

WORKSHOP ON COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FOR CITIES IN RAJASTHAN: Challenges and Opportunities

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Hotel Rajputana Sheraton, Jaipur*

A BRIEF REPORT



Organised by
India Urban Space Foundation

In Partnership with
**Dept. of Local Self Government, Govt. of Rajasthan
Ministry of Urban Development, Govt. of India**

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Acknowledgements

India Urban Space Foundation (IUSF) wishes to thank Department of Local Self Government, GoR, and Ministry of Urban Development, GoI for their support, participation and guidance for successful conduct of this workshop. IUSF also wishes to thank all participants from the cities across Rajasthan, expert panelists and other delegates who participated in the interactions over the two days.

IUSF expresses sincere gratitude to the sponsors of the event, viz. IL&FS Ltd., HCC Ltd, IDFC Ltd., ESRI India., Navayuga Spatial Technologies Ltd., Digital Globe Inc., ERDAS Inc., Rajasthan Builders and Promoters Association, and Jaipur Nagar Nigam for all support extended for this workshop.

Executive Summary

"This conference has provided excellent exposure and understanding on number of issues, especially for representatives of small ULBs like ours. We would like you to organize each year, one such event providing us learning opportunities on urban issues.", stated Shri. Ram Sharan Chaaju, Chairman, Shahpura Municipal Board at the end of the workshop. This statement in a sense provides the jist of the feedback from all participants at the two day workshop.

Inaugurated by Hon'able CM of Rajasthan, the tone for intense deliberations were set by the Chief Minister herself, emphasizing the critical importance of planning, usage of new technologies and innovative approaches for urban management, and most importantly leadership and commitment from leadership of the cities.

The workshop highlighted a number of issues, the key ones are:

- ✓ Led by the city's leaders, every city – large or small must develop a realistic and clear vision of what its wants to achieve in the long-term.
- ✓ To address spatial inter-linkages of all issues, all plans must be represented on maps.
- ✓ Land use planning and transport planning – both exercises should be simultaneously carried out.
- ✓ Small towns will need to lay emphasis on pedestrian movements and Non-Motorised Transport
- ✓ GIS should not just be one-off exercise, but must be applied in urban development and day-to-day management to support decisions
- ✓ RUIS is an important program and the city's leaders should support its implementation. The ULB has major role in providing information and on-the-ground support for implementation of RUIS.
- ✓ Innovative approaches should be used to deal with the issue of land assembly, which is critical constraint for implementing large projects.
- ✓ Intensive and detailed project preparation work is necessary, before launching any project implementation on the ground. Institutional arrangements should be clearly defined at start of project
- ✓ Funds under various programs, including JNNURM / UIDSSMT should be accessed to build organizational capacity

The major outcomes of the workshop was - Higher level of preparation of the leadership of over 50 cities and towns across Rajasthan to undertake implementation of RUIS and preparation of Master Plans for their towns.

Hon'able CM also announced:

- ✓ Assessing performance of cities in service delivery against standard indicators and benchmarks, and awarding cities based on such performance on 15th August 2008.
- ✓ Preparatory work should be started for taking up integrated urban improvements (urban services, tourism, heritage and natural environment restoration) in 7 identified towns.

Participants identified a set of key challenges, and measures they intend to take for improving their financial situation. Highlights are:

- ✓ Leveraging tourism for overall urban development
- ✓ Improving basic services such as SWM, drainage and building sewer systems
- ✓ Leveraging growth in land values, and real estate development to finance and enable orderly urban development
- ✓ Introduction of an 'Urban Development Tax', emerged as a common solution offered by many

Listed in the last section of this report, the next steps emerging from this workshop for both State Government and the cities will involve intense sets of work in making the RUIS and master planning initiatives successful.

1. Context for the workshop

Government of Rajasthan (GoR) recognizes the challenges and opportunities thrown up by the process of rapid urbanization in the State. GoR has been undertaking a number of measures for improvements in urban governance, infrastructure development and service delivery to citizens. These initiatives are not just restricted to the few large cities of Jaipur, Udaipur, Kota, etc.; but are reaching out and will impact each and every small and medium town across the State. These measures include – introduction of a forward looking municipal legislation; e-governance reforms; decision to implement guaranteed land title in cities across the State, etc.

Of these two major initiatives set the context for the workshop that was organized, viz.

