

Governance and Citizens in Urban India: Evidence from Delhi

March 2025



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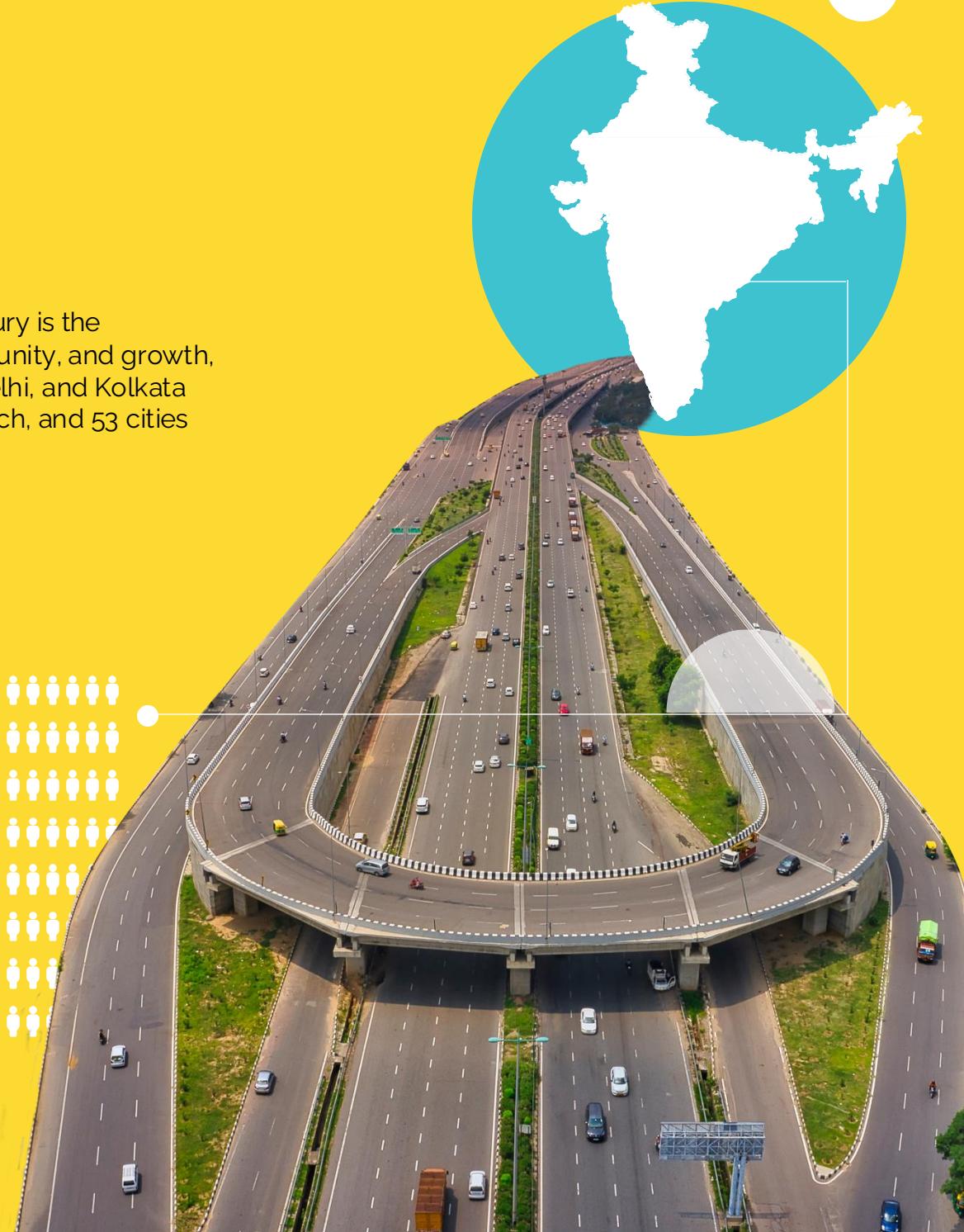
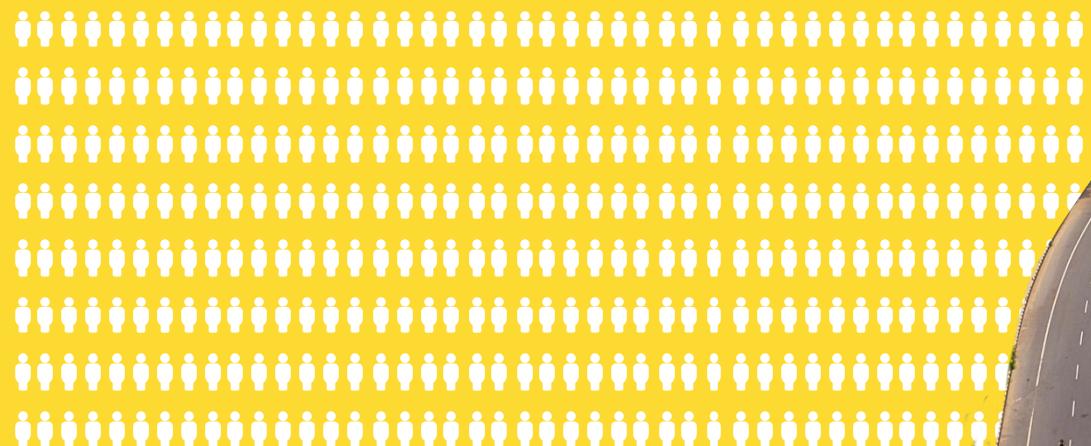
01 INTRODUCTION

Urban India

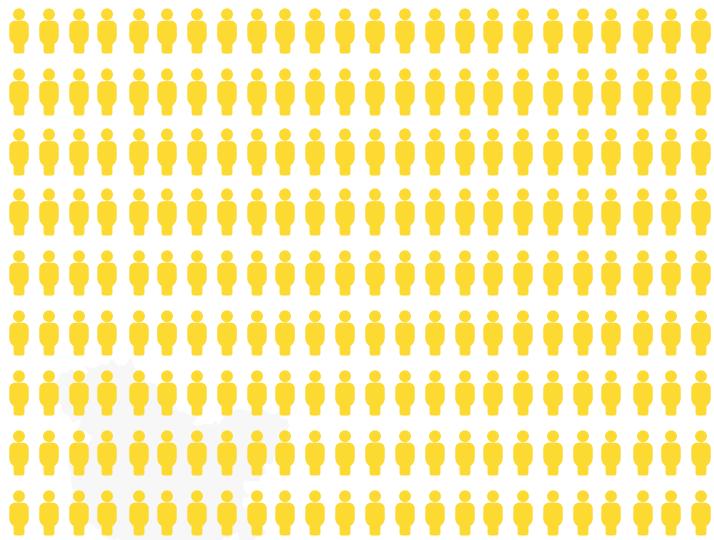
One of the greatest challenges that India faces in the 21st century is the governance of its cities. Cities are centers of innovation, opportunity, and growth, and are home to a steady flow of migrants. In 2011, Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata were the only three cities with more than ten million people each, and 53 cities had populations of more than one million each.¹

As of 2022,

India stands at almost 400 cities with populations between 0.1 to 1 million.



¹ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.janaagraha.org/files/publications/Citizen-Index-Book-Dec-2014.pdf



A UN report has estimated that urban population in India, will stand at

675 million people by 2035

and the percentage of India's urban population will be 43.2 percent.² However, the physical growth of cities has paced much ahead of our ability to govern them, which has put huge pressure on the existing development infrastructure, resources, and governance systems.

With recent studies suggesting a stabilization of population growth in the top-tier cities, it is believed that the future expansion of India's urban population is likely to be primarily driven by the smaller statutory towns (those with less than 0.1 million population) and Census Towns. These segments together accounted for a significant 50% of India's urban population in 2011. The narrative of India's urbanization is, therefore, becoming less top-heavy. Instead, there is a strong indication of more balanced urbanization, with small and medium cities poised to play a significant role. Understanding and addressing the specific needs and opportunities of these areas is fundamental for achieving inclusive urban development.



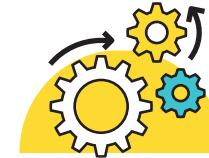
² <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indias-urban-population-to-stand-at-675-million-in-2035-behind-chinas-1-billion-un/article65584707.ece>

City-systems

Our work collects and presents data on the state of basic services and infrastructure in Indian cities to highlight the extent of these challenges. At the same time, relating the delivery of such services to mechanisms of governance. The ability of a city to deliver good quality of life (e.g., at a minimum, good quality of basic services and infrastructure) depends to a large extent on the complex, mostly-invisible factors (such as laws, policies, institutions, institutional processes) that underpin urban governance. To conceptualize these factors, diagnose urban problems and - more importantly - solve them, we need to view them in a systems framework. The "City-Systems" framework is a framework created by Janaagraha that helps us identify the root causes of our urban challenges. This City-Systems framework comprises four components:



1. Urban Planning & Design



2. Urban Capacities & Resources



3. Empowered & Legitimate Political Representation



4. Transparency, Accountability & Participation

Janaagraha undertakes regular reviews of the laws, policies, institutions and institutional processes that lie within each of these four components. Entitled 'Annual Survey of India's City-Systems',³ this work has identified significant challenges with urban India's City-Systems.

The work in this project focuses particularly on the fourth component. With such large populations living in smaller geographical areas, it is crucial to deepen citizen participation in all governance systems, in order to improve quality of life. Citizens should not only be aware, but empowered to have a say in how their cities and neighbourhoods are planned and managed. In any democracy, the quality of governance is inextricably tied to the quality of citizenship. Our work, therefore, also collects data on the current status quo of citizen participation and considers its relationship to service delivery in urban India.

³ Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (2017): Annual Survey of India's City-Systems – Shaping India's Urban Agenda. Available: <https://www.janaagraha.org/asics/report/ASICS-report-2017-fin.pdf> [accessed 15-05-2023].

The Urban Governance Project

The Urban Governance project aims to gather systematic and robust data on the relationship between citizenship, basic services, and infrastructure delivery in cities across India. We argue that effective citizenship means essentially being able to use one's rights, that is to effectively participate in public life and engage in public activities across social boundaries. Second, effective citizenship means being able to claim and obtain public goods, basic services, and infrastructure from the local state.

Till date we have collected data from over

38,000 citizens

in 17 cities across India.

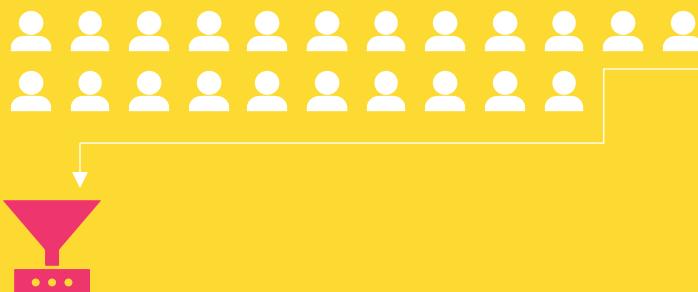
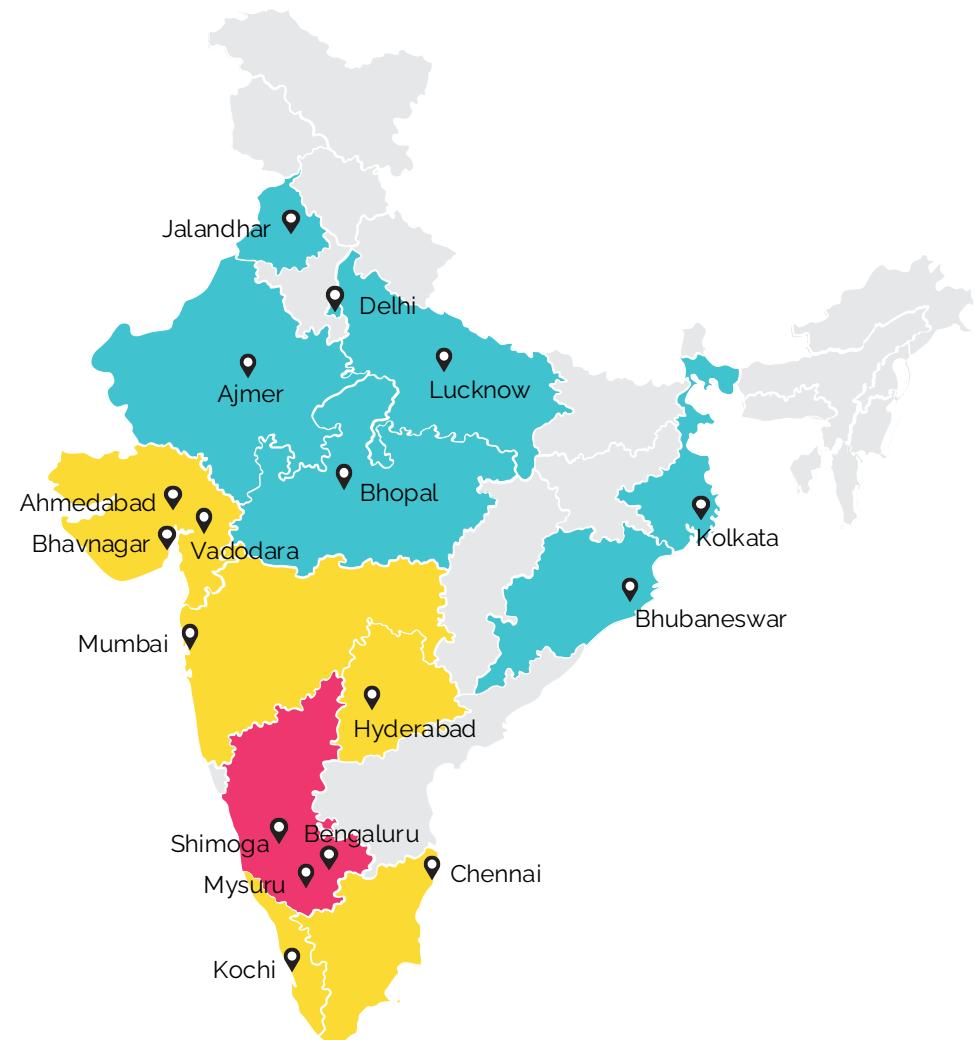


Figure 1: Cities covered in the project (2013 to 2022)

■ 2013-2018 ■ 2018-2019 ■ 2021-2022



Research design

01 Key respondent interviews

City commissioners, police commissioners, corporators, heads of departments, prominent academics in the city/state, and civil society activists were interviewed in each city to understand local context on service provision, issues, reference terms and inform the nuance for each city's survey instrument.



