

# PRO-POOR SERVICE DELIVERY INITIATIVES BY BANGALORE MAHANAGARA PALIKE

## I. Overview and Profile of Bangalore

### 1.1 *An Overview*

Bangalore city, known as the Silicon Valley of India, is the fifth largest Urban Agglomeration in the country. The city is growing rapidly and competes with the leading techno-knowledge cities of the world today.

The local self-government institutions in Bangalore Urban Agglomeration (BUA) comprise Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP), seven City Municipal Councils (CMCs) and one Town Municipal Council (TMC). The jurisdiction of BMP is about 226 sq. km with 4.3 million people. The council of BMP consists of 100 elected members (called Councilors) from the Wards. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected from among the Councilors for a term of one year. BMP with an administrative strength of 13,000 headed by the Commissioner (chief executive of BMP appointed by the State Government) is responsible for performing 55 obligatory and discretionary functions.

Out of Rs.10220 million (US\$ 226 million) annual budget of BMP for 2003 – 2004, about 60 percent is earmarked for development works. For the same year, a budget of Rs.213.5 million (US\$ 4.7 million) has been allocated exclusively for the upliftment of urban poor.

### 1.2 *Poverty Profile*

There are an estimated one million urban poor within the BMP area which is more than 20 percent of the total population of the city. About one-third of the slum inhabitants live below the poverty line, i.e. on a monthly household income of less than Rs.2,500 (US\$ 55.5) under deplorable service conditions (see Annexure 1 for details). Further, the literacy rate among the urban poor is below the overall rate at the city level and the female literacy rate is lower than that of the male.

### 1.3 *Development Challenges and Issues of Concern*

Providing infrastructure and managing the service delivery systems has not matched with the growth and development of the city. The high population densities, heavy traffic movements, increasing environmental pollution and large poor population makes it difficult for BMP to deliver cost-effective, quality services. The urban poor, in particular, are in a disadvantaged position when it comes to availing and accessing the infrastructure, which is under great strain. Consequently, the issues concerned with pro-poor service delivery have become more complex.

The three key areas of concern in this decade are (a) the administering of urban infrastructure, (b) improving pro-poor service delivery, and (c) ensuring the participation of the community in the development process.

The five main challenges in pro-poor service delivery for BMP are: (a) improving the availability and accessibility of basic services, (b) providing economic opportunities through imparting skills and training, (c) environmental quality improvement programs in slums, (d) empowerment of women to make them partners in progress, and (e) adopting a participatory approach in decision-making by public and resident groups.

Further, the local self-governments of BUA are confronted by three important management issues: (a) the coordination of the activities of the various local self-governments responsible for the governance of the agglomeration; (b) the Mayor / Chairman elected for a short-term having to evolve long-term policies for the urban poor, and (c) ensuring the continuous improvement of services with people's participation.

*“The poor serves and services the City but in turn they are serviced with poor basic infrastructure and amenities”, says Prof. Rao, Urban Expert. The Commissioner, BMP intervenes and says “Our efforts are yet to match and reach the needy, but this decade is dedicated to the pro-poor delivery system”. The Mayor too feels that “There are lots to be done to improve the infrastructure, especially for the needy urban poor. Let us review our past experiences and plan the future right now.”*

**– Prof. Rao, Urban Expert  
(in a conversation with the Mayor and Commissioner)**

#### **1.4 Service Delivery Systems and Strategies**

It must be admitted that BMP had neither a long-term strategy nor a separate budget for development of urban poor, primarily due to the short tenure of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chairmen of Standing Committees. Besides BMP depended heavily upon traditional annual budget methods as a tool for planning and development which was not necessarily linked to priorities. Nevertheless, it continuously attempted to serve the urban poor by way of schemes and projects under the annual plans and budgets most of which were short-term programs planned and implemented by BMP. The design and implementation of these programs lacked a need-based approach and did not involve people in determining needs, prioritizing services and obtaining their feedback for setting service delivery standards. Recognizing the existence of different communities and their different needs was absent in the planning process of BMP. The “urban poor” were not identified as a special group and hence remained under-served. Their problems and needs were, however, addressed through general welfare programs.

## II. Service Delivery Improvement Strategies and Initiatives for Economic Empowerment of the Urban poor

### 2.1 Need for Improving Services

There was a growing realization within BMP on the need for improving service delivery systems which was apparent from the increasing number of customer complaints and the dissatisfaction expressed by citizens through media and other channels of information. The

"The poor give so much more than we give them. We have so much to learn from them"

- Mother Theresa

formation of SWABHIMANA groups (resident's associations) all over the City on an increasingly large number and their concern and demand for the improvement of infrastructure facilities coupled with similar concerns from other NGOs and CBOs drove BMP to involve these groups in forming policies and developing strategies for service improvements.

The increasing urban poor population was another worrying factor for BMP. Though vocational training programs were being conducted to empower the urban poor, these training programs hardly made them skilled to secure jobs and most often were not in tune with the industry needs.

BMP was now forced to re-look at the service delivery process and also re-structure the vocational training programs to result in improved customer satisfaction and economic empowerment of the urban poor, especially women.

### 2.2 NIRANTARA – Approach & Principles

The introduction of NIRANTARA<sup>1</sup> programme in 1998, based on the management techniques of benchmarking and continuous improvement was a blessing to BMP. It changed the way BMP looked at its user / customers needs and the entire service delivery process which involved community and NGO participation in the prioritization of needs, and a feedback mechanism to continuously improve the service delivery standards.

