

Mainstreaming the urban poor in Andhra Pradesh

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This paper is about the Andhra Pradesh Urban Services for the Poor project (APUSP) currently being implemented in Andhra Pradesh state in southern India by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in partnership with the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID). The project covers 32 Class 1 towns, which in 1991 had a combined population of 5.5 million.¹ The project goal is to achieve 'sustained reduction in poverty and vulnerability of the urban poor in Andhra Pradesh'. The purpose is that 'the poor in Class 1 towns of Andhra Pradesh benefit from improved access to more appropriate and sustainable services' (DFID 1999).

Over a seven-year period, the project is expected directly to benefit more than 2.2 million slum dwellers in the 32 towns.² However, in a large country such as India, which has experienced many government- and donor-funded poverty reduction programmes over the last three decades, it is neither the scale nor the goal of APUSP that deserves attention. Rather, the merit of APUSP lies in its approach to poverty reduction.

The concept of poverty reduction in APUSP is based on three premises. First, reforms are required within municipalities in order to improve their performance in poverty reduction activities. Second, improvements in environmental infrastructure in slums have multiple impacts on improving the conditions of poor people, but need to be based on the demands of poor people and on the capacity of the municipality to operate and maintain this infrastructure. Third, civil society should be strengthened as a way to invigorate the interaction between poor people and the municipality and to stimulate policies in favour of the poor. This reflects the notion that poverty reduction requires the building of partnerships in both government and community or civil society, and that it needs to be based on the actual needs of poor people.

This concept has been translated into a three-pronged approach, consisting of funding for three inter-linked components: municipal reform (£15.7 million); environmental infrastructure improvement (£66.1 million); and working with civil society (£12.6 million). The three components are expected to be mutually reinforcing in a number of ways (DFID 1999).

The first two components are being undertaken by government and are brought together in a medium-term rolling plan, the Municipal Action Plan for Poverty Reduction (MAPP), articulated by each of the 32 municipalities with the participation of local stakeholders. Over time, the parallel civil society initiative is expected to improve the quality of participation and the poverty and vulnerability focus of the MAPP. It is also expected to influence state policy.

The first year of project implementation (2000-2001) has demonstrated the validity of the approach and the commitment of both partners (the Government of Andhra Pradesh and DFID) to the project principles. It has also brought into sharp focus the complexity of implementing some of the key principles of APUSP. In the following sections we will look into the practical implications, but first we will review the project components and the MAPP process in order to gain a better understanding of their contribution to mainstreaming the urban poor.

Contribution of project components to sustainable poverty reduction

Municipal reforms

Municipal reforms in APUSP aim to improve the way municipalities undertake responsibility for poverty reduction, which involves a wide range of improvement measures. With respect to infrastructure provision, municipalities need to set up mechanisms for consultation in order to determine and respond to the priorities of poor people. The municipalities need to mobilise adequate skills and finances to provide services as well as to operate and maintain them on a long-term basis. Even though APUSP does not provide funding to municipalities for non-infrastructure needs, the project expects them to co-ordinate poverty reduction activities in such a way that these needs are not overlooked.

Municipalities have the legal obligation to undertake poverty alleviation. As elsewhere in India, this duty has gained importance because of the decentralisation of responsibilities to municipalities for several activities, including poverty alleviation, brought about through the

74th Constitutional Amendment Act (Ministry of Urban Development 1992). So far, however, decentralisation has meant additional responsibility without additional powers or resources and with weak systems. Municipalities depend largely on central or state government funds for carrying out their activities but these funds are not always assured, lending a high degree of uncertainty to municipal functioning. Planning of any sort becomes difficult or even redundant and is therefore neglected.

However, there has been some change in the situation because of initiatives of the Government of Andhra Pradesh in the last five years, which place an emphasis on good governance and financial discipline for greater autonomy of local bodies. Measures such as incentives for higher revenue collection, support for the computerisation of certain functions, and technical assistance for updating accounts have resulted in improvement of the revenue position of most municipalities. User-charges and private sector participation in service delivery have been introduced on a small scale in a few municipalities. Greater accountability in routine municipal functions has been introduced and Citizens' Service Centres have been established for the convenience of citizens.

Parallel to this decentralisation has been a process of democratisation and increasing grassroots representation. The 74th Constitutional Amendment recognises local government as the third tier of government and Municipal Councils are democratically elected. One third of the council seats are reserved for women. The recasting of the central government's poverty alleviation schemes has meant that municipalities are responsible for facilitating the formation of a structure of representative women-only community-based organisations in slums. Resident Community Volunteers (RCVs) are elected for a neighbourhood group (NHG) of 20-40 households; RCVs in a slum or ward³ form a Neighbourhood Committee (NHC) with one of the RCVs elected as a Convenor. NHC Convenors form the Community Development Society (CDS) at the town level and elect their own office bearers (Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment 1998a). Programmes for the economic, social, and physical development of poor areas are expected to be implemented with the active involvement of the CDS structure. This has institutionalised the representation of poor women and given municipalities some experience of working with them.

