sector include interalia corporate bodies, consulting firms, contractors, maintenance companies, and private investors and so on. The public-private also include: service contracts, operation and management contracts, Leasing-Buy-Build-Operate (BBO), Lease-Develop-Operate (LDO), Wrap-Around Addition (WAA), Build Operate-Transfer (BOT), Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) etc. Most contracts cover the finance, design, management, and maintenance obligations. These contracts are usually financed by user fees or tariffs or by government subsidies. The argument is that private participation results in better efficiency. The PPP helps to raise resources (funds, techno-managerial skill and expertise), innovation, cost saving and construction and commercial risk sharing, entrepreneurial spirit and improve services simultaneously.

The partnership with third sector such as local NGOs, community organisations, trade unions and so on (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2004) is to achieve transparency,

accountability, social equity (Laquian, 2005: 307). Partnership with NGOs or Community Based Organizations also varies depending whether primarily, a deepening role or stretching role (Krishna, 2003: 365). Such engagements facilitate co-production without undue interference of government (Sansom, 2006: 213).

These civic groups play a predominant role in mobilising services, pressing for micro-policy reforms, engage in mass campaigns, demand for better services, monitor actual provision and ensuring accountability from service providers (Chowdhury Roy, 1999:1097; Jalal, 2000: 43; Robinson and White, 2001: 100; Paul, et al 2004: 933). The horizontal engagement of public civil society is aimed to promote consultative process and prioritise service options and widen the participatory democracy. In fact, the process of decentralisation has resulted in the empowerment of the common people through local-level planning and community resource mobilisation. Norms of such cooperation on networks of civic engagement among ordinary citizens and public agencies are used for developmental ends and serve as socialisation agents of partnership (Chowdhury Roy, 1999:1098; Vigoda, 2002:536; Sangita, 2005: 75) and realise collective pressure to usher policy changes. Instead of remaining passive recipients, the participation of civic groups has in fact inspired the undertaking of a unique state-citizen dialogue in a stupendous way by 'pressurizing' or 'lobbying' the existing state for change. These structures are effective beyond their social role, by linking the public issues at the grassroots into the appropriate platform at the local level. The deliberative structures hope to promote civic values, civility as a precondition for governance and thereby determine their own development paradigms.

The state and international partnership include a public authority from a country (preferably high income country) entering into a partnership with a public authority with a lower income country usually to assist the latter with its development projects (Hall, et al, 2005: 7-8; Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2004: 254). The second type of partnership is between international partners when public authorities (Hall et al 2005: 6) from different countries work together to address common set issues and agendas. These partnerships are important inter-organisational mechanism for delivering international development assistance. For instance, transnational agencies or international donor agencies like World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) or United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has major funding or contribution for infrastructure such as water supply; sanitation; energy or power sector.

There are many potential drivers for promoting partnership in developing countries. First, glaring infrastructure deficit, in the areas such as water supply, sanitation, local transportation, and waste treatment compel the government to opt private sector for financing, design, construction, and operation (Lquian, 2005: 312). Partnership would help to overcome impediments posed by state failure, institutional constraints, and distributing costs and risk among partners. In addition, partnership constitutes the most significant methods to generate performance of essential services that tends to reflect the incorporation of market-based principles and practices into the public provisioning of services (Pinto, 1998: 394). In the field of local governance, the governmental

organisations are increasingly dependent on private or semi-private actors for implementation of their policies and service delivery.

Expected outcomes from the Partnership

What inherent mechanism the PPP mode has to raise the inclusion level of the services? PPP reduces the gap of meeting increasing infrastructure needs and social exclusion. Partnership further can bring creativity, dynamic, resilience, innovation, energy, vibrancy and capacity building to improve service delivery. PPP however is critical in promoting innovation in technological, institutional, and organizational behaviors and practices in service delivery.

The objectives of PPP in service delivery vary with wider political and private interest. The PPP tries to promote clear customer focus through reduced cost, faster services, and improved service quality. Further, PPP promotes greater efficiency in terms of improved coverage, access and enhanced social service (Cook and Minogue, 1990: 398; Kaul, 1997: 21; Brown and Potoski, 2006:657; Bloomfield, 2006:401). PPP ensures recovery of user charges by better risk allocation and procures additional revenue streams, which public institutions alone often fail. Thus, PPP is seen as the best way, to govern the complex relations and interactions in a modern network society (Teisman and Klijn, 2002: 198).

