

## ADMINISTRATION OF URBAN CIVIC SERVICES IN INDIA: A CASE STUDY

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### **Abstract:**

*The governments at all levels involve in the production of goods and delivery of various services to the public at concessional rates or for free. Like any government bodies, local governments have also the role in the production of goods and services that can satisfy the local public needs. As a result local authorities perform different functions with the objective of satisfying public demand. Promoting economic, ecological and social development places a greater pressure in executing these functions such as health, education, sanitation, etc. Another area of interest for local government is the duty to improve the well-being of residents and attain maximum level of public satisfaction. Therefore, local governments do this by providing services, encourage community improvement and protect people from harm. The practice of administering public or civic services has changed its pattern from exclusive government provision to more decentralized approaches. More of the trend is to engage the community and the private sector in the provision and administration of civic serves. An attempt is made in this article to examine the civic services administered by the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) in the city of Visakhapatnam.*

Key Words: Local Government, GVMC, Civics Service, e-Governance

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## Introduction

The provision of civic services plays an important role in the promotion of economic development and poverty reduction. In addition to this, public services are intended to protect the health and social interaction of the people. Since most of the products are less profitable the involvement of private sector in the production and distribution of public services is very limited. Therefore, this is left to the government on what type of services to be produced and distributed. Besides, public goods and services are provided by governments to correct market failures that cannot be filled with private operators and where the market fails to correct itself. Public goods have also some ethical consideration that needs more accountability service provision system. That is the major justification for the government to involve in the provision of goods and services directly to its citizens. On the top of this, the public services are provided with the assumption of providing protection to the people from disease or social undesirable criminal acts (Peters et al, 2002).

The governments at all levels involve in the production of goods and delivery of various services to the public at concessional rates or for free. Like any government bodies, local governments have also the role in the production of goods and services that can satisfy the local public needs. As a result local authorities perform different functions with the objective of satisfying public demand. Promoting economic, ecological and social development places a greater pressure in executing these functions such as health, education, sanitation, etc. Another area of interest for local government is the duty to improve the well-being of residents and attain maximum level of public satisfaction. Therefore, local governments do this by providing services, encourage community improvement and protect people from harm.

Providing local government services involves in different levels of policies and decisions. Since the local government is the creature of state government, decisions on what type of service to be delivered need approval and guidance of the state government. Moreover, the boundaries of local government function are legally limited by state legislative bodies. Not only legal challenges but also capacity limitation constrains intention of administrators in providing necessary services. The market liberalization also has come with minimization of role of government in service delivery. The practice of administering public or civic services has changed its pattern from

exclusive government provision to more decentralized approaches. More of the trend is to engage the community and the private sector in the provision and administration of civic services. Ample literatures indicate the place of governments in market economy is diminishing to more regulatory level. An attempt is made in this article to examine the civic services administered by the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) in the city of Visakhapatnam.

### **Nature of Local Government Services**

The goods and services provided by the local authorities aim at to benefit residents, protection from health and physical dangers, and sharing common resources. The services or functions of local government emanate from general or special acts and rules. Services delivered by local authorities can be divided from legal perspective into mandatory or discretionary. Some services are mandatory, which means obligatory on local authorities that the authority must do what is required by law. Others are discretionary, allowing an authority to provide services if it wishes. Discretionary services are of a nature that is provided depending up on the preferences of the public at large and optional in nature. Moreover, these services include services which are not prohibited but not an obligation of a local authority (Jackson, 1967). The type of service determines the budgeting process and budget support of the local authorities.

In addition to this, the services can be classified for operational purposes as protection (police, fire protection, food inspection, licensing), communal (sewerage, cleaning, entertainment, lightning), social (education, housing, welfare) and trading (water, transportation, and other profit making activities) services (Richards, 1975; Warren, 1975). Like any public goods and services, local government services have the characteristics of joint consumption which make it difficult to be divisible and implement exclusion. The reason for the provision of goods and services by local government also revolves on the characteristics of the goods and services; and the need for equitable distribution either by monopolizing or regulating of production and distribution (Hirsch, 1970).

Municipal or local services may be delivered in variety of ways. They range from complete public provisions to complete private or a mixing of these including private public partnership. As a result, the room for private sector and public participation surfaced to the discourses of

service delivery through contracting, outsourcing, shared services and Public Private Partnership (Péteri, 1997; Kitchen, 2004). Assessment made by different writers from the experience of countries all over the world showed more inclination among local authorities to relieve from service provision through contracting or sharing responsibilities. More interesting manifestation of the transfer of responsibility is attached with falling in love of local authorities with Public Private Partnership Initiatives.