The decentralisation and democratisation initiatives of government provide a good starting point for reforms to sustain poverty reduction.

The strategy adopted by APUSP is to build on existing initiatives of good governance and financial management and also on the participatory structures of slum dwellers. The basic tasks are to support municipalities to bring about specified improvements in financial management, planning, capacity for implementation, and mechanisms for consultations with citizens, particularly with poor people. Broad indicative areas of reform are: revenue improvement, institutional development, participatory planning approaches, service delivery improvement, operation and maintenance, training or skills upgrading, and other matters as appropriate.

The premises of this targeted approach to reform are that better ways of interfacing with citizens and their involvement in making decisions that affect them will improve targeting. Similarly, improved revenue assessment and collection will result in the generation of more resources, and improved management of funds through transparent accounting and budgeting systems will lead to better allocation of resources for provision of services and for their operation and maintenance. This, in turn, will provide more satisfaction to the users of these services and give municipalities an incentive to take measures such as cost recovery and tax increases which may otherwise be politically difficult. The process will be further stimulated by a more vocal and informed civil society which can impress on municipalities the need to improve services for poor communities and involve them in decision-making processes.

The central issue is that improvement in performance requires the municipalities to be willing to change. Reforms that are driven by government policy and state-government directives are one way to bring about such change. In the long term, the pressure created by a strengthened civil society may also induce change in the ways municipalities work. However, if reforms are to benefit poor people in any substantial way, the incentives have to be different.

In APUSP, funding for improvements in infrastructure for poor people is expected to provide the incentive to reform. Measurable improvements in performance are the trigger for gaining access to APUSP project funds for infrastructure improvement. There are '... no automatic entitlements for those municipalities who do not demonstrate a commitment to change, to address the needs of poor people, and the ability to operate and maintain the infrastructure provided' (DFID 1999).

It is worth mentioning that the incentive system for pro-poor planning is breaking new ground in Andhra Pradesh and in India. Such a system is very different from the present policy and practice of equal shares for different administrative units (district, town, ward) based on per capita allocations. Allocations may currently be topped up for particularly vulnerable groups, but they are never based on performance.

Environmental infrastructure

The focus of APUSP on improvements in environmental infrastructure is in response to the current deficiency and inability of local government to deal with the situation. Such improvements are urgently needed in most of the 32 towns covered by APUSP. This is well illustrated by studies carried out during the design of the project (see Table 1).

It is well known that municipalities do not generate sufficient revenues to cater to the service needs of the growing population of poor people. This has been taken care of to some extent by several central and state government schemes undertaken during the last three decades. However, their impact has not been significant. The allocations have been meagre compared with the large and growing need, and thinly spread in order to share the benefits across political constituencies. Invariably the quality of services has been poor, and deteriorated rapidly since there was no attention paid to allocations for operation and maintenance. The schemes were top-down, with no scope for municipalities or poor communities to comment on the way they would be run. A significant change in the programmes being implemented since 1998 is the involvement of women-only

Table 1: Environmental infrastructure deficiency in slums in Class 1 towns of Andhra Pradesh

Infrastructure deficiency	Percentage of slum households
No municipal water supply	46%
No latrines (open defecation)	29%
No all-weather roads	41%
No drainage	45%
No street lighting	20%

Source: APUSP project design studies, 1998

representatives of community-based organisations in prioritising infrastructure needs in slums and in implementing some of these through community contracting (Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment 1998a and 1998b; Rao 2000).

APUSP project funds are primarily intended for in-settlement upgrading of water supply, drains, latrines, roads, street lighting, and garbage disposal within slum areas, and also for infrastructure necessary to link these services to town networks. The adverse effects of environmental problems such as area-wide flooding are also taken into consideration. This is different from previous slum improvement programmes, which did not consider linking arrangements and wider environmental problems, often leading to drains without out-falls, taps without water, and persistent flooding. Hygiene promotion is included in APUSP as an adjunct to improvements in infrastructure in order to enhance the health benefits of improved services.

This emphasis on infrastructure does not mean that the lack of it is the only deprivation faced by poor people in Class 1 towns. Focusing on infrastructure as a means to poverty reduction is justified by two arguments. The first is that improvements in infrastructure have multiple impacts on poverty. This has been amply demonstrated in an impact assessment study of DFID-supported slum improvement projects in India. It was shown that although infrastructure contributes primarily to improving the quality of life, it also has positive impacts on the survival and security dimensions of poverty by reducing vulnerability to disease and improving conditions for income enhancement (Amis 2001). The lessons from that study have informed the design of APUSP. These findings are also supported by the perceptions of poor communities in the Class 1 towns of AP. People living in slums who participated in appraisal exercises during the design of APUSP, identified multiple and wide-ranging benefits arising from improved water supply, drains, latrines, roads, and electricity.