- a. Preparation of Master Plans for all cities across the State, which were hitherto uncovered
- b. Expanding the coverage of Rajasthan Urban Information System (RUIS) to cover all Class I and Class II towns (total of 56 in all), for development of a spatial database of the cities through application of GIS technologies

The implications of such programs are many. The preparation and institutional capacities required for implementing these initiatives are immense. Most importantly, ***the leadership of these cities needs to be oriented into understanding the benefits and requirements of them.*** It is in this context, that this workshop was held, primarily targeted at the leadership of over 50 cities across Rajasthan. Some visual glimpses of this two day event is provided in Annexure I.

2. Workshop Structure and Proceedings

The workshop was successfully organized to achieve the objective of orienting the leadership of over 50 cities of Rajasthan on the issues, challenges and opportunities that lay ahead with respect to planning, translating plans to projects and using tools such as GIS in planning. The detailed structure of the workshop is provided in Annexure II.

Inaugural Session:

The workshop was inaugurated by Hon'able Chief Minister Smt. Vasundhara Raje, in the presence of Hon'able Minister for Urban Development and Local Self Govt, GoR Shri. Surendra Goyal and Secretary (UD), GoI Shri. M Ramachandran.

Taking stock of the level of participation, the Hon'able CM observed that it is important for the leadership of cities and towns across the State to participate in such events. Their participation signifies the seriousness of the city level leadership on issues related to urban planning and developing long-term vision for their respective cities.

The CM urged all cities to first develop a comprehensive vision plan and then expect the full support of the

state government to enable them convert the plans into projects on the ground. The CM highlighted her commitment for the pioneering initiative for introduction of guaranteed land title in the State, beginning with Jaipur on a pilot basis. She complimented



Addressing the delegates from cities across Rajasthan, Hon'able CM said, "There is a need to focus on small towns. It is important that infrastructure capacities and service standards are improved through proper planning and investment in these cities, before they become too large in size and the problems become extremely complex."

India Urban Space Foundation, and its Chairperson, Smt. Swati Ramanathan for her pioneering efforts on urban development initiatives in Rajasthan and also for organizing this much needed conference.

Mr Surendra Goyal, Minister of state for Urban Development also addressed the gathering and encouraged the elected representatives of all cities to think ahead of the challenges facing them. Shri M Ramachandran encouraged cities to look beyond the state and central government for funding their urban infrastructure and look at innovative instruments such as municipal bonds or PPP initiatives. Principal Secretary (Urban Governance), Shri. P S Pawar, and Smt. Swati Ramanathan, Chairperson, India Urban Space Foundation also addressed the delegates.

Complimenting Rajasthan Government for its initiative to implement guaranteed land title, Shri. M Ramachandran, Secretary (UD), Govt. of India said, "I look forward to Rajasthan's experience in implementing guaranteed land title in urban areas, as it can potentially serve as the model for all other states to follow."

Technical Sessions:

The workshop was structured to cover five key themes in five separate sessions, viz.

- a) City Vision: Linking Socio-Economic and Physical Development**
- b) Linkages between Spatial Planning and Urban Mobility**
- c) Use of GIS Technologies in Planning**
- d) Translating Plans into Projects – Planning and Technical Perspectives**
- e) Translating Plans into Projects – Institutional & Financing Challenges**

Each of the above sessions featured presentations by experts, followed by discussions, questions and responses with the delegates.



Mr. Mohinder Singh, Director, Land and Transport Academy, Govt. of Singapore highlighting linkages between spatial and transport planning

3. Participants at the workshop

- a. **Delegates from cities:** Delegates invited from cities included - Mayors / Chairpersons; CEO / Commissioner / Executive Officers; and senior officers from engineering and planning cadres of the ULBs. Participants included
- o **25 Mayors / Chairpersons;**
 - o **47 Commissioners / Executive Officers, and**
 - o **60 Planners, Engineers and technical staff from cities and State Government.**

The entire list of participants based on the registrations made for the conference is enclosed in Annexure III. Barring a few, all delegates were present for the entire two days duration.

- b. **Expert panelists:** A diverse set of 18 expert panelists participated in the discussions over the 2 days (list of names provided in Annexure I). These experts ranged from academicians, senior Government functionaries, consultants and practitioners.

- c. **Exhibitors and private sector professionals:** Over 35 professionals from the private sector including 7 exhibitors participated in the conference. The professionals were mainly from urban planning disciplines, engineering consultants, firms providing GIS solutions, urban infrastructure finance companies, Jaipur based real estate firms and project implementation contractors.