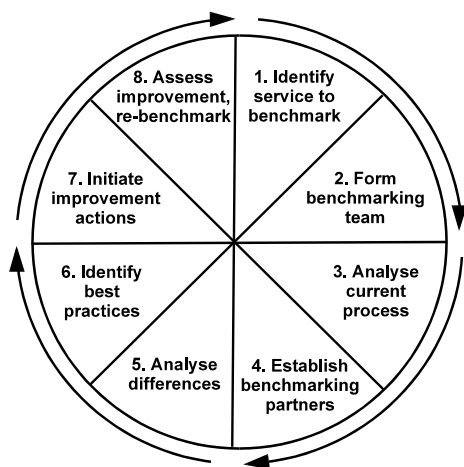
The BMP has named the *Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement* (BM & CI) as 'NIRANTARA' which in the local language means "*Continuous Improvement*". The main objective of NIRANTARA is to systematize and institutionalize aspects of service delivery improvement through management strategies and techniques such as benchmarking and continuous improvement with people's participation and feedback mechanisms.

NIRANTARA is a systematic process invoking sound analyze, and external comparisons, driven by teams and involving the community through the following approach: (a) *Capacity Building* of co-ordinators and improvement teams, (b) *Analyze services & processes* through community / NGO involvement and feedback mechanisms, (c) *Implement service improvements* in partnership with NGO / voluntary organisations / business establishments, (d) Ongoing service improvement initiatives through BM & CI (e) Implement institutional measures.

<sup>1</sup> Funded by ADB and technical assistance provided by ACIG in association with STEM, Bangalore

Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement are two important tools used in the improvement process. *Benchmarking* is a process that stimulates improvement by comparing services, processes and organizational performance between a number of organizations. Through detailed comparisons, an organisation can identify opportunities to improve its services. For benchmarking to work effectively, existing practices must be studied and performance indicators selected to judge service performance. Service staff must be involved in the benchmarking process, so that they develop the commitment to change existing services. *Continuous Improvement* is a process of step-wise improvement involving everyone in the organization in continuously looking for better ways of doing things to improve service delivery performance. The focus is on meeting customer needs and measuring performance through feedback mechanisms.

### The Benchmarking Cycle




---

### Principles of Continuous Improvement

- Focus on the Customer
  - Improve all processes
  - Involve Everyone through Teamwork
  - Measure Performance
- 

The key components of the NIRANTARA Programme include (a) training and sensitization programs for the officials, (b) institutional arrangement – **setting up of a steering committee & a working committee with project teams, to plan, deliver and monitor the service improvements, and involvement of business establishments / civil society in the implementation and maintenance works,** (c) **prioritizing services for phased implementation,** (d) **ranking and selection of prioritized services for immediate improvement,** (e) **using survey methodology and undertaking detailed study & analyses for understanding customer requirements and designing service delivery solutions accordingly,** (f) **linking selected service improvements to budgets,** (g) **people’s participation in prioritizing different development areas, prioritizing services for implementation within a development area, articulating their needs and preferences and giving feedback on quality of the implemented service,** (h) **NGO / CBO participation in – prioritizing services for improvement, feedback and maintenance of implemented services.**

---

### Key Components of NIRANTARA

- Training and Sensitization
  - Institutional arrangement
  - Prioritization of services for phased implementation
  - Ranking and selection of prioritized services for immediate implementation
  - Using surveys methodology & preparation of project reports
  - Selected services reflected in budgets
  - Participation of community and NGOs in the improvement process
- 

Two services successfully implemented under NIRANTARA are the improvement of footpaths and construction of community toilets. The implementation details of these services are explained in Part III.

### **2.3 Economic Empowerment & Social Development**

Keeping in view the phenomenal increase in their population to more than one million, the BMP had incorporated a number of schemes formulated by State and Central Governments to serve the urban poor. Most of these were evolved through a time process in an ad hoc manner and not based on the needs and priorities of the target groups. A consultation process with people, NGOs and targeted groups is lacking at the moment. The existing schemes cover the areas of primary health, education, basic civic amenities like water, sanitation, roads and drainage, electricity to individual houses in slum areas, and creating employment opportunities to improve economic conditions by imparting vocational training for adolescent girls and women. A few of these schemes are worth mentioning for their innovative, comprehensive and result-oriented approach. For instance, the vocational training programs in tailoring is targeted towards women and adolescent girls to economically empower them and bring about a change in their social status. For details refer Annexure 3.

The components of the vocational training program include, (a) needs-assessment, (b) institutional arrangement – political, administrative & financial, (c) facilitating economic opportunities, (d) identification of target beneficiary groups, (e) selection of trainees, (f) implementation & capacity building, (g) post-implementation assessment and (h) status upliftment in society.

A successful initiative under the vocational training programme has been the training programme in tailoring for women and adolescent girls. The details of this programme are explained in Part IV.

### **III. Nirantara – Strategic Approach to Improvement of Footpaths and Community Toilets**

#### **3.1 *NIRANTARA Initiatives***

The first step in the facilitation of the NIRANTARA program was to get the commitment of senior officials and management to embark on the program through training and sensitization sessions. The next concrete step was to put an institutional arrangement in place within BMP to manage the program. Two committees were set up, namely the NIRANTARA Steering Committee (NSC) and NIRANTARA Working Committee (NWC) to own, lead and manage the service delivery improvements. NGOs and CBOs who are the members of NWC and NSC represent the voice of the community. The NSC is responsible for the quality and effectiveness of the program while the NWC will take on the responsibility of planning and implementing service improvements. To enhance their capability in applying the components of NIRANTARA, the NSC and NWC underwent a capacity building program<sup>2</sup> to build the right skills and attitude for effectively implementing the program. The trained coordinators were organized into project teams to enhance service delivery standards for a specific service.