02 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

- 2 FGDs per city.
- Male and female citizens participated who were from marginalised communities, typically from very low-income neighbourhoods, especially in shack settlements and informal slums.
- Goals:
 - a. To collect qualitative data on how citizens access services, how they engage with politicians and the state, how communities are organized and how marginalised communities understand their rights
 - b. To use responses to adapt and fine tune our survey instrument to actual conditions and practices in these communities.

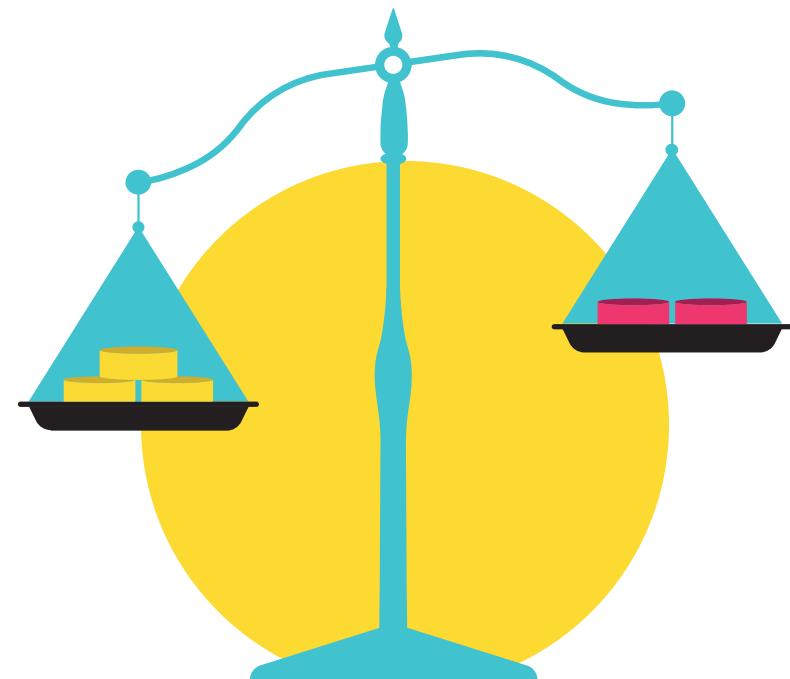
03 Large, quantitative, representative household surveys

- Systematic random sampling that stratified polling parts to generate a representative sample of polling parts across each city taking care to ensure citizens from marginalised communities were included.
- Manual counting, listing, and classification, of all residential buildings within the sampled polling parts in each city. Classification into one of five housing type categories: HT-1 (informal shacks), HT-2 (informal slums), HT-3 (lower middle class), HT-4 (middle class) and HT-5 (upper class housing).
- Manual counting of number of households within each listed residential building.
- Systematic sampling of households across polling parts.
- Quantitative household surveys with 1,000-3,000⁴ citizens per city.
- Top-up sampling to ensure sample match to listings (by housing type) and to account (and increase in the sample) for low numbers of certain housing types to allow for adequate 'within housing type' analysis.

04 Weighting

Rake weighting (or iterative proportional fitting) was used to create weights that are unique to each city. For the seven cities, each response was assigned a weight according to housing type of each housing structure, which is unique for each city according to the difference between the sample margins and the population distributions of the five housing types in the city (as determined by the listing data).

For more details on the methodology, please refer to Appendix 1.



⁴ Depending on city population size.

02 CITY IN FOCUS: DELHI

In this report, we provide a comprehensive overview of our quantitative findings from Delhi. Where appropriate, we compare our findings to six other cities from the most recent phase, for which our data analysis is completed.

About the city

- Current population estimate

2023 - 31,181,000
people,⁵ about



- The national capital territory of Delhi has an area of 1483 sq.km.⁷



- Delhi is the largest commercial centre in northern India. As per the Economic survey of Delhi (2005–2006), the tertiary sector contributes 71 percent of Delhi's gross State Domestic Product followed by secondary and primary sectors with 25 percent and 4 percent contributions, respectively
- Delhi has a large skill base, with 30 percent of the workforce qualified as engineers, doctors, lawyers, and consultants.

⁵ Population projection 2021: <https://population.un.org/wup/DataQuery/>

⁶ <https://www.indiastat.com/table/delhi-state/demographics/projected-urban-population-sex-delhi-1st-march-200/> 418518

⁷ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnibpcajpcgkclefindmkaj/http://des.delhigovt.nic.in/DoIT/DOIT_DM/district%20profile.pdf



About Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and local governance:

- The MCD was formed in May 2022 by merging the three existing civic bodies of East Delhi, North Delhi, and South Delhi. The MCD is one of the largest municipal bodies in the world providing civic services to approximately 20 million citizens of Delhi.⁸
- The MCD came into being as an independent body through a Special Act of the Parliament in 1958. The roles and responsibilities include providing civic amenities to the citizens, including health care facilities, cleanliness of roads, pavements, markets, ensuring proper functioning and infrastructure of government primary schools etc. The MCD also looks after the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure such as roads, over-bridges, public toilets, public transportation etc. It is also enlisted with taking care of water supply, managing the drainage system, solid waste management, upkeep of parks, libraries, parking areas, etc.⁹
- The Delhi Mayor is indirectly elected, for a term of 1 year.
- However, there are several areas of responsibility overlap of the MCD and the Delhi government.¹⁰

⁸ <https://mcdonline.nic.in/portal>

⁹ <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/mcd-polls-2022/story/mcd-vs-delhi-govt-how-overlap-of-duties-can-confuse-you-2303408-2022-11-30>

¹⁰ Ibid.

- List of agencies providing basic services to citizens:



1. Water and Sewerage:

State government through the Delhi Jal Board¹¹



2. Garbage and Waste Disposal Service:

State and city governments i.e., Urban Development Department of the government of National Capital Territory of Delhi, and urban local bodies¹²



3. Electricity:

State government through Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission¹³



4. Public transport:

State government through Delhi Transport Corporation¹⁴



5. Road construction, repairs, and maintenance :

State government through Public Works Department¹⁵

¹¹ <http://delhijalboard.nic.in/content/about-us-3>

¹² For Municipal Solid Waste- Point III. <http://web.delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/environment/Environment/Home/Environmental+Issues/Waste+Management#:~:text=The%20responsibility%20of%20management%20of,Department%20and%20Urban%20Local%20Bodies.&text=There%20are%203%20landfill%20sites,and%20Okhla%20land%20fill%20site>

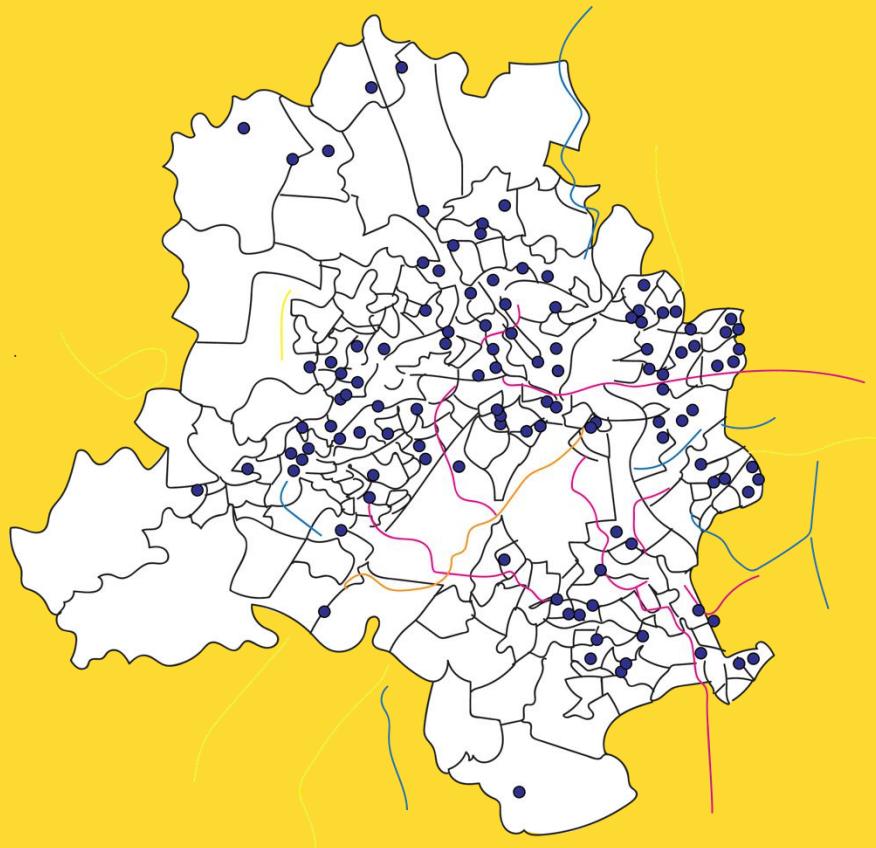
¹³ <https://www.derc.gov.in/about-us/function-derc>

¹⁴ <http://dtc.delhi.gov.in/overview>

¹⁵ <https://www.pwddelhi.gov.in/Home/AboutUs>

Achieved sample for Delhi survey

Figure 2: The sampled polling parts for urban Delhi survey



Dates of survey- July to November 2022

Total achieved sample for Delhi- 3113 citizens across 102 polling parts as shown in Figure 2.

The achieved raw sample is broadly the same as population data, particularly by religion (see Table 1) though is slightly over-representative of male respondents. The Housing Type (HT) distribution of the achieved sample broadly reflects the HT distribution of the listing data in Delhi (see Table 2). However, in Delhi, all housing types except HT3s were low in number during the listing. Therefore, there has been over-representation of all housing types in the main sample, at the detriment of HT3s. This was done deliberately through top-up sampling throughout the survey period to ensure adequate coverage of these HTs for 'within HT comparisons'. To adjust for this, weighted data (using Housing type listing proportions 1-5) is used throughout the report when not doing within HT type analysis. It is important to note that the listing data proportion of HT1 and HT2 (which in combination represents all slum-type housing in our work), at 10.5% is a very good reflection of the slum proportions from Census 2011 which stands at 10.63%.¹⁶

¹⁶ Census slum population data:
<https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog/6190>.
 Also refer to Economic Survey of Delhi, 2021-22, pp-268, chapter 14, section 119-
<https://delhiplanning.delhi.gov.in/planning/economic-survey-delhi-2020-21-english>

Table 1: Census data and JBCI sample compared for Delhi

	Total population			Literacy %	Religion %			Caste %	
	Total (n)	Male%	Female%		Hindu	Muslim	others	SC	ST ¹⁷
Census¹⁸	16787941	53	47	86	82	13	5	17	0
Raw Sample	3113	60	40	91	88	10	2	22	3
Weighted data	3113	59	41	95	86	12	2	16	2

Table 2: Housing Type structure listing and achieved sample data for Delhi

Data	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	Total No.
Housing type listing (structures)	4.6	5.9	82.7	5.4	1.3	19667
Achieved (raw) sample (%)	11.2	8.3	70.3	7.9	2.3	3113

¹⁷ The Scheduled Tribe population is not notified in Delhi, hence, the data is not presented in the District Census Handbook, 2011.¹⁸ Actual Population and Literacy figure 2011: https://des.delhi.gov.in/sites/default/files/DES/generic_multiple_files/population_of_delhi_as_per_census_2011_1.pdf. Figures for religion (estimated for 2020): <https://www.indiacensus.net/states/delhi>

GOVERNANCE

Key findings

- In urban Delhi, citizens believe that provision of water should be the top priority of the local government.

- A plurality of Delhi residents are not sure who is most important in ensuring basic services are delivered to them. The councilor is the most common selection, by one-fourth of citizens, while only three per cent think it is the provider themselves.

- Since COVID-19, Delhi residents indicate that their opinions of their corporator, and the MLAs is more positive than before the pandemic.



Citizens' opinions about delivery of basic services

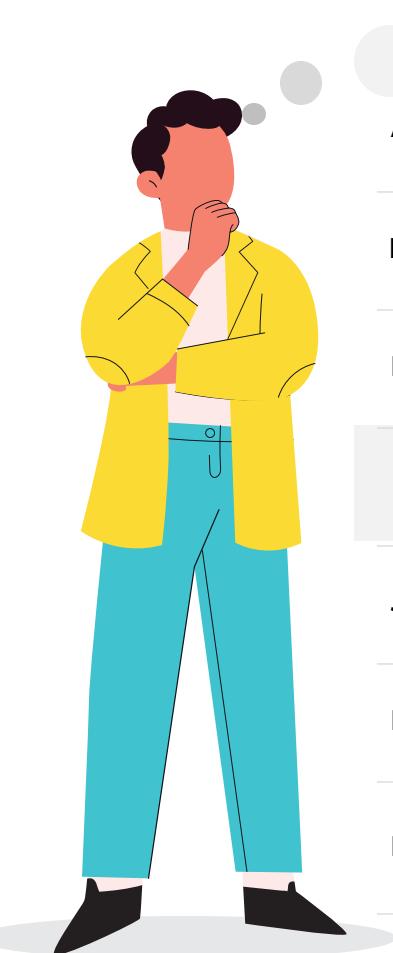
The awareness, involvement, and opinions of citizens on what the municipal governments should be doing and how are they doing it is integral to understanding urban governance.

