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## Good Urban Governance in South Asia (GUGSA)



**Program Overview and Compilation of Case Documents**

**T C G I**



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# Good Urban Governance in South Asia (GUGSA)

## *Programme Overview*



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## 1 Introduction

The USAID-sponsored Good Urban Governance in South Asia (GUGSA) program has reached its final stage - a regional conference - after documenting and promoting good governance initiatives in the urban contexts of six countries in southern Asia. One of the conclusions that emerged from the GUGSA experience is the need for a regional platform for documenting, disseminating and promoting good urban governance. In this concluding conference of the GUGSA program, this idea will be discussed and such a platform will be conceptualized. This overview summarizes the learning's and outcomes of the GUGSA project and presents the arguments in favor of establishing a regional forum.

## 2 Overview of the GUGSA program

USAID's Regional Urban Development Office for South Asia (RUDO/SA), in collaboration with the region's bilateral USAID Missions, initiated a three-year, three-location (Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) activity in October 2001 to promote good urban governance in South Asia. GUGSA activities document, disseminate and demonstrate best practices from local government bodies, to improve the response capacity of local urban governments within the country. The five principles of good governance that GUGSA focused on are: Transparency, Predictability, Accountability, Rule of Law and Participation.

In the aftermath of the Tsunami in 2004, it was felt that the scope of GUGSA should be modified to include Post-Tsunami works to be able to build on GUGSA's strength of regional networking. The study involved local institutions advocating Good Governance and Disaster Mitigation practices. It was also intended to help create relationships among cities for facilitating the exchange of information that can continue well beyond the tenure of the project. At this stage, the geographical scope was extended to include India, Indonesia, and Thailand.

In each country, the first stage of the GUGSA project consisted of research and documentation of promising practices. This stage started with a topical inventory of urban governance including a country level overview and more detailed research in five selected towns. This was followed by detailed case study documentation of two good urban governance practices from any of the five selected towns. The second stage was planned to include short-term projects to demonstrate the principles of good governance. This underwent some variation in the different GUGSA countries. In Sri Lanka, a participatory planning and project identification exercise was undertaken, followed by implementation of a selected project. In Nepal, a detailed case documentation of a community-managed water supply project was carried out instead. The demonstration project was dropped in the case of Bangladesh.

In the post-Tsunami scenario, the above activities were modified. The first stage consisted of documentation and dissemination of good urban governance practices in post-tsunami recovery work. This included a topical inventory and detailed case studies. In Tamilnadu (India) and Sri Lanka, this was followed by a demonstration project consisting mainly of a participatory, strategic planning exercise for long term recovery. The post-Tsunami segment of GUGSA is culminating with a training workshop on post-disaster recovery, organized along with the regional conference on good urban governance in southern Asia.

It is expected that both the Conference and the Training Workshop would help to create awareness on good urban governance and planning for resilient cities across the Region. It is also expected that the Conference and Workshop would help create relationships between cities to facilitate the exchange of information and cross-learning through the establishment of a formal network between the participating cities. The Administrative Staff College of India would facilitate the establishment of the network.

Most of the material in this overview, directly quotes from the topical inventory reports and case studies, prepared by the various consulting firms as part of the GUGSA project. Since the project was initiated in 2001, some of this material may be somewhat dated.

## 3 Sri Lanka

### 3.1 Urban governance scenario

In Sri Lanka, there are three types of Local Authorities (LAs):

- 17 Municipal Councils (MC) – generally responsible for towns with more than 30,000 residents. MCs are headed by a Mayor and assisted by a Commissioner who is appointed by the Provincial Council. Most MCs have public works, health and accounting departments, with a typical staff size of approximately 150-600 employees.
- 37 Urban Councils (UC) – generally responsible for towns with 10,000-30,000 residents. UCs are headed by an elected Chairman with staff sizes of 30-150 employees.
- 257 Pradeshiya Sabhas (PS) – are divisional/rural councils. PS governments are headed by an elected Chairman with average staff sizes of 30-50 persons.

MCs represent more densely populated areas than UCs, however the main functions of both council types are similar in nature – i.e. health and sanitation activities, solid waste disposal, greening of areas under their control and development of parks. In the typical PS, the focus is on thoroughfares, public health and market places and thus, the focus on services and environment is the same as MC and UC functions. However, due to the lack of finances these functions and services have not been sufficiently undertaken in many Pradeshiya Sabhas.

Though the Government of Sri Lanka established LAs with a mandate to provide services and amenities to their residents, the LA tax revenue base, primarily supported by Central Government transfers, has been inadequate to provide these services and amenities. The Central Government has been making efforts to improve the LAs financial resources. Moreover, internal pressures for increased decentralization have devolved more responsibilities to sub-national level institutions of governance. Examples include the Development Councils established at District Level and the 13th amendment to the Constitution which subordinates LAs to Provincial Councils (PC). In contrast to these decentralization endeavors/ activities, several important functions and services, such as electricity supply and water distribution, which previously contributed to LA revenues, were removed from the LAs domain and entrusted to Central Government agencies.

In response to the inadequate capacities of LAs, several institutional development projects - sponsored by World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) assistance - have been implemented. The Sri Lanka Institute of Local Governance (SLILG) was also established to provide training facilities for the Local Authority personnel to enhance their capacities. The most recent effort is the TALG program funded by the USAID.

### 3.2 GUGSA activities

The GUGSA project activities were first initiated in Sri Lanka. The local consultants were Environment Management Lanka (EML) and other partners included the Sri Lanka Institute of Local Governance (SLILG) and the community development division of SANASA, a federation of credit societies in Sri Lanka.

#### 3.2.1 Topical Inventory

In the first phase of the project, a topical inventory of good urban governance initiatives was prepared. The study covered three important Urban Local Authorities (ULA) – Negombo, Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte (“Kotte”), and Dehiwala – Mt. Lavinia (“Dehiwala”). The research in Negombo, Kotte, and Dehiwala was conducted in two ways:

- Current practices of ULAs in relation to “Good Governance”, and
- Perspectives of residents and their expectations for effective local governance.

