Bangalore Water Index

Project Proposal

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" **Act Now, Act Together, Act Differently.** **"**

[World Bank's *World Development Report 2010* Theme]

BWSSB and Consumers - Information Issues

The Problem

- No comprehensive data on Bangalore water (for instance, who tracks groundwater?)
- Citizens are not adequately informed about city's water situation
- Citizens unaware of challenges in production, distribution and hence do not act responsibly towards conserving water
- Lots of inertia/resistance to adoption of water conservation practices like rainwater harvesting

Possible Root Cause

- Comprehensive water policy may be missing
- Current information is not available to citizens on a sustained basis.
- Information is not available in a form that lends itself to analysis and understanding. Possibly because data
  - May not be digitized
  - May not be organized
  - May not have "single versions of truth"
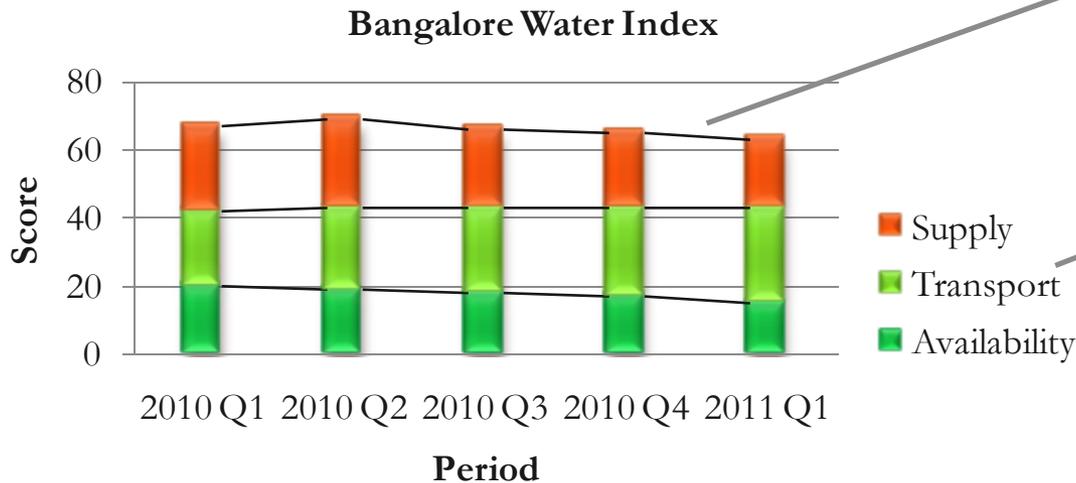 - May not be accessible

The Objective

To track the 'water health' of the city in the form of an index that can be used for comparative analyses (across time and across areas). To use the index so derived to promote water-smart behavior among citizens.

The Water Index – What and Why?

- An easy to understand, representative number to capture 'water health' of the city
  - Absolute number is meaningless, changes over time convey "progress" or lack thereof
- Designed by experts and enthusiasts, maintained by citizens
  - Maximum use of benchmarks prescribed by MoUD, academic institutions
  - And, space for citizen collected data as well as "perception".

- Spread awareness on urban water supply issue by seeding a quality data point for public discourse
- Spur collection and creation of data points, as well as increased transparency by agencies involved in Water Supply service
- Identify key areas of concern, reveal impact of programs and policies over a period of time

Bangalore Water Index

Idea is to show trends on water health

Index would have components to capture status of key areas of urban water health

Note #1 – Focus points

- Focus: Data
  - Not into criticism or prescriptions

- Focus Unit: Ward/Zone
  - Smallest unit tracked by BWSSB

- Focus viewpoint: urban consumer of water

- **Not** trying to
  - Establish benchmarks
    - Though some index calculation may be relative to accepted benchmarks

  - Track specific governments or agencies
    - Focus is water health of the city

  - Redo any expert research
    - Focus is to consume data produced by various research