Table 3: Urban citizens' opinion about the most important service that the local government should provide (data in percentage)

	Water	Sanitation	Health Service	Education	Electricity	Others ¹⁹	Don't know/no answer
Ajmer	35	36	6	19	3	1	0
Bhopal	14	25	10	31	9	6	6
Bhubaneswar	19	8	37	32	0	2	1
Delhi	35	20	13	15	5	11	1
Jalandhar	23	9	21	27	5	11	4
Kolkata	32	3	29	21	4	11	0
Lucknow	33	16	9	29	3	9	2

- In Delhi, provision of water is the most important service which citizens feel should be provided by the local government. This is the highest top response for water across all sampled cities.
- Sanitation and education come next respectively on the list of Delhi residents for being important services to be provided by the local government.
- In other cities, provision of education is a higher priority.

¹⁹ Others include - safety and personal security, clean air, public transportation, and housing.



Citizens' perceptions of key stakeholders in society

- The residents of Delhi seem to have a low opinion of all their elected representatives. Only just over one-third citizens feel that their local corporator, MLA and MP care about the well-being of the people of the constituency.
- This thought is not uniform among types of housing and varies somewhat by class. While the corporator is seen as caring about all the people of his constituency most by HT1s, HT3s and HT4s, the MLA and MP are seen in high regard most commonly by those residing in HT4s and HT5s. The HT1s are least likely to feel that their MP and MLA care about all the people in the constituency.
- This is quite different from the other cities where the majority of citizens feel that the elected representatives care about all the people in their constituencies.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has however, had a positive impact on people's opinions about their elected representatives in Delhi. About one-third of citizens indicate feeling more positive about their elected representatives (local corporator, MLA) since the pandemic. The biggest positive shift has been in the opinion of police which is the case in all cities.

Figure 3: Percentage of citizens who feel each elected representative cares about the well-being of the people of their constituency

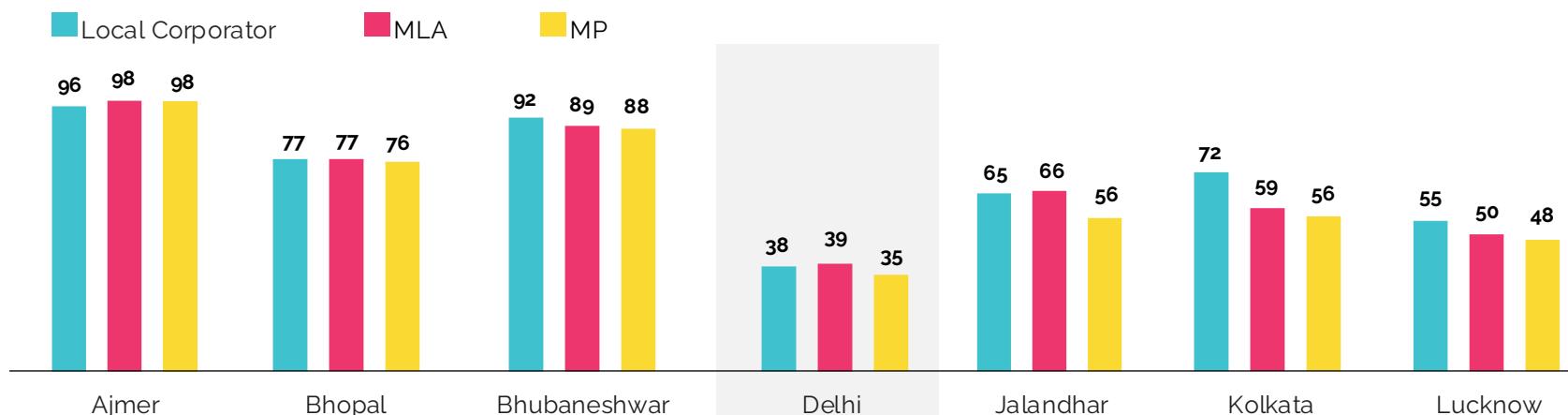


Figure 4: Percentage of Delhi citizens who feel each elected representative cares about the well-being of all the people of their constituency

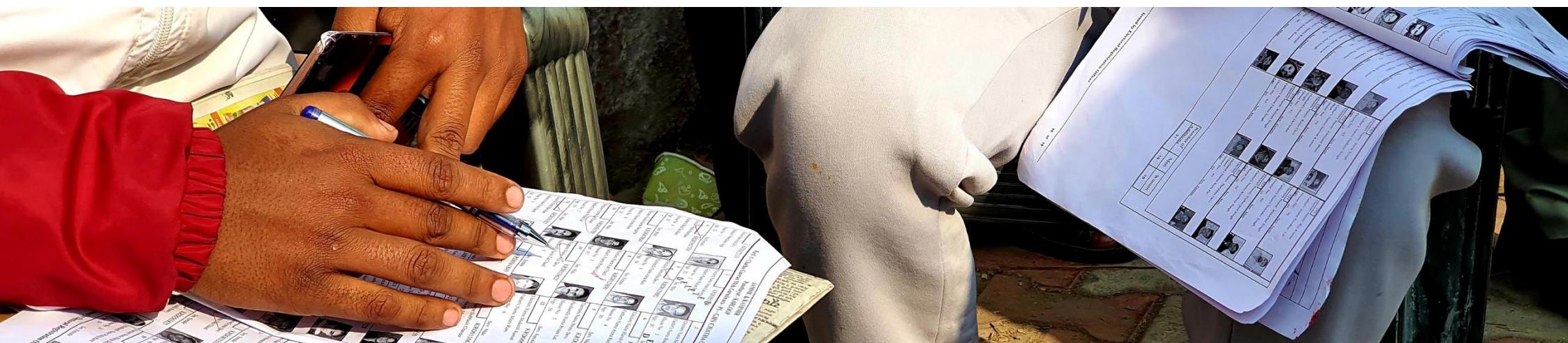
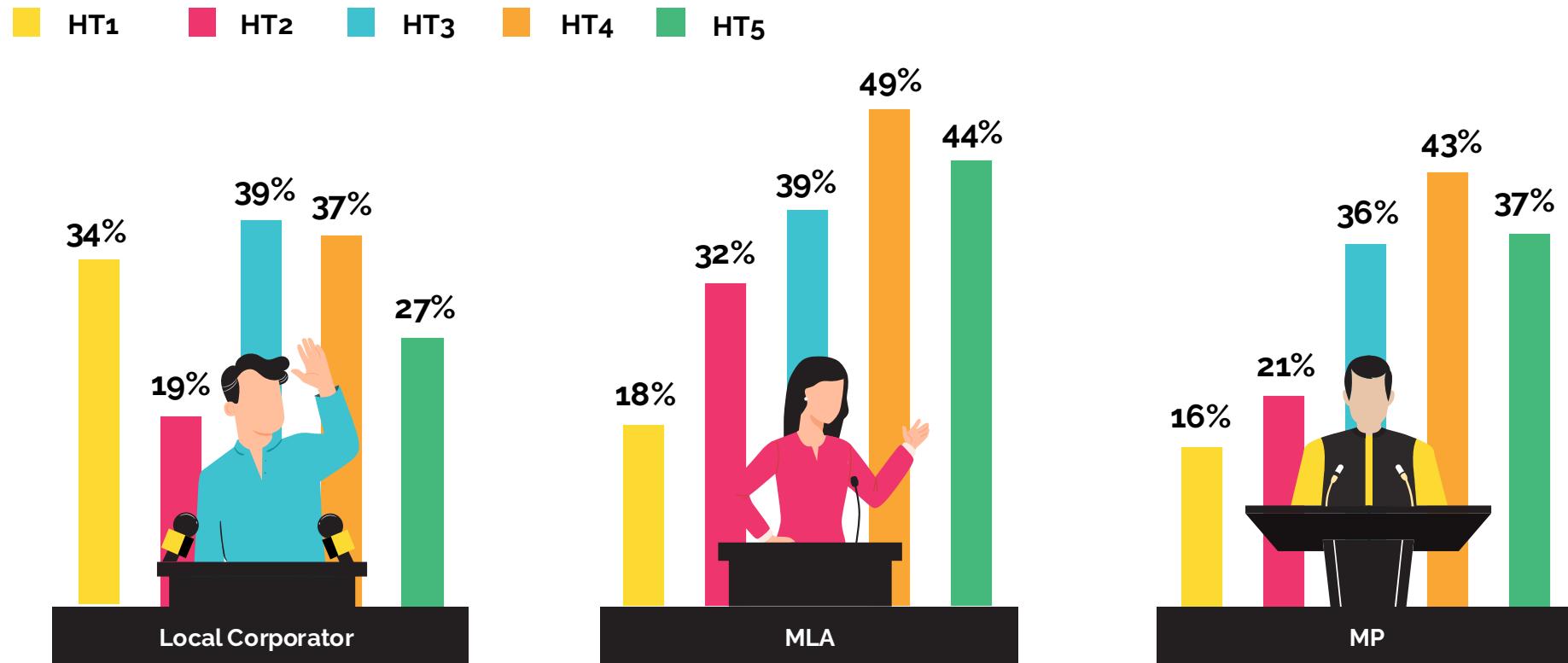
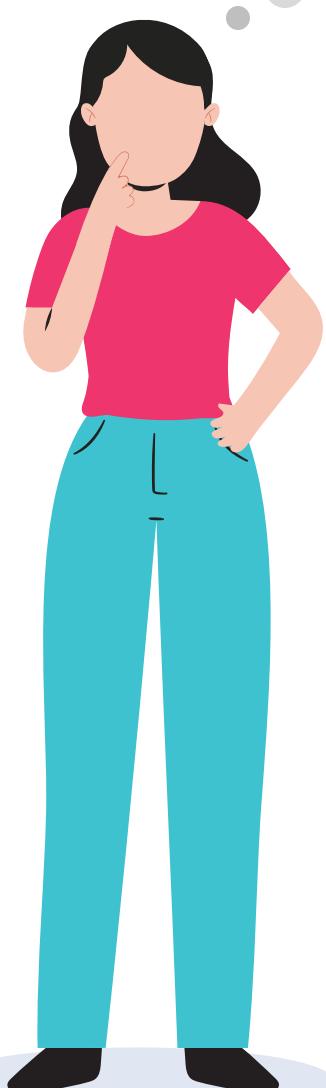


Table 4: Percentage of citizens who feel more positive about specific stakeholders since the COVID-19 pandemic (data in percentage)

	Police	Local Corporator	MLA	Local leader (unelected)	Government agencies	NGOs	Neighbours
Ajmer	47	38	33	35	34	35	38
Bhopal	50	43	38	39	41	45	41
Bhubaneswar	57	50	52	50	47	51	49
Delhi	61	36	33	35	43	50	55
Jalandhar	62	51	45	42	42	51	49
Kolkata	50	57	45	43	37	37	56
Lucknow	58	45	35	40	35	43	42



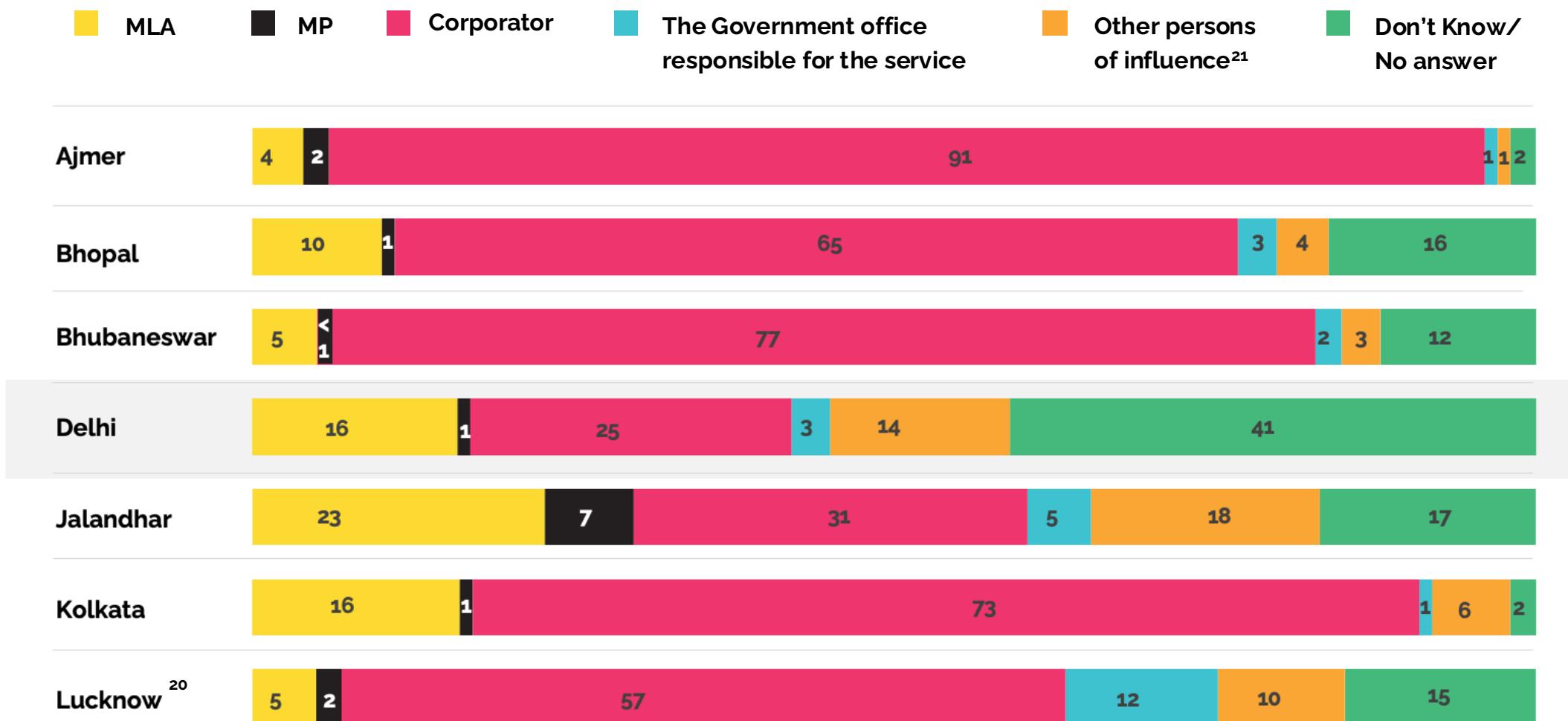
Citizens' opinions about the role of key governance stakeholders in service delivery