Obstacles for PPP

The major constraints for PPP are: fragmentation, duplication, heterogeneity and uncertain outcomes. Power relationship in partnership is often asymmetrical and less ambivalence. The most vexed issues of a partnership approach are fragmented structures and processes, blurring responsibilities and accountability. Effective coordination in partnership seems to be the area of contention which includes: duplication of services, heterogeneous approaches, competition for resources, and lack of integration, corruption, inter-institutional coordination, bureaucratization, and dependence (Robinson and White, 2001: 103; Krishna, 2003: 368).

Public authority in partnership is often overshadowed owing to its focus on monitoring and evaluation. Lack of infrastructure and other resources available with the Public authorities, which is, one of the drivers of such partnership; leads to somewhat uneven playing field and weak relations. Inadequate control over the PPP, is often observed in the cases of local contracts with private sector involved in services provisioning and result in higher cost to local taxpayers (Bloomfield, 2006:402;Hodge and Greve 2007: 553). The long-term partnership entailing innovative methods of financing public facilities are susceptible to transparency problems (Ghere, 2000: 448; Bloomfield, 2006: 403) and within partnership coordination costs are a major challenge to successful PPPs. Staff reduction or downsizing leads to mistrust and poor management. Tariff increase, layoffs, and poor stakeholder's coordination have contributed for its weakness. Further, private investors are basically profit-oriented. PPPs tend to focus on markets where revenues are easily generated. The poor are often excluded from PPPs because of institutional constraints that prevent the development of an attractive market that

involves the poor (Robinson and White, 2001: 104; Laquian, 2005: 312; Leung and Hui, 2005: 14). Such developments also push forward the argument that public provisioning is the only way out in a welfare state.

Many PPPs have failed due to strong opposition from civil society, local media, and other stakeholders. Even in the absence of this bias, governments often lack the financial resources and the technical capacities to provide services to the poor. Partnership would further marginalise the poor as they focus on markets for profits. Further, the availability of private financing for infrastructure projects has essentially provided governments an opportunity to use a 'mega-credit' card to charge on infrastructure deals (Hodge and Greve, 2007: 552). Lastly, the partnership projects have generally undermined the significance of local cultural ethos. Overcoming these institutional constraints often require innovative solutions and an inclusive partnership that will bring in all relevant stakeholders.

Enabling Conditions for Public-Private Partnership

It will require careful planning and application through a clear framework for partnerships to extract full potential of PPP mode. Governments need to work on accountable and transparent structures to formulate and enforce. First the establishment of proactive mechanisms (such as ombudsman, ethical training, and citizen grievances processes) would ensure partnership legitimacy. Second, PPP needs to do preparatory work defining procedure (specificities), tasks, quality indicators and monitoring process. Improved and more independent regulation of public utilities is achieved by an effective entry point for future well defined PPP contracts (Sansom, 2006:215). Some necessary pre-requisites include strong political commitment, transparency and consistency of policy, effective regulation, careful design of the contract with appropriate risk apportionment and attention to cost recovery, and clearly defined stakeholder roles, project financing, and extent of competition. And creation of a good information base is also an important factor. Feedback and consultations with citizens, labour unions, relevant government agencies, private investors, civil society organizations, and media will ensure support, client focus, and overall improved implementation of PPP and protect public interest.

Thus, successful PPP stems from the nature of goods and services produced and depends on transformation of inputs into outputs and tradeoffs that partnership face (Orts, 1996: 1080; Rudolph, 2000: 1768). Further, the successful partnership depends on the form of rates paid to public officials and the opportunity costs facing citizens for inputs like knowledge, skills and time (Ostrom, 1996: 1081). Finally, effective conflict resolution, contradicting social and political goals, complicated contractual agreements, expertise, consultation, cooperation and attending to their suggestions are all potential areas of concern.

Public-Private Partnership in Urban Context

Cities of the world experience tremendous pressure in terms of management and operation of urban systems as well as service delivery. Important changes are taking place in the governance of cities in developing countries; one of the important being the proliferation of various forms of networks and partnership between public-private

and civil society. Many urban reforms such as partnerships with public-private and civil society organisations are introduced to improve quality of governance and service delivery. The broad stakeholders in this reform process include differing in sectors and levels. Changes in rules, norms and values, practices have been brought to facilitate coordination among various agencies to improve efficiency. Privatisation, decentralisation, restructuring of departments and administrative procedures, laws and regulations, social audit, e-governance, citizen charter, redressal of grievances, transparency and sound personnel policies constituted major strategies of urban governance reform (World Bank, 2003). Many Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) introduce innovations to improve billing and collection, rationalisation of service charges, simplifications of tax assessment system, computerisation of services, and improved accounting and financial management systems.

