Report

The governance of urban service delivery in developing countries

Literature review

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Key messages

- Policy makers, practitioners and researchers need to identify, understand and address the pressing challenges associated with the delivery of services in urban areas in the developing world.

- Specific attention should be paid to urban services that are most important for broader development goals, and those that present unique challenges in urban environments, including solid waste management, water and sanitation and transport services.

- Governance and political economy factors are important in determining the effective delivery of public services, including in urban areas. However, while the literature is more fully developed with respect to some services than others, the body of knowledge is not strong on the key governance challenges specific to urban areas, or how these challenges can be overcome.

- There is a need for additional comparative research and empirical studies on such under-researched areas. This review aims to provide a basis for such efforts in the future.

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1 Introduction

By 2030, urban populations worldwide are expected to grow by 1.4 billion people, with city and town dwellers accounting for 60% of the total world population (USAID, 2013). By 2050 this figure is expected to reach 2.6 billion (ibid.). While the pace and pattern of urban growth and urbanization varies, the vast majority of the growth will take place in developing countries, with migration and urban growth leading a shift in the locus of global poverty that has been referred to as the 'urbanisation of poverty' (UN-Habitat, 2003 in Duflo et al., 2012).

In an increasingly urbanised world, it will be crucial to ensure that public services in urban areas deliver for poor people as well as the wider population, and it is now well known that governance factors are important in constraining or enabling effective service delivery. There are common assertions that services are likely to be better provided in urban areas because citizens may be more affluent and may feel more able to demand better services: accountability relationships with politicians and service providers are 'closer', for instance, so will be stronger, and there may be perceptions of higher 'political rewards' in delivering services to urban populations that may be more likely to vote. However, in such cases, the poorest within these growing cities and towns do not always benefit from these dynamics.

Therefore, urban populations are growing and contain greater numbers of poor people, and political economy, governance and accountability may be qualitatively different – although not necessarily always better – for urban versus rural populations. While the majority of international donor focus has been on improving services in rural areas, it seems unlikely that lessons learned from these areas can be uncritically transferred to urban areas. Hence, it is particularly important to review the available knowledge and policy advice on the governance of service delivery in urban areas.

The guiding questions for this study were:

- How do political economy factors affect public service delivery in urban areas in developing countries?
- What are the key governance challenges for delivering public services in urban areas in developing countries, and what are the lessons for what works?

This mapping has been undertaken as part of an ODI flagship programme on the politics of service delivery.[1] It is intended to serve three purposes:

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[1] Additional detail on this work, including case studies, analytical frameworks for political economy analysis and an exploration of the politics of sector characteristics, can be found online at:
http://www.odi.org.uk/programmes/politics-governance/politics-public-goods-service-delivery.

a Provide background information on a potential area of interest, complementing existing reviews that have focused more exclusively on traditional social service delivery sectors;
b Feed into the development of (possible) future empirical case studies; and
c Lay the foundations for further policy analysis in order to identify specific insights and guidance for urban service delivery.

2 Methodology

Resource and time constraints precluded a full systematic review approach. Instead, principles and elements from the evidence-focused literature review methodology outlined in Hagen-Zanker and Mallett (2013)[2] were used to guide the work. Drawing on the four principal stages recommended (protocol development, retrieval, screening and analysis), this study proceeded as follows:

Protocol development and testing: This involved finalising the research questions (and sub-questions), the selection of inclusion and exclusion criteria, the development of search strings, the identification of databases, journals and websites to be searched, the adoption of a framework for data recording and presentation and the initial testing and revision of the protocol.

After testing of the protocol, the search protocol was adapted in a number of ways. Measures were taken to restrict and limit the scope of the search efforts because of the high number of results returned and the low proportion of relevant sources. Additional search terms were added in order to increase the number of hits that properly covered governance and political economy factors. The list of services to be covered in greater detail was refined and the decision was made to focus particularly on those sectors more prominent in the literature on urban areas, namely:

a   Transport
b   Solid waste management
c   Social housing
d   Emergency services
e   Water and sanitation

Retrieval and screening: This included an academic literature search, the collation of grey and unpublished literature and bibliography-based snowballing (searching for references from and to selected 'key' publications). The relevance of the literature collected was assessed using the inclusion/exclusion criteria, based first on the basis of document titles and abstracts and second (where possible) on the full text of the remaining documents.

