

PRESS NOTE

URBAN CORRUPTION AND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN BRAHMAPUR CITY

A press meet of the program on
“Urban Corruption and Public Service Delivery in Brahmapur City”
by **Youth for Social Development**, a research based NGO based in Brahmapur,
with the support from **Partnership for Transparency Fund, USA**



YOUTH FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

(A Social Research and Development Organization)

PLOT NO-15/182, GURU DRONACHARYA NAGAR, BASANT BIHAR, AMBAPUA,
BERHAMPUR-760 010, GANJAM, ORISSA, INDIA
Email:ysdbam@gmail.com, Phone: 0680-3205464

“CORRUPTION HURDLES CITIZENS OF BRAHMAPUR CITY TO ACCESS BASIC PUBLIC SERVICES”: NEEDS URGENT ATTENTION TO CURB CORRUPTION AND IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Corruption hurdles in many ways to access basic services by the common man in Brahmapur city. It has identified by the World Bank that corruption as the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development. Corruption includes grand corruption which involves corruption that pervades the highest level of national government to petty corruption, the exchange of very small amounts of money or the granting of minor favors by those in minor position. Regardless of the scope of the corruption, such acts undermine the development of civil society and aggravate poverty, especially when public resources that would have been used to finance people’s aspirations for a better life are mismanaged or abused by public officials.

The small/retail/petty corruption of the kind that is associated with the public services also needed to be taken seriously because it impacts the lives of large numbers of people and can have rightly adverse allocation and distributive consequences. Those services include public utility services such as water and power, a wide range of civic services and regulatory activities such as taxation and law enforcement. Due to these petty corruption the poor are the worst effected since they cannot pay bribes in order to obtain benefits to which they are legitimately entitled. Worse they are denied basic justice in the hands of corrupt public officials. Corruption thus aggravates inequality in an already unequal society.

This survey is a modest attempt by the **Youth for Social Development** for Brahmapur city that facilitates the identification of any unethical practices in the urban area, highlighting ordinary people’s perceptions of corruption in organizations operating at the local level, the causes and the agents of corruption and money involved in it. The Urban Corruption survey/Bribery Index can play an important role in the development of appropriate measures to counter bribery and enhance transparency. This will also make accountable to the local government. As a whole this is an endeavor to good governance practice at the local government level.

In this circumstance it is high time to find out the level of corruption prevalence in providing basic public services in the local government level. SWAYAT, a centre for local government budget and policy research at YSD plans to conduct a **household survey** which will highlight the following points

- Identification of any unethical practices prevalence in providing basic services by the urban local government
- Highlighting ordinary people’s perceptions, causes and agents of corruption in organizations operating at the local level.

- Urban Corruption/Bribery Index, formulated as a result of the Survey, can play an important role in the development of appropriate measures to counter bribery and enhance transparency

Objectives and Scope

The overall objective of the Project is to find out the level of corruption at the local government level and aware people to raise voices against corruption to foster effective public service delivery by the local government.

- To find out the organizations, institutions or sections within institutions, where corruption is prevalent
- To compute the costs of corruption to the average citizen
- To increase public interest in the issues surrounding corruption, and
- To provide a basis for actions to be taken in the light of the findings of the survey and communicate such information widely to policymakers and the general public

Methods

Primary methods to achieve the above mentioned objectives are

- Corruption Survey through a structured research methodology developed by the team of researchers of YSD
- The survey findings will widely be disseminated among the tagged population
- Networking with CSOs and NGOs will be made to fight against corruption
- An anti-corruption helpline will be setup to check petty corruption regularly

Services Selected for the Study

1. ***Drinking Water***: Public Health and Engineering Department, Government of Orissa
2. ***Municipal Services*** (roads, drains, garbage, streetlights, birth and death certificate, property tax): Brahmapur Municipality
3. ***Building Construction Approval***: Brahmapur Development Authority
4. ***Land Record and Administration***: Tehsildar and Sub-Register,(Revenue Department), Government of Orissa
5. ***Public Health Care*** (Government Hospital): Health Department, Government of Orissa
6. ***Public Distribution System*** (Ration Shop): Civil Supply Department, Government of Orissa

Dimensions of the Study

The Urban corruption survey will be undertaken under the seven major dimensions which capture the corruption level and impact of bribery in the city.