Delhi citizens' opinions about local and elected representatives

- A major chunk of Delhi residents are unsure of who is most important in ensuring provision of basic services in the neighbourhood. However, only very few (3%) think it is the government agency actually responsible. The councilor is the most common selection, by one-fourth of citizens.
- In Delhi, and Jalandhar, more than in other cities, many residents feel that 'other people of influence' including middlemen and local unelected leaders are important in providing services to the neighbourhood.
- It is interesting to note that as we go up the housing ladder in Delhi, from HT1s and HT2s, to HT5s, a larger proportion of people answer that they don't know who is most important to ensure provision of basic services in their neighbourhood. Citizens residing in HT1s are most likely to identify other people of influence in provision of basic services, followed by citizens residing in HT5. Residents of HT1s – HT3s feel that the corporator is most important in ensuring basic services for the neighbourhood; but this perception is far less in HT4 and almost redundant in HT5s.
- Although the vast majority of citizens do not consider the actual responsible agency as playing the key role in service delivery, it is those in HT5s in Delhi who are most likely to consider them important.



Figure 5: Urban citizens' opinion about the most important resource in ensuring basic services are delivered to the neighbourhood (data in percentage)

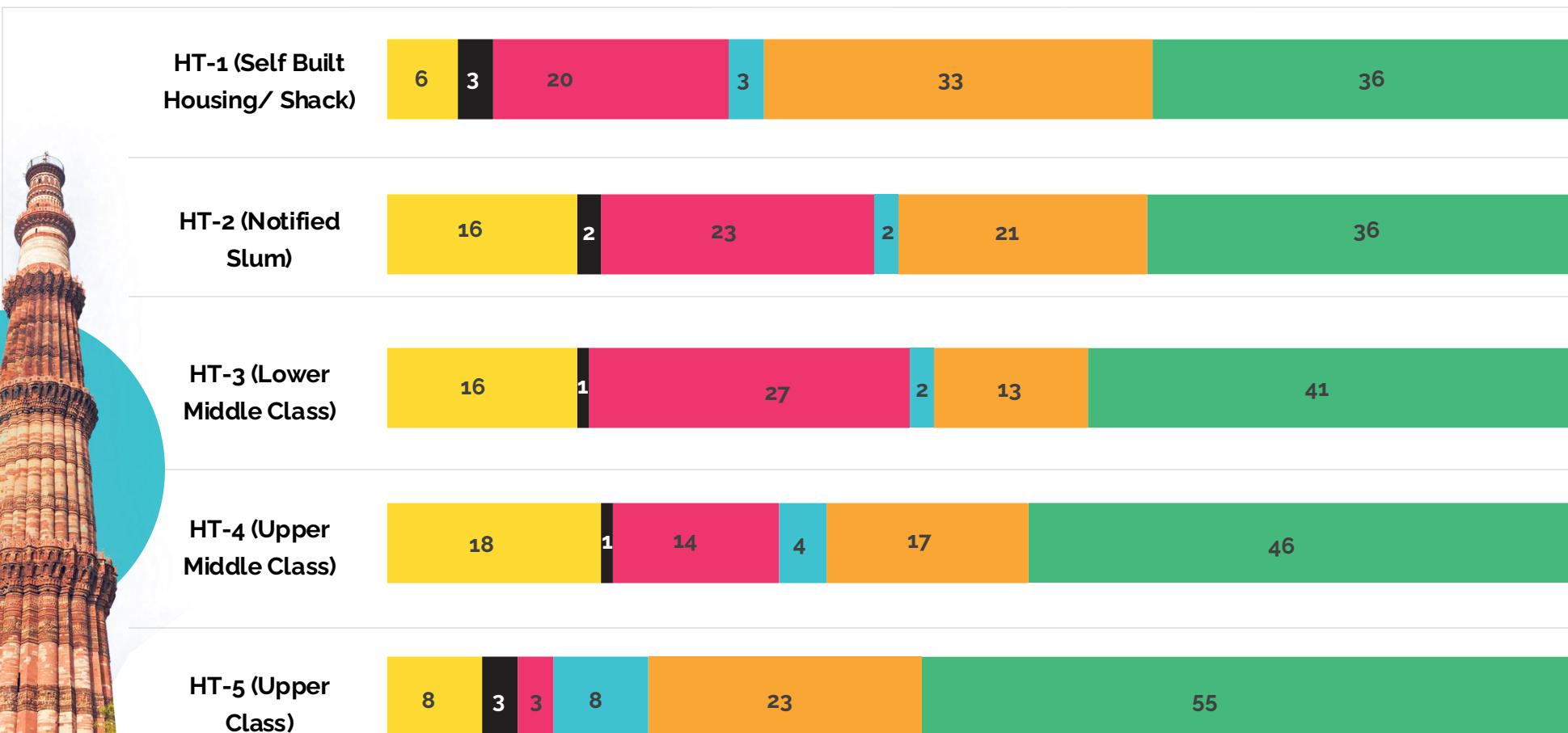


²⁰ Due to rounding, the total sums to more than 100.

²¹ Other persons of influence include local political leader (unelected), middlemen/ intermediary, and other persons of influence.



Figure 6: Delhi citizens' opinion about the most important resource in ensuring basic services are delivered to the neighbourhood by housing type (data in percentage)



²² Other persons of influence include local political leader (unelected), middlemen/ intermediary, and other persons of influence.

CITIZENSHIP

Key findings



As in all cities, in Delhi, citizens feel voting is the top most responsibility of a citizen in a democracy.

However, the respective proportion of Delhi citizens responding this way is lower than in other cities, with respecting the law and treating others as equal also featuring prominently.

There is a huge variation among housing types reporting voter registration, where, as we go up the housing ladder, the self-reported voter registrations increase.



Citizens' opinions about their responsibilities in a democracy

- Overall, urban residents in our sample have more vertical citizenship than horizontal. By vertical citizenship, we mean how citizens view their rights and obligations vis-a-vis the state, and by horizontal citizenship we mean how citizens view their obligations and rights vis-a-vis fellow citizens.
- Delhi is no exception, where citizens consider voting as their most important responsibility and self-reported voter registration stands at 73 percent. Additionally, the second most important responsibility reported by Delhi citizens is respecting the law. The highest response rate for voting as the most important responsibility comes from those residing in lower middle-class housing (HT3), followed by those residing in notified slums (HT2).
- Overall, however, the proportion of those citing these obligations towards the state in Delhi is lower than in most other sampled cities, especially with regards to voting. The obligation of treating others as equals is considered important by a larger proportion of citizens in Delhi than all other cities except Kolkata and Bhubaneswar.
- In fact, those residing in upper class housing (HT5s) in Delhi believe treating others as equal (i.e., horizontal citizenship) is a more important responsibility of a citizen in a democracy than voting.

Table 5: Urban citizens' opinions about the most important responsibility of citizens in a democracy (data in percentages)

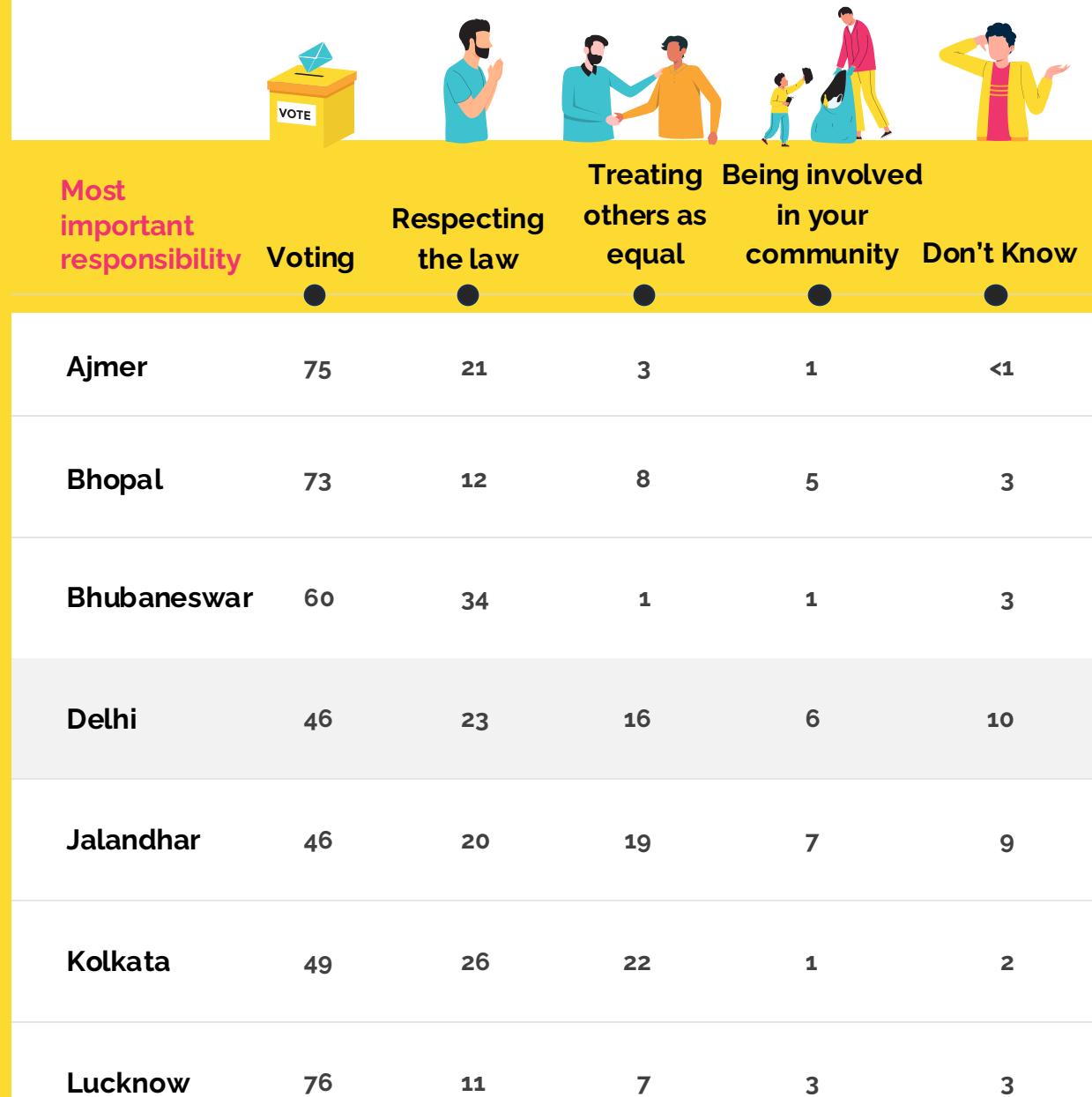
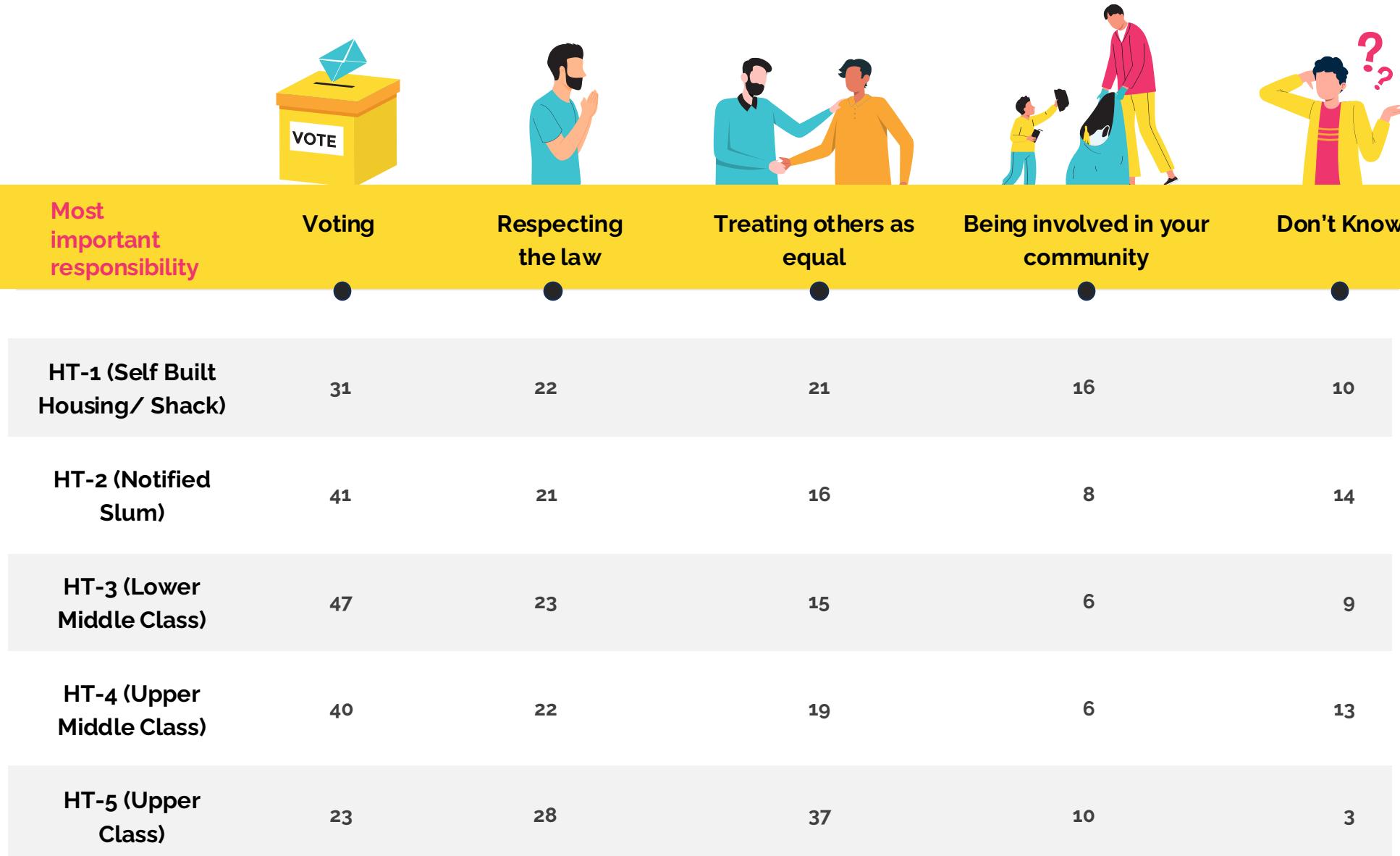