The project does not involve an abstract or wide scope, it has very clear points of focus
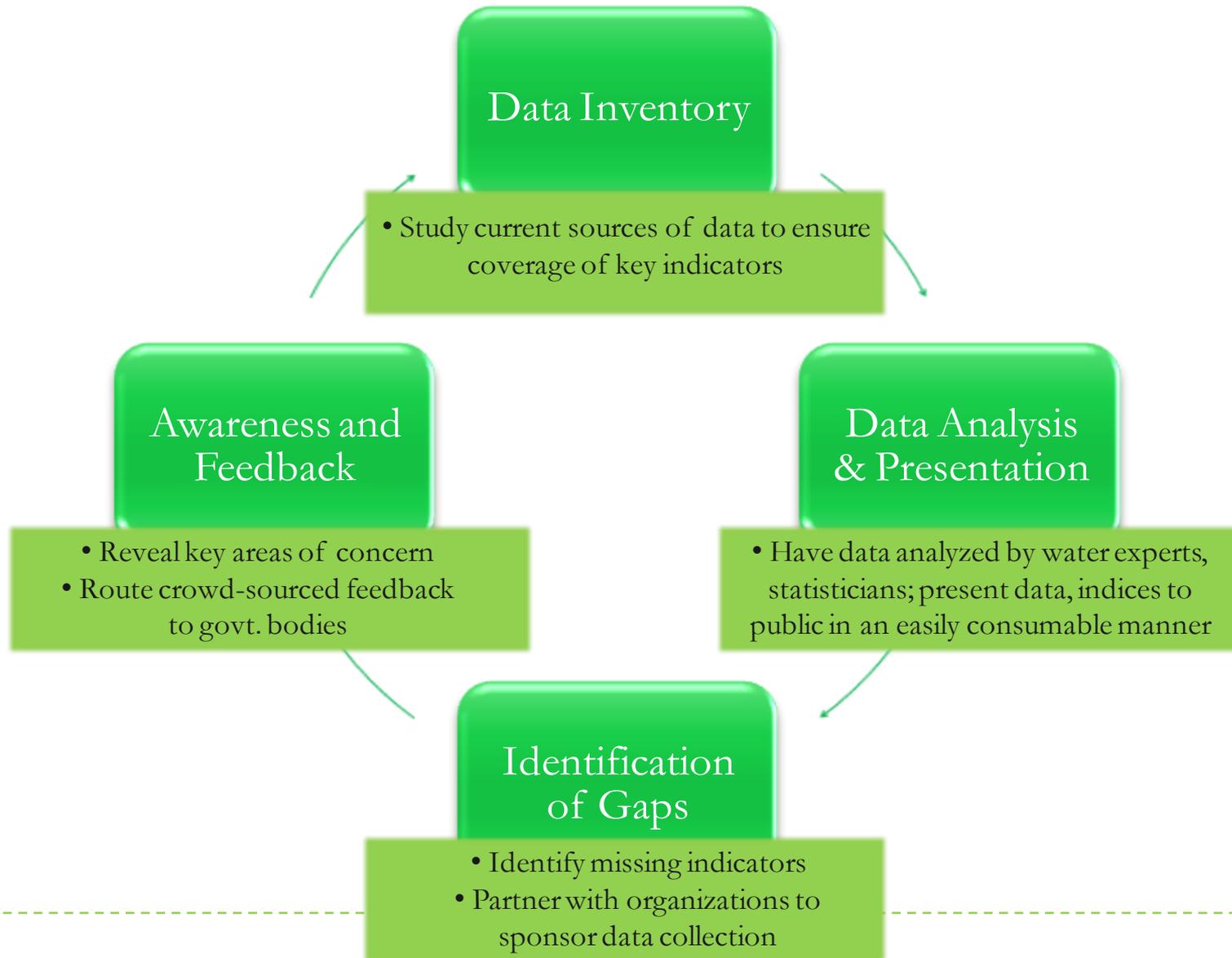
Note #2 – Focus is Aggregation, not new research

- Involves data aggregation
  - Doesn't include research to create new data points
  - **If** a missing data point is **critical**, will source those from concerned agencies, or look for partners to sponsor data collection
- Data will be sourced from
  - Government agencies like the BWSSB
  - Academic institutions/Experts
  - NGOs
  - Enthusiastic citizens

We are not trying to boil the ocean here!

The Proposition

Data Inventory
- Study current sources of data to ensure coverage of key indicators

Data Analysis & Presentation
- Have data analyzed by water experts, statisticians; present data, indices to public in an easily consumable manner

Identification of Gaps
- Identify missing indicators
- Partner with organizations to sponsor data collection

Awareness and Feedback
- Reveal key areas of concern
- Route crowd-sourced feedback to govt. bodies

Benefits

BWSSB

- Comprehensive, integrated, updated information available in easily consumable format
- Possibly - sponsored studies, data collection free of cost
- Clarity; identification of key areas of concern
- Increased citizens awareness and participation – more responsible citizens
- Opportunity to engage with citizens

Public, BWSSB's customers

- Reliable, current, accessible data – that is easy to understand
- Increased transparency and access
- Increased awareness, and opportunity for participation
- Better water practices -> Increase in water health

BWSSB/Praja.in/<Sponsor> – Relationship

▸ Expectations from BWSSB

- ▸ Commit to interview time with key staff members
- ▸ Provide access to internal data on its system and operations
- ▸ Provide data on key indicators on a sustained basis

▸ Expectations from Praja.in

- ▸ Planning, management and execution of project
- ▸ Work with experts (including Prof. Mohan Kumar (IISc), Prof Sekhar Muddu (IISc), Vishwanath Srikantiah) in formulating the index
- ▸ Partner with sponsors if needed
- ▸ Provide an Open Internet Portal for hosting work-plan, discussions, content for the project
- ▸ Present index on Praja.in

▸ Expectations from Possible Sponsor

- ▸ Commit to either paying for or providing Information engineers or Architects required for the project
- ▸ Sponsor data collection drives, studies
- ▸ Cover media costs
- ▸ Don't use the work as a reference without prior consent from BWSSB/Praja.in
- ▸ Publish progress reports and output from the Project to public exclusively via Praja.in

Looking Ahead

- BWSSB may choose to integrate index with its own site

- Campaigns and publicity drives may be organized to focus attention on key issues

- 'Water Day' – a monthly event along the lines of 'Bus Day' to promote water-smart behavior among citizens

Thank you

Look forward to your responses.

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