### **Role and Importance of Municipal Authorities**

The role of municipal authorities in administering civic services varies from country to country. The variation comes due to the circumstantial and substantial difference of the countries. The South African constitution put the responsibility of providing services and promotion of local economic development on municipal authorities (Nyalunga, 2006). In addition to this, a study on the role of local authorities in Africa by Van der Wal and Hilhorst (2007) indicated that in Tanzania licenses are issued at local level and local land inspection in Nigeria and Lesotho were made by local authorities. An experience from European country Bosnia-Herzegovina indicated that the local government units have played a greater role in the construction and maintenance of roads. The formulation of plans to maintain roads remains in the hand of the community. The local government maintains roads based on the requests from the community (McNeil et.al, 2009). This affirmatively explains how the role of the citizens and the government vary from country to country. All the studies indicate that practically the role to provide basic services remain in the jurisdiction of the local authorities.

In India urban local government authorities deliver different mandatory and discretionary civic services. Recent experiences in different states in the country show that the city governments attempt to engage people in service delivery. There was good tendency of involving the public and non-governmental organization in improving sanitation and education under the public private partnership programs (Misra, 1995; Dhameja et. al, 2009). However, a reservation was made by Arabi, Nagendra and Musthafa (2008) on the privatization of the service sector in India. Privatization of water service if not managed properly may lead to increase of tariffs that would add additional burden. The changing pattern of urban India is forcing the administrators to reorient plans and actions so as to perform and provide service in accountable, responsive,

responsible and transparent way (Bagga, 2008). The reorientation calls for the improvement of governance and building capacity of local government units.

From legal and constitutional perspective, the major responsibility of local urban governments in India is provision of goods and services. The Indian Constitution with the introduction of 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment in 1992 recognized urban local authorities as third layer of government. In addition to this, the XII-schedule of the constitution clearly stated the detailed list of services to be provided by local authorities. In line with this the regulations on Municipal Corporations in Andhra Pradesh i.e. Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Act 1955, Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation Act 1979, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Act 1981 and Andhra Pradesh Municipal Corporations Act 1994 contain a list of mandatory and optional list of services. The Acts specified more than 23 mandatory (obligatory) and 40 discretionary (optional) services. The list contains services related with health, education, road, sewerage, planning, water and environmental protection. With the objective of facilitating service delivery in urban areas the Government of Indian has formulated *Service Level Benchmarks* for water supply, solid waste management, sewerage and drainage service at national level (Ministry of Urban Development, 2009). This has helped state and local authorities to measure service delivery level and measure status against others.

### Visakhapatnam City

Visakhapatnam city is one of the fastest growing cities in Andhra Pradesh located in the East Coast of India in the offshore of Bay of Bengal. Geographically the city is located in 17°42' North latitude and 82°02' East on the cost of the Indian Ocean as a result the city experiences high humidity. The nearness to the ocean made the city more attractive port city for business and industrial uses. Thus from time to time the city is becoming a center for major big industries. Oil Refinery, Hindustan Zinc Smelter, fertilizer factory and Visakhapatnam Steel Plant are among the big industrial establishments in the city jurisdiction. The industrial development in the city over the years was creating job opportunities in the city. As result the economic, social and demographic pattern of the city is changing rapidly. Besides, today tourism and information technology are adding to the economic growth of the city. Demographically the city is experiencing a very rapid increase in the population size. The population of Visakhapatnam

urban agglomeration increased from 1.05 million in 1991 to 1.32 million in 2001. The growth of population was more than 80% during 1971-81 and 37.11% during 1991-2001. According to the provisional figure of census 2011, the population size of the city is 1.7 million. On the top of this, the city has a strategic importance since the western naval fleet of the Indian Navy is located in the city. The Vizag Port also adds another importance to the city by making a transitional area for ships sailing to different countries of the world. The need for more services has become visible and has created pressure on the city administration.

