

Integration of Top down & Bottom up approach in Urban and Regional Planning: West Bengal Experience of Draft Development Plans (DDP) and beyond

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Abstract:

Participation of multi stake holders in the urban and regional planning is an accepted phenomenon in current day practice, though the idea is not new. Recently two programmes have ensured the stake holder's role in the planning stage greatly. JnNURM ensured the multi stake holders role in preparation of City Development Plan (CDP) for identified cities. Whereas, DFID funded KUSP (Kolkata Urban Services for the Poor) programme ensured stake holders role from grass root level in more intensive way in preparation of Draft Development Plan (DDP) for 40 KMA (Kolkata Metropolitan Area) municipalities and remaining all non-KMA municipalities. The Present paper discusses the present global trend of incorporation of participation of various stake holders in planning decisions and then analyses the relevant situation in India in the context of DDP. Fourteen completed DDP has been analysed for that focussing on the land use plan. It then enumerates comparatively the outcome of a participatory plan (DDP) and standard conventional planning prepared on master plan or top down approach. Finally, it enlightens the appropriate mix of top down and bottom up approach in the planning methodology and focuses the future research need in this area. Findings of the study reveals that bottom up approach can address people need in a true way and best suited for the study phase. Where as, top down approach for proactive strategy is desirable in the plan-formulation stage. Engagement of a group of multi skilled professional is essential to ensure the integration of both approaches in planning.

Key words: Participatory Planning, Top down, Bottom up, Land use and Development Control, DDP

1.0 Introduction

The classic approach to planning is Top down. This approach is logical mainly in new endeavours since it provides early and high level planning, but a bottom –up approach makes more sense where we already have a base which needs to be developed and made stronger with the help of some participation from the concerned stakeholders. Participation of multi stake holders in the urban and regional planning is an accepted phenomenon in current day practice, though the idea is not new. The bottom up approach in planning may be traced back in 60's and started getting popularity among planners through decades. In India constitutional mandate (73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1992) has laid the foundation of stake holder's participation in the district planning and urban / rural planning in great way. Recently two programmes have ensured the stake holder's role in the planning stage greatly. JnNURM ensured the multi stake holders role in preparation of City Development Plan (CDP) for identified cities. Whereas, DFID funded KUSP (Kolkata Urban Services for the Poor) programme ensured stake holders role from grass root level in more intensive way in preparation of Draft Development Plan (DDP) for 40 KMA (Kolkata Metropolitan Area) municipalities and remaining all non-KMA municipalities. The Present paper discusses the present global trend of incorporation of participation of various stake holders in planning decisions and then analyses the relevant situation in India in the context of DDP. Thirteen completed DDP has been analysed for that. It then enumerates comparatively the outcome of a participatory plan and standard conventional planning prepared on master plan or top down approach. Finally, it enlightens the appropriate mix of top down and bottom up approach in the planning methodology and focuses the future research need in this area.

2.0 Background and Development of Participatory Planning

Idea of community participation is not new. It can be traced back in 50's and 60's. Many government programmes designed in the concept of self help in 60's advocating the poor oppressed should be part of planning development. Current community participation theory suggests that politicians and beaurocrats have exploited ordinary people and they are excluded from community development process (Sanoff). In America citizen's movement for the right in planning & development occurred in the inner city in the 1960's. In the mid 60's Paul Davidhoff, a planner & lawyer, challenged planners to promote participatory democracy & positive social challenge. His article "Advocacy & Pluralism in planning" in 1965 presented a new model in planning. Influenced by Davidhoffs advocacy model of planning, many design and planning professionals rejected traditional practice. Community Design Centre (CDC) became the staging ground for professionals for such work. CDC advocated for the grass root participation in planning. A new pragmatic approach to participation has emerged as citizen's power. Community participation has been described by different persons differently in different timescale. Deshler and Sock (1985) identified two levels of participation. *Pseudo participation* was characterized as domestication and assistantiation which is nothing but he informing, manipulation, placation and consultation respectively. Where as *genuine participation* was categorized as cooperatives (partnership & delegation of power and citizens control, which means empowerment. Burns (1979) classifies participation in four categories: 1) awareness, 2) perception, 3) decision making & 4) implementation.

