



# **SANITATION IMPROVEMENT IN INDORE**

**A CASE STUDY IN EFFECTIVE  
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**

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**Case Study**

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## Abstract

After the Swacch Bharat Mission (SBM) was launched by the Government of India (GoI) in 2014, the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) achieved remarkable success in promoting sanitation in Indore. This case study analyses the IMC's success, focussing on the underlying public management processes and the conditions in which these positive management practices emerged.

The IMC succeeded in door-to-door garbage collection including separation of garbage by citizens for processing, removal of stray animals from public spaces, keeping roads and other public sites clean, waste processing and other activities. Its success in improving the drainage system was more limited. The IMC's success was enabled by effective public management practices, i.e., protecting sanitation from corruption and clientelism to a significant degree, effective leadership that motivated the team, rigorous but supportive supervision, attention to workers' welfare, collaboration with NGOs and private firms, meticulous planning, reformulation of strategies as per feedback, constant improvement of processes, eliciting citizens' co-operation and responding to their needs, while enforcing laws and rules strictly and acquiring appropriate infrastructure. These productive practices spread to many other IMC activities as well, such as enhancing revenues, and the IMC became a more effective organisation.

The above-mentioned public management practices are not the norm in India and emerged in a very specific context in the IMC. To sustain the IMC's gains and for positive practices to spread, key aspects of this context must be recreated, and the lacunae that remain addressed. The IMC got strong political support, which ensured that capable municipal commissioners were appointed and supported when they took on vested interests, which is not the norm. Sanitation was protected from corruption, though corruption was not weeded out from other activities of the IMC and is a powerful dynamic in the wider system. As a municipal corporation, the IMC had a degree of autonomy to take decisions, which allowed it to experiment with various strategies and learn. However, most government initiatives are implemented through departmental agencies without such autonomy and the IMC itself has little autonomy regarding personnel and depends substantially on state government grants. The IMC enhanced its organisational capacity by following productive public management practices, but it lacks expertise in several key areas of urban governance. This reduces its capacity to tackle more complex issues, as was visible in its limited success in improving the drainage system.

The case study illustrates the need for a broad-based shift in the context in which public organisations function.

## Executive Summary

Inadequate sanitation is a key problem in India, leading to numerous problems including poor health, and high infant and child mortality. In the wake of the Swacch Bharat Mission (SBM) launched by the Government of India (GoI) in 2014, the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) has achieved remarkable success in promoting sanitation in Indore, ranking at number one continuously in the GoI's sanitation survey since 2017.

This case study analyses how and why Indore achieved its success, focusing on the public management processes that underlay this success. The case study also delineates the conditions in which these positive management practices emerged, as these have implications for wider shifts that are needed in public management in India. The case study is based on interviews with IMC officials, municipal councillors, representatives of non-government organisations (NGOs) and sanitation workers, focus group discussions (FGDs) with citizens, spot visits and analysis of the documents such as municipal corporation law, government orders and available data.

Indore is the most important city in Madhya Pradesh (MP) economically and, consequently, has high political importance. It is cosmopolitan, has a vibrant cultural life and numerous civic associations. The organisation responsible for providing sanitation in Indore is the IMC, i.e., the local elected government with elected ward councillors and the mayor at the helm. The IMC has its own tax and non-tax income, though state government grants form an important component of IMC's revenues. The IMC municipal commissioner is the administrative head. The Health Department of the IMC, which is responsible for sanitation, employed 7096 workers in 2020-2021. The salaries of these sanitation workers differ, depending on whether they are regular or contractual workers. because of shifts in government policy. At present, workers are employed through third parties only.

Before the IMC embarked on its sanitation initiative in 2015, the sanitation situation in Indore was extremely poor with garbage littered across public places and stray animals roaming the streets, leading to frequent accidents. The IMC had placed garbage bins at various spots for garbage to be deposited. In some areas, *jagirdars*, or sanitation workers, had informal rights to collect garbage from households and throw it in the bins. A company had been contracted to lift garbage from the bins and take it to garbage disposal sites. But the company did not lift garbage regularly, and garbage spilled from the bins on to the streets. The IMC employed sanitation workers to clean public areas. But there was a corrupt system whereby sanitation workers did not actually clean, but paid half their salaries to IMC councillors, officials and union leaders to protect them from disciplinary action. There were attempts to improve sanitation in the city in various projects, but success was limited. The reasons identified by interviewees included corruption and lack of information, education and communication (IEC) activities. Moreover, at this time, the IMC was an ineffective organisation with a poor work culture.

The groundwork for Indore's success was laid by several factors. The launch of SBM in 2014 was an important spur. The programme provided broad guidelines and some funds. As it was a special programme of the prime minister, it became a priority for many local political leaders. For various reasons, it became important for the chief minister (CM) to show good results in sanitation, and given its importance, Indore became a focus. Moreover, sanitation efforts got significant recognition, as the Government of India conducted an annual sanitation survey and ranked cities on their level of sanitation. In 2015, the chief minister posted a capable municipal commissioner (MC1) to the IMC and told him improve the city's sanitation. MC1 was well prepared for the job, having worked in Indore earlier and as municipal commissioner of another city in MP. In the same year, a new mayor was elected, who was a political heavyweight and keen to make Indore a clean city. Further, in 2014, the state government had rationalised the manpower structure of municipalities in the state. Although most of the newly sanctioned posts were vacant, the IMC's staff position was strengthened, and a larger number of supervisors had become available in the corporation.

MC1 began by commissioning a report to identify key problems in sanitation, and as per Gol guidelines, the IMC began to construct individual, public and community toilets. It took help from NGOs to plan meticulously and generate a high level of public awareness. Subsequently, the contract of the company that collected garbage from the bins was terminated. This was a bold move, but it was preceded by careful planning. The contract was cancelled only after the IMC had developed its own capacity to undertake the task.

In his previous stint as municipal commissioner, MC1 had attempted door-to-door garbage collection with limited success. In Indore, with the help of an NGO that had done door-to-door garbage collection successfully, the IMC took up a pilot programme using cycle rikshaws. As the pilot succeeded, IMC scaled it up. It laid special emphasis on community education, as door-to-door garbage collection could succeed only with citizens' participation. Lacking in-house capacity for the intense IEC initiatives required, the IMC contracted six NGOs for public education. At the same time, IMC officials levied fines on those who continued to throw garbage in public places, rather than provide it to the garbage collectors.

Within the IMC, MC1 built a productive work culture, exhorting officials to work hard and provide creative solutions. MC1 also busted the racket between IMC councillors, officials and union leaders that protected sanitation workers who did not work. He made an alliance with the union leaders of sanitation workers, helping them in various ways in return for their support in promoting a work-oriented culture. He also explained the need to keep sanitation outside the corruption system to IMC councillors. As MC1 had the support of the CM and the mayor, they had little option but to go along. Some sanitation workers who were not willing to work were fired. At the same time, the IMC took several welfare measures for the workers. To motivate sanitation supervisors, MC1 himself took rounds of the city early in the morning. With these measures, sanitation workers began to work.

As door-to-door garbage collection proceeded, there was resistance from the *jagir* workers, which was overcome by providing displaced workers employment in the IMC, and by taking action against those who continued to obstruct garbage collection by it. Ultimately, IMC succeeded and door-to-door garbage collection became the norm. Over time, the process was refined and improved. After careful planning, the cycle rickshaws were replaced by motorised vehicles. Secondary waste collection was systematised too, by setting up garbage transfer stations. The rag pickers who lost employment because of this were offered employment as well.

Another difficult task that MC1 accomplished was the removal of stray animals from the city. On the one hand, animal owners were offered places outside the city to breed animals, and on the other, stringent action, sometimes involving the police, was taken against those who refused to comply. Animal owners complained, but MC1 could stick to tough measures because of political support. Animal owners then filed a public interest litigation in court, alleging that the animals that had been removed were not being looked after properly. But the IMC dealt with this cleverly, supplying the animals to tribal families in nearby villages free of cost.

Additionally, as a GoI direction to separate garbage into dry and wet waste was received, the IMC began a concerted effort to implement it. Partitions were created in garbage collection vehicles to collect separated garbage and, as earlier, the IMC undertook intensive public education to persuade citizens. NGO personnel travelled with garbage collection vehicles, teaching citizens to separate garbage. At the same time, IMC officials refused to take garbage that was not separated, and levied fines on those who did not comply. With these efforts, citizens began to provide separated garbage. The IMC also began to levy user charges. In this, it encountered little resistance because of the satisfactory service that it provided.

With these changes, by 2017, Indore ranked number one on the GoI's sanitation survey. This success had several positive spill-offs. Political support became even stronger. After MC1 moved to another post in 2018, very capable officers were posted as municipal commissioners and sanitation remained protected from corruption. The new municipal commissioners now felt the pressure to keep up the performance. Further, the working culture within the IMC had changed. Doing new things and succeeding became the norm. Officials worked hard and intelligently, and supported workers. The new infrastructure and equipment that the IMC acquired increased its capacity to keep the city clean. NGO partners were treated with respect and valued. The importance of citizens was realized and the IMC's relationship with citizens became very positive. Citizens too began to appreciate and support the IMC as well as sanitation workers, who were often felicitated when IMC continued to rank number one.

The two municipal commissioners that followed MC1 built on the gains made, strengthening the previous initiatives and undertaking new ones. A control room was established to monitor

garbage collection vehicles; night sweeping was introduced, and so on. An important achievement was that the mountain of garbage that had built up over the years at the trenching ground was removed, and trees were planted instead. Further, the IMC partnered with two private companies to set up dry and wet waste processing plants. Where secondary and tertiary drains were lacking, these were built with public participation. A public park was built out of waste materials and back lanes were beautified. The IMC continued to partner with NGOs, support sanitation workers and evolved new ways to engage citizens.

Between 2015 and 2021, the IMC made significant gains in sanitation. Its most unqualified success was the door-to-door garbage collection system. Further, this was segregated and processed. Remarkable cleanliness of public places was achieved. However, the success with the sewerage system was more limited. Some dirty water continued to be discharged in rivers and ponds, and water bodies were not totally clean. Moreover, as the underground sewerage system was strengthened, rainwater that had earlier flown through open drains into rivers began to collect on the roads.

The IMC's success was enabled by effective public management practices. Sanitation was protected from corruption and clientelism to a significant degree. The leaders in the IMC led by example, working hard, which motivated the team. Sanitation workers' supervision became rigorous but was supportive rather than punitive. Workers' health needs were attended to, they were provided better equipment, and their hard work was recognised through certificates and small awards. In addition, IMC officials of all levels learned to plan meticulously, develop strategies in a consultative manner and change them appropriately based on feedback. Systems of working and supervision were developed and refined.

At the same time, the IMC improved its revenues and created appropriate infrastructure and equipment for sanitation although frontline workers still had inadequate equipment. Though it had little autonomy in terms of the type of the manpower it could employ, it increased the number of sanitation workers, and through NGOs, deployed a significant number of additional workers on the ground. The IMC developed long-term partnerships with NGOs, which expanded its outreach to citizens and helped it evolve effective strategies. It also partnered with private organisations where it was productive, such as for processing waste. But in these alliances, the IMC remained in charge and did not outsource essential sanitation work, where poor performance by a private party could cause inconvenience to citizens, and avoided dependence on any one agency.

The IMC began to place great importance on its relationship with citizens and encouraged their participation in several ways, addressed their complaints promptly and gained their support. It paid special attention to people who lost out, providing them with alternatives to neutralise opposition. At the same time, it was firm in enforcing laws, not allowing a small number of law breakers to highjack its agenda. The IMC's positive relationship with citizens made the task of keeping the city clean simpler as citizens did not litter and helped the IMC when they could.

These positive public management practices are important for all government activities. Further, they enhanced the IMC's organisational capacity. The positive public management practices that developed during the sanitation initiative have seeped into its other activities as well, leading to initiatives to protect the environment, increase revenue, harvest rainwater, etc. The IMC's services improved, with citizens reporting functional streetlights, development of parks, provision of benches and construction of community halls.

The above-mentioned public management practices are not the norm in India and emerged in a very specific context in the IMC. There are significant barriers in the broader political, social and administrative context that prevent them from being adopted more widely. These barriers also pose a danger to the sustainability of the initiative in Indore.

The IMC was successful in its sanitation initiative because of very strong political support, especially from the state level, which ensured that capable municipal commissioners were appointed and supported when they took on vested interests. Such political support cannot be taken for granted everywhere and may shift over time. While sanitation was protected from corruption to a significant degree in IMC, corruption is widespread in the larger system and is a powerful force and continues within IMC in activities other than sanitation. In the IMCs sanitation initiative, corruption was managed rather than rooted out. Consequently, there is the continuing danger of it reappearing in sanitation as well, especially if a corrupt municipal commissioner were to be appointed or an unethical mayor elected. Moreover, if the political focus on sanitation were to weaken, municipal commissioners who fight corruption could get transferred.

Additionally, as a municipal corporation, the IMC had a degree of autonomy to take decisions as well as a legitimate decision-making process through elected representatives, which allowed it to experiment with various strategies and learn. However, a large number of government initiatives are implemented through departmental agencies, which do not have such autonomy or legitimacy. The IMC's experience shows the need for a greater role to autonomous local governments in public programmes. At the same time, like all municipalities, the IMC lacks financial autonomy, as well as the power to recruit manpower according to need. This serves as a constraint in its capacity to deliver.

The IMC gained significantly in terms of organisational strength by following productive public management practices. But such public management practices are not the norm across government in India. The IMC itself could get personnel who do not follow these practices as municipal commissioners. As officials change over time, new officials may or may not understand and follow positive public management practices. Moreover, like other municipalities, a critical organisational weakness in the IMC is inadequate expertise in several key areas of municipal work, such as water science, landscape architecture, environment protection, etc. It also has many posts that are still be filled. This limits its capacity to deliver citizen services. The salary structure of sanitation workers is inequitable, and the wages of contractual workers are very low, reinforcing their traditional low caste status and inducing dissatisfaction.

The success of the sanitation initiative in Indore reveals, on the one hand, the importance of sound public management practices, and on the other, contextual factors that facilitate these practices. Organisations can follow productive management practices if there is political support in the face of opposition from powerful social actors, organisational autonomy to develop context-specific strategies and revise them, adequate organisational capacity in terms of human resources and finance, and low levels of corruption. Consequently, these larger systemic changes are needed for a secular improvement in public management.

## **List of Abbreviations**

AMRUT	Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
ASICS	Annual Survey of City Systems
BJP	Bhartiya Janta Party
C&D	Construction and Demolition
CM	Chief Minister
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFID	Department for International Development
ESI	Employees' State Insurance
ESIC	Employee State Insurance Corporation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIR	First Information Report
GoI	Government of India
GPS	Global Positioning System
GTS	Garbage Transfer Stations
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
IDA	Indore Development Authority
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IMC	Indore Municipal Corporation
JNNURM	Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission
MC	Municipal Commissioner
MIS	Management Information Systems
MLAs	Members of the Legislative Assembly

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Madhya Pradesh
MPs	Members of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGT	National Green Tribunal
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
ODF	Open Defecation Free
PIL	Public Interest Litigation
PM	Prime Minister
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RDF	Refuse-Derived Fuel
RTI	Right to Information
RWA	Resident Welfare Association
SBM	Swacch Bharat Mission
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SS	Swaccha Survekshan
STP	Sewerage Treatment Plants

# SANITATION IMPROVEMENT IN INDORE: A CASE STUDY IN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

## Introduction

### 1. The Purpose of the Case Study

Attempts to improve the extremely unsatisfactory levels of sanitation in India began in the colonial era and continued after Independence. But sanitation levels have remained inadequate, leading to poor health, high infant and child mortality, stunted growth among children, and the risk of infection and sexual assault for women because of lack of access to clean and safe toilets.<sup>1</sup> In other words, inadequate sanitation has been a key problem in India, impacting the health and well-being of its citizens adversely.

Sanitation is a critical need everywhere – in rural and urban areas. But in a rapidly urbanising India, it has special importance for towns and cities. The impact of inadequate urban sanitation will grow over time. At present, cities with a population of over 100,000 produce 44 per cent of the total waste in the country,<sup>2</sup> and this figure is likely to increase.

In contrast to the general lack of good sanitation in urban India, the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) has achieved very substantial improvements in sanitation in recent years. This positive outcome flowed from the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), a national programme to address sanitation that was launched in 2014. The programme has two components, rural and urban. Under the SBM, an annual survey is conducted to gauge the achievements of various cities in sanitation. Since 2017, the IMC has consistently ranked number one nationally, besting larger and richer municipal corporations in the country. To date, Indore's success in sanitation remains a subject for media comment.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, as described in the next chapter, Indore did not start at a high base level. In fact, the sanitation situation in the city was awful and Indore's transformation into the cleanest city in India has been dramatic. This success has been acknowledged by all: citizens, NGO representatives, officials and sanitation workers in Indore, who take considerable pride in their achievements and the city.

What explains Indore's success? How did Indore do it?

This is the central question addressed by this case study.<sup>4</sup> But as Indore's success is explored in the case study, the focus is not on technical improvements but on the new processes of

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<sup>1</sup> Doron and Jeffrey (2014), Ghosh and Sarkar (2023)

<sup>2</sup> Gupta and Sachdeva (2021), Singh (2021)

<sup>3</sup> Economic Times (May1, 2025)

<sup>4</sup> A word of caution: Since this case study may be viewed as part of the 'best practices in governance' literature, we emphasise that the selection of a 'best practice' for any study is beset with numerous problems. To begin with, the extent to which an initiative is 'good' or 'best' is often a matter of interpretation, and there can be strong differences of opinion. Additionally, no initiative is totally 'good'. Even the best initiatives may have some unfulfilled agendas and negative fallouts. Yet, despite these definitional problems, some initiatives tend to be clearly more promising than others. A broad rule of the thumb to identify such initiatives is that they should benefit a

public management and the underlying political economy dynamics that led to these processes. As the IMC improved sanitation in Indore, it did not bring in sophisticated technical solutions but used technologies that were widely available. The IMC's success was a result of changes in its public management strategies, although this does not mean that technical processes and innovations are not important. On the contrary, the last chapter of the case study points to the lack of capacity within the IMC to maximise the potential of technical improvement. Consequently, the lessons that the IMC experience provides relate mainly to public management. The IMC experience also illustrates the conditions under which good public management can emerge in the Indian context.

The case study documents the key public management strategies that led to the IMC's success. As several studies show,<sup>5</sup> the quality of management can change the outcomes of public policies.<sup>6</sup> Public management is an issue of some importance in India, where 'implementation failure' is a ubiquitous problem.<sup>7</sup> Notably, improving sanitation is a complex public management challenge, involving financial, organisational, interest-group and citizen-related issues. In particular, improved sanitation requires changes in citizens' behaviour, a task at which Indian state governments often perform sub-optimally, resulting in poor programme outcomes. Drawing on the IMC's success, this case study offers insights for public managers and administrators. The public management lessons that the case study offers are not restricted to sanitation related activities but are applicable across public service delivery activities. The IMC experience offers insights in the Indian context and is especially relevant for public managers in India; it may also be of use to those in other developing countries.

Along with an understanding of what sound public management is in the Indian context, a question that the case study addresses is why these effective management practices emerged while improving sanitation in Indore. Why were these strategies not followed earlier in the IMC, and why are they not followed routinely in India? The case study shows that certain contextual factors shaped the change in public management in the IMC. These contextual factors are important. On the one hand, they point to larger shifts that are needed to improve governance in general. On the other, they have key implications for the sustainability and generalisability of such initiatives. The extent to which such 'good practices' can last and can be transferred in other settings depends a great deal on the supportive factors in the context continuing or being replicated.

## **2. The Context**

This case study is situated in a particular context, which needs to be understood before proceeding further. An important element of this context is the city of Indore itself, especially

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significant number of citizens, especially those from less well-off sections of society. Moreover, while such initiatives may not be perfect, their positive outcomes should vastly outnumber the negative ones. The sanitation effort in Indore fits these criteria.

<sup>5</sup> For example, a significant reduction in crime in New York City in the mid-1990s owed a great deal to a change in the working processes of its police (Smith, 2009)

<sup>6</sup> Meier et al., 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Kapur (2020), Pritchett (2009)

its economic and political importance, which played a key role in Indore becoming the site of special initiatives in sanitation. As critical are the IMC's designated role, structure and human resources, especially regarding sanitation, because the IMC's activities flowed from these organisational characteristics. The key features of this context are described below.

### **a. The City of Indore**

The city of Indore is the economic hub of the state of Madhya Pradesh (MP), which lies in central India. As per the 2011 census, Indore was the fourteenth largest city in India with a population of 1.96 million. The population of the Indore Metropolitan Region, which includes peri-urban areas, was 2.17 million. In 2011, Indore had a literacy rate of 85.87 per cent (89.95 per cent for men and 81.48 per cent for women).<sup>8</sup>

The main industries, private firms and MP's stock exchange are situated in Indore. It is cosmopolitan, has people from all major religions and castes, as well as from several Indian states. There are, however, many colonies where specific communities such as Gujaratis, Marathis, etc., live. As per the 2011 census, 29.60 per cent of the population of the Indore Metropolitan Region resided in slums.<sup>9</sup>

Culturally and intellectually, Indore is MP's most vibrant city. Several newspapers originated there and the city has numerous educational institutions. It also has a significant number of civil society organisations. Associations such as the Marathi association, the Maheshwari association, market associations, etc., are involved in cultural and social activities. Not surprisingly, the ordinary citizens, politicians and officials of Indore take pride in the city. They see themselves as having a positive attitude, and being co-operative and helpful.

### **b. The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC)**

The governing body of the Indore Municipal Corporation comprises councillors (also called corporators) from 185 wards, each with a population of 6000-8000, a mayor<sup>10</sup> elected directly by citizens, members of parliament (MPs) and members of the legislative assembly (MLAs) whose constituencies are wholly or partly in the municipal area<sup>11</sup> and six persons with special knowledge of municipal administration, nominated by state government. A speaker is elected by the mayor and councillors to preside over meetings. The mayor also forms a 'mayor-in-council' from among municipal councillors, which is akin to a cabinet of ministers.

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<sup>8</sup> Directorate of Census Operations, Madhya Pradesh (2011) (A census has not been conducted in India after 2011 and comprehensive data is not available after 2011.)

<sup>9</sup> Directorate of Census Operations, Madhya Pradesh (2011)

<sup>10</sup> As per the MP Municipal Corporation Act 1956, seats are reserved for SCs and STs based on their share in population, while there is up to 25 per cent reservation for OBCs and 50 per cent reservation for women for councillors and mayors. The elected mayor can be removed by the state government, or recalled if three-fourths of councillors propose such a motion and 50 per cent voters vote in favour of such a motion. Councillors can be removed by the Divisional Commissioner, a senior administrative officer.

<sup>11</sup> MPs and MLAs can nominate representatives to act on their behalf.

The administrative head of the IMC is the municipal commissioner, who is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer. The IMC has posts of four additional commissioners to assist the municipal commissioner. There are 13 departments in the corporation (Annex 1, Para 1), each headed by a deputy commissioner. The IMC has a total of 6318 posts. Of these, 7.4 per cent are in general administration, 18.8 per cent are subject matter experts, managers and supervisors, 70.2 per cent are frontline workers such as sanitation workers, gardeners, drivers etc., and 3.6 per cent are helpers (Annex 1, Point 2). The IMC area is divided into 19 administrative zones, each of which has one to five wards. Each zone has an IMC zonal office, headed by a zonal officer. These zonal offices are the key implementation arm of the IMC.

IMC generates revenue from several sources (Annex 1, Point 6). State government grants form an important part of the revenue base. IMC's own sources of revenue include taxes, i.e., property tax and water tax, user charges for door-to-door garbage collection, income from granting building permission, providing birth and death certificates, etc., license fee, entry fees for gardens and other sites, and assigned revenue in lieu of octroi and stamp duty. Property tax is the largest own source of revenue (Details in Annex 3, Point 5).

### ***IMC and Sanitation***

As per the MP Municipal Corporation Act, 1959, municipal corporations are responsible for sanitation in cities. Their functions include cleaning public streets and places, disposing nightsoil and rubbish, constructing, managing and maintaining municipal water works, public urinals and latrines, sewers and drains, preventing the out-break, spread and recurrence of infectious diseases, and maintenance of public parks, gardens and recreation parks (See Annex 1, Para 3).

The Health Department of the IMC is responsible for sanitation and undertakes activities such as sweeping the streets, cleaning drains, door-to-door collection of garbage, etc. It is the largest department of the IMC and has an extensive staff, including a chief sanitation officer, sanitation officers, assistant sanitation officers, chief sanitation inspectors, sanitation supervisors, deputy sanitation supervisors and sanitation workers. There are 564 sanctioned posts of managers and supervisors in the Health Department, although more than three-fourths of these are vacant (Annex 1, Para 4 and 5). When SBM was launched, an 'SBM cell', headed by a superintending engineer, was added to address technical issues such as infrastructure creation, vehicle procurement, etc. The cell includes personnel for information, education and communication (IEC) and handling the management information systems (MIS), recruited on contract.

### ***c. Sanitation Workers***

In 2021-22, the IMC had 7096 sanitation workers on its own rolls. The type of work done by the sanitation workers includes the following:

- Sweeping roads and streets, cleaning public places such as gardens
- Driving garbage collection vehicles to collect waste from households
- Accompanying garbage collection vehicles to collect household waste and put it in the vehicle
- Filling garbage received from garbage collection vehicles into bigger capsules at garbage transfer stations and cleaning the garbage transfer station compound
- Cleaning drainage lines and chambers
- Cleaning public toilets

Sanitation workers are of four types:

- ‘Regular’ or permanent workers, who receive a monthly salary as per the seventh pay commission scale and various other benefits
- ‘*Viniyomit*’ or semi-regularised workers (workers who were in service on May 16, 2007) who are paid as per the fifth commission pay-scale, which is lower than that of regular workers
- Daily wage or muster workers, who are paid the daily wage rate set by district collector for unskilled workers
- Workers who are employed through third-party firms and paid the daily wage rate, at present employed mainly for cleaning the city at night.

In 2021-22, among the 7096 sanitation workers of the IMC, 18.57 per cent were regular, 28.41 per cent were *viniyomit* and 51.38 per cent were daily wagers. Another 1.6 per cent were ‘*evajdar*’ – workers from earlier times – who were allocated specific areas to ensure sanitation. Since May 2019, the state government has mandated that sanitation workers be recruited through third parties and not directly by municipal corporations. Three agencies have been identified to recruit workers, and a few workers have been recruited through them.

### **3. Case Study Design and Methodology**

Public management case studies require a detailed understanding of government working as well as research expertise. Consequently, this case study was conducted by an interdisciplinary team of researchers that included experts in urban development and local governance as well as a former civil servant.

The case study was based on an analysis of data and documents, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and spot observations. The documents scrutinised included the municipal law, relevant government orders, the IMC’s budget and various documents of the IMC. A key component of this study were detailed interviews with a wide spectrum of persons who had been involved in the IMC’s sanitation initiative. The attempt was to get the perspectives of multiple actors, working in various positions in government as well as outside government.

Fifty-six interviews were conducted with municipal councillors, officials, representatives of non-government organisations (NGO) and union leaders of sanitation workers (details in Annex 2, Point 1). These interviews were unstructured and explored the interviewees' experience of the sanitation initiative in depth. In addition, more structured interviews were conducted with sanitation workers. The sanitation workers were selected to include individuals who performed different tasks, such as sweeping roads, cleaning drains and public toilets, etc., as well as individuals with varied service conditions, i.e., regular, *Viniyomit*, daily wage workers and those employed through third parties. A profile of the sanitation workers interviewed is given in Annex 2, Point 2 (a) and (b).

Along with interviews with various actors in the sanitation initiative, focus group discussions were held with citizens to understand their experience. These FGDs were held with citizens in three types of residential colonies: a slum, a well-off area and a middle-class area. The profile of the three selected colonies is given in Annex 2, Point 3. In addition, spot observations were made of the selected residential colonies, garbage transfer stations (GTS), the trenching ground and waste processing plants.

The fieldwork for this case study was conducted between October 2022 and June 2023. The case study does not include developments that may have occurred since.

#### **4. Structure of the Report**

Chapter 1 describes the sanitation situation in Indore before the sanitation initiative. In Chapter 2, various developments that preceded the initiative, some directly connected to the sanitation initiative and others that were not directly connected to sanitation but had an impact on it are described. Chapters 3 to 5 document the Indore sanitation story in two phases. Chapter 3 describes the first phase between 2015 to 2017, when dramatic improvements were achieved in the sanitation situation and the city ranked number one in the national sanitation survey. Chapter 4 analyses the impact of these changes. Chapter 5 analyses the period between 2017 and 2023, when the sanitation initiative was consolidated and built upon. Chapter 6 describes the sanitation situation in Indore today; Chapter 7 examines the public management practices that led to the IMC's success. Chapter 8 outlines key aspects of the larger context that led to the emergence of effective public practices in the IMC.

Two clarifications are necessary regarding the presentation of the report. One, interviewees have been referred to by their roles. This is partly to keep the identity of the interviewees confidential. Moreover, instead of using pseudonyms to keep identities confidential, interviewees have been referred to by their roles, as roles are important to understand the import of interviewees' statements in a case study on public management. Two, throughout the report, the samples of actual statements made by interviewees have been provided in boxes, to give readers a sense of what the interviewees thought and felt. These interviewees' statements are neither facts nor analyses, which are contained in the main text of the report.

## CHAPTER I THE CHALLENGE

### 1 An Abysmal Sanitation Scenario

Before 2015, sanitary conditions in Indore were abysmal, as recounted by citizens (See Box G1 in Chapter VII), and confirmed by officials, municipal councillors, NGO representatives and sanitation workers during interviews. There was filth and pervasive stench in public spaces, about which citizens often protested to IMC councillors. To quote an ex-IMC councillor:

*'The situation earlier was very challenging. It was awful. People complained all the time. They would call me to their house for tea. When I went, they would ask me to stand outside, where there was an awful stink. Then they would say, this is why we called you – so that you can smell this.'*

Moreover, there were 25,000 to 30,000 stray animals on the roads. People let their cows roam free on the streets. The cows ate from the garbage bins placed in the streets, causing the garbage to spill out. Cows also ate the plastic that littered the streets. People who kept these animals often bribed IMC officials to not to take action as mandated by municipal rules. To quote a supervisory official:

*'People kept animals, tagged them and let them loose. They bought calves, fed them and let them roam about, and then sold the grown cow at a profit. The cows ate polythene bags off the streets. I used to drop cows to the 'goshala' (cow shelter). Do you know that in the goshala they once found 80 kgs of polythene bags inside one cow? Those who kept animals bribed officials to look the other way.'*

There were accidents every day, especially between two-wheelers and animals, which were reported in the media.

### 2 Ineffective Sanitation Practices

The system of garbage collection was ad hoc and casual. The IMC had around 2,000 garbage bins across the city for dumping garbage. In many colonies, there was a traditional '*jagirdari system*' whereby a *jagirdar*, i.e., a garbage collector, took charge of a particular area for garbage collection and had informal rights – the area "belonged" to him. The *jagirdar*, or people employed by him, collected garbage from people's houses for a monthly charge. One sanitation worker, who had worked in the *jagirdari* system earlier, reported that he collected garbage from houses and dumped it at a site designated by the IMC on public land from where the IMC truck collected it. The colony residents supplied him with a hand cart and other tools. He earned between Rs.10 to 50 per household per month (Box A1).

### **Box A 1 Jagirdari: Traditional Waste Collection**

*Most Indian cities have some element of a traditional and informal waste collection system.<sup>12</sup> This consists of families who hold customary rights to collect waste for defined areas. The people in this system are almost invariably from scheduled (dalit) castes that have traditionally been associated with waste work, scheduled tribes (adivasis) and migrants.<sup>13</sup> In exchange for the service, they earn a small fee from households. Additionally, they extract recyclable material from the waste that they collect, including paper, plastics and metals, which they sell to recycling material traders and processing units. Municipalities and private operators worked under public-private partnership arrangements as well, relying on these workers to collect waste and dump it at waste collection bins, thereby saving the funds that would have been required even if the workers were paid a minimum wage.<sup>14</sup> The work of informal waste collection is highly specialised, but often unhygienic, dangerous and oppressive as well. It provides little by way of social security or labour safety. It is also notoriously hard to structure and regulate. Litter and waste dumping are common negative outcomes.*

In other colonies, garbage was dumped in the garbage bins by citizens themselves. In addition, the IMC employed sanitation workers and provided them with hand carts to collect garbage from public places and throw it in the bins. The garbage was often thrown around the bins, however, rather than in them. No one wanted a bin in front of their house, and this often led to disagreements and quarrels (See Boxes G7 and G10 in Chapter VII).

For secondary garbage collection and transportation, i.e., from the garbage bins to the trenching ground, the IMC had contracted a company,<sup>15</sup> (hereafter referred to as Company A). Company A's job was to lift garbage from the bins, dump it at the trenching ground and return the bins to their original location. IMC provided the company some vehicles (bought with funds provided in a previous national programme). Company A was negligent and did not collect garbage every day; so, the bins overflowed.