For example, people leaving in slums in Warangal (Tumulakunta slum) commented that the provision of clean drinking water, latrines, and drains meant less diarrhoea, less disease, fewer mosquitoes, and less malaria. Fewer pigs grazing on the streets also meant improved safety. Because people felt healthier, they would be able to undertake more work, they would spend less on medicines, and their incomes would rise. Access to a nearby clean water supply meant that women would have more time free for both income generating and leisure activities.

Better roads and street lighting meant that rickshaw carts would be able enter the area, that people would be less likely to trip and fall, that the risk of snake bites would decrease, and that women and children would experience increased safety. Street lighting would enable people to undertake adult literacy and other study programmes, which would then have benefits in terms of increased income (DHU Consortium 1998).

Overall, people identified improvements to their environment and housing as improving their health, increasing their incomes, building a sense of pride in their surroundings, and increasing their contentment.

The second argument for the focus on infrastructure is that municipalities have some capacity to address the infrastructure needs of poor people, but next to no capacity to address the more difficult problems related to social deprivation, employment, and entitlements. Even the better-equipped municipal corporations in the large cities where DFID slum improvement programmes were carried out, could not do justice to the social and economic components of those projects (Amis 2001). The alternative strategy contained within APUSP is to address non-infrastructure needs through the civil society component.

Strengthening civil society

The implication from the previous sections is that strengthening civil society represents an attempt to strengthen the capacity of citizens, particularly poor communities, to make demands of the municipality, and this is an important part of the project's civil society component. The other part is related to an attempt to find alternative channels, through civil society organisations (CSOs),⁴ to address wider survival, security, and livelihood problems faced by poor people.

The third component of APUSP runs as a parallel project because the partners, channels of assistance, and types of activities are different from the governance and service provision focus of the other two components. Independent funding and technical assistance are expected to provide an incentive for links with other non-governmental networks and funding sources, thus widening the ambit of poverty reduction activities.

The civil society initiative in a town starts with a participatory planning appraisal (PPA), which is carried out by an experienced NGO and involves different stakeholders in the town. The PPA explores local concepts of poverty and vulnerability, livelihood strategies, poor people's perceived priorities, local views on programme and policy implementation, etc.. Issues highlighted in the five PPAs carried out to

date include aspects such as insecurity of tenure and employment, alcoholism, violence, caste discrimination, difficulties in accessing institutions and entitlements, poor services, poor health, vulnerable population groups such as deserted women, elderly, unemployed youth, etc.. The issues are not the same between different towns or even between neighbourhoods in the same town.

The purpose of the PPA is to build a shared understanding of the local dimensions of poverty and to form a town level working group (TLWG) of CSOs and municipal representatives. The tasks of the TLWG are to prepare a Town Level Framework Plan, to monitor projects under the plan, and to support the building of local partnerships for poverty reduction. Both the PPA and TLWG may have representation from the municipality, but they are not driven by it.

A Management and Support Team (MAST) has been set up to manage the Urban Initiative Fund (UIF) which can be accessed in three different ways. First, contracts for programmes of three years or more will be given to large NGOs or institutions for work in one or more towns related to issues such as legal literacy, working children, etc.. Second, shorter-term more inclusive contracts with measurable outcomes are issued for services in areas such as needs assessments, consultancy services for poor people, capacity-building activities, operational and action research, and communications material development. The third window of access is through a Rapid Response Fund, which aims to provide a large number of CBOs with direct access to the UIF for capital expenditure related to the expressed needs of the community. Projects will be prioritised in Town Level Framework Plans and monitored by the TLWG. The CDS women's groups are expected to be the main channels for this funding.

The UIF is expected to start operating in early 2002, once procedures have been defined and possible CSO partners identified. The UIF will provide windows of opportunity to those stakeholders who are best-suited for specific poverty-reduction activities to undertake the activities. Further, these activities will be defined in a transparent manner, based on a shared understanding of local poverty. This approach is expected to overcome the limitations of earlier DFID slum improvement programmes where social, health, and economic support programmes were implemented uniformly across slums by municipalities with indifferent results (Amis 2001).

The PPA and accompanying research on its findings will also inform social policy and, through MAST, may affect the way poverty

programmes are structured in future. The immediate impact will be on improving the poverty focus of the MAPP.

