SUMMARY OF SECOND YEAREND WORKSHOP

Capacity Building for Smart Data and Inclusive Cities (SDIC)

Date: 11 February 2020, Venue: Hotel Ibis Abu Dhabi Gate, UAE

Capacity Building for Smart Data & Inclusive Cities (SDIC) project is collaborating with four urban local authorities (Bhopal, Jabalpur, Faridabad and Kochi) to strengthen technical and institutional capacities. The National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) in collaboration with Institute of Development Studies, Sussex has undertaken this action research project for 3 years (Since 2018) with financial assistance from the European Union (EU).

SDIC, over the last two years of engagement with the participating cities, has established a baseline understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and contextual factors for each of the cities, identifying projects for tracing these learning journeys along with the (ULB)/(SPV). Based on the learnings and needs assessment of the city officials, various activities have been conducted including capacity building trainings on data visualization and analytics for SPV team members/municipal corporation staffs of Bhopal and Jabalpur, cross-city workshop/s for learning and sharing of experiences and initiation of co-formulating technological solutions through a pilot block-chain initiative. In Bhopal, a process to implement a pilot block-chain based platform is ongoing which intends to demonstrate a data governance framework for integrating multiple systems that are currently functioning in silos. In addition to these activities, stakeholder workshops for Kochi have been organised to engage in dialogue with the city governments and other relevant stakeholders at both state level and city level (including institutions, civil society organisations, and researchers). This workshop deliberated specifically on conditions necessary for forming Data Alliance.

The **Second yearend workshop of the SDIC project** was held on 11 February 2020 to discuss the pathways to achieve the larger goal of imbibing the culture of data usage in functioning of partner cities. During the workshop participants deliberated on challenges and solutions to form an inclusive and effective Data Alliance and City Data Policy in line with the Data Smart City Strategy. The participants in the workshop were CEOs from project cities, consultants of pilot initiative and SDIC team members.

The learnings from last two years and the city level road map towards data strategy were discussed. Cities expressed their willingness to form the city data alliance and shared their challenges for adoption of the same. The partner cities are at different levels of development and transitions in their efforts towards becoming smarter and liveable cities. Each city requires different set of approaches with respect to managing the data and internal workflow. Bottom up and top down aspects of data and innovation in the aspects of integration is the key. It has been observed that the learnings from the city-to-city, involvement of multiple stakeholders at state and city level is crucial for achieving goal of data driven governance.

During the interactive session, CEOs of the Bhopal and Jabalpur conveyed that both the cities have prepared the draft city data policy. CEOs elaborated the ground level challenges for adopting the policy document at city level. The administrative complexities of cities and ownership of data at city level is different from one to another. In the cities, some of the functions are under city level authorities and others are under state level agencies. The multiple hierarchy system of reporting in the city is a hindrance to the data flow. The blockchain pilot project also faces similar challenges in data procurement from different agencies. The block chain consultant also mentioned the difficulty to obtain the data from consultants employed by the state departments. They also highlighted a lack of sense of ownership among state level departments to achieve the larger goal of data driven governance.

The CEOs of the project cities suggested for a city level workshop to be conducted for creating awareness among the wider stakeholders including state and city level departments. The cities promised their support for the consultative workshop to engage stakeholders with SDIC team for setting the framework for an inclusive data alliance and mapping the expectations of stakeholders. Finally, the cities committed to further sharing and learning from each other.

The challenges mapped during the interactive exercise:

- **Lack of Ownership**: The officials from state level agencies and city level authorities' lacks ownership about the initiatives towards data driven governance. Trust needs to be built among the state and city level departments for smooth exchange of data and information.

- **Approval for adoption of city data policy**: The biggest challenge of the cities is to be approved from higher authorities for adoption of the policy document at city level. The data champions and authorities should get convinced to share data and restructure the workflow & interactions among the departments.

- **Lack of awareness:** Absence of awareness about the idea of why technology needs to be deployed and for what, are evident among the stakeholders as one of the bottlenecks to achieve the broader vision of evidence based planning.

- **Ground level challenges**: The ground level challenges for the data driven governance are the friction on how to collect, handle and maintain data and; overlapping of roles regarding responsibility, control and data privacy.

The city data policy should be comprehensive and self-explanatory. As a way forward, the following action points are considered for the third year of the SDIC project:

- **Stakeholder Consultative Workshops**: Workshops are first step to create awareness among the stakeholders. The workshop will be a significant platform for stakeholders to exchange their ideas and will be a step towards finding entry points to an inclusive and effective city data policy.

- **Collaborations among departments and across cities:** There is a need for institutionalizing collaborations and streamlining systems of data sharing with clear tasks and responsibilities.

- **Co-creation of City Data Policy through forming city data alliance**: The city data alliance that include wider stakeholder groups of city and state level data champions and experts to share their views on data parameters will ensure the inclusivity of the policy document. Co-creation of city data policy will create sense of ownership among the stakeholders.

- **Adoption of City Data Policy**: The success of the data driven governance is validated based on adoption of comprehensive city data policy. The competent authorities at state and city level needs to come on common platform to understand the need and agrees to approve the policy document.

- **Sharing of Learnings and City level partnerships:** Cities needs to share their learnings and engage in partnership to achieve the goal of evidence based planning.