



## Public Participation In Sustainable Governance: Case Study And Best Practices Of Pune District

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### Abstract:

*The essence of development is nothing but people's participation. Of all the social factors, like money, material, humans, etc., human factor are the crucial element. Public or people are pivot around whom the entire development processes are supposed to revolve. The responsible government which involves public engagement in the developmental projects experiences sustainability in it. This is because when participation is there the wastage of resources is less and there is more transparency which leads to build a sense of responsible and belongingness among the citizens and also leads to optimum and rational allocation of resources with greater efficiency in output and in the growth of the area. However, due to centralization of the decisions which excludes the opinions and suggestions of the citizens, urban cities faces sustainability in the governance. Thus, Pune being the world's most livable, economically vibrant, inclusive and environmentally sustainable city, is working to become a Smart city by connecting citizens to local government and encouraging direct participation. The Smart Pune Mission enables the citizens to get engage in the developmental projects so as to help the government to understand their needs and make informed decisions accordingly. This research will help the readers to raise awareness of citizens' rights and build political will for their participation. Combination of leaders, facilitator and participation groups working together through deliberative democracy can effectively integrate the public into civic decision-making.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable Governance, Government, Sustainable Development, Citizen Engagement, Pune Municipal Corporation, Smart City Initiative, Growth of Pune

### Introduction:

Sustainable Governance consists of the foundational system, culture and principles enacted by the highest governing body that considers environmental, social and economic factors, to uphold, defend and maintain decision-making, consistently over time, for the benefit and resiliency of the citizens as a whole. Pune is an economically and politically dynamic city, well-woven into networks of goods, services, and ideas. However, it faces the increasing service and infrastructure

demands associated with rapid growth. Participation or involvement of people in how their local government budgets, carry out projects and prioritizes spending over the developmental projects can be a powerful way of deepening democracy and enhancing wellbeing.

### Statement of the Problem:

Sustainability is a vital component of responsible governance. It is no more an abstract concept but a tangible and a measurable goal. Local government worldwide are taking proactive steps to

address environmental, social, and economic challenges through sustainability initiatives. Pune district has a history of public participation in governance. The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, provided for the creation of Urban Local Bodies for wider participation of people in development of urban areas. It created viable municipal bodies in urban areas which represented the people of the municipality. Municipalities were to have Wards within their territorial jurisdiction. However, the ward Committees and Municipalities have not been adequately developed into the institutions like the village panchayat. Thus, urban decentralization has not matured to the extent it is done in rural areas through Gram Sabha that is the assembly of Panchayati Raj. This is because our cities and towns do not have bottom up structures that create more proximity between the citizen and their urban local government. As a result, there exist a gap between public participation in the decision making process and also in developmental projects which hampers the sustainability in governance. To address this issue Pune officials is working to improve the citizen's engagement through Smart City initiatives.

**Aims and Objectives of the Study:**

The study is undertaken with the following objectives –

1. To find and study the best practices undertaken by Pune district to solve the issues of citizen's engagement through Smart City initiatives.
2. To understand the implementation strategy of Smart City Initiative undertaken by Pune City.
3. To study the impact of the initiative and the output of the initiative.

**Scope of the Study:**

The study is aimed to provide a valuable insight of how public participation in the functioning of the government will enable a sustainable development in the city by protecting their rights. It help us to understand that best form of development would happen when people participate in governance because there is check in balance from the peoples' side and also a sense of ownership or responsibility is developed among the participating citizens.

**Methodology:**

The study is mainly depending on the secondary data. It is a descriptive and analytical research. Conclusive research method is adopted for the collection of data. The descriptive research is applied for gathering the existing information through various case studies on the related topic. It is based on probability sampling.

**Limitation of the Study:**

The study does not include the primary data that could have been obtained through direct interaction with the citizens and the government officials. Also availability of secondary data is limited.

**Overview of the Smart City Initiative:**

Pune is a city in western India having a population of about 3.2 million and ranks as a ninth largest city in India by population. Smart City Mission is a critical imperative for Pune to ensure that it becomes a livable and sustainable city in spite of severe resource pressure and population growth. During the Smart City proposal stage, Pune officials made

serious efforts to involve citizens and communities on an unprecedented scale across the city, through various digital and non-digital mediums with the aim to make it the Ideal Smart City in India.