Shri. Ajai Agarwal, President, Alwar Municipal Council discussing a point on public transport solutions for small and medium towns

4. Key messages and take-aways

The key messages that were highlighted by the experts in the course of the presentations and following discussions in each of the technical sessions are as follows:

Technical Session I: City Vision: Linking Socio-Economic and Physical Development

- ✓ Every city – large or small must develop a realistic and clear vision of what its wants to be on 15-20 yr horizon, taking into account its unique character
- ✓ All plans must be represented spatially on maps. Only then spatial inter-linkages will be easily addressed.
- ✓ Local level plans must be made at ward levels with intense participation by citizens
- ✓ The ULB must take the lead in the vision formulation and planning process. The State Town Planning Department will provide technical and program management support.
- ✓ City plans should integrate with the plans of the urban region / district.

Technical Session II: Linkages between Spatial Planning and Urban Mobility

- ✓ Land use planning and transport planning – both exercises should be simultaneously carried out, feeding inputs of one into another. This should ensure housing clusters and job clusters are well connected.
- ✓ Mid-size cities should start planning for mass-transit systems like BRTS.
- ✓ It is important to provide the right-of-way in the plans, even if smaller roads are being built in short-term.
- ✓ Maximise road capacity through traffic planning and traffic management
- ✓ Small towns will need to lay emphasis on pedestrian movements and Non-Motorised Transport

Technical Session III: Use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Technologies in Planning

- ✓ GIS should be applied in urban development and day-to-day management as a tool for supporting decision making
- ✓ Every town must have a GIS based map and information regarding properties, civic amenities, land-use, infrastructure networks, etc. in relation to that digital map

- ✓ Having a GIS enabled spatial database is a 'must' for long-term planning. Accuracy of maps enabled by GIS can hardly be possible on large scale without using GIS technologies.
- ✓ RUIS is an important program and the city's leaders (Mayors / Chairmans/ EOs, etc.) should support its implementation. The ULB has major role in providing information and on-the-ground support for implementation of RUIS.

Technical Session IV: Translating Plans into Projects – Planning and Technical Perspectives

- ✓ Availability of land is generally biggest hurdle for translating plans into real projects. Innovative approaches should be used to deal with this issue, such as – land pooling and town planning schemes, granting selective preferred development rights to land-losers, creation of land bank in advance, adoption of sector planning approaches, etc.
- ✓ Use Public-Private Participation (PPP) models for implementing projects
- ✓ Intensive project preparation work in detail should be taken up, even before launching project implementation on the ground. This includes – project phasing and task and activity level planning
- ✓ Institutional arrangements should be clearly defined at start of project
- ✓ Contract packaging is critical – clear battery limits of work, appropriate sizing to attract best contractors, sequencing of tenders
- ✓ Site logistics, utility shifting, local approvals and licenses, etc. are usually neglected leading to huge time delays
- ✓ 'Constructability' of design is important, mechanism for resolving technical and commercial issues / disputes is very important

Technical Session V: Translating Plans into Projects: Institutional and Financing Challenges

- ✓ Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO), under MoUD, GoI can play an advisory role and provide support in State level initiatives in planning
- ✓ Funds under various programs, including JNNURM / UIDSSMT should be accessed to build organizational capacity
- ✓ City level leadership needs to play a key role in vision formulation and driving the planning process. Technical expertise and inputs will follow.

- ✓ From financing perspective, projects that have dedicated revenue streams from user charges are more viable
- ✓ Wide range of options exist for implementing projects under PPP; ranging for private party only responsible for O&M, upto where complete investment is made by private party.



Delegates visiting a stall of a GIS Solution Provider at the conference venue

5. Feedback from participants



Providing feedback on the workshop, Shri. Ram Sharan Chaaaju, Chairman, Shahpura Municipal Board stated, “This conference has provided excellent exposure and understanding on number of issues, especially for representatives of small ULBs like ours. We would like you to organize each year, one such event providing us learning opportunities on urban issues.”

This statement in a sense sums up the feedback from most participants on the event. On both days, feedback was also sought from city representatives on two sets of issues pertaining to their cities, in the context of the discussions held at the workshop. The issues and the common sets of responses are summarized below:

Day I Feedback: What are the key strengths of your city? What do you see as its main challenges? What vision would you define for your city?