### **Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC)**

For the first time in 1858, the Voluntary Municipal Association of Visakhapatnam was established to formally manage urban affairs of the city during the Madras Presidency. Similarly in 1866 the Visakhapatnam Association became a Municipality. In 1920, the Municipality changed into a Municipal Council. In 1979 Municipal Council of Visakhapatnam was upgraded into Municipal Corporation. The Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation was merged with surrounding Gajuwaka municipality and other 32 Gram Panchayats to form Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) on November 21, 2005, with an objective to providing better municipal services and to increase developmental activities in those areas. The merger has benefited the Municipal Corporation by bringing major industrial units like Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, Bharat Heavy Plates & Vessels Ltd. and Hindustan Zinc Ltd. within its limits, which were earlier covered under Gajuwaka Municipality. The merger has also brought a wide area under the ambit of GVMC which can be used for developmental purpose. GVMC is now divided into 72 wards for administrative convenience and covers an area of 540 sq. km.

### **Civic Services Administered by GVMC**

The services provided by local governments vary from country to country because of the nature of their creation. However, the general trend in literature show services such as education, health, sanitation, street lighting, fire prevention, crime patrol, city planning, licensing, recreations, roads, drainage, parking, animal shelter, and others (Lamothe and Lamothe, 2006). As any local government body, GVMC is legally empowered to provide various services. These services are related with public health and sanitation, public works, education, water supply, and e-

governance. The services are provided either directly by the Corporation or deliver through the involvement of the community or private developers. The services administered by the GVMC for the benefit of the citizens of Visakhapatnam city are examined in this part of the article.

### **(1)Public Health and Sanitation**

Public health and sanitation is the major task of the Municipal Corporation in making the city comfortable for residents. These services include prevention of food adulteration, immunization, HIV prevention, malaria controlling and waste management.

*Prevention of Food Adulteration:* In line with the Indian Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954, the Corporation carried out regular monitoring and supervision of business engaging in the production and selling of food items. Therefore, the Food Hygiene Wing of the Corporation was established in the Public Health and Sanitation Department with the responsibility of discharging inspection and control of food adulteration in the city with the aim of protecting the health of the society from substandard and unsafe services. For instance, during 2008-09 budget years, the hygiene wing made inspection randomly on more than 470 enterprises. Based on this, prosecutions of 15 enterprises were carried out. Additionally, on the same year the wing received 17 adulteration reports which were investigated properly, out of which two enterprises were convicted.

*Immunization:* The maternal and child health services constitute an integral part of the family welfare program that occupies an important place in the socio-economic development of Visakhapatnam city. Therefore, the Corporation provides immunization service to all members of the community free of charge in all Health Service Centers in the city. Focus was given chiefly to the implementation of Expanded Program on Immunization (EIP) with the attention given to the six diseases to reduce infant morbidity and mortality. For this purpose, the Corporation placed 22 Auxiliary Nurses and Midwives in 19 health centers and 2 first referral units to provide the service at least two days a week. The immunization performance of the year 2009-10 budget year indicated that more than 11 thousand mothers have got prenatal and antenatal vaccination. On the same year more than seven thousand mothers vaccinated against tuberculosis, tetanus, and others. In addition to this, the Corporation provides immunization

service for the citizens in case there is an emergency or swine flu outbreaks. In June 2010, the Public Health Department of GVMC carried out swine flu vaccination to its health staffs who are highly exposed to the diseases.

*Urban Malaria Prevention:* Visakhapatnam city is characterized by high level prevalence of malaria due to high level of humidity. The table (1) showed samples of blood taken to check for malaria. In five years time the Health Department has tested around six hundred thousand bloods and 1.5 percent was found to be affected by *Plasmodium vivax* and *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria infections.

Table 1: Malaria Incidences 2006-2010

Year	Blood Smear	Total	Percentile
2006	120578	1462	1.2
2007	123851	1510	1.2
2008	135989	1971	1.4
2009	128153	2040	1.5
2010	89245	1848	2.1
Total	597816	8831	1.5

Source: GVMC, Public Health and Sanitation Department

To tackle the problem, the Public Health Department in collaboration with all health centers of the city attempted to provide medication free of charge. In addition to free medication the Department provides prior emphasis to the efforts of spraying anti-larva insecticides in the peak-times annually (July to September). For the implementation of malaria prevention activities, particularly Anti-Larva Operations, the city was divided into three malaria divisions with six zones each. The anti-larva operation was highly constrained by lack of equipments and manpower although the Corporation has travelled a long distance with the existing resources.

*HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control:* In response to the growing prevalence of HIV in the city, the Corporation has institutionalized HIV prevention schemes with the formation of Visakhapatnam AIDS Control Society. The Society served as voluntary testing and awareness creation center. In



addition to the dissemination of information about HIV, the Corporation through various channels especially in the slum areas attempted to distribute condoms free of charge. On the top of this, the Corporation established drop-in-centers in 2007 to provide care and facilitate support for people living with the virus with the intention of serving people who come to the city for different AIDS related activities. Besides, in 2008 with the intention of serving people residing in slum areas, the Corporation has established a voluntary counseling and testing center. To address the financial problem of the people living with the virus, the Corporation in collaboration with Population Service International-India (PSI) bought insurance policy for 200 People Living with HIV (PLH). The insurance cost was covered by the state government (50%), PSI (40%) and the beneficiary (10%). This is a pioneer initiative in India to provide insurance coverage to PLH.

*Solid Waste Management:* The waste collection is one of the basic essential services provided by the GVMC to make the city safe for residents. The quantity of waste generated increase from time to time. Currently the estimation made by the Corporation shows that more than 880 tons per day waste is generated from different sources. The major waste comes from domestic households that cover 44.96 percent of the waste generated. Next to it, around 22.5 percent waste generated from street sweeping and drainages. In order to achieve clean city, the Corporation has three levels of waste collection systems. First, *primary collection* system involves in the collection of waste based on door-to-door efforts. This was carried out with the involvement of *Residential Welfare Associations (RWAs)*. There are 800 RWAs and 126 Self Help Groups (SHG) involving under the PPP initiative in the primary waste collection initiatives. RWAs and SHGs had involved in the creation of awareness among residents under the *Janachaitanya* programmes. Second, *secondary collection* refers to dumping wastes collected from households into containers. Around 2602 cement bins and 800 steel containers were placed in the city to serve more than 2 million people. The *third level* involved in the transportation of wastes from secondary sources to land fill or recycling facilities. The Corporation has attempted to engage private sector developers with the assistance obtained from XII Finance Commission grant for scientific waste management, like *EnviroSyz India Private Limited*, in an effective manner. The Corporation has faced greater challenges in getting additional landfill sites. In addition to this, the wastes generated from streets were collected at night time through outsourcing the work. Moreover, the bio-medical waste is directly collected by private agency, *Maridi Eco Industries*

*Pvt. Ltd.*, and treated in accordance to the norms of Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board. The agency collects money from the health centers based on the agreed tariffs and service charges set in consultation with the Corporation. The Corporation uses its own incineration center and a shredder with the capacity process in 250 kg and of 10 Kg per hour respectively.

## (2) Water Supply

With the expansion of the city and population growth, the demand for water of industrial and household consumption has increased in Visakhapatnam. Finding and implementing sustainable water supply service and system bring into being greater challenge for urban local authorities. Policymakers and service providers in local authorities need to take action to improve water services for the poor and underprivileged part of the community. GVMC has around ten different water supply sources that anticipated producing a total of 72.8 Million Gallons per Day (MGD). However, due to technical and natural limitations, the current actual supply of water from these sources remained 47.76 MGD which shows 25.04 MGD deficit. In addition to the existing sources, the Corporation made attempts to exploit ground water at residential and commercial neighborhoods. There are about 6387 bore-wells with the capacity of generating 1.50 MGD. The Corporation works in pilot water supply schemes in Gajuwak and peripheral are on 275 sites to produce more than 3.0 MGD. These sources increase the water generated and supplied from 47.76 to 52.26 MGD which demonstrated a 9.4 percent improvement.

The water service coverage in Visakhapatnam city in 2007 according to *Urban-Water-Utilities-India-Benchmarking-Study* of Asian Development Bank was 48.92 percent with 85668 water supply connections and served about 750,000 residents. According to *Development Activities Report 2010-2011*, the Corporation projected almost 85 percent water supply coverage in the city with a total of 135059 bulk and domestic connection and serving more than 1.5 million residents. There is more than 11000 km of distribution line network to cover residential, industrial and commercial areas.