II. Public-Private Partnership: A case study of BATF in Bangalore City

Partnership among various government agencies has been evolved to address the changing needs of growth and development of Bangalore. City Improvement Trust Board (CITB) in 1945 and later Bangalore Metropolitan Planning Board (BMPB) in 1961 was responsible for preparation of master plan for Bangalore (Heitzman, 2004: 48). In their place, Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) came into existence in 1976. The BDA prepared Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) in 1985 to promote inter-agency coordination. Bangalore Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (BMRDA) was set up in 1985 to plan, coordination and supervise orderly development of the Bangalore Metropolitan Region (8721 Kms). State departments like Urban Development Department (UDD), Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) and the State Town Planning Directorate (STPD) State Town Planning Board (STPB) and Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation (KUIDFC) are responsible for policy, supervision and coordination. Major private and public planning bodies such as Nandi (Mysore Highway Corridor)-Bangalore Mysore International Corridor Planning Authority (BMICPA), BIALI for construction of New International Airport-Bangalore International Airport Planning Authority (BIAPPA) and IT corridor are involved in planning and development activities in the city. The problem of vertical networking is compounded with poor intergovernmental coordination and fragmented interventions. To overcome this, Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF) was constituted to mobilise resources, improve infrastructure and transform Bangalore a better performing metropolis.

BATF and Partnership -Policy Formulation, Enforcement and Implementation

To develop Bangalore as class one city of the country by 2004 and strengthen its position as an engine for Karnataka's economic growth, BATF was constituted in the year 2000. It consisted of 15 members representing government, corporate sector and civil society. The BATF represented entrepreneurial class influencing public policy space as partners in setting the urban agendas as well as implementation (Heitzman, 2004: 103; Raghunath and Sen, 2003: 206). Over the years, the BATF has been silent catalyst translating its mandate into action projects and creation systems to enable PPP

for realising the city's potential.

BATF worked with 7 civic stakeholders (BMP, BDA, BWSSB, BCP, BMTC, BESCOM, and BSNL). ATF assisted them in implementation of short-term and long-term projects. In addition ATF undertook projects on its own initiative to build credibility with the stakeholders and show case best practices (BATF, 2003). Such experiment has enabled the stakeholders to access skills and resources of the various civic and administrative stakeholders. These efforts aimed efficiency, cost effective implementation projects and schemes that encouraged participation of public and private sectors, professionals and citizen groups for enhancing quality of life in the city. The thrust areas of ATF include: Up-gradation of infrastructure; public health and sanitation; roads and traffic; and introduction of local financial reforms.

Urban Infrastructure and Upgradation: ATF Partnership

With the partnership of ATF, BDA developed infrastructure facilities like ring roads, fly-overs, grade separators, parks and lakes and other infrastructure facilities. These were undertaken at cost of Rs 300- 400 crores without any assistance from the state government and other civic bodies (BDA, 2004: 32). These projects have been completed within 18 to 24 months. These enabled BDA to turn out financially vibrant and developed the quality city infrastructure with no additional burden on the citizens. Further, BDA allotted 40,000 housing sites during 2000 to 2003.

The Bangalore city police introduced many changes primarily on prevention of crime and maintaining of traffic management, with the help of ATF. Police force has created innovative solutions to address the city's traffic problems through one-ways. Under the guidance of ATF, many citizen-friendly initiatives such as 'Pay and Park' facility was installed in 95 locations. This enabled BMTC to earn over 1.25 crore revenue per year. Some of the issues in this context are – one, does the revenue generated help to recover the costs? Two, how the infrastructure developed enhanced convenience and efficiency of the citizens? ATF with BMTC constructed 100-125 bus shelters on BOT basis at no cost. BMTC earned over 1.25 crore revenue per annum carrying 25 lakh passengers every day. The introduction of service centres (information-cum-complaint lodging system) by BMTC enabled passengers to enquire about bus routes, arrivals and departures (ATF, 2003). In addition, 40 Modern High-Tech Bus Shelters were constructed along Outer Ring Road. Other highlights of the period were installation of 647 new power transformers, installation of 1.3 lakh new telephone connections, introduction of one-way traffic on major roads, a modern fingerprint system for crime detection, renovation of five ground-level reservoirs and allocation of 5,000 housing sites. The ATF in collaboration with the BMP, the Bangalore Traffic Police and the BMTC has taken up a Central Area Traffic Management Plan (CATMP). This has helped to some extent in reducing air pollution, travel time and fuel consumption, and make pedestrian crossings safe.