During the capacity building program for NSC and NWC, a survey was conducted among senior officials in BMP and NGOs. The survey identified 32 services for improvement. Thereafter, based on the frequency of demand for a service improvement and other criteria, like (a) service importance to city's strategy (b) service cost relative to operating costs (c) potential for improvement and (d) number of customers for the service, 10 services were ranked and prioritized for improvement. Further five services were taken up for detailed analysis, study and implementation by the project teams. These include (a) footpaths, (b) community toilets, (c) solid waste management & education, (d) property tax assessment & collection and (e) food safety. The details of the services selected under the Project and its overall influence on BMP are given in Annexure 2.

The detailed project reports prepared on the above services by the improvement teams had not only awakened the top level decision makers and elected members at BMP to the immediate needs of the poor and common man, but had also attracted the interest and contribution of corporate bodies who come forward to participate actively in these programs. There were other players (NGOs) who made their significant contributions to the improvement process by producing report cards<sup>3</sup> on the performance of BMP.

To limit ourselves to the scope of the case study, two services, namely, improvement of footpaths and construction of community toilets, have been selected here for detailed understanding of the components of NIRANTARA, how they were used in the improvement of services and their impact on the urban poor.

#### **3.2 *Strategic Approach to Improvement of Footpaths***

The condition of most of the footpaths in Bangalore City was deplorable, attracting the wrath of the citizens as well as the politicians. Besides, they also posed safety hazards to

---

<sup>2</sup> Conducted by ACIG in association with STEM, Bangalore, with funding from ADB in RETA 5764 & RETA 5959

<sup>3</sup> An NGO, Public Affairs Centre, has developed an effective report card system of rating the performance of BMP

citizens due to obstructions like debris, hawkers, telephone and electricity poles, loose stones, etc. Due to these impediments, pedestrians rarely used the footpaths, walked on the roads, and made themselves vulnerable to road accidents. The needs-assessment survey carried out in the improvement process revealed that 80 percent of the pedestrians using footpaths were the urban poor. This reaffirmed the high priority accorded to the improvement of footpaths in the city.

### ***NIRANTARA in Action***

A project team headed by one of the trained co-ordinators was constituted under NWC to undertake a detailed study and analyses for the service improvement of footpaths. The team conducted a first time ever, needs-assessment survey through a structured questionnaire at different locations in the city, inviting the views of NGOs & CBOs and ensuring people's participation across different sections of the society including the urban poor. After analyzing the existing service level and the suggestions made by the public, the team recommended different kinds of footpaths for different locations in the city based on the usage and type of location (like residential, recreational and commercial areas). Different design layouts with cost estimates were worked out for the expected service level standards.

BMP then included this service for improvement in the budget 2003 - 2004 with a provision of Rs.227 million (US\$ 5 million), which is about four percent of the total budget for developmental activities. As a pilot project, the work of improving footpaths with interlocking tiles for an extent of 90 km was taken up in certain major and arterial roads, during the current year. Fifty percent of the footpaths were constructed by the end of September 2003. On completion of the service improvement, the team conducted a customer satisfaction survey to obtain feedback from the people on the quality and usage, for continuous improvement of service.

### ***User Feedback***

The level of satisfaction on the improved footpaths has increased to 63 percent from the earlier satisfaction level of nine percent in 2002, as per the customer satisfaction survey conducted in September 2003. Similarly, the usage of footpaths has increased to 93 percent and the improved footpaths have weaned people away from their old habit of walking on the roads. The survey indicates that women are more safety conscious and use footpaths regularly. People of Bangalore have started using the footpaths wherever they have been improved and it shows the change in their behavior, as seen in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. People using Improved Footpaths**



### ***Success & Outcomes***

The improvement of footpaths has been a successful initiative under the NIRANTARA programme for the following reasons: (a) high quality of project submissions reduced the time taken to secure finances, (b) engagement and representation of all sectors of the community in prioritizing needs, planning, implementing and post-implementation maintenance and feedback, (c) separate budgetary provisions for the improvement of service, (d) institutionalization of the service initiatives within BMP and by building partnerships with NGOs / business communities in the maintenance of the improved service as is happening on one stretch of road where the footpaths are now being maintained by a well known company in the brewing business.

### ***Future Plans***

To sustain and further improve the service delivery standards for footpaths, BMP has committed itself to continuous improvement of footpaths all over the city in a phased manner, and will (b) adopt the benchmarking component of NIRANTARA which was not fully enforced in this phase, (c) draw up a policy for maintenance in partnership with NGOs and corporate bodies (d) extend people's participation to the budgeting process as well and (e) ensure easy use and access even for people with disabilities.

<b>Strategies &amp; Components of NIRANTARA</b>	<b>NIRANTARA Applied to footpaths</b>
Training and Sensitization	By external funding & training agencies
Institutional arrangement	Formation of NSC, NWC & participation of NGOs
Prioritization of services for phased implementation	NSC, NWC & NGOs
Ranking and selection of prioritized services for immediate implementation	NSC, NWC & NGOs
Using surveys methodology & preparation of project reports	Needs-assessment survey, feedback survey, area-specific engineering designs and cost estimates
Selected services reflected in budgets	US\$ 5 million for 2003 -2004
Participation of community and NGOs in the improvement process	Planning, Implementation & post-implementation phases
Benchmarking & Continuous Improvement	Continuous Improvement through feedback systems. Benchmarking not implemented
<hr/> Future Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting benchmarking techniques</li> <li>• Draft a maintenance policy in partnership with community / NGOs / corporate bodies</li> <li>• People's participation in budgeting</li> <li>• Easy access to disabled</li> </ul> <hr/>	

