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**Public-Private partnerships in urban governance:
The case of Bangalore and Mumbai
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Since the liberalization of the Indian economy, there has been increasing emphasis on the mode of public-private partnerships. The debate has been going on that partnerships should be encouraged among public agencies that administer the infrastructure area with private entities in such a way that a fair sharing of risks and profits associated with projects may be the answer to the severe paucity of infrastructure in the country.

However, the term 'public -private partnerships' has been used primarily to signify the participation of private enterprises in construction, operation and use of assets to yield returns to the private entrepreneur. Such approaches have been used to successfully build, operate and transfer assets such as bridges, roads, water supply and sewerage systems. An interesting version of public-private partnership mode has been in operation in some cities, especially in matters concerning urban governance. The study looks at the effectiveness of such public-private partnerships in urban governance through an in-depth case study on two such initiatives in urban India; namely the Bombay First initiative in Mumbai and the Bangalore Agenda Taskforce in Bangalore.

The Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF) was set up in 1998 with a mandate that includes identifying priorities, upgrading infrastructure, capacity building of institutions, revenue enhancements, providing strategic inputs and becoming a forum for inter-stakeholder cooperation and dialogue. BATF has been a very visible high profile group constituted by eminent people with great track record of achievements in their life. The group has enjoyed extensive political support and has been billed as the real PPP, which has brought together the best of private and public sectors.

BATF which has been in existence for almost four years now has been quite visible and has a few success stories to its credit. Some of these include a public private partnership for bus stops, implementation of the self assessment of property tax, the establishment of 'Nirmala Bangalore' and the construction of public toilets, the Swachcha Bangalore collection of garbage. But the biggest achievements of BATF could be the role it has played in streamlining the Bangalore Development Authority to become one of the most effective organisations in the city and the country.

Meanwhile , Bombay First was set up in Mumbai in 1995 with the idea of retaining Bombay's position as a premier financial center. It also had a significant proportion of large corporate heavy weights who would work for the growth and development of Mumbai. But nine years after it was set up the initiative is still struggling to be on its feet even though the initiative had started with a corpus of 25 crores. It was initially decided that Bombay First would function as a pressure group

and would lobby for services to the city. But the initiative really never caught up mainly because of the lack of political support and due to the strong base of other pressure groups and NGOs who did not wish to relinquish control. A number of reports on various ways in which services in the city can be improved were generated but little could be done to take it forward due to various factors.

The study concludes with suggestions on how cities should go about to work on a plan for urban governance. Perhaps the biggest realization of this study is that these initiatives would have to be reinvented in every city. The study lists some points which are crucial for the successful implementation of such systems like strong political support, customisation of approach to agencies, capacity building, financial strength, leadership and public support for the success of such initiatives.