IMC undertook the sweeping and cleaning of public places through its own sanitation workers but a corrupt system operated, whereby there were many 'ghost' sanitation workers. These workers paid part of their salary to IMC councillors and officials as well as leaders of their unions (to help them in case of disciplinary action) in lieu of not showing up for work. During the study, not only did officials and NGOs representatives attest to this practice, but some sanitation workers too admitted to a lax working style, albeit indirectly. Moreover, the work of sanitation workers was poorly organised. They were allotted ill-defined areas. Consequently, their responsibilities were ambiguous, and they could not be held accountable (Box A2).

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<sup>12</sup> Gill (2021)

<sup>13</sup> Gill (2009)

<sup>14</sup> Chintan 2012

<sup>15</sup> This practice began in 2007

### **Box A 2: Comments on Sanitation Before the Initiative**

- *Earlier, around 60 per cent of the sanitation workers did not come to work. IMC officers and councillors were part of the racket and used to take money. The IMC used to be called 'Narak Nigam' (Hell Corporation). Lots of bribes were taken. (Union leader)*
- *Sanitation workers did not work because they were politically connected. Many politicians would get their candidates appointed. There were many ghost workers. Citizens also did not like sanitation workers. (IMC Official)*
- *No one bothered about the whereabouts of sanitation workers. There was no beat system. Just wards were fixed, and sanitation workers could be assigned to any place in the ward on a daily basis. So, it was difficult to assign responsibilities and accountability. Many were earning a salary paid by the IMC but were working elsewhere. They would just sign the attendance sheet and go. Some sanitation workers were quite rich. (NGO 2 Representative).*
- *There were several vested interests in garbage collection. Company A was paying sanitation workers to do their work along with our work. Sanitation workers also had other jobs. For instance, out of a salary of Rs. 35,000 per month, a worker would pay half in bribes to IMC officials, corporators, etc., and hold another job elsewhere. (Ex Municipal Commissioner)*
- *Earlier, unions used to misguide the sanitation workers. (IMC Official)*
- *Previously, we got free time and could go home early. (Sanitation worker)*
- *Very few workers were doing honest work earlier. (Sanitation worker)*

There was neither a waste management system to speak of nor any infrastructure for waste management. Garbage was simply dumped at the trenching ground, where a big mountain of garbage had piled up. Until the 1970s, when there was limited use of paper and plastic, manure was made from the waste. Then, around 1985, more plastic bags, packaging and various types of plastic goods began to be used and found their way into the garbage. Consequently, the quality of the manure made in the trenching ground deteriorated and farmers stopped buying it. Subsequently, there were frequent fires in the trenching ground, which generated a terrible stench. Residents of colonies located near the trenching ground often held demonstrations in protest.

### **3 Attempts to Improve Sanitation**

Some attempts were made to address the situation, especially when funds were available from the Government of India or there were externally funded projects.<sup>16</sup> The sewerage system was augmented between 1992 and 1997 through a grant from the British Overseas

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<sup>16</sup> The first sewers were built in the 1940s along with an old oxidation pond for sewerage treatment.

Development Agency (ODA),<sup>17</sup> as it was then known. Funds were provided for river cleaning and laying sewer lines. However, this project was implemented through the Indore Development Authority (IDA) and subsequently handed over for management to the IMC. From 2004 onwards, funds were provided to improve the sewerage system under the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) of the GOI, through the state's Environmental Planning and Co-ordination Organisation's schemes and through special grants for the Simhastha Mela (a religious fair in the neighbouring district of Ujjain). Additionally, between 2006 and 2015, funds were provided to improve urban services, municipal capacity building and administrative reforms, and inclusive development under JNNURM; besides, there were also projects funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom, and the Asian Development Bank.<sup>18</sup>

However, the success of these projects was limited. For instance, officials reported that the sewers laid under the ODA project between 1992 and 1997 were not effective and, hence, sewerage was not fully trapped. According to a social activist who was interviewed, the consultants did a shoddy job and pipelines were laid without proper attention to contouring. Moreover, as a senior member of a local consulting firm who was subsequently involved in the sanitation drive commented, information, education and communication (IEC) activities were inadequate, which reduced the impact of these initiatives.

Politicians and activists too attempted to address the situation but had very limited success. To quote a former IMC councillor:

*'I was very worried about sanitation. I really wanted to do something about the situation. When I got up in the morning, I began attempts to remove garbage that remained under the bins when the bins were lifted. Then we got bigger garbage bins, but the problem remained.'*

Civil society groups too were active. In 2008-09, a social activist filed a public interest litigation (PIL) in the high court regarding the IMC's failure to remove garbage in Indore, pointing out that this adversely affect public health. The court ordered the IMC to take immediate measures, such as cleaning public places, removing stray animals, etc. The IMC could not respond effectively, however, and the court then asked the district collector to supervise the IMC.

Notably, at that time, the IMC was not a well-functioning organisation. The work culture was poor and there was little concern for sanitation. Citizens perceived the IMC as an ineffective organisation unable to deliver and called it '*Narak Nigam*' (hell corporation). To quote an IMC official:

*'The approach of the IMC was lackadaisical. At that time, the image of the IMC was not good.'*

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<sup>17</sup> This was known as the Indore Habitat Improvement Project (1990-1997) (Chu 2018).

<sup>18</sup> DFID undertook the Urban Services for the Poor Programme (2006-2012) and MP Urban Infrastructure Programme (2013-2015) (Chu 2018).

## CHAPTER II PRECURSORS OF CHANGE

### 1 Introduction

Indore's noteworthy achievements in sanitation were preceded by several developments, some related to sanitation and others not, that created the conditions that facilitated the events that followed. Many of these conditions existed in other cities as well, but some were unique to Indore. In other words, a special constellation of contextual factors in Indore laid a fertile ground for success.

### 2 Political Spur

A critical development was the prime minister's (PM's) announcement in 2014 of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) as a key government programme. Daily photographs of high-profile politicians sweeping public roads appeared in newspapers across the country, signifying the programme's political importance. In Madhya Pradesh, for various political reasons, this initiative gained added importance for the then chief minister (CM). Moreover, Indore became a focal point. Because of its political and economic importance, any success in Indore would be highly visible, maximising political gains.

That the top political leadership at the state level was keen to improve sanitation is important, because state governments take key administrative decisions, especially regarding personnel, and such decisions critically influence outcomes. The CM appointed a new, very capable, municipal commissioner, i.e., MC1, who was reported to be very close to him. The CM urged MC1 to do something about sanitation. As described later in the case study, the CM strongly supported MC1 through various contentious events.

As the CM emphasised sanitation, the signals to local political leaders were clear. The new mayor, elected in February 2015, strongly supported the sanitation initiative. Politically, the mayor of Indore is an important person, as well as the leader of the IMC. Thus, there was an alignment of interest at all three levels – central, state and local.

Notably, councillors from the opposition party, i.e., the Congress, did not oppose the sanitation initiative either. In any case, the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) had a sizeable majority in the IMC, so decisions could be taken easily. As SBM, supported by the PM and other political leaders, began, local politicians in Indore too swept the streets to prove their commitment and support for the effort.

Further, as mentioned earlier, the court's order in the PIL case mandating supervision of the IMC by the district collector caused considerable embarrassment to its mayor and councillors, as the IMC is an autonomous local government body. This too acted as a spur for its politicians. (Box B1).

### **Box B 1: Comments on Political Commitment**

- *The CM wanted Indore to be number one. It was important for him politically. Politicians will always look for political gains. I am the only opposition MLA in Indore. When the sanitation initiative started, I took a positive approach and supported it (MLA (Congress) and ex-Minister).*
- *For the CM, Indore is the city of dreams. It is the financial capital of the state. It generates the maximum revenue, as much as the rest of MP. The CM wants Indore to develop. He always posted good IAS officers as collectors and municipal commissioners here. A social activist had filed a PIL. I felt that the city was getting a bad name. Our image was not good. I appreciate the social worker (Ex councillor (BJP))*
- *The mayor must have been aware of the CM's attitude (IMC Official).*
- *When I joined as municipal commissioner, the CM told me that sanitation in Indore was a mess and I had to do something about it (MC1).*
- *Serious work in sanitation began because of the SBM. The 'raja' (king) is always watched carefully by lower-level politicians. Because Modi had announced the SBM, political actors made a very major contribution to this effort. When the SBM was announced, I worked to create an 'Adarsh' (model) road. The goal was that the Adarsh road should be so clean that people could eat on it. Then we had an event when people brought food and ate on the road. I wanted to give a message. It was reported in newspapers and on television. A standing committee of MPs came to see it. It became a great road, where people took selfies. The mayor-in-council was very keen to address it too. We told the new commissioner, this is tough work, go ahead, we will support you (Ex corporator, BJP)*
- *Politicians helped because it was Modi's campaign. They used to sweep the streets from time to time. There were very few politicians from the opposition in the IMC (FGD with zonal officials).*
- *The High Court order ruined the IMC's image and had a big impact. The elected body was very upset and decided to do good work. (IMC Official)*
- *There was a PIL in the court, and the court was threatening to hand over the entire waste management operation to the state government. At an important meeting of MLAs, municipal council, mayor, etc., there was a decision to give sanitation priority for the next five years (IMC Official).*

### 3 A Framework Programme

The SBM programme provided the framework for the IMC's activities. The Ministry of Urban Development issued guidelines for the urban segment of the SBM in October 2014,<sup>19</sup> and revised them in 2017. The SBM's goal was to eliminate open defecation, eradicate manual scavenging, foster modern and scientific measures of waste management, generate awareness and induce behavioural changes among citizens regarding sanitation and augment the capacity of municipalities to create an enabling environment for private sector participation (GoI 2017).

The SBM provided funds for the construction of individual, community and public toilets, solid waste management, capacity building and IEC activities. In the years between 2015-16 and 2020-21, funds provided from the SBM comprised between 0.97 per cent and 2.85 per cent of the IMC's total revenue receipts (Annex 3, Point 1). The amount was small compared to its overall financial inflows but as an additional amount for a specific activity, i.e., sanitation, it made a difference.

Additionally, the SBM enhanced the IMC's legitimacy by ranking municipalities on their performance. This ranking was based on elaborate third party evaluations, called the 'Swaccha Survekshan' (SS) or sanitation survey. The survey, conducted across 75 cities, was structured to foster competition among municipalities and encourage citizen participation. If a municipality performed exceptionally well, not only did it receive prize money, but publicity and recognition as well. This motivated all actors: politicians, officials and citizens.

### 4 Augmentation of Human Resources

An important precedent to Indore's success, unrelated to the sanitation campaign, was that in 2014, the personnel structure in all municipalities in MP<sup>20</sup> was rationalised. Many posts that were no longer useful were abolished and new ones that were more relevant were created. Unfortunately, most of the new posts remained vacant (Annex 1, Point 2), but several new managerial and supervisory posts were filled up. For example, the IMC had had no Additional Municipal Commissioners earlier, but when the fieldwork for this study was being conducted, it had five. The number of deputy commissioners increased so that there was one for each zonal office. A new post of deputy sanitary supervisor was created as well.

This allowed for much greater supervision than had been possible earlier. This new level of supervision was important for sanitation, an activity that involves a large work force and is spread across a wide area. To quote an IMC official:

*'Earlier, in the 1992 set up, we did not have enough supervisory staff. When the new set up was introduced in 2014, many supervisory posts were created. That was very important in improving sanitation. Four additional commissioners were added. Now there is a deputy commissioner for each zone.'*

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<sup>19</sup> Biswas and Jamwal (2017)

<sup>20</sup> Government of Madhya Pradesh (2014)

In addition, as per the SBM guidelines, an IEC consultant and a management information systems (MIS) consultant were recruited on contract for sanitation. The IEC consultant recruited by the IMC was qualified in mass communications, and as the case study shows, this was an important skill.

## **5 Strong Leadership**

As the SBM got underway, the IMC acquired very good leadership, partly by chance and partly by design. The new mayor had political weight. She came from a prominent political family and her husband had been a state minister. She was an MLA as well as the mayor and continued as an MLA after her mayoral term had ended. As described later in this report, she could negotiate with state level politicians as well as manage the demands of local politicians.<sup>21</sup> She was also committed to improving sanitation in the city (Box B2).

In addition, as noted above, the CM had posted a capable municipal commissioner, i.e., MC 1, and given him the mandate to improve sanitation. As it turned out, MC1 was exceptionally capable, and excelled himself, mentioning during his interview that he worked so hard that his health suffered. MC1 was not a 'direct recruit' to the IAS, as his predecessors and successors were, but had been promoted from the state civil service. Notably, though direct recruits to the IAS have to pass tougher examinations to join the civil service compared to personnel recruited through the state civil service, IAS officers typically do not spend much time in field level posts. In contrast, promoted officers, like MC1, usually serve two decades or so in field level posts and, as a result, the best among them acquire a very solid understanding of how to get things done on the ground.

Moreover, MC1 had the support and confidence of both the CM and the mayor. He could retain his position in spite of taking decisions that hurt vested interests. This is usually not the case for less well-connected officers. In fact, MC1's performance as municipal commissioner boosted his career. As his tenure ended three years later, he became the district collector of Indore, a highly coveted post. MC1 had been posted in Indore earlier and knew the city well. He had also served as the municipal commissioner of the Bhopal municipal corporation and knew how municipal corporations worked. During his interview, he said he had attended numerous seminars, conferences, etc., on sanitation. He had attempted to improve sanitation in Bhopal, and though he did not succeed, he had learned.

With these strengths in knowledge and political support, MC1 played a pivotal role in turning the sanitation story around in Indore. Even though he left the IMC in 2017, people involved in sanitation referred to him continuously during interviews five years later (Box B2).

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<sup>21</sup> Her husband had been a minister and died in an accident. She became mayor when the post was reserved for women.

## Box B 2: Comments on Leadership

- *This mayor was different. She had a strong political background, and she didn't have to bother with local politicians. They could not pressurise her like they often pressurised other mayors. (IMC Official)*
- *I call the then mayor iron lady. She could take tough decisions and stand by them. She sorted out political problems. All mayors have priorities when they are elected and, for her, it was sanitation. (MC1)*
- *Modi's call to do something about sanitation was a very important point in our sanitation journey, and so was MC1's posting. (Ex-corporator (BJP)).*
- *The credit for the sanitation effort goes to MC1. MC1 is very close to the CM. (Corporator (Congress))*
- *I had been posted in Indore earlier and knew the city and its people well. I knew who was powerful, who was a troublemaker, etc. I had also been municipal commissioner Bhopal for five and a half years and knew about municipal corporations. I used to attend all the national conferences on sanitation and solid waste management. Towards the end of my tenure, I worked on sanitation and solid waste management for one and a half years. I began using cycle rickshaws to collect garbage in one place. There, I understood that it was necessary to work fast, and in the whole city. (MC1)*
- *It was not easy for MC 1 to work in Bhopal because there were many bigwigs, ministers, officers, etc. But in Indore, he could do things. Even though MC1 was a promoted officer, he was really very good. (IMC Official)*
- *The big change came when MC1 joined. MC1 worked very hard. I have never seen a municipal commissioner like that. He would explain, cajole, scold to get people around. MC1 had 100 per cent support from the mayor and the CM. He lodged police complaints against politically connected people. All this is not possible without such support. Other capable officers would not be able to do this without political support. Often, when there are political problems, officers are transferred even for doing the right thing. (IMC Official)*
- *I am not sure why sanitation became the focus. Possibly, the then municipal commissioner saw an opportunity to make his name. (IMC Official)*
- *Officers' goals matter. MC1 was very committed and very capable. (Union Leader)*
- *MC1 was a perfect fit for this system. He kept the BJP party people happy. He was very capable. MC1 was a dictator. But we got along because we were two mad men. He told me that he had to make Indore number one in sanitation. (Social Activist)*

## **6 The Decision**

The contextual conditions mentioned above set the stage for the change that was to come. Notably, the opportunity offered by SBM was common to all Indian cities, and all the municipalities of MP benefitted from the improved personnel structure and the CM's interest in sanitation. But Indore was unique in its special importance in the state and had strong local political and administrative leadership. A key moment came in 2015, when the mayor and commissioner decided to make Indore bin free, litter free and dust free.

## CHAPTER III THE FIRST SUCCESS

### 1 Introduction

In the three years that followed, the IMC turned the sanitation situation in Indore significantly. It made Indore open defecation free (ODF), began door-to-door collection of segregated garbage from households, levied user charges for this service, created a mechanism for secondary waste collection, cleaned public places and removed the stray animals that roamed the streets of Indore. By the end of this phase, Indore had become a significantly cleaner city, its citizens cared about keeping it so, and the IMC began to rank number one in Gol's sanitation survey.

This was a tough job, as several vested interests opposed it. The IMC's own staff, councillors and sanitation workers were involved in corrupt rackets, leading to several 'ghost' sanitation workers. As it proceeded with door-to-door garbage collection, *jagirdari* sanitation workers stood to lose their livelihoods; with systematic secondary waste collection and processing, rag pickers lost out and the removal of stray animals entailed loss of income for animal owners. Moreover, all citizens had to change their habits and work harder to dispose of waste.

Under MC1's leadership, the IMC met all these challenges and succeeded.

How did this happen?

This process, described below, provides many lessons in public management.

### 2 Small Steps

#### *a. Building Toilets*

As MC1 took charge, he commissioned a report to develop an integrated solid waste management system, hiring a firm (Consultant X) that had been approved by the Government of India (Gol) for this purpose. The report brought out various issues, such as people throwing out waste several times a day, garbage bins not being cleared regularly, inadequate and poorly maintained vehicles, sanitation staff not working, etc.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, as an official of the consulting firm reported during an interview, MC1 did not just commission the report; he also talked to the agency personnel several times to develop a strategy to address the situation.

To begin with, as per the national goal, the IMC began efforts to make Indore open-defecation free (ODF). Like all cities, as per the SBM guidelines, it undertook construction of public and community toilets as well as individual toilets in people's homes, for which the Gol provided

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<sup>22</sup> Information was obtained through interviews. The full project report is not available.

subsidy. The IMC's approach was professional and took into account the importance of eliciting citizen's co-operation. To locate public and community toilets at appropriate sites, and to identify households needing individual toilets, MC1 conducted a detailed survey and sought inputs from NGO personnel who knew the area well. Based on this information, sites for 450 public and community toilets were selected, and households for 14,000 individual toilets identified. To quote an NGO representative:

*'In other cities, people do guess work. For instance, if some public toilet is crowded, another is added. In Indore, a proper exercise was done to locate and build public toilets. A team headed by an Executive Engineer, with 10 other officials, was formed to oversee the task. We suggested the locations because we knew the area well. MC1 was out in the field for a lot of time as well, finding out, checking, etc.'*

The contract for the building of individual toilets was awarded to contractors after formal bidding. Importantly, NGOs were assigned to monitor the contractors. One NGO representative reported being called to the IMC's meetings with contractors to provide information regarding delays, etc.

Moreover, unlike many other municipal corporations, the IMC laid emphasis on community awareness and education. For this, it partnered with NGOs. With their help, video films were made, educational material was made available in public places, street plays as well as plays by school children were staged; school children would then stop their parents from open defecation. Sanitation committees were set up in localities, and 'sanitation ambassadors' were selected. A few pressure tactics were also used. A 'dabba (box) gang' was created, whereby people beat hollow tins when they saw open defecation. There was a children's gang as well. Notably, the IEC guidelines of the SBM (rural) mentioned specifically that shaming and coercion merely alienate the community and should not be used (Gol n.d.). While the IMC's initiatives to promote public education and action for sanitation were admirable, the pressure tactics used were problematic.

#### ***b. Termination of a Company's Contract***

As noted earlier, Company A, which was responsible for collecting garbage from bins placed across the city, did not do so regularly. This led to filth and a foul smell in public places. Initially, MC1 attempted to get Company A to improve its operation, but there was little change. Consequently, MC1 decided to terminate Company A's contract and the IMC decided to do this work directly. This was a bold decision, as it defied the then prevalent wisdom in policy circles that the private sector is more efficient in service delivery; even the SBM guidelines had acknowledged the importance of private sector participation. In India, public-private partnerships (PPPs) in the collection and transportation of waste have been widespread.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the IMC's reputation as an ineffective organisation created

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<sup>23</sup> PPP operates in two ways in solid waste management. One, the private company collects, transports and segregates waste and charges user fees from all households and commercial areas. Two, the municipal corporation gives out contracts for garbage collection,

scepticism about its ability to successfully incorporate this unusual shift from contracting private firms to undertaking the task directly.

As MC1 took the decision, he sought the mayor's confidence to ensure support should unforeseen difficulties arise, and got it. Still, the termination of the contract with Company A was no ordinary task. As MC1 commented, he had feared that as soon as Company A got the notice for contract termination, it would stop work, hurting the limited ongoing garbage clearing operation. Consequently, he planned the termination carefully.

Company A was in possession of all the garbage collection vehicles, some its own, and around 70 to 80 that belonged to the IMC,<sup>24</sup> which were to be returned to the IMC as the contract ended. These vehicles were in very poor condition and the IMC's vehicle repair system was in shambles. To ensure that there were no problems when it took over the work, IMC first upgraded its vehicle repair workshop. A new site was selected, and mechanics were hired. This took six months. Soon after, the IMC served Company A notice for the termination of its contract and began to collect garbage directly.

This exercise showed that MC1 could take bold decisions. But in parallel, MC1 anticipated the problems that could arise and prepared to deal with them. MC1 also made a special effort to keep the mayor informed and seek her continuing support for the new mission. To quote:

*'MC1 used to respect the mayor. Some commissioners ignore the mayor. Mayors sometimes pressurise commissioners to do illegal things. Then the relationship deteriorates.'* (IMC Official)

### **c. A Pilot**

As noted earlier, MC1 had started door-to-door garbage collection when he was municipal commissioner in Bhopal but had limited success. In Indore, NGO 1, a large and well reputed organisation, had been working with rag pickers for several years,<sup>25</sup> and had developed a fee-based model of collecting garbage from households. In 2016, some representatives of NGO 1 met the mayor and MC1 at a public event and shared their experience. Subsequently, MC1 asked NGO 1 to undertake a pilot project in two wards.

To highlight the initiative and give a signal to all local politicians, MC1 selected wards from where the mayor and the speaker of the IMC had been elected. NGO 1 worked in these wards for five months or so. IMC provided tricycles, and NGO 1 began to collect waste from households and segregate it in the tricycles by making partitions. Two NGO personnel travelled with the tricycles to generate public awareness. The pilot was successful.

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transportation and segregation to third parties, and compensates the third party, instead of the third party charging user fees (Gupta and Sachdeva 2021).

<sup>24</sup> The vehicles had been bought with JNNURM funds.

<sup>25</sup> NGO 1's basic work is in enhancing the livelihoods of the poor. When working with rag pickers, *kabadis* (waste traders), etc., the NGO undertook a livelihoods analysis and got funding for a project from the Swiss Development Agency in 2008. NGO 1 formed self-help groups (SHGs) and set up a system whereby the SHGs collected garbage from households for a fee. The waste was then processed in a plant set up for the purpose and sold.

The IMC subsequently expanded this operation across the city. Notably, the IMC leadership was willing to listen to an NGO that had worked successfully on the problem and seek its help. At the same time, it tested the waters before going to scale. Moreover, they had kept an eye on messaging, strategically selecting for the pilot the wards of two prominent local leaders.

An important point to be noted is that the IMC had the autonomy to take these decisions, because compared to field-level bureaucratic agencies, municipal corporations have much greater decision-making powers. This autonomy enabled the pilot. Further, the mayor was supportive, and there was a clear BJP majority in the IMC; so, decisions could be taken speedily and easily.

### **3 The First Big Change**

#### ***a. A Decision***

After NGO 1 submitted its report on the pilot project, MC1 sought feedback from various other sources. He then decided that the IMC would organise door-to-door garbage collection across the city as in the pilot project and remove the public garbage bins. Once again, MC1 exhibited his capacity to take decisive action and exercise caution at the same time. He could have outsourced the job but instead decided to undertake it in-house, taking full responsibility. As earlier, he took the mayor into confidence. Subsequently, the IMC purchased cycle rickshaws for door-to-door collection of garbage throughout Indore.

#### ***b. Team Building***

As the exercise began, MC1 set up a highly productive working environment at the IMC. He consulted IMC officials and encouraged them to suggest solutions to problems. He made them work hard but also supported them. While seeking support from IMC officials, he continued to lead, handling the most difficult tasks himself (Box C1).

#### **Box C 1: Comments on MC1's Leadership by IMC Officials**

- *MC1 created a strong team. He used to tell us, do what do you need to do to get the job done, and I will get you the resources.*
- *MC1 was really passionate and put a lot of pressure on the IMC staff. But he also looked after the staff.*
- *In the early days of the initiative, we used to start work at 4 am and go on until 11 pm.*
- *MC1 used to deal with the councillors and other politicians, etc. himself.*
- *MC1 used to take care of all issues regarding political interference. If someone created a problem, we just called him. He could co-ordinate with everyone. He had worked in Indore for many years.*

### **c. Partnerships**

The success of door-to-door garbage collection was contingent on citizens putting out garbage on time for the collecting vehicles. Consequently, the IMC gave community education high priority, making it the main focus in 2016. MC1 recognised that communicating with citizens and eliciting their co-operation required special skills, which IMC did not have. Consequently, it contracted NGOs for IEC work.

An excellent process was followed to contract NGOs. Bids were announced and five NGOs that were assessed as technically most qualified were offered contracts at the lowest bids received. Rather than giving all the work to a single NGO, the IMC chose to empanel five and distributed the service areas among them. This reduced the risk of failure. If one NGO did not work well, others could take over. Moreover, the IMC could allocate more areas to NGOs that performed well. Subsequently, it began door-to-door garbage collection using cycle rikshaws. Some 450 to 600 field staff of NGOs worked in the programme at various points in time (Box C2).

#### **Box C 2: Comments on Partnership with NGOs**

- *Initially, we worked on a voluntary basis for the IMC. But when door-to-door garbage collection started on scale, a tender was floated for IEC. Several NGOs were asked to work on the lowest rates, because I think that MC1 had had some negative experience with a single agency. He wanted good agencies. Two NGOs dropped out because they had underestimated the intensity of work. Another joined in 2019. (Representative NGO 1)*
- *We were involved in drafting the tender documents and the memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the NGOs (Representative, Consultant X).*
- *We got involved with sanitation in Indore after MC1 joined in 2015. Earlier, we had worked as a house keeping agency. IEC is basically NGO work. MC1 was clear that NGOs did this best, while official agencies were good at being firm on rules. Usually, one agency is recruited for each programme. Here, five agencies were empanelled. The NGOs brought varied expertise. (Representative NGO 2).*
- *We got good people from NGOs who could talk to citizens and explain. (IMC Official)*
- *NGOs did a lot of work. They did street plays, created public awareness. (Sanitary Inspector IMC)*

#### ***d. Dealing with Resistance***

When door-to-door garbage collection began, there was resistance from two sources. One, many IMC councillors were sceptical because an earlier attempt in 2012 had failed. MC1 dealt with this scepticism in several ways. He started with an advantage because he was seen as having close links to the CM and had the full support of the mayor. This put pressure on local politicians to go along with his schemes. Moreover, MC1 had demonstrated the process in wards connected with the mayor, their leader. But MC1 did not rely on his links to powerful actors alone. He talked at length with IMC councillors and organised workshops to explain the concept. Ultimately, he got their co-operation. To quote a representative of NGO 2:

*All the corporators took a sanitation oath. We took out a 5-kilometre rally about door-to-door garbage collection. The mayor, district collector, municipal commissioner, MLAs, NGOs, all joined in.*

The more serious opposition was from the garbage collectors of the *jagirdari* system, who lost their jobs as the IMC started door-to-door garbage collection. To begin with, IMC officials explained their plans to the leaders of the *jagirdari* system. However, as door-to-door garbage collection began, *jagirdari* workers stopped IMC vehicles in several instances, and even vandalised them, and accused IMC officials of misbehaviour. To counter this opposition, and to address the very real loss of livelihoods that *jagirdari* workers faced, MC1 offered them employment in the IMC. Many were happy to accept and joined the IMC as sweepers. An erstwhile *jagirdari* worker who became a sanitation worker in the IMC reported that he got an offer to join it as a daily wage worker and accepted. At the time of the study, he swept the streets in the colony where he had been a *jagirdari* worker. He said that his salary was low, but at least he had something predictable in hand and hoped to become a permanent employee in the future.

Nevertheless, some workers still did not co-operate. In such cases, aggressive action was taken and complaints were lodged with the police. As MC1 took punitive action, he was careful to brief the media. He also maintained good relations with the district administration, the police and the judiciary, letting them know what he was doing to ensure their backing in adverse circumstances. All these actors supported him. As IMC succeeded in door-to-door garbage collection, citizens too stopped hiring the *jagirdari* workers (Box C3).

### **Box C 3: Comments about Resistance from jagirdari workers**

- *The biggest challenge was dealing with the jagirdari system. MC1 was very intelligent. I told him that if you just fight with all of them, it will not work. He said, let us give them jobs in the IMC. Still, many of them resisted. They said that they would collect the garbage from homes and give it to us. They would lodge first information reports (FIIRs) with the police against darogas (supervisors) for misbehaviour, etc. Still, when we explained that they could get government jobs and join the educated class, they came around. (Ex councillor (BJP) 1)*
- *When we started door-to-door garbage collection, there was strong resistance from the jagirdari workers. The jagirdari workers would not let IMC vehicles go inside their jagir areas. Once they vandalised a vehicle too. First, MC1 would talk to them and explain. Then he said he would lodge FIRs, etc. (Representative NGO 2)*
- *Removing the jagirdari system was a tough task. Jagirdari workers would say that officials had misbehaved with women and crowds would gather. Twice, FIRs were lodged against the IMC (Representative NGO 1)*
- *MC1 talked to the leaders in the jagirdari system and explained. Many of the workers were also recruited by the IMC as sweepers. Between 200 to 400 were hired. When the workers did not co-operate, then MC1 took aggressive action. He lodged FIRs against them. (IMC Official)*
- *Councillors always supported us. If there was a problem with jagirdari workers, they would help. Some jagirdari workers resisted. Once the vehicles of the IMC started collecting garbage, citizens stopped supporting the jagirdari workers. The IMC vehicles were more regular than the jagirdari workers and citizens stopped paying the former. (Chief Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*

#### **e. Improving on the Pilot**

As door-to-door garbage collection proceeded, a politician mentioned to MC1 that using motorised vehicles rather than cycle rickshaws would be cheaper. MC1 estimated the cost of this transition with the help of NGO partners. A cost comparison between using cycle rickshaws and motorised vehicles showed that, in fact, the latter were more cost-effective, as they required less manpower. Consequently, the IMC decided to shift to motorised vehicles.

Initially, a nationally prominent politician from Indore donated money from funds at the disposal of MPs, yet another proof of political support for the initiative. From this fund, thirty vehicles were bought. The route chart for each vehicle was prepared with some care. To assess the number of vehicles needed at various sites, the IMC conducted a household survey with the help of NGO partners to estimate the amount of garbage generated in different areas. When the vehicles started operating, to quell political and other opposition, IMC councillors and other local politicians were involved. When a vehicle was bought for a ward,

a ‘flag-off’ ceremony was held in the presences of the ward councillor, mayor, district collector, municipal commissioner, MLAs, NGO representatives, etc., and the media was informed.

This approach succeeded, and by 2016, all cycle rickshaws had been replaced with motorised vehicles. Over time, vehicles were equipped with sound systems that played jingles to alert people of the vehicles’ arrival. Teams to repair minor faults in vehicles quickly were set up as well (Box C4).

#### **Box C 4: Comments about Getting Motorised Vehicles**

- *Later, the cycle rikshaws were replaced with vehicles. MC1 involved us in planning this transition. Many decisions needed approval from the mayor-in-council and the IMC council, but this was never a problem. There was a BJP majority and a BJP mayor. (IMC Official)*
- *We did household surveys and mapping to calculate the number of people in each household, because the quantum of garbage produced depends on the number of people. In Indore, more than 40 per cent households had more than eight people. Different areas have varied needs. In slums, there is a lot of drinking. Middle class people are different. Commercial and industrial areas have different needs. We identified five types of areas: three types of residential (low, middle and high income) areas, market and industrial areas, and encroached areas – because waste is generated in illegal dwellings too. (Representative NGO 1)*
- *Buying vehicles was within my power of financial sanction of Rs.2 crore. (MC1)*
- *The municipal corporation has significant financial powers. (IMC Official)*
- *Initially, for door-to-door garbage collection, four vehicles were purchased, and five to six wards were selected. Later on, residents from different colonies demanded door-to-door garbage collection vehicles and the IMC purchased more vehicles. Then, a sound system was installed in the vehicles to alert people about the arrival of the garbage collection vehicle. A new vehicle repair workshop was set up. A new management and support system was also set up. This included a vehicle puncture repair team and a mechanical team. (Vehicle Supervisor 1).*

#### **f. Getting Citizens on Board**

Door-to-door garbage collection made new demands on citizens. Now, they had to provide garbage at a fixed time to the garbage collection vehicle rather than throwing it at their convenience. The IMC faced the challenging task of changing citizen behaviour. Here, the strategy of working with NGOs paid off. NGO personnel took up a range of activities. They organised citizens’ rallies and approached resident welfare associations (RWAs), religious leaders and market associations. Importantly, they developed different strategies to convince

different types of people. An NGO representative reported that in some middle-class colonies, they went to 'kitty parties', i.e., women's parties held regularly by a group of women, to promote sanitation. Moreover, as the garbage collection vehicles were deployed, NGO personnel were assigned to each vehicle to educate citizens. Consequently, they met the citizens every day. In other words, public participation was elicited not simply by showing films, creating jingles and the like, but by deploying specific strategies for different groups and through daily interaction with citizens.

Additionally, many local politicians too made efforts to generate awareness regarding sanitation, using their relationships with citizens to the IMC's advantage. Dustbins were provided at subsidised cost to poorer households (Box C5).

#### **Box C 5: Comments about Eliciting Citizens' Participation**

- *Our first job was to embed the idea of door-to-door garbage collection firmly in people's minds. Our responsibility was to foster contact between citizens and the IMC. (Representative NGO 2)*
- *NGOs did a lot of work. They did street plays, created public awareness. Councillors also used to go to their wards and educate people. (Sanitary Inspector IMC)*
- *We had some difficulties in the slums, where people were often rude and asked why the new system was needed. In the middle class and upper class colonies, people would not let us come in. We went to the 'kitty parties' and started naming those who broke the door-to-door collection rules. Later, we approached smaller groups of people separately, such as RWAs, religious groups, market associations, etc., and encouraged them. A healthy competitive atmosphere was created, so that if one group started sanitation initiatives, others had to as well. (Representative NGO 2)*
- *We did cultural programmes with sanitation as a theme in schools and colleges. (Ex-Councillor (BJP) 1)*
- *I did many awareness programmes in my ward. I did a lot of awareness generation in a colony where scheduled castes live. We gave people dustbins at subsidised prices, raising money from funds assigned for corporate social responsibility (CSR). We had events in lanes. In wards where corporators could not mobilise citizens, NGOs took over. (Ex-Councillor (BJP) 2)*
- *The most difficult job in this whole process was educating people about door-to-door garbage collection. We reached out to citizens. We gave dustbins at subsidised prices to people who could not afford them. (Sanitary Inspector IMC)*
- *We painted all the garbage collection vehicles yellow to prevent misuse of vehicles. When these vehicles went around the city, people also saw the IMC working. (MC 1)*

- *Initially, people did not have faith that garbage collection vehicles would actually come to their houses but over time, they were convinced. (IMC Official)*
- *Initially, door-to-door garbage collection was challenging because citizens were not used to it. We had a tough time convincing them. Keeping calm and smiling even when disagreeing was a challenge. Sometimes we apologised even if we had not made any mistake. The powerful and influential people did not behave properly with us. In some areas, issues still pop up, and we have to deal with them politely and professionally. (Daroga and ex-Garbage Collection Vehicle Assistant)*

If citizens did not comply after various persuasive tactics, fines were imposed. The process of levying fines was also made simpler. Extant rules required the IMC to file cases in the municipal court and await its ruling to levy fines. These rules were amended to allow for instant imposition of fines. Discussions with IMC officials in zonal offices revealed that at this stage, fines were imposed often and sometimes were quite heavy. For big offenders, fines could be as high as Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh. If people did not pay the fine, their shops were sealed. Occasionally, the police had to be called in. Moreover, the IMC did not spare locally powerful individuals if they broke rules, which sent a signal to others (Box C6).

#### **Box C 6: Comments about Punitive Action**

- *The strategy that MC1 adopted was that first he would educate people through newspapers, campaigns, etc. Then, if they did not comply, he would take strong punitive action. (IMC Official)*
- *A new process that began during this period was the issuing of spot fines. Earlier, we used to make 'challans' to present in the municipal court. Several officials were given the authority to levy spot fines of different amounts. Fines can be levied for several categories of offenses: for not separating waste, for throwing garbage in public places, for open defecation, for spitting near paan shops, for using polythene bags, etc. When we started, we imposed fines many times on people for disposing garbage inappropriately, sometimes fines of Rs.50,000 or Rs.1 lakh for big offenders. All the liquor shops, which belonged to politically connected people, were fined. (Discussion with Zonal Officers, zone 1)*
- *If people did not pay the spot fine, we used to seal shops. Sometimes the police were called. (Discussion with Zonal Officers zone 2)*
- *We also took coercive action when it was needed and created fear among citizens. (Ex councillor (BJP) 2)*
- *In the beginning, public representatives used to telephone us to say that the fine should not be levied. But we stood firm because of MC1. The contribution of IEC in this type of behaviour change is 70 per cent, while that of punitive action such as fines, etc., is 30 per cent. (Discussion with officials in Zonal Officers, Zone 1).*

During FGDs in selected colonies, citizens reported that they were counselled and punitive action was taken as well. In the well-off sample colonies, people were keen to co-operate as they wanted a cleaner environment but could not have it earlier because IMC support was lacking. In the poorest colonies, the threat of punitive action played an important role in behaviour change.

Moreover, the regular and timely appearance of garbage collection vehicles generated public confidence in the system. Over time, people gained confidence that garbage collection vehicles would come regularly and on time and began to provide garbage accordingly (Box C7).

<b>Box C 7: Discussions during FGDs in Sample Colonies about Garbage Collection</b>	
<b>Colony</b>	<b>What Citizens Said in FGDs about Garbage Collection</b>
Colony 1	<p>In the initial days, the IMC vehicles came regularly. The workers travelling with the vehicles pressured us to not throw garbage in public places and only give it to the garbage collection vehicle. They also told us that if we threw garbage in public places, we would be fined. There were regular announcements about challans and fines. The IMC also appointed NGOs to counsel and orient us about door-to-door garbage collection.</p> <p>The IMC was strict. We were very scared of the fines. The strictness forced us to change, though we are not habitual rule followers and are known for breaking rules. Regular follow-up, counselling, orientation and door-to-door contact played an important role in changing our habits. It took one year to understand and get used to the new system.</p>
Colony 2	<p>When garbage collection started, most people co-operated because they wanted cleanliness. The NGO staff used to come with the garbage collection vehicle. They conducted meetings and did door-to-door campaigning. As the municipal team came regularly, there was a big change in our mindset. As the system improved, everyone joined in.</p> <p>If anyone was found throwing garbage in public places, they were counselled, but if they continued, fines were imposed. But such incidents were very rare in our colony. In the beginning, if at times the garbage vehicle did not come or someone missed the vehicle, garbage was thrown in an empty plot.</p>
Colony 3	<p>When the municipality removed the garbage collection bins, we were worried about finding a place to throw garbage. From habit, we would throw garbage at the spot where the bin had been placed. Then the garbage collection vehicle started coming daily. But if we missed it, we would throw garbage at the spot where the bin had been placed. Earlier, many times, we could not hear the sound of the vehicle and so missed the vehicle. We requested the people with the vehicle to increase the volume of the announcer. They were very polite and helped. We received awareness lessons from the team that accompanied the garbage vehicle.</p> <p>The streets are too narrow for the vehicles to come inside the colony, so we have to go and dump it where it stands at the edge of the colony.</p>

### ***g. The Success***

These efforts resulted in citizens' gradual compliance with the garbage collection system over a year. By the end of 2016, all the old garbage bins had been removed. This was IMC's first big success and signified the beginning of the turn-around.

Underlying the first success were key features of MC1's management style: openness to new ideas, team building within the organisation, careful planning, taking bold decisions, continuous improvements in working processes, building coalitions with many actors, especially NGOs and politicians, educating citizens and eliciting their participation, and adopting a carrot and stick approach to those who resisted.

Moreover, as an autonomous municipal corporation, the IMC could take a host of decisions. Besides, political support played a key role in the IMC's success. Often, when punitive action is taken against citizens, local politicians pressurise officials to stop it. This was the case in Indore as well. Usually, when local politicians do not succeed, they appeal to state authorities. However, MC1 had the CM's support. Without such support, it is doubtful if consistent punitive action would have been possible.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **THE TURNAROUND**

#### **1 Introduction**

As the IMC began door-to door garbage collection, it had to create a good system to transport the garbage collected to the trenching ground as well. Moreover, cleanliness in public places had to be ensured. It succeeded in these endeavours. At the same time, it began to levy user charges for garbage collection and managed to ensure waste segregation. After a period of three years, the IMC ranked number one in the sanitation survey.

As subsequent chapters show, the IMC's success over three years turned around not only the sanitation situation in Indore but changed the IMC as well.

#### **2 Cleaning Public Places**

##### ***1. Tackling Corruption***

As stated earlier, the IMC used its own sanitation workers to keep public places clean, but a corrupt system operated around these workers. In this system, IMC councillors, officials and union leaders took a 'cut' from the salaries of sanitation workers. In return, they promoted a lackadaisical work culture by protecting sanitation workers from disciplinary action. They also got their relatives and supporters on the rolls, so that the IMC had many 'ghost' workers, who were paid, but did not actually work.

MC1 decided to tackle this problem. While doing so, along with his considerable administrative abilities, he showed an acute understanding of the power structure and a capacity to work with it. He needed to deal with all those who received payoffs from the sanitation workers: the councillors, officials and their union leaders. Of these, officials were the easiest to tackle, because MC1 had authority over them. Moreover, because he had political support from the top, officials could not subvert his authority by appealing to politicians. MC1 could tackle the IMC councillors too, as he had the support of the mayor and the CM, and the councillors could not seriously scuttle MC1's plans. To soften the blow, MC1 became especially attentive to local politicians' other demands, processing them quickly and often in their favour. He showed this consideration to politicians from the opposition party as well as from the ruling party to minimise opposition.

However, the sanitation workers' unions, of which there were six, were outside this authority structure. To begin with, MC1 met with union leaders to explain that the 'ghost' worker racket had to stop. He requested them to not interfere if action was taken against errant sanitation workers. He identified the most important leader and established a rapport with him. In addition, he made things easy for the union leaders. Initially, he did not act against absentee sanitation workers who were family members of union leaders. He also realised that union leaders stood to lose the money that they earned from the corrupt system. To compensate for this loss legitimately, he encouraged them to apply for contracts to maintain toilets, etc.,

and many union leaders bid for them successfully. At the same time, he called union leaders to meetings and made them feel valued. He also helped them in various ways. To add pressure, MC1 called a meeting of union leaders and IMC officials at which the mayor presided. In the meeting, he discussed the corrupt system around sanitation workers and made it clear that it would not be tolerated. Then, the IMC released the proceedings to the press (Box D1).

This strategy worked. With political support and by striking deals with vested interests, MC1 managed to build a consensus to take sanitation out of the corrupt system.

#### **Box D 1: Comments on Breaking the Corruption Racket**

- *I took the mayor and IMC councillors into confidence. Some councillors created problems. They would complain that there was garbage in their ward. I would go there and ask to see the garbage. I used to process their other demands such as road construction, building permissions, etc., quickly. I told them, leave sanitation alone, I will help you in your other work. Soon, a mutual understanding developed that sanitation had to be kept outside politics. I also used to back track when things got too hot (MC1).*
- *MC1 told all the corporators not to interfere with the appointment of and other matters relating to sanitation workers. Earlier, officers used to go to councillors' houses with files and all kinds of deals would be made. He issued an order that no officer would take files to councillors' houses. Then, he directed that he would issue all orders. There was a lot of consternation. (Union Leader)*
- *I was the opposition leader at that time. We used to tour the roads with MC1. He would say, let us put some 'choona' (lime) around the garbage bins. (Corporator (Congress))*
- *I used to talk a lot to MC1. When the sanitation initiative was started in Delhi, MC1 said that we could get a lot of money for the city by winning prizes. MC1 was good at work. (MLA (Congress), ex-Minister).*
- *Everyone who is involved in the process is important: sanitation workers, politicians, citizens. People often start working without understanding the power dynamics. Troublemakers can also be controlled and used. I took the union leaders into confidence. I gave the union leaders a lot of importance. I used to call them home for tea. When we bought shoes, uniforms or raincoats for the sanitation workers, I would show union leaders samples and involve them in the selection so they could also tell sanitation workers that they had got them these benefits. The union leaders used to make between Rs.50,000 to Rs.2 lakh per month from employees to protect them in case of disciplinary action. At that time, there was a government order that contracts for the maintenance of public toilets and 'rain baseras' (shelters for travellers) should be given to union leaders of sanitation workers. I used that to enable them to get such contracts. Now, they could earn money legally and were*

happy. Union leaders then started creating a work-oriented environment, and sanitation workers began to work regularly. It took one and a half years. (MC 1)

- *MC1 organised a meeting to explain that spurious appointments, not working, etc., had to stop. I thought, this is a blot on our reputation. First, people look down on us because we are 'harijans' (scheduled caste). Then they say that the city is dirty because we don't work. This is not good. I told him that I would help him. MC1 began to talk to me. We undertook that there would be no protests, etc., against work-oriented decisions, as long as workers were compensated. I have also started an NGO. We have accepted contracts to maintain Sulabh Shauchalayas (public toilets) and rain baseras in Indore. We did not have a community hall for marriages. I told MC1 this, and he helped us build a community hall at an old zonal office from where the municipality had shifted. It is very good. We also built a dharamshala (inn) near the airport. The sanitation workers were pleased. (Union Leader)*
- *MC1 dealt with the unions. We used to explain to union leaders and would help them in small ways and meet their reasonable demands. He helped some in generating income. He used to talk respectfully to them. He would take them around in his vehicle. They became his fans. Even now, they are his fans. (IMC Official)*

## **2. Forming an Alliance with Sanitation Workers**

Once the corrupt system was dealt with, a carrot and stick approach was adopted towards sanitation workers and supervisors. Disciplinary action was taken against those who did not work. Many workers were suspended, and there was a sense of fear among sanitation workers as well. But MC1 began disciplinary action only after he had neutralised the opposition that could have caused trouble. His acute understanding of the traps that had to be avoided is illustrated in his statement below:

*'To begin with, I suspended a few darogas (sanitation supervisors) who were lax in their work. All the darogas are connected to some municipal councillor or the other. Many municipal commissioners try to discipline workers by suspending some errant ones. But supervisors are very smart. They usually propose names of relatives of union leaders for suspension, and then all hell breaks loose. Before my time, a couple of darogas were suspended. Some 1500 people came to the office and broke the windowpanes, etc.'*

In fact, he used his new bond with the union leaders to identify sanitation workers who were not working. As earlier, he used NGOs to verify facts. It needs to be recognised, however, that his political backing enabled him to take on vested interests and not get transferred. It is doubtful if another municipal commissioner with the same perspicuity but without a similar strong political backing would have remained in the post.

Along with disciplinary action, MC1 began new welfare measures for sanitation workers and supervisors. The IMC could not increase their salaries, as these were set by the state government. So MC1 focused on sanitation workers' health and morale. If a sanitation worker

or a member of their family fell ill, the IMC ensured that s/he got proper treatment, at times, talking to local industrialists to fund it. He ensured that they got their Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) cards. Sanitation workers were provided masks and gloves to protect their health. MC1 made sanitation workers feel valued, telling them they were part of the IMC family. Workers who worked especially well were given the title of 'daroga' (supervisor), even though their salary could not be increased.

As a result of these measures, IMC sanitation workers began to work regularly. Thus, the IMC leadership built an alliance with sanitation workers to work for a shared goal instead of the previous corrupt system (Box D2).

#### **Box D 2: Comments on Encouraging Sanitation Workers**

- *I held health camps for sanitation workers. Whenever anyone in their family would fall ill, I would arrange for treatment in a good hospital and get some industrialist or some such person to foot the bill. These people also need the IMC in various ways. I told the sanitation workers that we were all like a family and if they had any problem, we would try to address it. The mayor also held several meetings. This confidence building effort went on for eight to ten months. (MC1)*
- *Earlier, sweepers used to work with a small broom. Now, they use a big broom. The big broom is better for health. Sanitation workers were also given masks and gloves. Health check-ups were arranged for them. If there were accidents, they were taken care of. They got ESIC cards, insurance, free treatment when they were ill. Eye check-up camps were also conducted. (IMC Official)*
- *There was resistance from the sanitation workers when they were made to work. MC1 did a lot of persuasion with unions, etc., and threatened and fired those who refused to work. He would use techniques like promoting a good worker as a 'daroga' without a salary increase, but with all the prestige, etc. We provided information about sanitation workers too, as we had a team of 500 workers on the ground. Then the workers began to change. Some said that they would rather work for their whole salary rather than pay unions, etc., a part of it, and so on. (Representative NGO 2)*
- *MC1 suspended a lot of people who were not working. He suspended more than 1100 people. MC1 would inspect various areas. If a sanitation worker was found to be shirking, he, along with the daroga would be suspended. If someone was not working, I would tell him. Then MC1 would verify from other sources, such as NGOs, and take action. The reason he could do all this was that he was daring and had the CM's support and contacts at higher levels. The CM had given MC1 a free hand. After such incidents, MC1 acquired a reputation for being effective and became powerful. (Union Leader)*
- *Some workers were suspended, and everyone was scared. (Zonal Officer, IMC)*

### 3. Improving Work Processes

As IMC officials and sanitation workers were motivated to work hard, improvements were made in the working arrangements to enhance productivity. For example, the MC1 asked NGO partners to estimate the area that a sweeper could cover in a day. Subsequently, a 'beat' system was developed, and each worker was assigned his or her exclusive patch of area or 'beat'. Earlier, these workers had been attached to vaguely defined areas and sanitation supervisors directed them to go to one place or another. This was a haphazard way of working, whereby workers' task assignment was vague, so that they could not take pride in their work. At the same time, they could not be held accountable. With the introduction of the 'beat' system, each sanitation worker was responsible for his or her beat. Additionally, workers were provided with long-handled brooms instead of short-handled ones to reduce their physical exertion and improve their efficiency.

The supervision and management of sanitation workers was systematised as well. In 2016, biometric attendance was started. MC1 set an example by going out early in the morning with the sanitation staff. This forced other IMC officials to do the same. The addition of supervisory staff just prior to the new sanitation initiative allowed for more rigorous monitoring. Additionally, MC1 motivated supervisors by organising regular meetings and workshops. He also provided them a petrol allowance and wireless sets, which increased their efficiency substantially, as sanitation supervisors reported during interviews (Box D3).

#### Box D 3: Comments on Systematising Work

- *In 2016, we made a beat plan system. MC1 asked us to estimate the amount of work that a sanitation worker could do. We estimated that a sanitation worker could clean 800 metres per day. This has now been accepted across the country. When beats were clearly defined, accountability for performance could be enforced. (NGO1 Representative).*
- *To motivate the darogas, I held regular meetings with them, organised workshops for them in a nice hotel. We gave them a petrol allowance of Rs.2000 per month, wireless sets, and so on. Overall performance improved. Besides, I used to go out early in the morning every day and the IMC staff would also come. (MC1)*
- *Things improved when new supervisory staff was recruited. There was also a lot of thinking about how the staff should be deployed (IMC Official)*
- *In 2016, we started biometric attendance, and it had a big impact. (Zonal Officer, IMC)*
- *During MC1's tenure, the working hours of sanitation workers were increased. (IMC Official)*

#### **4. Eliciting Public Co-operation**

As the IMC succeeded in improving the performance of sanitation workers, it motivated citizens to collaborate in keeping public places clean. Public toilets had already been constructed. Campaigns were held to educate citizens. All places that were vulnerable to garbage dumping were beautified, to prevent littering. Punitive action too was taken fairly liberally, sometimes in excess. To quote an NGO representative:

*'There were some excesses too. For example, construction labourers erected shanties on vacant plots, but there were no toilets or hygiene arrangements. In such cases, IMC officials approached the owners of properties where the labourers were working and threatened to block construction unless they provided toilets for the labourers. Everyone has their own working style. For example, MC1 told the Director of Indore Development Authority that he would stop their construction work if there was open defecation in their colony. This could have been done gently too.'* (NGO1 Representative).

### **3 Removal of Stray Animals**

A key initiative to ensure cleanliness in the city was the removal of stray animals from roads and other public places. As in previous initiatives, MC1 employed a carrot and stick approach. A meeting was held with local political and community leaders to elicit their co-operation. Provision was made to compensate animal owners who stood to lose income by allotting them space in a colony created outside the city to rear animals.

Subsequently, IMC officials began to persuade people to follow IMC's directives. Many councillors too participated in this effort. However, several animal owners continued to resist, and, as earlier, MC1 initiated punitive action. Initially, MC1 made threats of legal action, but success was limited. Subsequently, a month's notice was given to all animal owners to remove their animals from the city. Since many animal owners had also extended the boundaries of their backyards, or even built sheds, etc., on public land, these animal owners were threatened with the demolition of such encroachments if they did not comply.

For those who still did not comply, coercive action was scaled up further. Many encroachments that housed animals were demolished. Once again, the strategy was to act against the most powerful people first to send strong signals to everyone. In some instances, there was intense conflict and the police had to be deployed. One worker who was operating a trolley to remove animals was killed.

During this process, MC1 sought support from various actors. He personally briefed the judiciary about his plans. A meeting was held with the district administration to elicit their support. MC1 was also in regular contacts with local politicians. The media was briefed frequently. Further, by this time, the IMC's image had improved as well, following the success of the door-to-door garbage collection and cleaning of public places. The media reported on

the animal removal initiative favourably, despite several clashes with animal owners. Moreover, a majority of the citizens were supportive as well. People did not like the filth that stray animals created and the traffic accidents that they caused (Box D 4).

<b>Box D 4: Focus Group Discussions in Sample Colonies about Removal of Animals</b>	
<b>Colony</b>	<b>Experience in Colony</b>
Colony 1	Earlier, some people kept animals to sell cow dung. They let the animals loose, which created filthy areas. The removal of stray animals was good, because stray animals were making our area dirty. When animals were removed, some people sold their animals and started doing other work; others shifted to the outskirts of the city where they were given plots to rear animals.
Colony 2	The IMC effectively evicted stray animals from the city. All residents were troubled by the stray animals. People used to let their cows roam freely and cows used to eat garbage outside. Now, cows are in cowsheds. This is a big change. Initially, when this initiative was started, cow owners faced problems as they lost income. Many people did not move to plots given to them outside the city. Some even sold the plots. People made political comments too. The terror created by stray dogs had not subsided, however. Since some people feed street dogs, these dogs create nuisance for everyone.
Colony 3	All the cows and pigs were removed. This was a good thing because animals created filth in the area. Besides, cows don't eat plastic thrown around the streets anymore and don't die. No one kept cows in this colony; therefore, there was no opposition. But the problem of stray dogs remained. We know that they can't be killed, but the problem needs to be addressed.

Many local politicians complained to the CM about the harsh measures employed by the IMC, but he supported the IMC. Animal owners then deployed other means to thwart the initiative. A PIL was filed in the High Court, alleging that the animals that had been removed were not being looked after properly. The state High Court asked for a report on the issue. The mayor herself helped sort out this problem. She talked to the MLAs of nearby districts, and they agreed to take the animals. The animals were transported in 50 to 60 trucks to 29 villages near the city and given to tribal families free of cost. Camps were held as animals were given to the families, photographs were taken and video films made. Subsequently, a status report was filed in the High Court and the PIL was dismissed (Box D5).

#### **Box D 5: Comments on Removal of Animals**

- *I was involved in the removal of animals. When we started the drive, many people sold their animals or sent them to villages. We created a colony where people could keep animals. But when animals of people who had bribed officials to not enforce this policy were relocated, they protested. Some people tried to make trouble by saying that we were taking away the animals to kill them. But, overall, we were supported by the people in this drive. (IMC Official)*
- *Removing animals was a big challenge. We went to people and explained. For people who did not listen, we caught their cows, and broke their houses or 'badas' (backyards), etc. One IMC worker caught an animal. When the owners demanded its release, he refused. He was killed! As compensation, the deceased worker's family received Rs. 5 lakh; his daughter was given a job and there was other type of assistance as well. A colony has been made outside the city to keep cows. Now many keep cows there. (Discussion with Zonal Officials)*
- *When a worker was killed, MC1 became aggressive. No local political leader objected, however, because by then a momentum had been built. And there was a lot of public support for the activity (IMC Official)*
- *The district administration and the IMC team checked the legal status of the land occupied by animal owners. We first removed the encroachments and enclosures of the big shots. We received support from politicians and the media even though some politicians also lost out. Every month, all the IMC councillors and MLAs were invited to attend motivational meetings. There were serious efforts at co-ordination. A large police force was also deployed. During this time, MC1 used to brief the judiciary personally about what was going on. (IMC Official)*
- *When we decided to relocate the animals, we (councillors) talked to MPs and MLAs and requested them not to complain to the CM. We talked to the opposition parties as well. They were convinced too. I said, should we forever be standing in court, explaining why things were so bad, or should we do something about the situation. I went to a 'basti' (colony) in my ward where people let animals roam free. I told them, why don't you keep at most two cows at home or keep animals outside the city in a shed. Look at what you are feeding the 'gau mata', (cow), who we worship. They eat garbage and plastic. Why don't you keep only a few and feed them properly. Some people were convinced. Around 10 per cent of the people did not agree. The Yadav community told me that if I got the animals removed, they would not vote for me. So, I invited them to a meeting and explained to them. When people did not comply even after much persuasion, we gave a free hand to the administrative officers who sought the help of the police. Many people complained to the CM at this time. But the timing was good, because Prime Minister Modi had just announced the sanitation drive. After we removed the animals, we began to receive public support as well. (Ex-Councillor (BJP) 1)*

- *In the beginning, we had to take tough action. For example, there were lots of pigs in my area. We called the pig owners and explained that they could not keep their pigs in the city. Some refused, and we broke their houses. There was a lot of tough action against cow owners too. (Bill Collector, IMC)*
- *This was a tough job but now, it seems like a surprisingly good thing. People from other cities come and ask how we did it, how we managed the media and the politicians. (IMC Official)*

Notably, unlike the IMC, many larger and richer municipal corporations than the IMC have not been able to remove animals from cities. As in earlier efforts, MC1's administrative capability was crucial for this success. But even he would not have succeeded without strong political support.

#### **4 Systematising Secondary Waste Collection**

Soon after door-to-door garbage collection succeeded, the IMC systematised the secondary waste collection process, i.e., the transportation of garbage collected from households to its final destination. Earlier, garbage used to be collected from garbage bins by Company A and then taken to the 'trenching ground'. Now, the IMC decided to set up garbage transportation stations (GTSs), which were places where all the garbage collected from a particular area was brought, pooled together and sent to its final destination. MC1 had earlier observed how GTSs functioned in Ahmedabad and had been impressed.

Between 2014 and 2016, ten GTSs had been set up across the city. Large vehicles, which could transport waste from 30 to 35 door-to-door garbage collection vehicles, were purchased. The door-to-door garbage collection vehicles deposited garbage at their assigned GTS. At the GTS, this waste was shifted to larger vehicles for transportation to its final destination. Waste was collected separately from places where there was bulk waste generation, such as restaurants, large offices, etc., for which IMC's existing vehicles were used.<sup>26</sup>

As this exercise began, rag pickers who used to scour garbage dump sites began to lose their livelihoods. As in the case of *jagirdari* workers, many were employed by the IMC to work at the GTSs. During the study, the four GTS workers who were interviewed had all been rag-pickers earlier. They said that as garbage was removed from dumping areas, they found it difficult to recover material that they could sell from the garbage. At the same time, IMC officials approached them and suggested that they work at the GTSs on daily wages and they accepted the offer. All the four workers interviewed mentioned that that they used to earn more as rag pickers. However, their income fluctuated widely then, creating high levels of anxiety. Now their income was steady and secure. One interviewee reported that as a rag picker, she used to face hardship and indignity because people assumed that she was a thief, burglar, baby snatcher, etc. Now, she looked forward to becoming a permanent worker of the IMC someday in the future.

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<sup>26</sup> These had been bought with JNNURM funds.

## 5 User charges

In 2017, the IMC began to levy a user charge for door-to-door garbage collection: Rs.120 per month from commercial establishments and a uniform charge of Rs.60 per month from residential buildings. Subsequently, these rates were streamlined and varied as per the size of the establishment. Surprisingly, our interviews revealed that this was not difficult. True, there were a few minor protests by some citizens, but in general, people were willing to pay, because the IMC was providing a significant and reliable service (Box D6)

### Box D 6: Focus Group Discussions on User Charges

Colony	Experience with User Charges
Colony 1	Each household pays Rs.60 per month for garbage collection. Everyone pays the user charges. We have never skipped any payment. There is no problem in paying garbage collection charges, as these are for the improvement of our area. If someone does not pay user fees for a year, they receive a bill from the IMC.
Colony 2	Initially, there was a fee of Rs.60, now Rs.100 is being charged. Every house in our colony pays the fee, and many deposit an annual fee. There is no problem. There is a saying that if one rupee is spent on cleanliness, then three rupees will be saved on health. When two houses are built on a single plot, then there may be a dispute. Arrangements should be made to remove it.
Colony 3	Initially, there were no charges for garbage collection but later on, they imposed a fee. We argued a little and asked why the fee was being levied. When they explained that it was a service charge and for hygiene, then we understood. Some people said that there was no choice but to pay the fee because if we throw garbage in public places, we will have to pay a fine, which is high. It is better to pay the monthly garbage collection charges, which is not a big amount. Sanitation charges were needed to clean our area. We get timely services and a clean area. We feel it is good to pay the charges. But we do not know how this money is being used.

## 6 Waste Segregation

In 2018, the GoI issued guidelines that waste should be segregated. Subsequently, the IMC began the exercise by making two compartments in its door-to-door garbage collection vehicles to collect wet and dry waste separately. The tough part of the exercise was to persuade citizens to segregate the waste. As in the case of user charges, having seen the IMC succeed, many citizens were receptive. Yet, waste segregation required more effort and not all citizens were willing to do it. Moreover, the principles of why garbage needed to be segregated had to be communicated clearly.

For this, an exercise to educate and persuade citizens began. As before, NGOs played a pivotal role in educating people. NGO personnel who travelled in the garbage collection vehicles explained how garbage was to be segregated and helped people rectify errors. Once again, the daily interactions between citizens and NGO representatives were intense. NGO personnel knew about how specific citizens dealt with their garbage and strategised accordingly. Additionally, MC1 empowered the NGOs staff, so people would listen to them. In meetings, he would mention NGO representatives by their names. When there was a problem that needed sorting out, such as a streetlight not working, NGO personnel could approach the IMC and get it repaired. This increased their clout with citizens. Thus, the IMC and NGOs strengthened each other. The NGOs expanded the IMC's outreach to citizens, while the IMC provided NGOs with legitimacy and authority.

The IMC and NGO staff in the garbage collection vehicles dealt with citizens politely but firmly. They would refuse to take waste that was not segregated because they were not allowed to offload unsegregated waste at the GTS. Fines were imposed when citizens did not comply. Occasionally, there were disagreements and even violence, and cases had to be registered with the police. When local politicians complained, MC1 explained the importance of the process to them (Box D7).

#### **Box D 7: Comments on Segregation of Waste**

- *The success in door-to-door garbage collection and the construction of transfer stations created a positive vibe when we started to do segregation. (IMC Official)*
- *The most effective mobilisation strategy is to contact each household every day. Our staff forms personal relationships with the households. We know who will never dump garbage on the road and who might, who will always segregate and who may not. If someone does not segregate, the focus is on them. If adults are not receptive, we may talk to the children. Each household in the city has been approached by some NGO person. There is one NGO volunteer per 500-600 households, who is connected to all of them. (NGO1 Representative)*
- *We made our people accompany garbage collection vehicles. They checked the garbage from each house and, if necessary, informed people about their mistakes in segregation. This took six months. Even now, our people accompany the garbage collection vehicles daily. We did the soft part, like persuading people, while the IMC officials did the hard part, like levying fines, etc. Our people felt empowered because the IMC took action when they complained. MC1 would mention us by name in meetings. If a streetlight was not working, we could inform him and get it repaired; so, people saw us as influential. There was no political interference in our work. In other cities, politicians pressurise us to recruit their supporters and harass us if we don't. MC1 was firm with the municipal councillors about this. (NGO2 Representative)*

- *There was lack of faith between the IMC and the people, which the NGOs bridged. It helped that the IMC resolved the issues that people complained about to the NGO person. This built credibility. (IMC Official)*
- *MC1 acted very intelligently in allocating three persons for each garbage collection vehicle. (IMC Councillor (Congress))*
- *One big challenge was getting people to segregate waste. We made a lot of effort to explain to people. But there were people who were not willing to listen. In one colony, one NGO person inadvertently touched a woman's hand during this process. There was a big fight and people drew out swords. It was covered widely in the newspapers. In some colonies, where people drank a lot, it became difficult to reason with them. In one poor colony, people drew out knives and a driver got hurt. (Discussion with Zonal officials)*
- *Initially, at the GTS, each garbage truck was first checked, and they were allowed to offload only if garbage had been segregated. This changed the casual approach of the garbage vehicle team, and they stopped accepting mixed garbage from the colonies. (Vehicle Supervisor)*
- *We also put pressure on people. We refused to take garbage if it was not segregated. (Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *The most difficult thing was to get people to separate garbage. A lot of awareness generation had to be done. We used to do a lot of spot fines. We fined a wine shop Rs.50,000. We fined a transporter Rs.1 lakh. We fined hawkers. If any politician created problems, we requested MC1 to talk to them. (Chief Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *Initially, I had arguments with a few residents regarding segregation of waste. I explained to them why and how waste should be segregated. Then I said to them – 'this time I am doing it for you but not in the future'. Next time, they brought segregated waste. (Sanitation Worker)*

Initially, citizens found garbage segregation tedious and often made mistakes. But after six months or so of education, persuasion and some coercion, citizens began to segregate garbage (Box D8).

**Box D 8: Focus Group Discussions on Waste Segregation**

<b>Colony</b>	<b>Experience of Waste Segregation</b>
Colony 1	<p>The staff with the garbage collection vehicles would refuse to take garbage if it was not segregated. Initially, we had arguments when they did not take garbage. These were not very big arguments, but initially, we did not welcome it. It took almost one year to change our habit after rounds of follow-up, counselling, meetings and door-to-door contact by the NGO and IMC teams.</p>
Colony 2	<p>One NGO staff and two IMC employees travel with each garbage collection vehicle. In general, their behaviour has been very good, except for small arguments. They would explain to us why we needed to segregate household waste. When someone mixed up the garbage, the garbage collection team refused to take it. They would get citizens to come to the vehicle and separate the garbage. This embarrassed people and there were some disputes. To begin with, we used to give garbage in plastic carry bags. Later on, the IMC stopped taking garbage in these plastic bags and distributed two dust bins for Rs.350 for dry and wet waste.</p>
Colony 3	<p>Earlier, we gave unsorted garbage without any hassle. But later on, they asked us to segregate waste. Initially, bins were distributed for free, but after some time, supplied at cost. We started using separate bins for dry and wet waste.</p> <p>At first, we did not understand the difference between dry and wet waste and made mistakes. But after the IMC and NGO staff explained, we understood. The garbage collection team used to help us. It took some time for all of us to understand that if we gave mixed garbage, the IMC and NGO staff would make us come to the vehicle and separate the garbage. This was very embarrassing, as people laughed at us.</p> <p>It was difficult to segregate the waste because we had never done it before. The entire household had to change its habits. It took a long time, a lot of strict follow-up and action for us to adopt it.</p>

## CHAPTER V THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

In 2015, Indore had ranked 129 in Gol's sanitation survey; in 2016, it ranked 27 and in 2017, it ranked first! As the SBM was a high-profile programme, the IMC's efforts received nationwide recognition, unlike other local positive initiatives that are barely noticed. This recognition played an important role in the subsequent evolution of the initiative. At the same time, as they brought around a turnaround in the sanitation situation; IMC officials and workers learned new ways of working and many changes came about in the organisation.

### 1 Strengthening of Political Support

Once Indore achieved the number one rank, the CM's support for the programme became even stronger. The high visibility of the success made it a political asset. The biggest proof of strong political support was that after MC1 finished his tenure and became district collector in Indore in 2018, very good officers were posted as municipal commissioners, i.e., MC2 and MC3. This ensured that the initiative continued to have good leadership. Notably, it is quite common for positive initiatives to decline in impact when leaders of low calibre follow officials who initiate the positive changes. An additional outcome of the political support was that like MC1, MC2 and MC 3 were given stable tenures of around three years as well. This stands in contrast to the general pattern identified by the 'Janaagraha' Annual Survey of City Systems (ASICS) which found the average tenure of municipal commissioners<sup>27</sup> to be around 10 months (Box E1).

#### Box E 1: Comments on IMC Municipal Commissioners

- *There was always political support from the CM, but it increased after Indore was ranked number one. (IMC Official)*
- *The CM always gives importance to keeping Indore at number one. When he comes to Indore, he asks whether Indore will retain its position. He puts lots of pressure before the sanitation survey, attends meetings, etc. (MC 3)*
- *One important reason for our success was that we got very good officers as municipal commissioners. MC1 was very good and so was MC2. MC 3 is also really good. She is Indore's first woman municipal commissioner. When she came, everyone was initially concerned about a woman getting posted. I was concerned! I used to worry that everything would collapse. Our expectations were low. But her working style turned out to be similar to MC1 and MC2. (Ex corporator (BJP)1)*
- *MC 2's work was excellent. MC 3 is very good. She is not interested in politics, etc. She focuses on her work. (Councillor (Congress))*
- *In fact, MC3 is more creative than the MC1 and MC2. (Representative NGO2)*
- *The tenure of commissioners in the IMC has been three years or so, which gives them time to deliver. (MC3)*

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<sup>27</sup> Gupta and Sachdeva (2021)

The support of local politicians solidified as well, as they took pride in the achievement. More IMC councillors began to take up activities regarding sanitation in their wards. Even the opposition councillors lent their support.

#### **Box E 2: Comments on Strengthening Local Political Support**

- *I did a lot of things in my ward. Then other corporators saw it and also started doing things. There was a competitive spirit. After all, everyone wanted to receive the first prize. And as people started appreciating and saluting us, it energised everyone. (Ex councillor (BJP – 1)*
- *The opposition political parties co-operated because it was a matter of pride for them too. Everyone wants the first prize. It is a matter of being proud of the city. It is a collective effort by all political parties. The present mayor is also committed to getting the prize. (Ex councillor (BJP – 2)*
- *Once, I remember there was a wedding in my family, after which a lot of garbage was left on the premises. I cleaned it myself. It was all over the newspapers. There is a video of me cleaning after the wedding on You Tube. The sanitation initiative did not happen because of one person, or the BJP; everyone contributed. Politics definitely played a role. The CM wanted Indore to be number one and it was important for him politically. Politicians will always look for political gains. Ultimately, it is the sanitation workers that made it happen. (MLA (Congress), and Ex-Minister)*

## **2 Continued Protection of Sanitation from Corruption**

As politicians began to take pride in a clean Indore, the agreement that MC1 had forged to keep sanitation free of corrupt activities became an established practice. NGO representatives who worked in sanitation attested to this, though one opposition councillor claimed that some corrupt practices still continued. While some corruption may have continued in sanitation, a critical shift that did come about was that its impact on performance declined very substantially. In particular, the earlier racket through which IMC councillors and officials made money by appointing ‘ghost’ sanitation workers diminished significantly. To quote an NGO representative:

*‘In Indore, MC1 ensured that there was no corruption in sanitation related activities. In other places, as soon as a leader changes, officials start asking for bribes. After the leadership change in Indore, there were a few minor attempts by sanitary inspectors, etc., to re-introduce corruption. For example, some sanitary inspectors complained that segregation is not good. But they did not succeed. We don’t pay any bribes in the IMC. In areas other than sanitation, the bribes and inefficiencies might be going on as usual.’*

If Indore's success had not been recognised publicly and continuing strong political support was lacking, it is possible that corruption in the old ways would have gradually returned in sanitation. But, at the time of the fieldwork of this case study, that had not happened on a significant scale.

### 3 Citizen Support

Citizens too began to view the IMC in a positive light. They took pride in the cleanliness of the city and co-operated with the IMC in keeping it clean. In IMC's subsequent initiatives, they were supportive and enthusiastic. As noted above, as the IMC succeeded, most citizens were willing to pay user charges for sanitation. Importantly, citizens became more supportive of sanitation workers as well. In many colonies, people felicitated the sanitation workers when the IMC was ranked number one and this practice continues (Box E3).

#### Box E 3: Comments on Citizen Support

- *When we started door-to-door garbage collection, people used to say, this will last for a month, no more. But when it succeeded, their views became more positive. After we removed the animals, we began to receive public support as well. Now citizens protest if anyone litters. (Ex-councillor (BJP) 1)*
- *When the door-to-door collection of garbage was successful, people started trusting the IMC. (IMC Official)*
- *Everyone felt very proud when Indore ranked number one in 2017. Good sanitation then became a public movement. (IMC Official)*
- *I joined NGO2 in 2019. When I joined, citizens were already co-operative. (Employee, NGO2)*
- *Citizens also liked the cleanliness and supported us. (Discussion with Zonal Officials).*
- *When Indore ranked number one, and sanitation workers were felicitated and recognised, earlier problems faded in people's minds. (Representative NGO 1)*

### 4 Improved Infrastructure and Equipment for Sanitation

By this time, the IMC had upgraded its physical infrastructure and equipment for sanitation significantly. It had good quality vehicles for transportation, a well-functioning vehicle repair workshop, modern GTs, etc. This enhanced its capacity to ensure cleanliness. Notably, the new sanitation infrastructure in the IMC was created while improving processes, with the latter leading. This meant that appropriate infrastructure was bought and used optimally.

## 5 Shifts in Organisational Culture

The organisational culture in the IMC began to change as well. One reason for this shift was the continued pressure on the IMC to rank number one in the sanitation survey. While there were political reasons for this pressure, the professional reputations of municipal commissioners that followed MC1 were at stake as well. Notably, the BJP lost the elections to the state legislature in December 2018, and Congress was in power for over a year. But the IMC continued to improve sanitation during this period. Similarly, when the term of the mayor and the councillors ended in December 2020, municipality elections were not held until July 2022 (COVID was cited as a reason). But the sanitation initiatives continued under the leadership of MC3.

After MC1, MC2 and MC3 too worked extremely hard, systematised the work, and innovated. This orientation penetrated all levels. The 'ghost' sanitation workers were replaced by sanitation workers who came on time and worked sincerely (Box E4).

### Box E 4: Comments on Changes in the IMC's Organisational Culture

- *This post is a huge burden and also very motivating. The burden is because we can't now slip from the number one position. It is motivating because you get output and recognition. In some posts, you work hard but getting results is difficult. (MC3)*
- *The sanitation work went on even when there was no political body in the corporation for a year and a half. (Ex-councillor (BJP) 2)*
- *MC2 took the work to the next level. He was cool and decisive. He set up many systems. He was not as aggressive as MC1 nor as open. (IMC Official)*
- *Each municipal commissioner has his or her own style. MC1 was aggressive. MC 2 was a very calm person. He continued what MC1 had done. MC3 takes up aspirational projects. (Representative NGO2)*
- *MC1, and then MC2 after him, had a lot of analysis done of gaps and technical solutions, and what can be done, especially regarding transportation of garbage. (Consultant X)*
- *MC3 goes out at 6 am to oversee the cleaning operations. And in her tenure, there were no councillors or mayor to help, and there was COVID. But we won the sanitation survey prize the fifth and sixth times. You will not believe this, but she had a son during this time and took only eight days' leave. If she had taken the six months' maternity leave that was due, everything would have collapsed. (Ex-councillor (BJP) 1)*
- *MC3 did excellent work during COVID. (Councillor (Congress))*
- *Officials conducted meetings with us, and we gave our inputs to improve the system. Some inputs which I gave are:*

- *All vehicles should be washed and greased at regular intervals so that they work smoothly. This suggestion was appreciated and adopted by the management.*
- *Every GTS should have one puncture repair team.*
- *A puncture repair kit should be given to each vehicle so that in an emergency they can repair the vehicle. Now every vehicle had a puncture repair kit. (Vehicle Supervisor)*
- *When IMC got the first prize in 2017, we all realised that we would have to work harder, and a feeling of competition set in among all the staff. The IMC adopted a more professional approach and now we are more focused on the task being completed in a given time. (Daroga)*
- *Once the sanitation workers improved, everything changed, the work culture, etc. (Union Leader)*

Not only did the more productive working style continue in sanitation, but MC1 extended these working processes to other activities as well, so that they became widespread within the IMC. For instance, it became ‘normal’ to set new organisational goals and work towards achieving them. Along with its achievements in sanitation, the IMC removed illegal hoardings and encroachments and took other measures to beautify the city. It constructed *rain baseras* (shelters for travellers). It also increased its revenue, which enabled it to undertake more initiatives. To quote an ex-municipal councillor:

*‘MC1 was very active, but we had very few resources and equipment at that time. Our annual income was only Rs.100 crore, out of which we paid for salaries, day-to-day expenses, etc. The electricity bill alone was Rs.5 to Rs.6 crore. We generated extra income by getting people to pay the house tax that they were not paying. People used to ask us, why are you harassing us?’ (Ex-councillor’ (BJP) 1)*

Careful planning, strategising and systematic working – the working processes that had led to success in sanitation – were visible in other activities as well. For example, to increase the IMC’s revenue, unregistered property was identified and registered, commercial property registered as residential property was identified, fines charged for illegal construction, etc. The practice of watching out for stakeholder interests was carried to other activities as well. When encroachments were removed, alternative housing was provided. At the same time, those who refused to abide by the law were dealt with firmly.

Importantly, the IMC’s efforts to engage citizens increased significantly and became part of its working ethos. Intensive IEC activities and subsequent co-operation from citizens made IMC officials realise the importance of citizen action and led them to view citizens positively as co-operative and helpful. During interviews, several IMC officials and councillors remarked on the importance of citizens as partners.

## CHAPTER VI BUILDING ON SUCCESS

By 2018, although the IMC had made significant headway in improving sanitation, the task was by no means complete. Many more issues needed to be addressed, such as the growing mountain of waste at the trenching ground, waste processing, upgrading the drainage system and so on. MC2 and MC3 worked on both these fronts. They strengthened and refined existing processes. They also worked towards new goals. Consequently, Indore continued to become cleaner.

### 1 Deepening and Systematising Previous Work

#### *a. Streamlining Garbage Collection*

To make door-to-door garbage collection more efficient, a system to monitor garbage collection vehicles was established. MC1 had initiated this idea, and MC2 worked on it diligently, establishing a control room and developing a system for continuous monitoring of garbage collection vehicles, using the Global Positioning System (GPS) and wireless sets. Consequently, timely movement of vehicles could be ensured and vehicles that broke down could be replaced quickly. Additionally, the IMC improved the quality of its vehicles and refined their route charts.

Moreover, it identified sites that generated bulk waste, such as hotels, hospitals, etc., and mapped this waste. As per GoI guidelines, waste was to be collected separately from sites generating more than 100 kilograms of waste, but the IMC reduced this limit to 10 kilograms, as it proved to be more efficient (Box F1).

#### **Box F 1: Comments on Streamlining Garbage Collection**

- *Another problem that we faced when we started door-to-door garbage collection was that sometimes the vehicle would not reach and people would complain. Then MC1 began working on a control room and MC2 completed it in 2019. Now we know where each vehicle is. (Discussion with Zonal officials)*
- *MC2 sat in my zone office for eight days to work out a plan for a door-to-door collection vehicle. He made the route chart, calculated the time for each stop, etc. Then he shared it with everyone. (Assistant Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *A new management and support system was set up, which included a vehicle puncture repair team and a mechanical team. If any faults appear in a vehicle, the driver communicates with the workshop and they send a team to solve the problem. Now, all the vehicles have a hydraulic system and the power steering makes it easy to drive as well. Battery-operated autorickshaws are used to pick up garbage from narrow streets. (Vehicle Supervisor 1)*

### **b. Improving Waste Segregation**

The IMC began by segregating wet and dry waste. In 2019, the Gol suggested segregation of waste in three categories: wet, dry plastic and dry non-plastic. This was followed. Subsequently, the waste segregation categories increased from two to six. An employee of NGO 2 reported that when she joined in 2019, waste was segregated into four categories, but now it was segregated into six. As the residents of colony 2 reported during an FGD:

*‘Every year, provisions were added to separate different types of waste like glass, cloth, plastic and sanitary waste. It was very difficult to follow. But if we did not follow, the garbage collectors would object and impose fines. Gradually, we got used to it.’*

Further, waste segregation did not remain limited to households. Big waste producers such as hotels and hospitals were required to provide segregated waste as well. IMC sweepers too began to separate dry and waste in two different bags.

### **c. Enhancing Cleanliness in Public Places**

The cleanliness of public places remained high on the agenda. MC1 had introduced night sweeping in some parts of the city and MC 2 extended it to the whole city. There was some opposition from sanitation workers, but IMC officials negotiated the transition by talking to the workers and making adjustments. No women sanitation workers were put on the night shift. Some workers preferred the night shift, as it enabled them to hold two jobs. Notably, after the IMC’s initial successes, conflict between the management and sanitation workers over work reduced very significantly, and when it arose, was negotiated.

Another initiative taken in 2020, led by MC3, in response to a Gol protocol for city beautification, was to clean back lanes. Back lanes had earlier been garbage dumping sites. Now they were cleaned and beautified and became places where children could play. To quote an IMC official:

*‘A hundred back lanes have been improved in this way. This is MC3’s initiative. People can see the benefits of this; children are playing, people are doing puja (praying) in the back lanes.’*

### **d. Partnership with Civil Society and Citizens**

Importantly, the IMC deepened its alliance with civil society and citizens. It continued its collaboration with NGOs, especially for IEC activities. The two NGOs whose representatives were interviewed in this study had joined the sanitation initiative when it began in 2016 and were still collaborating with the IMC as the fieldwork for this study ended in 2023. They had become long-term partners and valued their collaboration with the IMC.

At the same time, IEC activities increased in scale and sophistication. Citizens were encouraged to take up their own sanitation campaigns in schools, markets, etc. In fact, collaboration with citizens became a major feature of all IMC activities. To quote an NGO representative:

*‘Community participation continued in MC2’s time. MC3 has embedded community participation more deeply into all activities of the IMC. If a jingle is to be made, the community is asked to propose jingles, and the best is selected.’*

An important development is the establishment of a helpline whereby citizens can complain. This is monitored diligently within the IMC, so that complaints are addressed promptly.

#### ***e. Alliance with Sanitation Workers***

The alliance that was formed between the senior management of the IMC and sanitation workers also continued and strengthened. Both MC2 and MC3 adopted a positive approach towards sanitation workers and remained friendly with union leaders. This meant that all personnel in the IMC continued to work towards organisational goals. To quote a sanitation workers’ union leader:

*‘Politicians try to mislead people and create trouble. Officers have helped us a lot, but politicians have worked against us. We got a lot done in the period when there were no elections to the IMC. When supporters of a prominent politician beat up an officer, at least we ensured that his son went to jail for 15 days. I helped MC2 in this. MC2 took care of the administrative side to ensure that the miscreants were punished, and I took care of the people side. MC3 takes a lot of care of the health of sanitation workers.’*

## **2 New Initiatives**

### ***a. Removal of Legacy Waste***

As noted earlier, a mountain of waste had built up on the trenching ground where all the garbage was dumped. In 2016, MC1 had attempted to remove this legacy waste. The IMC had obtained screening machines to separate the waste through bioremediation into wet waste (which was fertile), plastic waste (to be given to cement factories to use as fuel), and stones, etc., (to put in land-fill sites). Some 5000 tonnes of waste was separated, but the process was not completed.

In 2018, when MC2 took charge, there was a protocol from the GoI to finish all legacy waste. The IMC floated a tender for the job and selected a company. But the company did not deploy enough machinery and could not process the waste. Once again, the IMC took charge. MC2 sought advice from Consultant X, and subsequently, the IMC procured screening machines and operators. The legacy waste area was divided into 20 sectors. For bioremediation, several agencies were contracted and allotted sectors. It took a year to process the waste. During this exercise, various types of gases were released, and many workers fell ill.

But by 2019, the legacy waste was cleared. There was significant public recognition of this effort and MC2 received many accolades. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) appreciated Indore’s efforts and directed all state governments to work as per the Indore model.

As in the case of garbage segregation, a Gol protocol played a role in the removal of legacy waste. Moreover, as for garbage collection, outsourcing to a single private company failed for legacy waste too. Instead, the IMC took charge and got advice from a good expert. Then, multiple private agencies were recruited for specific tasks.

### ***b. Waste Processing***

Once the IMC succeeded in segregating various types of waste, it became possible to process them. Technical advice was taken from Consultant X once again, and two major plants were set up in Indore to process waste through a public-private partnership model. For this, the trenching ground, now free of legacy waste, was divided into three parts. The major portion of the land remained with the IMC and was converted into a garden, but two parcels of land were provided to two companies to process waste.

Company B was contracted to process dry waste. In return, it agreed to pay Rs.1.5 crore per annum to the IMC. Dry waste is provided to it as it is received, and it screens 18 types of waste to send to different types of recyclers. In 2019, the IMC again sought advice from Consultant X to process wet waste and floated tenders for private sector partnership for a bio-methanation plant. Company C was selected for the job. Notably, company C had taken samples of the wet waste generated in Indore for over a year, satisfied itself that it was pure, and then decided to set up a compressed natural gas (CNG) plant, using technology obtained with German collaboration. Company C too was allotted land at the trenching ground. In February 2021, the CNG plant, with a capacity of 550 metric tonnes, was established. Company C pays the IMC Rs.2.60 crore per year as revenue. Besides, it has to sell up to 50 per cent of the CNG produced at the plant at discounted rates to the IMC for its transportation system. Additionally, several erstwhile rag pickers who lost their livelihoods as waste processing began, have been recruited by Company C.

For electronic and domestic hazardous waste, the IMC entered into memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with different companies. In addition, some wet waste processing is done on site, such as in marriage gardens, hotels, etc. The IMC gives organisations that process their own waste some concessions, such as reduced user charges. For small hotels, common processing facilities have been created. Citizens have also been encouraged to do home composting, for which NGOs provide technical guidance.

In recent years, the IMC has focussed on processing waste continuously on site. For this, the concept of 'zero waste ward' was started; all the waste in a ward is processed within the ward. A model was developed with the help of NGO 2 and taken forward. In addition, in collaboration with NGOs, the IMC has developed a 'Waste to Wonder' park, i.e., a garden made out of waste material (Box F2).

## Box F 2: Comments on Waste Processing

- *The bio-methanation proposal was made in 2019, and Consultant X was involved in the technical work. Earlier, the IMC had a small composting plant in the trenching ground. This was removed and the land was handed over for the bio-methanation plant. (IMC Official)*
- *The bio-methanation project was tendered on the basis of royalty sharing in August 2020. Our company offered a royalty of Rs.2.5 crore per year, which was the highest. The plant was inaugurated in February 2021 by the PM. We employ around 80 former rag pickers for housekeeping functions and sorting work. (Representative Company C)*
- *We have encouraged people to make compost from waste in their houses. We connect with various stakeholders, such as farmers, and encourage people to take selfies with their compost bins. We tell people that if they have more compost than they can use, they can give it to community gardens. (IMC Official)*
- *We worked on a 'Waste to Wonder' park, a garden made from waste material. It was the brainchild of the IMC. MC3 said that we should create a garden out of waste. We did a study, conceptualised the park and made a presentation at the IMC. As the park was being made, MC1 (now district collector Indore) and MC3 visited it regularly to discuss the design, etc. It has a children's play area. There is a compost pit where leaves, waste, etc., from the park are used. A small lotus pond has been made in an old tub. A statue of Mahatma Gandhi has been made out of bottle caps. (Employee, NGO 2)*
- *We have also worked on a zero-waste ward. The concept is to not to take any waste out of the ward but process it there. To begin with, we selected one ward and did in-depth profiling to see if it would be a good site for a pilot. We get a lot of information about various areas because we are embedded there. We selected a ward that had a zero-waste housing society. We created a waste segregation facility. In this ward, waste is segregated into 16 categories. Plastic waste is processed by a machine. There is a compost pit for wet waste. We buy dry waste from citizens. IEC is very important. It has to be done daily. If you leave it, then people stop doing segregation, etc. We did a workshop with citizens. This concept was not there in any Gol guidelines. This was the first zero waste ward. (Employee, NGO 2).*
- *Six wards are now zero waste. (IMC Official)*
- *Big garbage producers are asked to convert their wet waste into compost. If they can't use the compost, then the IMC can also purchase it from them. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*

### **c. Sewerage and Nala Trapping**

As noted above, sewer pipelines were laid in various projects in Indore before the sanitation initiative of 2015. However, there were gaps in the secondary and tertiary level drains, and dirty water flowed into Indore's two rivers and six big *nalas* (drains).

As GoI protocols were received that no untreated sewerage be released into any natural water source and there be 30 per cent reuse of treated water, an exercise was taken up to create secondary and tertiary drains to connect all sewer lines to the main sewerage system. Where this was not possible, sewerage treatment plants (STPs) were built. The water was treated before it was released into the river. This exercise too was undertaken with public participation. At times, poor people spent Rs.25,000 to Rs.30,000 to connect the tertiary lines from their houses. There was good media coverage of the effort.

#### **Box F 3: Comments on Nala Trapping**

- *Earlier, some of the dirty water was discharged into the river. Then we did nala trapping. In this, drains were made to connect sewer lines to the main sewerage system. Where this was not possible, sewerage treatment plants (STPs) were constructed. This was done on a war footing. Citizens also contributed. Those who had open lines put pipes. Now no dirty water goes into the river. There is fish in the river. (Zonal Officer, IMC)*
- *After the SBM protocols to not release dirty water into natural water sources, there is more focussed effort on laying interconnecting lines and making household connections. So far, 1746 major outfalls and 5624 domestic outfalls have been trapped. In the industrial area, we have set up a facility for combined treatment of sewerage and industrial effluents. (IMC Official).*
- *A lot of work was done in sewerage too. We did nala tapping where dirty water was going into the nalas. Where this was not possible, we built STPs. (Discussion with Zonal officials)*
- *When we worked on connecting water ways in slums, citizens connected water lines. (MC3)*

**CHAPTER VII**  
**SANITATION IN INDORE AFTER THE INITIATIVE**

Over the course of eight years, between 2015 and 2023, the IMC improved sanitation in Indore substantially, although some issues remained unaddressed. During FGDs in the three sample colonies, as citizens commented on the situation before and after the sanitation initiative, they remarked that public areas were much cleaner, stray cows and pigs had been removed, the foul smell that had existed earlier had gone, flies and mosquitoes had reduced and clean public toilets were available. The quality of their environment had changed. In one colony, benches had been put at an erstwhile garbage dumping area, and it had become a place for residents to sit and chat. However, citizens reported that there were problems of leakages although drainage had improved and stray dogs still littered the streets (Box G1).

**Box G 1: Discussions during FGDs in Sample Colonies about the Sanitation Situation Before and After the Initiative**

Colony	Situation before initiative	Situation after initiative
Colony 1	<p>There was dirt, garbage, cow dung, excreta of dogs and pigs everywhere, big heaps of garbage and plastic in all corners, stray animals in the streets.</p> <p>The colony had some open drains, but the drainage system was very inadequate, so wastewater flowed everywhere. The <i>nala</i> was full of garbage.</p> <p>There was a public toilet, but it was very dirty.</p> <p>There was a foul smell and lots of mosquitos and flies; so, people would fall ill.</p>	<p>There are no garbage heaps in public areas, and the streets are much cleaner. No cattle and pigs roam around, but stray dogs remain and dirty the streets. The foul smell is gone, mosquitoes and flies have reduced, and people don't fall ill as often.</p> <p>The colony has a sewage and drainage system. The nala still has a lot of garbage, though less than earlier.</p> <p>The public toilet was reconstructed in 2019 and it is clean. Everyone can use it, and no fee is charged.</p>
Colony 2	<p>The colony had bins where people dumped garbage. Garbage used to overflow from the bins. Stray cows, dogs and pigs would eat at these points and spread the garbage and filth further.</p> <p>There were no public toilets, so people urinated in open spaces.</p>	<p>Now there are no garbage collection bins and the colony is much cleaner. Stray cows and pigs are no longer in the colony, but dogs remain. There is no open defecation.</p> <p>Mosquitoes and bed bugs have reduced significantly.</p> <p>However, the drainage system has leaks, and there is not enough repair.<sup>28</sup></p> <p>This is a huge issue.</p>

<sup>28</sup> Citizens said that this was because of lack of co-ordination between contractors who laid the main pipelines and contractors who did the work subsequently.

Colony 3	<p>We were living in hell. We had lots of problems because of garbage and dirty smell in the colony. There was a dirty, stinking corner where garbage was dumped, on the street from which we exited the colony, and it was difficult to cross it. The garbage was not lifted regularly from the garbage point and the cows used to eat plastic. There was a public toilet. Everyone used it, no one maintained it, and it was filthy.</p>	<p>Our colony is clean, as can be seen. There are no excreta from cows, and cows do not die because of eating plastic, etc. The dump yard corner is now clean. The municipality has put benches in it, where residents sit to talk and gossip. The mosquitoes and flies have decreased but not gone completely. Now, the public toilet is closed. This has increased cleanliness, and there is no foul smell.</p>
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Below, the successes and failures of the IMC in the various measures it undertook to improve sanitation are discussed.

### 1 Door-to-Door Garbage Collection

The door-to-door garbage collection system is very effective, though in poorer colonies it is less so. Even the severest critics admit this success, as do citizens, sanitation workers, officials and NGO representatives. In sample colony 1, where poor people live, a researcher observed:

*‘When the garbage collection vehicle came to the slum as per schedule, everyone was ready with their household waste, segregated in two bins. The bins were not blue and green, but there was a system to give segregated garbage. People waited until the vehicle stopped and gave their garbage bags.’*

Moreover, different methods are used to collect garbage from various types of areas. It is collected separately from bulk garbage producers regularly; short-term arrangements are made to collect waste from construction sites and hand carts are used in narrow streets.

While garbage collection is a definite success, a social activist remarked that keeping garbage inside the house than throwing it on the road results in release of more methane gas, where it is released quickly in the atmosphere, an argument often made by environmentalists. However, it could be argued that the negative consequence on health if garbage is allowed to remain in public places can be significant. This type of cost-benefit analysis is beyond the scope of this case study, but from the point of view of public management, the IMC set a goal for door-to-door garbage collection, and achieved it (Box G3).

### **Box G 2: Comments on the Garbage Collection System**

- *One good thing that has happened is the door-to-door garbage collection system. There is no garbage, etc., on the roads now. MC1 made a big contribution in this. Also, they gave jobs to many rag pickers. (IMC Councillor (Congress))*
- *Our vehicles stop at various points, fifty or so metres apart, where people come to give garbage. The vehicles start at seven in the morning every day. For old or sick people, we collect garbage from their doorstep. (Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *Garbage collection has happened, but in some poor colonies, it is not as good. In poor colonies, it is around fifty per cent. (MLA (Congress), ex Minister)*
- *In small streets, hand carts are used to get garbage from houses to garbage collection vehicles. If the hand cart can't go, then sanitation workers go and collect garbage from a single spot. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*
- *Bulk garbage collection system vehicles are different and have the GPS system as well. There is a separate supervisor for bulk garbage collection vehicles. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*
- *Garbage collection has happened. Earlier, people used to throw out garbage when a bag was full. Now it is kept in the house the whole day, till the door-to-door collection vehicle comes. And if someone misses it, it is kept for two days. This leads to more methane gas in the house, as garbage keeps lying around. Garbage on the road meant that methane gas was released quickly in the atmosphere. (Social Activist)*

## **2 Waste Segregation at Source**

The IMC has succeeded in segregating waste at source. Households provide six types of segregated waste. Large waste producers such as hotels too provide segregated waste. Officials remain extremely vigilant about segregation. According to a representative of Company C, this achievement is unique to Indore, and no other Indian municipality segregates all its waste (Box G3).

### **Box G 3: Comments on Waste Segregation**

- *The company was impressed with the quality of waste in Indore. It was fully segregated. We analysed the waste quality before we bid for the CNG project. Source segregation requires four things: infrastructure, capacity building, mass awareness and standard operating procedures (SOPs). All this was done systematically in Indore. No other city does 100 per cent segregation, although many are now doing it partially. Mysore, Bangalore, Bhopal, all the top 10 cities in the sanitation survey have made a beginning. (Representative Company C)*
- *Now six types of garbage have to be separated. Where is the need for all this? It's a shot in the dark. (Councillor (Congress))*
- *I have come here recently from Ujjain. In Ujjain, there is no segregation of garbage. (Official, Trenching Ground)*
- *Now, in hotels, etc., organic waste convertors have been installed. They give us segregated waste. There are 72 vehicles that take waste separately from large waste producers. (IMC Official)*
- *There is an entry system at each GTS. If any vehicle gets mixed garbage at the GTS, then the team follows it up and ensures that it does not happen again. (Vehicle Supervisor)*

### **3 Waste Transportation**

The IMC has established an efficient system of transporting the waste that is collected from households, streets and bulk waste producers through its ten modern garbage transfer stations. In these GTSs, segregated garbage is collected in separate areas and then sent for processing. As garbage collection vehicles bring segregated waste in separate bags from households, the bags are emptied in their allotted area. This is followed by some manual sorting by sanitation workers at the GTS. Subsequently, different types of waste materials are put in separate larger vehicles that carry them to the processing sites. Organic waste is loaded into capsules and sent for bio-methanation (Box G4).

**Box G 4: Visit to a Waste Transfer (November 2022)**

*According to the official-in-charge, the GTS was started in 2017 and expanded in 2018. Earlier, it was an open garbage dump. The GTS area is covered at the top, but open on all sides. There are six compartments or demarcated spaces for 6 types of waste: plastic waste, e-waste, sanitary waste, hazardous waste, dry waste and wet waste. The GTS was clean and well-maintained. At the time of the visit, workers were slotting waste unloaded from a garbage collection vehicle in different areas.*

*The GTS-in charge reported that the GTS has a staff of twenty-five. Several hundred vehicles reach the station every day. Waste is collected in the morning, and work goes on until three in the afternoon. Then there is an evening shift for waste from commercial establishments*

*Near the trenching ground, a large number of IMC trucks carrying waste from GTSs could be seen. These were either 'capsule' trucks or regular dumpers, covered and tied down in tarpaulin.*

**4 Keeping Public Places Clean**

The IMC deploys a range of strategies to ensure cleanliness in public places. It ensures meticulous sweeping and cleaning. Of the 17 sanitation workers who had been with the IMC long enough to assess change, seven said that they were now required to clean more thoroughly than before. The main roads of the city are swept at night between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. Markets are swept thrice a day. A sanitation agency has been contracted for this job. They have teams of sanitation workers who use sweeping machines, wash the roads with jet machines and collect dust with vacuum cleaners.

Preventive measures have been taken as well. The removal of stray animals has made an important contribution. However, while cows have been removed, pigs remain in some places and stray dogs are a problem. There are stringent Supreme Court guidelines on measures that can be taken against stray dogs. They can be sterilised but not removed. The IMC has not been able to address this issue. In addition, many new public toilets have been built. While earlier, public toilets used to be dirty, now there is a dedicated team to clean them; they are well-maintained. All toilets have basic facilities, a functional system and supply of water. There are paid toilets as well, charging Rs.5 for toilet and Rs.10 for bathing (Box G5).

#### **Box G 5: Comments on Cleanliness in Public Places**

- *We do evening sweeping. Markets are swept three times a day. In the morning, we sweep residential areas. Now we do machine sweeping at night. Indore has become dust-free. (Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *Different areas have different systems according to the quantum of garbage production in that area. In the 'Sarafa' (bullion) market, a large quantity of garbage is produced at night, so, a special night shift team works in the area. When the crowds increase, more staff is provided. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*
- *Earlier, the number of public toilets at common places was very inadequate. Moreover, the toilets were not maintained properly, and water was not available all the time. The toilets were full of urine and human excreta and had a foul smell. It was very difficult to use them, and people used to urinate at other public places. Now the number of toilets has increased, and they are well-maintained. All the toilets have basic facilities and water, and there is a dedicated team to clean them. People do not use other common areas to urinate. (Sanitation worker cleaning public toilets)*
- *Cows have been removed but there are pigs and dogs all over the city and make it dirty. There are syndicates around the trade in pigs and dogs (MLA (Congress), Ex-Minister)*

Perhaps the IMC's most remarkable achievement is that it has persuaded citizens to change their behaviour regarding sanitation. IMC officials and sanitation workers reported that most citizens did not litter or indulge in other unsanitary practices. However, a few people continued to transgress rules. This was especially the case with people from outside Indore, such as students. Consequently, IMC officials and sanitation workers remain vigilant. They counsel people, and impose fines as needed (Box G6).

#### **Box G 6: Comments on Behaviour Change Among Citizens**

- *Earlier, people burnt garbage in the colony but now it has stopped. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *Earlier, citizens would throw garbage anywhere, but now they throw it only in the bins installed in public areas. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *I feel that now the system has been established. People follow rules. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *The number of people throwing wrappers, plastic or other waste in public places has reduced drastically. But many people still litter. The majority of these are educated people. (Sanitation Worker)*

- *Most citizens follow basic rules of sanitation and cleanliness such as waste segregation, giving waste on time, not throwing garbage in public spaces, etc. But twenty per cent of citizens, especially people from elsewhere, still require follow-up and monitoring. (Zone Supervisor)*
- *Generally, citizens don't litter in Indore. They take a lot of pride in the city. We fine those who do. (Assistant Revenue Officer, IMC)*
- *Students who come from small towns where cleanliness is not top priority are not used to such a system. They often litter. (Daroga)*
- *Today, no one litters. If any one does, other people stop them. (IMC Official)*
- *Sanitary inspectors have been provided with spot fine machines. The machines have a system that if a person litters repeatedly, then the fine amount increases. Two-time defaulters are converted into regular littering persons. But these are rare. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*

Citizens confirmed this scenario during FGDs in the three sample colonies. Citizens said that they were vigilant about unsanitary practices, stopped people from indulging in them, and in some cases, cleaned the streets as well. Moreover, conflicts over garbage disposal that had existed earlier had ceased, because the rules were clear, and a majority of people followed them (Box G7).

**Box G 7: Discussions during FGDs in Sample Colonies about Previous and Current Citizen Practices regarding Sanitation**

Colony	Previous Citizen practices	Current Citizen practices
Colony 1	<p>Citizens threw garbage around the area where garbage bins were placed.</p> <p>Very few houses had toilets. There was a public toilet, but it was very dirty. Children defecated and urinated in the street or in open drains.</p> <p>People only kept the area in front of their houses clean. There were conflicts if someone put garbage in front of someone else's house. Heated arguments were common.</p>	<p>Children, teenagers and adults know about segregation and cleanliness. When we saw the changes in our slum, we realised that it is good for us.</p> <p>We do not throw garbage in public places but give it to the garbage collection vehicle. If we miss the vehicle, we go to the IMC vehicle and dump it. Children do not defecate in drains and open areas. At times, citizens themselves clean the streets. Still, five to ten per cent of people throw garbage in the <i>nala</i> at night.</p> <p>Now, all households have toilets in their houses, though the amount paid by the IMC to construct toilets was not sufficient.</p> <p>We are happy because the area is clean, and we are living in better conditions.</p>

Colony 2	<p>Earlier, people threw garbage in vacant plots at night. This garbage flew back to the houses opposite, which annoyed the house residents. It also flew back to the colony, making it dirtier.</p> <p>We wanted cleanliness but lacked a support system from the IMC to achieve it.</p>	<p>Now, everyone gives garbage to the garbage collection vehicle only. Even if the vehicle does not come, residents do not throw garbage outside but keep it at home. We cannot throw garbage here and there as earlier. People also keep their courtyards clean. But twenty per cent of the people still litter.</p> <p>When there is a lot of garbage from a house, the vehicle team does not take it. Then, people throw garbage in the open ground at night. Sometimes garbage is not cleared from public places.</p> <p>Once public toilets were built, people stopped using public places to urinate. After the sanitation drive, the residents have got new hope. We support the municipality team wholeheartedly and have changed our colony into a clean one.</p>
Colony 3	<p>People often threw garbage in the street, and not in the designated area. They would not listen even when others objected, which created lots of problems. There were fights among residents. Children would defecate and urinate at the sides of drains.</p> <p>We did not try to do anything about cleanliness. We did not value sanitation. We thought that it was the municipality's job and they should do it properly.</p>	<p>There are no fights about throwing garbage on the streets now. We wait for the garbage collection vehicle to dispose of garbage.</p> <p>We try to keep the colony clean. We are happy about the cleanliness. This changed our thinking too. Now we teach children to clean the house and our residential area. We feel good that we are part of this arrangement. We realised that we needed to co-operate fully with the IMC.</p>

## 5 Waste Processing

All the waste from GTSs goes to the trenching ground. The garbage mountain that once existed there has disappeared. Instead, the trenching ground has a city forest developed by the IMC and the processing plants of Company 2 and 3 to process dry and wet waste respectively. The city forest created by the IMC in the trenching ground spans 147 acres. The forest has teak, *saagi*, *jamun*, apple and other trees. Vegetables and sugar cane are grown as well, which the staff take away. The trees are medium sized and the plantation is dense. There are 88 workers in the area to tend to the forest and make peat from green waste such as leaves.

The waste that goes to the trenching ground is weighed and then sent straight away for processing. Company 2 sorts dry waste, and sends it further on to re-cyclers it has contracted, and that are registered with the pollution control board. It pays the IMC Rs.1 crore per year as revenue (Box G8).

#### **Box G 8: Processing Dry Waste**

*A site visit to the plant showed that workers (mainly women) sort the non-hazardous dry waste of various types, such as plastic, paper etc., manually and place it on different conveyor belts. This waste is subsequently sorted by size by ballistic machines that have industrial cameras. An employee reported that the cyclable waste, i.e., of more than 50mm diameter, is made into bales and sold to various recyclers. Waste of less than 50 mm diameter is not recyclable and is used to make refuse-derived fuel (RDF). All the waste received in a day is recycled on the same day.*

The plant set up by Company C has a capacity to handle 500 tonnes of waste from gardens, vegetable markets, gardens, etc., per day. For every tonne of waste, 40 kilograms of CNG is generated. In the plant, 17000 kg of natural gas and 100 tonnes of compost can be generated per day. To run the plant, CNG and solar panels are used. Half of the CNG gas is bought by the IMC for its city buses, and the rest is sold to industrial and commercial users. The compost is bought by fertiliser companies. Company C pays Rs.2.25 crore per annum to the IMC. Many officials and experts visit the plant, and the National Green Tribunal chairperson was a recent visitor.

The construction and demolition (C &D) waste goes to another plant, and the IMC has MoUs with several companies for other types of waste such as electronic waste, hazardous waste, etc. The officials interviewed reported that the IMC now processes almost all its waste. Some solid waste is sent to a landfill, but that is less than one per cent of the total waste. This meets pollution control standards. Officials of the state pollution control board have been impressed by Indore's compliance with its standards and tell officials of other cities about it.

In addition, several citizens have started processing waste as well. For example, in colony 2, during FGDs, residents reported that many people now made compost from the waste from their kitchens and used it in their own gardens.

## **6 Sewerage**

IMC has had some success in cleaning up water bodies and improving sewerage. As per officials, the underground drainage system is now near universal, and only 434 septic tanks remain in Indore. It has also laid drainage lines where they did not exist. For instance, in colony 1, during FGDs, residents reported that there had been no drainage lines earlier. Consequently, people did not construct toilets in their houses because septic tanks were needed to dispose of waste and people could not afford them. During the sanitation drive,

drainage lines were laid and residents constructed toilets. A sanitation worker too reported that broader drainage lines had been laid in many areas. Moreover, drainage problems are addressed swiftly because of the helpline. The IMC has improved its system for cleaning drain lines and chambers as well. It has also created secondary and tertiary drainage lines to ensure that no dirty water flows into rivers and *nalas*.

But this success has been quite limited, and the drainage system has many shortcomings. An opposition MLA said that dirty water was still being discharged in some ponds and sewerage remained a problem in the outer parts of the city. Though the level of filth in river and *nala* has declined substantially, more work is needed. As indicated in Box G1 above, in colony 1, the *nala* continues to have garbage and residents admitted that some people still dump garbage in it. According to a social activist, there were many flaws in the construction of the drainage system, and the whole approach to cleaning water sources itself is faulty. Significant funds have been spent to ensure that there are no flowers, leaves, etc. in the river, but industrial waste remains a problem. Moreover, the river has been beautified and the banks painted, but the colour of the paint will flow into the river over time. Additionally, a new problem has arisen. Earlier, when there were open drains, rainwater would collect in them and be carried to the rivers and *naalas*. Now that there are no open drains, the rainwater comes on to the road. For this, a storm water drainage system is needed, but there are no funds to build one. (Box G9).

#### **Box G 9: Comments about the Sewerage System**

- *According to our last survey, there were 434 septic tanks remaining in Indore. Sewage treatment plants are outsourced. And we have data on how much is being treated. The effect of SBM is that we do not have maintenance delays in the sewerage system. The help line has made this much more efficient. (IMC Official)*
- *The sewerage and nala tapping is a failure. In Bedawari talab, dirty water is still discharged. I have raised my voice about this. They say that they will address this later. At the outer edges of the city, sewerage is still a problem. (MLA (Congress), Ex-Minister)*
- *The whole approach to water is wrong. Someone in Delhi takes a decision that there should be no flowers, leaves, dead bodies in rivers. But these have always been in the rivers, and rivers have been fine. Yet, Rs.40 crore is spent in ensuring that there are no flowers, leaves, etc., in the river. Then, there has been beautification of the river by painting the embankments. The colour will all go into the river. The problems are not these, but other things. The natural flow of the river is stopped through check dams, etc. River is nature. Attempts to change it will fail. They have cleaned the river in the middle. What use is that? Actually, they don't even know how many kilometres of river we have. During COVID, the rivers became cleaner. Why? Because industrial waste reduced. Industrial waste is the main problem. I had made a plan for the river,*

but MC2 did not agree with it. He said that de-silting was needed every year. He could have got me to supervise the whole nala cleaning operation, but he did not. Officers made money right under his nose. (Social Activist)

- Now we have a better system to understand the drainage system. We have more machines such as dividing machines to conduct searches, the desilting machine to clean and we use the jetting machine too. The machines are in good condition. (Sanitation worker)
- Earlier, the drainage system was not very good in most areas. The drainage line was very small in size, only 6 inches and this caused choking. A 6-inch drainage line had the sewerage of 50 houses. While cleaning these lines, we would see napkins, paper, etc., coming from the drainage line. During the sanitation initiative, bigger pipes were laid in many areas. This reduced choking in most areas, but it still happens. (Sanitation worker)

## 7 Summing Up

Indore’s sanitation system is not perfect, and many issues remain to be addressed. But the haphazard and ineffective system that once existed has been replaced by a highly organised and effective one. Citizens take pride in the city and do their bit to ensure that the city remains clean (Box G10).

### Box G 10: Discussions during FGDs in Sample Colonies about Previous and Current Sanitation Practices of IMC

Colony	Previous cleaning systems	Current cleaning systems
Colony 1	Sweepers cleaned the area at the cost of <i>roti</i> (bread). Sometimes residents gave them money and gifts during the festival season. <sup>29</sup> There was a point identified by the IMC where the garbage bin was kept. Most people threw garbage at this point. Garbage was lifted from the bin once in a while. There was a garbage heap at the place.	Early in the morning, the IMC team cleans the streets. There is door-to-door garbage collection. There are no garbage bins in public areas. Drains have been constructed. The drainage line is cleaned on a regular basis. The <i>nala</i> was cleaned by the IMC recently. The fogging machine comes every 10-15 days for pest control.
Colony 2	From 1995 to 2015, the husband of the woman who swept the streets collected garbage from every house and put it in the garbage bins placed at various	The IMC has started collecting garbage from house to house. The garbage collection vehicle comes twice a day. If it breaks down, alternative arrangements are made. Waste is not burnt.

<sup>29</sup> Residents were not clear if these were IMC employees.

	<p>points by the IMC. He charged Rs 25 per month per household. The garbage bins were not picked up regularly, nor were they cleaned. The colony remained dirty. The garbage only got out of people's houses but often remained on the streets.</p>	<p>All garbage collection bins have been removed and empty plots cleaned. Community toilets have been built, and builders have to arrange toilets for workers. This has reduced filth in public places. The IMC has ensured that people don't throw garbage in public places. But drains are not cleaned regularly. There was a flood in a nearby colony last year because of poor drainage. The work on the drain was done two years ago, and it was done in a hurry. The IMC got a prize, but the work is not good.</p>
Colony 3	<p>For garbage collection, bins were kept at common points. They got filled quickly, and the garbage scattered all around. Many times, stray animals got into it and spread it further. Everyone threw garbage at a corner, as it was convenient to do so while going out for work.</p> <p>IMC sweepers did not come regularly. They would come sometimes after we complained, then they would ask for money to clean, and did not do so if money was not paid. We used to negotiate the rates with them, and then they cleaned our area.</p>	<p>Garbage collection vehicles come to collect garbage. The IMC sweeping staff comes to clean and you can see how clean our colony is now. Now the street is swept three times a day. Public toilets have been built.</p> <p>But we still struggle to clean our drains. The drainage chamber needs regular cleaning, but it is not cleaned when we request. The IMC workers do not come on time and ask for money to clean drains, though it is actually their job.</p>

As noted above, the IMC's success with cleaning water sources and sewerage has been inadequate. Although drains have been built and drain cleaning services are provided, there are many construction defects. Moreover, at times, the IMC has been more concerned with beautification than hygiene and the environment, as in the case of painting river embankments.

To quote the severest critic of the sanitation effort encountered during the fieldwork:

*'Still, I would say that in spite of all the problems, Indore is better than other cities. Some things have been done.'* (Social Activist)

## CHAPTER VIII LESSONS IN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

### 1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the key public management practices that led to the IMC's success. These practices emerged as the IMC made determined efforts to succeed, transforming not only the sanitation scenario in Indore, but the IMC itself. Many of these practices have been identified at various places in the previous chapters. However, it is important to view them together because, though many of these management practices are recognised as effective working methods in the academic literature on public management and public administration, in India, public officials are not mandated to follow them.<sup>30</sup> Some public managers learn these productive working methods through experience, but many do not. Additionally, there is little discourse or research regarding what good public management entails and consequently government personnel are not trained to follow them.

### 2 Key Public Management Strategies

#### *a. Leadership Strategies*

An important ingredient of the IMC's success were the leadership strategies that its municipal commissioners followed. The three municipal commissioners had different leadership styles: MC1 had a 'dashing' persona, while MC2 and MC3 led more quietly. But of importance here are some working styles that they had in common, which find resonance in the academic literature on effective leadership in organisations.<sup>31</sup> Each leader understood his or her role in the context that he or she inherited. MC1 was pivotal to the process and turned the sanitation scenario in Indore around. MC2 and MC3 recognised what had been achieved, strengthened it, and built on the gains made.<sup>32</sup> All three leaders took full responsibility and were decisive. But they also consulted experts and encouraged IMC officials to contribute ideas and innovate. At the same time, they protected the initiative from those who sought to derail it. All the leaders worked extremely hard and led by example. All showed concern about employees' welfare.

#### *b. Protection from Clientelism and Corruption*

Before MC1 could follow effective management strategies, such as motivating workers and systematising work, he had to break the corruption racket around sanitation, especially the existence of 'ghost' workers. The significant reduction in corruption in sanitation, even though some corrupt practices likely continued, enhanced the IMC's productivity enormously. As 'ghost' sanitation workers were replaced by those who worked, productivity increased. The

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<sup>30</sup> Sharma (2023, 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Rainey and Steinbauer (1999)

<sup>32</sup> As public agencies have multiple and vague goals, leaders need to set the right goals for effective action (Rainey and Steinbauer 1999).

organisation became more professional, as supervisors emphasised work-related issues. Nearly three-fourths of the sanitation workers who worked within the IMC said during interviews that IMC officials were fair, rewarding good work and punishing shirking. Among those who said that the officials were not always fair, all but one qualified their remarks, saying that the supervisors were fair to them personally (Annex 3, Point 11).

Moreover, the supervisors' contact with politicians too shifted to legitimate work in contrast to corruption rackets or conflict over breaking rules that had existed earlier. Sanitation supervisors reported during interviews that IMC councillors and other local politicians no longer interfered when disciplinary action was taken against workers who did not perform well. This allowed officers and supervisors to create a result-driven work culture. When politicians organised events, officials assisted them in maintaining sanitation and resolved sanitation-related problems and citizen's complaints in the politicians' constituencies. The IMC's relationship with its partners too improved as corruption reduced. NGO representatives reported that for sanitation related activities, no one asked them for bribes and assessed the situation in Indore to be better than in other municipalities vis-à-vis sanitation (Box H1).

#### **Box H 1: Comments regarding the Impact of Reduction in Corruption**

- *Earlier, there used to be a lot of pressure from politicians and powerful people to go easy on errant sanitation workers. We had to give in to this pressure somewhat. Now, there is no such pressure. (Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *Politicians contact me when they organise events in their wards. I ensure that the work gets completed well in time. After the event, I ensure that streets, public parks, etc., are cleaned well. I engage respectfully with them and give them priority as per the protocol. Their behaviour has changed after 2015. They show us more respect and are more polite. (Daroga)*
- *There are only work-related interactions with politicians. I try to respond to their concerns and requests. There is no problem. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*
- *I do not know much about the level of corruption within the IMC, but certainly no one asks us for bribes. (Representative NGO 1)*
- *A lot of money has been spent on sanitation and there has been a lot of corruption. For instance, the old garbage bins: no one knows where they went. Every six months, the boundary walls in the city are painted and so much money is spent. I used to complain about all this in IMC meetings. Salaries of NGOs workers are paid by the IMC. NGOs say that they need to engage 100 people, but in reality, they only engaged only forty. (IMC Councillor (Congress))*
- *Even today, 30 per cent sanitation workers are ghost workers. Union leaders make money out of this. There are five to seven union leaders in Indore. They are in both the BJP and the Congress. (MLA (Congress), ex-Minister)*

### **c. Motivating the Team**

#### *i. Importance of Employee Morale and Motivation*

The IMC's success illustrates the importance of high morale and level of motivation among employees at all levels for success. IMC employees worked extremely hard to change the sanitation scenario in Indore. Now, hard work is the norm. IMC personnel understand the organisation's goals, are committed to work towards those goals and take pride in achieving them. Even workers' unions now co-operate to reinforce a work-oriented ethos. In fact, the problem now is different: IMC staff tend to overwork and feel stressed, an issue that the IMC needs to address (Box H2).

#### **Box H 2: Comments by IMC Staff regarding the Workload and Work Culture**

- *Middle-level officers have seen things change. They are motivated by the top-ranking officials of the IMC and feel the urge to perform well. A work culture has developed. People start work early in the morning. (MC 3)*
- *Sanitation workers now attend to their work regularly. The unions don't interfere. (Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *Earlier, sanitation workers used to be lazy; now they are sincere about their work. (Chief Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *During MC1's tenure, the working hours of sanitation workers increased. Those who did not work were removed. A work culture developed in the IMC. This took one and a half to two years. (IMC Official)*
- *In most places, sanitation workers go on strike, but not here. (IMC Official)*
- *Earlier, I used to supervise 2.5-tonne capacity vehicles operated by Company A. There were only three vehicles at that time. Now, we have a greater number and types of vehicles and hence, our workload has increased manifold. (Vehicle Supervisor)*
- *We work under stress, people are overworked, and many officers develop high blood pressure, etc. The municipal commissioner starts work at six in the morning (IMC Official)*
- *We still start work at 7.30 in the morning and go on till night. Work does not stop. There are no Sundays, and not much time for family or religious activities. Nearly all politicians do various types of programmes on Sundays and we have to attend. Working non-stop has become a habit, and there is a lot of enthusiasm as well. We need to be like this to perform. Otherwise, we will not be able to do things. The IMC should do something to keep this pace of work, perhaps by organising yoga etc. (Discussion with zonal officials)*

When sanitation workers were asked how they contributed to the improvement of sanitation in Indore, they invariably mentioned that they worked very hard and well. When they were asked whether their work had changed after the sanitation drive began, workers who had worked long enough to make such a comparison said that the scope of their work had increased. For example, those who swept roads reported that they had to clean better, and separate wet and dry waste before transferring it to the trucks carrying garbage. Some remarked that while earlier they ended their work early and worked in a relaxed way, now they had to adhere to working hours and timelines. They also worked extra hours, without any compensatory remuneration. Among the 19 IMC workers who responded to the survey, only four said that they were never asked to work extra hours; three said that they had to work extra hours regularly and 12 said that they were asked to work extra hours at special times, such as during the sanitation survey, festivals, VIP visits, etc.

The commitment to work shown by IMC employees at all levels increases the IMC's effectiveness.

#### *ii. Setting an Example*

IMC employees were motivated to work hard for several reasons. One was that, as highlighted previously, all three IMC municipal commissioners were extremely hard working, leading through example and gaining legitimacy to make a similar demand of employees. Notably, an important source of motivation for government employees is their 'public service motivation' which Perry and Wise (1990) have described as 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organisations'.<sup>33</sup> This motivation can be tapped to a greater or lesser degree. It is obscured in an ethos that promotes corruption but can be enhanced with inspiring leadership.

#### *iii. Rigorous and Supportive Supervision*

The IMC relies on rigorous but supportive supervision. Out of the 17 sanitation workers who had been with the IMC long enough to make comparisons between previous and current practices, 10 reported that the level of supervision had become more intense. They said that the casual and intermittent monitoring that had been the norm earlier was replaced with regular and rigorous supervision. Sanitation workers reported being monitored two or three times a day and were required to complete their assigned tasks before they could stop work. Several workers said that their supervisors were strict and held them accountable. The IMC

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<sup>33</sup> A dominant approach to explain the motivation of public sector employees is the 'public choice' theory, whereby public servants, like all human beings, are seen as being motivated primarily by self-interest (March & Olsen, 1989). However, some scholars have also identified a "public service motivation" as a component to explain the behaviour of public sector employees. The public service motive is seen as comprising rational motives such as the satisfaction obtained from participating in policy formulation and commitment to public programmes or advocacy for special causes. Such norm-based motives include loyalty to the country, and the pride in serving the public interest and social equity because of the love for and desire to protect people within certain political jurisdictions (Perry & Wise, 1990).

now trains supervisors on various technical issues related to sanitation enabling them to provide technical help to the workers.

At the same time, IMC supervisors supported the workers. Sanitation workers said that their supervisors were supportive and caring, which is often not the case in other municipalities.<sup>34</sup> Notably, among the 25 sanitation workers who were interviewed, not one reported a difficult or harsh supervisor. Only three sanitation workers reported occasional arguments or use of rough language by their supervisors, but even they qualified their statements by saying that these were minor problems, and that overall, the supervisors were friendly (Annex 3, Point 2). Several cited incidents when their supervisors supported them against citizens who made false or unfair complaints against them. When workers were asked what they did when they faced a problem, all said that they approached their supervisor, who helped. Additionally, the IMC has strengthened its supervisors.

Further, when 22 sanitation workers were asked if they had faced work related problems, 15 reported no major problems. Among those who mentioned facing problems, none mentioned problems because of the IMC. Only one worker complained that she felt stressed because she did not get enough time to complete all her assigned tasks but added that she could ask the supervisor for extension of time. The problems that sanitation workers reported usually concerned errant citizens who continued to litter, did not segregate garbage properly, did not allow workers to clean the drainage chambers under their shops, or misbehaved and made false complaints. When they were asked what they did about such problems, they replied that when they could not resolve them, they sought the advice of their supervisors, who usually helped.

As a consequence of firm but supportive supervision, sanitation workers in the IMC perform well. During a discussion, zonal officers reported that 90 per cent of the sanitation workers performed well while only 10 per cent were problematic. Moreover, supportive supervision became an organisational norm. The supervisors reported that senior officials were friendly and responsive if they encountered any problem (Box H3).

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<sup>34</sup> A study of sewerage workers in Vijayawada MC showed that workers feared senior officials, i.e., assistant and divisional engineers (Srinivasa and Rao 2022).

### **Box H 3: Comments by Sanitation Supervisors**

- *I got training on managing different types of vehicles. I learned about oil levels, vacuum, pressure and sound systems of the new vehicles that were purchased. The training was hands-on and regular, every month. This was very useful to get work done on time. My knowledge has increased; I can check vehicles, take precautions and even do small repairs. This has increased my work efficiency. (Vehicle supervisor)*
- *We were assisted through workshops on sanitation. The training covered handling of equipment, such as shovels and pickaxes, operating spot fine machines, collecting and managing garbage, where each type of waste should be sorted, the best way to sweep the roads, dispose waste, and clean leaves, etc. I learned new things about how to keep the city clean. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*
- *During meetings with drivers, we tell them how to better manage time, be punctual, clean the vehicle, etc., and ensure that they follow instructions. Senior officials are responsive to our concerns, such as the need for technical support, or change of drivers, etc. (Vehicle supervisor)*
- *Counselling is the best approach. Now, we try to solve problems on the spot. The chief sanitary inspector seeks feedback from the team before taking any action. If anyone misbehaves or argues unnecessarily, then I speak to the control room and get quick support from there. (Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector)*
- *Being a female supervisor, I faced problems with a few male team members. When I took action against them for not doing proper work, they approached higher officials. (Assistant Daroga)*
- *My boss is good to me. We can report our problems to higher officials, and they respond by ensuring we get sufficient staff, repairing vehicles on time, etc. (Zonal Supervisor)*

#### *iv. Incentives*

The IMC uses incentives rather than sanctions to encourage sanitation workers. None of the 25 workers interviewed reported ever being punished, while 18 had received recognition in the form of certificates or medals as well as prizes such as cash, shawls, etc. Most of these prizes had been awarded to groups of workers, but three workers reported receiving individual awards, which made them proud (Annex 3 Point 3). Moreover, one female assistant daroga who was interviewed had been promoted from the rank of a sanitation worker in appreciation of her work. She was enormously proud.

When asked how they disciplined workers, IMC supervisors said that if a worker's performance was sub-optimal, they first counselled him or her, and resorted to punitive

action only if the worker did not improve. But they did take punitive action when needed. As noted above, the reduction in clientelism and corrupt practices means that local politicians did not interfere in such cases. One female supervisor, however, complained that some male sanitation workers did not accept her authority (Box H4).

**Box H 4: Comments regarding Reward and Punishment**

- *I have received 8 awards. I keep all my awards in the Zonal Officer's office. Zonal officials remark on these in front of others. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *I got the opportunity to work at a higher level, show my leadership skills. I am one of the first women darogas selected as part of the innovation of the IMC. The IMC gave me the opportunity to prove myself. This boosted my motivation, and I am trying my best to perform at a higher level. (Assistant Daroga)*
- *When someone's performance is not up to the mark, I counsel them. It is not often that I have to take disciplinary action against drivers. But if they don't improve after I talk to them, I ask higher authorities to take action. Some workers have improved because of my feedback. I have never had a case when a politician got involved in disciplinary action against sanitation workers, but I am aware that sometimes they do. (Vehicle supervisor)*
- *If anyone does not perform well, I report to my supervisor, and if there is no improvement in their performance, my supervisor takes strict action. Sometimes, workers are dismissed. Sanitation workers are not fired frequently, though some have been, for irregular attendance. (Daroga)*
- *We sometimes remove workers temporarily through disciplinary action but usually rehire them after some time. Workers rarely lose their jobs. (IMC Official)*

*v. Employee Welfare*

Another motivating factor for employees is the concern that the organisational leadership shows for employees. Early on, MC1 put employees' welfare high on the agenda and the other two municipal commissioners followed the same practice. In particular, the IMC showed concern for the sanitation workers' health. All IMC workers interviewed reported getting regular health check-ups, though workers employed through a third party did not report receiving such service. Out of 25 workers interviewed, 21 reported having Employees' State Insurance (ESI) health cards with which they received free medical treatment for themselves and their families. The IMC has also taken care to ensure workers' safety, especially of those who clean drains, providing them with appropriate tools and creating hygienic protocols. Moreover, several workers said that if there was an accident, they had full trust that IMC officials would take immediate action.

In addition, the IMC provides workers with two sets of uniforms and shoes every year, which enhances the professional image of the workers. Most workers were satisfied with the quality of the uniforms, though there were a few exceptions.<sup>35</sup> A few workers complained that earlier they used to receive free soap, but this had ceased. The workers who cleaned drains reported receiving uniforms, raincoats, helmets, gum boots, gloves and night goggles. These were of good quality (see Box H5).

#### **Box H 5: Comments of Sanitation Workers regarding Welfare Measures**

- *We receive support from the IMC when we fall ill. It has never happened to me, but I know of workers who received such support. Health camps are held regularly. There was one last year where blood, etc. were checked. We have better health now. (Sanitation Worker (Daily wager))*
- *No help is provided by the IMC if children fall ill. I take them to the hospital at my own expense. (Sanitation Worker recruited through a third party)*
- *The IMC always takes care of our health. We all have health insurance of Rs.2 lakh. We receive good quality kits to clean drains. Since our job is high risk, health-wise, the IMC does not take any risk by providing us bad quality tools. Many bad incidents happen in other cities, and I have heard that earlier, they used to happen in Indore too. Now we are not allowed to clean drains without the approval of the supervisor. To clean deep drains and big chambers, we need permission of the zonal officers who at times stand and supervise until the work is over. (Sanitation Worker cleaning drains)*
- *We used to clean drainage lines and chambers manually. We did take precautions. If the chamber was hot, then we poured water into it. If there was gas, then it made your hand warm and something white got deposited on your hand. If anyone entered the chamber before the gas was released, he could die within 10 seconds. We go in only after ensuring that the gas was released. Once one person did not take such precautions and died. Now, we are not allowed to enter a chamber without permission. For the cleaning of big chambers, the zonal officer has to be present. We also have good machines to clean the drainage line. (Sanitation Worker cleaning drains).*
- *Earlier I used to work under unhygienic conditions, sometimes working in filthy water up to my shoulder level while cleaning dirty chambers, drains and back lanes. After 2015, I began to work in more hygienic working conditions. (Sanitation Worker)*

<sup>35</sup> IMC sanitation workers reported receiving two pairs of uniforms every year regularly, though one worker said that she recently received only one pair, while earlier she had got two. Among sanitation workers who swept roads, the women were satisfied with the quality of the saris they received except for one worker who said that her sari was too thick. Some men were not happy with the uniform either. They reported that it faded early and had a white strip that attracted stray dogs, which attacked them. One said that he had been attacked twice by street dogs and subsequently stopped wearing the uniform. Among those employed by a third party, a male night sweeper said that his uniform quality was very good. Similarly, a sanitation worker who cleaned public toilets was satisfied with the quality of the uniform.

Given the concern that the IMC shows for its sanitation workers, it is not surprising that only one out of the 21 IMC sanitation workers interviewed had joined a union. When workers wanted higher salaries or better equipment, they petitioned the management, rather than agitate through unions.

#### ***d. Continuous Learning, Innovating, and Improving***

When MC1 sought to change the sanitation scenario in Indore, he had no models to go by as no Indian city had achieved what Indore was trying to accomplish. He obtained information from many sources, experimented through pilots, was open to feedback and formulated new strategies. His style was consistent with the findings in various studies that rigorous analysis of a situation and continuous improvement of strategies in response to feedback can make all the difference between success and failure.<sup>36</sup>

Other IMC officials too participated in these learning processes and have adopted them. Officials at all levels have been encouraged to think and contribute. For example, on the suggestion of a junior official at the zone level, a trained mechanical engineer, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) auto-rickshaws began to be used in the IMC. Now, officials learn through pilots, experience and feedback within the organisation, and from outsiders, such as consultants, NGO personnel, activists and politicians. They then apply these learnings to their work. For example, zone level IMC officials have become very smart at tracing dumped waste to specific offenders. When they find dumped waste, they analyse it. In one case, officials tracked inappropriate disposal of garbage from a hospital by identifying a bed sheet that belonged to it in the garbage. The hospital owner accepted the lapse and paid Rs.25,000 as fine. Officials have also learned many ways to put pressure on citizens to follow sanitation protocols. During discussions, they reported that students coming from other cities to Indore, tend to litter. Officials pressurise them by complaining to their landlords.

The capacity to learn enables the IMC to tackle new problems, improve existing strategies and enhances employees' motivation.<sup>37</sup>

#### ***e. Building Systems***

Not only did IMC employees learn to work intelligently, but they also built systems. The IMC has paid special attention to streamlining and systematising the work of sanitation workers which ensures last-mile delivery. An important initiative was to have dedicated teams for specific types of work, such as cleaning of public toilets, deep cleaning of roads, etc. This increased efficiency. Moreover, each process is planned carefully. For example, for door-to-

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<sup>36</sup> For example, in the mid-1990s, crime in New York City could be controlled when the police began to recognise crime patterns and carefully monitor their own interventions, abandoning the unproductive ones and expanding the ones that worked (Smith, 2009). Similarly, a survey of Texas State agencies showed that learning in organisations was fostered when work groups had effective information systems, there was inclusive dialogue, information regarding performance was considered to foster improvement and there was decision flexibility, meaning that the operational staff could use their learning in decision making (Moynihan & Landyut, 2009).

<sup>37</sup> A theory widely accepted and espoused by managers and management scholars is that employees perform better under managers who advance self-direction and self-motivation (Lawter et al., 2015; McGregor, 1957). A considerable amount of research regarding work motivation shows that workers thrive when they are allowed autonomy in their work and feel competent yet challenged to improve the task (Denhart & Catlaw, 2015; Pink, 2012).

door garbage collection, there is a well-defined schedule for the vehicles. Each vehicle covers 700-800 houses and has a stopping point and a fixed time-period for which it stops, depending on the type of area. The sanitation workers who sweep roads have their clearly designated beats.<sup>38</sup> They segregate dry and wet waste in separate sacks. In markets and other areas where there is higher volume of waste, special arrangements are made. Among the 17 interviewed sanitation workers who had been with the IMC during the sanitation initiative, 11 reported that their work had become more systematic and predictable (Box H6).

#### **Box H 6: Comments of Sanitation Workers on the System of working**

- *Earlier I used to do sweeping, drainage cleaning, sewage cleaning and any other work that my supervisor asked me to do. We used to work in two shifts for almost 12 hours. Now, I sweep and clean and go along with the vehicle to collect garbage. I don't clean drains, and dead animals, etc., are cleared separately. The work is more structured.*
- *The areas of work have been assigned clearly. Earlier, we cleaned streets, drains and common garbage dumping places, but now we only clean streets and back lanes.*
- *We used to collect all types of garbage together and did sweeping most of the time. Now, I travel with the garbage collection vehicle and collect segregated waste. I work in a cleaner and better environment, with better work conditions.*
- *When I joined, most of the work was done by hand. We used to open the chambers to release the gas and had to wait for almost a month. Then we used bamboo and 'fawada' to clean choked drainage lines. We did this under the guidance of senior sanitation workers. For small jobs, it took a minimum of two hours and for larger tasks, many days. Only if it was very difficult, we asked for cleaning machines. Now we do all the cleaning work with machines. We no longer enter the chamber. Only if the drain can't be cleaned using a machine do we get down in the chamber, after receiving an order from the Zonal Officer. We block the road properly and one person is assigned to monitor. We have well-sealed safety uniform without which we can't enter the chamber. As a result of the new machines, our work has become easier and cleaning the entire line takes three to four hours.*
- *Now we are used to working at night. During the day, it is not possible to clean the roads. We clean mud from roads and streets at night. Earlier, we could not clean our route in one night. It took almost four to five days to clean a road. This continued for two years. Now the city is much cleaner and we can barely fill one truck.*

The IMC has also built a good system for supervision of work. Biometric attendance of workers ensures that they start work on time. All the garbage collection vehicles are checked daily and

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<sup>38</sup> Public Management literature shows that clear definition of tasks and institution of new processes when necessary are characteristics of high performing organisations (Rainey and Steinbauer 1999).

their movement tracked electronically. Supervisors follow all the steps of a well-defined processes on a daily basis. For example, before the sanitation initiative, workers who swept the roads would go directly to their work. Now, they meet at a common point every day and supervisors assign them specific tasks (Box H7).

### **Box H 7: How Supervisors Work**

#### ***Supervisor 1***

*An Assistant Chief Sanitary Inspector, supervising five wards, five darogas and 32 sanitation workers, describes his work as follows:*

*'I ensure that drivers and sanitation workers report on time; the open dumper vehicles move on time; tankers move for cleaning toilets; garbage collection vehicle are scheduled on track. I do field visits and check employees in each beat. I make the following checks:*

- *Whether the Darogas have checked the attendance of employees in their teams*
- *Whether Assistant Darogas have taken attendance and are monitoring workers*
- *Whether vehicles are following the route and collecting all the bags from the pickup points*
- *Whether sanitation workers are in proper uniform, using the tool kit, doing proper work in their beat*
- *Whether the community and public toilet supervisor has ensured proper cleaning*

*I solve problems, deal with the public, listen to complaints, interact with corporators and take their feedback to improve the situation.'*

#### ***Supervisor 2***

*A vehicle supervisor responsible for managing all vehicles and their movements and drivers reported that he worked in five wards and supervised 23 garbage collection vehicles, six open vehicles, one vehicle equipped for construction and moving earth, one dumper and 38 drivers (all males). His activities include the following:*

- *Ensuring all vehicles are in good working condition daily*
- *Taking attendance of drivers daily, arranging for a substitute if any driver is not available*
- *Ensuring all vehicles leave on time; arranging for a substitute if a vehicle is not available*
- *Tracking vehicles on their route to ensure garbage is collected from all areas using GPS*
- *Ensuring that field teams receive support, such as timely vehicle repair, adequate amount of fuel, replacement of vehicle in case of break down*
- *Visiting various colonies for spot checks*
- *Ensuring all vehicles are parked properly for next day's work.*

These systems have been built by brainstorming, planning, trial and error, and feedback loops. In building these systems, the IMC shows the characteristics of a ‘learning’ organisation, that is, an organisation where new skills and insights learned by individuals become part of standard operating procedures.<sup>39</sup>

**f. Enhanced Revenues, Adequate Infrastructure and Equipment**

As the sanitation drive proceeded, the IMC enhanced its revenues and its financial position significantly. As noted above, the IMC used its new working style to raise its revenues. Consequently, between 2014-15 and 2021-22, the IMC’s own revenue increased by 161.7 per cent in nominal terms (Annex 1, Point 6). This works out to an average increase of over 23 per cent per year, which is four times the average inflation rate of around 5 per cent during this period. In fact, it generated more funds by increasing its revenues than through the amount it received from the SBM (Annex 3, Point 5). The improved financial position made it possible for it to undertake more projects and provide more services to citizens without relying solely on national programmes (Box H8).

**Box H 8: Comments Regarding Revenue Enhancement**

- *We have increased our revenue. We doubled it during MC1’s time. We could only do sanitation because of the increases in revenue. User charges vary from Rs.60 to Rs.150 per month. People from slums pay too, though some people are unable to. Our sanitation model is self-sustainable. Now there is a Gol protocol to recover at least 95 per cent user charges. (IMC Official, Finance Department)*
- *In 2021-22, the IMC raised a demand of Rs.190 crore for all user charges and fees, of which Rs. 42 crore was for door-to-door garbage collection. In 2021-22, the collection of user charges was around 64 per cent, which is quite high. (Chartered Accountant, IMC)*
- *Municipal revenues have increased significantly, though property tax rates have not been revised very much. (IMC Official)*
- *User charges are very effective. (IMC Official)*

These revenues were used to enhance human resources, infrastructure and equipment for sanitation, which improved service delivery.

As the state government prescribes the staffing structure of municipalities and posts their officials, the IMC’s capacity to add personnel is small. But it made the improvements that it could. In focused on enhancing the manpower at the front-line, i.e., at the level of workers, through two means. One, since the IMC could recruit new daily wage workers at that time, it

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<sup>39</sup> Popper & Lipshitz, 1998

increased the number of sanitation workers. Two, the IMC used the services of a large number of NGO personnel who played a key role in changing citizens' behaviour.

The IMC's work is facilitated by the infrastructure it has created for sanitation. As noted in Chapter II, some infrastructure, especially sewer lines, was created in earlier projects as well, but did not have the desired impact. During the sanitation initiative described in this case study, the augmentation of infrastructure and equipment was *process driven*, i.e., equipment was bought as needed for various activities undertaken to achieve specific goals. This was contrary to the common practice of creating infrastructure and buying equipment in advance, before the processes have been put in place. Consequently, the infrastructure and equipment serve the IMC's needs precisely and are used continuously.

For door-to-door garbage collection and segregation, the IMC has 534 garbage collection vehicles, with compartments to collect various types of garbage separately, as well as large trucks to transport bulk garbage. There is GPS tracking and a wireless monitoring system for these vehicles and a vehicle repair workshop to ensure that they remain in working order. The IMC has established 10 garbage transfer stations where the garbage can be collected and sent to various waste processors. For cleaning sewerage drains and chambers, the IMC has acquired desilting machines, jetting machines, pressure machines etc.

The IMC also procured equipment to increase efficiency. For example, earlier, to clean public toilets, tractors and water tankers were used and water was delivered to the toilets through pumps and pipes. A sanitation worker engaged in this task reported that it was difficult to drive tractors into narrow lanes, and the process was time-consuming as well. Now, the IMC has acquired tankers with pressure pipes to clean the toilets quickly and the new vehicles can be driven through narrow lanes as well.

Additionally, the IMC has acquired appropriate equipment for better supervision. A control centre has been established to monitor garbage collection vehicles. A vehicle supervisor reported that the electronic monitoring system helped in dispatching vehicles on time, as well as in co-ordination within the team. *Darogas* and other supervisory officers have been provided with walkie-talkies, which they find extremely useful. To quote a sanitation supervisor:

*'The walkie-talkie helps a lot to reach out to the staff at night and ensure that they follow instructions. The walkie talkie facilitates internal communication. If someone does not follow instructions, then officers and the control room receive updates, and this helps in getting work done on time.'*

Supervisors have also been provided spot fine machines, which monitor the number of times a person is found littering and automatically increases the fine to be paid for repeated offenders. Consequently, IMC officials can levy spot fines fast and accurately.

However, the availability of tools for sanitation workers is not fully reliable. Workers who clean drainage pipes and chambers have good tools. An IMC drainage worker reported that they had both oxygen and ordinary masks, safety belts, ropes, oxygen gas cylinders, shovels, *fawadas* (spades) and bamboo sticks: the complete kit necessary to get into the drainage line and clean it well. These tools are of good quality. If any tool is damaged, it is replaced immediately and machines are repaired on a regular basis. Similarly, a sanitation worker who cleaned public toilets said that he had good equipment, which is replaced as needed. At the garbage transfer station too, workers used iron claws and rods to remove garbage from containers, gloves to sort out glass and sanitary waste, and brooms to sweep the floor. All four workers interviewed said that the tools provided by IMC were of good quality and were replaced as needed.

Yet, sanitation workers who swept roads were not always provided the main tool they used, i.e., a broom. Ten out of 12 such workers reported that they had to buy their own brooms. One worker reported that some people received their brooms from the office, but these were of poor quality and very heavy to use. Consequently, many workers did not take the brooms, or if they took them, re-assembled them to reduce the weight. Nine workers said that the IMC ought to provide them with better brooms; five said that they had asked for brooms, but have not received any. The workers are also provided two sacks to collect segregated waste, along with masks and gloves. One worker complained that carrying two filled sacks was punishing; so, she dragged them and as a result they tore quickly, and she had to make her own arrangements. Another worker said that she did not get *fawada* and *tagari* (pan to collect waste) for work and had to collect and segregate garbage by hand. Seven workers said that the masks they received were of poor quality; eight complained that their gloves wore out very quickly. Only one worker said that his gloves were replaced as needed. Two workers wondered if they could receive more advanced machines for sweeping.

Similarly, vehicle drivers and assistants too lacked needed equipment. One vehicle driver interviewed said that earlier a pen drive was provided to play cleaning songs, but now he had to buy it with his own money. Moreover, no special rod or *fawada* was given to dump garbage inside the vehicle. Masks and gloves were needed, but often not provided. One vehicle assistant who travelled with the vehicle, but also did other types of work, reported being provided with spades and brooms. These were replaced annually. He said that when he received a new broom, it was fine. But when it broke, he had to buy another one using his own money. Moreover, when he was asked to clean back streets, no gum boots were provided.

To sum up, the IMC needs to be more vigilant about providing appropriate equipment to all sanitation workers.

### ***g. Partnerships***

An important reason for the IMC's success was that it forged fruitful partnerships in areas where it lacked requisite skills. Its partners increased its capacity to solve problems and undertake new initiatives. Its most important partnership has been with NGOs, who were contracted to provide the expertise that it lacked, i.e., for public education and mobilisation. This was pivotal in the IMC's success. These have become long-term associations. Of the five NGOs that initially began work with the IMC, three have continued, and a fourth agency joined in 2019. To this day, NGO workers travel with garbage collection vehicles. Notably, through NGOs, the IMC deploys a large work force at the grassroots level for public education and mobilisation. This increases the IMC's outreach to citizens enormously. Moreover, NGOs train the IMC field staff in ways to communicate with people. That is why the IMC is an organisation with the extraordinary skills in public education and mobilisation that are essential for sanitation. An important point to be noted is that according to the NGO representatives interviewed, the IMC treats them much better than other municipalities. Moreover, the NGO partners are not merely implementing units; they also provide advice and participate in strategy formulation. In addition, the IMC has obtained advice from a local consultancy firm. It has partnered with private agencies to process waste, from which it generates revenue as well.

However, even as it has partnered with other organisations, it has remained in charge. For instance, though the SBM guidelines specifically recommend public-private partnerships, the IMC has relied on these much less than many other municipal corporations. In fact, outsourcing essential services can be very tricky.<sup>40</sup> If the private firm responsible for the work does not perform, the options for the public organisation responsible providing the service are very limited. If the public organisation takes action against a contracted agency whose work is unsatisfactory, the service can come to a halt. For essential services, this can cause considerable hardship to citizens. Additionally, removing private firms can be complicated, as there can be delays due to legal action, etc. The IMC has partnered private agencies intelligently where it really needed to do so, such as for waste processing, and not for activities where such partnerships carry high risks (Table H9).

Moreover, no agency has been allowed to hi-jack the IMC's agenda. It has been decisive in getting rid of ineffective firms as in the case of Company A. Moreover, it has avoided dependence on any one agency for essential tasks and has partnered with several NGOs instead only one. This strategy has been helpful in creating healthy relationship with partners.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Even in mid-nineteenth century London, as substantial action to improve sanitation had to be undertaken, the importance of public rather than private action became clear. Municipal authorities took over private companies engaged in sanitation services and extended and improved their services (Black 2008).

<sup>41</sup> Studies on networks of organisations show that network effectiveness is enhanced if networks are co-ordinated centrally through a single core agency (Provan & Milward, 1995).

### **Box H 9: Comments about Partnerships**

- *We run awareness programmes with the assistance of NGOs. They do good work. We have 26 garbage collection vehicles in our zone, and one NGO staff travels with each vehicle. Another NGO's staff monitors as well. We received a lot of help from NGOs. (Zonal Officer, IMC)*
- *The tendering for selection of NGOs has been done three times. Each time, a letter goes to technically qualified NGOs to ask if they are willing to work at the lowest rate submitted in the tendering process. Those who agree are allotted work by the IMC. At present, the payment rates are rather low, as inflationary adjustments have not been made since 2019. We also participate in decision-making. For instance, recently we participated in the rainwater harvesting initiative. Various citizen groups, resident welfare associations (RWAs,) religious organisations, everyone was involved in reaching out to households. Everyone owned the process. (Representative NGO 1).*
- *We do work with the IMC as per their goals and needs. We have faced problems in other municipalities, but not in Indore. In other municipalities, when municipal commissioners changed, our relationship with the organisation changed, but not here. (Representative NGO 2).*
- *We have good partner organisations in NGOs. They have done a lot of work. They made extensive public contact during COVID. They bridged the gap between the IMC and citizens. They helped in dealing with hard-to-reach communities. (MC3)*
- *We have 150-200 NGO helpers. They are usually high school graduates but some are school or college dropouts. Now we have started recruiting women too. They are paid around Rs.20,000 to Rs.25,000 per month. We train them. There are no courses or training institutes for this kind of work. Neither is there any educational material. First, the new members are attached to another worker who explains to them what to do. Then we hold sessions in our head office. The field staff has to work hard: start early in the morning and work even on holidays. Our staff travel with the garbage collection vehicles. They also report whether these vehicles are on time, etc. We don't have a role in collecting user charges and penalties but inform municipal officers regarding payment of such charges. We don't have any problems with municipal officials in Indore. We work in ten other cities. In other cities, we are not heard, but in Indore, we are. There is usually a long process of approvals necessary for work in other cities. But here, approvals are easy because officials themselves are on the ground. (Employee, NGO 2)*
- *When I talk to my colleagues, they often say that hiring private agencies reduces their workload. But that is a short cut. When we present our work in seminars, we advise people to do the work themselves. (MC3)*

- *MC1 used to say that with outsourcing, the IMC would lose control. At best, we can charge a penalty for poor subcontracting work. If you take action, then subcontractors can go to court. With our own employees, we have day- to-day control. Most cities have outsourced garbage collection and transportation of waste. We do it ourselves. It is cheaper. We spend around Rs.800 per tonne of waste. If outsourced, the expenditure would be Rs.1100-1200 per tonne. People think that outsourcing increases efficiency and is easier to manage, but that is not the case. (IMC Official)*
- *Across the country, the out-sourcing model is being followed. There is no ownership in this model. (NGO 2 Representative)*

#### ***h. Stakeholder Interests***

A key strategy that the IMC followed was to take care of stakeholders' interests and minimise resistance. Politicians were briefed regularly, as were the media and the judiciary. An alliance was formed with union leaders of sanitation workers. An important strategy was to pay attention to those who lost out, such as *jagir* workers, rag-pickers and animal owners, and offer them alternative ways to reduce their losses. As the IMC addressed the legitimate concerns of stakeholders, it reduced opposition to its goals.

However, even as the IMC made explicit efforts to respond to various stakeholders, it was firm with those who did not comply with the law. For example, *jagir* workers were offered employment but police cases were filed against those who continued to obstruct IMC workers. Similarly, animal owners were provided the option to rear animals at the outskirts of the city, but spatial encroachments by those who continued to rear animals within the city were demolished and police action taken. This highlights the importance of law enforcement by public agencies. Had the IMC not been firm with those who continued to flout the law, it would have lost its credibility and its capacity to accomplish its goals.

#### ***i. Relationship with Citizens***

##### ***i. Building a Positive Relationship with Citizens***

An important plank in the IMC's success in sanitation was the positive relationship that it formed with citizens, seeking and valuing their contributions. During interviews, councillors and officials consistently emphasised the importance of citizens' participation and the value of their contribution. In turn, the IMC provided good quality services. This paved the way for an IMC-citizen collaboration, which was very productive.

The education and mobilisation of citizens played a critical role in the development of IMC's relationship with citizens. An important lesson here is that the IMC's strategies relied on *in-depth* interaction with citizens to change their behaviour. In India, social sector programmes typically rely on general awareness campaigns. But in Indore, the NGOs' staff travelled with

the garbage collection vehicles and had daily contact with citizens, which was very effective. Moreover, a range of other strategies, documented in previous chapters, such as approaching RWAs, religious associations, getting citizens to propose sanitation jingles, etc., were used. As a rule, public organisations in India lack the requisite manpower and skills for intensive public contact and mobilisation.<sup>42</sup> The Indore experience shows that NGOs are exceptionally adept at this and collaboration with them can be very fruitful for the implementation of public policies.

In addition, citizen co-operation is possible only when the public organisation provides a high standard of services and shows concern for citizens. For example, during interviews, IMC officials stressed the need to ensure that garbage collection vehicles reach on time. The IMC has also established a helpline to receive citizens' complaints, which has to be attended to promptly. The helpline has enhanced IMC's accountability to citizens. Further, sanitation workers said that they made special efforts for the elderly and the infirm during garbage collection (Box H10).

#### **Box H 10: Comments about Citizen-Participation**

- *The sanitation initiative succeeded because of citizens' participation. (Ex-Councillor (BJP) 2)*
- *Citizens' contribution is very important. (IMC Official)*
- *To influence citizens' behaviour, we found that advertisements in papers, jingles, radio announcements, etc., are less effective than face-to-face communication, i.e., the NGO person accompanying the garbage collection vehicle was there to explain to people. This is two-way communication, as the NGO person also hears what people have to say and can convey it to the IMC. (IMC Official)*
- *The personal relations with citizens that NGO workers cultivated have improved the IMC's services. They helped resolve other problems as well, such as malfunctioning streetlights. As a result, people have developed trust in the IMC. (Representative NGO 2)*
- *We engaged with 77 resident welfare associations, ward committees and committees of housing societies. Interacting with just the ward committee is not enough. Various religious groups and market associations have their own committees. There are also nali (drain) committees. NGOs were effective in liaising with these committees too. (IMC Official)*
- *There are some 250 associations in Indore: resident welfare societies, commercial organisations, industry associations, etc. We invited them to meetings and sought their suggestions regarding what needs to be done. (MC3)*
- *We face problems when the chamber to be cleaned is inside a shop or some other area that people don't want us to enter. First, we explain the problem to the people*

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<sup>42</sup> Sharma (2023)

*and if they do not listen to us, we inform our supervisors. Then he visits peoples' homes to explain and convinces them that if they do not allow workers to enter the premises to clean the drains, the drainage is likely to get choked. Then they allow us to enter. (Sanitation Worker)*

- *Our garbage collection vehicles have to reach on time. Otherwise, people telephone to complain through the helpline. The municipal commissioner has directed that all complaints have to be resolved. Now it is difficult to find cases to levy fines for littering (Sanitary Inspector, IMC)*
- *Everyone has my phone number. People call me if they miss the garbage collection vehicle. Then I go back and pick up their waste, so no one throws it here and there. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *I help the elderly segregate waste. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *I ensure that elderly people do not have to dump garbage in the vehicle. I take it from them and dump it myself. Sometimes, I segregate the waste too and then clean their bins before returning them. I offer my assistance to all who come to dump garbage. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *We learned how to work as professionals and deal with citizens. Sometimes, citizens lodge complaints against sanitation workers through the helpline. The IMC has to respond to all the complaints within 24 hours. We categorise the complaints and see which can be resolved easily and which will take time and then solve them accordingly. For example, cleaning of drains or sewerage takes more than one day, so we list it under the work-in-progress category after making the first visit as early as possible. (Daroga)*
- *We have regular discussions with citizens to explain the situation. For any problem, complaints can be made on the helpline. We ensure that these are addressed within a day. We also do follow up. I check the helpline regularly for complaints. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *I am polite with people because nowadays it is easy to complain through the helpline. I do not want to get in trouble. (Sanitation Worker).*
- *In Indore, people are more willing to pay user charges than in Jabalpur because they receive reliable services. (Assistant Revenue Officer, transferred from Jabalpur a year ago)*
- *When people started seeing the results in sanitation, they followed other rules too, such as traffic rules. People of Indore are proud of their city. I have been in Indore since 2005. There has been a lot of change. Our accomplishments are appreciated even by outsiders. (IMC Official)*
- *This citizen awareness thing is nonsense. If the citizens are supposed to do everything, then what are the responsibilities of government departments? (Social Activist)*

## *ii. Law Enforcement*

As noted in the previous chapters, along with education and persuasion, strict enforcement of laws and rules, and levying fines shaped the IMC's relationship with citizens. To date, IMC officials remain vigilant about littering and continue to impose fines on people who litter. But such fines are infrequent because, in general, people follow the rules regarding garbage disposal and littering. While describing how they dealt with citizens, sanitation workers said that they were carefully polite, did their work, but also insisted that all sanitation related rules be followed.

However much a public agency may educate and persuade, some people will continue to flout the law. Firm action by public agencies against such people can have a demonstration effect and prevent other citizens from doing the same. Effective law enforcement is a critical element of the relationship of public agencies with citizens. Moreover, good law enforcement reduces conflict among citizens, because errant behaviour is dealt with through legal means rather than through fights among people. In the sample colonies, quarrels and fights regarding garbage dumping ceased as the garbage collection system functioned well. (Box H11).

### **Box H 11: Comments about Enforcement of Sanitation Rules**

- *People are afraid of littering because they can be fined on the spot. Earlier, we used to issue court 'challans'. Now we can impose spot fines. (Sanitary Inspector IMC)*
- *Earlier, many challans were issued. But now there are no challans because I convinced the citizens. Earlier, people used to argue and even fight if we complained about their mistakes. As I began to video tape such arguments to file complaints, they slowly changed. (Sanitation Worker).*
- *Sometimes we complain if we catch them throwing garbage here and there and they apologise. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *If citizens do not segregate their garbage, I do not allow them to put it in the vehicle. (Sanitation Worker)*
- *We have to be attentive and ensure that no one throws waste in public places. If waste is found in public places, we put it in the vehicle. I only advise people to not litter, but don't use any force. I warn with respect if I see someone throwing waste in the wrong place. (Sanitation Worker)*

## *iii. IMC-Citizen Collaboration*

Because the IMC used persuasive tactics, delivered good services and enforced the law, it developed a collaborative relationship with citizens. Citizens appreciate the efforts made by the IMC. They like the clean environment and value receiving prompt redressal of their

complaints through the helpline, though some problems that are unique to specific colonies persist (Box H12).

<b>Box H 12: Focus Group Discussions in Sample Colonies regarding the IMC</b>	
<b>Colony</b>	<b>Citizens' Opinion of the IMC</b>
Colony 1	There is a huge change in the IMC's working style. It gives special attention to our area. Therefore, our area is now very clean and we are happy.
Colony 2	The IMC has developed a helpline app where anyone can post their demand or complaint. It is very effective. The IMC staff take immediate action to close the complaints. Follow-up is also done. Most people have downloaded the app on their mobiles. A lot has changed because of the helpline. Officials' behaviour has also changed. Now they listen to the people. Officials' fear that if work is not done on time, citizens will complain through the helpline. Discipline has increased.
Colony 3	The IMC has performed well with regards to cleanliness. It has started taking action and has become more responsive. But still, there remains the problem of inadequate public toilets adjacent to market areas. The IMC is not taking it seriously. The common toilet in our colony does not work and needs to be demolished, but no action has been taken. True, if we compare the present situation to that before 2015, there is a visible change in the attitude of the IMC employees, especially the garbage collection and cleaning teams. But in other matters, such as the practice of asking for bribes to clean drainage lines or to build drinking water facilities in public places or construction of new public toilets, more change is needed.

Citizens have developed a positive attitude towards and a better relationship with sanitation workers. During FGDs, citizens reported that they had begun to like and respect the sanitation workers much more than they did earlier and listen to them (Box H13).

**Box H 13: Focus Group Discussions about Sanitation Workers**

Colony	Citizens' Opinion of and Relationship with Sanitation Workers as Reported in FGDs
Colony 1	We behave nicely with sanitation workers and they are like a part of our extended family. We never had any problem with the people who came with the garbage collection vehicle. Now they are like family members. They sometimes ask us for tea and sometimes we ask them. We give them sweets during the festival season.
Colony 2	<p>We never had a bad relationship with sanitation workers. But yes, we used to think that they are sanitation workers, and most people's body language was not as good as it is now.</p> <p>When the sanitation drive began, everyone had trouble because sanitation workers forced us to give garbage only after segregation. So, we used to have arguments. But later on, as they explained the reasons for segregating garbage, the relationship became smooth.</p> <p>In our colony, people often serve tea and snacks to sanitation workers and give gifts at festivals. We also tip them several times a month. We behave well with the cleaning staff. Many times, if some citizens make mistakes, others explain to them. Now we have started recognising the workers, because the same people come to collect the garbage. Employees change less often, so relationships have been formed.</p>
Colony 3	<p>Earlier, we had many arguments with sanitation workers when the area was not swept on time. We were not very positive about their job performance. But later, even as we continued to make mistakes in disposing of garbage properly, they explained to us calmly. They never argued with us. This was a really significant change in their behaviour.</p> <p>We now treat sanitation workers with respect and have a very good relationship with them. They address our complaints and talk in a very respectful way. It is two ways: we give respect and get respect. We never had any big disputes or conflicts with any sanitation worker.</p>

Sanitation workers too reported good behaviour, respect and co-operation on the part of citizens. Sanitation workers who swept roads reported that their interaction with citizens changed after the sanitation initiative. Previously, citizens used to ask them to clean their areas often, but lacking a well-established system created by the IMC, the sanitation workers could not do so. There used to be arguments and citizens complained. Now that a sanitation system is in place, this type of hostile interaction has stopped. But a few sanitation workers remarked that some citizens continue to be disrespectful and exploitative (Box H14). Of the 21 sanitation workers who commented on their interaction with citizens, 15 made positive comments, such as citizens being friendly, respectful, etc., but six made negative comments, such as citizens demanding that sanitation workers provide unpaid private sanitation services and making false complaints (Annex 3, Point 4).

#### **Box H 14: Comments about Citizen Behaviour**

- *For the last 2-3 years, people have celebrated when we won the prize. They throw flowers on sanitation workers. The days on which sanitation workers have holidays, people come out and sweep the roads themselves. I have been in Indore since 2005. The public culture has changed. (IMC Official)*
- *Citizens support us a lot. Now, they don't like it if someone interferes with the IMC's work or if government workers are bullied. When we receive an award, the next day, people throw flowers on sanitation workers. We get requests from citizens to send sanitation workers so that they can felicitate them. (MC3)*
- *People are now really enthusiastic. When we got an award from the President of India, citizens came to the airport and the whole city celebrated. (IMC Official)*
- *Earlier, citizens did not like sanitation workers. Now they want to take selfies with them and felicitate them. (IMC Official)*
- *I have moved to Indore recently from Ujjain. In Indore, there is much more public awareness and political support regarding sanitation, as well as deep engagement of NGOs. (IMC Official)*
- *Now, people have changed. They have stopped littering. (MLA (Congress), ex Minister)*
- *Casteism and the practice of untouchability that existed earlier among both citizens and the IMC staff have gone. Earlier, people would throw money to sanitation workers from a distance to avoid physical contact; now they give them recognition. (IMC Official)*

The collaboration between IMC personnel and citizens has made the task of keeping Indore clean easier.<sup>43</sup> As citizens usually do not litter or indulge in other unhygienic practices, IMC officials reported that the need for punitive action against citizens has decreased significantly. Sanitation workers said that cleaning public areas was much easier than it used to be because there was much less filth around. Moreover, citizens are willing to pay user charges for prompt services. All in all, the sanitation initiative highlights the central importance of public agencies' relationship with citizens in achieving public goals.

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<sup>43</sup> How public services operate is decided not only by those who deliver them but also by citizens who use them, conceptualised as 'co-production' (Whitaker, 1980). Citizens co-produce by requesting or not requesting assistance, such as from medical personnel, by assisting or not assisting in public programmes, as in the case of parents sending children to school regularly, and by mutually adjusting expectations with service delivery agents.

### 3 Public Management and Organisational Effectiveness

The change in the IMC's public management practices has enhanced its effectiveness as an organisation considerably. Unlike in the years before 2015, when the IMC used to be perceived as an ineffective organisation, IMC councillors and staff now view it as an organisation that can perform. IMC officials now prefer to manage projects internally, through their own staff rather than outsource. This perception is shared by the state government. Many public events are now held in Indore and IMC officials are even sent by the state government to other places for a range of activities. Additionally, IMC officials take much pride in the fact that professionals from across the country now visit the IMC to learn.

As the new productive management practices of the IMC have yielded results, setting new goals and achieving them has become part of its ethos. It has improved roads and streetlights, promoted rainwater harvesting and reduced the use of plastic in the city. Since 2023, the focus has been on a plastic-free Indore and improvement in air quality. The new modes of functioning that the IMC developed to improve sanitation have seeped into its other activities as well. For example, the IMC has deployed several strategies to increase its revenue.<sup>44</sup> These include the following:

- Registering unregistered property to levy property tax
- Identifying commercial property registered as residential property and registering it as commercial, which yields higher tax revenue
- Initiating a GIS survey to augment property tax even more
- Settling minor illegal construction with fines
- Charging entry fee for public gardens, etc.
- Levying 'betterment tax' on roads
- Issuing municipal bonds
- Encouraging citizens to pay by awarding a badge of honour to citizens paying user charges

Similarly, to persuade people to stop using single use plastic bags, a campaign was undertaken and citizens were provided cloth bags at low or no cost, with slogans claiming pride in using cloth bags on them. Rainwater harvesting was promoted in collaboration with partner NGOs through extensive citizen outreach. There is an organisational culture to work systematically, innovate, treat the frontline workers well, partner with NGOs and work in collaboration with citizens that is followed across various activities with good results (Box H15).

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<sup>44</sup> In India, municipalities usually have limited financial strength (Ahluwalia 2014). About 54 per cent of the cities do not generate enough revenue to meet their salary expenses (Gupta and Sachdeva 2021).

#### **Box H 15: Comments about Organisational Culture and Effectiveness**

- *I worked in the IMC from 2012-2015 and then came back in 2020. The sanitation initiative has generated a feeling within the IMC that we can do things. In a recent state government event where the CM was present, we did a great job. We could not have done it earlier. (IMC Official)*
- *We are tapped by the state government to assist with other activities. We go to the Simhastha Mela in Ujjain. Whenever there is a problem, we are called. When we work outside Indore, we do the paperwork related to the IMC at night. (Discussion with Zonal officials)*
- *The sanitation initiative of Indore has built our image and the image of the party. For instance, 18 MPs came from across the country to see what we had achieved. (Ex corporator 1 (BJP))*
- *The non-resident Indians (NRI) fair will be held in Indore because of our image as an effective organisation after our success in sanitation. (IMC Official)*
- *After removing legacy waste, every year the IMC did something that other cities were not doing. (IMC Official)*
- *The new mayor also feels the pressure to do something. His focus is on air quality and traffic. The success in sanitation has impacted other activities of the IMC. We were ranked first on a more holistic index too and are climbing up the liveability index as well. Our property tax collection is increasing every year. We used to collect around 45 per cent of the due property tax, now we collect around 70 per cent. We are working on major flyovers, roads etc. We have started work on rainwater harvesting and want to achieve 100 coverage in the next two years. We work systematically. We learn continuously. (MC 3)*
- *We have undertaken many activities other than sanitation. We were number one in rainwater harvesting. We have improved roads. You cannot have a dust-free city without addressing various other aspects of urban development. We don't just work for the award, though it is motivating. (Discussion with Zonal Officials)*
- *A campaign called 'mein hoon jholadhari' (I am a cloth bag user) was undertaken. The IMC provided cloth bags at either low or no cost to citizens. We award certificates to shops that don't use single use plastic bags. The 'mein hoon jholadhari' campaign was quite popular. (IMC Official)*
- *The ban on polyethene bags was a challenge too. There were many industrial units in Indore that produced such bags. They have closed down. Now, the same firms are making paper bags. (Ex-Councillor 1 – BJP)*

- *A new challenge is what to do with hawkers. We are making a zone for them. (Zonal Officer)*
- *Sometimes, cement factories refuse to take refuse derived fuel (RDF) from the processing plant. We want to set up an RDF plant here. Then some waste is generated from the biogas plant. We want to set up a plant to process that waste too. The CNG plant processes it, but it is slow. Sometimes, it piles up in a heap. (Assistant Engineer, IMC)*
- *We undertook a special drive to collect arrears, register property that had not been registered, identify cases where commercial property was registered as residential property, and compound illegal construction, etc. Now, a GIS survey of property has been done and may increase income from property tax further. In 2018, we issued bonds. There was a good response. There was an editorial in the Economic Times about this. Issuing bonds requires that we follow company guidelines. A badge is given to those who pay user charges. (IMC Official, Finance Department)*
- *Several types of pressure tactics are employed to collect user charges. For example, user charges are collected from housing societies rather than individuals. (Chartered Accountant, IMC)*
- *People living in slums also pay though they are less regular. It is most difficult to have poor people pay user charges. One cannot really put pressure on them. We do Lok Adalats in which people receive discounts. Some people pay then. We publicise the Lok Adalats a lot. We also insist that all dues are cleared at the time of mutation and property registration. In both Indore and Jabalpur, user charges are levied for garbage collection. But it is better organised here. In Indore, we have five rates for different types of people; in Jabalpur there are only two. Earlier, in Indore, there was a flat rate of Rs.60 per month for everyone, but now it is more differentiated. In some posh areas, it is Rs.150 per month. The charge is also pegged to the amount of waste generated. For example, for apartment complexes, it is between Rs.6000 to Rs.9000, depending on the amount of waste generated. (Assistant Revenue Officer, transferred from Jabalpur a year ago)*

The increased effectiveness of the IMC in areas other than sanitation is visible on the ground. During FGDs in the sample colonies, citizens reported various improvements such as functional streetlights, development of parks, provision of benches and the construction of a community hall. Though not all IMC initiatives are successful, a large number are (Box H16).

**Box H 16: Focus Group Discussions in Sample Colonies Regarding IMC Initiatives Other than Sanitation**

<b>Colony</b>	<b>Initiatives Other than Sanitation Undertaken by IMC</b>
Colony 1	There was no community hall in the area. This was constructed by the IMC and is used for several common purposes. It is known as Kabir Hall. Earlier we did not have functioning streetlights. Now every street has streetlights that work. The IMC constructed concrete roads in the slum.
Colony 2	The IMC has done a good job by developing a park for senior citizens. There has been improvement in the gardens. Earlier, there was only garbage but now, it is not so. Now a very nice garden has been made nearby. The water supply system has improved. Some hawkers have been provided alternative workplaces by creating a hawker's corner; that's why there has been some improvement. But other street vendors have replaced them. The problem remains and traffic is disrupted.
Colony 3	Benches have been put in what was earlier the garbage throwing spot. People now sit there and talk.

**4 Concluding Remarks**

The successful public management practices followed by the IMC have two broad components. One, the IMC strengthened itself. It changed its own working style by seeking information from the ground up, formulating strategies with care, experimenting and learning, and supporting workers. It has acquired appropriate infrastructure and equipment for sanitation and improved its financial standing. These strategies are effective in both public and private organisations. But two changes that the IMC introduced are especially important for public organisations. The first was the significant reduction in clientelism and corruption, which was essential before other management processes could be improved. The second strategy, especially relevant for public organisations, was the IMC's partnerships with other agencies, especially NGOs. Public organisations have broad goals, and do not usually have all the skills needed to achieve them in-house. Consequently, appropriate partnerships can enhance their capacity to achieve goals significantly.

The second key component of the public management practices followed by the IMC concerns its approach to citizens. The relationship with citizens is a key ingredient of success for public organisations, especially those working on the ground. The IMC forged a mutually supportive relationship that with Indore's residents, which was essential to keep the city clean. At the same time, the IMC ensured the fair and rapid enforcement of the rule of law, which is important to convince the citizenry of the seriousness of the intent of public policies. Finally, the IMC engaged seriously with all stakeholders, in particular attending to the needs of those who lost out and thereby reduced opposition to its policies.

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, in India, very limited attention has been paid to effective public management strategies by policy makers and scholars alike. It is interesting that instead of finding out why the IMC is more capable than other municipalities and attempting to recreate the same conditions in all organisations, the state government simply seconds IMC officials to other places. This shows the lack of concern as well as understanding about how the performance of public sector entities can be improved within the government system. Public officials are not trained systematically to follow good public management practices. But as Indore's experience shows, the productive potential of such practices is enormous. What constitutes good public management, therefore, needs to be brought centre-stage.

## CHAPTER IX THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE

### 1 Introduction

The effective public management practices followed by the IMC, described in the previous chapter, can be useful to achieve a wide range of policy goals. These practices have been documented in the literature on public management, especially that emerging from developed countries. But they are not common in India. Notably, even the IMC did not follow them before the sanitation initiative. In fact, they signalled a change in its organisational culture.

At the same time, while not common across the country, the productive public management practices identified in the previous chapter are not unknown in India. Like the municipal commissioners described in this case study, several public managers develop effective working strategies through experience. Yet, these practices have neither spread across the system nor is any serious attempt made to propagate them. For example, there has been little attempt to delineate the underlying processes that helped the IMC succeed and encourage other organisations to adopt them.

This indicates that there are strong barriers to following sound public management practices in India, preventing their wide-spread recognition and adoption. These barriers need to be analysed to identify strategies to make effective public management the norm rather than the exception. This scrutiny can also provide answers to two attendant questions, i.e., whether these sound public management practices are likely to sustain within the IMC, and the extent to which they can be replicated in other cities. In other words, how can a 'best practice' become common practice? After all, a clean city should be the norm, not the exception.

An understanding of the barriers to effective public management can be gained by examining the context, or various aspects of the political economy and the overall system of governance, that supported the IMC's success. The special contextual factors that supported its success provide pointers to broader shifts that are needed to change the public management ethos in India. However, it should also be recognised that while IMC benefitted from a constellation of specific contextual developments, it remained constrained by several other aspects of the context that did not change. These too need to be analysed and understood to identify the broader changes needed to induce more effective public management.

But before moving on the contextual factors that framed the IMC's success and those that remain a problem, there is need to recognise that its success has created its own dynamic, which has important implications for the sustainability and replicability of the initiative. This dynamic is touched upon briefly below, before moving on to the contextual factors that framed the sanitation initiative.

## 2 The Momentum

The IMC's success has generated a certain momentum of its own, which will work towards sustaining the gains made in sanitation. One aspect of this momentum is the whole ecosystem to ensure sanitation that has taken root in the IMC. Effective standard operating procedures (SOPs) for maintaining sanitation have been developed and are followed. The necessary infrastructure has been created and equipment purchased to facilitate these SOPs. Ensuring sanitation is now part of organisational routine and routines, by definition, tend to be followed unless there are interventions.

A second aspect of the momentum is that there is pressure on local politicians and bureaucrats to maintain extant standards of sanitation because citizens expect a certain level of services. Consequently, any IMC mayor or councillor who allows the sanitation situation to deteriorate is likely to be unpopular and may not be re-elected. To quote:

*'Politicians now have a stake in the city. There is agreement across political parties on sanitation. When we worked on connecting water ways in slums, politicians supported us.'*  
(MC 3)

Additionally, the professional reputation of any municipal commissioner who lets sanitation deteriorate will suffer. This will motivate municipal commissioners to at least maintain standards, and some may even try to improve them further. Moreover, IMC councillors and employees take pride in their achievements.

A third factor pertains to the organisational shifts that have come about in the IMC. Its officials work in more intelligent and creative ways than they did earlier. Treating the junior staff well is an accepted practice. The IMC's relationship with citizens has become positive and mutually supportive. As we have seen, this shift in the organisational ethos has enhanced the quality of work not only in sanitation, but in other areas as well. However, as is discussed below, several threats to this work ethic come from the larger context.

Finally, a societal change with respect to sanitation is visible in Indore. Not only do citizens expect a certain level of services from the IMC, they themselves do not litter as they did earlier; they segregate garbage and take pride in a clean city. The social norms around sanitation have changed. Moreover, these new social norms make the IMC's task of keeping the city clean much easier. Citizens co-operate with the IMC and are willing to pay user charges. To sum up, the changes in social norms, the political calculus and shifts in the organisational culture of the IMC support the sustenance of the gains made in sanitation in Indore.

The momentum of the IMC's success has spread across Madhya Pradesh as well. Other municipalities have drawn inspiration from Indore and worked hard to improve sanitation. In the national sanitation survey of 2022, Madhya Pradesh ranked number one among all states.

An important politician from Indore reported that he had provided funds to neighbouring village councils to improve sanitation.<sup>45</sup> Indore's success has influenced national policy too. For example, soon after Indore became garbage bin free in 2016, the activity was added to the SBM protocol in 2017. When Indore removed legacy waste, the National Green Tribunal asked for affidavits from chief secretaries of all other states regarding how they intended to deal with legacy waste. Indore has demonstrated the possibility of having a clean city, and this acts as a spur for other municipalities and national agencies.

However, it is more difficult to replicate Indore's success in sanitation in other cities than to sustain it in Indore. In Indore, the success in sanitation has a momentum, which does not exist in other Indian cities. Instead, problems emerging from the larger context remain dominant, obstructing achievement of goals. Below, the contextual factors that supported the IMC's success but that do not exist as a rule, and those that remain a constraint for the IMC are examined in detail.

### **3 The Contextual Dynamic**

#### ***a. Political Support***

##### *Role of Political Support in IMC's Success*

One factor that was critical for the IMC's success was political support. The Swacch Bharat Mission was an important national programme launched by the prime minister and provided the IMC with an agenda as well as resources. Through the SBM, the IMC had access to extra funds for sanitation related activities (Annex 3, Point 1) and could recruit two consultants for community mobilisation and education, and management information systems (MIS). Because of the prime minister's interest, local political leaders supported the initiative. Additionally, as the SBM was a high-profile programme, the IMC's success attracted national attention, which spurred it further.

But the SBM was common across the country and the IMC succeeded far better than any other municipality. This illustrates the importance of political support from the state level. As discussed in Chapter II, the chief minister was very keen on a breakthrough in sanitation, and Indore became the focus because of its prominence in the state. The chief minister's support played a critical role, because the state government could take decisions that had concrete impact. The most important decision was the posting of MC1, an extremely capable officer with knowledge of the working of municipal corporations as well as Indore. Significantly, MC1 enjoyed the chief minister's confidence, who gave him the specific mandate to improve sanitation in Indore. As illustrated in the previous chapters, MC1's skills and motivation played a key role in turning the sanitation problem around.

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<sup>45</sup> MLAs in Madhya Pradesh have at their disposal some money to allocate for projects that they consider especially important. Usually, these funds are allocated for various types of construction projects such as roads, community halls, etc.

But simply posting a capable and motivated leader was not adequate. Many organisations get such leaders from time to time, but do not necessarily achieve significant success. A critical factor here was that MC1 received strong political support throughout his tenure. Even when he annoyed locally powerful persons, he was not transferred, which, in India, is the exception rather than the rule. He could tackle the problem of ghost sanitation workers and remove stray animals from public areas, both of which hurt the interests of many locally powerful persons, including IMC councillors, and still stay in position. The whole initiative could easily have faltered if MC1 had been transferred because of complaints from local leaders. And in fact, it is quite common for officials to be given ‘punishment postings’ of minor importance or in far-flung areas for coming in the way of local vested interests. Instead, MC1 was rewarded for his efforts with a good posting after his tenure in the IMC.

Additionally, strong state level political support meant that the municipal commissioners who followed MC1 were extremely capable as well. Often, what a capable officer achieves is undone by incompetent or corrupt successors. Moreover, like MC1, the municipal commissioners who followed were aware of the chief minister’s interest in improving sanitation in Indore and keen to maintain the number one position that the city had achieved in the country. Consequently, they kept up the momentum that had been built. They too completed their tenures without being transferred.<sup>46</sup>

At the local level, political support from the mayor contributed to the IMC’s success. The mayor was from the same political party as the prime minister and the chief minister and shared their goal of improving sanitation. If there had been a mayor who did not support the sanitation initiative, either for political reasons or the benefits derived from various corrupt practices, MC1’s task would have been much more difficult. Moreover, the mayor was a political heavyweight and had significant clout with the IMC councillors. She could co-ordinate with other political actors when needed, as when stray animals were moved to nearby districts. Additionally, a majority of IMC’s councillors were from the same political party as the PM and CM and either willingly supported the sanitation initiative or were forced to do so, because it was the mandate of their political party leaders. Had the IMC been dominated by the opposition, its efforts might not have been as forceful.

The convergence of political motivations at the national, state and local level created an unusual moment for Indore’s eventual success. However, among these, support from the state government was the most critical. Because of this support, capable municipal commissioners could be provided on a continuous basis. These leaders, in turn, could foster the public management practices that led to success. In particular, with political support, they could enforce the rule of law in society and insist on a work-oriented culture within the organisation. Those who opposed these measures could not get them removed.

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<sup>46</sup> Research has demonstrated that rapid turnover of top officials hurts effective management of agencies while stable leadership without such disruptions leads to improved performance. (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999).

### *The Dynamics of Political Support*

The political support for sanitation that spurred the IMC's success was in place as the fieldwork for this case study ended. But this cannot be taken for granted. The interest in sanitation can wane at the national as well as the state level if the priorities of political actors change for a range of factors, such as the political actors themselves changing, diminishing political gains from sanitation, other issues becoming more pressing, and so on.

Sustained state-level political support ensured capable and hardworking municipal commissioners that the IMC had for nearly eight years between 2015 and 2023. But the more common political practice comprises posting of officials on criteria other than merit. This limits organisational performance across India and could derail the IMC's achievements in sanitation in the future. To quote:

*'In another city, one municipal commissioner did a very good job, but when the next one came, the initiatives were dropped. Still, some improvements have sustained.'* (Representative NGO 1)

If political focus shifts from Indore and from sanitation, less capable and committed municipal commissioners could be posted. While the gains made in sanitation can probably survive less capable municipal commissioners as the system is already in place, if a corrupt municipal commissioner is posted, corruption in the sanitation system could increase and derail the initiative. To quote:

*'The IMC now has a lot of infrastructure and equipment to maintain the success. But things can go wrong in the future quite easily. If a bad municipal commissioner is posted, all this will vanish. So far, we have had good municipal commissioners.'* (MLA (Congress), ex Minister)

Notably, the position of the municipal commissioner of Indore is a highly coveted one. Since the possibilities of bribes and other corrupt practices in Indore are very high, many corrupt officers seek the post of municipal commissioner in Indore.

An important contributor to the IMC's success was that sanitation was protected from day-to-day political interference in law and rule enforcement. This was an exception rather than the norm. For instance, IMC officials reported that municipal officials visiting from other states were impressed that the IMC had removed stray cows and pigs. This is not a difficult task *per se*, but its execution usually generates complaints from various groups and the political support necessary to weather such complaints is not common. Within Indore, before the fieldwork for this case study began, there had been instances of politicians becoming physically violent with officers who were enforcing rules not related to sanitation. Such interference did not exist regarding sanitation when the fieldwork of the study ended but can reappear if sanitation loses its state-level importance.

Support of municipal level politicians, especially the mayor, too played an important role in the IMC's success. At the time of the fieldwork for the case study, officials reported that the new mayor was a well-educated person, and keen to take the sanitation initiative forward. However, other municipalities may not be so fortunate (and even Indore may not have a good mayor forever). In particular, if a corrupt mayor were to get elected, he or she may try to re-introduce corrupt practices. A municipal commissioner could counter such attempts with the support of the state government. But such support from the state government is not common across municipalities. In Indore, too, if the state government's interest in sanitation were to wane, the situation could deteriorate.

Additionally, significant problems in the political ethos are visible in the IMC itself. Councillors who belong to the opposition party reported feeling ignored and side-lined. They were very dissatisfied and complained that the councillors' meetings were now perfunctory and no substantial issues were discussed at these meetings. To quote a councillor from the opposition:

*'The BJP councillors who have been recently elected are all new. They don't know a thing, not even how to manage files. There must be barely 20 to 25 old councillors left. The IMC no longer holds regular meetings. Everything is done by the district collector or the municipal commissioner. The councillors are given guidelines by the party, and since they belong to the party in power, they are not accountable. The opposition councillors are unhappy. They have been side-lined totally. The importance of councillors has steadily declined over the last 10 years. My husband tells me that when he was a councillor, issues raised by the opposition were taken seriously. But now there is no discussion or debate. I have asked a lot of questions under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, but there has been no reply. Whenever any party has a very big majority, these kinds of things happen.'*

### **b. Autonomy and Recognition**

#### *Organisational Autonomy*

The IMC's success needs to be understood against the fact that as an elected local government, it had a fair degree of autonomy, which is not available to departmental agencies.<sup>47</sup> It could experiment with new strategies, buy equipment as needed, decide on the pace of work, etc., without seeking approval from higher governmental levels. This allowed it to not only craft new initiatives but also change course if something did not work. Additionally, as it had its own income sources, it could fund activities for which SBM funds were not forthcoming, such as buying vehicles for door-to-door garbage collection. Moreover, because of a body of elected councillors, the IMC had a legitimate local decision-making process. This allowed it to take many consequential decisions that a single bureaucrat would hesitate to take.

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<sup>47</sup> Agencies are effective when oversight authorities demand performance but also provide the necessary authorisation and resources and refrain from micromanagement. This autonomy to manage its mission enhances agency performance (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999). Moreover, an important question regarding the implementation of public policy is whether implementation is about achieving conformance or performance (Barrett, 2004; Hill & Hupe, 2014).

In contrast, in India, as a rule, programmes for social and economic development are implemented by departmental agencies rather than autonomous local governments. Departmental agencies, which follow the directions of state level departmental offices, have very little autonomy. Yet, as the IMC experience shows, autonomy, along with a valid local decision-making process, can be vital to success. Consequently, rather than implement programmes through the less autonomous departmental agencies, widening the work-sphere of local governments and transferring departmental manpower and financial resources to them enhances the potential for effective public management.

However, in India, municipalities have inadequate autonomy. Financially, they are heavily dependent on transfers from the state and national governments and the range of activities that they can undertake depends on state government support. Municipalities are not empowered adequately to mobilise financial resources by raising taxes or levying user fees or unlocking land value. India's municipal revenue has remained constant at 1 per cent of GDP, which is low compared to other developing countries such as Brazil (7.4 per cent) and South Africa (6 per cent). Moreover, between 2010 and 2018, municipal tax revenue as a share of GDP declined from 0.30 per cent to 0.25 per cent while during the same period, the combined revenue of the union and state governments increased from 16 per cent to 18 per cent.<sup>48</sup> Although it has improved its financial footing, state government grants still comprise a large share of the IMC's funds (Annex 1, Point 6). As the fieldwork for this case study came to an end, state government funds to the IMC had reduced significantly, as the government had prioritised other schemes before elections. Clearly, devolution of more revenues to municipalities, or a more stable system of grants, is needed.

Similarly, the human resource structure, i.e., the types and number of experts, managers and workers is controlled by state governments. The state government takes decisions regarding the recruitment and posting of senior and supervisory officers, the salary structure, promotion and a range of other human resource management related issues. This limits the extent to which the IMC can extend and enhance the delivery of services to citizens. It cannot get the experts that it may need. If the IMC had been able to augment its human resources as per its needs as it did in its sanitation infrastructure, it could have emerged as a more capable organisation. This is the case in municipalities across India.

The lack of autonomy extends to day-to-day working as well. IMC officials complained about excessive monitoring at the state level with a great deal of time being spent in reviews and video conferences, which reduced the time available for substantive work. To sum up, organisational autonomy, which was so critical to the IMC's success, remains constrained across municipalities and other field level organisations in India, creating a barrier for work that is innovative and responsive to citizens' needs.

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<sup>48</sup> Ahluwalia, Kanbur and Mohanty (2014), Gupta and Sachdeva (2021).

### *Autonomy in Programme Design*

As noted above, the SBM guidelines played a facilitative role in the IMC's success by providing direction and resources. Additionally, unlike many other programme guidelines in India, the SBM guidelines were not overly prescriptive, suggesting a broad range of activities that could be undertaken. Because of the flexibility in the guidelines, the IMC could structure its efforts to suit its specific contextual conditions and needs. As the case study shows, the IMC crafted strategies that took into account the varying characteristics of citizens in different areas of the city, the varying needs of different areas, and so on.

This has important implications for programme design in India. Several programme guidelines mandate very specific activities and allow little or no local variation. This case study shows that implementing organisations need the autonomy to tailor their strategies to specific local needs.

### *Recognition*

Along with providing a fair degree of autonomy, the SBM energised the IMC by publishing the results of its annual sanitation survey. Consequently, the IMC's achievements became highly visible, motivating its personnel, generating public co-operation, quelling opposition and spurring it towards continuous improvements.

However, a degree of caution is necessary here. In public systems, incentives and rewards can lead to negative consequences as well as positive ones because public authorities need to respond not just to goals set by higher tiers of government but to citizens' needs as well. If achievements of goals set from the top are rewarded while those that address citizens' needs are not, organisational priorities can get skewed.<sup>49</sup> Among the interviewees in this case study, the opinion on the impact of the sanitation survey was divided. Some interviewees alleged that there was an obsession within the IMC to remain number one in the sanitation survey, and fulfilment of ranking protocols took precedence over more important tasks, such as addressing the water shortage. Others were of the opinion that the IMC's emphasis on sanitation was appropriate, and the improvements were real (Box I1).

Another problem with recognition based on achievement of goals set from the top is of organisations taking undesirable shortcuts, mis-reporting achievements, etc. In the IMC, some effort to 'manage' the sanitation award was visible during the study. When twenty sanitation workers were asked reasons why they had to work more than their usual stipulated hours, eleven mentioned the visit of the annual sanitation survey team, and ten mentioned visits by VIPs and senior officials. Six respondents mentioned that they worked harder during the festival season, two mentioned special sanitation drives and one mentioned big functions.

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<sup>49</sup> In the UK, in 1998, more than 300 headline performance targets were identified for all government departments. Subsequently, there was evidence of improvement in performance. But there were also non-trivial problems. In the health sector, staff was diverted towards what was measured, and patients were asked to wait outside hospitals to reduce waiting time (an indicator). The UK performed strongly in the 2004 round of World Bank's general governance rankings, but on many public service-specific international rankings, such as educational attainment, health, crime, etc., it did not do well (Hood 2006).

### **Box I 1: Comments on the Sanitation Survey**

- *The sanitation survey is a good tool. It has changed over the years. The indicators help in setting goals and there is a lot of competition. There is a lot of media coverage when results of the sanitation survey are announced. Not only has the motivation and morale of the team within the IMC been impacted positively, but the mayor and councillors have also benefitted from good results. The negative aspect is that the focus gets limited to certain indicators, and people also manipulate and manage the survey teams to get good results. (MC3)*
- *It is possible to manipulate the sanitation survey because third party agencies are hired to do the ranking. But this sort of manipulation cannot be widespread. And because of the sanitation survey, at least some work is being done everywhere. (Representative NGO1).*
- *Being number one is a very big priority, to be achieved at any cost. No IAS officer can allow the number one position to slip. Municipal commissioners put all their energy in getting the award. There is too much emphasis on the award. Because of the exclusive focus on sanitation, other problems have been left unattended. There is no effort to improve roads, drainage systems, etc. There is a terrible drinking water problem. Water is supplied once in two days, and it does not reach some areas of my ward. Why has nothing been done about it? There are dogs on the streets, and they attack people. The task has been outsourced to two companies. I don't know what they do. (Congress Councillor)*
- *The sanitation survey is a good thing. Targets should be achieved. I don't agree that it has distracted from problems such as drinking water. We have enough water. But distribution is a problem. (Congress MLA, ex-Minister)*
- *Municipal Commissioners are keen to get the prize because they want to stay in Indore. The sanitation survey team keep giving Indore prizes because they have to justify the money that is being spent on sanitation. They never talk to me, though I always get in touch with them. The IMC people don't let journalists meet them (Social Activist)*
- *This sanitation thing is like riding the tiger, you can't get off. You have to be number one. Other things are neglected. If some rankings are given for drinking water too, it will come into focus. There is another small scheme in which we also got number one rank. No ranking, no work. (IMC Official)*
- *A huge amount of documentation has to be done for the sanitation survey. There are many questions to be answered. Those who do poor documentation don't receive awards. (IMC Official)*
- *For around 45 days before the sanitation survey, we work for longer hours. There is no extra remuneration for that. We do it quite happily. (Sanitation Worker)*

To conclude, matters related to recognition and reward need to be handled carefully and tied not just to goals set from the top, but to citizens' needs and to sound working processes as well. If done properly, public recognition of local successes acts as a spur, strengthening the motivation of political and administrative leaders, and earning citizens' support.

### ***c. Clientelism and Corruption***

#### ***Managing Corruption***

To introduce effective public management practices, MC1 had to protect the sanitation initiative from corruption. The importance of protecting appointments from clientelism for good performance has been highlighted in several studies.<sup>50</sup> Clientelism and corruption do not just lead to public money being pilfered, but also impact the whole work culture and undermine organisational capacity and effectiveness.

However, in the sanitation initiative in Indore, corruption was *managed* rather than rooted out. While sanitation related activities were protected from bribery and other malpractices, there is no evidence of reduced corrupt practices in other activities of the IMC, regarding which interviewees commented that 'business as usual' prevailed (Box 12).

#### **Box 12: Comments about Corruption in IMC**

- *There is 40 per cent corruption in the IMC. Politicians want 20 per cent, and officers take another 20 per cent. This is true of all political parties. Even an honest municipal commissioner cannot control this. (Congress MLA, ex-Minister)*
- *Whenever there is a meeting of the IMC Council, Rs.20 lakh is spent. The meeting hall is under construction. The meeting is held in five-star hotels. Around 5000 people have lunch. With every councillor, several supporters, etc. come. I have been saying, why don't we just put up a tent in a ground and have the meeting? I have filed a PIL regarding this. I keep filing PILs. (Congress Councillor)*
- *Nowadays, rivers are called naalas. This is because you can erect buildings closer to naalas than to rivers and make money. (Social Activist)*
- *There is no corruption in sanitation. But in other matters, it is business as usual. (Representative, NGO 2).*
- *MC3 is strict. Now there is strict action against corruption. Recently, there were some bribery issues regarding preparation of maps and MC3 suspended 37 people. (Union Leader).*

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<sup>50</sup> Tendler (1998) shows that in two initiatives that succeeded in Brazil, the appointment of grassroots health workers was protected from clientelism.

Citizens in the sample colonies too reported that while sanitation had been protected from corruption significantly, it persisted in other activities (Box I3).

<b>Box I 3: Focus Group Discussions in Sample Colonies Regarding Corruption in IMC</b>	
<b>Name of Colony</b>	<b>Corruption in IMC</b>
Colony 1	We never faced any corruption issues – maybe because this is a slum area, and our incomes are very low; so, they don't ask for any money.
Colony 2	Corruption has not decreased from 2015 to 2023. It has decreased in some cases. Now there is no corruption in the matter of cleanliness. Earlier, if an animal died, we had to pay money to get it removed. But now we do not have to pay. When the IMC staff come to pick up the dead animal, they ask for phenyl for cleaning, but do not ask for money. This is a big change. But corruption has not reduced in other matters. It still takes many rounds to get the job done. If we compare the quality of roads constructed by the Indore Development Authority (IDA) and the IMC, IDA roads are much better. Corruption can't go away because many people still believe in getting work done by paying money. The establishment of an on-line system for house property tax calculation online has reduced corruption. There is very little discretion and hence corruption is less. But some officials still continue to take bribes.
Colony 3	Corruption has not been reduced, even today. The sewerage workers take a lot of money to do the cleaning. This is a big problem.

Corruption is prevalent widely in India, and it can be argued that, along with the formal rule-based public management system, there exists a parallel informal public management system based on clientelism, bribery and other corrupt practices.<sup>51</sup> Because corruption involves public officials at all levels, it is rarely punished while officials who object to corrupt practices are liable to be transferred.

Government officials fall in two categories. One category comprises officials who do not participate in the patronage and corruption-based informal system. As a rule, such officers do not understand the informal system well, may fight it and are likely to get transferred in the middle of their good practices if they hurt powerful interests. The second category comprises those who are part of the informal system, do not attempt to curb it and consequently do not undertake projects that need a reduction in corrupt practices.

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<sup>51</sup> Sharma (2023, 2009)

But the style of functioning that MC1 adopted corresponded to neither category. MC1 understood the dual formal and informal systems well and used his astute understanding of the situation to protect the sanitation initiative from prevailing negative practices, without attempting to take on the informal patronage and corruption-based system head-on. MC1 had a very acute grasp of how power was distributed and used – not only the formal power of the judiciary and the media, but informal power relationships that relied on patronage-based functioning and corruption. Consequently, as he addressed the overt power of the judiciary and the media by keeping them both informed – a good public management practice – he also struck deals with the covert power brokers. He placated local politicians and union leaders by attending to their other interests, rather than demanding that they abide by the law and rules *in toto*. In other words, he managed corruption, accommodating the patronage-based, corrupt system, to achieve his immediate goal to successfully launch the sanitation initiative.

### *Implications*

During the entire period of the fieldwork of this study, sanitation appeared to remain largely protected from corruption. Even though an opposition councillor claimed that corrupt practices persisted in sanitation and some sanitation workers claimed that a few ‘ghost’ workers continued to exist, interviews with NGO representatives and FGDs with citizens showed that in sanitation related activities, corruption had reduced significantly. However, the management, rather than the rooting out, of corruption means that the situation remains precarious, as corruption remains an important dynamic within the IMC as well as in the larger government system. Moreover, the fact that in the IMC, corruption was managed rather than rooted out, indicates the enormous power of the informal system of clientelism and corruption in India.

This has implications both for sustained protection of sanitation from corruption within the IMC and its replicability in other cities. When clientelism and corrupt practices are the norm, they can only be countered in specific instances with very strong political backing. For instance, the IMC could overcome resistance from politicians and officials involved in the racket of ghost sanitation workers only with state level political support. Under ordinary circumstances, any municipal commissioner who attempted to tackle this problem would have been under constant threat of transfer, as local politicians would have complained about him or her to the state government. If the political costs of ignoring local politicians had been higher than the cost of derailing the initiative, the municipal commissioner would have been transferred. Such strong political support for positive initiatives can exist more widely only when clientelism and corruption are not the norm. .