A total of 232 sources were deemed worthy of inclusion:

- 49 focused on transport
- 51 addressed solid waste management
- 43 focused on social housing
- 6 covered emergency services
- 50 focused on water and sanitation

[2] *'Guidance Note: How to do a rigorous, evidence-focused literature review in international development'* (date). Overseas Development Institute (ODI): London, available at http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/7834-rigorous-evidence-focused-literature-review-international-development-guidance-note.

- 32 covered multiple services.

Analysis: The screened sources were classified. Assessments were made of the quality and coverage of the literature and the strengths and weaknesses relating to the guiding research questions. Rapid assessments were made of:

- The importance attributed to governance and political economy factors for the delivery of the service, and the basis of this attribution
- The level of detail and depth of analysis of the nature of these governance and political economy factors
- The extent to which links were made between specified governance dynamics and service delivery outputs and outcomes, and the rigour with which this was done
- The overall strengths and weaknesses of the body of knowledge, and key gaps where insufficient research has been carried out on issues that seem particularly relevant

The full list of screened sources can be found in the bibliography at the end of this paper. The final search protocol can be found in the appendix.

3 Overview

The literature on urban service delivery tends to focus on a subset of government services. Particular attention is given to water and sanitation (including water supply, waste water management, and sanitation systems and practices), solid waste management (including collection, sorting and recycling or final disposal of waste), and transport (including public transport, traffic management and transport management more broadly). To a lesser extent, attention is also given to social housing and other housing-related services, as well as some consideration of urban safety and security. Urban areas are often covered by the literature on the delivery of health and education in developing countries, but no strong distinctions are made between rural and urban areas.

This coverage of sectors in many cases reflects a judgement about which services are most pressing to deliver in urban areas in order to reach broader developmental goals – for example, the health risks posed by water and sanitation challenges are particularly acute in urban areas, and this is increasingly also where a large proportion of the poor live (J-PAL, 2012). The selection of urban service delivery sectors often prioritises those services over which urban governments typically have some level of control – for example, solid waste management (SWM) is devolved to the local government in a large majority of cases (Boex et al., 2014). To a lesser extent, this selection is based on an implicit assessment of the extent to which the delivery of a particular service and/or the challenges faced is qualitatively different in urban areas.

An example of the latter can be seen in the challenges faced in the provision of water and sanitation services. Characteristics of those services in urban areas, such as the increased use of networked rather than household level systems that often dominate in rural areas, not only create new technical challenges but also affect the types of politics generated in these sectors. In the example given here, networked systems create tendencies towards monopoly provision, which in turn shifts the balance of power in the sector and affects the ability of both users and the state to hold providers to account.[3]

The review uncovered a considerable amount of evidence that indicates that governance plays an important causal role in the effective delivery of services in urban areas, alongside financial challenges and technical concerns (Harpham and Boateng, 1997; Devas, 1999; Boex et al. 2014). The provision of adequate financing is an important driver of the effectiveness of urban services (Stren, 2012); for example comparative evidence suggests that levels of recurrent expenditure have a modest correlation with service delivery outputs across urban areas in South Asia (Boex et al., 2014).[4] Technical concerns and the implementation of 'good practice' are of course important, although even the predominantly technically-

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[3] Mcloughlin, C. with Batley, R. (2012) 'The Effects of Sector Characteristics on Accountability Relationships in Service Delivery'. ODI Working Paper 350. London: Overseas Development Institute.

[4] Financing does not necessarily seem to be an insurmountable obstacle. Many urban areas are economically vibrant and a considerable amount of experimentation has been done and progress made on how to harness this for the delivery of public services by means of innovative financing arrangements.

oriented sources tend also to highlight the importance of institutional strengthening and specific governance measures and recognise that implementation is affected by the local context. In fact, a strong theme in the literature is an exploration of the failure of various reforms that took a technical approach and imported 'good practice' models, in particular for water supply and public transport.