Financial Reforms and ATF

ATF along with BMP has also undertaken a number of citizen friendly initiatives like

the introduction of the *Sarala Katha Scheme* (SKS), *easy plan* (Sulabha Nakshe) for sanction of building plans, setting up a computerised complaints management system, easily accessible round the clock control room and Self-Assessment Scheme (SAS) of property tax. Although the exact numbers are not known, the BMP officials claim that the citizen's response has been very good for SKS. Bangalore thus became the first city in India to adopt a comprehensive unit area method based, property tax assessment scheme. The BATF has contributed in developing communication strategy, delivery mechanism and computerisation of data (Raghunath and Sen, 2003: 207).

In 2002-03, about 2000 *Khata* booklets were sold. Besides, Fund Based Accounting System (FBAS) was introduced in the area of accounting and budgeting reforms and along with various stakeholders viz. BMP, BCP and BMTC formed a mechanism to address the tax problems in Bangalore (BATF, 2003). As a result the BMP property tax collection had gone up to Rs 200 crores from Rs. 100 crores within 3 years. A thorough revised financial module was done with all required technical inputs. These measures have helped to mobilise additional resources. On one hand these are basically improvement of governance issues in the state domain and push for the argument that better governance mechanisms of state enhance provisioning capacity.

III. Urban Government and Civil Society Partnership

The partnership between government and civil society in Bangalore can be classified into two categories. In the first category, the government and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have come together to set priorities and formulate, implement and monitor policies and programmes. In the second category, the CSOs are undertaking various programmes on their own without collaborating with government. Some of the organisations have contested the government actions by mobilising and empowering the people to raise their voice. These civic groups exhibited a range of organisational forms which include the loose debating style, the entrepreneurial style, and the confederation of neighbourhood interests. Such 'third force' activism reflects augmentation of social capital that articulated collective visions of urban based problems and offer solutions. (Heitzman, 2004: 110).

The government has collaborated with civic groups for policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. The organizations like 'Janaagraha' and 'Swabhimani' collaborated with BMP in setting agenda and identifying the needs of citizen. While NGOs like, AVAS and CIVIC mobilised slum dwellers through 'Slum *Jagruthu*' programme. To promote policy and action planning consultation, UNCHS funded CIVIC on urban management programme (Heitzman 2004: 160). Community Based Organizations, NGOs and residential associations raised their voice and local concerns for the provisioning of services (Paul, 2004). NGOs like 'Centre for Environment Education', 'Bangalore Environment Trust', INTACH, Exnora and Shanthinagar Residential Associations have set the dialogue and provide engineering and technical inputs to BMP for improving Integrated Solid Waste Management. A citizen-local

government initiative for cleaner, greener and safe Bangalore was launched by 'Swabhimana' (Nair, 2005: 114). Citizens groups like CIVIC and others aimed to empower citizens with the Right to Information Act (RTI) and vision campaigns. Initiatives have been taken by corporate sector like Wipro and Intel software companies in education through I-shiksha services (a network of computer tools) to enhance teaching and learning process. Similarly, the Rag-pickers Education and Development Scheme (REDS); and the Tata Council for Community Initiatives worked on community programmes for the city (Heitzman, 2004: 162).

Public and civil society partnership has also brought through public hearings forums for providing services like electricity, water, and so on. Nearly 3591 cases related to water disputes, non-receipt of bills, metering faults, were resolved during 2001-2005 through water adalats conducted by BWSSB. NGOs were also involved in educating citizen about citizen charters to redress grievances through inter-voice recording system, RTI cell (Right to Information) and so on. Some of the citizen groups like Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Samudaya and Kannada Shakti Kendras have redefined urban space by mobilizing social class and promote civic activism. To this effect, BATF, PAC (Public Affairs Centre) and CIVIC shared the concern for the management of city. NGOs like CIVIC, Citizen's Action group and Bangalore Environment Trust, and Nagarlok were involved in legal activism against BMP for the poor state of transportation, private use of public spaces (Nair 2005: 196).

The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1993 facilitated state-civil society partnership in provisioning of services (Subha and Bhargava, 1999; Sekhar, 2005). This arrangement has given legitimacy to the civic groups and improved the credibility of BMP¹. This has facilitated efficient delivery of services and empowered the ULBs. Civic groups like 'Jaanagraha', 'Civic' and 'Proof' are involved in participatory budgeting practices at grassroots level.

