



URBAN GOVERNANCE DIALOGUE

Transforming Urban Governance

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"Equipping Local Elected Leadership of Kanpur and Lucknow"

Highlights from Capacity Building Workshop

Over the last two decades, Praja Foundation has been working towards enabling accountable governance. It conducts data-driven research on civic issues, inform citizens, media, and government administration. Praja also works with elected representatives to equip them to address inefficiencies in work processes, bridging the information gaps and mobilising them in taking corrective advocating for change. Over last 27 years, we have organised over 100+ training workshops building capacity of 2,000+ local elected and administrative leadership.

Praja, conducted **2-day capacity building workshops for the Elected Representatives (ERs) of Kanpur and Lucknow Municipal Corporations**. The workshops aimed to enhance their understanding of 'Uttar Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act 1959 (UPMCA) and Municipal Finance.' **P. C. Pisolkar, a subject expert** and former Chief Municipal Auditor of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), **facilitated the session on 'Municipal Finance'**. For these workshops, training modules were specifically designed to simplify the Corporation Act and Finance documents for the Councillors.



Honourable Mayor of Kanpur Municipal Corporation with Councillors, Praja and Ekjut Kanpuria team

From Vision to Action

In July 2023, Praja Foundation signed a MoU with Directorate of Urban Local Bodies (DULB) and Urban Development Department (UDD) of Government of Uttar Pradesh (GoUP) on **Capacity Building of Elected Representatives on Uttar Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act 1959 and Municipal Finance**. As a result of this, Praja Foundation organised 2 pilot workshops in the city of Kanpur and Lucknow in UP.

Praja Foundation developed **modules for both cities that simplifies the understanding of UPMC Act and Municipal Finance for the respective cities**. The module will serve as a handbook for the Councillors that can be readily referred to understand the basic Governance structure and processes for the Councillors. The training module booklets were provided to all the Councillors during the workshop.

Apart from the UPMCA and Municipal Finance, the workshop also focused on the three-tier system of Governance, 74th Constitution Amendment Act, various Committees in a city, roles and responsibilities of a Councillor and deliberation at local level. It also aimed to facilitate networking and collaboration among the councillors.



Praja Team with Councillors of Lucknow Municipal Corporation

Capacity Building Sessions

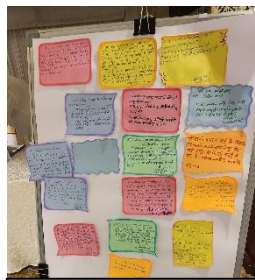
The workshop in Kanpur was organised on 6th and 7th of August 2024 and was inaugurated by **Honourable Mayor of Kanpur Municipal Corporation Mrs. Pramila Pandey** while a similar event was organised in Lucknow on 8th and 9th of August 2024. The workshop was conducted in two parts: Day 1 focused on understanding Governance, specifically at the local level while Day 2 had an elaborate discussion on Municipal Finance and Budget.



Honourable Mayor of Kanpur Municipal Corporation with Praja and Ekjut Kanpuria team

Day One:

The workshop in the city of Lucknow was conducted by Praja Foundation while the workshop in Kanpur was conducted in collaboration with **Ekjut Kanpuria**. The sessions were initiated with an engaging keynote address by Mrs. Priyanka Sharma, Director of Programs at Praja Foundation and Mr. Aviral Dubey, Program Manager at Praja Foundation, explaining the flow and content of the session.



Activity to understand the expectations of councillors



Praja Team addressing the Councillors in Kanpur

An activity was conducted to understand the expectations of the Councillors from the session. A brief pre-session test was also conducted to estimate the awareness and understanding of the elected members on the basics of 74th constitution amendment and sections on UP Municipal Corporation Act.



Praja Team addressing the Councillors in Lucknow

This was followed by detailed explanation of the three tiers of government, the legislature and 7th Schedule of the Constitution which includes the list of subjects under the Union, State & Concurrent List were highlighted. The councillors were introduced to the 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1992 followed by the 12th Schedule which includes the explanation of 18 functions a city government shall deliver mentioned under Article 243-W.



Councillors during the session in Kanpur

An important aspect of the session was "How to Read an Act?" was highly beneficial and informative for the Councillors. It involved listing the important sections of the Act, providing an overview of the history of the UPMCA, and discussing important amendments that have been made. The session also delved into the discretionary and obligatory functions outlined in the Act, while elaborating on the roles and responsibilities of the councillors.

Furthermore, the councillors actively participated by highlighting their experiences and challenges encountered in the communities, discussing the lessons learned, and offering valuable suggestions to address the identified problems. It was also inferred that the councillors have a collective power as opposed to a singular approach to the issues they face in their respective community.



Councillors engaging in active discussion with Praja Team in Lucknow

In another activity, the councillors started reflecting and listed the functions delivered by their respective Municipal Corporation. An extensive discussion took place regarding the various types of committees along with necessity of formulating Ward and Wards Committees. This started with the discussion on tools to enable effective deliberation which highlighted the need for creation of ward committees. It was agreed that Ward Committees would provide a better platform to address local issues effectively.



Councillors of Kanpur Municipal Corporation actively involved in the workshop

Day Two:

On day two, the session on Municipal Finance was conducted by P. C. Pisolkar, the former Chief Municipal Auditor of BMC. The session commenced by decoding the concept of a budget, its historical context, and definition. Mr. Pisolkar explained the objective of the budget and further elaborated on the National Municipal Accounts Manual, a simplified accounting toolkit formulated by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs on the recommendation of a Task Force formed by the Comptroller & Auditor General of India. In this session, an engaging activity was conducted wherein the councillors were tasked with listing down their vision for their ward and city, the existing reality as compared to the vision and the steps taken by them to address the current reality.



