ADDRESSING QUALITY CONCERNS FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN INDIAN CITIES

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The urban mobility crisis in India

- Population size doubled
- Vehicles went up 15-times

Source: TERI, 2006
Snapshot of PT in India

• Dirty, overcrowded buses- “poor man’s mode”
• Mix of modes
• >50% trips; <5% share
• Ad hoc planning
• No priority (till recently)

• Mostly state controlled
• Handful city buses
• Subsidized
• High tax burden (2.6 times more than cars)
• No quality monitoring
• IPT fills the gap....
Snapshot of PT in India (cont’d..)

• Mostly illegal, unregulated;
• Not recognized yet lifeline of passengers
• Quality, service varies from city to city
Defining Quality in PT...

• No one commonly accepted definition
• Experts agree- “move beyond conventional process and profit related parameters of PT performance and address human/customer concerns like service reliability, information, access, safety, comfort, image, cleanliness, etc.”
• Affordability, availability, accessibility and acceptability could be the four attributes to evaluate public transport services
• ...as opposed to evaluating current internal vehicle and organizational parameters
Quality improvements for whom?

A survey indicated that on an average a slum household spent Rs. 23/day on travel, whereas a non-slum household spent Rs.32/day on travel, and the average range of the share of monthly income spent by slum dwellers on local conveyance was 26-44% (CEPT, 2008)
Monthly Household Income (Rs.)

- Retain captive user market
- Improve mobility for urban poor
- Make it attractive for all user categories
Present QM parameters in India

• Service kilometre operated/vehicle owned
• Passenger carried/vehicle owned
• Passenger carried /staff member
• Staff/vehicle owned
• Per cent of vehicle fleet operating in peak hours
• Revenue/vehicle owned
• Revenue/vehicle kilometre
• Kilometres operated between breakdowns
• Kilometres/fuel consumed
• Cost/vehicle km
• Fare collection leakage
• Employees’ absenteeism
• Number of accidents per $10^5$ kilometres
International good practices

**Singapore**: Public Transport Council (PTC) lays down ‘bus service quality standards’ that include criteria like availability, reliability, integration, safety and information. These standards are regularly monitored by regular compliance audits and published reports by the PTC.

**Victoria**: Public Transport Operations Office (P TOO) monitors the performance of the public transport operators, conducts customer satisfaction surveys and publishes results.

**Helsinki**: City Board of Public Transport releases Public Transport Planning Guidelines. These guidelines outline the availability, extensiveness of the network and quality standards for operation.
Challenges for India

• Inadequate thrust at the national policy level to improve quality and shares of PT usage
• Unclear implementation at city levels
• Lack of priority to PT
• Inadequate involvement of city authorities
• Multiplicity of organizations
• ‘Mafia’ of illegal modes
• Financing, privatization
• Inadequate capacity and know-how
• Obsession with fancy expensive systems
# Policy Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy/Plan</th>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>What’s missing?</th>
<th>Result</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Urban Transport Policy</td>
<td>Well-integrated, city-suited, affordable, public transport and NMT</td>
<td>Robust mechanism to ensure this, performance measurement, quality monitoring, customer satisfaction surveys, efforts to improve existing systems</td>
<td>On paper, not reality, infrastructure not services</td>
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<td>JNNURM</td>
<td>Build mass transit systems, NUTP compliant</td>
<td>No specific emphasis on SUT; guidelines; 65 cities</td>
<td>More road space for cars; NUTP objectives not met</td>
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<td>Eleventh Five Year Plan</td>
<td>Financial reforms, optimum modal mix</td>
<td>Action plan, institutions</td>
<td>Nobody takes responsibility of implementation</td>
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<td>India's NAPCC</td>
<td>Increase share of PT</td>
<td>Targets, measurables</td>
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<td>Service level benchmarks</td>
<td>Performance measurement</td>
<td>Priority; institutional; capacity</td>
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Conclusion

- There should be a clear and realistic definition of sustainable public transport quality in the context of Indian cities.
- There is a need to go beyond infrastructure provision and address the operational and human concerns related to the existing public transport systems (including informal systems).
- Performance of public transport services needs to be evaluated beyond the conventional parameters of internal efficiencies and these should be extended to include more user-based and user-relatable parameters like good image, cleanliness, availability, affordability, accessibility, comfort, safety, security and reliability.
Conclusion (cont’d)

- Unless the performance of services and expected outcomes are monitored against some benchmarks, the efforts to improve the system or make the necessary changes would be meaningless.
- Mega projects in cities should ensure affordability and inclusiveness.
- City governance should include urban transport as a key function and carry out monitoring.
Muchas gracias!

Thank you!
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<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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<td>Bangalore</td>
<td>(6.1 M)</td>
<td>Fast growing, IT hub, metropolis, educational institutions, PSUs</td>
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<td>Decent level of state run public transport services</td>
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<td>No scientific method to plan routes, monitor performance</td>
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<td>Differentiated services; yet congestion</td>
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<td>Surat</td>
<td>(2.8 M)</td>
<td>9th largest city, trade centre, industrial town</td>
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<td>Shillong</td>
<td>(0.27 M)</td>
<td>Hilly, tourist city</td>
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