This research was primarily based on structured interviews with residents and MC staff, and supplemented with existing secondary resources. In addition, the consultants, with their extensive association and involvement in local government systems and processes in Sri Lanka, reviewed the background of the ULAs, and their mandate to deliver services within a more democratic framework.

The study spotted opportunities for major improvements in the areas of accountability and participation. It also identified two case studies for detailed documentation – one on a project in the town of Negombo, dealing with drainage and mangrove conservation and the other in Dehiwala Mt. Lavinia dealing with solid waste management.

### **3.2.2 Negombo Case Study**

In the mid 1980s, the Negombo Municipal Council (NMC) of Sri Lanka realized it was facing a number of health and environmental problems within its district, specifically in the Kadolkele area. Kadolkele was a newly established area that was uninhabited up until 1985, when the lands were sold to landless families from the district of Negombo. The area lacked a rainwater drainage system resulting in water logging, mosquito breeding and consequently, diseases. These new populations began using the nearby mangrove forests for resources. Deforestation of the mangroves caused soil erosion and silting in the lagoon area leading to decline in fish breeding.

The NMC, along with the local community and non-governmental organizations, implemented innovative governance practices and designed effective projects in order to address and overcome these issues. A storm water drainage project, a solid waste collection project, and a mangrove restoration project were all successfully implemented in the Kadolkele area - all of which involved the participation of members of the respective communities, in order to solve their own health and environmental problems. The case study highlights some of the effective governance practices observed by the Negombo Municipal Council (NMC) in dealing with complex and intricate urban management issues within the framework of good governance principles.

The storm water drainage project was successful mainly due to the proper identification of the community's needs and the quick response to address these through the active participation of the beneficiary community, which (also) contributed financially to the project. In the case of the mangrove conservation project, the local authority succeeded in creating greater awareness among the community members to protect the natural resources of the lagoon area. They secured new knowledge about operating mangrove nurseries and succeeded in the cultivation of new mangroves on the bank of the lagoon, thus resulting in the overall preservation of the mangroves and lagoon bank. Once again, active participation from the community was key to its implementation.

This service exemplifies good governance practices, particularly community participation, transparency, and accountability. The lessons learned provide a role model for the 21st century for replication in local authorities that are invariably faced with similar challenges in infrastructure and service provisions.

### **3.2.3 Dehiwala mt. Lavinia case study**

The Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia Municipal Council (DMMC) in Sri Lanka, has developed a solid waste management policy that exemplifies Good Urban Governance practices. They are:

- Efficient urban services delivery: privatization of solid waste collection and disposal, and
- Active citizen participation in local government: reduction of solid waste through programs that engage community-based organizations.

The DMMC recognized the need for a new policy due to the inadequate system of collection and disposal of solid waste and the problems confronted by low-income community groups relocated in the municipal area. Under the new policy, new institutional arrangements for planning, implementation, and evaluation have been made by the DMMC. A new standing committee on solid waste management and environment, and a new department under the Deputy Commissioner has been created for this purpose.



Amidst objections from within and outside the Council, the DMMC has privatized collection and disposal of solid waste in four of twenty-nine wards, and intends to expand it to a few other wards. Service delivered in the four wards has improved and complaints from the residents have been minimized.

The solid waste reduction program was initiated by the DMMC on the request of the dwellers (1,200 families) in the relocated site of Badowita. This program was carried out in six stages or blocks. Sevanatha, an NGO partner, organized the people into community development councils (CDCs) with the assistance of foreign funded projects and aid agencies. They have contributed through awareness programs, community mobilizations, demonstrations, and training.

Reduction of solid waste is done through recycling and re-using. A solid waste collection and sorting center (WCSC) has been established. Sorted items are sold to generate revenue for the community. The DMMC plans to extend this solid waste reduction program into two other ward areas. Composting (of organic waste) is due to commence with the provision of a suitable land to establish a centre/ such a facility.

The DMMC has initiated the program using its resources and utilizing contributions from the government, private sector, and civil society organizations. Change was introduced through education and awareness programs. Objections encountered have been overcome through discussions and mobilization programs. Community members expressed interest and dedication to help solve their own problems.

The primary result is that both the DMMC and the community have benefited in various ways. Improved solid waste removal, better health and environmental conditions, revenue generation, and employment are all benefits to the community. The DMMC has been able to successfully establish public-private partnerships and community participation in service delivery programs.

### **3.2.4 Demonstration Project at Deraniyagala**

Later, a demonstration project was initiated in Sri Lanka. The Demonstration Project for Good Urban Governance consisted of two stages of work; the first being a participatory, strategic planning exercise and the second being the formulation and implementation of a solid waste management project. The strategic planning process, was carried out through the convergence/ coalition of two USAID funded projects – the Good Urban Governance in South Asia (GUGSA) Project and the South Asia Regional Conference on Disaster Mitigation and Urban Infrastructure Financing.

In consultation with the Sri Lanka government and other stakeholders, Deraniyagala, a small town falling under the category of Pradeshiya Sabha or Local Authority, was selected. The municipal body was given training on how to carry out strategic planning. Subsequently, a participatory strategic planning workshop was organized with all their stakeholder groups with facilitation and support from GUGSA consultants. At this workshop, the focus areas were identified and the participants carried out SWOT analysis for each of these areas. They formulated a vision for the town and identified broad strategies for each focus area. Later the GUGSA consultants helped the local authority formulate projects. One of these, a solid waste management project, was selected for implementation with GUGSA financial support.

SANASA, a federation of credit Cooperatives with a development agenda, was roped in to implement the solid waste management project in collaboration with the local authority. This initiative also created a precedent for the municipal body actively collaborating with a civil society organization.

During the inception period, a project officer with good facilitative and organizational qualities was recruited and a project office established within the PS. A solid waste management committee was established. Awareness programs were conducted during this stage and commitment built with officers and/or representatives to support the Deraniyagala Solid Waste Management Program with a wide range of target groups such as schools, youth clubs, residents' associations, etc. Representatives of various organizations were invited for the awareness creation and consultative processes. Special programs were conducted to transfer knowledge on methods of composting and reduction at source. Compost bins were distributed by the project for families of selected areas.