**Implementation Strategy:**

For implementing the Smart City Initiative Distinctive 5S approach towards citizen engagement was adopted –

**Distinctive “5S” approach to citizen engagement**

<b>1</b> <b>Speed</b> 	<b>2</b> <b>Scale</b> 	<b>3</b> <b>Structure</b> 	<b>4</b> <b>Solutioning</b> 	<b>5</b> <b>Social audit</b> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Blitzkrieg approach to reach out to 1 million citizens in in 100 days</li> <li>▪ 2 citizens engagement exercises run in parallel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Campaign designed for mass engagement</li> <li>▪ Maximum coverage across all 15 wards in Pune</li> <li>▪ Equal representation from all socioeconomic classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proprietary 9-phase structured approach to citizen engagement                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 5 phase approach to pan city engagement</li> <li>– 4 phase approach to local area development</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ End goal to develop inclusive solutions – not just identify problems and issues of citizens</li> <li>▪ Crossed-sourcing of ideas and solutions key component of exercise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unique component of syndication and acceptance by citizens</li> <li>▪ Incorporating citizen suggestions and objections by mini-lab/townhalls</li> <li>▪ Citizen pledge to show support</li> </ul>










Source: Smart Pune- Citizen Engagement Case Study.

- In line with the Smart City Mission guidelines, the Pune Smart City Team structured the entire citizen engagement effort into nine phases – the first five phases were for the entire city while the last four were run for the area identified (Aundh-Baner- Balewadi i.e. ABB) for the local area development initiative.
- The citizen engagement process was run tightly, with a strict deadline for

each phase that was publicly announced. The output for each phase was shared back with the citizens with the help of local media within 2-3 days, making it a closed-loop process.

- The key stakeholders included in this mission were Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), NGOs & Social Foundations and Citizens.

**‘Pune citizen engagement model’ used a structured 9-phase approach is being used to maximize involvement of citizens**

<b>Envision</b> 	<b>Diagnose</b> 	<b>Co-create</b> 	<b>Refine</b> 	<b>Share</b> 
<p><b>Phase – I</b> 17<sup>th</sup> Sep – 28<sup>th</sup> Sep</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask citizens on inputs on creating a vision for the city</li> <li>▪ Ask citizens the major areas of concern in the 12 sectors</li> <li>▪ Playback results at the end of the phase</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – II</b> 28<sup>th</sup> Sep – 12<sup>th</sup> Oct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask citizens about development opportunities and issues in each core sector and help identify the most vital issues that need to be resolved</li> <li>▪ Playback results at the end of the phase</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – III</b> 13<sup>th</sup> Oct – 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask citizens for detailed solutions to key pan-city issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – IV</b> Over a period of 3 days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct delivery labs for extensive problem solving with key experts and citizens to refine solutions</li> <li>▪ Open citizen discussion forums</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – IV</b> 15<sup>th</sup> Nov – 15<sup>th</sup> Dec</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Share the final set of solutions with citizens and open for suggestions and discussions</li> </ul>
<b>Area selection</b> 	<b>Competition and Profiling</b> 	<b>Engagement with residents</b> 	<b>Sharing and Acceptance</b> 	
<p><b>Phase – VI</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Selection of development type</li> <li>▪ Define assessment criteria for selection</li> <li>▪ Short-listing of areas</li> <li>▪ Evaluation by citizens</li> <li>▪ Evaluation by sector experts</li> <li>▪ Evaluation by elected representatives</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – VII</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participation of 50+ teams from arch. colleges in Pune</li> <li>▪ Extensive profiling done through walk through and workshops</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – VIII</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Citizens asked issues they face in basic services</li> <li>▪ Vision for the area and the smart features it should have were understood</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase – IX</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ &gt;60% of the households to pledge support for the initiatives planned</li> </ul>	

Source: Smart Pune- Citizen Engagement Case Study.

**Impact of the Initiative:**

A comprehensive citizen engagement process was run for local area selection, with 2.81 lakh inputs for the area selection based on the criteria shared by the Pune Municipal Corporation.

Offline citizen engagement include –

- Face-to-face: 7.5 lakh forms was distributed to households across all 15 wards, out of which, 307991 households filled the form. 1.5 lakh citizens signed-up as smart volunteers. Around 15,000 school students from different schools in the city have taken out a rally to spread the word about the Smart Pune Mission.
- Discussion: 100+ meetings with different groups from the Pune stakeholder grid.
- Newspapers: 10 leading newspapers in the city covered the campaign through 20 articles over a period of 45 days.
- Radio-channels: 40 messages broadcasted across 5 Radio channels.
- Others: Around 400 Ganesh Mandals had initiated to set up drop boxes for the devotees to submit their feedbacks.