### **3.3 Strategic Approach to Construction of Community Toilets**

The practice of open defecation in the city, by slum and floating population has been a cause for concern and worry. Not only does it add to the environmental pollution but also has a bearing on the health of the individuals. Though some toilets were constructed in slums and busy commercial areas, due to lack of awareness on use of public toilets, lack of basic facilities like continuous water supply, power and regular cleaning, people rarely used these toilets. The affordability and access to these toilets was also an issue. NIRANTARA has contributed significantly in turning around this scenario. The existing toilets can be broadly classified into two types: (a) *“Pay and Use”* toilets – maintained by resident groups – CBOs / NGOs and constructed by corporate bodies / voluntary institutions / BMP / other public agencies and (b) *“Free Use”* Toilets – maintained by Government / NGOs and constructed by BMP / Slum Board / voluntary institutions. Today there are 106 *“Pay and Use”* toilets in the city as against 650 *“free use”* toilets.

### ***NIRANTARA in Action***

During the workshop for capacity building of BMP officials on the approach to NIRANTARA, the improvement and construction of community toilets was another service prioritized for improvement. The project team undertook a detailed study and analyses by conducting a needs-assessment survey engaging the participation of the people and NGOs in assessing the existing levels of service and inviting recommendations for improvement. The survey revealed that 8 out of 10 persons were in favor of "Pay and Use" toilets and the public recommended that CBOs / NGOs or private organizations should manage these toilets. The project team also visited various types of existing toilets managed by different organizations for the purpose of comparison and selection of best practices prevailing in the community.

The team worked out various designs and estimates for construction of community toilets, bearing in mind quality, aesthetics and facilities. Locations for construction were identified in consultation with local officers, Councilors, NGOs and voluntary organisations based on the need, floating population and where the concentration of the urban poor is more. BMP has included this work in the budget for 2003-04 with a provision of Rs 80 million (US\$ 1.8 million) for construction of 100 toilets.

The team drew up an implementation plan after examining aspects of cost effectiveness and customer satisfaction. This influenced the overall policy of BMP towards community toilets. The policy of BMP now focussed on: (a) construction of " Pay and Use" toilets, (b) maintenance of these toilets as far as possible by voluntary organizations, CBOs, NGOs and resident groups, (c) provision of uninterrupted water supply for each toilet either through a borewell or public water supply system, (d) in slums - payment subsidized and issue of identification cards to the families, (e) campaign to increase public awareness on usage and maintenance of toilets and (f) range officers of BMP made responsible for monitoring the maintenance of toilets.

More than 100 "Pay and Use" toilets have been constructed which cover slum areas as well. Slum dwellers have been issued identity cards by BMP for their use at nominal rates. This has changed the behavior and habit of the slum residents and stopped the open defecation practices around slums. It is heartening to note the way in which large corporate bodies have come forward to construct and finance 100 toilets in the City in collaboration with BMP.

### ***User Feedback***

The impact of the newly constructed toilets has been favorably voiced in a customer satisfaction survey conducted in September 2003 by an NGO. Above 90 percent of residents in the vicinity were found to be using these toilets. The feedback is integrated into the NIRANTARA process for continuous improvement in service delivery.

### ***Success & Outcomes***

The construction of community toilets under the NIRANTARA programme has had a significant impact on the quality of life of the people especially the urban poor. The success can be highlighted by the following changes (a) policy changes – delivering accessible, afford-

**Figure 2. Community Toilets constructed under NIRANTARA**



able and sustainable solutions by outsourcing maintenance and affordable pricing for the urban poor, (b) NGO / corporate partnership in planning, implementing and maintaining the service improvements, (c) separate budgetary provisions for the improvement of community toilets, (d) institutionalization of the service initiative within BMP and partnerships with NGOs / corporate bodies and (e) securing people's participation in the improvement process and setting service delivery standards.

### ***Future Plans***

BMP will undertake the remaining toilets for construction and improvement in a phased manner following the NIRANTARA approach and components, thereby (a) ensuring continuous improvement in the service delivery levels by the application of benchmarking techniques and customer feedback, (b) building & sustaining partnerships with community and NGOs / corporate bodies in the maintenance of services, (c) upgrading about 650 old toilets, which are not in usable condition, with modern facilities to convert them to "Pay and Use" toilets and (d) improving people's participation in the budgeting process.

<b>Strategies &amp; Components of NIRANTARA</b>	<b>NIRANTARA Applied to community Toilets</b>
Training and Sensitization	By external funding & training agencies
Institutional arrangement	Formation of NSC, NWC & participation of NGOs
Prioritization of services for phased implementation	NSC, NWC & NGOs
Ranking and selection of prioritized services for immediate implementation	NSC, NWC & NGOs
Using surveys methodology & preparation of project reports	Needs-assessment survey, feedback survey, identifying locations, design layouts & cost estimates, promotion of "pay & use" concept and identity cards with a nominal monthly fee for slum dwellers
Selected services reflected in budgets	US\$ 1.8 million for 2003 -2004
Participation of community and NGOs in the improvement process	Planning, Implementation & post-implementation phases. Also attracted corporate funding and maintenance.
Benchmarking & Continuous Improvement	Continuous Improvement through feedback systems. Benchmarking not fully implemented
<b>Future Plans</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People's participation in budgeting</li> <li>• Upgrade 650 old toilets with good facilities and convert to "pay &amp; use"</li> <li>• Application of benchmarking and continuous improvement technique</li> </ul>	

#### **IV. Strategic approach to Economic Empowerment & Social Development – Vocational Training in Tailoring for Women and Adolescent Girls**

The contribution of urban poor to the community is enormous. BMP thus formulated vocational training programmes for economically empowering the urban poor. Thrust was given to economically empowering women and adolescent girls from the urban poor families to help them augment their family incomes and lead a better quality of life. Though vocational training programs were imparted in tailoring, embroidery and knitting, the most successful has been the tailoring program.