- **Incidence:** How often people are asked for bribes in the organizations that they deal with
- **Prevalence:** The percentage of the population that is affected by bribery in an organization.
- **Severity:** Consequences of reduction of bribe, resulting in unsatisfactory service to denial of service altogether (i.e. no bribe, no service)
- **Favoritism:** Favoritism refers to the normal human inclination to prefer acquaintances, friends and family over strangers. (favoring friend, relatives and others to get the work done in the public office)
- **Frequency:** The actual level of bribery reported in an organization, that is, how many officials of the organization receive bribe
- **Cost:** The estimated cost of bribery in an organization to the public, measured as a “bribery tax” in rupees per person
- **Bribe size:** The average size of bribes paid to officials of the organization

Besides this dimensions the study will also focus on three major questions

- How corruption takes place?
- Where are the weak points in the system that allows corruption to take place?
- What are the actual and potential ways of achieving accountability?

Computation of Bribery Index

The corruption/bribery index captures different dimensions and impact of bribery. These could include, for instance: incidence, prevalence, severity, favoritism, frequency, cost and bribe size. The overall index is an aggregate of all indicators.

Limitations of the Study

The study is likely to encounter the following limitations

1. This study does not cover corruption at various other levels such as where a business man pays bribes to an Income tax official or a custom official allow concession in tax payment.
2. It also does not cover the mega corruption, the grand larceny, in which hundreds, and thousands of crores of rupees are paid as bribes to corrupt functionaries or Government funds are siphoned off on large scale.
3. It also does not cover any government schemes like housing, poverty alleviation and others.

Dissemination of the Results

The findings of the study will widely be disseminated among the services providers (government officials), media, academicians, eminent personalities, NGOs, civil society and the general public through seminars, workshops and press release. A city level

coalition against corruption of civil society organisations will be set up by involving few honest public officials, elected representatives, and local champions and also the district administration which will curb petty corruption in Brahmapur City and benefit the common man.

Toll Free Anti-Corruption Helpline

In face of the widespread petty corruption in public agencies in the city, the YSD will establish a forum for Coalition Against Corruption (CAC). The main objective of the CAC is to set up a helpline in order to provide assistance to citizens in the redressal of their complaints and grievances relating to petty corruption. The project aims at addressing petty corruption in public agencies and departments by putting social and moral pressure on the impugned agencies (and corrupt officials) through the following citizen-friendly process:

- The affected citizens may register their complaints with the Coalition Against Corruption via the helpline.
- The Coalition Against Corruption will forward the complaints to the appointed nodal officers in the departments and agencies concerned for remedial action.
- The Coalition Against Corruption will follow up the complaints in case responses are not available after a reasonable time is not satisfactory. The complainants will be appropriately informed of the progress of their cases.

With the help of the media the Coalition Against Corruption will make information about the nature of complaints and action taken public.

In this regard we request to the citizens of Brahmapur city, to the public officials, academicians and media persons to cooperate with our study team by disclosing in an open manner all the information and also the incidents of corruption that comes in their way to get public services. This will create a general awareness among the common man not to bribe and improve the service delivery and good governance.

For more information, please contact:

Mr. Bibhu Prasad Sahu, Secretary, YSD
Plot No-15/182, Gurudronacharya Nagar, Basant Bihar, Ambapua,
BERHAMPUR-760 010, Ganjam, Orissa, India
Email: ysdbam@gmail.com, swayat@gmail.com
Phone: +680-3205464, +91-9937190060