#### ***d. Organisational Capacity***

##### *Public Management Processes*

The sanitation initiative succeeded because the IMC enhanced its organisational capacity by following effective public management practices, while the financial resources and small additional manpower provided by the SBM helped as well. A productive working culture in the IMC has been supported by three consecutive municipal commissioners. But, as noted previously, ideas about sound public management processes are not discussed widely in India nor are officials mandated and supported in following such practices. For example, the state government, instead of understanding why the IMC has become more capable than other municipalities and attempting to create the same conditions elsewhere, simply deputed IMC officials to other municipalities during important events such as the prime ministers' visits, big investor meets, etc. There is little attempt to learn from the day-to-day processes followed in the IMC.

The IMC initiative is not replicable unless ideas about what effective public management implies are known, accepted and practised widely across the system. It is not surprising that though other municipalities were exhorted to follow the Indore example, they could not. For example, one NGO representative reported that inspired by the IMC, another municipal corporation had engaged them for citizen education and mobilisation. But they had engaged the NGO only four months before the national sanitation survey. In the remaining eight months, things went to seed. This municipal corporation copied the IMC and contracted the NGO to improve its rank in the sanitation survey but was oblivious to the importance of sustained public contact and education that the IMC sought from its partnerships with NGOs. Similarly, the manager of Company C said that many officials visited their plant to adopt the new mode of waste processing in their city. But no other city was able to convince citizens to segregate waste.

The fact that effective public management practices are not followed across the system threatens the working culture in the IMC as well. In the future, it might have the misfortune of being headed by municipal commissioners and officials who may not appreciate the new ethos, and orient it towards the extant administrative culture. In fact, the problems the larger system poses to the budding new organisational culture are constantly visible in the IMC. For example, to collect unpaid charges, IMC officials use dubious means such as cutting off electricity to recover dues even though this is not allowed as per government rules. The tendency towards inappropriate use of authority persists in the IMC. The existence of corrupt practices has been discussed above.

##### *Human Resources*

As shown in the previous chapters, the IMC leadership has done a good job of motivating employees and creating a productive workforce. This has increased the IMC's capacity to deliver services to citizens. However, there are very significant fault lines in the structure of human resources in the organisation.

IMC lacks experts in many subject areas related to sanitation, such as water science and hygiene.<sup>52</sup> While external experts can be hired as consultants, organisations need at least a basic level of internal expertise to identify issues and experts who can offer solutions, as well as for daily operations. The availability of requisite experts would have improved the quality of the IMC's sanitation effort, just as appropriate sanitation infrastructure did. The lack of expertise extends to other areas of municipal work such as environment protection, landscape architecture, traffic movement and even gardening (Box I4).

The limited success in improving the drainage system points to inadequacy of expertise to take on complicated problems. If more and better experts had been available, they could have contributed to the sanitation initiative to give it greater depth. Moreover, many posts are vacant. For example, out of 35 posts of managers, only 17 (48.6 per cent) were filled, out of 1190 posts of specialised workers, 313 (26.3 per cent) were filled.<sup>53</sup> (Annex 1, Point 2) so that the workload of officials is high and stressful.

#### **Box I 4: Comments about Human Resources**

- *The problem is that there are many vacant posts. When the human resource set-up changed in 2014, some people, especially engineers, were recruited. But still there are many vacancies. There have been no promotions for some time. The court has stayed them because of some dispute over reservations. Earlier, the IMC used to do some of its own recruitment. Now recruitment decisions have been centralised and are very slow. We can recruit only sanitation workers and some contractual workers. (IMC Official)*
- *The IMC's mandate has been increasing. In 1994, it took over the maintenance of city schools. Now health clinics have been started, and the IMC has to manage these as well. There is the urban poverty programme and the Prime Minister's Awas Yojna (provision of housing to low-income families). Recently, the CM did a 'Jan Sewa Abhiyan' (services to citizens campaign) to ensure that all citizens received their entitlements. Also, 29 new villages have been added to the IMC and the area to be managed by it has increased from 134 square kilometres to 250 square kilometres. But we don't have the type of specialised staff we need for all these activities. For example, environment related work is increasing, but we have no experts. The garden section has no experts. Revenues have increased but not the size of staff. (IMC Official)*
- *The IMC lacks expertise in many key areas. They have no landscape architect, who can look at biodiversity, etc. They have only civil engineers. They have no one who understands water science. They have no traffic engineers and no expertise on air quality. These are important issues that require deep knowledge. (Social Activist)*

<sup>52</sup> Professionalism, or requisite specialised skills acquired through education and training, enhance organisational performance (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999),

<sup>53</sup> Posts are vacant because the state government has banned fresh recruitments to cut costs.

The salary structure of employees is decided by the state government and is extremely unsatisfactory for sanitation workers. Among the sanitation workers interviewed, regular workers reported a monthly take home salary between Rs. 21,780-42,000, *Viniyamit* workers between Rs. 15,000-20,000, and daily wage workers between Rs. 6000-9800. The difference between the salaries of permanent and daily wage workers is huge – the former are paid nearly four times the latter, though both do the same work. The following quotes from a regular worker and a daily wage worker illustrate the point:

- *My salary is more than Rs. 40,000 per month. I have worked in the IMC for 22 years. My children have done well. My son is a sports teacher. My daughter is married and is also a sports teacher. My children studied in government and private schools from time to time. I don't know about unions. I just do the work. People should be given permanent jobs. (Sanitation worker (Regular))*
- *My gross salary is Rs. 8200 per month and net salary is Rs. 7000 per month after deductions for EPF, etc. I do a second job of cleaning an office after 2 pm. from which I make Rs. 4000- Rs. 5000 per month. I belong to a labour union. We discuss salaries a lot. Inflation is rising constantly. We should be made permanent and paid more. (Sanitation Worker (Daily wager))*

The low emoluments of a majority of sanitation workers lead to dissatisfaction and reinforce the low status of the caste of these workers. Of the 25 workers interviewed, two workers lived in a '*kuccha*' house (a house made of less robust materials) and five in a house without tap water. Nine workers had no personal vehicle to travel and only nine out of 25 owned a scooter or motorcycle (Annex 3, Point 6 and 7). In this respect, the IMC is no different from other municipal corporations.<sup>54</sup>

The paltry amount paid to daily wage workers is not motivating in the long-term. When sanitation workers were asked to make suggestions, the dominant response from the *Viniyamit* and daily wage workers was that their salaries should be increased and they should be made 'regular' (Annex 3, Point 8). When they were asked if they would recommend their job to others, a majority said that they would not. When they were asked the reasons for their response, those who said they would not recommend others to do these jobs cited their low salary most frequently. Among those who said that they would recommend others to apply for these jobs, the most frequent response was that for uneducated people, these were the only jobs available (Annex 3, Point 10). Zonal officials suggested during an FGD that an incentive scheme should be put in place to augment sanitation workers' wages. Among

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<sup>54</sup> A study of sewerage workers in Vijayawada MC showed that 3 per cent workers were illiterate, and their mean years of schooling was about 4 years. Most were contract workers, who earned Rs. 9000 per month. Moreover, the workload of the existing staff had been steadily increasing, and they were made to work extra hours without compensation. About 35 per cent owned their houses, of whom 46 per cent lived in *kaccha* houses, 42 per cent in *semi-pucca* and 12 per cent in *pucca* houses. Nearly 72 per cent dwellings were in notified slums. Three per cent of the workers owned agricultural land while ten per cent owned non-agricultural land. The wives of most workers earned meagre amounts through non-agricultural casual work. Some workers had multiple occupations (Reddy and Rao 2022).

sanitation supervisors too, there were three categories: regular, *Vinaymit* and daily wage supervisors. Among the supervisors who were interviewed, the regular supervisors were satisfied with their salary but others complained that their salaries were inadequate for meeting their basic needs.

As per government directions, the IMC has identified three agencies to recruit sanitation workers. IMC officials reported that they did not find the third-party arrangements effective and preferred recruiting workers directly. Notably, the IMC has succeeded so far not because it outsourced certain activities but by taking ownership. The recruitment of sanitation workers through third party is a recent practice but needs to be watched in terms of the welfare of the workers.

To sum up, the IMC's control over its human resources is limited and it has used such authority as it has, to motivate its employees to perform. But key problems remain: it lacks expertise in several areas, the number of personnel is inadequate for its growing activities and it pays very low salaries to a large proportion of its sanitation workers. These issues limit the IMC's organisational capacity to deliver citizen-centric services, and as they pertain to government policy, they apply to other municipalities as well. In India, municipalities have almost no leeway to develop their own personnel structure for their specific needs. At the very least, it should be possible for municipalities to propose changes in the personnel structure and incorporate them after approval from the state government. The large number of vacancies that are now prevalent inhibit the organisational capacity to deliver.

#### **4 Change and Social Dynamics**

While issues related to political support, organisational autonomy and capacity, and corruption play a critical role in all public initiatives in India, this dynamic can vary across different types of changes attempted as they may demand different levels of effort from citizens and impact diverse social groups.

Improving sanitation requires behavioural changes among citizens, as do many other types of changes. However, the behavioural changes required in sanitation do not entail high costs in terms of time or money for citizens, especially after the initial phase. For example, in Indore, initially, citizens had to make some effort to segregate waste and transfer it to the garbage collection vehicle on time. Once adopted, these habits did not require either additional time or money, nor did they require any other effort which significantly altered the daily lives of the citizens. Moreover, the returns came fairly quickly as citizens begin to enjoy a clean and hygienic environment. Such a change is far easier to make than, say, shifting from the use of fossil fuels to solar energy, which entails significant upfront costs for citizens and positive results are visible only in the long-term. Similarly, taking public transport to reduce environmental damage by reducing the number of vehicles on the roads can entail extra daily investment of time (unless the public transport system is very good), as well as the physical

effort of walking to and for from bus or train stations, and is likely to be resisted more. Thus, the cost-benefit ratio for citizens plays a key role in inducing changes in citizens' behaviour.

Moreover, sanitation is an activity in which there are very few losers. A cleaner environment serves the interests of a vast majority of citizens. As FGDs in some colonies revealed, many citizens had been unhappy about their unhygienic surroundings before the sanitation initiative began. They probably just needed support from the IMC to change the situation. As this case study demonstrated, a few citizens, such as *jagir* workers, rag pickers and animal owners did lose out in some ways. The IMC did its best to compensate them, but an important factor in its success in dealing with them was that the losers received little support from opposition political parties, the media or even social activists as a very large number of citizens stood to benefit from the IMC's initiatives. The ruling political party too stood to gain more electoral support because of the new initiative than it anticipated to lose.

Another critical factor in the IMC's success was that among the groups that were impacted adversely, *jagir* workers and rag pickers were poor and powerless and had limited capacity to resist. While animal owners had some social weight, they were not extremely powerful. Changes in public policies, such as policies to empower women or to enforce environmental standards in industry, where powerful groups are impacted adversely, can evoke opposition from powerful groups and are harder to implement, because such groups can take recourse to legal processes and may have political clout. When corruption is widespread, it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to go against the interests of very powerful actors because of their capacity to influence politicians and officials through political donations, bribes and other means.

In other words, as change is attempted, the social dynamics and the various actors that are impacted by the change have an important bearing on the strategies to be followed and the likelihood of success.

## **5 Concluding Remarks**

The success of the sanitation initiative in Indore reveals, on the one hand, the importance of sound public management practices, and on the other, contextual factors that facilitate these practices. This case study showed that organisations can follow productive management practices to the extent that there is political support to follow them in the face of opposition from powerful social actors, organisational autonomy to develop context-specific strategies and revise them as organisations learn, adequate organisational capacity in terms of human resources and finance, and low levels of corruption.

These contextual factors are critical for the sustainability and replicability of 'good practices'. Consequently, what is needed for a secular improvement in public management practices are larger systemic changes, some of which have been identified in this case study.

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## Annexes

### Annex 1: General Information About the Indore Municipal Corporation

#### 1 Departments of the IMC

- Accounts Department
- Education Department
- Electrical and Mechanical Department
- Fire Department
- Food and Civil Supplies Department
- Health Department
- Housing and Environmental Department
- Information Technology Department
- Law and General Administration Department
- Planning and Rehabilitation Department
- Public Works Department
- Revenue Department
- Water Work and Drainage Department

#### 2 IMC Posts as on January 1, 2022

Administrators		Specialists		Frontline Workers				
	Number of Posts	Filled (Regular)		Number of Posts	Filled (Regular)		Number of Posts	Filled (Regular)
Municipal Commissioner	1	1	Town Planning and Engineering	173	124	Guard	36	128
Additional Commissioner	4	4	Legal	7	0	Leading fireman	120	-
Deputy Commissioner	19	6	Public Relations	6	0	Fireman	240	-
Assistant Commissioner	11	5	Physical Training	5	0	Time- keeper	80	33
<b>Total Managers</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	Fire	14	1	Skilled Gardener	39	180
Office Workers	428	237	Garden	22	4			
Accounts	5	2	Revenue	295	48	Drivers	20	58
<b>Total Administrators</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>255</b>	Electricity	30	0	Sanitation Keeper (Worker)	3900	1354
			Sanitation	564	126	<b>Total Frontline Workers</b>	<b>4435</b>	<b>1753</b>
			Traffic	6	0	<b>Helpers</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>134</b>
			Encroachment	21	0			
			Information Technology	13	0			
			Community	34	10			
			<b>Total Specialists</b>	<b>1190</b>	<b>313</b>			

### 3 Functions of Municipal Corporations Related to Sanitation as per the MP Municipal Corporation Act, 1956

#### a. Matters to be provided by the municipal corporation (Section 66)

- Cleaning public streets, places and sewers
- Disposing nightsoil and rubbish, and if deemed desirable, preparing compost from them
- Constructing, managing and maintaining municipal water works to provide suitable water for public and private purposes
- Constructing, managing and maintaining public urinals and latrines
- Constructing, managing and maintaining sewers and drains
- Taking measures to prevent the outbreak, spread and recurrence of infectious diseases
- Maintenance of public parks, gardens and recreation parks

#### b. Matters to be provided by the municipal corporation at its discretion (section 67)

- Constructing, maintaining and cleansing washing and bathing places
- Destroying or detaining ownerless dogs and stray pigs and detaining animals causing nuisance
- Organising and managing chemical and bacteriological laboratories for analysis of water, food, drugs, detection of diseases and research connected with public health
- Establishing and maintaining *gwala* (milkman) colonies and cattle pens within and outside the city
- Constructing and maintaining sanitary stables for animals or garages for vehicles

### 4 Managers and Supervisors of Health Department, IMC as on 1.1.2022

Post	Number Sanctioned	Number Filled (Regular)
Chief Sanitation Officer	1	1
Sanitation Officer	4	2
Assistant Sanitation Officer	12	0
Chief Sanitation Inspector	40	4
Sanitation Inspector	80	10
Sanitation Supervisor	160	0
Deputy Sanitation Supervisor	267	109
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>126</b>

## 5 Sanitation Staff in a Zonal Office

In a zonal office, the sanitation staff<sup>55</sup> include the following:

- Health Officer
- Chief Sanitation Officer
- Assistant Sanitation Officer
  - Daroga Day and night shift
  - Assistant Daroga
- Sanitation workers
  - Vehicle in charge
- Drivers
- Helpers

## 6 Revenue Receipts of the IMC

(Rupees in lakh)

S. No.	Item	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Percentage change 2014-15 to 2021-22
A	<b>Own Revenue</b>									
	<i>Tax</i>									
1	Property Tax	13,003.41	16,787.84	22,413.89	24,206.96	26,035.36	31,223.96	29,313.11	38,475.27	195.9
2	Entertainment Tax	96.77	75.99	93.62	89.08	109.72	106.61	13.21	42.15	-56.4
3	Advertisement Tax	336.62	346.05	101.65	51.62	89.07	69.09	132.85	263.31	-21.8
4	Other Taxes	0.16	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.36	0.22	0.03	0.11	-31.3
5	Betterment Tax				-	-	-	-	170.43	
	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>13436.62</b>	<b>17210.09</b>	<b>22609.34</b>	<b>24247.84</b>	<b>26234.51</b>	<b>31399.88</b>	<b>29459.20</b>	<b>38951.27</b>	<b>189.9</b>
	<i>Non-Tax</i>									
1	Water Charges	5,560.30	4,124.39	4,893.41	5,843.20	5,437.01	5,722.21	5,416.77	5,747.91	3.37
2	Fees and User Charges	6,046.75	8,503.85	9,433.92	12,237.59	13,054.73	15,283.60	11,686.92	21,774.15	260.1
3	Rent Income	333.41	112.17	422.23	540.89	782.30	767.76	667.75	1,031.91	209.5
4	Sale and Hire Charges	337.40	224.98	333.19	401.69	179.58	198.40	325.20	276.84	-18.0
5	Income from Investment	676.33	283.72	486.22	203.22	785.06	1,265.00	973.82	920.09	36.04
6	Interest Earned	157.71	357.00	533.06	747.09	920.12	898.47	629.68	775.20	391.5
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13111.90</b>	<b>13606.11</b>	<b>16102.03</b>	<b>19973.68</b>	<b>21158.80</b>	<b>19700.14</b>	<b>30526.10</b>	<b>30536.10</b>	<b>132.8</b>
	<b>Total Own Revenue</b>	<b>26,548.86</b>	<b>30,816.21</b>	<b>38,711.36</b>	<b>44,321.52</b>	<b>47,393.30</b>	<b>55,535.33</b>	<b>49,159.35</b>	<b>69,477.36</b>	<b>161.7</b>

<sup>55</sup> Information obtained from a zonal office

S. No.	Item	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Percentage change 2014-15 to 2021-22
<b>B</b>	<b>Other Revenue Receipts</b>									
	<i>State Assigned Revenue</i>									
1	Octroi	30,779.81	34,325.38	35,114.06	42,541.21	50,983.66	39,854.24	41,460.87	45,489.55	48
2	Passenger Tax	385.95	373.23	372.93	365.43	134.20	314.12	251.35	252.88	-34
3	Commercial Tax	5,910.59	7,667.57	7,788.63	8,921.60	9,044.95	5,169.17	5,199.19	5,156.81	-13
4	Stamp Duty	6,343.34	6,023.79	6,466.62	3,776.33	3,420.24	3,708.19	5,963.54	5,418.02	-15
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>43419.69</b>	<b>48389.97</b>	<b>49742.24</b>	<b>55604.57</b>	<b>63583.05</b>	<b>49045.72</b>	<b>52874.95</b>	<b>7.26631</b>	<b>30</b>
	<b>Grants</b>									
1	State Finance Commission	410.32	423.97	441.94	481.65	463.79	486.92	782.12	495.43	21
2	Other State Government	2,336.12	2,731.18	2,765.78	2,804.07	3,250.45	2,102.06	2,910.17	4,027.96	72
3	Central Finance Commission	2,595.37	5,092.56	9,540.37	8,146.60	9,424.16	10,709.01	15,150.00	10,150.00	291
4	Other Central Government	-	-	-	-	1,818.70	-	-	-	
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>5341.8q</b>	<b>8124.71</b>	<b>12748.0</b>	<b>11432.3</b>	<b>14957.1</b>	<b>13297.99</b>	<b>18842.29</b>	<b>14673.39</b>	<b>175</b>
	<b>Total Other Revenue Receipts</b>	<b>48,761.50</b>	<b>56,637.68</b>	<b>62,490.33</b>	<b>67,036.89</b>	<b>78,540.15</b>	<b>62,343.72</b>	<b>71,717.24</b>	<b>70,990.65</b>	<b>46</b>
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE RECEIPTS</b>	<b>75,310.36</b>	<b>87,453.89</b>	<b>1,01,201.69</b>	<b>1,11,358.41</b>	<b>1,25,933.44</b>	<b>1,17,879.05</b>	<b>1,20,876.59</b>	<b>1,40,468.02</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>Capital Receipts</b>									
1	Loans Taken	3,936.15	1,769.76	250.00	-	14,075.00	1,221.07	32,000.00	-	713
2	State Capital Account Grants	23,997.75	18,327.50	7,555.00	3,233.77	6,486.63	11,455.08	10,017.88	10,109.44	-58
3	Central Capital Account Grants	484.69	6,230.27	6,550.72	12,640.41	36,511.56	13,499.65	22,563.71	20,334.62	4095
4	Other Capital Receipts	87.29	235.45	383.38	43.16	72.44	37.81	207.11	637.23	630
5	Receipt from PMAY and RAY Booking		-	-	-	212.09	3,595.56	7,494.27	11,744.94	5538
	<b>Total Capital Receipts</b>	<b>28,505.88</b>	<b>26,562.98</b>	<b>14,739.10</b>	<b>15,917.34</b>	<b>57,357.72</b>	<b>29,809.17</b>	<b>72,282.96</b>	<b>42,826.23</b>	<b>50</b>
	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS (A+B+C)</b>	<b>1,03,816.24</b>	<b>1,14,016.87</b>	<b>1,15,940.78</b>	<b>1,27,275.75</b>	<b>1,83,291.16</b>	<b>1,47,688.22</b>	<b>1,93,159.55</b>	<b>1,83,294.25</b>	<b>77</b>

## Annex 2: Case Study Design and Methodology

### 1 Number of Interviews, FGDs, Spot Visits Conducted

Interviews	Number	FGDs	Number
IMC headquarter officials (including ex-officials)	12	With citizens	3
Zone Office officials	4	With zonal officials	2
Councillors/Ex Councillors/MLAs	4	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>
Sanitation supervisors	5		
Sanitation workers	25	Spot visits	<b>7</b>
NGO representatives/ Activists	5		
Union Leader	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>		

### 2 Profile of Sanitation Workers Interviewed

Total Number of workers interviewed: 25

#### a. Worker Type

Type of Work	Number of Workers			Earlier work	Number of Workers	Service Type	Number of Workers
	Male	Female	Total				
Sweeping roads and streets	2	11	13	None	11	Regular	5
At garbage transfer station	0	4	4	Jagirdari	2	Viniyomit	7
Helper with garbage collection vehicle	2	0	2	Rag picker	4	Daily wage	10
Garbage collection vehicle driver	1	0	1	Other type of cleaning work	4	Employed through 3 <sup>rd</sup> party	3
Drainage cleaning	2		1	Other	4		
Cleaning at night	1	1	2				
Cleaning Public Toilets	1						
	9	16	25		25		25

#### b. Age, Gender, Date of Joining

Gender	Number of Workers	Age	Number of Workers	Joined IMC	Number of Workers
Male	9	20-29	1	Before 2015	12
Female	16	30-39	9	2015	3
		40-49	13	2016	3
		50 and above	2	2017	4
				2018	3
<b>Total</b>	25		25		25

### 3 Characteristics of Residential Colonies where FGDs were held with Citizens

Name of Colony	Type	Description	FGD Group
Colony 1	Slum	It is the oldest slum of Indore and, at one time, many residents were engaged in criminal activities. Now most people are daily wage workers, small entrepreneurs and in low-level government jobs. Many residents are from the cleaning community. The colony is situated next to a <i>nala</i> . The population density is high.	6 Women, 5 Men.
Colony 2	Well-off Area	This is an old colony of Indore. Most families are well-off and retired from government jobs. The colony has a main road and several streets. It has many small parks, a couple of which have temples. There is no market within the colony, but a small market on a highway connects to the main road of the colony. There is one school in the adjacent colony, and no hospital within the colony.	11 Men 5 Women
Colony 3	Middle class area	The residential area is between two of Indore's busiest markets, the 'Cloth Market' and 'Sarafa'. Most families of the colony prepare and sell food items at night to traders. The houses are old, built very close together, and the streets are also very narrow.	8 Women 2 Men

## Annex 3: Case Study Findings

### 1 Contribution of SBM to IMC Revenues (in Rs. crore)

	Total Receipts	SBM receipts	SBM Receipts as Percentage to Total IMC Revenue
2015-16	1140.17	10.62	0.93
2016-17	1159.41	32.0	2.76
2017-18	1272.76	14.74	1.16
2018-19	1832.91	22.74	1.24
2019-20	1476.88	30.77	2.10
2020-21	1931.60	55.00	2.85

Source: Chartered Accountant of IMC

### 2 Comments by Sanitation Workers about Supervisors

Comment	No. of Workers Making Comment
Good relations with supervisor	
Supervisor good	9
Praises/appreciates my work	4
Get good support from supervisor	8
Understanding, helpful, caring person	6
He is also not a permanent employee, so he understands our issues and supports us.	4
Allows me to leave when needed	1
Good teamwork	1
Very friendly. Sometimes uses rough language, but not regularly.	1
We keep our communication clear. If we are not able to do any job, we tell our supervisor and they consider it. I ensure that in the summertime, I clean all drainage, so there are no problems in the rainy season. That is why they appreciate my work.	1
We work in a team. Sometimes we have arguments but not any major conflicts or fights. My relationship with all my supervisors is very good because I do my work on time and with honesty.	1
Supervisor professional	1
Only talks about work, no chit-chat, but friendly and co-operative	3
Never misbehaves with us	1
Is strict about work	3
Strict some times, but helpful	1
He has to be strict with us sometime due to the pressure of work. I have never been treated badly by him.	1
My supervisors talk strictly sometimes but does not use bad or foul language	1
He becomes strict sometimes when there is too much work pressure. We share light moments with him. Sometimes there is hot talk, but only on work matters. The communication stops for two-three days and later, everything become normal. Our supervisor takes care of the team. He does not give work to workers who have health issues. Sometimes, our supervisor uses strong words to get us to complete work and then we get upset but finish work with no hard feelings.	1

### 3 Rewards Received by Sanitation Workers

Type of Reward	No of IMC workers	No of 3 <sup>rd</sup> party workers
Got certificate, medal, shield	10	1
Received cash	8	
Received watch	7	
Received shawl	2	
Honoured in a group and invited for lunch	1	
Received a dining set and utensils.		2
Never	7	
Reward type not clear	1	

### 4 Citizens' Behaviour towards Sanitation workers

Comments by Sanitation Workers	No. of Workers
Positive Comments	15
Negative Comments	6
<i>Comments</i>	
<i>People don't misbehave with us.</i>	5
<i>Most citizens are friendly, behave well</i>	3
<i>Most people give proper respect to us.</i>	4
<i>In general, response from the citizens is good and they respect our job.</i>	2
<i>They understand now that we are doing our work. The only thing is that it is unhygienic; so, they maintain distance while we work.</i>	1
<i>Good relationship, interaction.</i>	2
<i>They invite us to their family functions, for snacks and tea. I am their favourite sweeper now. If I go on leave, they call me and ask why I am not coming.</i>	2
<i>Earlier, people asked us to stay away but now they don't, and offer us tea, water, etc.</i>	1
<i>I request them to put water on the pavements, so that they can be cleaned properly. Many of them help and put water.</i>	1
<i>I am not treated badly because of caste, no complaints regarding caste, no one uses any caste-related words.</i>	5
<i>No one uses any caste-related abusive language with us, because they all know that it is an offence.</i>	3
<i>Sometimes, they ask how is your work and we reply to them it is good and they appreciate our work. Due to our uniform, no one dares misbehave with us.</i>	1
<i>Some of the houses where tenants live do not treat us well</i>	1
<i>Some people misbehave with us.</i>	1
<i>A handful of people create problems when you do not do their personal cleaning work, and threaten to complain.</i>	1
<i>Still, sometimes they give indications that they still think that we do dirty work.</i>	1
<i>New residents who came to the colony do not behave well. They pressurise us to clean areas which are not assigned to us. Some people force us to lift dead animals though it is not our job. Many people throw their garbage in the back lanes and we are forced to clean them. If we do not, they complain. Sometimes we clean the area but still, they do not close our complaint. Some people pressurise us using the name of politicians.</i>	1
<i>Sometimes citizens make false complaints about our work and we face problems in explaining.</i>	1

## 5 Increase in own Revenue of the IMC against SBM Receipts (In Rs. Crore)

	Own Revenue of IMC	Increase over previous year	SBM receipts
2014-15	265.49		
2015-16	308.16	42.67	10.62
2016-17	387.11	78.95	32.0
2017-18	443.22	56.11	14.74
2018-19	473.93	30.71	22.74
2019-20	555.35	81.42	30.77
2020-21	491.59	-63.76	55.00
Total		226.1	165.87

## 6 Sanitation Workers' Opinion on Salary, Saving and Borrowing

Total Number of Workers: 25

Comment on salary	Number of Workers	Comment on savings	Number of Workers	Comment on borrowing	Number of Workers
<b>Regular</b>		<b>Regular</b>		<b>Regular</b>	
Adequate.	4	Save almost half my salary	1	Borrow only from bank	1
<i>Happy about earning good money being a permanent employee.</i>	2	Save Rs. 5000 per month	1	I borrow it from our employees' co-operatives and return it. It is directly deducted from our salary.	2
<i>Family is big but husband also works in the IMC; so, they manage.</i>	1	Could save Rs. 1000 per month earlier, but these days repaying a loan, so not much saving. Borrow for marriage, health.	1	Borrow for marriage, health	1
<i>Sometimes feel it is less as the family grows.</i>	1	Save small amounts off and on	1	Not clear	1
Inadequate	1	Used to save Rs. 2000-3000.	1		
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>Viniyamit</b>		<b>Viniyamit</b>			
Inadequate	8	No saving.	5	Towards end of the month, buy groceries without paying. Borrow from relatives for big events.	1
		Not much saving.	1	At times borrow from friends and relatives.	6
		Rs. 1000 per month, but not all months	1	Borrow from employees' co-operative	1
		Rs. 2000 per month	1		
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Daily Wage</b>		<b>Daily Wage</b>			

Comment on salary	Number of Workers	Comment on savings	Number of Workers	Comment on borrowing	Number of Workers
Inadequate	9	No savings.	8	At times borrow from friends and relatives	8
NA	1	Used to save Rs. 1000 to 2000, but now can't because of cost of living.	1	Sometimes, I have to borrow money Rs. 2,000-3,000 if any bulk expenses such as marriage or death issues come into the family. That gives me stress	1
		NA	1	NA	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>10</b>
<b>Third party</b>					
		No savings	1	Borrow from money lender and friends	1
Inadequate	<b>3</b>	Save 2000-3000 per month.	1	Borrow from SHG in village	1
		NA	1	NQ	1
			<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>

## 7 Socio-economic Status of Sanitation Workers

Caste		Education		House		Vehicle	
Caste	No. of workers	Education Level	No. of workers	House Type	No. of workers	Vehicle Type	No. of workers
SC, Valmiki	15	Illiterate	5 (3 women)	Own	14	None	9
		Not formally educated, literacy not clear	1 (Woman)	Rented	5	Family member has scooter/motorcycle	6
SC, Mang Matand	6	Not formally educated but can read and write	7	Government	1	Own motorcycle, scooter	9
SC Other	4	Class 3 and 4	4	Living with family	3	NA	1
OBC	1(Vehicle driver)	Class 5	3	Not clear	2	<i>Total</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>25</i>	Class 7	1	<i>Total</i>	<i>25</i>		
		Class 8	2	Pucca	23		
		Class 9	1	Kaccha	2		
		Class 12	1 (vehicle driver)	Total	25		
		<i>Total</i>	25	With tap water	20		
				Without tap water	5		
				Total	25		

## 8 Suggestions Given by workers

Comment	No. of Times Suggested
<b>Regular</b>	
Improve drainage line, chambers etc.	1
More awareness among citizens	1
Local transport facilities to all staff like company buses, facilities of soap, washing powder	3
Better brooms, uniform, safety shoes, more tools, etc.	2
<b>Vinaymit</b>	
Increase in salary, equal payment to everyone	3
Should be made permanent, more regular workers should be recruited	3
Better facilities like shoes, masks, brooms	3
More sanitation workers should be recruited to reduce workload	1
More awareness among citizens	1
<b>Daily Wage</b>	
Better salary for employees.	6
Should be made permanent, more regular workers should be recruited	4
There should be promotions for those doing good work.	1
There should be more benefits and facilities, medical box in vehicle.	2
More sanitation workers should be recruited	3
More awareness among citizens.	1
<b>Employed through third party</b>	
More salary, more facilities, more advanced machines.	1
Take care of labour. Proper instruction to staff. Regular monitoring. Keep extra labour with the night team on each route.	1

## 9 Comments by Sanitation Workers regarding Recommending the Job to Others

Comment	No. Regular	No. Viniyamt	No. Daily Wage	No. 3 <sup>rd</sup> party	Total
Would Recommend	1	5	1	2	9
Have tried			1		1
Would Not Recommend	4	2	7	1	14
NA			1		1
<b>Total</b>	5	6	10	3	25

## 10 Comments of Sanitation Workers about the Fairness of IMC Officials

Comments of Sanitation Workers	Number of Workers making the Comment
IMC staff is fair	16
If anyone doesn't work, they are punished	1
Not always but with me, they are fair because I do my job sincerely.	1
Many are not working properly and <i>daroga</i> is under stress as they have to manage all people.	1
There is favouritism in the IMC. Some people do not come for work and still get paid. They just come to mark attendance.	2
All drivers who are close to local leaders get favourable treatment but it is not much in our zone.	1
Not much interaction with IMC staff (third party workers)	2



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