

14. Good City Governance

14.1 Context

Despite the fact that planning and development have been going on in Delhi for the last four decades, the planning approaches and the investment decisions have not always dealt with the resulting environmental impacts. There has been no vision beyond infrastructure to deal with environmental problems *per se*. Removing these planning weaknesses, in fact, reforming the planning process itself, and not repeating the past mistakes or reinforcing them through current practices should initiate a reform process.

The environment, urban planning and management in Delhi will continue to suffer from the current disabilities, and will not cope with future prospects unless a number of fundamental and drastic changes are made in its governmental structure. Short-term recommendations in this regard are given below.

14.2 Room for Improvement

Given the current backlog and future demand for infrastructure services, using the accepted criteria of Good City Governance (see Box), there is room for improvement in Delhi. The supply side approach of providing better infrastructure accompanied by more effective asset management will provide the necessary foundation for developing an environmentally sustainable city. Capacity

building, process reforms, getting institutions right, getting prices right, etc. from the outset. To this extent, decisions on the future of the MCD and the DDA, and the consequent changes in the GNCTD itself (by way of applicability of the 74th Constitutional Amendment) and installation of the Project Management Co-ordination Unit, etc. should not be delayed. But, this will not be sufficient unless sustainable institutional arrangements are also made simultaneously, and in some cases ahead of the infrastructure services.

As recommended earlier, action is required at the policy and the governmental levels. Attracting national and international funding will also necessitate positioning institutional reforms

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Urban governance has been defined as “an efficient and effective response to urban problems by democratically elected and accountable local governments working in partnership with civil society.”(UNCHS) The basic elements in this definition are

- Efficient and Effective- getting things done right, and getting right things done, making optimal use of resources
- Democratically elected- participation in the decision-making process; rule of law
- Accountable- decision makers are responsible for results of their decisions
- Partnership- commitment of the stakeholders
- Civil society- the community and the private sector