The components of the vocational training programme described in Section 2.3 have been adapted to the tailoring programme.

##### ***Components of Vocational Training as Applied to the Tailoring Programme***

In BMP's approach to empower women and adolescent girls as part of a bigger objective of addressing the issues of upliftment of the urban poor, a needs-assessment was undertaken bearing in mind the following factors, (a) the low level of literacy and skills among the women of the urban poor, (b) lack of or inadequate services like tailoring in the surrounding areas inhabited by the urban poor, (c) the need for augmenting family income by the women and adolescent girls among the urban poor, and (d) demand from the garment industry for skilled women in tailoring. Though the needs-assessment process did not involve any structured survey methods, the flourishing garment industry in the city and the growing demand for professional tailors led BMP to introduce this program. The institutional arrangement for the program included political, administrative and financial aspects. The elected members / Councilors played an important role in the selection process of trainees. The appointment of trainers to manage and deliver services was done by BMP. Since these trainers belonged to the same locality and were employed on a part-time basis, the program was rendered cost-effective. Based on the number of training centers required to be set up, budgetary provisions were made for this program.

There are more than 200 tailoring centres in different locations of the city today. The objective of this program is to facilitate economic opportunities by way of enhancing skills to attract income-generation activities. Once the program was included in the budget and the institutional arrangements were in place, the next challenge was to identify target beneficiary groups and adopt a fair selection process with the priority given to the very poor segment of the community. The program was publicized through local formal and informal channels of communication. About 50 percent of the intake was through the elected representatives of the wards and the remaining 50 percent was based on income criterion.

Applications were invited from interested people during the previous year and the training program was implemented in the next financial year. The curriculum was designed for one year with a monthly stipend of Rs.100 (US\$ 2.2) for each trainee, which they could utilize to buy materials for training and for personal transport. During the course of one year, the trainees were imparted sufficient skills in the training vocation thus *building capacity* for economic opportunities. On successful completion of the training an examination was con-

ducted by an external agency<sup>4</sup> and certificates were issued to the successful candidates. They were also provided a sewing machine to enable them to start working at home and earn for the family.

The *post-implementation assessment* indicates that almost all the persons who have completed the training have taken to tailoring. After the completion of the training 75 percent of the women have secured placement in the private sector export oriented garment factories in Bangalore and are getting a monthly wage ranging from Rs.3,000 to Rs.5,000 (US\$ 67 to US\$ 111). Some women are engaged in tailoring work at their own homes and earn additional income. A few women have replaced the machines provided by BMP with bigger and better machines to improve efficiency and increase productivity. They earn on an average of Rs.100 (US\$ 2.2) per day.

*“Sir, the persons who have completed their training under us are earning more than what we are paid by the BMP as salary!”*

**- (Instructors & other staff of training)  
Institutes**

---

<sup>4</sup> JC Polytechnic – a Government of Karnataka educational institute in vocational training

**Figure 3. A Training Center managed by BMP**



### ***Beneficiaries Feedback***

A customer satisfaction survey conducted by an NGO to know the opinions and attitudes of the beneficiaries' reveals that the persons who have received the training in different vocations belong to the productive age group of 16 to 45. After having gone through the training (a) 60 percent are fully engaged in the jobs, (b) 32 percent are partially engaged, and (c) only eight percent are not engaged in the vocation.

The survey also reveals that at least three percent of the beneficiaries are able to provide better schooling for their children, six percent are in a position to have better clothing for the family members and another 11 percent have better facilities at home subsequent to their starting to earn. To state it briefly, the training has been serving its purpose.

### ***Success & Outcomes***

Some of the major successes BMP has had with the tailoring program can be categorized under the following heads (a) *Institutional Arrangement*: The training centers are housed in BMP owned buildings. The institutional change has been from collaboration to complete ownership and management. Since the training centers employed part time trainers within the community the program was rendered cost-effective, (b) *Improved Social Status*: The attitudinal change witnessed among the beneficiaries of the vocational training has been that they consider themselves as contributing members of the family. The trainees have developed lot of confidence in their capabilities and faculties. The regular income they bring to the family through their employment or work has improved their social status in the family. Many take part in decision-making within the family and some are the heads of the families. Even the unmarried daughters earning through tailoring either at home or by working in a garment

factory, are consulted by the head of the family, (c) *Increase in demand*: Several of the training centers were started by the BMP Councilors themselves in many wards in response to the demands of the urban poor from those wards and later were regularized by the BMP. The number of centers now have grown from a single center to almost 300 – by any standards a milestone achievement in socio-economic empowerment of women and urban poor, (d) *Budget Provisions*: When the vocational course became popular among the urban poor, the BMP responded to the people's desires and interests by making available the required resources of Rs.20 million (US\$ 0.44 million) out of its special budget of 18 percent to meet all the expenses of the vocational training for the women and adolescent girls.

### ***Future Plans***

For sustaining and improving the impact of this programme for the urban poor BMP would (a) adopt the vocational training under the NIRANTARA programme applying the components of NIRANTARA which includes benchmarking, continuous improvement, needs-assessment and feedback through effective survey methodology and (b) tie-up with garment industries to facilitate employment for the trained and (c) comprehensive, long-term approach linked to budgets.