The Municipal Action Plan for Poverty Reduction as a framework for mainstreaming the poor

MAPP objectives and concept

Each of the 32 municipalities is required to prepare a MAPP to enable it to gain access to APSUP funds. The MAPP enables a municipality to define how it will achieve three linked objectives in its own context. These objectives derive from the principles of APUSP and are:

- to improve municipal governance and management so that municipalities become more efficient and responsive to the needs of the people, especially poor people;
- to improve environmental infrastructure for poor people in a sustainable way;
- to identify and undertake poverty reduction measures with the active participation of poor people and civil society.

The MAPP is a rolling plan, updated periodically. It begins with a Basic MAPP, in keeping with the current capacity of municipalities, and later evolves to a Full MAPP (see Table 2). The MAPP contains the municipality's strategy, proposals, and implementation plan with measurable outcomes for municipal reform and environmental infrastructure and its approach to convergence⁵ with other poverty alleviation programmes in other sectors, e.g. education, health, employment, income generation, etc..

In the first year of project implementation, the *Basic MAPP Guidelines* were drafted and piloted through a closely guided process in three towns (Chittoor, Qutbullapur, and Rajahmundry), and finalised after extensive consultation with municipalities. Guidelines were prepared by the APUSP Team (Municipal Strengthening Unit and Appraisal and Monitoring Unit) and consultants.⁶

The APUSP Team conducts interactive regional workshops for five or six municipalities at a time. The main objectives are to familiarise senior elected and executive municipal functionaries with the guidelines and process, and to build their capacity to undertake the preparation of their MAPPs. They may do so on their own or request assistance from the APUSP Team. Ten municipalities are currently in various stages of MAPP preparation.

Table 2: MAPP concept

Elements	Basic MAPP	Full MAPP
Timeframe	1-2 years	3-5 years rolling plan
Database	Uses existing data	Develops database
Municipal reform and performance improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simple and few reforms - Essential training for MAPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More complex reforms and improvement measures - Training for performance improvement also
Environmental infrastructure	In a few wards on the basis of selection criteria	Phased yearly programme including a large number of wards
Convergence	Only of urban poverty programmes implemented through the municipality	Includes programmes of other agencies and UIF under C3
Resource mobilisation	Planned within DFID and available resources	Proposes to mobilise additional funding

Source: APUSP Project Document, 1999

According to the guidelines, MAPP preparation follows a nine-stage process in a municipality (APUSP 2001). It is worth summarising this process as it contributes to setting up a participatory, inclusive, and transparent approach to poverty reduction in a town-wide context and within the framework of municipal planning and budgeting. The process has the potential to contribute significantly to mainstreaming the poor.⁷

Stages in MAPP preparation

Preparatory steps

Municipalities are required to form two local committees before embarking on the MAPP process. The Municipal Reforms Committee (MRC) is constituted to give strategic guidance to the MAPP process. It is headed by the Mayor or Municipal Chairperson and includes the local MLA/MP, the floor leader of the opposition party and other members of the municipal council, the Municipal Commissioner,⁸ two persons from outside the council, and the CDS President. The Municipal Task Force (MTF) takes day-to-day responsibility for preparing a MAPP. It is headed by the Commissioner and is a multi-disciplinary team consisting of heads of the functional sections of the municipality.

Stage 1: Getting started

The APUSP project and the purpose and process of the MAPP are introduced by the municipality at a large meeting to which representatives of a wide range of stakeholders are invited. The members of the MRC and MTF are also introduced.

Stage 2: Problem identification

This starts with a workshop co-ordinated by the municipality with representatives of stakeholder groups (elected municipal councillors, municipal staff, CDS and other CBOs, NGOs, and other organisations working with poor people). One third of the participants are women. The participants work in groups to articulate a vision statement for the town and identify problems with respect to poverty, infrastructure, and municipal performance. The workshop identifies two working groups from among the participants to provide a more detailed analysis of the problems over a period of three to four weeks.

Working Group 1 on municipal performance improvement carries out a municipal SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) in relation to financial status, staffing, service delivery, and interfacing with citizens. The problems and their causes are analysed with the involvement of the entire cross-section of municipal staff and elected representatives and strategic objectives for improving municipal performance are identified and ratified by the MRC. Proposals are prepared to address these objectives and assessed against criteria such as benefits, political and social acceptability, technical and managerial feasibility, cost, and measurable outcomes within the MAPP period.

Working Group 2 on poverty and infrastructure deficiency identifies different kinds of poor settlements, uses existing data to rank them in terms of poverty and infrastructure deficiency, and shows the ranking on a matrix. It also places poor settlements in a city-wide perspective of ward boundaries, service networks, and environmental problems such as flooding, sea and river erosion, and pollution. This analysis is shown on maps and charts. The poorest and most deficient settlements are visited by a technical screening group to check site conditions and the need for off-site infrastructure.