Table 2: Water Service Connections as of 2011

	Connection Categories	No.	Percentage
1	Bulk Water Supply Connections	80	0.06
2	Semi Bulk Connections	2141	1.59

3	Domestic Connections	124353	92.07
4	Public Stand Posts	8485	6.28
	Total	135059	100

Source: HRD, Developments Activities 2010-2011 Report

The above data reveals that out of the total connections about 92.07 percent were domestic connections that served the residents at household level. This is an encouraging effort by the city government to provide service to the urban poor. As compared to the 2007 coverage the current situation show almost 100 percent progress throughout the Corporation, state and central government efforts. The Municipal Corporation exerted efforts to boost water service coverage in the slum areas in collaboration with the state and central governments. Under the current distribution system, the Corporation installed 210 storage reservoirs with the capacity to storage capacity of 19.01 million gallons. In addition to this, there are 16 pumping stations in the city. To support the existing distribution system, the Corporation has five balancing reservoirs at Padamanabham and Yendada with the capacity of 8200 KL

### (3) Education

The need for education increased from time to time with the growth of the population in the city of Visakhapatnam. In line with the needs and expectations of the people, the Vizag Municipality started providing secondary education since 1947. Secondary education became a service provided by the municipality especially after independence with objectives of expanding educational opportunities. As a result, this provided better opportunity for professional development of local students and relieved parents from additional costs of sending children to other areas in search of secondary education (Appa Rao, 1974). However, even after long years of educational services, the City Development Report in 2005 indicated that 55 percent of the households living in slum and squatted areas did not have access to primary education. This put pressure on Corporation to provide educational facilities to the people settled in squatted areas. The GVMC maintains 97 schools of different levels with more than twenty six thousand students. The schools are staffed with 443 teachers serving at different capacity. The number of primary, upper primary and secondary schools and the students in these schools is given below.

Table 3: Students and Teacher

Years	Number of Students				Number of Teachers			
	Primary Schools	Upper Primary Schools	High Schools	Total	Primary Schools	Upper Primary Schools	High Schools	Total
2005-06	16207	3174	10434	29815	192	23	172	387
2006-07	16504	3075	10235	29814	198	26	175	399
2007-08	14661	2935	10434	28030	263	21	205	489
2008-09	14321	3125	10201	27647	204	19	205	428
2009-10	15966	1200	9607	26773	204	8	231	443

Source: GVMC Education Department

It is widely acknowledged that the availability of adequate number of well-qualified and trained teachers is the key to educational development. In view of this, most countries spend huge resources on teachers' salaries and their professional development. Data on teachers in the Corporation schools reveals that student-teacher ratio was very high particularly in upper primary schools (150:1). The total number of students attending in the Corporation schools has shown a tendency of decreasing from year to year.

GVMC has initiated different measures to improve educational facilities and student educational performance in the city. The programmes namely *Balyam*, *Sweekaram* and *Vidyasree* were undertaken by the Corporation under collaborative efforts. The first initiative is *Balyam Programme* with main objective of childhood development. The programme is initiated to attract the children of the underprivileged communities who reside mainly in slums to primary schools. It intends to prepare children and make them ready with all the required skills and attitudes necessary for primary education. The *Sweekaram* initiative is a Public Private Partnership endeavor that is proposed to improve the infrastructure facilities in GVMC Schools. The scheme intends to collect donations in the form of funds, buildings, computers, etc. To this effect the Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the GVMC *Sweekaram* Education Society and the 18 donors like NGOs, business houses, public sector undertakings, industrialists and others on May 2008. *Vidyasree* is another public private partnership initiative by the Corporation to assist students who scored higher marks in the 10<sup>th</sup>

class examination. The programme mainly aimed at financially supporting students of the Corporation schools who got more than 500 marks in the SSC examination. A fund was created with contributions from philanthropists and it was operated as a part of GVMC *Sweekaram* Education Society. The program is intended to support students in the future college and university careers through providing financial assistance on regular basis.

#### (4) Public Works

The public works of the GVMC involved in the provision of various infrastructures to the residents. These infrastructures include roads, underground drain system, street lighting, and storm water drains (surface sewerage).

*Road Construction and Maintenance:* With the population growth and expansion in various economic sectors, the city has come under pressure with various challenges related with road network coverage and management. In recent times the increase in population has triggered in increasing of the number of privately owned vehicles and motor cycles. In 2008 the road coverage of the city was around 812 km which covers the whole city. Besides, the Corporation has engaged in the construction of 83 km long roads in 2009 and 86 km of road in 2010 in the main city and adjacent areas. With this road coverage in the city has increased by 10.2 percent. In general the Corporation was able to construct around 169 km of road in the main and adjacent city areas found to be encouraging that contributed to the betterment of the city. The total road coverage of the city is now to the extent of more than 1000kms.