Overall, the available literature does not permit firm conclusions to be drawn about the nature of key governance challenges and lessons and the political economy factors that are most important for delivering services in urban areas in developing countries. The biggest weakness in the body of current knowledge is insufficient comparability: too few assessments attempt within- or between-country comparisons, and there are limitations to desk-based comparison due to patchy geographic coverage and a limited comparability between sources (due primarily to different conceptions of governance).[5]

Another crucial weakness is the relatively low number of studies that attempt to make systematic links between governance and the effectiveness of service delivery. Typically, studies that focus on institutional, governance and political economy factors do not include measures of outputs and outcomes, and where they are included the causal link between the governance dynamics and the effective delivery of the service is not explored in detail. Studies that focus more on service delivery outputs and outcomes tend not to cover governance issues in detail, do not provide explanation of the findings or recommendations about governance and institutions, and fail to provide an analysis of the causes and consequences of those factors.

Taken together, these factors mean that it is difficult to draw robust conclusions that clearly identify the most important governance challenges and political economy factors in delivering services in urban areas and the most critical lessons for the governance of these services. This caveat aside, some impressionistic generalisations can be made.

The governance of urban areas is carried out using a range of different types of bodies (with differing levels of responsibility and differing levels of decentralisation themselves), but no one size fits all, and different models seem to fit better in different contexts (Slack, 2007). More than in rural settings, it seems that urban governance involves a large and diverse range of actors, and in particular there is a strong theme of working with or through the private sector for service delivery (Harpham and Boateng, 1997; Slack, 2007).

Decentralisation is a common concern: in general, studies either argue or assume that an increased level of political devolution and distribution of responsibilities and powers to city-level administrative units will result in improved service delivery outcomes (e.g. Dillenger, 1994; Harpham and Boateng, 1997; J-PAL, 2012). The only available robust comparative analysis shows that in South Asia, the levels of local functional responsibility and local administrative control have a modest correlation with service delivery outcomes (Boex et al., 2014). That study concurs with a broader theme in the literature: despite numerous efforts at decentralisation, the levels of de facto control that has been given to local government bodies in urban areas is typically quite limited.

Many of the other governance challenges seem to fit around the central elements of Wild et al.'s working framework for common governance constraints to service

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[5] WATSAN stands out as an exception to this general rule, although there have been few attempts to synthesise lessons specific to urban areas and potential gaps on urban-specific WATSAN services such as sewerage.

delivery,[6] in particular policy (in)coherence, bottom-up and top-down performance monitoring and oversight and space for local problem-solving:

Policy incoherence: Urban areas face large and complex challenges that are often interrelated with many other trends and challenges, the resolution of which requires interlinkages between different sectors and often different local government bodies (Slack, 2007). Indications from the available literature suggest that this issue can be addressed with the provision of unified bodies for a sector (e.g. a unitary transport authority is frequently recommended), or through strong coordination and the promotion of collaboration (Henderson, 2001).

Performance monitoring and oversight: From a top-down perspective, there is a focus on the importance of the appropriate management of markets for outsourced services and careful design of contracting instruments and incentives for contractors (e.g. Mitric, 2013). The bottom-up side appears in studies that emphasise the role of mechanisms for downward accountability and the participation and influence of local communities on the management of service delivery (although notably, little seems to be known on how to engage urban communities in service delivery).

Local problem-solving: A strong theme in the literature shows how externally-imposed solutions have tended to produce disappointing results due to the importing of international models with insufficient local ownership or with no attempt to tailor them to local realities (this occurs, in particular, in privatisation reforms in transport and waste management). There are also notable examples of novel governance arrangements being reached through local drive and experimentation; in these cases there is a particular focus on 'networked' forms of governance as an alternative to the creation of unified authorities (e.g. Oosterveer, 2009) and on finding ways to build solutions with existing practices and institutions (e.g. Henderson, 2001).

