

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

Praja Foundation



Simplifying peoples' lives

Committed to create an accountable and efficient society
through peoples' participation

www.praja.org

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SECTION-I

Introduction:

Continuing our vision of building a well governed nation with simple, transparent and accountable systems. Praja had developed a new project to usher in accountability and transparency in the functions of Elected Representatives' across Mumbai. The year 2008 will be marked as a year of development of new ideas, software and data gathering for Accountability Project, which is now, be called as Praja Dialogue.

The Praja Dialogue

The citizens of Mumbai city are represented by 267 Elected Representatives. 227 Councilors in the Municipal Corporation, 34 Member of Legislative Assembly's in the State Legislature and 6 Member of Parliament. All of these people have been directly elected by the citizens as their representatives to represent them in the respective houses.

Keeping track of their performance and their work during their term has been a challenge for citizens, NGOs and other agencies including their own political parties.

Praja had created a unique system to keep a track of the performance (working) of the elected representatives by actively monitoring their work as elected representatives and to generate a platform for dialogue using this information and the Web as a starting point.

Programs conducted under Praja Foundation for Praja Dialogue.

1. Information Collection.
2. Data, Upload and Translation.
3. Software and Website Development.
4. Launch, Media and Outreach.

SECTION-II

(Programs, Methods, Achievements and Future plan)

Program:

Information Collection

'And we have collected data of all the elected representatives across Mumbai'

Method:

We believe Right to Information is the key for transparent and accountable society and extensive usage of RTI will reduce corruption and accurate information will be generated for citizens'.

Our information collection method is based on this premise and authentic data is collected through filing RTI applications from the relevant administrative body. The procurement of data is through a series of negotiations, communication and occasionally appeals with the authorities.

The data collected has its own anecdotes... most of the time the person in charge is missing, fewer infrastructures and staff at the Administrative offices and convincing the administration that they have the information.

Achievement:

1. Profile information of all 227 Corporator and 34 MLA of Mumbai gathered.
2. Attendance reports of all the ERs in their respective Committees and Assemblies obtained.
3. Records of money spent for the financial year 2007 and 2008 by all the ER.
4. Records of questions raised by all the ERs in their respective committees in the year 2008.
5. Total number of civic complaints filed by citizens across all 24 wards of Mumbai, through the Online Complaint Management System.
6. Total number of crimes reported including First Information Reports, Non Cognizable reports and Major Crimes Head data for 6 Regions in Mumbai i.e. Police Stations (84) and Beat Chowkies (66).
7. Total number of students studying in more than 1044 Municipal Schools from 1st Standard to 10th Standard including their passing numbers, drop out numbers, students to teachers ratio and gender ratio.
8. Total number of cases registered in 64 Dispensaries, 25 Municipal Hospitals and 4 State Hospitals... a sensitive disease list was also sorted.

Data Cycle achieved in 2008

Future Plan:

- I) To collect the data in a cycle so that we are able to have better communication with the Administrative bodies.
- II) New issues for representing citizens' concerns be researched and information to be avail.
- III) To increase the performance indicator of ERs'. Praja will be conducting research on ideas like Councilor complaints in ward offices and the bills proposed in the Assembly, etc.

Program:

Data Entry, Upload and Translation

'And a system is devised for upload of data'

Method

The data is the most important thing coming to the Praja Foundation. It not only brings the information but also excitement, as with every new data new insights on the working of the Administration or ERs is garnered.

The data collected is sorted and classified in a system, then entered into an Information Management Sheet, later corrected and approved for upload. The information on the Questions raised by ERs' is generated in Marathi and we then translate it to English. To understand this information and to translate it was a huge learning experience, as we are first organization to execute the translation. The data is viewed by eminent professionals working on data like Mr. Dorab Supariwala, Mr. Tutu Aluwalia and Dr C R Shridhar Curam.