Mr. P.C. Pisolkar (former chief auditor of BMC), explaining best practices in Kanpur

The finance session included a comprehensive explanation of the General Principles of Municipal Budgeting. This included discussions on estimated income and expenditure, a comparison between estimated and actual budgets, Budget grants and the importance of conducting reviews to revise the budget in order to ensure a minimum cash balance at the end of the year. A detailed explanation of sources of income and its categories for the corporation was also given. Additionally, detailed explanations were provided regarding the financial calendar and various sections pertaining to finance in the UPMCA.



Councillors of Lucknow Municipal Corporation engaged in the workshop activities



Mr Pisolkar with the Councillors of Lucknow Municipal Corporation

Councillors were also given out summarised budget handouts where they could develop a better understanding of their respective Municipal Corporation's budget as per the explanation from Mr. Pisolkar.

Day two concluded with a session on e-Governance reforms and initiatives to facilitate better service delivery and citizen participation. Mr. Aviral Dubey, Program Manager from Praja Foundation **conducted a session on e-Governance** reforms that could be implemented in Kanpur as well as Lucknow Municipal Corporation. This session aimed to explore potential digital governance initiatives and advancements for the betterment of municipal operations. He highlighted the best practices followed in India with use cases from cities across the country.

The Workshop held in Kanpur involved session on Solid Waste Management conducted by the team of Ekjut Kanpuria where they discussed the pilot project initiated in a selected ward of Kanpur Municipal Corporation. The Councillors of Kanpur Municipal Corporation showed interest in scaling the initiative in other wards as well.

Key Insights from the session

- The workshop in Kanpur was well-attended, with a total of **63 participants** out of a total of 110 councillors, including **members of the executive committee**.
- The participation in Lucknow was up to a total of **14 participants**.
- The session highlighted **best practices in Urban Local Governance** and encouraged the participants to **identify problems and brainstorm for solutions** faced by the city.
- **Councillors expressed their positive feedback**, stating that the session proved beneficial in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities outlined for Councillors in the act.

- There are 37 female councillors out of a total of 110 councillors in Kanpur Nagar Nigam while a total of 38 female councillors out of 110 councillors in Lucknow Municipal Corporation. Female participation in both cities of Praja's workshop was significant, with active involvement from all those who participated.
- The analysis of pre and post-test done by the Praja team indicated that almost all of the councillors who participated both days were able to enhance their understanding about the basics of municipal governance and finance.
- Councillors expressed their positive feedback, stating that the session proved beneficial in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities outlined for Councillors in the act. They also requested to conduct similar workshops on regular basis.
- It was discussed in the session that the Corporation does not hold regular meetings as recommended by the UPMC Act 1959.
- The Councillors mentioned that ward and wards committees do not exist in Kanpur Municipal Corporation as well as Lucknow Municipal Corporation and there are no forums for citizens to participate in the deliberation of the city either.

Way Forward

- This workshop aimed to strengthen the elected representatives through capacity building, thereby transforming the overall working of the city resulting in better governance.
- With every new election we have newly elected councillors coming in, we have understood that these councillors need a support to guide them and function better.
- There is need to constitute ward and wards committee as per UPMCA-1959. We would like to suggest reform of wards committee with councillors and Mayor of the corporation so that all the councillors could be a part of all committee other than the board meeting.
- There should be regular Councillors training where details of deliberation like relevant sections from the act functioning of board /committees meeting, role of councillors in deliberation etc. are discussed.
- Regular follow up meeting with councillor is suggested to be organised for better functioning.
- Councillors work very closely with SWM issues in their respective wards. To ensure the continuation of Ekjut Kanpuria Project in Kanpur it is important for project team to continuously hold regular meeting with Councillors of the project area.
- The cities need to focus on increasing their own sources of revenue to initiate its own policy and program with or other than state and central government for the urban poor and informal settlements.

Glimpses from the Workshop

"As a newly elected councillor, I have greatly benefited from this workshop, which has increased our awareness of our rights and duties. I strongly advocate for the continuity of such workshops in the future. Each and every question was answered in a detailed manner. The workshop was highly beneficial and empowering."

**Saumya Shukla, Councillor, Ward 95, Kanpur
Municipal Corporation**

"I would like to express my gratitude to Praja foundation on organising this informative workshop and educating my councillors on the Act and Budget. The unique way of explanation helped specially the new councillors to understand working and nuances of the corporation and the house. It was heartening to see the spirit of healthy competition amongst councillors while doing the activities under the workshop."

**Pramila Pandey, Mayor, Kanpur
Municipal Corporation**

"The workshop was very educative, I was able to learn more about the roles and responsibilities of a Councillor in short period of time"

**Rajni Gupta, Councillor, Ward 83,
Lucknow Municipal Corporation**

We would like to know your views and feedbacks based on the above information shared. Feel free to reach us at info@praja.org

Kind Regards,



Nitai Mehta

Managing Trustee, Praja Foundation



Milind Mhaske

CEO, Praja Foundation



Mayor of KMC addressing the Councillors



KMC Councillors during the Workshop



Praja's Fellows engaging with the Councillors



Praja Team with Mayor of KMC



Female Councillors of Lucknow



Day 2 of Workshop in Lucknow