



(Regd., Public Charitable Trust No 599 / 94--95 IV)

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Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review

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Submitted by CIVIC-Bangalore

Profile of Contributing Organisation: CIVIC-Bangalore is a 29-year-old organisation. It is a voluntary citizens' initiative which emerged in 1990-91 as a forum for discussion and action mainly on issues impacting cities, their development and future. The initiative became a registered non-profit charitable trust in 1995. Realizing decentralization and social justice in the urban context, through the implementation of the 74th Constitutional Amendment on urban governance, has been our aim. Our aim has not been to supplement or supplant government services but to make the government deliver on its promises to the people. We have worked with the centre, state and local governments and the general public, advocating for the desired changes. By focusing on democracy, decentralization and public participation, our activities promote good governance, inclusiveness, and improvement of service delivery.

In the last 15 years, given the growing disparities in the city, our focus has been on the urban poor. The main tools used by CIVIC to improve service delivery encompass transparency, awareness building and empowerment of the community through the Right to Information, accountability through public interactions with officials for grievance redressal and advocacy for systemic changes through public hearings and public interest litigations as a last resort, while acknowledging the procedures to be followed by the government itself. We have worked with national networks campaigning for the Rights to Information, Rights to Food and Work, the Fundamental Right to Education, Right to Social Security and Electoral Reforms.

At the municipal ward level, our focus has been on bringing all sections of society, including the urban poor, on a common platform to plan, budget, and audit the ward programme of works of the municipal governments and those of other state-level departments.

At the slum level, CIVIC has produced IEC material and conducted awareness programmes, grievance redressal meetings, action research and public hearings for the urban poor on five rights: the rights to food, water, health, education, livelihood and social security.

We have been directing our experience and learning at the grassroots to feedback into policy change at the cities', state and national levels to ensure the relevant integration of correction measures. Further, to ensure an up-scaling of our intervention at the grassroots, given the experience and learning at the slum and ward level, we, while still maintaining our grassroots presence, through partners, focus significantly on policy advocacy and campaigning at the city, state and the national level.