The two working groups meet to ensure co-ordination and compatibility of outputs. The findings of Group 2 which are related to need for better data, network design, staff capacity building, equipment, etc. are incorporated into the municipal improvement proposals of Group 1.

Stage 3: Strategy formulation

A two-day workshop is convened with the participants of the problem analysis workshop. The findings of the two working groups are presented and the workshop recommends which poor settlements should be a priority to be included, which strategy is to be followed for infrastructure investments, and which reform proposals are to be taken up in that MAPP. The MRC deliberates on the recommendations and endorses them, with or without changes. The decision of the MRC and the next steps in MAPP preparation are shared with the workshop participants.

Stage 4: Preparation of reform proposals

The MTF reviews the reform proposals recommended by the strategy formulation workshop and consolidates them into a set of proposals to meet the strategic objectives for improving municipal performance. The expected outcomes of each proposal are considered and an implementation plan is prepared for the proposals.

Stage 5: Preparation of environmental infrastructure proposals

The first step at this stage is micro-planning with community groups in the priority settlements. The process is undertaken by a community micro-planning group, co-ordinated by the NHC Convenor and consisting of all RCVs in the settlement, representatives of other women's and youth groups, fieldworkers of programmes in the area (literacy, health, woman and child development, etc.), and municipal sanitary workers. The exercise is facilitated by a multi-disciplinary municipal micro-planning team and takes four to five weeks. The broad steps in the process are:

- inventory of existing infrastructure and needs identification by the Group, using participatory mapping techniques;
- preparation of a draft Settlement Plan for Infrastructure;
- technical assessment by municipal engineering staff;
- community feedback and agreement on a final Settlement Plan for Infrastructure showing rehabilitation proposals for existing infrastructure and proposals for additional infrastructure;
- discussion of different implementation and operation and maintenance responsibilities.

The second step is the preparation of environmental infrastructure proposals based on the Settlement Plans for Infrastructure and off-site infrastructure needs. The engineering section of the municipality

prepares these with assistance, if required, from the local office of the Andhra Pradesh State Public Health Engineering Department (PHED). The process is overseen by the MTF. An implementation plan is prepared for the proposals.

Stage 6: Finalising the MAPP document

The MTF is responsible for this task. The document outlines the process of MAPP preparation and gives proposals for reform and infrastructure improvement as detailed in Stages 4 and 5. The MTF cross-checks the document against APUSP appraisal criteria. The document is presented to the Municipal Council for adoption.

Stage 7: Appraisal and approval

The AMU carries out concurrent field appraisal of the MAPP process and final desk appraisal according to agreed criteria. These criteria include poverty and gender focus, participation, and municipal capacity to engage in these aspects. The Empowered Committee approves the proposals on the basis of the appraisal report.

Stage 8: Preparation of detailed proposals

Detailed proposals are prepared after the MAPP is approved. The proposals are expected to indicate clearly measurable outputs at milestones, procurement and operation arrangements, and detailed costings including for operation and maintenance. The infrastructure proposals are broken up into sub-projects for appropriate contract packaging. Small sub-projects for roads and drains may be contracted to willing community groups. In any case, community groups are expected to monitor contracts in their area.

Stage 9: Sub-project review

The sub-projects are reviewed for technical and managerial feasibility by the AMU, after which funds are released.

The Basic MAPP process in practice

Experience from managing the MAPP process in the three pilot municipalities shows that the process is valued by the municipalities for its clarity, transparency, and acceptability. There is representation of civil society, including poor communities, at all stages where problems and needs are assessed and decisions made about solutions. The guidelines represent a highly participatory process, both within and beyond the municipality, which is completely different from previous practice. For this reason most municipalities will require guidance for preparing the first MAPP. In the following section we review how some critical issues related to poverty reduction are dealt with in practice.

Critical poverty reduction issues in the Basic MAPP

Availability of funds

Funding for infrastructure improvement for the poor is assured for seven years, as long as the municipalities show adequate progress on reforms and prepare MAPPs. Judging from the present enthusiasm, these conditions will be fulfilled. The bulk of DFID infrastructure funding is designated for in-settlement improvements. The selection of priority settlements through the transparent process of analysis and decision-making in the MAPP ensures that this funding will necessarily benefit the poorest communities in the analysis. Off-site infrastructure funds may lead to benefits accruing to the non-poor. However, guidelines specify that only up to 35 per cent of the infrastructure funds are to be used for off-site infrastructure, and that at least 50 per cent of the beneficiaries should be poor. This implies that, at the most, 17.5 per cent of the infrastructure funds may benefit communities that are not poor.