The broad sets of responses were:

- ✓ Most cities have listed heritage buildings / forts (historical in nature), natural heritage like lakes, temples, etc. as their city's assets / strengths. However, in their vision / plans there is little on how these will be leveraged for their development.
- ✓ Most cities have listed SWM, drainage and sewerage as their priority areas. Water supply, seen as a State Govt. mandate is missing on their priority challenges.

- ✓ Many have spoken about shortage of staff in SWM. However, only few have identified PPP as an option to improve SWM services despite this constraint.
- ✓ Inter-departmental coordination at the city level has been highlighted as one of the key challenges
- ✓ Many cities have reflected linkages between tourism growth and improved urban infrastructure services. However, such linkages have not been identified for other sectors of the economy.
- ✓ Some cities have spoken about rapid real estate growth. However, mechanisms to leverage such growth for development have not been foreseen.

Day II Feedback: Every city needs financial resources to implement its' plans and service delivery improvements. Please enlist your plans to strengthen the financial base of your ULB, and the measures being taken for the same.

Broadly, the common points mentioned by ULBs are:

- ✓ Creation of a land bank, by identifying all municipal owned properties
- ✓ Land use conversion / regularization charges
- ✓ Higher fees for building plan approvals
- ✓ Charge bulk consumers like marriage halls, hotels, restaurants, and other commercial properties
- ✓ Some typical ideas listed include – developing a shopping complex, auction of advertisement hoarding sites, etc.
- ✓ Introduction of an 'Urban Development Tax', emerged as a common solution offered by many
- ✓ Very few have mentioned about imposition of user charges against services such as SWM or sewerage services.

While many potential sources of income have been pointed out, estimates of actual yield from these sources is vague, often mentioned as "crores" or "lakhs of rupees".

6. Overall outcomes and impact

The event in itself created some impacts, both for the short and long-term. These may be listed as:

- ✓ Announcement by Hon'able Chief Minister to all participating cities about institution of awards for the best performing agencies under following categories:
 - Best performing UIT
 - Best performing Nagar Nigam
 - Best Performing Nagar Palika
 - Best performing Nagar Parishad

Performance will be assessed on basis of standards of services delivered, and will be announced on 15th August 2008.

- ✓ Hon'able CM also announced that comprehensive urban development projects (with urban development, heritage conservation and tourism development components) should be taken up in towns of Rajgarh, Ratangarh, Lakshmangarh, Navalgarh, Fatehpur, Kuchaaman, Mount Abu, Jaisalmer. Of these two towns may be taken up in priority. Interest and commitment of IL&FS Ltd. and HCC Ltd. were also sought from their representatives for participation in these projects on PPP basis.
- ✓ The elected and administrative leadership that participated in the workshop went back with:
 - Better orientation on the need and implications of urban planning, and preparation of Master Plans in particular
 - Appreciation of GIS solutions, and their application for urban planning and management
 - Appreciation of challenges involved in implementing plans and translating them to actual projects on the ground
 - A much higher level of preparation of the cities for participating in the forthcoming two key initiatives, viz.
 - GIS implementation under RUIS II
 - Preparation of master plans

7. Next Steps

A few next steps identified for the different stakeholders are listed below:

a) Next steps for concerned departments of GoR

- ✓ Roll-out these initiatives of RUIS and Master Planning without any delay and leverage the momentum created. Further intensively communicate about these initiatives with the ULBs.
- ✓ Exploring ways and means to build institutional capacities of the ULBs to take on these initiatives, including lateral induction of professional staff with appropriate skills through contracting
- ✓ Intensive program planning and leveraging the best of resources from the market for implementing these two initiatives
- ✓ Creating a full-time team of professionals at the State level who will hand-hold the ULBs in the course of these two initiatives
- ✓ Initiate a program for orienting ULBs on issues pertaining to land management, financing leveraging from land and land related development control instruments, and related topics

b) Next steps for ULBs across the State

- ✓ Elected and administrative leadership in the cities should initiate wider consultation towards formulation of vision and long-term plans for their cities and towns
- ✓ Undertake internal assessments, putting together data, triggering basic surveys
- ✓ Undertake a thorough financial assessment of their situation, potential revenues and prepare long-term projections

c) Next steps that India Urban Space Foundation will like to pursue

- ✓ Contribute as part of working group constituted to examine measures to build ULB's capacities to implement these initiatives. Shrinivas Kowligi, CEO, India Urban Space Foundation is a member of the working group.