<b>Components of Vocational Training</b>	<b>NIRANTARA Applied to Tailoring</b>
Needs-assessment	Low literacy levels & vocational skills, need for augmenting family income and demand for skilled workers from garment industry
Institutional arrangement - political, administrative & financial	Training centres owned by BMP, managed by Councilors in respective wards. Budget allocated from the 18% budgetary provisions for
Facilitating economic opportunities	Skill enhancement, provisions of tools of trade, access to potential employers, promoting entrepreneurship and monetary assistance during training.
Identification of target beneficiary groups	Women and adolescent girls
Selection of trainees	By Councilors, through issue of application forms and priority given to the very poor
Implementation & capacity building	One year program in skill building
Post-implementation assessment	Feedback surveys
Status upliftment in society	Increased social status within the community and in the neighborhood
<b>Future Plans</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt the vocational training program under the NIRANTARA model.</li> <li>• Tie-ups with garment industries for employment of the skilled workers</li> <li>• Comprehensive, long term program with budgetary provisions</li> </ul>	

## V. Achievements & Outcomes

### 5.1 *NIRANTARA and Women Empowerment & Social Development*

NIRANTARA has taken up the long neglected issues never thought of in a regular planning process. The three service initiatives described in the case study, show the engagement of community and involvement by NGOs / CBOs in the service delivery process of BMP. The success that has been achieved can be summed up under the following four heads: (a) analytical & needs-based approach, (b) people-centric governance, (c) influence on urban poor, and (d) institutionalization of initiatives.

**Analytical and Needs-based Approach:** After the training under NIRANTARA, the officials of BMP have identified the problem areas and diagnosed the needs of the urban poor in a systematic manner. They are now habituated to conducting surveys, consulting the targeted beneficiaries and requisitioning the expert's opinions to assess the needs of the beneficiaries and the likely options to meet the needs. They also have a feedback system in place to incorporate the views and perceptions of the users on the programs undertaken. The project reports prepared under NIRANTARA by the BMP officials themselves with the help of NGOs followed a similar systematic approach.

**People-centric Governance:** The changes that have been brought in service delivery systems and especially in the preparation of annual budgets with open discussions are a few instances of the shift from the traditional bureaucratic practice to a people-centric approach. The reports prepared under NIRANTARA are examples for the same. The service improvements initiated under NIRANTARA have now grown in stature to include the entire city also attracting the participation of the corporate world and the involvement of the public.

**Influence on Urban Poor:** The initiatives of the BMP have had quite an influence on the quality of life of the urban poor especially due to the construction of footpaths, community toilets and vocational training programs. Now people of the city as well as the floating population has been using the facilities wherever they exist. People today are ready to pay a fee for using the community toilets. This is a positive change in the behavior of the people and also indicates the impact the facilities have created on the lives of the people in Bangalore. Similarly, the demand for admissions to the vocational training courses by the women has increased almost two-fold. The achievement for these women is not only in terms of augmenting their family's income but also in increasing their status in the family and the neighborhood.

**Institutionalization of the Initiatives:** The participatory and analytical approaches adopted by BMP officials, and the impact it has had on the urban poor, have given them a feeling of achievement besides boosting their confidence levels. BMP officials have prepared the reports under NIRANTARA themselves with the assistance of NGOs and CBOs. This has facilitated the inclusion of service improvements in the annual budgets. After seeing the reports, the Commissioner of BMP himself said, "we need many more of such quality reports to tackle the challenging issues of the City today". However, these service improvements are only work in progress and scope exists for continuous improvement in service delivery standards.

**5.1 Voice and Views of NGO / CBO: Vinay Baidur of CIVIC <sup>5</sup> and Nagaraj of AVAS <sup>6</sup>**

The last few years have seen a slow beginning by the officials and elected Councilors of BMP to seek feedback and generate responsiveness in administration and there is a directional change towards people friendly governance. A few illustration of citizens friendly measures by BMP are: (a) feedback from beneficiaries and their involvement through NIRANTARA, (b) the process for preparation and finalization of the Local Municipal budget now incorporates citizens inputs, (c) shortlisting the services for improvement under NIRANTARA such as a Customer Complaint System was an excellent measure which gave an impetus to the entire BMP machinery to increase responsiveness and decrease contact-based grievance redressal, (d) similarly prioritizing Solid Waste Management and Property Tax Assessment as important services to be improved methodically, in a citizen friendly approach, created better services, and (e) appreciation and adoption of three services – footpaths, public toilets and vocational training - by one and all.

Some of the major drawbacks are (a) eliciting feedback from citizens and continuously informing them about the project was not systematic and no periodic newsletter / pamphlets / handouts were prepared and distributed, (b) officials have been hesitant to break the protocol which gives political representatives the right to address the media about the programs, (c) consulting and informing the citizens should have been a policy, (d) describing the nature and standard of services through an information brochure would have been very beneficial to bring about a change of BMP's image vis a vis the citizens.

Other comments on the project include (a) in preparing the project report on footpaths considerable emphasis was laid on four different varieties of footpaths depending on the usage. This was not followed in the implementation phase since only interlocking cement-concrete tiles footpaths were finally commissioned, (b) access of the disabled to footpath services must also be stressed as in others, which is not truly incorporated, (c) funding the setting up of NIRANTARA secretariat, and (e) an action plan for upliftment of urban poor and describing the role of NGOs and CBOs in the development process is yet to be undertaken by BMP.