IV. The Outcomes of the PPP mode

The outcomes of the PPP mode can be discussed on efficiency and equity terms.

Efficiency

Reviews indicate that efficiency levels of service delivery have improved in some of the public utilities in Bangalore. By limiting manpower and outsourcing its activities, the efficiency levels in BWSSB had gone up from 78 per cent to 95 per cent. While in BDA per capita productivity went up from Rs. 21 lakhs to Rs.1 crore, salary as percentage of budget dropped from 7 per cent to 3 per cent. Through contracted out maintenance work of streetlights of BMP resulted to avoid pilferage in material use and energy loss and increase in efficiency level to 95 per cent as compared to 45 per cent earlier (Urban Finance 2004; Sangita 2006: 49-50). Corruption and harassment of the common man has declined in registration deeds after the introduction of Kauvery software, and has ensured the speedy delivery and better access to information.

Here we observe efficiency gains of two types. One, efficiency gain is at the cost of limiting the manpower or using outsourced workforce at cheaper rate. This can be termed as low road efficiency. Two, avoidance of pilfer age of energy and loss is a welcome mode.

Equity and Service Delivery

We are aware that privatisation adversely affects the interests of the vulnerable sections and backward regions in having access to public resources and employment. The basic services like water, sanitation and electricity provided by the private organisations may not be available in the disadvantaged and backward regions. Such a situation may lead to social tensions. In many instances social networks and civil society associations or partnership do not guarantee effectiveness in the social sphere. Chandhoke (2005) in Delhi context found that the citizens repose little faith on civil society institutions as saviour of their problems and prefer the government (state) for solutions. Similar study by Harris (2005) in Delhi concluded that poorer and less educated are more likely to seek political parties and government support to solve their problems rather than civil society.

In Bangalore context the PPP mode indicates limited impact on urban poor. In spite of BWSSB's all-round performance, the availability of water to the poor and low-income group is very low. A study of five slums in Bangalore, it was found that the water consumption was only 25 per cent of the city average which was less than half the water norm fixed by public health engineers. One-third of the population has only partial or no access to potable water (Subramaniam, 1988; Benjamin, 2000).

Access to other services such as toilets in Bangalore is also not satisfactory. An official report for 1994 stated that there were 113,000 houses without any latrines, while 17,500 had dry latrines (Benjamin 2000: 39). Similarly, while addressing the infrastructure needs, the lofty ideals and aims of BATF did not trickle down the benefits of its activities to the poorer sections in the city (Ghosh 2005). Further, ward committees do not constitute effective platform for interface between citizens and representatives, as the latter do not have awareness about their respective ward office and their representatives (Sekhar, 2005). The satisfaction level of service among the poor was not very high. Partnerships tend to be ad hoc, donor-dependent, and loosely coordinated, highly supply-driven rather than end-user and limited in scope to impact on poverty reduction.

The case study and reviews present some of the stark realities of the approach. The question is how a good pro-poor model can be positioned. Or universal public provisioning in the basic services sector is the only way out?

V. Policy Prescriptions

Vibrant partnership is an essential paradigm to ensure the efficient services delivery and raise the inclusion level. Local governance reforms highlight the critical importance

of partnership in the negotiation, delivery and monitoring of services. The new trend of partnership represents culture of new deliberative forums impacting on policy institutions. This is understood in the context of competing social demands that pressurise for public action/ policies. Despite tangible accomplishments, the above findings clearly demonstrate the fact that nexus through PPP do not by itself guarantee equity and holistic participation. PPP alone is not a panacea, rather it is one of the tools, and government has at their disposal for service delivery – a tool that needs careful application. The government is committed to empower citizens with more opportunities to influence public services in ways that are relevant and meaningful to them, and in ways that will make a real difference to services.

An important prerequisite for partnership and reforms to be effective is ensure that citizens are equipped with knowledge, skills and confidence to play an active role in public dialogue, consultation and local decision making. Only then, they can scrutinize public services, hold them to account and help them to improve. To this end, the government must support capacity building; scale up citizen governance. The bottom line interventions through innovative models such as partnerships must adequately ensure the provisioning of services to poor for better urban governance. Greater attention must be paid to broaden decision making process that determine distribution pattern and deepen to include low income communities in service delivery systems and thereby contribute for poverty reduction.

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