Families residing in Deraniyagala were organized in groups of 20, and a leader having special community work and environmental skills was appointed. At the SANASA campus, the leaders were trained on home gardening methods using compost and were also informed about the possibilities of recycling plastics, paper, metal etc. They were then mobilized to educate and train the community. Selected households were provided with compost bins. Source separation of plastics, bottles and metals was encouraged and a potential buyers list was established at the local authority for public use. The local authority is also working on a feasible collection and sales method on behalf of the public.

### **3.2.5 Demonstration Project at Kaluthara**

In the post-tsunami phase of GUGSA work it was decided to build on GUGSA's existing network and experience to carry out some work that would demonstrate the importance of integrating good governance principles in planning for post-disaster recovery. In consultation with USAID-Colombo and local stakeholders, the coastal town of Kaluthara near Colombo was selected.

A structured, participatory, strategic planning exercise was carried out in the Kaluthara Urban Council. Starting with a kick-off meeting, several working groups were formed and various training workshops organized for them. A visioning exercise was carried out and Kaluthara's vision and mission statements were formulated. In the next workshop, issues were identified and prioritized, under the following heads: General Administration and Finance, Health and Sanitation Services, Physical Infrastructure Facilities, Water & Electricity Services, Social Services and the like. Then goals and objectives were set for each area and projects formulated on that basis. Projects were then ranked in order of priority. The GUGSA consultants have assisted the Urban Council in preparing detailed project proposals for 14 projects which will be used to secure financial support from the government and donor agencies.

Specific outcomes of the project are:

- Four-year participatory strategic plan with budget
- Completely developed project proposals
- Trained and committed planning team in the Urban Council

### **3.2.6 Key outcomes and learning's**

The early phase of GUGSA work involving the topical inventory and case studies showed that there are many isolated, but good examples of local leadership and good governance that can be used to highlight and promote the cause of good urban governance.

One of the outcomes of GUGSA Phase 1 work is that the methodology for participatory strategic planning at the municipal level has been tested and the capacity to carry out such activities built in the Municipality. The local consultants, EML, utilized the experience in other urban reform activities, particularly The Local Governance Program (TALG) funded by USAID. The process adopted in Deraniyagala is being used as a case study in training courses for local planning under this program. The Deraniyagala experience has now been documented as a holistic case study in promoting good urban governance.

The Kaluthara demonstration project takes the Deraniyagala experience one step further and shows that a sophisticated planning process can help in strengthening an urban local body significantly to set its own course and pursue it systematically. It also shows how a learning process can be actively promoted across a country by a properly structured and funded program run by an institution like the Sri Lanka Institute for Local Government. Such institutions can be more effective in their task of capacity-building if they are networked with similar institutions across the region.

## 4 Nepal

### 4.1 Urban governance scenario

Nepal's urbanization level is second-lowest in the South Asia region after Bhutan. However, the urban scenario in Nepal is undergoing dramatic change as a result of the rapid growth in urban population, which is increasing at an annual rate of 3.6 % (national average is 2.27%). This rate is enough to double the present total urban population of 3.2 million (2001) living in 58 municipalities within the next 10 years. The actual present urban population remains underestimated, as many urban settlements have not yet been included. By the year 2035 the urban population is expected to reach 50% of the total national population.

As a result of this rapid urbanization process there has also been a dramatic increase in the number of the designated urban areas - the municipalities have grown from 33 in 1981 to 58 at present, which would soon be reaching 100 in near future. This means that in the coming years, the municipalities would increasingly be facing critical issues of: deficiencies in urban infrastructure and services, deterioration of urban environmental conditions, housing shortages, increasing urban poverty, the challenges of creating more employment opportunities etc.

Presently, despite the fact that the municipalities have a legal mandate in the form of the Local Self-Governance Act 1999, they are resorting to crisis management to cope with those problems. Weak organization, poor capacity for resource management, lack of skilled manpower etc are their major weaknesses. Although the Act defines their functional and financial responsibilities, there is a general need for improvement of municipal capabilities in the following areas: organizational strengthening; mobilization and utilization of financial resources; ability to plan and prioritize investments; enhancement of planning and implementation capabilities for infrastructure development and service delivery; capacity to work in partnerships with the private sector and civil society; ability to mobilize the media for dissemination of information; and, setting performance standards for the various services rendered by the municipality. Effective adoption of the principles of good urban governance by the municipal governments in Nepal is the key to finding the solutions to the above problems.

### 4.2 GUGSA activities

After Sri Lanka, GUGSA work was initiated in Nepal. The local consultants were Team Nepal and other partners included the Municipal Association of Nepal (MUAN).

#### 4.2.1 Topical Inventory

The first step involved development of a List of Stakeholders. This was done in two stages. Key institutions or resource agencies involved in municipal management and development were identified as the primary stakeholders, and their detailed information was obtained on the basis of a structured questionnaire. The second step involved a general review of Nepal's local government system. This was done on the basis of the review of the published Acts and available documents.

The third step was a wide evaluation ending in a 'long list' of Municipalities that have a good track record in urban governance. 15 municipalities were short-listed taking into account city size classification, different ecological regions, socio-cultural differences and various developmental regions.

In the fourth step, 5 municipalities were selected after gathering primary and secondary information on them and the specific projects that feature good urban governance principles. A customized questionnaire or format was designed as a tool for consultations with the key stakeholders and resource agencies. Consultation meetings and group discussions were held and the data was analyzed based on aggregate scoring by each municipality as per the selected criteria. The 5 municipalities chosen were Butwal, Dharan, Dhulikhel, Bharatpur and Pokhara.

In step 5, in-depth research was carried out on the five Municipalities. This involved background study of the municipalities, followed by the design and development of study tools i.e. a topical inventory

matrix, the municipal staff and resident survey questionnaires; field investigations focused on meetings/interactions, and structured interviews with the municipal staff and the residents for primary and secondary data collection. In each municipality, different aspects of service delivery were evaluated from the point of view of both the municipal staff and citizens, keeping in mind the principles of good urban governance. Based on this evaluation, specific initiatives with the potential of being categorized as a 'best practice' were identified. This exercise also yielded an overview of the governance situation in the municipality. At the end of the Topical Inventory stage, the specific projects/ initiatives short listed were compared and two were selected for detailed documentation - the Shree Complex Vegetable & Fruit Market of Pokhara SMC and the Bamghat Tole/Lane Organisation of Butwal Municipality of Nepal.