The literature provides fewer lessons on political economy dynamics than on governance. It includes some discussion of the micro-level incentives that have technical characteristics of service delivery subsectors, as well as some discussions of the role of local and national politics in shaping urban service delivery outcomes. The economics and politics of land use and development, and their interaction, seems to be a central theme impacting on a number of different services, as does the dynamics of private sector provision.

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[6] Wild, L., Chambers, V., King, M. and Harris, D. (2012) 'Common constraints and incentive problems in service delivery'. ODI working paper 351. London: ODI http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7791.pdf

4 Sector mapping

The following section provides an assessment of the literature on each service delivery sector, describing the importance attributed to governance factors for service delivery, a brief outline of what is known about governance and political economy factors relating to the service and an assessment of key gaps in the literature.

4.1 Solid Waste Management

SWM is one of the central urban services. Solid waste is increasingly an issue for urban areas in developing countries due to rapid urban growth and increases in consumption; the harmful health and environmental effects, typically felt the most by the poorest in a city, make it an urgent issue to tackle. Providing collection, sorting, processing, recycling and final disposal of waste has proven to be a considerable challenge for the majority of urban areas in developing countries.

The available literature suggests that the coverage and effectiveness of SWM services varies considerably between urban areas in developing countries (World Bank, 2012). As well as the physical scale of the task, the amount of money spent on SWM is one important factor in the effectiveness of this service, which is typically underfunded (Sida, 2006). The Urban Institute (2014) shows some correlation between resources allocated to SWM and volumes of waste collected across 11 cities in South Asia. Nunan and Satterthwaite (2010) find the wealth of a city and its residents to be important factors in the delivery of SWM and other environmental services across nine cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In addition to these factors, all available research indicates that governance issues are highly significant in the delivery of SWM. Some have even proposed that the effectiveness of SWM can serve as a proxy indicator for the quality of governance in urban areas (Whiteman et al., 2001).

Our literature review uncovered a number of sources relating to SWM and governance. A selection of studies examine governance challenges and practices in some detail, in a number of cases going into the political economy factors and the drivers of better or worse governance of SWM (for example, Yhdego, 1995; Onikobun, 1999; Walling et al., 2004; Myers, 2005; Mariwah, 2012; and Bjerkli, 2013). Studies have been carried out in cities in North, East, West and South Africa, South and South-East Asia and Latin America. Many of these (although not all) do make explicit efforts to connect governance, institutional and political economy issues with measurable service delivery outcomes.

Across these studies there are some common themes. According to all the available literature, responsibility for SWM is given to municipal government or other local government bodies for urban areas and the responsibility for delivering SWM is frequently outsourced to some degree to the private sector or NGOs. Governance arrangements have proved to be important, with the level of both de jure and de facto decentralisation found by the Urban Institute (2014) to have some correlation with SWM service delivery outcomes. Mechanisms for performance monitoring and effective design of regulation and contracting instruments have proven crucial

in some contexts (Mariwah, 2012). In other instances, downward accountability and spaces and channels for citizens to influence the provision of services have made an impact on service delivery (Nunan and Satterthwaite, 2010).

Informal institutions are often important, with the ability for actors to forge collaborative 'network' approaches to governance leading to better outcomes in some instances (van Horen, 2004; Oosterveer, 2009); instances where new arrangements are built organically on existing practices (such as scavenging) have also proven to be promising (Yhdego, 1995). Some political economy factors are discussed: for example, the majority of retrieved studies recognise improved SWM as a public good and hence face the challenges of free-riders and 'the tragedy of the commons'. Political drivers of SWM policies are explored in some cases (e.g. Feiock and West, 1993), and the role of cultural and political histories in the success of policy reform (Myers, 2005). Others have shown how the 'network' of SWM delivery functions largely for patronage or rent-seeking purposes, with the local government retaining key powers relating to contracting and price-setting that allow them to exploit relationships (Bjerkli, 2013).