---

<sup>5</sup> CIVIC (Citizens Voluntary Initiative for the City) – NGO, member of NWC

<sup>6</sup> AVAS (Association for Voluntary Action & Services) - CBO

## VI. LESSONS DRAWN

**Time is a Factor:** Any institutional, social and economic change is always a slow and consistent process and can be achieved only over a period of time. A vision for the future backed by a sound action plan prepared with the participation of people and the use of effective survey and study methodology is the key to success. Further, the action plan needs to be worked out for inclusion in the annual budgets and implementation to be undertaken in a phased manner.

**Lack of Continuity in the Office of the Mayor and Commissioner:** The tenure of Mayor and Standing Committees is only one year. Even the Commissioners, who are Chief Executives of BMP, are transferred frequently. Lack of continuity in the office has a bearing on the continuation of programs and the process of institutionalization.

**Priority is Always for the Day to Day Work:** In any municipal organisation, it is the ad hoc works that take maximum time rather than planned programs. The trained coordinators and senior managers are occupied with their obligatory functions and rarely have the time to shift their energies to strategy, policy and planning, and monitoring the achievement of strategic goals. The absence of any service delivery performance standards for the officials does not ensure accountability and the drive to improve the existing service delivery mandate.

**Need for NIRANTARA on Permanent Footing:** The NIRANTARA experiment induced a change in the planning process and mindset of personnel in BMP. Moreover, it brought the people and NGOs closer to BMP. It needs a permanent secretariat as envisaged earlier by ACIG. External funding and technical assistance to improve service delivery mechanisms plays a significant role in improving the municipal delivery standards.

*“NIRANTARA is a new experience. It changed our outlook on beneficiary participation and opened our path on project identification, prioritization and formulation”*

**- NWC member**

**Citizen Engagement and Building Partnerships:** It has been realized that the key to successful implementation of improvement programs lies in consulting the community at every stage and partnering with NGOs, voluntary organisations and corporate bodies in the planning, implementation, post-implementation and continuous maintenance of the improved services.

*“When citizens don’t share responsibilities there is not much that a government can do to improve the quality of life. We must make Bangalore a beautiful City and replicate it in Mysore, Mangalore, Dharwad, Belgaum, etc. But first, the initiative must start from Citizens”.*

**Chief Minister, SM Krishna  
– Deccan Herald**

## VII. Future Directions

Enhancing pro-poor service delivery systems and economic upliftment of urban poor are the areas BMP will focus on. The key tasks that will be taken up and the approach adopted in the planning, implementation and post-implementation phases of service delivery will comprise the following four areas

### ***Sustain the Momentum Created by***

***NIRANTARA:*** The NIRANTARA process initiated in BMP will be strengthened by creating a small secretariat which will plan, implement and monitor service delivery improvements and provide budgets. The continuous improvement and benchmarking techniques will be adopted in improving service delivery systems. Five of the 32 services prioritized by NSC and NWC have already been implemented and will be continuously improved. The remaining services will be taken up for implementation in a phased manner.

*“The general impression that ordinary citizens have about BMP is that the civic agency is inaccessible. There are allegations that officials are not available for explanation on various matters. We want to put an end to all such complaints. Our goal is to make sure that citizens get every bit of information that they seek from us”.*

***- Mr. Srihari, Addl Commissioner, BMP  
- Deccan Herald***

***Internalizing and Systematizing:*** The approach to all the development projects undertaken by BMP will include community consultation and beneficiary feedback systems. Besides a platform for meeting of interdepartmental personnel of BMP along with NGO and professionals for selecting, prioritizing and analyzing projects for enhancing the municipal service delivery systems will be created

***Develop a Comprehensive “Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)”:*** A Five year long term plan for PRS will be formulated and poverty alleviation programs matching to the needs of the urban poor will be identified. The programs will be prioritized and cost estimates for the same will be worked out.

***Preparing Annual Action plan:*** An annual action plan from PRS linked to budgets will be formulated. The plan will be implemented through departments and monitored by NIRANTARA secretariat. Based on the feedback the action plans and PRS will be modified annually.

***Knowledge Management:*** All projects provide an opportunity to apply new approaches and learn from the implementation experiences. . A momentum has been built up in BMP with the NIRANTARA program for the improvement of service delivery. It has been proved that the management techniques of benchmarking and continuous improvement has lead to service improvements only in a few services of BMP. More number of persons will be trained in NIRANTARA techniques, to not only build capacity within BMP for improving service delivery processes but also extend their expertise to neighbouring municipalities.

***Establishing Information Kiosks:*** BMP will establish information kiosks in the coming year in important locations of the city to bring out the transparency and accountability in the governance system. The key information relating to the type of revenues, expenditure ward wise and project wise, the latest government orders, rules, bylaws, regulations, etc. will be provided in the database of the kiosks.

*“The iron curtains of BMP may no longer be there. Any information about the status of development works and projects, financial statements and other details, which were earlier classified as confidential, will now be made available through information kiosks. Through this initiative, the BMP wants to shed its bureaucratic image and bring in transparency and accountability in its administration.”*

**- DH News Service**

## VIII. Replicability of BMP's Initiatives

The three BMP programs discussed in the earlier sections, namely, improvement of foot paths, building of community toilets and empowerment of women & adolescent girls through vocational training, address the critical issues of urban poverty and have been successful. They set a few good examples for any ULB in developing countries.

The experiences gained and lessons learnt by BMP through implementing NIRANTARA and other urban poor programs with peoples' participation can be of paramount importance for other ULBs, either to replicate or modify and adopt these programs. It is more so, as the thrust is laid on enhancing the public services through Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement. Further, these are planned and implemented with due concern on feedback from the beneficiaries. The urban poverty alleviation initiatives taken by BMP have a two-fold approach: (a) increasing the availability and accessibility of services to urban poor and (b) imparting vocational training to improve skills of the urban poor and facilitate economic empowerment especially for women and adolescent girls.