#### **4.2.2 Shree Complex Vegetable & Fruit Market, Pokhara**

The Pokhara Sub-Metropolitan City (SMC), as a rapidly growing urban centre of the Western Development Region, is the third largest city in Nepal. This SMC had been witnessing a significant rise in the demand of urban consumers for grocery, vegetables, fruits and meat products in the recent years. Pokhara SMC, however, despite satisfactory development of basic urban infrastructure facilities (like road network, drainage and water supply etc,) did not have any well-organized retail market centers for fruits, vegetables and meat products. Absence of a proper retail market place meant that consumers were not getting quality goods at competitive prices. The farmers also were unable to get reasonable prices for their agro-products, as there was no fixed market place where they could negotiate with the smaller retailers, or could directly sell to the consumers. The Pokhara SMC realized that an organized and well-planned agro-products retail market space at a proper location near the city center was an urgent need.

The Pokhara SMC did not have any land of its own in the city center to develop such a market complex in order to meet this urgent need. A private entrepreneur, who held land in the area of contention, approached the Municipality with a business plan and the Pokhara SMC readily agreed to the idea. The entrepreneur built the facility and registered it under the Companies Act. Organized spaces were created. Despite initial apprehension about the organized market activity and moving to a new place, many vendors moved in. This was made possible with the unrelenting efforts of both the entrepreneur as well as the Pokhara SMC which had agreed to not allow ad-hoc vending in the surroundings of the developed facility.

This project demonstrated the principles of good urban governance in the following ways:

- The municipality fulfilled its accountability to the citizens, traders and farmers in an equitable manner.
- The municipality ensured predictable behavior on its part with respect to the terms of the partnership, thus also ensuring that the model is replicable across the city.
- They maintained transparency in all the arrangements such as rent, etc.
- The entire decision-making process involved the participation of all key stakeholders.
- They also ensured that there is no illegal vending in the vicinity.

#### **4.2.3 Butwal Municipality – Bamghat Tole/Lane Organisation (Tlo)**

Butwal Municipality (BM) has been undertaking programs related to urban economic development and poverty alleviation within the RUPP framework since a number of years. Sub-ward neighborhood level local organizations in the form of Tole/Lane organizations (TLOs) within the Municipality are the backbone of the RUPP program implementation strategy. The overall state of affairs in the Bamghat Area was grim before the establishment of the Bamghat TLO. Deficiencies in basic urban services like drinking water, poor conditions of the road and surface drains, poor state of sanitation, and energy supply, were adversely affecting the lives of the inhabitants of the area.

The project was aimed at improving the urban living conditions, as well as, improving livelihoods of poor and disadvantaged people, utilizing the benefits of rural-urban linkage potentials through: (1)

Development of physical infrastructure, (2) Development of community-based economic enterprises for generation of employment opportunities for the urban poor, with a particular focus on women entrepreneurs and (3) Provision of training, technology and funding support to the TLO members for undertaking the various social, economic and physical infrastructure programs at the community level. To be able to achieve the above, the process was initiated through formulation of the "Tole" (Community) Development Plan (TDP). Various kinds of Enterprise Development Plans (EDP) were developed for income generating activities and employment opportunities having impact on individuals. These activities were complimented with the provision of Seed Grants, which help implement the TDPs through investments in socio-economic infrastructure at the community level, and also with matching contributions from other sources - community, Municipality Wards, RUPP , etc.

The manner of implementation of the entire process demonstrated the principles of good urban governance. Financial accountability was ensured at all stages. The consistency in the project framework across the city ensured predictability. The community's strong involvement in all stages of decision-making not only engendered participation, but also ensured transparency. The TLO was assisted to make their own constitution and rules, and these rules were adhered to.

#### **4.2.4 Dhulikhel Water Supply Project – A Process Document**

Later, a detailed documentation of a community-managed water supply project in Dhulikhel was taken up instead of a pilot demonstration project. Water has for long been a contentious issue in Nepal. Various capital improvement projects were undertaken during the past few decades to improve water accessibility. However, most of them remained just capital improvement projects and did not go beyond technical design and construction. Dhulikhel is perhaps one of the earliest examples of people-oriented service design, construction, operation and delivery in lifeline infrastructure. The water supply system in Dhulikhel, since long, has been owned, operated and managed by the people of Dhulikhel. This was made possible at a time when the overall environment was not very conducive.

Originally a village settlement, Dhulikhel was not converted to a Municipality until 1987. It had for long faced water accessibility problems and the community, especially women, coped with tremendous hardships in fetching water. While the Dhulikhel community negotiated solving its water supply issues in consultation with GTZ (a German Donor Organization), GTZ asked the community and local authority to also contribute for water supply infrastructure. Dhulikhel being a Village Panchayat could not garner funds from the central authorities. Through a community initiative, the status of Dhulikhel was upgraded to a Municipality.

The idea to initiate a community-owned water supply scheme in Dhulikhel was drawn from the then successful Bhaktapur development Project being implemented by the erstwhile Ministry of Panchayat and Local Development with the financial and technical assistance from an external agency – GTZ. A strong case was made requesting technical and financial assistance from the German Government for implementing a water supply system to meet the long term needs of Dhulikhel. Active community participation, especially including the women, was assured, leading to GTZ agreeing to assist. Several studies were undertaken and finally the beneficiaries set up an ad-hoc committee on the initiative of the then Dhulikhel Nagar Panchayat. Post its constitution, the Municipality (then Nagar Panchayat) was involved actively in the inception and subsequent stages, assisting and working closely with the District Water Supply Organization to successfully commission the water supply project in 1991. The project was formally handed over to the Dhulikhel Water Users Committee for subsequent management. This was designed as a 24x7 water supply system with gravity flow.

The management of the Dhulikhel Water Supply Project (DWSP), with the Dhulikhel Water Users Committee (DWUC) at its core has successfully demonstrated the principles of good urban governance. The Municipality and the DWUC have maintained accountability to the users as well as to the city at large in delivering services. From the formation of the Dhulikhel Municipality, through the implementation of the project and its operation, there has been intense citizen involvement, also ensuring transparency. There have however been issues about extending the water supply to new areas that need to be served.