These themes should only be taken as indicative, however, because there is a limited body of knowledge on the governance, institutional and political economy factors that affect the delivery of SWM services in urban areas in developing countries. In general, the more practically-focused literature on SWM, including assessments, good practice and programme design material, have tended to focus on technical issues, with governance and institutional factors perceived largely as an issue of capacity or a matter for importing idealised models. Those studies that go more deeply into the substance of the governance of SWM have insufficient geographical coverage and are lacking in comparative analysis. Analysis of political economy dimensions is also insufficient. The majority of studies focus on single urban areas, with only a small number looking at a number of sites in the same country; just three uncovered sources that discuss governance and institutional dynamics of SWM that draw on evidence from more than one country. It is difficult to draw comparisons between cities covered in different studies because of differences in conceptual and empirical approaches to issues of governance.

4.2 Transport

Transport-related services in urban areas include public transportation, traffic management and provisions for non-motorised transport. These services have the potential to contribute to developmental outcomes in a number of ways: the reduction of congestion and travel times can in turn reduce transaction and connectivity costs, thereby spurring growth; urban mobility through affordable transportation can lead to economic mobility by enabling poorer segments of the population to access opportunities; safety can be improved through better traffic management; and both health and environmental benefits can be gained by planning for reduced motorised transport (Gwilliam, 2004; Sietchiping et al., 2012; Mitric, 2013).

Some transport-related priorities are resource intensive: affordable public transport will often need considerable ongoing subsidy, as well as considerable up-front investment (especially for rail modalities). However, across the available literature there seem to be strong roles for management, institutions and governance (e.g. GTZ, 2004; ASI, 2005; IDL, 2013). Fast-growing urban centres in the developing world are facing 'premature congestion', with high levels of traffic and in many cases declining mobility due to the growth rate and pattern of urban populations and car ownership, but also the fact that they are outpacing management capacities

(Gakenheimer, 1999; Sietchiping et al., 2012). The majority of cities not only struggle to provide decent public transport, but also fail to have a functional traffic management unit (something that is relatively low-cost; Gwilliam, 2003).

A number of sources look in detail at particular governance forms and their impact on service delivery outcomes. Policy coherence and institutional coordination are central themes: responsibilities even just for traffic management and road safety are typically distributed across a number of ministries, and finding affordable ways to transport populations requires not only effective individual modalities, but joining up different modalities in terms of planning, use and management (Gwilliam, 2003; GTZ, 2004; Mitric, 2013). Many argue that the solution is to create one single transport authority for metropolitan areas, whereas some have argued that the system is and will be 'polycentric' and needs to be managed as a network (Vaidyanathan et al., 2013). The literature shows that imported 'good governance', typically in the form of privatisation and deregulation of public transport, has not proved entirely successful, in part because of principal-agent issues and challenges for effective contracting and properly-aligned performance incentives (Estache and Gomez-lobo, 2003; Imran, 2010; Mitric, 2013). It has been argued that the ability of some countries to escape traditional 'good practice' models and find unconventional approaches that better fit local realities and existing institutions is one of the major hopes for improved transport management (Gakenheimer, 2003; Imran, 2010).

There are also a number of sources that cover the drivers of management and governance, including political economy factors. For example, one model examines the reasons why demographically heterogeneous cities have a bias towards underinvestment in transport (Breuckner and Selod, 2005), while a number of sources highlight how congestion and environmental issues can lead to market failures (for example, on-street competition incentivises frequent stop-and-goes, thereby increasing traffic and lowering efficiency). The economic benefits of running privatised services mean that the sector is sometimes used for patronage purposes, and in many cases powerful bus lobbies stand against reform (IDL, 2013). In other cases there seems to be a strong political incentive to provide affordable public transport supported by genuine political leadership (IDL, 2013; Estache and Gomez-Lobo, 2003). And as with other urban issues, the possibility of coherent planning and sufficient financing is affected by the economics and politics of urban land use (Borcke and Wrede, 2004).

Despite these notable themes and strengths, there are some gaps in the literature. The institutional, political economy and governance challenges relating to traffic management remain relatively unstudied and are currently under-prioritised by international agencies. Even less is known about promoting and governing non-motorised transport and what drives it. And in public transport, although there is a reasonable level of breadth and depth, existing studies tend to focus on the incompatibility of imported models of good practice (in particular privatisation), and less seems to be known about what does work and how hybrid arrangements might be found.