Table 6: Urban Delhi citizens' opinions about the most important responsibility of citizens in a democracy by housing type (data in percentages)



Citizens' self-reporting about being registered to vote

Figure 7: Urban citizens' self-reporting about being registered to vote in municipal/state/union elections (data in percentage)

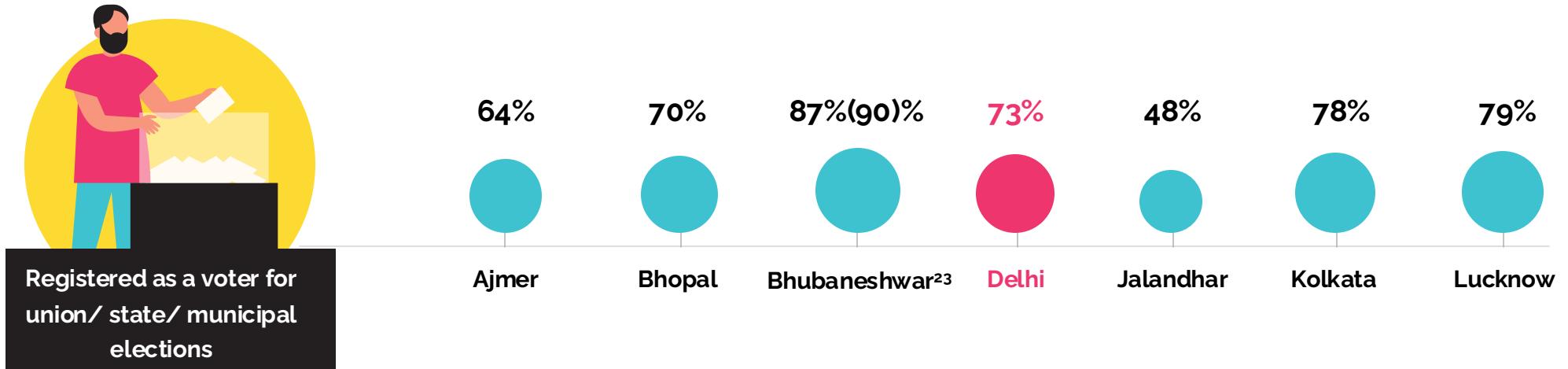
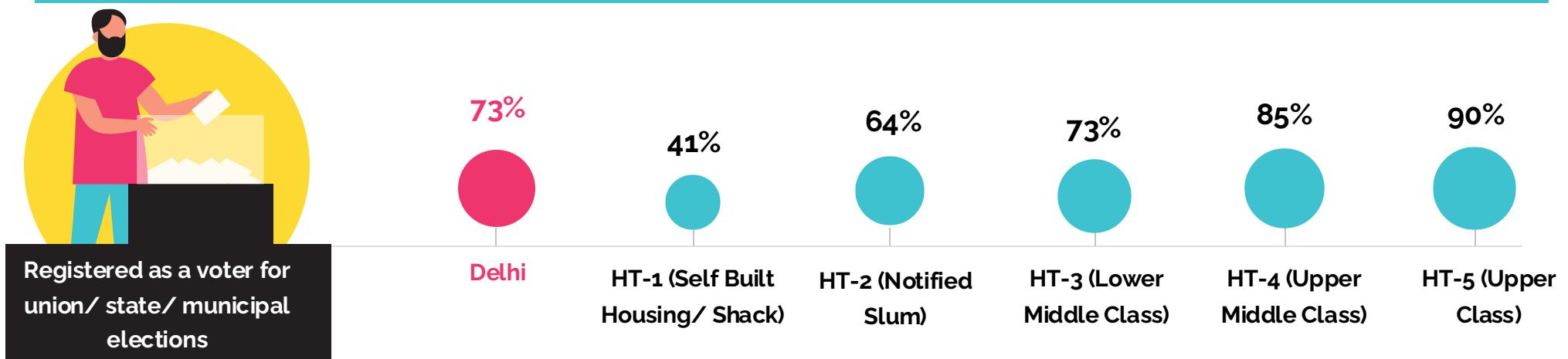


Figure 8: Delhi urban citizens' self-reporting about being registered to vote in municipal/state/union elections by housing type (data in percentage)



- In Delhi, 73 percent of citizens report that they are registered to vote for all layers of government. We observe a huge variation among housing types, where, as we go up the housing ladder, the self-reported voter registrations increase. We observe an almost 50 percentage points jump from self-reported voter registrations from HT1s to HT5s, with the biggest jump coming from HT1s to HT2s.

²³ In an unstarred question (no.1516) asked in Lok Sabha on 10th February, 2021, the Minister of Law and Justice clarified that all states and union territories are sharing the voter list. Hence, the same electoral rolls are used for national, state, municipal, and panchayat elections. However, in Bhubaneswar local knowledge suggested the separate electoral lists may still be in use, so separate questions were asked about municipal elections. Self-reported voter registration for municipal elections is given in brackets.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Key findings

Delhi fares poorly on citizen participation scores as compared with other cities in our sample, performing better only than Jalandhar.

As for most urban citizens, Delhi citizens participate most by voting.

Urban Delhi residents are generally not aware of any ward committees in the city, likely due to limited implementation of these across the city.

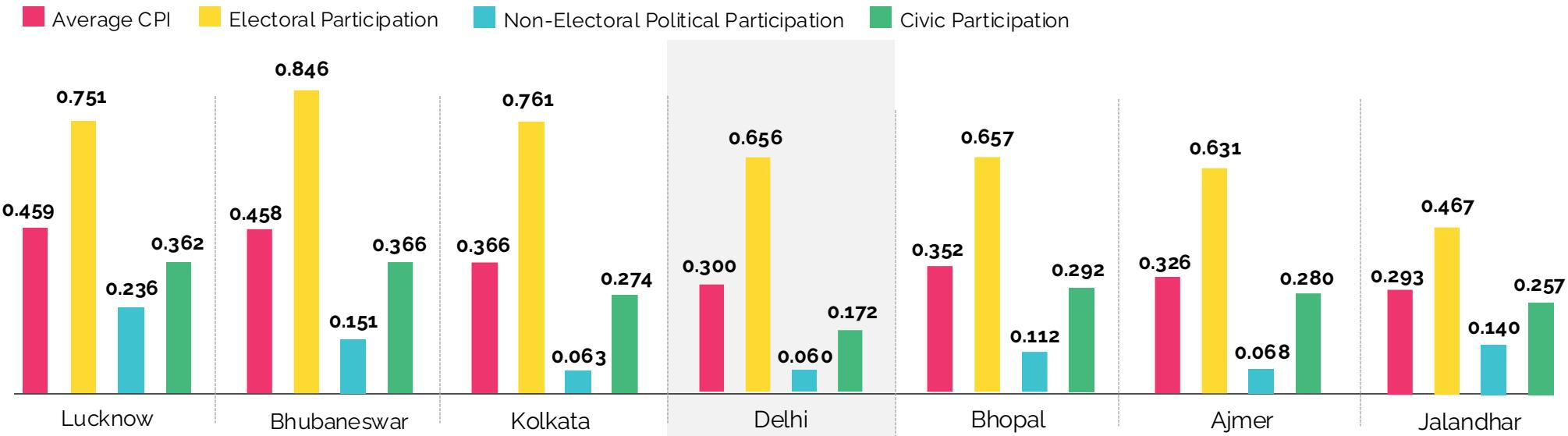
Urban Delhi residents are least likely (out of all citizens across our 7 cities) to believe the corporator is the most important in ensuring basic service delivery. This is reiterated by the fact that only 6% have contacted their corporator or visited their municipal or ward offices in the last 6 months (the lowest in our sample).



Citizen Participation

To create a holistic picture of citizen participation, we created a citizen participation index (CPI). The index comprises of three components including political participation (electoral), non-electoral political participation and civic participation. The index is created from the responses of to multiple questions. The index calculates a score between 0 and 1, which means that a score closer to zero would signify low participation, and a score of one would mean that the citizen participated in all activities.²⁴

Figure 9: Average citizen participation index and components' score by city



Key Findings



01

The CPI scores of all sampled cities is below 0.5. Delhi's score is second lowest out of our sampled cities, above only Jalandhar.

02

As for most urban citizens, Delhi citizens participate most by voting, in an average of 2 out of the last 3 elections of different tiers of government.

03

Likewise, as is the case in all cities, in Delhi, citizens participate least in non-electoral political activities such as political rallies or as members of political parties.

²⁴ For more information on the CPI, please refer to Appendix 2.

Table 7: CPI scores by housing type

	HT-1 (Self Built Housing/ Shack)	HT-2 (Notified Slum)	HT-3 (Lower Middle Class)	HT-4 (Upper Middle Class)	HT-5 (Upper Class)
Ajmer	0.195	0.323	0.325	0.325	0.369
Bhopal	0.362	0.368	0.347	0.343	0.425
Bhubaneswar	0.267	0.443	0.476	0.461	0.438
Delhi	0.198	0.280	0.299	0.327	0.311
Jalandhar	0.102	0.187	0.309	0.238	0.260
Kolkata	0.353	0.387	0.363	0.343	0.326
Lucknow	0.245	0.403	0.460	0.483	0.448

Key Findings



- Among the urban Delhi residents, participation is the least in HT1s, and jumps most as we move to HT2s. From there on, there is a steady increase in participation in HT3s and 4s, but a slight decline as we close in on HT5s.
- Among the metro cities of Kolkata and Delhi, Kolkata citizens report much higher HT1 and HT2 participation than Delhi citizens. The gap between the two cities closes in as we move towards the upper-class housing.

Citizens' awareness of ward committees and engagement with corporators

Table 8: Urban citizen's awareness and attendance in ward committee meetings (data in percentages)

	Aware about ward committees (yes)	If yes, attended ward committee meetings in the last year
Ajmer	4	67
Bhopal	10	68
Bhubaneswar	42	62
Delhi	6	41
Jalandhar	14	53
Kolkata	37	11
Lucknow	25	83



- Delhi residents, along with Ajmer, report the lowest awareness of ward committees in their city. This is not unsurprising given implementation of the legislation and implementation regarding Ward Committees and Area Sabhas is limited in Delhi.²⁵
- Among all other sampled cities, Bhubaneswar and Kolkata report much higher percentage of citizen awareness about ward committees.²⁶
- Close to 70 percent of Delhi residents do not know how to contact their ward corporator. Moreover, over 90 percent of the residents have not visited municipal corporator/ward corporator for any service-related issue. This is not surprising since Delhi citizens seem to rely on their corporators the least (out of all our sampled cities) with only 24 percent of citizens feeling them most important in ensuring basic services to the neighbourhood.

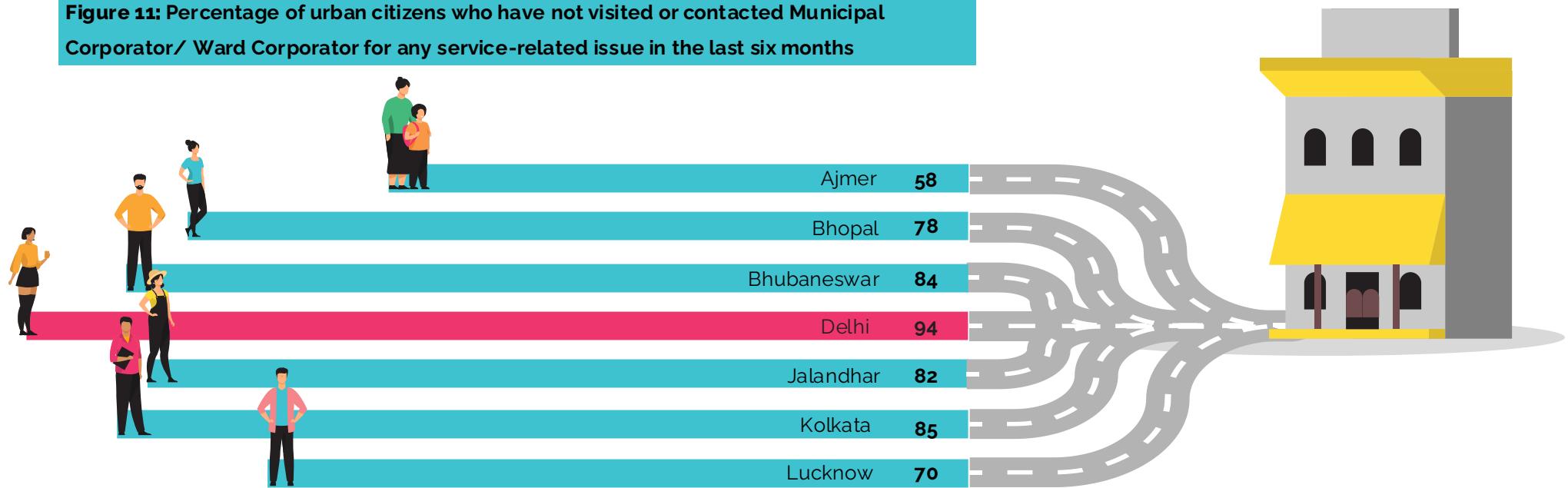
²⁵ Also, during the focus group discussions in Delhi, none of the participants were aware of ward committees in their areas. A study by Ahmad et al (2013) on governance institutions in Delhi points out that in the city, "the legislation regarding Ward Committees was adopted in 1996. However, only twelve WCMs were created, which means that they stand for a population of more than 800,000 inhabitants. They only include elected councilors and have no representative from the civil society." Pp-650, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2012.12.006>. This is confirmed by ASICS (2017) (<https://www.janaagraha.org/ncsr/reports/ASICS-Databook-2017.pdf>, pp 12-13) noting that Ward Committees and Area Sabhas do not exist and therefore citizens are disconnected from decision-making in the city and their neighbourhood.

²⁶ In Bhubaneswar, though the ward committees (in the strictest sense of what ward committees are) are not that active, it is the slum development associations (SDAs), that are very active, and have been constituted through government intervention. In Kolkata as well, while the area sabhas or ward committees are not very active (in each ward), there are borough committees (constituted for a few wards together) that are much more active.

Figure 10: Percentage of urban citizens who don't know how to contact their ward corporator (data in percentages)



Figure 11: Percentage of urban citizens who have not visited or contacted Municipal Corporator/ Ward Corporator for any service-related issue in the last six months



BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Key findings

Urban Delhi residents have the third highest score in basic service delivery, as compared to all other sampled cities.

Delhi citizens report very high percentage of metered electricity (almost 100 percent), across all households.

As we move from the lowest housing type HT1, to HT2, there is a drastic improvement in service delivery for Delhi residents. Urban Delhi residents of HT5, have the highest scores of service delivery among all cities and all housing types across cities.

Piped water connections are present for almost all the population, HT2 and beyond. Over 80 percent of HT1s report having a piped water connection. However, those in HT1s are most likely to have issues with water not coming every day or coming for less than 2 hours a day. Between 15-25 percent of residents in all housing types depend on borewells for piped water supply.

Reporting of compromised sanitation is the highest among HT1s, and it drastically reduces for HT2s. However, HT3 and beyond, almost no one reports compromised sanitation.



Basic Service Delivery Index (BSDII)

To provide a composite picture of the quality of basic services, we created an index which was a comprehensive measure of access to services including drinking water, sanitation, electricity, condition of roads in front of the house, and the likelihood of the house getting flooded. The index goes from 0 to 1, with :

0- meaning that a household gets no services and is often subject to flooding.

1- meaning continuous 24/7 delivery of water and electricity, a flush toilet that is connected to a sewer line (or septic tank) and does not get clogged, and good roads, and no flooding in the house or neighbourhood (see Appendix 3 for more details).

Figure 12: Basic service delivery index scores for sampled cities

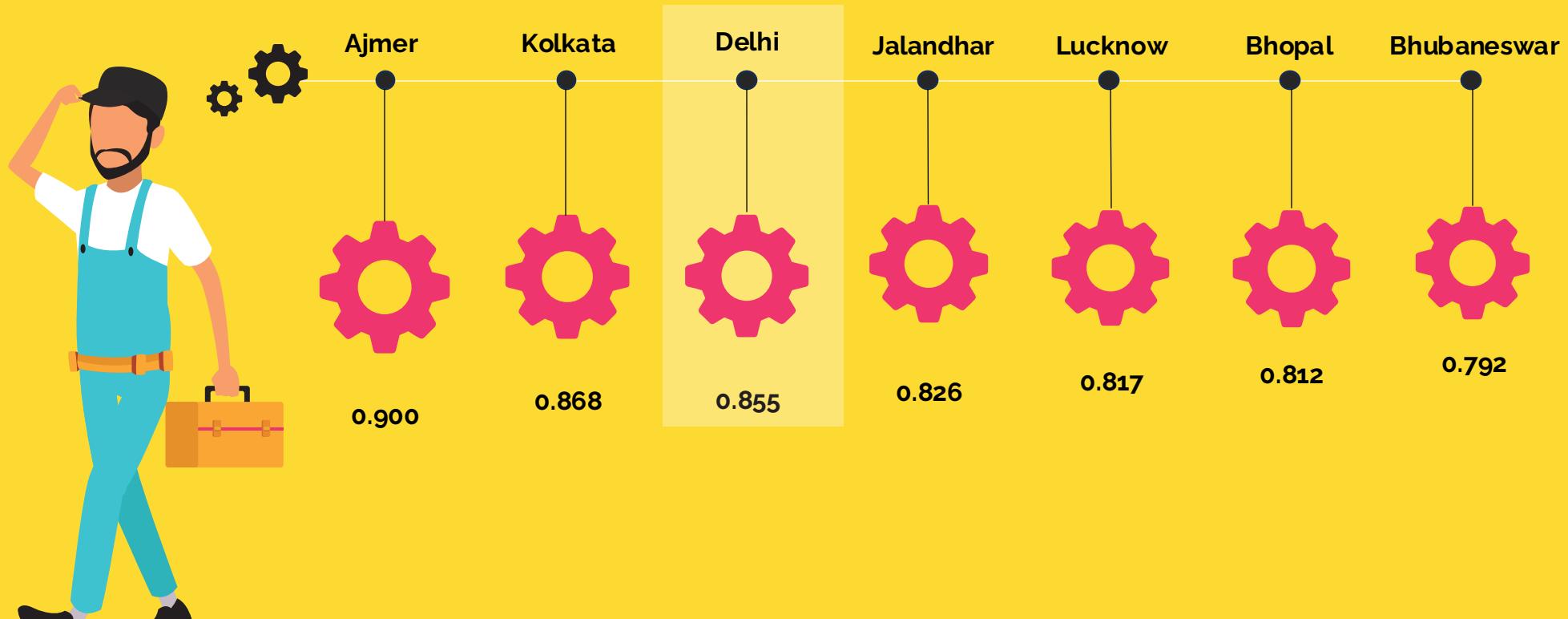
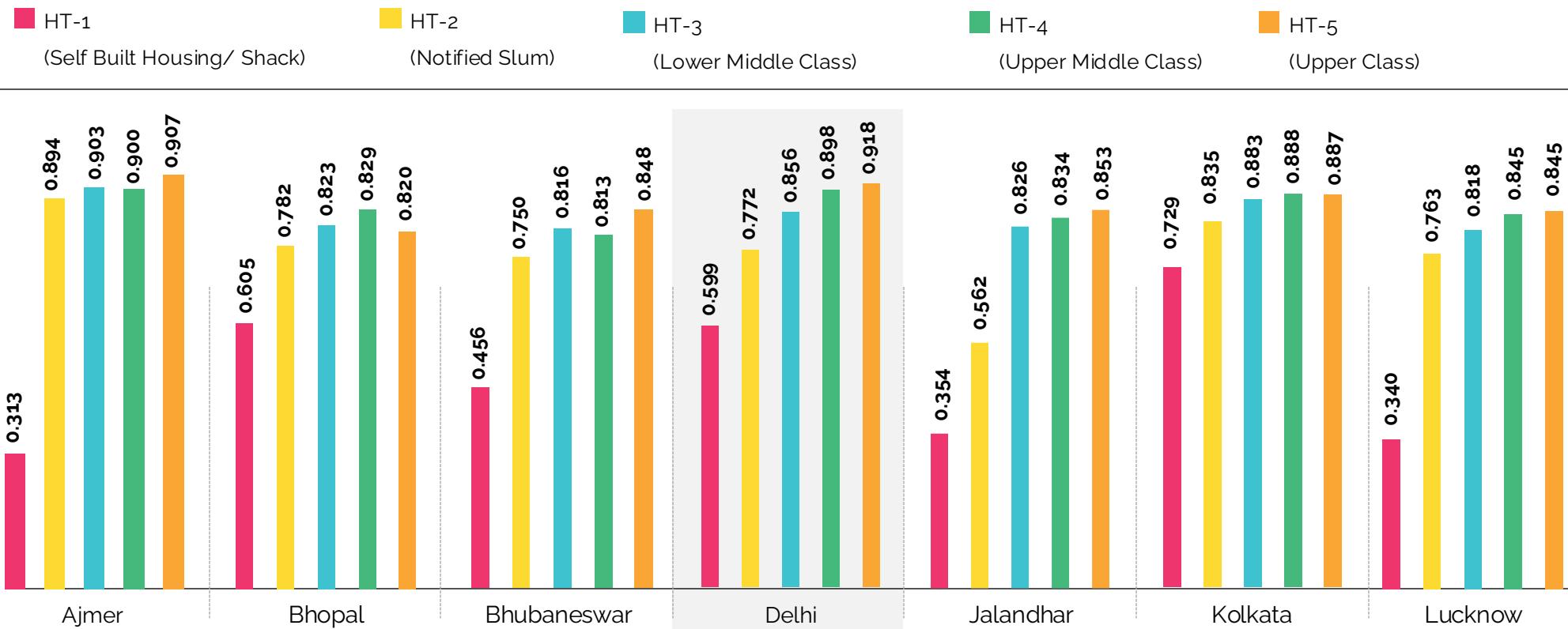


Figure 13: BSDII score by city and household types



Key Findings



01

Most cities overall report a relatively high BSDII score but these scores are highly differentiated by socio-economic class.

02

Delhi comes third from the top for the overall BSDII score. The lack of proper sanitation facilities, especially in HT1s and HT2s pull down the score.

03

Service delivery drops off markedly from HT2 to HT1 settlement households in all cities and it is the latter who receive the lowest quality of basic services.

04

In most cities, including Delhi, there is relatively little difference in basic service delivery between those in HT3s, HT4s and HT5s.

Breakdown of basic service provision

Table 9: Availability of basic services (data in percentage)

	Water Supply				Electricity		Sanitation	Road outside house	Flooding during monsoon
	Type of piped water supply (tap + borewell)	Location: inside household premises	Duration: some water on all 7 days of the week	Duration: 2 or more hours, daily	Presence of electricity connection	If electricity connection, % metered			
Ajmer	 98	 100	 96	 47	 96	 99	 1	 97	 94
Bhopal	 98	 94	 94	 35	 97	 97	 8	 89	 64
Bhubaneswar	 98	 96	 99	 90	 99	 97	 45	 90	 75
Delhi	 100	 98	 99	 87	 98	 100	 2 ²⁸	 98	 73
Jalandhar	 100	 99	 100	 97	 98	 99	 10	 95	 58
Kolkata	 98	 82	 99	 98	 98	 98	 7	 99	 72
Lucknow	 98	 96	 99	 95	 96	 99	 16	 93	 59

²⁷ Compromised Sanitation: (1) No Latrine within Premises: (1) Open Defecation (2) Public Latrine (3) Pit Latrine (Open) (4) not connected to any Other System (not connected to a sewer line): Open drainage into the ground or into water body through a covered drain or uncovered drain.

²⁸ This figure is counter-intuitive from our understanding of the ground realities. There may have been some mis-interpretation of the question when translated into Hindi and this is being explored.

- At a city level it appears that the majority of Delhi residents do not struggle with electricity, sanitation, and road quality. However, while electricity is fairly consistently available across different housing types, there's a large variation in access to good quality sanitation.
- Citizens in HT1s face severe issues of availability of covered and piped sanitation. Even in HT2s, the latter is far more prevalent, with about 75 percent citizens report having a piped/sewer connected sanitation system at the household level.
- As compared with other services, availability of piped water is less prevalent in HT1s across the city. There is a dependence on borewells²⁹ by close to one-fifth of the respondents, among various housing types. Additionally, over a quarter of those living in HT1, have water for more than 2 hours a day.



²⁹ The city municipal corporation also operates borewells, and it is not clear from the residents' responses whether the reported piped water is actually from a municipal water pipeline, or a borewell (Household wise response for borewell: HT1: 20%, HT2: 15%, HT3: 22%, HT4: 24%, HT5 23%). In Delhi, local knowledge suggests that most of the HT3.4.5 households who report a borewell connection, may have a private connection within their household premises.

Table 10: Availability of basic services in / around the houses of Delhi citizens by housing type (data in percentage)
**HT-1
(Self Built
Housing/ Shack)**

	Water Supply				Electricity		Sanitation	Road outside house	Flooding during monsoon									
	Type of piped water supply (tap + borewell)	Location: inside household premises	Duration: some water on all 7 days of the week	Duration: 2 or more hours, daily	Presence of electricity connection	If electricity connection, % metered												
HT-1 (Self Built Housing/ Shack)		83		57		81		72		89		100		50		56		37
HT-2 (Notified Slum)		99		83		91		83		93		99		26		90		69
HT-3 (Lower Middle Class)		100		99		100		86		98		100		<1		99		72
HT-4 (Upper Middle Class)		100		100		100		100		100		100		0		99		84
HT-5 (Upper Class)		100		100		100		100		100		100		0		100		96

³⁰ Compromised Sanitation: (1) No Latrine within Premises: (2) Open Defecation (3) Public Latrine (4) Pit Latrine (Open) (4) not connected to any Other System (not connected to a sewer line): Open drainage into the ground or into water body through a covered drain or uncovered drain.

Relationship between citizen participation and service delivery

For assessing the potential impact of participation on service delivery we begin by comparing the citizen participation index scores with the basic service delivery and infrastructure index scores for all cities.

Table 11: Comparison of CPI and BSDII scores by city

	Lucknow	Bhubaneswar	Kolkata	Bhopal	Ajmer	Delhi	Jalandhar
CPI	0.459	0.458	0.366	0.352	0.326	0.300	0.293
BSDII	0.817	0.792	0.868	0.812	0.900	0.855	0.826



Delhi's CPI score is the second lowest in comparison to other sampled cities, but the BSDII score is third from the top. We also notice that Lucknow tops the list for CPI scores but is at third from last of the BSDII score. However, when we look specifically within cities, we see a much more nuanced and clearer picture emerge. As can be seen in Figure 3, in all cities, except Kolkata, those citizens who have above average participation scores, also have higher BSDII scores.

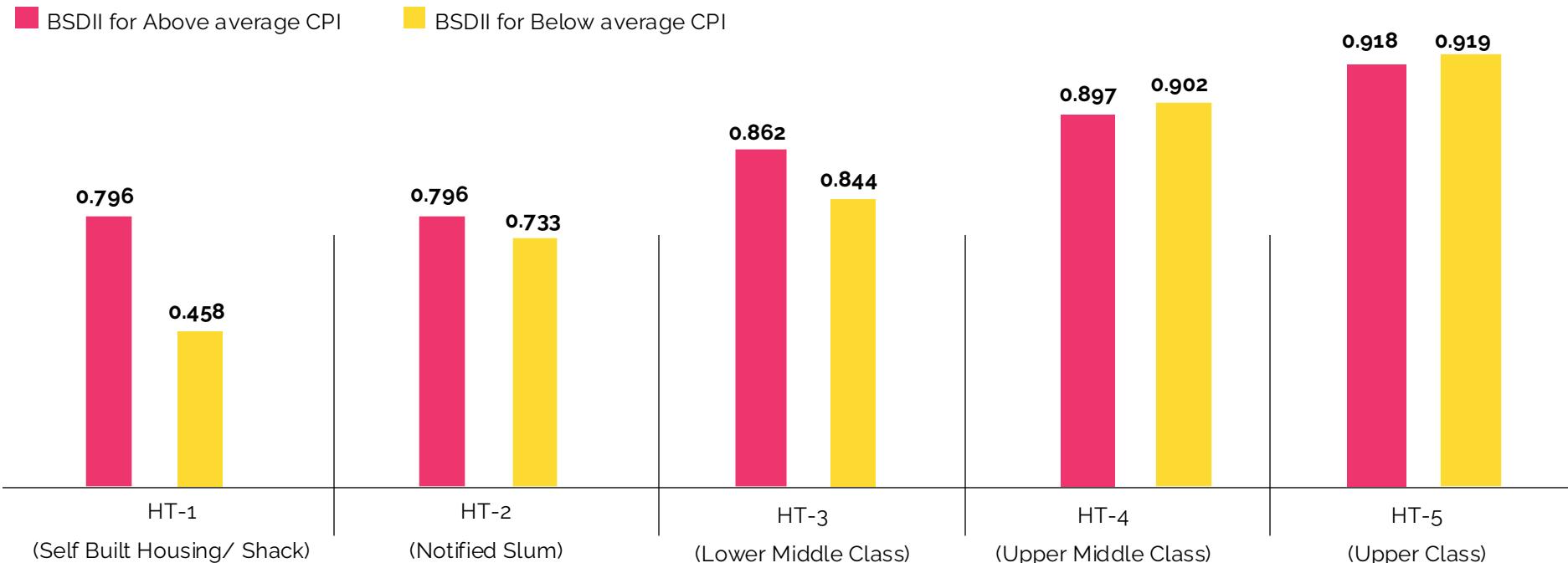
Figure 14: Above and Below average CPI scores, and corresponding BSDII scores



In Delhi, the difference between service and infrastructure scores for those who participate an above average amount and those who participate a below average amount is quite large. In fact, Delhi and Ajmer show the highest difference in BSDII scores between those who participate more, and those who participate less. Among the different housing types, we notice very little differences in degree of participation and its result in BSDII scores especially for HT3 to HT5, in Delhi. The difference is however, quite pronounced in HT1s, and slightly lesser so in HT2s indicating that citizens who participate more, have better services and infrastructure scores, than citizens who participate less.

Generally speaking, across cities, as we have seen, the BSDII scores improve as we go up the housing ladder. In all cities, the largest jump in improved services is from HT1 to HT2. What is particularly interesting however, is that in HT1s in all cities, except Bhopal, those who participate more, have better services. This differentiation that participation makes is seen most strongly in HT1s as compared with other HTs, regardless of city. It is important to note that the findings in this section describe the overall relationships found within the data. These need further exploration and context on a city-by-city basis.

Figure 15: BSDII scores split by high/low participation and housing type in Delhi



WAY FORWARD

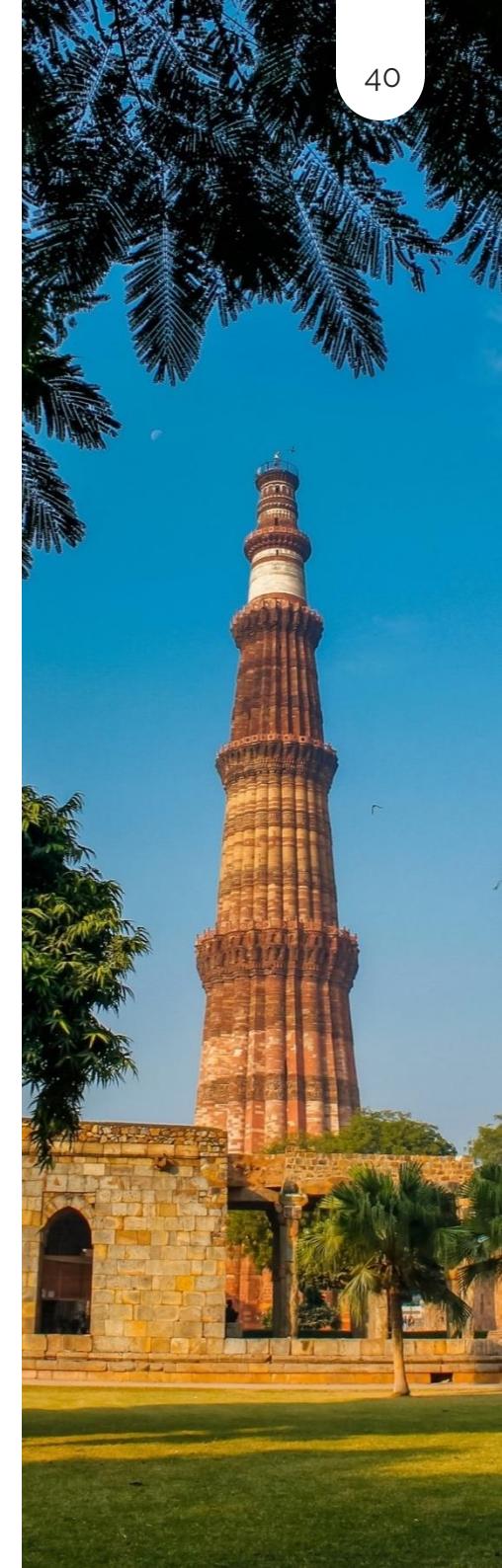
Delhi residents have the third-best score in basic service delivery, as compared to all other sampled cities. Service delivery is lowest for those residing in shacks (HT1s), as is the case across cities, with a marked improvement even as you move to those residing in slums (HT2s). At the same time, citizen participation is quite low in Delhi compared with other cities and characterized mostly by voting and civic and community activities, rather than non-electoral, political activities. However, the relationship between participation and service delivery needs further exploration.



Improve transparency, accountability and participation

While citizen participation is low in Delhi, to enhance it there are a series of innovations that can be brought in from the policy perspective as well as implementation of already existing regulations. These include:

- Mandating constitution of ward committees and area sabhas across Delhi and notifying rules for the same.
- Amending the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 to mandate:
 - i. **Participatory budgeting/public consultation** as part of municipal budgeting and notify corresponding rules to institutionalize the same and ensure continuity.
 - ii. The MCD to conduct an **annual internal audit** of processes and internal controls and mandate **the publication of the internal report in the public domain**.
 - iii. The MCD to adopt **open data standards and publish key financial and operational data in open data format on the city government websites at regular intervals**.
 - iv. **Formulate a citizen charter** providing for target levels of services, with time-bound service delivery and penal consequences and compensation for non-adherence along with other such relevant information.
 - v. The MCD to have a **digital governance policy/roadmap**, as a tool of accountability and grievance redressal.
 - vi. Mandating ward offices to **display ward budgets and current projects underway** for public viewing and scrutiny.
- Amending the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 to provide for a **Municipal Ombudsman**, to redress citizen grievances related to service delivery and failure of civic agencies and empower the Ombudsman to **investigate corruption suo motu and resolve inter-agency disputes**.
- **Enacting** a state **Public Disclosure Law (PDL)** that is **compliant with the model PDL**, mandates disclosure of audited financial statements on a periodic basis, information on service level benchmarks, major works done, plan and budget details, etc.
- Mandate city government to **publish monthly e-newsletter and Demand Collection Book (DCB)** on tax details on the city government website.
- Mandate city government to undertake **citizen satisfaction survey**.



Fix other City-Systems

As described in the introduction of this report, the ability of a city to deliver good quality of life depends on the laws, policies, institutions and institutional processes that underpin urban governance. To conceptualize these factors, diagnose urban problems and - more importantly - solve them, we need to view them in a systems framework. The "City-Systems" framework is a framework created by Janaagraha that helps us identify the root causes of our urban challenges and its components are regularly reviewed through the Annual Survey of India's City Systems (ASICS).³¹ 'Transparency, Accountability and Participation' is a key component of the City-Systems framework. However, there are three other key areas under which reforms and amends need to be considered which would help to strengthen the governance system to deliver good quality of life to citizens in Delhi. These include urban planning and design, urban capacities and resources – finance and human resources, empowered and legitimate political representation.

³¹ Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (2017): Annual Survey of India's City-Systems – Shaping India's Urban Agenda. Available: <https://www.janaagraha.org/asics/report/ASICS-report-2017-fin.pdf> [accessed 15-05-2023].



Urban planning and design

As mentioned in ASICS (2017, p. 8),³² 'well-made and well-executed Spatial Development Plans (SDP) lie at the heart of economically vibrant, equitable, environmentally sustainable and democratically engaged cities. India's cities suffer from acute lack of planning.'

Relevant to Delhi therefore, the Delhi Development Act, 1957 can be amended to include the participation of parastatals, civic agencies, and the public in the process through formal platforms like ward committees and area sabhas. In addition, to ensure plan enforcement, the act can be amended to prevent approval of plans not in conformity with the spatial plan, ensure effective monitoring systems for ongoing projects and strengthen penalization provisions for plan violations.

Moreover, it could also mandate self-assessment of progress, periodic ground surveys, and online disclosure of information for improved transparency of ongoing constructions/projects. All of this can be brought together by the planning authority over a shared, common digital spatial development and planning map, which can be updated through periodic GIS mapping. can ensure a single window clearance proves for social development projects in conformity with SDPs. Delhi could have a land titling policy to secure land titles.

³² Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (2017): Annual Survey of India's City-Systems – Shaping India's Urban Agenda. Available: <https://www.janaagraha.org/asics/report/ASICS-report-2017-fin.pdf> [accessed 15-05-2023].

Urban Capacities and Resources – Finance and Human Resources

ASICS (2017) also highlights the need for large amounts of capital to be available for cities to invest. These investments need to be in bridging the gaps in current infrastructure as well as new developments. Additionally, it's needed for revenue expenditure such as operations and maintenance (including HR) and hiring of talent to deliver the same.

Pertinent to Delhi, amendments can be made to the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 to empower the MCD to levy and collect profession and advertisement tax, raise borrowings without prior approval from the state/union government and mandate the creation of medium-term fiscal plans to ensure fiscal prudence. In addition, ensuring timely constitution of the State Finance Commission is imperative to positively impact the financial position of Urban Local Bodies. Delhi is yet to constitute the 6th State Finance Commission.

Furthermore, the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 should create a municipal cadre and mandate for induction and periodic training of municipal officials. The Act should mandate medium-term and annual workforce plans that align to these fiscal plans and are underpinned by a Performance Management System (PMS) with quantitative performance metrics at the staff and department level.

Empowered and Legitimate Political Representation

Mayors and Councillors in Indian cities don't have full decision-making authority over critical functions and services such as planning, housing, water, environment, fire and emergency services etc.' (ASICS, 2017, p. 14).³³ As per Janaagraha's ASICS, 2017, the municipal corporation of Delhi had complete/partial roles only in 8.5 out of the 18 functions to be devolved as per the twelfth schedule of the Constitution. This signals the challenge of fragmentation in governance, having no single authority being responsible for the city. Therefore, it is recommended to amend the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 to devolve all 18 functions to MCD as obligatory/mandatory functions as per the 12th schedule of the Constitution. In a phased manner, steps may be undertaken to have all agencies (state departments and civic agencies) that provide services in MCD limits to be accountable to the Mayor/Council for service delivery to citizens within those limits. It is further recommended to amend the Act to mandate for a directly elected mayor with a term of 5-years.

The MCD should be empowered over municipal staff, including that of the commissioner, in terms of appointment, recruitment and initiating disciplinary action. The mayors and councilors should be given induction and periodic training to empower and equip them to deliver their role. Since the State Election Commission (SEC) is responsible for conducting the municipal elections, and that the ward delimitation is a political exercise, it is suggested that the SEC could be empowered further on ward delimitation as well, as the exercise should be undertaken by an independent and autonomous body.

³³ Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (2017): Annual Survey of India's City-Systems – Shaping India's Urban Agenda. Available: <https://www.janaagraha.org/asics/report/ASICS-report-2017-fin.pdf> [accessed 15-05-2023].

APPENDIX 1

Methodology

Key respondent interviews

Key respondents were interviewed in each city, before the start of the formal quantitative survey, to understand the local context on service provision, municipal and urban issues faced by the city, and also to get specific information on wards and neighbourhoods for sampling purposes.

For Delhi, the key respondents' interviews were conducted in April 2021. As mentioned earlier, we spoke to Municipal Commissioners, Mayors in each city, and some local and state level elected representatives as well.



Focus group discussions

In Delhi, the focus group discussions took place on 1st April 2021. The two discussions were held in neighbourhoods with marginalised communities. As part of the discussions, the respondents were asked questions on basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation, health and education, etc., in their neighbourhood. A few points on their local corporator, as well as the access to BPL cards, Aadhaar cards, etc. were also noted during the discussions. These FGDs took place after the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic hence, questions related to Covid were asked. Questions related to the pandemic were also included in the quantitative survey.



Large, quantitative, representative household surveys

Sampling: We employed a multi-stage stratified systematic random sampling strategy that stratified polling parts to generate a representative sample of polling parts across each city taking care to ensure citizens from marginalised communities were included. After identifying the wards and assembly constituencies falling within the city municipal corporation area, and all polling parts within each of these political-administrative units, the polling parts were stratified.

Household listing and classification: Listing and categorization of all houses within a sampled polling part was done by a field team which literally walked through the entire area identified in the base maps and drew the buildings onto the base maps and assigned the housing type. The listed data thus provided a full inventory of all the households located in our geographically delineated sections of our randomly selected polling parts giving us a complete distribution of residential structures by housing type classification and formed the sampling frame from which we ultimately selected households.

Each sampled polling part in the city was mapped in a spatial manner, and each building was allocated a Housing Type (HT Category - HT1 are un-notified slums/ shacks, HT2 are informal settlements or slums, HT3 are the lower middle-class housing, apartments, mostly single floor, made of only concrete, HT4 include middle-class housing of independent houses or apartment buildings, and HT5 are upper class Housing, including apartment complexes/gated communities with amenities.)

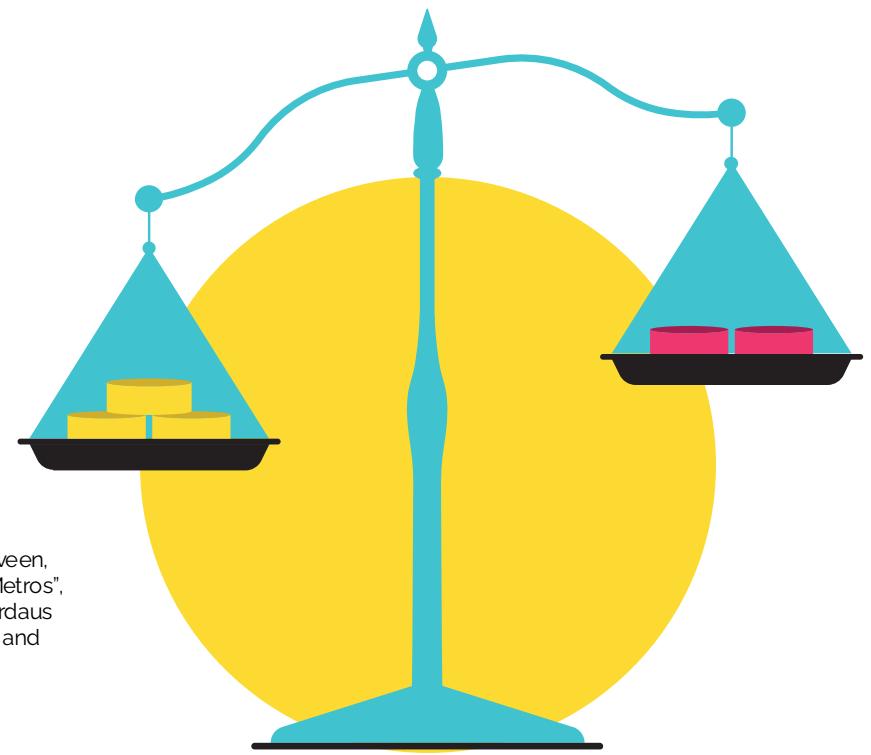
Survey: The quantitative survey in Delhi was conducted after the second phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in Hindi, and through CAPI (computer-assisted personal interviews) method. Since Delhi was a metropolitan city (tier-I), the targeted sample was 3000 respondents. However, we achieved a total sample of 3113 respondents at the end of the survey.



Weighting and index creation:

Rake weighting (or iterative proportional fitting) was used to create weights that are unique to each city. We have chosen to reweight the sample data according to the respondents' housing type. (at the structure level from our household listings). From our previous work, we know that our housing type measure is the biggest predictor among all our socio-economic variables for levels of service delivery and citizenship. As a principle, weighting necessitates that there are reliable population margins for all categories of a variable upon which one seeks to adjust one's data.³⁴ Since we lack reliable population counts for OBCs and General/Forward Castes (the census only reports SC/ST), we cannot adjust our data using Census data. Given the relatively poor economic conditions of many individuals belonging to SC/ST groups, we expect that weighting along the housing type will reduce bias and make our sample more representative. Note that our household listing data, collected between 2021-2022 in 7 project cities, provides a comprehensive, census-like account of the distribution of dwelling types in each city at the structure and unit/household level.

We did not weight on gender because the focus of the survey is on the household, rather than individual level, and so should not greatly affect results. Empirically, religion and gender weights were shown not to significantly affect the reported results for a representative subset of the questionnaire. We have reason to believe that reweighting along housing type mitigates the effect of higher proportions of Dalits and Adivasis. From a theoretical perspective, housing type serves as a reasonable proxy for socioeconomic status. Given the relatively poor economic condition of many individuals belonging to SC/ST groups, we expect that weighting along housing type will reduce bias introduced through larger proportions of this subpopulation.³⁵



³⁴ Solon, Gary; Steven J. Haider, and Jeffrey M. Wooldridge. 2015. "What Are We Weighting For?" *Journal of Human Resources*, 50(2): 301-316.

³⁵ There is evidence emerging in the literature on segregation and housing type. For more, read Bharathi, Naveen, Deepak Malghan and Andaleeb Rahman (2019), "Neighbourhood-scale Residential Segregation in Indian Metros", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 54(30):64-70. Thorat, Sukhadeo, Anuradha Banerjee, Vinod K Mishra and Firdaus Rizvi (2015), "Urban Rental Housing Market", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 27:47-53. and Vithayathil, Trina and Gayatri Singh (2012), "Spaces of Discrimination", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 47(37):60-66

APPENDIX 2

Construction of the Citizen Participation Index (CPI)

The CPI has three components:

- (1) Electoral participation**
- (2) Non-electoral participation and**
- (3) Civic participation.**

(1) Electoral participation – Voting in national, state, and municipal elections is coded 1 if a respondent voted in an election and 0 otherwise.

(2) Non-voting participation includes whether a respondent is a party member, contributes time during election campaigns, attends political rallies and meetings between elections, and discusses specific candidates among family, friends, and others within the community. Each of these elements takes the form of a dummy variable and is coded 1 for "yes" and 0 if "no".

(3) Civic participation that includes whether a respondent attends ward committee meetings, holds membership in non-political, non-government organizations and associations, and perceptions of community participation in preventing harassment of women in the neighbourhood. Each of these is coded 1 if "yes" and 0 if "no". While the end-points of the index mark the two extremes of citizen participation - no participation to full participation, and are clear to understand, the values in-between represent different combinations of the three components of participation.



APPENDIX 3

Construction of Basic Service Delivery and Infrastructure Index (BSDII)



The BSDII is based on 5 dimensions of household infrastructure:

1. Water Infrastructure component of BSDII comprises of:

- i. Access to water,
- ii. Convenience in accessing water,
- iii. The usability of the water a household receives,
- iv. The ability (and methods) of households to store water, and
- v. The frequency of water supply for a household.

2. The electricity infrastructure dimension is based on three elements of electricity supply.

- i. Does a household have power?,
- ii. How often are there power outages in a week?, and
- iii. How many hours does a household go without power during such outages?

3. In order to measure sanitation infrastructure in a household we consider the following elements,

- i. The type of toilet a household has and (among those with a modern sanitation system connected to a main sewer line),
- ii. Whether, and how often, the line connecting the household to the main sewer gets blocked?

4. In order to measure the vulnerability of households to flooding and water logging during monsoon we asked:

- i. Does the ground floor of the building you live in get flooded during monsoon?

5. We measure the type of road by classifying it into: paved (pucca) or unpaved (kuccha).

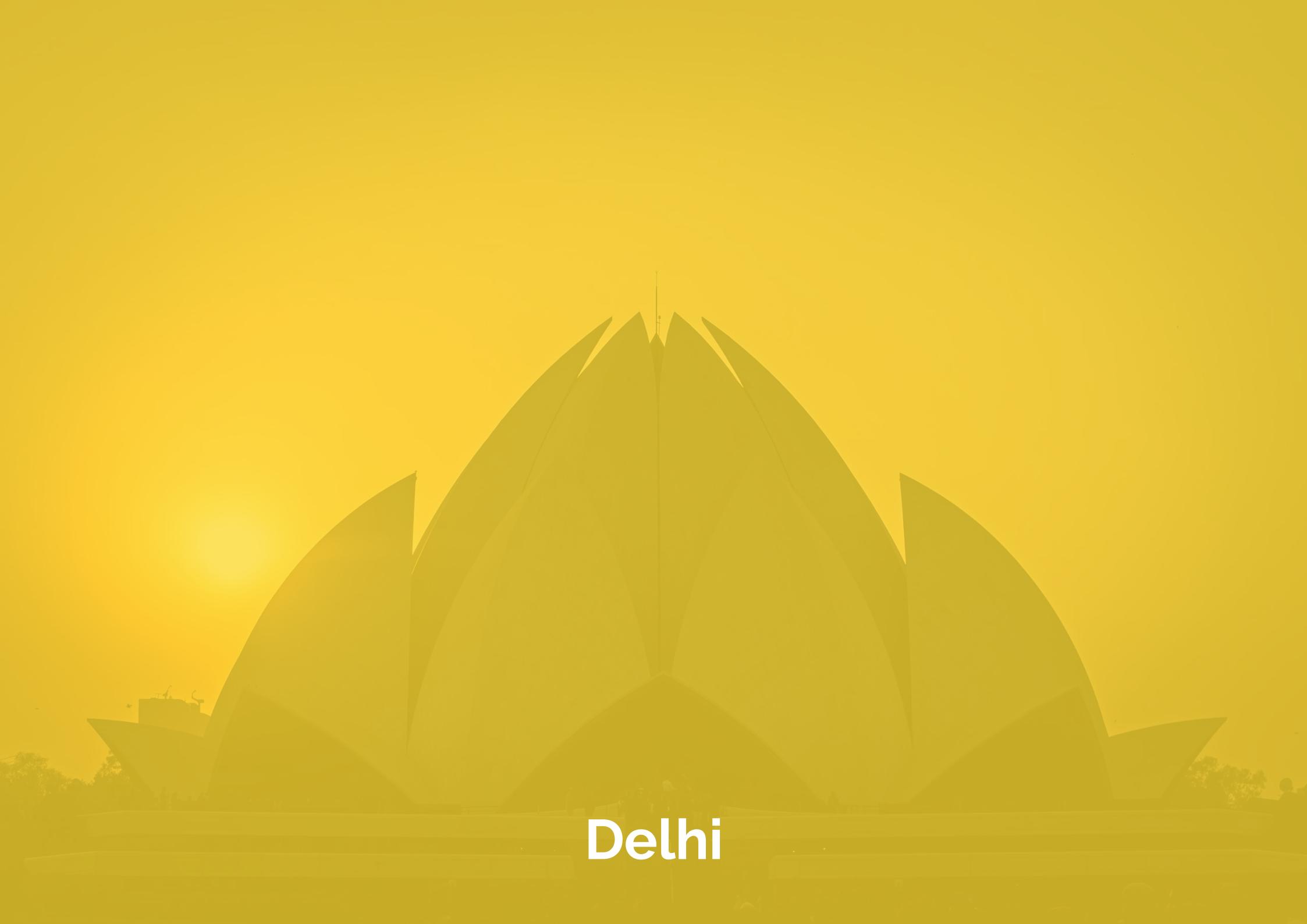
BSDII assigns equal weights to the three components that are directly connected to household infrastructure - water, power, and sanitation, and half-weights to flooding and roads. Implicit is the notion that the first three components "count" more for a household than the latter two. Our index equation is therefore:

$$\text{BSDII} = [(Water) + (Power) + (Sanitation) + 0.5 * (Flooding) + 0.5 * (Road)] / 4$$

About Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy

Janaagraha is a non-profit trust working towards the mission of transforming the quality of life in India's cities and towns. It works with citizens to catalyze active citizenship in city neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to city governance (what we call "City-Systems"). Civic Participation, City Finance, and Urban Policy & Research are Janaagraha's three major strands of work to accomplish its mission.

The interpretation of the survey and results as presented are entirely those of Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy.



Delhi