### **4.3 Key outcomes and learning's**

The entire GUGSA experience in Nepal has shown that even in a small nation like Nepal with serious developmental problems and relatively unstable political environment, there are many examples of active citizen participation leading to excellent examples of good urban governance. The examples that were revealed in the initial scoping studies were far too numerous to document under this project, but many more than what GUGSA has documented need to be shown to the world.

Another important learning is that many examples from Nepal could probably be candidates for replication not only across Nepal, but even in other Asian countries. However, in the absence of a regional network, these examples don't see light of day. Local institutions like the Municipal Association of Nepal as well as professionals in the country have considerable talent and commitment. They also need international platforms to share experiences and learn. A regional platform would make this affordable.

## **5 Bangladesh**

### **5.1 Urban governance scenario**

Bangladesh is a rapidly urbanizing country, where urban population has grown from 8.21% to nearly 25% between 1974 and 2003. UN estimates suggest that in 1999 more than 30 million people lived in urban areas; and by 2030 its urban population is likely to cross the 80 million mark. The population of Bangladesh was around 135 million in 2003, of which 33.75 million were living in urban areas. With a population of around 12.5 million in 2001, Dhaka alone contains nearly 40% of the total urban population of the country showing a very high degree of primacy in an era of urban decentralization. Further, Dhaka is likely to become the fourth largest urban agglomeration in the world with a population of 21.1 million by 2010.

As a result of the urbanization process there has also been a dramatic increase in the number of designated urban areas - municipalities increased from 77 in 1981 to 123 in 1991, 223 in 2001 and 275 in 2003, and would soon be reaching 300 in the near future. With a rapidly growing population, the municipalities will be confronted with critical developmental issues in the coming years. The Paurashavas (municipalities) are guided by the Paurashava Ordinance 1977 which lays out their powers and responsibilities. There is now a need to improve their performance by promoting good urban governance.

### **5.2 GUGSA activities**

After Nepal, GUGSA work was initiated in Bangladesh. The local consultants were DEVCONsultants (DEVCON) and other partners included the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB).

#### **5.2.1 Topical Inventory**

As in the case of Nepal, the first step involved development of a List of Stakeholders. The second step involved a general review of Bangladesh's local government system. The third step was a wide evaluation ending in a 'long list' of Municipalities that have a good track record in urban governance. 15 municipalities were short-listed on the basis of Population Size, Population Growth Rate, Per Capita Total Revenue, Per Capita Capital Expenditure and Program Coverage. Representation of towns in terms of size classification, geographical and ecological regions was also factored in.

The fourth step involved choosing 5 municipalities for detailed research. This was done on the basis of their performance in terms of good governance. Consultations with stakeholders in the urban sector, as well as secondary data from various urban sector programs were the basis of this short listing. The selected municipalities were Faridpur, Habigonj, Kushtia, Tongi and Rangamati.

Like Nepal, in Bangladesh also, the fifth step was to carry out in-depth research on the five Municipalities. The methodology adopted in Nepal was replicated in Bangladesh with some customization for the local context. In each municipality, different aspects of service delivery were

evaluated from the point of view of both the municipal staff and citizens, keeping in mind the principles of good urban governance. Based on this evaluation, specific initiatives that could be categorized as a 'best practice' were identified. It emerged that most of the examples of good urban governance were essentially in externally-funded development programs, that too mostly in the area of community-based poverty alleviation and infrastructure development programs. It also emerged that while there are good examples of governance, there is much to be achieved. At the end of the Topical Inventory stage, the specific projects/ initiatives short listed for documentation were compared and two were selected for detailed documentation. These were the "Local Partnership for Urban Poverty Alleviation (LPUPA) Project, Kushtia Municipality" and "Supporting Households Activities for Hygiene, Assets and Revenue (SHAHAR) Project, Tongi Municipality".

### **5.2.2 Local Partnership For Urban Poverty Alleviation (Lpupa) Project, Kushtia Municipality**

The LPUPA Project began in 1998. Kushtia Municipality started implementation jointly with UNDP from July 1999, with an aim of empowering the urban poor and poverty alleviation. The Project involves a holistic "bottoms-up" approach to poverty eradication through urban community organizations, capacity-building of local communities, establishing and strengthening linkages between the poor communities and the private sectors, with local government and non-government service-providers and policy-makers.

At the municipality level, a project coordination committee was formed comprising of individuals and representatives from the Municipality, as well as a wide range of stakeholder organizations. The Project has adopted a large variety of participatory tools for social mobilization. A total of 33 Community Development Committees (CDCs) have been formed. They represent 4,106 households and a total of 19,355 people from low-income settlements.

Char Kuthipara, located in Ward No. 3 of Kushtia Municipality, is a densely populated area and had significant deficiencies in infrastructure and social development characteristics. During the last 4 years of the project, water and sanitation facilities significantly improved in the area. The CDC took measures for increasing coverage and use of sanitary latrines, drainage, tube-wells and waste bins for promoting behavior changes and a safer environment. They have increased access to the existing government and non-government services related to essential health. The Project provides information regarding existing health services, particularly for the women and children to increase community awareness regarding available services, apart from fulfilling their basic rights.

The LPUPA Project of Kushtia Municipality has been performing as a replicable role model. It achieved predetermined objectives of creating a sustainable process of supporting people's efforts to overcome poverty and for mainstreaming policies of urban governance. It has created a substantial effect on the municipal service delivery system, basic infrastructure improvements and on the overall socio-economic condition of urban communities.

### **5.2.3 Supporting Households Activities for Hygiene, Assets And Revenue (Shahar) Project, Tongi Municipality**

The SHAHAR Project started at the end of 1999. This is one of the 4 projects under the Integrated Food Security Program (IFSP) of CARE Bangladesh supported by USAID. The project works through five paradigms - community mobilization, institutional strengthening, income generation, health-hygiene and nutrition and minor urban infrastructure - all of which are delivered through partnerships with local NGOs and the Paurashava (Municipal authority).