There is a scope for replicating some of the approaches evolved under the BMP's poverty alleviation initiatives. These includes: (a) adoption of NIRANTARA management model involving NWC & NSC, (b) enhancement of services through analytical methods and beneficiary feedback, (c) joint efforts by ULB, corporate bodies, voluntary institutions, etc., for planning and implementation of public services and amenities, (d) provision of separate budget and funding for urban poverty alleviation programs, (e) preparation of annual report cards on services and (f) empowerment of women and adolescent girls.

**Adoption of NIRANTARA Management Model Involving NWC & NSC:** The two NIRANTARA management committees viz. NWC & NSC, comprise the Chief Executive & senior BMP department officials, the Mayor & chairmen of standing committees of the elected representatives, NGOs, voluntary organisations, professionals and experts. Thus, they cut across the different cross sections of the stakeholders. Their purpose is to identify and prioritize the services needed by the people. For better results, the committees need a small separate secretariat with two or three persons to co-ordinate and provide administrative support.

**Capacity Building by External Agencies:** Often personnel in ULBs do not have required aptitudes and skills either to elicit the customer's satisfaction on service performance or to systematize / institutionalize the aspects of service delivery through community involvement and customer feedback. This calls for training of ULB staff by an outside agency, capable of providing technical assistance for benchmarking and continuous improvement.

**Joint and Participatory Efforts by ULB, Corporate Bodies, NGOs, Voluntary Institutions, etc:** The success of urban poverty alleviation programs wholly depends upon the joint efforts of the sponsors and beneficiaries. Continuous consultation and interaction between them would ensure a sustainable planning and implementation program for making public services and amenities available to the urban poor. This would require a change from the ULBs' traditional planning to a process involving the corporate bodies, NGOs, voluntary institutions, resident associations, etc.

***Provision of Separate Budget and Funding for Urban Poverty Alleviation Programs:*** This will bring about a radical transformation in the process of preparation of budget and provision of funds to the programs.

The local corporate bodies and philanthropic institutions could be involved in the entire process of service delivery. Further, the beneficiaries themselves could be motivated to willingly contribute towards the cost of the services. The possibility involving external agencies should be explored to raise additional funds for these programs.

***Preparation of Annual Report Cards on Services:*** To help the decision-makers in ULB in program planning and mid-course corrections, it is necessary to commission an independent survey of citizens' satisfaction levels vis-à-vis the services offered. This will be a feedback system involving the beneficiaries and NGOs. Attempts could be made at least every year to elicit such feedback from citizens through report cards as is being done in Bangalore.

***Empowerment of Women and Adolescent Girls:*** With a view to augmenting the income among the families of urban poor and generate economic opportunities, a needs-assessment has to be carried out and the demand for skills required by various industries needs to be studied after which appropriate vocational training programs can be planned for the urban poor. This approach can be adopted to raise the social status and economic levels of the urban poor.

## References

- ACIG, August 2003, *Final Report for TA 5959-REG – Enhancing Municipal Service Delivery Capability (Phase II)*, Asian Development Bank.
- BMP, 2003, *Performance Budget – 2003-04* of Bangalore Mahanagara Palike.
- BMP, C.I. *Project to Improvements to Footpaths in Bangalore City*. NIRANTARA: ADB Project II RETA 5959.
- BMP, *Report on TA 5764 – Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement Project Phase I for Evaluating Municipal Services Delivery Capability of BMP*.
- BMP, *CI Project Reports on Improvements to : (i) Footpaths, (ii) Community Toilets, (iii) Property Tax Assessment and Collection, (iv) Food Safety, and (v) Solid Waste Management*. Reports By NIRANTARA Working Committee.
- BMP, May 2002, *India Population Project VIII, Bangalore - Endline Survey Report* by Center for Research in Health and social Welfare Management, Bangalore.
- Census, *Census Report 1991 and 2001*.
- CIVIC Bangalore, 2003, *City Profile Bangalore - A Report* submitted to the Regional office Urban Management Programme, UNDP / UNCHS(Habitat).
- CRISIL, 2003 *Compendium of Best Practices*, CRISIL.
- Nick Devas, 2000, et al. *Urban Governance and Poverty – Lessons from a Study of Ten Cities in the South*. University of Birmingham.
- STEM, 1989, *Slum Shelter and Environmental Improvement Programme – Bangalore, Hubli-Dharwad and Gulbarga: Housing and Urban Development Department, Government of Karnataka*.
- STEM, 1992, *Family Welfare Project for Urban Slums, Bangalore: Report Prepared for Bangalore City Corporation*.
- STEM, 1992, *Survey of Slums in Bangalore – General Analysis, Bangalore: Report Prepared for Bangalore City Corporation*.
- STEM, 1992, *Survey of Slums in Bangalore – A Baseline Survey, Bangalore: Report Prepared for Bangalore City Corporation*.
- STEM, 1992, *Housing Profile and Perspectives: Bangalore Metropolis in Karnataka, Bangalore: Report Prepared for Karnataka Housing Board, Government of Karnataka*.
- SWABHIMANA, September 2003, *A Guide to Active Citizenship in Bangalore*.
- TECSOK, July 2002, *Project Report on Community Toilets*, Report submitted to Bangalore Mahanagara Palike.
- TECSOK, September 2001, *Evaluation Report of Training Programmes of Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP) – (Tailoring, Knitting and Embroidery)*.
- UNCHS (Habitat) & Govt. of India, September 2001, *Good Urban Governance Campaign – India Launch: Learning from one Another*. UNCHS & Government of India.