Recent planning thinking has laid the foundations for a general sense of best practice, which is for an open and participatory process. But practitioners are aware of the large barriers in making this really work (Glasson & Marshall). Referring from a tracer study of participatory district planning Cooksay and Kikule suggests that participatory planning at the community level has the potential of providing the basis of district planning. Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) is expensive & time consuming but provides a higher chance of sustainability due to the ownership of the programme. (Cooksey & Kikule)

In India, stakeholder's participation has been improved from awareness to participation & decision making. In some pocket the implementation or the actual devlopment work has been a participatory process. Apart from the West Bengal experience discussed here, various city in Kerala and other parts has seen the spatial and economic planning could be done in a better way by participatory process. Systematic evaluation of those process and outcome remaining limited, the actual aim of bottom up and top down approach could not be determined.

3.0 Participatory Planning Experience in West Bengal

Participatory planning has been a great success in West Bengal since 70s. Here the focus is on the outcome experience of DDP in municipalities. For the convenience the study will focus on the land use and development plan only.

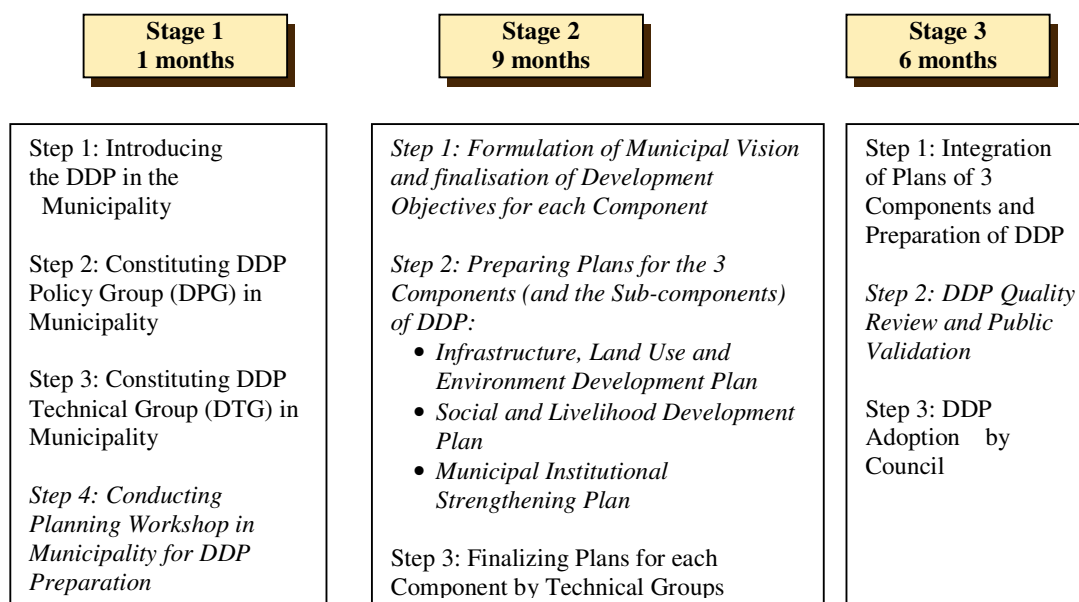
3.1 The DDP preparation process

The West Bengal Municipal Act 1993 requires municipalities and municipal corporations in the state to prepare Draft Development Plans (DDP) covering a period of five years. A common guidelines have been made under KUSP programme for the preparation of DDP. The DDP

Guidelines recommends 2 important groups to be constituted at municipality level for the DDP preparation process. These are:

- *DDP Policy Group (DPG)*: The DPG will provide policy guidance and strategic support for the preparation and implementation of the DDP and will also coordinate with higher levels of government. It consists mainly elected decision makers and nominated members in some cases.
- *DDP Technical Groups (DTGs)*: The DTGs will be responsible for preparing the project proposals and plans for each of the sub-components of the DDP, with the overall guidance from the DPG. Three DTGs should be formed for the 3 main components of the DDP. DTG consist Urban Planners, Engineers, community development experts, executive officer, etc as per the DTG category.