Achievements:

1. Profile, Attendance and Money Spent by 227 Councillors and 36 MLAs of Mumbai entered, corrected and uploaded.
2. More than 2000 questions of all the ERs' studied, translated and uploaded.
3. Data of four issues across 24 wards in several departments spread over Mumbai, decoded and entered.
4. Content and Sample data check methods formed and implemented.

Future Plan:

- I) The data entered will be checked every day to achieve precision.

- II) Sample data checking to be executed after each data upload cycle.
- III) Conduct research/study on the existing data to give additional information from the same information.

Program:

Software and Website Development

'And comprehensive software is developed to give innovative reports and to accommodate more states of India'

Method

Simple yet interesting presentation of the data with action facilitation is thought behind creating the software. The development of software and website is the final activity for creating the dialogue process between citizens and the ERs.

We studied and developed an understanding on functions of each Administration body and also work of the ERs'. This led to the development of Code in software and finally we developed the software with Net Prophets Software Developers.

The next development was of the Website that not only gives the information but also provides options for action, based on the data generated. The entire program is called e-citizenship with interactive features giving avenues for the citizens to DIALOGUE with the ERs'.

Achievements:

- a. Data Management software created to enter the information of profile, functions, money spent, attendance and issues.
- b. A single page is created on each ER's performance with comparison of functions and avenues to interact.
- c. One window page for each ward giving information of the ISSUES, their ERs and additional information on Administrative bodies.
- d. Reports on Ward Issues, Comparison of Issues across wards, Ward Corporators, MLAs, Political Party wise, and Gender wise prepared and ready to be rolled out.
- e. To maintain the dialogue process between Citizens and ERs, interactive features like 'Write to your Corporator', 'Scream Here' and Mumbai News has already been rolled out.
- f. A comprehensive software created to add more Cities/States of India

Future Plan:

- I) To generate more reports and extend the option to Citizens directly.
- II) Create a template of reports for writing to the Administrative body so that a three way communication can be facilitated.
- III) To add new features to simplify the usage of data in the website.

Program;**Launch, Media and Outreach**

'Beta version of the website launched on 24th December 2008'

Method

The launch of the Website, Media partnership and the Outreach Communication are independent program components. The focus this year was restricted to Information Management and Software Development because only after acquiring a robust data a next level of programming could be initiated. The information was shared with data experts from the electronic and print media. It was also shared with Public Relation agencies for partnership and eminent opinion makers for feedback and support. Nevertheless we did achieve some significant developments in all the three activities.

Achievements:**I Phase**

- a) The beta version of the website was launched on December 24th 2008.
- b) Two newspaper carried reports on the website independently.
- c) More than 100 enquiries, compliments and suggestions received on the beta version of the website.
- d) 30 eminent personalities of Mumbai are now part of Praja Dialogue, giving more than three to four days of their month and each raising funds to support the project.
- e) In-house campaign developed for Outreach communication.
- f) Content and Design for communication to be rolled out soon.
- g) First communication to political parties already rolled out.

II Phase:

Website and White Paper launch:

Date: 16th March

The website was launched on the 16th of April. The event was conducted by Ms Iris Mandeira (Ex-AYBI CEO and Alumini of IFAN). Mr BG Deshmukh, Chairman of Praja Foundation, delivered the key note address and Mr Nitai Mehta, Managing Trustee of Praja Foundation, presented the project.

The first lady of Mumbai, Mayor Ms Subha Raul (Shiv Sena) was the guest of honour. She released the white paper on the functions and issues of Mumbai in the presence and support of other political party members. The parties promised to use the dialogue platform to communicate with the citizens of Mumbai. Councillors Mr Rahul Shivale (Shiv Sena), Adv Rajiv Chauhan representing MLA Mr Kripa Shankar Singh President Mumbai Congress and BJP leader Mr Atul Shah were dignitaries on Dias.

The events covered by 31 newspaper and score of electronic as well website portals.

Future Plan:

- I) A partnership with SAATCHI and SAATCHI (PR firm) to be finalized for Campaign.
- II) An official launch of the website with Media groups by the month of February.
- III) A communication tool and offline program with NGOs to be initiated by February first week.