Online citizen engagement include –

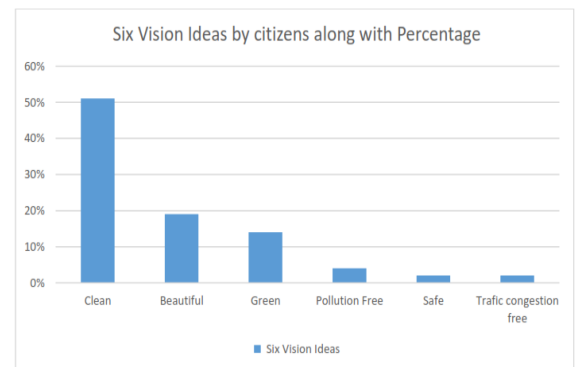
- Portal: 70,778 registrations on Pune Smart City portal within 1 month.
- Facebook: 29,860 digital audience along with 1,435 likes, 423 posts made and 289
- Twitter: 1,168,312 impressions and reach of 670,506 through 3,585 tweets and 6,345 retweets in 2 months.

- Mobile App: 6,700+ responses with 1,092 downloads and ~500 ideas received from citizens.
- YouTube: Broadcasts received 21,767 views and 3,951 likes.

The extensive citizen and community engagement efforts contributed to Pune Smart City Proposal bagging second place overall in Round 1 lighthouse cities of the Mission. Additionally, significant pull was created through media and online presence where citizens would give suggestions on the website.

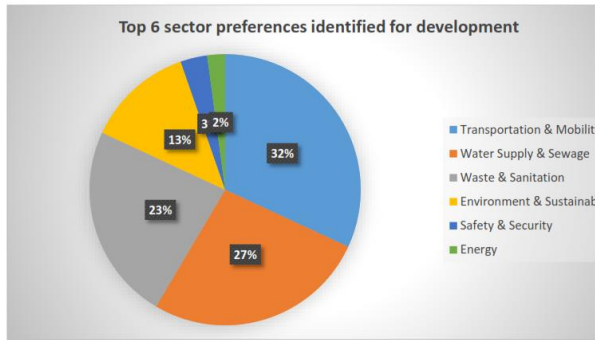
**Data Analysis:**

- i. Identification of top 6 vision ideas with their percentage based on the inputs of the citizens –



Based on citizens opinion obtained through their engagement by various modes.  
Source: Smart Pune- Citizen Engagement Case Study.

- ii. Identification of issues aligned to Smart City features: Top six Sector preferences identified by the citizens –



Based on citizens opinion obtained through their engagement by various modes.  
Source: Smart Pune- Citizen Engagement Case Study.

**Findings Based On Objectives:**

This study has unfolded the following facts with respect to objectives

- Diverse civil society, in collaboration with open-minded municipal government representatives, have leveraged supporting national policies to help lead Pune towards transformative change.
- The gap between the citizens participation and Pune Municipal Corporation for obtaining a sustainable governance has been narrowed through the Smart Pune Mission as it has enabled citizen engagement through different modes and methods (Offline method and online method) for sustainable development.
- The initiative by enabling citizens participation has helped them to voice up their opinions and suggestions about what they would like to see in the city of Pune and has identified top six vision ideas such as Pune should be more Clean- 51%, Beautiful- 19%, Green- 14%, Pollution Free- 4%, Safe- 2% and Traffic Congestion Free- 2%.
- The Smart City Initiative helped citizens in identifying and communicating the issues to

government arising from the top six sectors with percentage such as Transportation

- & Mobility- 30%, Water Supply & Sewage- 25%, Waste & Sanitation- 22%, Environment & Sustainability- 12%, Safety & Security- 3% And Energy- 2%. This identification of issues by the citizens would definitely help the government of Pune to address it by making improvement in their policies of a concerned services. This in turn will help to achieve a sustainable governance through public participation.

**Conclusion:**

With citizens as the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the Smart Cities Mission, Pune city officials made an effort to involve Pune Citizens (Punkers) on an unprecedented scale. This Mission that aims an innovative way to drive infrastructural, economic, environmental and social growth will enable local development and will also harness technology to improve the quality and standard of living of the citizens. With the vibrant cultural heritage, a strong human capital and strong business environment as a key strength, Pune aspires to become one of the most livable cities in India following a process driven by its citizens.

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