Table 4: Road Coverage, Constructed and Maintained

No	Years	Road Construction		
		Coverage	Constructed	Maintained
1.	2008	812	-	141
2.	2009	895	83	118
3.	2010	981	86	147
4.	Total	-	169	406

Source: Chief Engineer Office, GVMC

The Chief Engineer Office is responsible for maintenance and repair of roads. In 2008 the Corporation repaired around 141 km long road. Whereas in 2009 the length of road repaired

reduced to 118 which declined by 16.3 percent from previous year of performance. On the other hand in 2010 the length of road repaired in the city goes to 147 km per year.

*Surface Sewerage:* Another civic service provided by the GVMC is sewerage. The total length of surface drainage for rainwater and overflowing water from households is around 1900 KMs throughout the city. It showed a modest improvement in terms of length coverage. In 2008 there was 1624 KMs of surface sewerage system that cover the whole city. However, in 2009 with the construction of more than 150 KMs, the length of coverage went to 1895 KMs.

*Street Lighting:* In 2005 with the 46000 different types of bulbs the Corporation coverage reached around 80 percent. Meanwhile the number of bulbs increased to 51000 in 2008 that showed an increase by five thousand. It registered a 10.9 percent improvement in number of bulbs and increased the coverage by almost ten percent in three years time. According to projection made in 2005 (estimation made in the preparation of City Development Plan), the Corporation reached its 100 percent street coverage in 2009. The coverage in 2009 in terms of numbers of bulbs increased by 7000 (i.e. 13.7 percent) as compared to the 2008. The current status commencing from 2010, the Corporation achieved its coverage of streets more than one hundred percent with the installation of more than 65000 bulbs in the city.

*Underground Drainage System:* The entire area of Visakhapatnam city has been divided into 20 sewerage blocks for the sake of taking up the sewerage schemes in a phased manner by the GVMC. The first phase of sewerage was taken up in the old city which was commissioned during the year 1981. The cost of the project was 1.8 million to construct about 13.15 KMs. So far this provided 1600 house service connections which achieved its objectives. The second phase of underground drainage construction project was sanctioned in 2001 in three blocks with a project cost of Rs. 142.1 million. The schemes ended up after constructing 97 KMs drainage. Under this scheme the Corporation connected 9500 houses out of the targeted 13000 connections. In the third phase in 2006, the Corporation sanctioned 200 million rupees to construct 50 KMs of underground drainage system. This project improved connection coverage from 141700 (in 2001) to 159300 (in 2007) house connections; with ultimate target of 256,400 connections in 2040. The fourth and fifth phases were sanctioned under JNNURM.

### (5)E-Governance Services

Under the e-governance initiatives, the city government has taken up two schemes namely *Saukaryam* (i.e. the facility) and *e-Seva* (i.e. e-service). The *Saukaryam* service was initiated by the Corporation itself in 2000 to provide electronic services to its residents. The facility as a pilot e-governance project aimed at taking municipal services to the door steps of citizens in a transparent manner. The services have been providing information with regard to different services provided by the GVMC including the citizen charters. In addition to this, the facility enabled to collect property tax and water service charges online. Besides, the citizens can trace their arrears from the website of the Corporation.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh came with new initiative named *e-Seva* that incorporated the different services provided by *Saukaryam* facility and new additional services to the citizen. Formerly the facility provided collection for property tax and waters charges, but the new facility enable the citizens to pay their telephone and electricity bill at *e-Seva* centers. The detailed services provided on both civic-centers include the following:

- Collection of utility bills; electricity, water and sewerage, telephone bills, property tax, examination fees and selling prepaid parking tickets, and others
- Permit related: renewal of trade licenses, change of address of a vehicle owners , transfer of vehicle ownership, issuing and renewal of deriving licenses, registration of new vehicles, etc
- Issuance of certificates : registration of birth, registration of death, issuance of birth certificate, issuance of death certificate
- Online services: internet-enabled electronic payments, downloading of different formats and government orders
- Others; reservation of APSRTC bus tickets, reservation of water tanks, filling of passport applications and sales of application and stamps such as non-judiciary stamps, trade license application, national game tickets, and various national and state level application formats.