4.3 Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation are thought to be among the most important services that should be provided for people who live in urban areas. This area includes water supply, systems for dealing with waste water and sewerage and domestic sanitation systems and practices. The effective provision of these services has primary health benefits and prevents the spread of disease.

A considerable body of literature documents the importance of institutions and governance for effective delivery of these services. Political economy factors, institutional dimensions and governance failures are common factors in ineffective service delivery, typically hitting the poorest the hardest (World Bank, 2012). It is commonly agreed that effective water and sanitation relies on strong institutions and good governance, especially so that all people, even the poorest, receive water effectively and can use it to serve their needs (Bakker, Kooy, 2008, Hardoy et al., 2005). While not all sources relating to the governance of water supply and sanitation (WATSAN) focus exclusively on urban areas, a large proportion do cover urban as well as rural areas, where it seems these issues are equally important.

The review uncovered a significant amount of research on how to govern services effectively in order to meet those people's needs. A number of studies analyse the political economy factors affecting WATSAN service delivery in urban areas in developing countries (Harris, Kooy and Jalloh, 2012; Basu and Main, 2001; Pierce, 2012). Some of them discuss the institutional factors required to effectively benefit from water and sanitation services, as well as a thorough analysis of governance challenges and their drivers and the implications they have for the provision of water and sanitation (Hardoy et al., 2005; Bauer, 1998; Rashid, Jusoh, Malek, 2009; World Bank, 2011). The employment of public-private partnership is a particular focus, along with lessons for what drives good partnerships between public and private operators (McGranahan and Satterthwaite, 2006). This literature has a broad geographical scope.

A significant number of studies analyse the political economy factors affecting WATSAN service delivery in urban areas in developing countries (Harris et al., 2012; Basu and Main, 2001; Pierce, 2012; Cammack, 2012). They focus on several themes, including assessments of the causes that could affect people's motives to get water and sanitation services (Whitfield, 2006; Felgendrecher and Lehman, 2012; Pierce, 2012). Often there are free-rider problems, which can affect the delivery of WATSAN services, especially when such services have to be 'networked' (Harris et al., 2012). There is also analysis of the opportunities and constraints to promote improved outcomes through regulatory frameworks (Walker et al., 1997).

The literature on the governance of WATSAN is quite strong overall and does positively address urban areas, although J-PAL (2012) argue that there are still key gaps on institutional barriers and political economy dynamics. One important gap, however, is subsectoral: there is limited focus on waste water treatment and sewerage and the associated governance and political economy factors. Of secondary importance, there has not yet been a synthesis directed at applying the lessons for governing WATSAN specifically to urban areas.

4.4 Social housing

There is an existing body of knowledge on the problems resulting from inadequate housing, in particular, the challenges associated with slums and poor living conditions (Rondinelli, 1990). Some efforts at slum upgrading are being made, and there are some domestically driven programmes, but, in general, social housing and the provision of other housing services has not taken off as a mainstream concern in the literature on international development.

A number of studies relate to how political economy factors shape housing outcomes, such as work looking at institutional factors and the interests of elites in urban Africa (Fox, 2013; Jibao and Prichard, 2013), studies on Asia (Shatkin,

2004; Sandhu, 2013) and the Pacific Islands (Duncan, 2011). There is significant diversity in this literature, with some tackling issues of housing directly (Harriss, 2007; Jha 2007; Jiabao and Prichard, 2013), while others include land and housing as an aspect of other problems such as food security and pro-poor growth (e.g. Maxwell and Daniel, 1999).

In general there does seem to be some consensus that these geographies of poverty are shaped by structural and institutional factors and incentives and by political and economic behaviour. There is insufficient knowledge to draw any robust comparisons, but some factors discussed include how the structure of the productive economy is seen to have led to housing problems in Singapore, (Lee, 2008); how various forces driving political and economic exclusion are behind the emergence of slums in India (Appadurai, 2001), and links between political representation and democracy and housing (Rasid, 2009).