Fig 1: The major stages of DDP process



Note: Steps written in *italics* involves intensive Stakeholders participation

The important features in the process include:

- Participation by and consultation with the widest range of stakeholders, building on existing grass root structures such as Ward Committees, NHG, NHC and CDS
- Explicit attempts to assess socio-economic needs, especially of the poorest groups living in formal and informal settlements
- Transparent system for prioritization of issues
- Matching plans to projected resources. Financial projections must be realistic and affordable, from predictable funding streams.

3.2 Coverage of DDP

Entire DDP process has been divided into three components as shown below

Table 1: DDP components and Coverage

Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Slum Infrastructure Intra-municipal Infrastructure: Trans-municipal Infrastructure	Livelihood and Poverty Local Economic Development:	Organization Development: Process and Systems Improvement:

Environment Development Land Use Development :	Healthcare: Education:	Citizen Interface: Financial:
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3.3 Case Study of Land Use Plan of selected 14 municipal Towns

For the present study the plan outcome of land use development under component 1 as above has been considered. DTG was asked to frame the land use development plan in three sub themes as below:

- Theme 1: Making land available
- Theme 2: Development of Municipal Owned land
- Theme 3: Regulatory controls on development of area under jurisdiction of ULB

After discussing thoroughly with public regarding the above DTG finalized the projects and prioritised as per the guided framework based on peoples need. ULB were asked to analyses existing land use condition as per UDPFI guidelines and frame policy decisions to address land use issues. Now to analyse the outcome of the plan some parameters were identified as annex 1. Based on the complying status of each DDP for each parameter some interesting observations are made.

Around 10% of 126 ULB in West Bengal has been chosen for this. Out of those, ten are from KMA and remaining four are from non KMA regions. Locations of case studies are shown below:

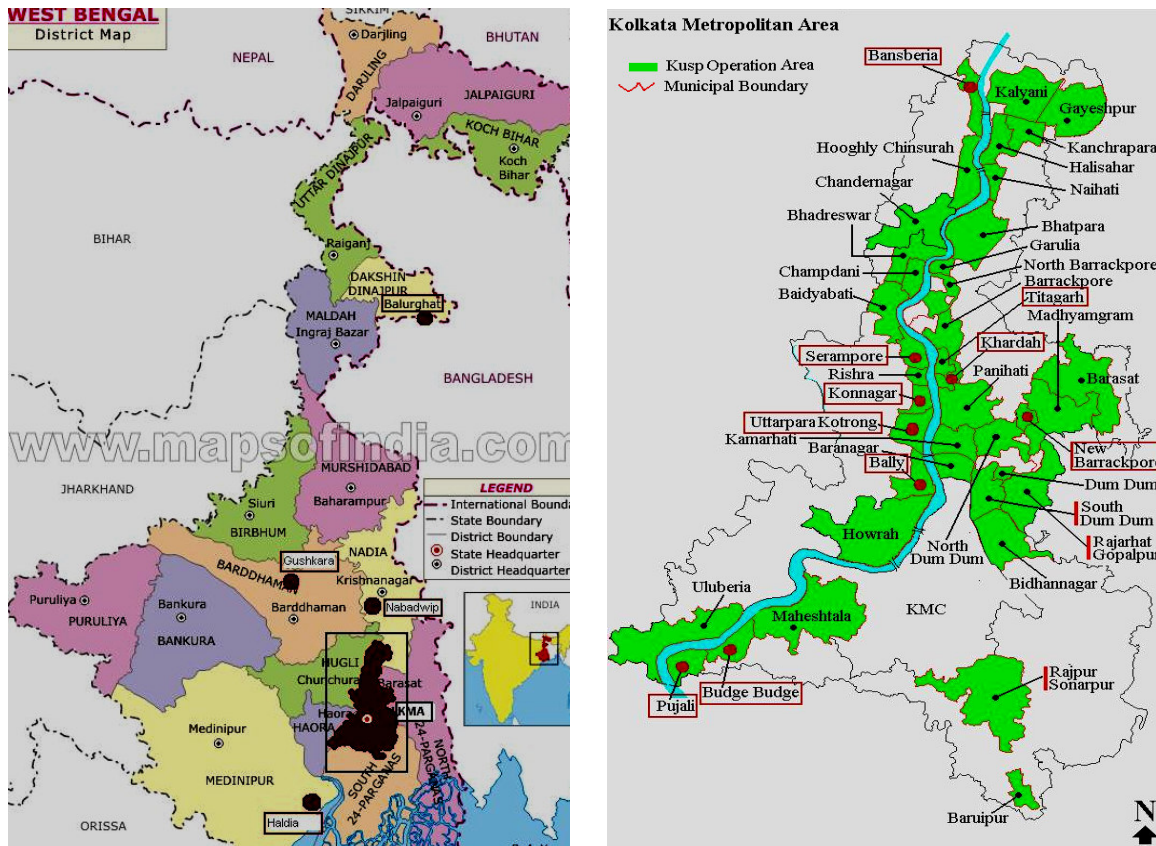


Table 2: Parameters of the Outcome Study

Parameters for the study	Stature in the DDP guidelines
Analysis of existing situation	Mandatory
Analysis of future growth trend	Not mandatory
Identification of available land	Mandatory (theme 1 & 2)
Identified Land use and land issues	Mandatory
Future Land Use plan	Not mandatory
Land assembly policies	Not mandatory
LUDCP enforcement & revision	Mandatory (theme 3)
Prioritization of projects by public consultation	Mandatory

4.0 Findings

From the case study it has been found that all DDP did involve people and other stake holders in the problem identification, prioritization and validation of plan. Whereas, future growth trend of land use development have been analyzed by about half. Fifty percent of all ULB did study the existing situation on the basis of UDPMI guidelines. It appears that the issues related to immediate need of the people has been addressed better. For example existing issues like encroachment, lack of open green space etc has been prioritized and land issues are identified almost by all cases.

Further, the prioritization of projects identified by public has been done in an open and participatory method by all ULB. Whereas the expected plan outcome like innovative land assembly system, development control plan, future growth & land use plan have not emerged. Only 20-40% ULB (2 to 5) have come up with identified public land, land assembly procedure, development controls/strategy etc. No single ULB has come up with a future spatial land use plan. Land acquisition and purchase has been the only mode of land assembly for only three ULB.

No ULB took any area development projects for future residential growth. Fragmented small scale projects like beautification of parks, creation of market complex, ward office or health centre remained as majority. Five ULB mentioned or undertook projects on LUDCP enforcement of local revisions. Interestingly, it has been found that the ULBs who got additional advisory or support for university or institute could address more parameters under the study.

5.0 Discussions and Way Forward

It has been found that, in general, that outcome like 'existing issues', 'priority projects' have been better from the bottom up approach. However more proactive planning objective have not fulfilled from bottom up approach. Those are best suited from top down or conventional approach. Below is the comparative study of outcome of top down and bottom up approach.

Table 3: Comparative outcome of participatory approach and Master Plan approach in planning

Sl. No.	Out come parameters	Participatory Approach	Master Plan Approach

1	Study of Existing Situation	√	√
2	Analysis of growth trend	partially	√
3	Availability of land	×	√
4	Important issues identified	partially	√
5	Recommendation of land assembly policies	Land Banking	×
		Land Acquisition	partially
		Town Planning Schemes	√
		Land Pooling	√
		Accomodation Reservation	×
6	Allocation of fund for development of land	√	×
7	Capacity of urban bodies to take up new thrust areas	partially	×
8	future land use plan & proposal	partially	√
9	Development Control	X	√
	Prioritisation of projects as per peoples need	√	partially

The question lies how much mix of integration will be appropriate in formulation of the planning methodology. The present case study definitely shows that over reliance upon peoples participation did not help achieving proactive planning issues as described above. Prescribing any such appropriate mixes of top down and bottom up approaches from the current case study would not be feasible for all cases. But it is evident from the analysis that in the finalization of plan stage (stage 2) well thought strategy based on the growth trend and existing situation need to be detailed by planning expert. A suitable mixes of expert advisory in this stage is desirable. In the planning methodology future land use plan and development controls could be made mandatory also in the guidelines.