If the convergence principle works, additional funds from other programmes may be brought in, in addition to which funding for poverty programmes such as Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojna (SJSRY, the Silver Jubilee Urban Employment Programme) and the National Slum Development Programme (NSDP) will be available to the municipalities. At present there is a reluctance to bring these into the ambit of the Basic MAPP for fear of complicating the process, although this may be possible in subsequent cycles once the approach has proved itself. The feasibility of converging programmes and projects funded through the UIF will become clearer once the fund starts operating.

The more ambitious and high-performance municipalities are expected to generate local resources, some of which may fund poverty reduction initiatives. They may also use the Full MAPP to mobilise additional resources from national and international funding agencies, some of which have already shown interest.

Targeting poor people for infrastructure improvement

The targeting of poor settlements in the MAPP is determined by two interrelated parameters: poverty and vulnerability is one, and infrastructure deficiency is the other. Shortcomings in quantitative and qualitative terms for water supply, sanitation, drains, flooding or erosion, roads, street lighting, and garbage disposal are used as

indicators. The *Basic MAPP Guidelines* give guidance on selection of the indicators and allow the municipalities to give appropriate weightings, depending on local conditions, to each of the indicators in order to arrive at a composite index of environmental infrastructure deficiency.

Poverty and vulnerability indicators are grouped into three broad categories: economic, social, and entitlements. Initially a wide range of indicators was listed, based on earlier poverty data for the 32 towns,⁹ participatory poverty studies elsewhere in the country, and findings of the first participatory planning appraisal. The poverty and vulnerability indicators chosen at first were: below the poverty line (BPL), dependence on daily wages, working women, and working children (for the economic-income and employment-grouping of indicators); scheduled caste or scheduled tribe (SC/ST) and illiteracy (for the social indicators); and insecure land tenure or no ration cards (for the entitlements indicator).

The list of indicators was given for guidance to the three municipalities undertaking the pilot MAPPs but the list eventually had to be cut down to two indicators: below the poverty line (BPL) and scheduled caste or scheduled tribe (SC/ST), since the information on other economic and social indicators was incomplete. The inclusion of entitlements as an indicator was considered controversial, since the state government is currently reviewing its welfare programmes as part of the World Bank-supported Andhra Pradesh Economic Reforms Programme, and it had to be omitted for the time being. There seems to be a political concern at state government level about raising expectations which it may not be possible to meet because of policy changes. So the composite indicator for poverty and vulnerability is made up of BPL and SC/ST households, which are the conventional indicators used for targeting poverty programmes in India.

Settlements are given scores for each of the indicators. The average scores for poverty and infrastructure deficiency are then determined separately and clustered into three ranges representing the worst, not so bad, and best settlements. These ranges of one to three are used to rank poor settlements according to poverty and infrastructure deficiency and represent them on a simple matrix format (see Figure 1). The settlements that are poorest and most deficient in infrastructure are in the cell in the bottom right-hand corner (p3/i3).

The 3x3 matrix, as it is now called, has emerged as an appropriate tool for targeting poor settlements for infrastructure improvement in

Figure 1: Poverty and infrastructure deficiency matrix

Poverty and vulnerability (p) →				
Infrastructure deficiency (i) ↓		p1/i1	P2/i1	p3/i1
		p1/i2	p2/i2	p3/i2
		p1/i3	p2/i3	p3/i3

Source: Based on Basic MAPP Guidelines, 2001

the MAPP. It gives a comparative picture of poor settlements in a town. It is simple enough to be understood and used as a working tool by a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives of poor communities. It is transparent and non-controversial and acceptable to local politicians, poor communities, and municipal officials. The analysis is carried out by the working group on poverty and infrastructure which includes representatives from the major stakeholder groups. In all three pilot MAPPs, the poorest and most deficient settlements were selected at the strategy formulation workshop.

The matrix can be considered as a major breakthrough, considering conventional and accepted practices of either evenly spreading resources across all slums, or selecting slums on the basis of slum notification and political constituencies. However, it has been criticised by academics for presenting an oversimplified picture of complex realities. It is argued that it is not the matrix but the data and indicators which need to be more robust. The accepted approach of using existing data for the Basic MAPP has its limitations, which are recognised by the municipalities and the MSU. Consequently, pilot MAPPs for Rajahmundry and Qutbullapur have included the need to improve information on poor settlements in their reform agenda.

The participatory planning appraisals are expected to demonstrate the importance of certain indicators and help resolve certain issues such as whether or not entitlements are critical as indicators of poverty and vulnerability. The sharing of findings from the PPAs is an important step in understanding poverty in the Class 1 towns, and therefore, towards better targeting of poor people.

The other weakness related to targeting in the Basic MAPP is also related to inadequate data: only notified slums have been included, even though they form only a part of all poor settlements in a town. The practice is to carry out detailed surveys only in slums notified under the Andhra Pradesh Slum Improvement Act of 1956 (Government of Andhra Pradesh). Government infrastructure programmes are implemented in notified slums, unlike APUSP, which includes all poor settlements (slums not yet notified, relocation areas, and housing layouts for economically weaker sections, EWSs). Local knowledge confirms that often the un-notified slums are much worse than notified slums, both in terms of poverty and infrastructure deficiency. However, it is the lack of data that prevents such settlements from being included in the Basic MAPP, even though there is local political pressure to do so.

In this instance, advantage can be taken of MAPP's design as a rolling plan and the opportunity to include critical inputs during the seven-year life of the project. Better understanding of poverty, resolution of welfare policy issues, and improved data may ultimately lead to better targeting of poor people in subsequent cycles of MAPP.

Participation of poor communities

Micro-planning is now the accepted tool in India for eliciting the participation of poor communities in determining their needs and priorities and planning for improvement of their settlements. The difference here is that micro-planning is nested within a wider town-wide framework of participatory analysis and decision making, unlike the usual slum-by-slum approach to participation, facilitated by municipal or NGO field staff.

The MAPP uses to advantage the federated structure of women's groups already existing in the towns. The functionaries of the apex level CDS participate in the MAPP formulation workshops side by side with the Mayor or Chairperson, councillors, Commissioner, and officials of the municipality, MLA, MP, and other institutions. They are also members of the working group on poverty and infrastructure

deficiency. In addition, the CDS President is a member of the MRC. This way the MAPP process gives participation of poor communities a high priority in decision making.

Experience so far has shown CDS members to be equal to the challenge of participating effectively with other stakeholders. This can be attributed to the fact that they represent the primary stakeholders and have been selected for their leadership qualities and ability to negotiate and manage activities on behalf of poor people. They have also attended capacity-building workshops conducted as part of the SJSRY programme and by MAST. The MAPP process itself is a capacity-building measure and gives all stakeholders equal opportunity to participate.

Micro-planning is the first step in articulating funding proposals for infrastructure improvement and is therefore given importance by municipalities. It has been designed as an interactive process between community groups and municipal field staff. RCVs and NHC Convenors, who constitute the base and middle levels of the CDS structure, lead problem identification and demand assessment, while the municipality responds with technical solutions for infrastructure. Finally a joint decision is made. This implies that both sides have to have the capacity to deliver their part of the results and work together.

Experience from the pilot programmes shows that working with the community is a new experience for many of the RCVs. They are not even fully aware of their general roles and responsibilities. The brief training on micro-planning is not enough of a basis for effective participation. This is expected to change once the capacity-building programmes of Component 3 reach the towns. However, that is unlikely to happen before the first cycle of Basic MAPPs is completed in the 32 towns.

Similarly, the Municipal Micro-Planning Teams have their weakness. They consist of engineering, sanitation, and revenue staff, who are not used to working with communities, and the brief orientation to micro-planning is not sufficient to promote the skills and attitudes required for such work. Only eight of the 32 municipalities have community development staff. The APUSP project provides for recruitment of core community development staff. However, so far the state government has not been able to finalise the recruitment modalities. Project funds will support community development staff as and when they are in place. It is assumed that they will continue to be employed after the project period as higher revenues generated by financial reform will

mean that their salaries can be met, although of course this may not happen in all towns.

In any case, it makes sense to develop skills and attitudes of other staff, particularly engineers, for working with poor people. Micro-planning, contract management, operation and maintenance of infrastructure all require engineers to work with community groups. This is seen as an important part of the municipal performance improvement activity along with the training of elected representatives to be more responsive to poor communities.

In addition to training and placement of community development staff, the capacity of municipalities to work with poor people is expected to be strengthened through appropriate communication and information tools and expansion of activities of the present Citizens' Service Centres to include information services.

Meeting non-infrastructure needs

The Basic MAPP design relies on the principle of convergence for meeting the non-infrastructure needs of poor people. The idea is to co-ordinate and converge inputs from different sources, including government and NGO programmes and initiatives under Component 3 of APUSP. This is not likely to be put into practice in the first cycle of Basic MAPP.

Component 3 programmes have yet to be initiated. Even when they are, it is difficult to see how the MAPP can serve as a co-ordinating mechanism. Their success lies in linking up with the Town Level Framework Plan, which may have very different timeframes and processes. Addressing non-infrastructure needs through this channel is more likely to be a parallel process.

Other programmes have their own norms for targeting and fund allocation, which are difficult to match with the MAPP process and timeframe. The levers for change do not rest with the municipality but with the concerned funding institutions, with whom a policy dialogue may have to be initiated.