### Conclusions and Policy Implications

The public health and sanitation services provided by the GVMC showed modest improvements from time to time. Especially the achievement in terms of malaria and HIV controlling prevention was encouraging. Likewise, the Corporation achieved 80 percent capacity of collecting solid wastes. The attempt to involve the community and private developer in the solid wastes management was an indication of the Corporation's effort to boost solid waste management. However, there is lack of proper institutional framework of supervision and coordination of external stakeholders. The Corporation has attempted to privatize the bio-medical waste management in the city that reduced the burden of the existing incineration capacity. The efforts of immunization by the Corporation were encouraging with the existing limited human resources.

The city of Visakhapatnam is the pioneer within the state in providing education to residents from primary to high school level. The recent trend in terms of education coverage, however, shows stagnation for almost five years without adding new capacity and number of teachers. Besides, the success of the students at 10<sup>th</sup> class examination remains constant without showing much improvement from time to time. However, the current practice to introduce English medium curriculum would assist the students to perform better in the coming years. The schools are mainly serving the underprivileged part of the community. Empowering schools leads to empowering the students and the community at large particularly the poor. The current practice on engaging donors, in public private partnership initiatives, in the construction and expansion of educational infrastructure signals a good hope for the future if the Corporation strategically attempted to exploit the potentials. Therefore, the Corporation has to work on education with the objective of involving various stakeholders to improve quality of education.

The GVMC has engaged in the expansion of infrastructures such as roads, underground drainage, and street lighting. The road coverage of the city is increasing from year to year as well as the length of roads maintained. However, the roads of the city do not escape from damage due to other infrastructure expansion and negligence of usage. This needs coordinated effort among different stakeholders to minimize the damages on roads in the city. The number of bulbs on the street showed an increasing pattern. The role played by the Corporation in addressing the



problem of flooding in the flood prone areas was encouraging in mitigating the severity of damaged caused on human and material resources. The service connections of underground drainage system have increased to benefit more residents.

The influence of modern technology started to be felt by the Corporation since 2000 with the introduction of *saukaryam service* in efforts to make the administrative service easily accessible. This made the Corporation a pioneer in the introduction of computerized service providing centers. Currently the facility is integrated with *e-seva* centers administered by the state government. The e-governance opportunities provide convenience in making payments related with electricity, water charges, property and other payments. But most of the centers are staffed with outsourced employees which needs attention. The staff on rolls of the GVMC may be appointed to *e-seva* centers to make the service more sustainable.

The GVMC has been delivering different services that emanate from the constitution of the nation and Municipal Corporation Act. To guarantee residents access to efficient and effective services, the Corporation has used various alternative ways of delivering services. The Corporation from time to time has attempted to improve the service quality of the city by decentralizing the service provision system with the involvement of private provider and community organizations in addition to directly provided services. These would create the possibly of belongingness and mobilization of local resources for the betterment of the city. However, the decentralization process was not free of defects. It needs proper follow-up and implementation mechanism. Some of the following limitations need attention from policy makers in the Corporation and the state government.

1. *Lack of Manpower*: In recent years, the supervision on different services indicated that there are no adequate personnel providing the services. The number of teachers in the schools shows no improvement even if there is an increasing number of a student enrolled in government schools especially in the lower level primary schools. Additionally, the supervision of water services and sanitation services were hindered by lack of sufficient manpower that works on supervision of different works. This needs proper attention from the Corporation side. Besides, there is high turnover of professionals in the city which hinders the Corporation from benefiting from the expertise

of the personnel. Moreover, the number of people working in the health sector reduced from time to time and resulted in deterioration of service in the health centers.

2. *Inadequate Supervision*: Supervision is inadequate in the service sector, especially in the water service sector. The Corporation was not able to control and minimize wastage of water due to different reasons. One can understand from simple observation of the streets how much water is wasting. Lack of supervision in the solid waste management sector is highly manifested in the city. Similarly, some of the PPP projects have failed to address problems sustainably due to lack of supervision and control.
3. *Low Level of Awareness among the Residents*. Low-level of awareness of the population can be mainly manifested from two services, one the sanitation alertness can be easily identified by an ordinary observer how residents are reluctant to use dusting bins and containers in the residential areas. The Corporation has, therefore, the responsibility of improving the awareness of the residents on public health and sanitation to make the city safe and comfortable. Second, the leakage and wastage of water was very high. In some areas 30 to 40 percent of the water remained unaccounted mainly due to the improper utilization of public water taps and old transmission tubes. The water resource utilization by the residents was disappointing. The public pipe lines are not properly fixed. Hence, the community using this water taps not properly using them. The wastage of resources needs proper attention from policy makers since it might have an impact in the long run.

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