The community covered in the case study is located in Block-4 of the largest low-income settlement widely known as Ershad Nagar under Tongi Municipality. This settlement has 1,130 households with a total of 5,475 people. Before the SHAHAR Project, community members of this low-income settlement did not have enough mutual support to undertake joint actions against common social, economical and other livelihood problems. The community lacked confidence and leadership. Ershad Nagar dwellers had to struggle to increase their incomes in order to survive. With more than 50% of the community being illiterate, members lacked basic knowledge about health, hygiene, sanitation, and income or

survival skills. They had no access to information about the local service providers or economic opportunities by which they could benefit. Employment opportunity was also limited.

Initiatives undertaken under the SHAHAR Project have brought significant changes to the community in terms of lives and livelihoods. Community members in the low-income settlement have achieved their intermediary goal of sustainable socio-economic development. Unemployment rates have come down and there has been significant improvement in infrastructure and municipal services.

#### **5.2.4 Practices of Good Governance Principles in Both Municipalities**

**Accountability:** Both the CBOs practice participatory planning and the implementation of project activities at the community level. They select their leaders through democratic ways. The project structure and reporting mechanism facilitates stakeholders to report to each other for their respective planned support.

**Transparency:** The community-based organizations and the projects in both municipalities maintain full transparency in all their operational aspects. Allocated project funds and procedures are disclosed to the public through signboards in front of the CBO offices.

**Participation:** The CBOs are making maximum effort in order to ensure local participation, particularly of the women and the poor, beginning with community mobilization, group formation, project planning and implementation levels.

**Rule of Law:** In Kushtia, CDC leaders handle complaints and grievances by assisting the Ward Commissioners and Municipality Chairman to enforce laws. However in Tongi, the CRMC itself handles the complaints and grievances.

### **5.3 Key outcomes and learning's**

Though it was initially intended to build a relation with the Municipal Association of Bangladesh, the prevailing political environment and a seeming lack of interest at local level prompted the GUGSA program to drop the idea of a demonstration project. From the GUGSA involvement in Bangladesh, it is clear that there is space for a local institution to network the urban local bodies effectively and to give them access to learning opportunities locally and internationally. Most of the good governance practices identified in the early stages of the project were initiatives funded and technically supported through external agencies. The process of decentralization of governance still has a long way to go and requires continued support.

## **6 Indonesia (Aceh)**

GUGSA involvement in Indonesia was conceived in the aftermath of the Tsunami of December 2004. The concept was to document examples of good governance in the post-tsunami recovery process.

### **6.1 Urban governance scenario**

Indonesia has taken significant steps in strengthening democracy since regional autonomy was first introduced in January 2001. The Government comprises of the Central Government and Local Governments (Provinces, Regencies and Cities). Administratively, Indonesia is divided into Provinces (Provinsi) that are headed by Governors (Gubernur). Each province has its own legislative body, called Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People's Representatives Assembly). At present, Indonesia has 33 provinces. Seven new provinces were created since the year 2000. Four of the 33 provinces have special status, as follows:

- Nangroe Aceh Darussalam (in the past, Daerah Istimewa Aceh or Aceh Special Region): has greater status (its own Islamic law, flag, song, and local political parties).
- Yogyakarta Special Region: The governor is by default, the Sultan of Yogyakarta.



- Papua (formerly, Irian Jaya): has a greater role of local government (own flag and song of province)
- Jakarta Special Capital Region: capital city of Indonesia, and place of all national government bodies.

Each Province consists of Regencies (Kabupaten) and Cities (Kota). The Regency has the same status as a City and has a similar structure of local government. The difference between a Regency and City is in differing demographics, size and economics. Generally the Regency covers a larger area than a City, and the City has non-agricultural economic activities. Each Regency or City has its own local government (Pemerintah Kabupaten/ Kota) and legislative body (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Kabupaten/ Kota). The Regency is headed by a "Regent" (Bupati) and the city is headed by a "Mayor" (Walikota). Both Regencies and Cities are subdivided into Sub-districts (Kecamatan). Head of a Sub-district is called Camat, a civil servant who is responsible to the Regent or the Mayor. A Sub-district is divided into administrative villages (Desa or Kelurahan). A Desa can be defined as a body which has authority over the local people in accordance with acknowledged local traditions in the area. A Desa enjoys greater local powers than a Kelurahan does. Kelurahan is part of a Regency or City government bureaucracy. The Governor, Regent or Mayor and representative members are elected by popular vote for 5-year terms.

Even though the decentralization process was well underway when the Tsunami hit, the capacity of local governments was woefully inadequate to handle the aftermath of the disaster. In Aceh Province, a political negotiation process was also in progress. All of this had implications for the reconstruction process. A tenuous balance has been established in Aceh between Central and Local Government responsibilities and powers in the management of the reconstruction process.

## **6.2 GUGSA activities**

### **6.2.1 Inventory of Good Governance Practices in Post-Disaster Recovery**

A List of Stakeholders was developed prior to the inventory of good governance practices. The stakeholders include the Badan Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi (BRR), Aceh-Nias, the Provincial Government, Local Governments in Nangroe Aceh Darussalam Province, and NGOs working in Aceh. The need for identification of best practices was advertised in the local newspaper "Serambi Indonesia", and posted in several mailing lists concerned with local governance. Letters were sent and telephone calls made to the local governments and other organizations. Visits and discussions were initially conducted in Banda Aceh. After candidates for good governance practices had been identified, site visits were conducted to the particular Districts or Cities where these were implemented. Snap-shot documentation was done for fourteen good governance practices:

- URDI – Village Planning
- YIPD – Koperasi Khasanatul Ikhlas (Cooperative Organization)
- Rotary Club – Providing Fishing Boats
- AIPRD – Integrated Services
- MIN Rukoh – Participative and Transparent Planning
- Aceh Partnership Foundation – School-based Disaster Mitigation
- YIPD – Village Planning
- Pemkot Banda Aceh – One Stop Service for Banda Aceh City
- WWF – Timber for Aceh
- PDAM - Commitment for Clean Water Pilot Project
- LGSP – Qanun for Financial Management

- Bappeda Banda Aceh – Management System
- BRR – Improving the Community’s Economic Status
- GERAQ – Corruption Eradication

### **6.2.2 Case Study - Puskorinfo**

Parallel to snapshot documentation of good urban governance practices in the larger region of Aceh, GUGSA also commissioned a detailed case study of an initiative supported by the USAID through the Local Government Support Program. This consisted of two mutually complementary activities – (1) USAID-LGSP Initiatives and Response for Alue Penyareng II Barrack (Barrack Alpen II) and (2) Center for Coordination and Information (PUSKORINFO - Pusat Koordinasi dan Informasi). Both these programs were initiated in response to an evident need for facilitating the process of identifying Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and housing them in rehabilitation sites.