As first generation DDP the basic outcome appears satisfactory. Roy et al described that due to lack of practice in thinking holistically, the concept of DDP did not get enough attention from the ULBs. It started as a special 'Job' to be undertaken to get fund under KUSP. However in course of the DDP process, as it is seen absolutely participatory in approach and it involved a full cross section of society it started getting attention of decision makers and technicians in ULBs. In fact in the process ULBs started competing with each other to complete the task and to get the incentives out of timely completion, authority had set.

The capacity of municipality to envisage the long term planning policy is another area of discussion for the present case. Government has appointed urban planners for each municipality. However, in absence of qualified urban planner (M. Tech/M. Planning) for all 125 ULB (except KMC) government appointed qualified architects engineers, economist, sociologists, geographer in the role of urban planners and after a handholding cum training on the DDP process they are deputed to ULB for the preparation of DDP. Subsequently government has taken initiative to upgrade them to qualified urban planner by sponsoring to AITP examination conducted by ITPI through intensive classes being held at Administrative Training Institute (ATI), Kolkata. So capacity of technical team remained a limitation at least for this phase.

6.0 Conclusion

Considering the experience from the above it may be concluded that bottom up approach can address people need in a true way and top down approach for proactive planning strategy is desirable also in the plan formulation stage. Through participatory land-use planning, local people come to feel ownership of the plans. The advantage in this is that there is more probability that they will implement the plans willingly, and that the activities and impacts will be sustainable. But the drawback in this approach, as already pointed out, will be that if the people are unable to manage their own plans properly in the long run due to lack of expertise, then the

entire decision making process goes vain. Therefore, to balance both, multi speciality group must be engaged to integrate the peoples need, other stake holders input and futuristic and proactive planning development need, which could not be envisaged by common people's participation. Engagement of a group of multi skilled professional is essential to ensure the integration of both approaches in planning.

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Abbreviations used

AITP: Associate of Institute of Town Planners
ATI: Administrative Training Institute
CDP: City Development plan
DDP: Draft Development plan
DPG: DDP Planning Group
DTG: DDP Technical Group
ITPI: Institute of town Planners India
JnNURM: Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
LUDCP: land Use and Development Control Plan
KMA: Kolkata metropolitan Area
KMC: Kolkata Municipal Corporation
ULB: Urban Local Bodies

Annexe 1:

Name of the municipality	New Barrackpur	Bally	Kharchan	Titagarh	Bansberia	Budge Budge	Pujali	Konnogar	Srerampore	Uttarpara	Balughat	Gushkara	Nabdwip	Haldia
Population	83183	261575	116252	124198	104453	77566	33863	72211	197955	150204	135516	31863	115036	170695
Location	KMA										Non-KMA			
Area	16.89	11.81	6.87	3.24	9.06	9.06	8.28	4.69	14.5	20.81	8.56	21.5	11.66	109.65
Parameters of the study														
Analysis of existing situation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Analysis of future growth trend	--	Yes	--	Yes	--	Yes	Partly	--	Partly	Partly	--	--	--	--
Identification of available land	--	Partly	--	Partly	--	Yes	Partly	Partly	Yes	Yes	--	--	--	Partly
Identified land issues	Partly	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partly	Yes	Yes	Partly	Yes	Yes	Partly	Partly	Yes	Yes
Future Land Use plan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Mentioned	--	--
Land assembly techniques	Land banking by purchase	--	Yes	--	--	Yes	--	--	Partly	Yes	--	--	Yes	Partly
	Land acquisition	--	Yes	--	--	--	--	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes	--
	TP scheme	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Land Pooling	--	--	--	--	--	--	Mentioned	--	--	--	--	--	--
Accommodation reservation	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
LUDCP enforcement & revision	--	Yes	Partly	--	--	Yes	--	--	Partly	Partly	Partly	Partly	--	Yes
Prioritization of projects by public consultation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes