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URBAN BASIC UTILITIES MANAGEMENT UNDER FRAGMENTED GOVERNANCE: AN ORATORY ON ITS CONTRIBUTION IN CITIES OF DEVELOPING WORLD

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Abstract
Governance of urban basic services/utilities i.e. water supply and sewerage, electricity, drainage, roads network etc.; forms the major part a city government's functions since these consume highest portion of budgetary allocations and requires human resources support due to respective development and management nature. Effective, efficient and responsive management of these ultimately shapes the quality of an urban government. In pursuit, developing nations have been experimenting with a number of arrangements of which fragmented urban basic utilities/service governance emerged to be the majorly espoused one. Driven by the notions of Neoliberalism as well as insistence of international aid/doner agencies, such an adoption was expected to be suitable in all accounts of basic utilities governance. However, empirical evidences suggest that it has produced quite a number of governance convolutions. These include limited expansion capacity, limited autonomy of city governments in decision-making, stringent national government control, lack of public accountability, lack of coordination and cooperation between service providers, corruption etc. - thus, resulting to a high degree of inconveniences in urban living and loss of potentials in city economy. Commitment of city governments on better living, competitive business environment and sustainable economic growth are increasingly appearing to be distant possibilities under this arrangement. As a remedy, what is/are the potential/s of a general purpose metropolitan government with prerogatives to plan, develop, manage service provisions in the developing world? These have been examined in this paper.
Keywords: Urban basic utilities, metropolitan government, fragmented governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Last several decades' trend of urban transformation across developing world - expedited by globalization driven economic reform and reorganization - has reiterated the indispensability of urban basic utilities for spatial growth (Moinuddin, 2012; ADB, 2007; Goodman, 2006; Rahman, 2005; World Bank, 2003; Dillinger, 1994; World Bank, 1993). Precisely, the efforts for economic progress resulted with built space expansion and improved peoples living conditions that - in a cyclical order - have proliferated the "demand for urban basic utilities for further growth" (Chong, 2003; p.19). This increased demand compelled city authorities or governments to amplify resources allocation for delivering the

stakeholders with effective and responsive services that eventually determines governance quality and efficiency (ADB, 2007; Goodman, 2006).

Unlike the developed world, urban basic utilities such as electricity, telecommunications, roads, water supply - along with supportive economic and financial policies - have long been recognized as key element for enabling opulence in the developing countries as well (Garmendia et al, 2004). Human development targets rely on services that require supportive infrastructure - safe water and hygienic sanitation to prevent a number of infectious diseases, electricity to serve schools and health clinics, roads to access these (Garmendia, et al, 2004). More recently, growth experts have also stressed that with the provisioning of dependable and reasonably priced basic utilities, urban poverty can be reduced substantially which in turn could render considerable amount of support in the efforts of attaining Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Calderon and Servén, 2004). However, the key constraints are the quantity and quality issues of delivered urban basic utilities (Friedmann, 1995). According to United Nations (2004), at least 175 million urbanites in the developing nations worldwide do not have a source of potable water near their homes. In many cases, the supplied water there is of sub-standard quality and 305 million urbanites lack access to basic sanitation (United Nations, 2004). It is estimated that approximately 14.6 million people in Dhaka city are experiencing electricity outage for several hours on daily basis for the last half-decade (Moinuddin, 2010). These fact aligns with Cohen (2004) and Dillinger (1994)'s contention - cities in the developing world have not been able to guarantee better quality of life to the extent that was expected since eminence of urban basic utilities remains questionable. The implications of such service constraints - in economic and distributional terms - are quite wide spared. About the economic implications, Kesside's (1993) pointed out that "a lack of access to, or unreliability of, infrastructure services can have adverse effects on growth, forcing firms to seek costly alternatives, which may in turn have unfavorable impacts on profits and levels of production and consequently, on investment and job growth" (p. 13). Ugaz and Waddams (2008), in their study on all categories of manufacturing establishments across Senegal found that substitute costs for public infrastructure services (induced by the failure of electricity, fixed line telephones, better roads network) accounts for 18 percent of the total establishment cost on average. Service failures hamper the uniform distribution of economic benefits of urbanization. In the developing nations - with the rising urbanization - gap or inequality in the basic services delivery is also widening between higher and lower income groups. And, referring to Rondinelli's (1997) research findings, Leipziger (et al, 2003) pointed out that when urbanites fail to reach to the formal system of services delivery, they resort to low quality but costly alternatives. For instance, a survey on water vending in cities of 16 developing countries across Asia and Latin America found that in the absence of piped supply, households are forced to purchase water from

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vendors or to resort to additional options that costs - on average - 1.2 times higher than that of piped water systems (World Bank, 2004). Lack of reliable, cost-effective transport services further reduces the availability of educational, social and livelihood opportunities (Mugabi, et al, 2007). Nonetheless, it has been unanimously agreed by researchers, academics and development assistance agencies that in developing countries, delivery of or access to urban basic utilities is a crucial determinant in deciding poverty level.

2. FRAGMENTED URBAN BASIC UTILITIES GOVERNANCE IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: REFLECTION ON CONTRIBUTIONS

Last fifty years attempts of improving urban basic utilities governance by the developing countries can be categorized as experimentation with different forms of arrangements (Garmendia, et al, 2004). The aim of such experimentation has been to identify and resort to the "best-fit" option through "trial-error method" (Garmendia, et al, 2004; p. 61) since improvement of urban basic utilities delivery and management is increasingly being recognized as an accompaniment of good urban governance (ADB, 2007). Perceived as an effective arrangement of institutional strengthening, fragmented urban basic utilities governance has been adopted across different parts of the developing world quite at length (Easterly and Servén, 2003). The basis of this mode rests with public choice theory that tends to address the same as "metropolitan governance" or "governance without a government" (Ross Stephens and Winkstrom, 2001; Vogel, 1997). Scholars from this cloth explained fragmented governance as per respective research or knowledge focus. However, Barlow's (1991 – also cited by Vogel, 1997; p. 189) explanation appears to be more appropriate to current paper which is as following:

"Metropolitan governance involves the governing of a metropolitan area without formal metropolitan government. Instead, reliance is placed on special-purpose bodies, the joint efforts of the local government and arrangements between levels government. There is a considerable fragmentation - both functional and territorial- and it is only by means of an array of institutional arrangements among the various agencies and governments that coordination is achieved."

In particular, production and delivery of urban basic utilities have been left to multiple sectors namely national government, autonomous and local government units (Mugabi, et al, 2007). Prud'homme (2004) reported that such reliance on fragmented governance of urban basic utilities started in the early 1980's. The rationale remained with the perception that it is conducive for promoting competition amongst service providers thus enabling the dwellers to choose from a range of options based on their preference (Silvermann, 1992). Fragmented governance domain was perceived to be the way forward

to ensure macroeconomic stability, attract investment, improve the quality of living and effective in ensuring the principles of good governance i.e. accountability, transparency, participation, efficiency (Prud'homme, 2004; Haines, 1992; Silvermann, 1992). However, the arrangement emerged to be contributing adversely - to a considerable extent. According to Dillinger (1994), the assumption that fragmented arrangement attributed municipal governments in developing countries with clearly defined service responsibilities has also proved to be erroneous. Despite the provisions of national constitutions - under fragmented arrangement - the service responsibilities of municipal governments have been very limited (Dillinger, 1994). It is worth of citing here that developing countries started to adopt fragmented urban basic utilities governance under the recommendation from the foreign assistance agencies to overcome constraints emerging out of the lack of intergovernmental coordination and cooperation that prevented the dissemination of improvement ideas relating to administrative knowledge (Cohen, 2004). The assumption that tribulations in internal administration could be addressed by resorting to fragmented service governance arrangement emerged to be inapposite as subsequent evaluation reports, however, suggest that "problems in internal administration were not due to a lack of knowledge but instead reflects rational responses to firmly established, if perverse, institutional arrangement induced by fragmented arrangement" (Dillinger, 1994; p. 21). In particular, Garmendia (et al, 2004), Cohen (2004) and Dillinger (1994) noted that inadequate availability of urban basic utilities in the developing countries are in part the reflections of inefficiencies or incapacities by the operational authorities functioning under fragmented arrangement. Ugaz and Waddams (2008), Mugabi (et al, 2007), Leipziger (et al, 2003) argued that cities that opted fragmented approach for urban basic utilities governance - despite having the legal mandate to serve all urban inhabitants - lacks clear articulated visions or mission statements, sound management structures and human resources that effectively blocks the fulfillment of delegated responsibilities. Indirectly, it has also encouraged vested political interference in the management of resources (Mugabi, et al, 2007). With reference to day-to-day urban living, fragmented arrangement has been considerably criticized for deteriorating quality of living of the city dwellers through various channels (Davison, 2001). Because of such inefficiencies, as much as one-third of produced services i.e. water supply, electric supply; are lost through physical along with commercial means and the revenue realization often remains insufficient to cover operating costs - let alone expanding the service coverage (Garmendia, et al, 2004). In addition, under fragmented arrangement, service providers develop weak capacity of information management that hinders adequate monitoring and evaluation of service status and in turn, contributes with less effective delivery (Cohen, 2006; Garmendia, et al, 2004; Silvermann, 1992). This phenomenon also constricts the ability of projecting future requirements and subsequently, designing measures to meet the same (World

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Bank, 2004). Thus, the approach produced a number of adverse consequences that have been quite common across the developing nations. These are as following:

A. Enfeebled local government - Enervate capacities of local government have surfaced as the major contributor in the deficiencies of urban services across cities of developing countries (Garmendia, et al, 2004). Dillinger (1994) contended that in many developing countries, municipal governments do not exist in a way that was often assumed. These are not being bestowed with the authority to assume the full responsibility of urban basic utilities (Davison, 2001). Instead, direct government special purpose organizations or sector corporation bodies have long been created and assigned with the responsibilities of provisioning and managing major urban basic utilities namely water supply, electricity, roads and highways, sewerage etc. (Cohen, 2004; Dillinger, 1994). Rather, local government units in developing nations are often bestowed with service responsibilities namely street and drainage network cleaning, which are secondary compared to those of the direct government organizations – at least in terms of citizens' priority (Rahman, 2005). This limited functional responsibility eventually constructs the scope for the national government bureaucrats to undermine such publicly representative bodies (Dillinger, 1994).

B. Elected authority's inadequate autonomy in decision-making - The dominance of government organizations with independent legislation in the urban basic utilities governance and limited functional responsibilities of local government abates the comprehensive service governance capacity of the later in developing nations (Nickson, 2005; Siddique, 2005). Experiences from developing nations reveal that the former tends to operate as administrative arm or extension of the national government (Cohen 2004; Davison, 2001; Dillinger, 1994). Additionally, Prud'homme (2004) and Haines (1992) noted that such service organizations are not normally bestowed with much needed autonomy in decision-making as envisaged in the public choice literature. Dillinger (1994) reported that national government appoints the officials to run these service organizations instead. Apart from staff appointments, in these organizations, it often determines the staff strength, promotion decisions, wage or salary structure, service regulations etc. (Dasgupata and Savage, 2006; Garmendia, et al, 2004; Dillinger, 1994). And, because of such practice, Dillinger (1994) further claimed that service providers eventually assumes bureaucratic character and fails to grasp the very essence of urban services provisioning and management i.e. irrespective of types, these are meant for augmenting societal well-being in terms of better living, economic growth - not just administering a set of technical/engineering installations. The practice results with the emergence of less effective and less responsive municipal services for the citizenry, growth of an authoritarian central-local government relationship and emergence of less public accountability which hinders the overall improvement of service environment (Easterly and Servén,

2003). Additionally, the environment allows for few channels of demand expression by the citizenry concerning community requirement and possesses lesser or no scope of community participation in the service decision-making (Savage and Dasgupta, 2006). Garmendia (et al, 2004) and Cohen (2004) argued that service providers' deficient autonomy in decision-making raises serious operational problems namely lack of clear policy with regard to financing, demand management, subsidy, pricing mechanisms, planning framework, supportive legislation etc. Collectively, these problems invoke a power polarizing scenario towards government bureaucracy concerning the determination of what service infrastructures are to be constructed or developed and when (Davison, 2001). With reference to her research findings on water supply and sewerage services in Ruwa, Zimbabwe, Davison (2001) contended that service providers' lack of autonomy in decision-making under fragmented arrangement inhibits coordination between services that are interdependent i.e. water supply and electricity. Davison (2001) reported that the respective operational guidelines, governance directives imposed by the line or controlling ministries are the key contributors in this connection. Additionally, such causes the service governance domain to suffer from the shortage of skilled work force. According to Davison (2001), the inherent reason remains with the perverse central-local relationship or in other words, because of stringent control, national government assumes a position of settling the time and necessity of staff appointment – not the service providers. Lack of autonomy also hampers the speedy detection of troubles and formulation of solutions (Davison, 2001). National government's control in fixing the tariffs and other taxes causes the service providers - at times - to run short of funds for providing ample services to its increasing citizenry. Davison (2001) also argued that lack of autonomy over spending means that the authorities cannot be fully responsive to the requirements of the respective electorate. Nonetheless, under fragmented arrangement, decentralization of responsibilities from national government has not resulted with the decentralization of authority (Davison, 2001).

C. Corruption - Gulati and Rao (2006), referring to national government's direct control, argued that it is conducive in constricting public accountability and transparency of the urban basic service/utility providers in the developing countries. And over the years, the culture has encouraged the surfacing and spread of corruption in the governance domain (Gulati and Rao, 2006). Paterson and Choudhuri (2006), Transparency International (2002) pointed out that the rationale rests on the following premise: in the developing countries, construction/installation as well as maintenance of these service infrastructures account for the majority percentage of annual development budget. Having direct government organizations as service providers that are less inclined towards public accountability, transparency as well as possessing low scope of community participation in decision-making, such high allocation craft scopes for the managers, engineers and front line maintenance staffs to lend themselves to corruption.

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Paterson and Choudhuri (2006), Soreide (2005) claimed that existence of corruption within the services governance domain begins at the ministerial level, gradually penetrating at the directorate levels in the middle and ends in project level at the bottom. They claimed that at the ministerial level, corrupt practices are made to occur through the exploitation of policies, laws and public entities. Governance failures within the directorate level refer to a wider stretch of "analysis and action, covering all corrupt activities as well as non-corrupt but inefficient processes and systems" (p.161). As for the administrative corruptions at the project level, these are orchestrated through the manipulation of public offices or service funds of any type (Paterson and Choudhuri, 2006).

Operationally, most common form of corruption by the service staffs include demanding bribes from the end-users for carrying out mandated service responsibilities, substandard construction, unnecessary budgetary increase in the maintenance and rehabilitations of service infrastructures (Gulati and Rao, 2006; Paterson and Chudhuri, 2006). However, in particular, staffs belonging to different levels of the organization practices different forms of corruption. Transparency International (2002) in one of its report – drawing reference of Bangladesh - pointed out that at the lower-tier, field operators tend to employ high amount of discretionary authorities. For instance, they largely decide to provide or refuse service connections, revising service bills upwards or downwards. Whereas, the higher officials - bestowed with the powers to decide on the large-scale procurements, contract awarding etc. - tend to manipulate such authority in their favor to materialize vested interest. Gulati and Rao (2006) also argued that inadequacy, substandard quality in services provisioning have contributed duely in the spread of corruption within the service governance domain. In pursuit of service improvement as well as meeting the increased demand, service providers in the developing countries often being found opting to recruit large number of staffs of which a significant portion does not possess adequate qualification and training. In the end, such results with the weakened control, monitoring and maintenance of the services. Bhatia and Gulati (2003) pointed out that often in the cities of developing countries, corruption in urban basic utilities governance have been found to be responsible for impoverishing the community by hampering the attainment of service targets that are aimed at improving citizens living quality, business environment. Nonetheless, the affects of corruption in urban basic utilities tend to last long (Bueb and Cache, 2005). The economic costs of corruption might well be larger than the financial costs (Paterson and Choudhuri, 2006). Additionally, corruption induces institutional costs since it does have a spillover effect on other sectors. Corruption induces inefficiencies by inflicting higher than necessary production costs as well as ineffectiveness by compelling the service providers to remain underachiever in terms of accomplishing service objectives (Paterson and Choudhuri, 2006; Soreide, 2005). Thus, by

aligning with Quah's (2003) opinion, it can be stated that existence of many opportunities of corruption encourages the spread of the same in urban basic utilities governance domain in developing nations.

D. Continuous imbalance in resources usage - Mugabi (et al, 2007) argued that weak capacities of local government impose constraints on attempts of improving service delivery in addition to resources. Evidence shows that the level of resources devoted to urban services governance is already substantial. While statistics on the sectoral and geographical pattern of government expenditure are scarce (particularly in developing countries), according to one estimate of ADB (2007), government expenditure on urban services in the developing and transitional economies ranges between $200 to $600 billion - approximately 5 to 7.5 percent of their present GDP – which is considerably high (ADB, 2007). However, these investments have not been able to assure a hundred percent dweller coverage and delivery of quality services. ADB (2007), Dillinger (1994), Easterly and Servén (2003) cited that three factors are contributing in this connection. The first being the continuous rural-urban migration that is incessantly increasing the already large city population and creating pressure on the allocated resources. Secondly, presence of multiple service organizations induces higher administrative cost – implying that within this scarce resources scenario, a considerable amount ought to be devoted to maintain establishment costs, thus compelling the governance domain to trim development initiatives i.e. downsizing resources for service development, expansion and improvement. Thirdly, when developing nations rely on outside sources for resources, these are often obligated to implement improvements prescribed by the donors that are not much sought-after by the community. Collectively, these factors induces resource constraints in the efforts of improving urban basic utilities, thus compelling developing nations to remain underachievers in attaining devised development targets (Easterly and Servén, 2003).

E. Unequal access to services - Fay and Yepes (2003) argued that a fairly large number of urbanites in developing countries possess much lower access to electricity, water, sanitation, telecommunications and transportation compared to their counterparts in middle-income countries. Additionally, Leipziger (et al, 2003) pointed that disparities between low-income and better-off areas within same cities are quite noticeable in these developing nations. For instance, in Pune, India, 100 percent of the suburban households belonging to upper income group have water connections, compared to just 7 percent of households in squatter settlements (Dasgupta and Savage, 2006). And in Accra, Ghana, two-thirds of the poorest households share a toilet with 10 others (World Bank, 2003). Such disparities have clear effects on health outcomes. In the slums of Nairobi, Kenya; infant mortality rate is double (187) of the national average, which is 84 (Ugaz and Waddams 2008). Roberts (2003) stated that repeated efforts of strengthening services governance under fragmented arrangement have not emerged as effective in

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this regard. Specifically, the endeavor has attributed in the surfacing of service geographies with differential access scenario (Davison, 2001).

F. Poor service quality - As for the service quality, a recent study on seven Latin American countries suggests that because of poor quality, the effectiveness of urban basic utilities infrastructure in the region is only about 57 percent compared to industrial countries (Rioja, 2003). The study further projected that in the long-run, cost of this underperformance would be equivalent to about 40 percent of real per capita income. Garmendia, Estache and Shafik (2004) indicated that fragmented urban services governance fosters a significantly high correlation between income and service quality across urban areas in the developing nations. In their study of 12 cases from developing countries across the world, they found that areas inhabited by higher income groups tend to have better quality urban basic utilities such as uninterrupted power and water supply, better roads network etc. Garmendia (et al, 2004) - referring to this correlation - contended that the exercised governance paradigm of urban basic utilities have significantly evoked differential investments, development propensities across different income geographies within each of these city and city regions. Additionally, ground operation and maintenance of service infrastructures also made due contributions in such qualitative differences.

3. LESSONS LEARNT

The experiences of fragmented urban basic utilities governance from different parts of the developing world offer the following lessons:

The reform endeavors of urban basic utilities governance have tended to revolve around administrative restructuring primarily and technical concerns of planning, infrastructure development and service delivery secondarily within the government controlled service providers or departments – but not on issues pertaining to power switching. According to Devas (2005), if city governments are to have a role in addressing poverty, these need to be bestowed with at least the responsibilities for services and infrastructures that decide urban footprints. Ability of a city government to influence over service policies is crucial for the improvement of living and business standards as well as ensuring macro-economic stability in the urban arena (Dillinger, 1994). Removing key functions from local elected government eventually risks weakening of whatever influences the urbanites may have on the services (Amis, et al, 2004; Devas, 2005; Beall, et al, 2002). Rondinelli (1997) provided a fairly acceptable explanation in this connection - there are fewer incentives for national government bureaucrats to perceive citizens as clientele. This occurs when the locus of decision-making moves away from the beneficiaries (Davison, 2001). Effective urban basic utilities governance requires decision-making paradigm to be switched from national government to local elected units (Davison, 2001). Oluwu and Wunsch (2004) claimed that

such switching strengthens local government's institutional capacities in decision-making and implementing. Precisely, Easterly and Servén (2003) argued that an institutionally strong local government is one that is capable of effective delivery of urban basic utilities and services, possesses the authority and skills to enhance resources collection and utilization, assumes efficient arrangements to share the investment costs of local public good infrastructure. Collectively, such capacities enables local governments to create a well-functioning urban environment through equal, efficient and responsive urban basic utilities and services provisioning, which in return contributes in poverty alleviation and attaining development targets (Easterly and Servén, 2003).

3.1. General-purpose metropolitan government: the theatre for improvement

The above lessons carries the concept of metropolitan government to the forefront as these implicitly indicates that the concerned ills of fragmented arrangement can be trounced through resorting to a general-purpose metropolitan government since the justification of its enactment revolves around achieving efficiency, effectiveness, equity and responsiveness in key urban services governance by overcoming the problems of respective tribulations i.e. lack of coordination between service providers, overlapping of service responsibilities, unequal service delivery, etc.; which craft scopes for augmenting urban economy, livability (Valorie and Andrews, 2009; Bird and Slack, 2007; Tsou, et al, 2005; Feulner, et al, 2005; Leland and Johnson, 2004; Hamilton, et al, 2004; Post, 2002; Stephens and Winkstrom, 2001;Vogel, 1997; Leland and Cannon, 1997; Bish and Ostrom, 1973; Wheatley, 1969; CED, 1966; Bollens, 1965).

In this connection, it is worth of highlighting some key connotations of metropolitan government. Proponents of metropolitan government defined the term quite extensively i.e. Rusk, 2003; Singh, et al, 1996; Barlow, 1991; Walsh, 1969 etc. Roberts and Sykes's (2000) definition substantially reflects the capacities of the arrangement in curing the ills of fragmented mode of urban utilities governance discussed earlier -

"Metropolitan government is a comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that are interdependent" (p. 27).

The very perception of metropolitan government arose when individual local government units were unable to cope with area wide metropolitan condition relating to urban services delivery namely difficulties in policy coordination within local government units concerning public-works infrastructure development, unpatterned-inequality arising out of different locational tax profile and fragmented policy

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accountability fostered by multiple organization involvement in the early twentieth century (Lightbody, 1995; Barlow, 1991). In principle, metropolitan government mechanism thrives on local government's comprehensive authority over the urban basic utilities affairs within the official metropolitan boundary. Campbell (1992; p.19) argued that such comprehensive authority enables a general purpose metropolitan government "to act in multiple capacities - providing local public services, realizing and distributing adequate resources for urban services development and maintenance, clearing the market of local public goods in response to local expressions of demand, operates as an administrative agent of higher levels of government, embracing greater community representation in service governance domain so that their aspirations regarding service requirements are well represented." Campbell (1992) noted that a metropolitan government can assume functional responsibility for multiple services thereby reducing the aggregate administrative costs in public sector. Sager (2004), Fleischmann (2000) claimed that a metropolitan government is enacted with motives of rendering clear benefits i.e. social justice, sustainability and public accountability. In particular, Valorie and Andrews (2009), Feulner (et al, 2005), Tsou, et al, (2005), Bird and Tarasov (2004), Hamilton (et al, 2004); Sager (2004), Leland and Johnson (2004), Rusk (2003), Stephens and Winkstrom (2001), Leland and Thurmaier (2000), DeHoog (1997), Swanson (1996) pointed out that the benefits accruing out of metropolitan government includes achievement of scale economics in services infrastructure development, greater services tax realization and sharing that accrues through stretching of metropolitan area, greater public accountability, coordinated urban planning etc. Thus, essentiality of metropolitan government arrangement in urban basic utilities governance is clearly emphasized. In the 1990's, scholars of urban affairs from different ideological cloth - including those favoring fragmented governance - agreed that urban basic utilities specially, "those categorized as system-maintenance or as engineering one such as electricity, telecommunications, master planning, arterial highways, traffic management, public transport, general utilities, recreation areas, refuse disposal, fire and environmental protection etc. should be delivered in an integrated fashion on grater scale because of their operating character and benefits derived out of economics of scale" (Ross Stephens and Winkstrom, 2001; p.49). Moreover, fiscal equivalence, spillover effects, redistributive effects etc. also supported the idea that these urban basic utilities would be better governed under an integrated arrangement (Rusk, 2003; Foster, 1997). The necessity of integrated planning - at least on a project basis - was illustrated dramatically by the experiences in deregulated Britain i.e. London Docklands development, the Channel Tunnel and the Third London airport. In Canada, the government of Ontario launched a new program for metropolitan government formation through consolidation (Rothblatt and Sancton, 1993). The objective in this regard has been to realize economic growth that would lead towards social equity. Reflecting on the arrangement's utility in the developing nations, Mugabi (et al, 2007), Cohen (2004), Garmendia (et al, 2004), Prud'homme

(2004), Brenneman and Kerf (2002) argued that governance of urban basic utilities by a general-purpose metropolitan government captures more potentials for improving urban economy and living quality that needs faster growth of urban infrastructures. As a result, its appeal has gained momentum in a number of developing nations (Sanliyap, 2001; Barman, 1999; Steinberg, 1996). Empirical evidence from Namibia (World Bank, 2003), parts of Indonesia (Lanti, 1996) suggests that a metropolitan government is conducive in responding to the challenges and complexities of multi-jurisdictional management since by mechanism, it assumes a superior governance framework over several jurisdictions and increases efficiency in resources utilization, augments effectiveness in generating local resources for financing and managing the development initiatives, possesses better orientation and match of urban basic utilities infrastructure to contextual requirements, better integrates planning of urban utilities development project and accumulates public resources in the form of local institutional strengthening, augments realization of service taxes, enhances living quality, catapults better urban functioning system etc. Smith (2002) stressed that metropolitan government encourages the development of a receptive urban institutional capacity, which is about inducing organizational development and counter-acting the processes of organizational decline. Devas (2005), Beall (et al, 2002) and Davison (2001) argued that politically, creating a metropolitan government is about making rooms for stakeholders of different categories in the forums of service decision-making. This draws the concept to the issues of scale and voice. On one hand - according to Devas (2005) - scale of metropolitan government provides greater scope for the urbanites - irrespective of their socio-economic standing - to organize through various groups for influencing service policies. On the other hand, citizenry can express their preferences through such grouping or organizing efforts to the local political process to ensure that urban services are delivered fairly efficiently to meet their requirements. Citing example of 15 developing nations, Laquian (2005), Oluwu and Wunsch (2004) asserted that a multi-level metropolitan government headed by an elected leadership that includes both community level and an extensive metropolitan wide stretch covering the entire urban area, eventually accommodates wider community voice in decision-making related to policy formulation, election of leaders, resources sharing and mobilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of decided programs as well as achieving transparency, accountability, social equity and geographical balance in urban services provisioning. Devas (2005), Beall (et al, 2002), Davison (2001) insisted that such a structure provides opportunities for the urban community to exert influence in different ways - appropriate to the scale of the issue and the avenues available. From functional point of view, Mugabi (et al, 2007), Siddique (2005), Sharpe (1995), Norton (1994), Paddison (1983) and Leemans (1970) claimed that metropolitan government possesses certain clear advantages concerning urban basic utilities governance that suits the profile of

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developing economies. Firstly, it creates a platform for a common focus, leading to a clear understanding of the delivery and management vision, mission and objectives. Secondly, the planning process itself helps to bring out structural deficiencies within, which triggers enabling legislation. Thirdly, through enhancing accountability and transparency, it creates confidence among internal and external stakeholders. Fourthly, devises effective tools to achieve significant process improvements and changes that are conducive for inculcating higher levels of performance in services delivery and management. And finally, crafts the scope for devising, implementing effective land use plans since the arrangement integrates economic and social metropolitan area through territorial and functional consolidation. Garmendia (et al, 2004), Davison (2001) asserted that the arrangement has emerged to be effective in avoiding some of the key problems of urban basic utilities governance in developing countries induced by fragmented governance namely service responsibility duplication between providers, existence of special purpose agencies imposed by respective organizational higher-ups that are unaccountable to local citizens.

TABLE 1 - COMPLIANCE OF METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Principles of good governance	Foundation	Compliance of Metropolitan government
Legitimacy and voice	**Participation** – *all men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech as well as capacities to participate constructively.*	√
	Consensus orientation - *good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures.*	√
Performance	**Responsiveness** - *institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders.*	√
	Effectiveness and efficiency - *processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources.*	√
Accountability	**Accountability** - *decision-makers are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organizations and whether the decision is internal or external.*	√
	Transparency - *transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.*	√
Fairness	**Equity** - *all men and women should have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.*	√
	Rule of law - *legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights.*	√

Source: UNDP, 1997

Based on these theoretical underpinnings, it can be stated that in terms of general characteristics, metropolitan government possesses the required capacities to supplement the principles of good governance (UNDP, 1997). Table 1 below renders support to that assertion.

3.2. Attainment of Millennium Development Goal and metropolitan government: the linkage

Referring to the compliance status of metropolitan government with the principles of good governance in Table 1, the arrangement can be perceived as an exponent of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) attainment strategy for the developing countries. Garmendia, (et al, 2004), Graham (et al 2003) asserted that to ensure urban basic utilities are making due contributions on the way of attaining MDGs, the respective governance arrangement ought to work towards providing citizenry with effective, efficient and responsive services that are equally distributed. In this connection, it is worth of citing the key postulations of Millennium Development Goals that are related to the improvement of urban basic utilities governance. According to the Revised Resolutions of United Nations (2002) on Sustainable Urban Development, these are as following:

- Promoting integrated urban services governance and support efforts of concerned service providers to innovate and learn from each other in order to address their challenges in the areas of land, housing, basic services and infrastructure.
- Reforming regulatory and institutional frameworks, codes, norms, laws and standards and develop and implement enabling policies, regulations and strategies facilitating access to a wide range of affordable, adequate, safe and environmentally-sound land, housing, basic services and infrastructure options for all segments of the society.
- Strengthening the capacities of administrative and financial institutions as well as delivery systems responsible for expanding access to land, housing, basic services and infrastructure.

Interestingly, these requirements of MDGs complies with the justifications of enacting metropolitan government i.e. ensuring equity, efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness in urban basic utilities governance. In this connection, Oluwu and Wunsch, (2004), Amis (et al, 2004), Davison (2001) contended that in developing countries, equal and quality access, higher efficiency, effectiveness and better responsiveness of urban basic utilities acts as the foundations of better urban settings that attracts productive investments – which in turn supports economic growth, prosperity and better living conditions. Prud'homme (2004), Garmendia (et al, 2004) argued that integrated urban basic service governance professed by metropolitan government arrangement has appeared as comparatively successful in better delivery and management affairs. The links between integrated urban basic utilities

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management, growth and social outcomes such as progressing towards the achievement of various Millennium Development Goals operates through multiple channels as argued by Prud'homme (2004) in Figure 1. As per the figure, integrated governance of urban basic utilities such as water, sanitation, transportation and energy directly benefits households and business enterprises with higher access to quality services - thus improving the respective welfares significantly (Prud'homme, 2004). And the availability of adequate and qualitative urban services lowers the costs of living and doing business and most importantly, expands market opportunities for both the dwellers and business enterprises of all categories (Prud'homme, 2004). The resulting gains are higher competitiveness and better production capacity that facilitates with the growth of urban economy and ultimately, welfare and reduction of poverty (Prud'homme, 2004).

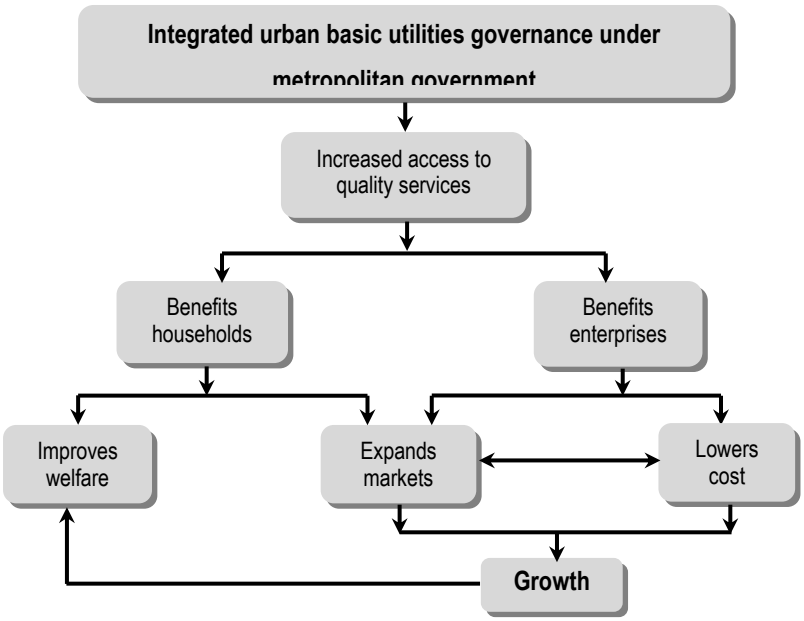

FIGURE 1 - METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT, URBAN BASIC UTILITIES INTEGRATION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL.

Numerous efforts have been made to measure the linkages between integrated urban basic utilities governance under metropolitan government and growth, poverty reduction, community welfare in developing nations. Garmendia, Estache, and Shafik (2004) examined 71 cases across the world conducted over the past 15 years. The sample included 50 cases of multiple countries (including developing countries) and 21 on individual developing countries. And, they found that in few instances, integrated governance of urban basic utilities and infrastructures have catered negative effects on productivity or growth. The study confirms the role of integrated urban basic utilities under metropolitan government in promoting growth and productivity and reducing disparities through equal and responsive provisioning or distribution of urban basic utilities across different income geographies (Garmendia, et

al, 2004). The study insisted that such a model of urban services governance allows effective addressing of much needed concerns such as increased and improved access to basic services namely water supply and sanitation, electricity, education and health care - leading to poverty reduction, growth in urban productivity and reduction in the propensity of contagious diseases, citywide planning and infrastructure provisioning. The case studies of Garmendia (et al, 2004), Easterly and Servén (2003), Deninger and Okidi (2003) have explained the anatomy of metropolitan - that facilitated the much-sought improvements government - as following:

- a governance arrangement that is large or stretched enough for decision- making and implementing to be accessible to, and accountable to all communities across the metropolitan area,
- embedded with statutory protections for each level from encroachment by higher levels, and from changing political fashions,
- possesses taxing powers allowing higher resource accumulations that are to be
- redistributed between rich and poor localities,
- resources are guaranteed and distributed equitably to the local community thus enabling these to substantially finance essential local services and infrastructures, and
- embedded with the mechanisms for democratic accountability to citizens and participation by citizens at each level as well as mechanisms for accountability between levels.

Together these results suggest that the returns from integrated urban basic utilities governance are higher during the early stages of a city's development, when services are needed to be provided to a wide range of citizens for ensuring higher productivity, better living condition etc. (Cohen, 2004). The studies concluded that while the importance of urban basic utilities infrastructure varies between countries and over time, the overall quantity and quality are critical determinants of urban growth in developing and transitional economies.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The discussions quite clearly depicted two contrasting portraits from developing countries. On one hand, reliance on fragmented urban basic utilities arrangement has been complimentary to poverty, compressing employment and income generating opportunities. On the other hand, adoption of metropolitan government arrangement has been successful to a considerable extent in improving living standards, business opportunities, reducing living expenses, expanding scopes of availing social

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services i.e. education; and democratic renewal in city services governance from below. In operational terms, enactment of metropolitan government arrangement is about strengthening institutional arrangement of city or local government. It is about allowing the local representative units to decide and plan for the respective development endeavors instead of being imposed upon by the national government. Nonetheless, it can thus be argued that metropolitan government arrangement is about enhancing technical, political and institutional affairs of city governments in the developing world.

However, metropolitan government is not without shortcomings. With its enactment, local government cost might increase i.e. Baton Rouge – East Baton Rouge Parish, Nashville-Davidson County, metro in Portland, Oregon (Stephens and Winkstrom, 2001), areal boundary of the city becomes rigid which - at times - escalates real estate price i.e. Baton Rouge – East Baton Rouge Parish, Nashville-Davidson County, metro in Portland, Oregon; Clacutta, India; Cukurova, Turkey (Savage and Dasgupta, 2006; Sayinlap, 2001; Eisenhardt, 1989), local government size gets bigger which could induce indolence in development and management tasks i.e. IUIDP across Indonesia (Talukder, 2006). Vogel (1997) criticized the arrangement for its overt interest in infrastructure development rather than urban renewal and social needs of the central cities, ignorance in developing mechanisms for smoothing national government-local government relationship. These empirical evidences suggest that operationally, metropolitan government possesses certain amount of challenges.

Thus, it is worth noting here that there exists no governance mechanism that can be considered as everlasting panacea for urban basic utilities/services ills. With the change of time and socio-economic footprint, the governance mode for city ought to embrace changes or modifications to be responsive to respective requirements. Indeed, governance arrangement of cityscapes is an ever-evolving phenomenon.

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