On October 1, 2005, the multiple stakeholders of Aceh Barat, in a planning workshop, decided to improve services to the IDPs through (1) establishment of a Center for Relocation Services, and (2) Services to improve local economic development, particularly the community’s access to working capital. These activities were to be demand driven. A temporary relocation site, Barrack Alpen II was chosen out of 42 such 'barracks' in Aceh Barat. It is located at Desa Ujong Tanah Darat, a Sub-district of Meureubo. Technical assistance and facilitation was provided to help move them to permanent housing. The steps in this process involved (1) Data Verification, (2) People’s Agreement, (3) Establishing a Committee for Relocation, (4) Land Identification (by the Community), (5) Land and Subsurface Soil Investigation, (6) Negotiation, (7) Site Planning and (8) Land Administration. The process is currently ongoing, but key milestones of securing land and approvals are over. The construction of houses and infrastructure is now underway.

The entire process is being carried out in such a manner as to demonstrate all the principles of good governance. The process is hugely participatory. Checks and balances are built in to ensure transparency and accountability. The process is now being replicated with other barracks that need assistance.

During the process of helping Barrack Alpen II and from other experiences in the region, it was realized that such initiatives cannot succeed without support in terms of information and facilitation. The concept of PUSKORINFO was formulated in this context. Supported by LGSP, it is a wide partnership of government and non-government agencies. Its major contribution is in compiling a database of IDPs in a participatory and transparent manner. PUSKORINFO also provides an effective two-way interface for information exchange between citizens/ beneficiaries and government or donor agencies. Policies, programs, projects, rules and regulations, etc are communicated to citizens and information about the needy is communicated to the respective agencies.

PUSKORINFO is an initiative that is growing in credibility because of its contribution to improving governance in the post-disaster recovery process. It has now been co-opted into the mainstream rehabilitation and reconstruction process.

### **6.3 Key outcomes and learning's**

The post-disaster situation is typically a chaotic one with multiple agencies operating on different, often conflicting agendas. These situations are also characterized by a curious paradox of lack of information and a surfeit of information. In such situations, it is extremely important to have effective interfaces and facilitating processes to ensure that genuine needs are met and that funds are effectively utilized. The PUSKORINFO experience and other cases that have been documented have potential application in a variety of geographical situations around the developing world. The converse is also true – that the PUKORINFO initiative could have benefited from learning about similar examples in post-earthquake Gujarat or post-Tsunami Tamilnadu. Once again, this points to the need for a regional platform for sharing and learning about governance.

## **7 Thailand**

### **7.1 Urban governance scenario**

The government structure in Thailand is unique given its oscillation from semi-democracy to democracy with 18 military coup d'état since the re-establishment of Constitutional Monarchy in 1932. The economy has gained momentum since the 1980s despite political instability that changed leadership at short intervals. However, the democratization in Thailand was slowly and steadily progressing. The promulgation of the Constitution in 1997 is the highest point of democratization in the history of Thailand.

There are three levels of administration in Thailand; namely, central, provincial and local administration. Central administration consists of the Prime Minister's office, ministries, departments, agencies and other public organizations that have the same status as departments. The Provincial administration consists of provincial and districts offices of various central ministries, departments, and public agencies. There are 75 Provinces excluding Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and Pathaya City Administration (PCA), and 795 districts and 81 minor districts within the Provinces.

The Local administration consists of 1129 Municipalities known as Thesaban and 6,745 Tambon (sub-district) Administrative Organizations (TAOs) according to data from the Ministry of Interior in 1999. Tambon is the smallest geographical unit with autonomy under the decentralization legislation. The Thesabans are the urban organizations within the local administration structure of Thailand.

### **7.2 GUGSA activities**

Thailand was included in the post-tsunami program of GUGSA. It was decided to document an inspiring example of post-tsunami recovery in collaboration with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Bangkok. After initial scoping, the ADPC team selected Patong Municipality as their case study.

#### **7.2.1 Case Study of Patong Municipality**

This case study presents the experience of one municipality in Thailand, which had transformed from a village to a city in the last decade of 20th century, and subsequently was totally devastated by the tsunami in December of 2004. This study illustrates how it got back on its feet in less than two years, converting its tragedy into an opportunity. The underlying theme of this success story is the Good Urban Governance of Patong Municipality.

Patong Municipality in Phuket Province of Southern Thailand is a popular tourist destination attracting more visitors than its own population. The tsunami that hit the coast claiming the lives of many foreign tourists and local residents, also destroyed the progressive development that had emerged towards the last decade of the 20th century. The Municipality actively engaged in rescue and relief operations and then focused their attention on restoring normalcy in services. However, it did not stop there. It went on to draw up plans for reviving the economy and also to undertake measures for preparedness in a future disaster event, including a sophisticated early warning system. The most important thing is that they have now started development projects that integrate disaster mitigation measures such as natural buffers on the coast. The municipality has also engaged in significant capacity-building measures for its own staff. The entire post-tsunami recovery initiative of the Patong Municipality is a replicable model for post-disaster recovery.

### **7.3 Key outcomes and learning's**

The Patong case is a world class example of a well thought-out, structured intervention at the local level with local leadership. In a region that is increasingly witnessing natural and man-made disasters, it is important that less developed countries have access to learning from these experiences. Needless to say, the case for a regional forum is strengthened.

