

## PRESS NOTE

### Benchmarking Quality of Public Services in Brahmapur City A Citizen Report Card on Basic Public Services

A user feedback survey conducted by Youth for Social Development, Brahmapur supported by Public Affairs Foundation, Bangalore with technical assistance from the Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore



**“Quality of Public Services are poor. Needs Urgent attention to improve in access, quality of services and better responsiveness from the public officials”, say citizens of Brahmapur City on the quality of services provided by the local government.**

How do citizens in Brahmapur City rate their public service providers? What are the major issues confronting users of basic facilities like drinking, garbage clearance, drainage, public toilets, streetlights, roads, public health facilities, primary education and public distribution system? What suggestions do citizens have to improve the quality of public service delivery? These and similar questions were probed in a very participatory and scientific manner through a citizen feedback survey conducted by researchers of YSD and PAC. The survey found that citizens are generally satisfied with streetlights, government primary education facilities and street roads services, though they have clearly indicated that they expect better performances from their service providers. The dissatisfaction level is among services like drainage, drinking water and garbage clearance. The findings from this pioneering exercise in Brahmapur City give a strong endorsement to the local government for ensuring effective access to services. However, issues related to quality and reliability of services need urgent attention. The survey findings also make a strong plea to improve the provision and service quality of drinking water, drainage system and government health facilities in both the slum and non-slum areas. The survey, conducted during March-May, 2007, covered a representative sample size of 1006 households in Brahmapur city.

The survey was based on the methods and techniques of the Citizen Report Card (CRC), a simple but powerful tool to provide public agencies with systematic feedback from users of public services. Pioneered by Public Affairs Centre (PAC) in the city of Bangalore in 1993, CRCs elicit feedback through sample surveys on aspects of service quality that users know best, and enable public agencies to identify strengths and weaknesses in their work.

This CRC study was carried out by a group of senior researchers from the Youth for Social Development, a research based NGO working on improving local governance in Ganjam district. Mr. Bibhu Prasada Sahu, Mrs Madhuri Padhy and Mr. Sunil Pattanaik with the complete guidance from Prof. Bhagabata Patro, Reader Economics, Brahmapur University and panel of senior researchers of Public Affairs Centre (PAC) based in Bangalore. Dr. Sita Sekhar, Dr. Gopakumar Thampi, Dr. Meena Nair, Dr. Prabhakar and Dr. Venu Gopal Reddy. The study funded by the Public Affairs Foundation, Bangalore working improving governance worldwide.

### **What is a “Citizen Report Card”?**

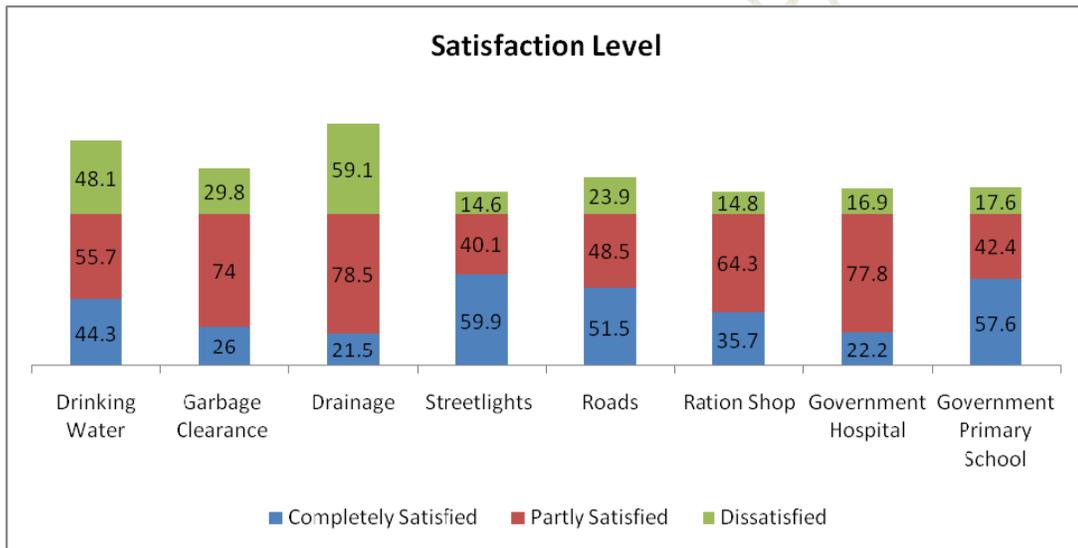
The Citizen Report Card (CRC) represents an assessment of the city's public services from the perspective of its citizens who are the users of these services and can provide useful feedback on the quality, efficiency, and adequacy of the services and the problems they face in their interactions with service providers. When there are different service providers, it is possible to compare their ratings across services. The resultant pattern of ratings (based on user satisfaction) is then converted into a 'report card' on the city's services. A citizen report card on public services is not just one more opinion poll. Report cards reflect the actual experiences of people with a wide range of public services. Users possess fairly accurate information, for example, on whether a public agency actually solved their problems or whether they had to pay bribes to officials. Over the years, CRCs have been successfully used to assess government services in countries such as Ukraine, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda, Peru, and Argentina.

## How was the study conducted?

At the initiation discussion was held with few public officials of various service agencies (BMC, PHED and CSD etc.) regarding provision of basic public services the purpose and objectives of the project and usefulness of the CRC. Following this, Focus-Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with few citizens and RWA (Residents Welfare Association) stakeholders to identify the key issues for the survey. The household interviews were carried out by YSD field investigators and supervised by YSD researchers and panel of senior researchers of PAC. The research team of YSD carried out the data analysis and reporting of the findings.

## How satisfied are the citizens in Brahmapur with the nine basic services?

Streetlights, government primary education and street roads have received the best rating among the nine services in terms of complete satisfaction with the services provided, A large proportion of users across the services indicated partial satisfaction with services, thereby voicing a demand for better services.



## How do different aspects of services measure up?

The overall satisfaction scores given by a user is a total measure of his or her satisfaction with various attributes of the service. This study has made an attempt to see how different service attributes vary between the three services probed in Brahmapur; the attributes selected are:

- Access & Usage
- Quality of Services
- Problem Incidence and Resolution
- Responsiveness of the Service Providers
- Corruption
- Satisfaction and Suggestions to improve

## Suggestions by the citizens of Brahmapur City

- Sufficient water should be supplied and frequency should be improved during the summer season
- Drains should be cleaned regularly and drainage system should be improved
- Garbage should be cleared regularly and garbage bin should be provided
- Number of public toilets should be increased and maintained regularly
- Extra streetlights facility should be arranged
- Roads should be repaired/ maintained regularly
- Quantity and quality of the rationed items should be more
- Improve the quality of treatment and change in behavior of hospital staff
- Improve the quality of teaching and regularity of teachers

## The Way Forward...

This pilot Citizen Report Card on selected services provided by the Brahmapur Municipality and PHED has provided valuable diagnostic pointers to improve services. The CRC has also established credible and objective benchmarks on how services are experienced by the citizens of Brahmapur. The YSD team is confident that the BM and PHED will respond to this report in a proactive manner and will actively encourage CRCs in other sectors. By amplifying the voice of the end-user of services, CRCs have opened a new channel for the government to listen and respond to issues in a focused and constructive way. The residents of Brahmapur City are strongly encouraged to assist their local government to solve problems related to service delivery in the form of providing constructive feedback on specific areas to be improved and also, by partnering and cooperating with the service providers.

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