Conclusion: sustaining poverty reduction and mainstreaming poor people

The MAPP is a good basis for sowing the seeds of sustainable poverty reduction with the institutional focus of the municipality. The investment in infrastructure improvement forms the starting point for immediate improvements in municipal performance in terms of

working with poor people, improved analysis of problems and targeting, multi-disciplinary working, and allocation for operation and maintenance of improved services. It remains to be seen whether or not revenues will increase as a result of reform and, if so, whether they are eventually used for improving the conditions of poor people and for supporting institutional arrangements for working with poor communities. A better-informed and vibrant civil society and transparent processes may actually make that happen.

The MAPP also institutionalises and legitimises the participation of women representatives of poor communities at strategic and grassroots-level decision-making processes, and establishes a link between the different levels. Transparent processes and the opening up of opportunities for the participation of a wide range of stakeholders is already beginning to have spin-off effects in terms of creating a town-wide constituency for poor people. This will be taken further through civil society partnerships and networks.

The functional and purposeful approach to participation in the MAPP has its limitations and needs to be supported by an awareness of rights and responsibilities and empowerment strategies of Component 3 for medium- and long-term benefits.

The analytical and rolling nature of the MAPP allows weaknesses in the areas of service delivery and working with poor people to either be addressed as part of the reforms component or to be taken up in the next MAPP cycle (e.g. data on poor settlements). APUSP places the municipality almost in the position of a 'mother institution' for poverty reduction. Not only is it expected to adopt responsive procedures towards delivery of services for poor people and their sustenance, but also to be involved in the parallel civil society initiatives through the PPA and membership of the Town Level Working Group. This brings into focus the importance of municipal reform and performance improvement and links up directly with the government policy of decentralisation and municipal responsibility for poverty alleviation. It is for this reason that municipal capacity building is high on the APUSP agenda.

Together the APUSP project principles, its multi-pronged approach, and the down-to-earth mechanism of the MAPP to translate these in the context of each municipality create a highly conducive environment for mainstreaming the concerns of poor people. The first year of project implementation has shown that this is not an assumption but a reality. The implication is that the sustainability of the MAPP process is, in

itself, central to mainstreaming poor people's concerns. The question is whether the municipalities and state government will continue to apply the process beyond the project period and whether it will be applied in the other towns as well. It must also be understood that mainstreaming poor people can only happen over a longer timeframe and within a policy framework. APUSP can certainly demonstrate a way forward and the ultimate test of the project will be in its influence at a wider level: on social policy through the participatory planning appraisals, on state and national programmes for pro-poor municipal reform, on allocations for urban poverty reduction, and in expanding the role of CSOs in empowerment and urban poverty reduction.

Notes

- 1 A nationwide classification based on population. Class 1 towns have a population of between 100,000 and 1 million.
- 2 The slum population is often used as a proxy for the poor population, even though it is well established that not all people living in slums are poor.
- 3 A ward is the lowest administrative and electoral unit in a municipality.
- 4 Civil society organisations (CSOs), for the purpose of APUSP, include development NGOs, voluntary organisations, academic and research institutions, local media, community-based organisations, private sector companies, and professional and business bodies.
- 5 The term 'convergence' is often used in India in relation to planned co-ordination of development programmes, which address different aspects of a broader problem. The idea is to build synergies between interventions that may otherwise be separate and distinct. The term is also used for pooling resources from different sources. The MAPP and micro-planning provide the framework at town and settlement level for converging programmes (social, health, income generation, etc.) and resources (from donors, government, the private sector, poor people) for addressing the felt needs and priorities of the poor.
- 6 The Government of Andhra Pradesh has appointed a Project Co-ordinator and set up a Municipal Strengthening Unit (MSU) and an Appraisal and Monitoring Unit (AMU) under the Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration to manage the first two components of APUSP. Component 3 is managed separately by a Management and Support Team (MAST). An Empowered Committee with state government and DFID representatives makes policy decisions.
- 7 Although APUSP does not use the term 'mainstreaming the poor', it does make an attempt to not leave poor people in the margins by institutionalising the planning, financial and participatory mechanisms for sustainable poverty reduction.
- 8 Municipal Corporations are headed by elected Mayors and Municipalities by elected Chairpersons. Four of the 32 towns are corporations. Each Municipal Ward is represented by a

Councillor or Corporator in the Municipal Council or Corporation. The MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) is the local elected representative in the state government Legislative Assembly. The MP (Member of Parliament) is the local representative in the National Parliament. The Municipal Commissioner is the executive head of a municipality and is appointed by the state government for a term of about three years.

- 9 Recent surveys of slums and poor people living in the 32 towns are: the Andhra Pradesh slum survey (1994), the Below the Poverty Line (BPL) survey carried out as part of the Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojna (SJSRY) programme (1998), and multipurpose slum survey as part of the Janmabhoomi programme of the Andhra Pradesh government (2000).

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