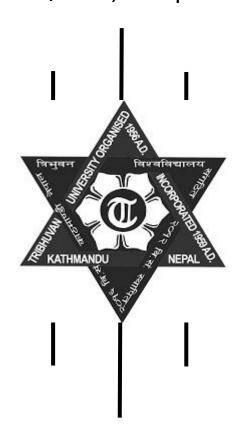# Tribhuvan University

Institute of Science and Technology

Bhaktapur Multiple Campus

Dudhpati -17, Bhaktapur

E-Governance

Report Writing on PRAJA

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Date of submission: 29/11/2020

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PRAJA

INTRODUCTION
PRAJA is a non-partisan organisation working towards enabling accountable governance since 1997. Praja's continuous engagement with the local elected representatives and administration through capacity building, research and advocacy has had a positive impact on city governance.Praja envisions improving the quality of life for all through simplifying people's lives, creating tools for better governance and making democracy work.

PROBLEMS
PRAJA believes that urban governance in India has failed to deliver good governance to the citizens of urban India. We also believe that this is due to the governance structure of urban India. The lack of true grassroot democracy where local elected representatives and local governments are not sufficiently empowered and not responsive to the citizens is the primary cause for lack of effective governance in cities.

PRAJA'S RESPONSE
PRAJA undertakes data driven research for identifying capacities in urban governance, map inefficiencies in their work processes and identify best practices. It then provides this information to urban governance stakeholders including elected representatives, administration, citizens, media and academia; and works with leadership amongst its stakeholders to identify and address inefficiencies in building their capacities to improve work processes in urban governance.

VISION:
PRAJA believes that the governance structures in urban India lack true grassroots democracy. Local elected representatives and local governments are not sufficiently empowered and not responsive to the citizens which is the cause for lack of effective governance.

MISSION:
Praja works with key urban governance stakeholders including elected representatives, administration, media and citizens to address inefficiencies and build capacities through data driven research and advocacy to improve urban governance.

- o   To improve quality of life for ALL
- o   Simplifying people's lives
- o   Creating tools for better governance
- o   Making Democracy Work

EVOLUTION OF PRAJA:

Over the last two decades Praja has been working towards enabling accountable governance. We conduct data driven research on civic issues, and inform key stakeholders such as elected representatives (ER), citizens, media, and government administration and work with ERs to equip them to address inefficiencies in their work processes, bridging information gaps, and mobilising them in taking corrective measures advocating for change.

In the past we have partnered with the Mumbai Corporation of Mumbai to come up with its Citizen Charter, to revamp their Citizens Complaint Grievances Mechanism and run it in the initial years. We come up with annual white papers on the performances of civic, health, crime, education and housing issues in Mumbai and Delhi; since 2011 we have been coming up with an annual report card to track performances of MLAs and Councillors in Mumbai and in Delhi since 2016. We do not just stop at creating standardised matrixes or governance indicators but also support in building the capacities of elected representatives, executives and citizens by coming up with various handbooks on governance and conducting numerous workshops/trainings on governance issues. Since 2017, we initiated targeted intervention with college students through a yearlong fellowship, to build a cadre of skilled and capable future political leaders and citizens who are active beyond the ballot box.

The hallmark of PRAJA's work has been extensive use and analysis of data to highlight trends and gaps across various issues concerning citizen's lives in order to guide policy recommendations. In the last ten years in Mumbai and five years in Delhi, we have analysed around 4.5 Cr unique data points on urban governance, collected through Right to Information and citizen survey. The in-depth insights have been instrumental in creating evidence to inform our key stakeholders, equip them with ground realities and advocate for reforms.

PRAJA has now embarked on an ambitious journey to transform urban governance across the country, to advocate policy changes that will change the way Indian cities are governed. It is a multilayer project in nature, with research being the bedrock to form a network and influence change. We have been conducting an Urban Governance Reforms Study to map implementation of 74th Amendment and status of urban reforms in all the states, identify levers and barriers and to identify a set of recommendations. The first of its kind study, aims at developing an 'urban governance index' to assess the present status of reform implementation, with the larger goal of forging a network of key influencers, thought leaders and local government bodies to democratise city governments and improve delivery of services. The network will be leveraged as a platform for: knowledge sharing; equipping stakeholders; mobilising stakeholders; and advocating for policy changes. In a nutshell the project will enable urban governance to transform 'smart city' into a 'smartly governed city' by influencing policy change at a structural and system level.

ANALYSIS

In my perspective PRAJA is one of the most reliable organization in transforming traditional urban cities into smartly governed city. Organization like such is very much crucial for the overall development of country. It is leading every aspect of sustainable development in an efficient manner. It makes us bound in a network for change and growth. When we come together as one, we will be heard. No matter how big or small our issues are, they are going to solve. As a result, there will be peaceful, prosperous and progressive life ahead.

CONCLUSION

To hit the bull's eye, PRAJA is a multilayer project in nature with research being the bedrock to form a network and influence change. The Network as a platform for-knowledge sharing, equipping stakeholders, mobilising stakeholders, and advocating for policy changes at structural and system level. In a nutshell, it enable urban governance to transform 'smart city' into a 'smartly governed city'.