## 8 India (Tamilnadu)

### 8.1 Urban governance scenario

Coastal belt of Tamil Nadu: The State of Tamil Nadu has a coastal belt of 1,016 kms stretching all along its eastern edge and another belt of 60 kms along its western periphery. The entire length of the coastal belts of Tamil Nadu constitutes around 12% of the total length of coastal belts of India, and it is spread across 13 districts of the State.

Local Governance in Tamil Nadu: The present system of local governance in Tamil Nadu follows the 73 and 74 Amendments to the Constitution of India. Subsequently, the Government of Tamil Nadu enacted the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act 1994, replacing the earlier Act, and also amended the relevant provisions of various Acts relating to urban local bodies.

The prevailing local governance bodies in Tamil Nadu are categorized into 'rural local bodies' and 'urban local bodies'. Panchayat Unions and Panchayats come under the 'rural local bodies' category. Urban local bodies include Municipal Corporations, Municipalities, and Town Panchayats (earlier designated as Special Village Panchayats).

### 8.2 GUGSA activities

In the post-tsunami phase of GUGSA it was decided to undertake two initiatives in Tamilnadu – a documentation of cases of good governance in post-tsunami recovery in settlements along the coast, and a demonstration project in one of the affected settlements. M/s CCI were appointed as the consultants for the case study documentation and the demonstration project was carried out by urban planners B. R. Balachandran and Sowmya Haran.

#### 8.2.1 Case Study of Nagapattinam and Kanyakumari Districts

For the development of the Case Study, tools employed include discussions and the questionnaires that were used in individual and group interviews and household surveys. The respondents' perception about adherence to principles of good governance practices were inferred from the replies given by them during household survey and discussions. A comparative study of Nagapattinam and Kanyakumari districts was carried out from the point of view of good governance in post-disaster response.

In Nagapattinam, one of the important initiatives was the establishment of the Nagapattinam NGOs Coordination and Resource Center (NCRC). Designed as an interface between citizens, government and NGOs, this center played an important role in ensuring participation, transparency and accountability in the post-tsunami situation.

In the Kanyakumari district, the highlight was the constructive role played by a NGO, Kottar Social Service Society (KSSS). The KSSS mobilized the affected fishing communities and ensured that the beneficiaries were well informed and received timely assistance of various kinds. They played a key role in channeling funds and other forms of assistance to the community. Their contribution to empowering people, complementing the administration and promoting good governance has been documented in this case study.

#### 8.2.2 Strategic Plan for Colachel – Demonstration Project

Discussions were held with the Tamilnadu government regarding the GUGSA activities. Originally GUGSA was to support demonstration projects in Nagapattinam and Cuddalore. However, the government suggested that instead another town, Colachel (in Kanyakumari District) be taken up as Nagapattinam and Cuddalore had already received a lot of assistance from other sources. With a population of about 23,000 and covering 5.5 sq. kms. Colachel, is divided into 24 wards of which 11 are on the coast. In the tsunami, over 400 persons died and many houses were destroyed.

In the first stage of work, rapid assessments were carried out to assess the nature of post-tsunami recovery issues in the town and establish the Municipality's current status in terms of municipal service

delivery and its internal management processes. At this stage preliminary stakeholder consultations were carried out to establish the key concerns of the Municipality, citizens and stakeholder groups. A kick-off meeting was organized, with key stakeholders of the city including both members of the Municipality and key officials of other relevant government agencies, to identify the areas of concern (Mission Areas) and to identify stakeholder groups to participate in the exercise. A communications campaign consisting of focus group discussions, youth debates, competitions in schools etc were carried out. Detailed assessments were conducted on urban growth management, municipal service delivery and management capacity of the municipality.

This was followed by city visioning, strategic and action planning exercises using tools such as SWOT analysis in a participatory workshop at the city level. This led to the formation of broad strategies and action plans. The thinking process was supported by analytical outputs from a questionnaire survey of households and businesses in Colachel. Subsequently, the consultants assisted the municipality in translating the vision and strategies into discrete projects for implementation. These projects have been cast into an investment plan for the town. A study tour was also organized for the chairman, municipal staff and select stakeholders to look at examples of decentralized waste water treatment and solid waste management, which were high priorities for the municipality.

The tangible outcomes of the project include an investment plan with wide public support and a solid waste management project which is already into implementation. The more important outcome is greater awareness among both citizens and the city's leadership about the value of systematic planned investments in building a resilient city.

### **8.3 Key outcomes and learning's**

The cases documented in Tamil Nadu show how much these communities could have benefited from an experience sharing with Indonesian, Sri Lankan and Thai counterparts. This is one of the reasons that GUGSA decided to bring these people together at a workshop. Very often, particularly in the chaotic aftermath of a disaster, communities end up making mistakes already made by other communities in similar situations across the world. The only way to prevent this is to ensure learning opportunities across boundaries.

## **9 A regional forum for promoting good urban governance in southern Asia**

The entire GUGSA project experience has revealed the need for a regional platform for sharing good urban governance experiences and to actively promote initiatives for the same.

### **Key elements of such a forum – points for discussion**

- Host country – preferably one which already has significant experience in establishing and promoting good urban governance practices
- Host city – well connected to the world and considered a leader in urban development initiatives
- Host institution – preferably one which has urban affairs as one of its core competences and also has the experience of hosting international conferences, workshops as well as creating learning opportunities in various formats for individuals and networks
- Progressive agenda/ charter for promoting good urban governance
- Wide membership/ buy-in from across the Asian region
- Substantial funding to kick-start the process
- Sustainable financial model
- Strong professional leadership

## **10 Conclusion**

The Good Urban Governance in South Asia project of the USAID set out on an ambitious mission with very limited funding. It has creatively leveraged the skills and commitment of institutional partners in partner countries to bring together useful experiences from across the region. Within the limitation of resources available, GUGSA has also attempted to carry out a proper documentation of the examples identified. In three locations, GUGSA has also worked hands-on in small towns to undertake participatory planning exercises that demonstrate the principles of good urban governance. In the process, those who have been involved in the project have developed warm relationships which have gone beyond the confines of this specific project.

The GUGSA family now hopes that the concept of a regional platform will be realized soon and scale up GUGSA's modest effort into something that lasts long and benefits the entire region, contributing to economic development, peace and stability in the region.