



UNDERstanding Indian Urban Governance REFORM: A comparative analysis of the Smart City Mission reforms and their impact on sustainable urban mobility (UNDER REFORM)

The combined pressures of a growing urban population, increasing urban sprawl, and rapidly rising income, coupled with inadequate public transport, lack of coordinated infrastructure, and increased motorisation have placed huge and unequal burdens on India's urban areas. This has resulted in highly congested roads, poor air quality, high pedestrian casualty rates and poor accessibility and quality of life particularly for the urban poor. In this context, redesigning urban mobility governance has been identified as a critical element of progress in delivering more inclusive and economically, environmentally and socially sustainable cities in India.

Efforts to reform urban transport governance, primarily through the bolstering of local level capacity, have been underway in India since 2006 but with limited affect due to lack of meaningful delegation of authority and financial power. However, in 2015 the Indian national government launched the Smart Cities Mission, aimed at going beyond what has been achieved before at the local level. The focus of the initiative is to promote 'cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens' through the application of 'Smart' Solutions.

Within this context then, this research uses the Smart Cities Mission as a major opportunity to understand the aims and processes of transport governance reform and the extent to which these reforms are capable of achieving a significant improvement in the mobility system. To this end, the research will undertake a qualitative comparative analysis of previous and planned reforms in four of India's designated smart cities; Jaipur, Ranchi, Bhubaneshwar and Bangalore. The research will characterise governance arrangements and governance reforms across each of the four cities and try to advance understanding through the application of the multi-level governance framework to guide empirical analysis. The research will also trace the impacts of governance reforms through to impacts on the economic prosperity and quality of life of citizens through analysing changing processes and outcomes. This is essential if we are to move beyond identifying problems to understanding how to overcome them.

The second aim of the research is to bring together, develop and inspire a community of researchers and practitioners to advance the study and understanding of mobility governance across India and between the UK and India. Working with WRI India, the project will engage practitioners in the four cities from the outset to ensure the findings are as meaningful as possible, doing so through a series of workshops and interviews. Our interview questions will be co-created with stakeholders and the data collection informed by the key challenges of urban mobility governance identified by stakeholders through exploratory workshops at the start of the project. A study visit to three UK cities that have experienced different levels of transport governance reform will be held for stakeholders from each of the four 'smart cities' to learn lessons from the UK experience and draw on practitioner expertise. A special session of the World Conference on Transport Research in Mumbai will also be convened to bring practitioners into dialogue with scholars at the forefront of research on transport governance in India and beyond. These activities will build both professional and research capacity to address future transport governance challenges.

If you have any questions about the project at any stage then you can contact the Principal Investigator, Professor Greg Marsden (g.r.marsden@its.leeds.ac.uk; +44(0)1133435358)

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