4.5 Emergency services

This review uncovered very little literature that directly covered emergency services in developing countries, whether or not in urban areas. While it seems possible that some material on emergency health services might be located through a targeted search of the literature on health systems, and that knowledge on urban search and rescue might be found in a targeted search of the literature on humanitarian action, there does seem to be a genuine gap in these two areas, and there is undoubtedly very little known about fire services in developing countries (whether in urban areas or not). This gap in knowledge is accompanied by a seeming lack in interest in the issue on the part of aid agencies and other development actors.

What little literature was found was predominantly focused on emergency medical services; it highlighted management problems, financial wastage and institutional inefficiency. Some analysis of incentives relating to trauma services was located (Joshipura et al., 2004), plus an assessment of the capacity of the institutions dealing with the ambulance services (Huang et al., 2001) and analysis of the efficiency of institutional structures and bottlenecks relating to these services (Waseem et al., 2011). However, in general, issues of governance are not covered in detail. Studies tend instead to focus largely on a basic mapping of the available services, an assessment of the frequency of use and/or recommendations about the technical aspects of services that could cover urban populations, such as trauma care and ambulance services.

5 Recommendations

This review provides a robust mapping of the available literature relating to the governance of service delivery in urban areas; hence, it will be of use to any future attempts to contribute to knowledge and policy advice in this field.

It is extremely important that ***comparative analysis*** is carried out on the governance of urban service delivery:

- New, empirical multi-country studies in the vein of Boex et al. (2013) are needed, focusing on the significance of broadly-defined governance factors, as well as a series of more qualitative studies focused on better understanding of governance and political economy dynamics.
- A desk review may be helpful in order to begin to outline and categorise different governance challenges faced in the provision of key urban services and how they have been overcome.
- At a minimum, any single-area study should make attempts to carry out research in a way that builds on and is comparable to the existing body of knowledge.

Comparative analysis should aim to compare and contrast areas where progress has been possible in urban settings (for example where transport has improved or water supply has increased), both to understand why and under what conditions this occurred and to explore what may be transferable to other urban contexts.

One possible tool to assist with comparability is the adoption of the ODI framework of common governance constraints (Wild et al., 2012), which seems to provide a good fit for challenges of governing services in urban areas.

Some recommendations can also be made on priority sectors for future primary research:

- ***Emergency services:*** There seems to be very little knowledge on emergency services in urban areas in developing countries in general, let alone the governance and political economy dimensions. Empirical research is needed to explore the causes of insufficient provision of these services, and the lessons for their effective delivery.
- ***Waste management:*** There is a need for more detailed research on the political economy factors affecting waste management in urban areas and the challenges and lessons for governing those services.
- ***Traffic management:*** In contrast to a reasonable number of studies on transport management and public transport, there is very little on traffic management. Future research should focus on the challenges and lessons for governing these services and the political economy factors affecting service provision.
- ***Sewerage***: In contrast to the otherwise fairly strong WATSAN literature, there is relatively little on sewerage. Future research should

examine the political economy factors shaping the provision of waste water treatment services and the governance challenges and lessons for effectively governing these services.

It is important for future research in this area to ensure that attempts are made to link governance dynamics with measureable service delivery outputs and outcomes. This could be done through longitudinal comparisons that look at changes in outputs/outcomes over time in one city as well as comparisons between different cities.

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Appendix: Search protocols

Inclusion/exclusion criteria

Sources must:

1. Be in English
2. Be published in or after 1990
3. Focus primarily on urban or peri-urban areas
4. Include a focus on developing countries (i.e. either just developing country-focused, or both developed and developing)
5. Include an examination of the delivery of, or need for, one of the 8 services listed above (a to h)
6. Analyse how governance or political economy factors affect the delivery of that service

Search strategy

Sources were retrieved through two approaches: searching for agreed 'search strings' on a set number of search engines, and snowballing.

The following engines were used to search for potential sources:

- Ingenta Connect (http://www.ingentaconnect.com/)
- JSTOR (http://www.jstor.org/)
- Google Scholar (http://scholar.google.co.uk/)
- Google (https://www.google.co.uk/)

The relevance of the sources will be judged using the inclusion/exclusion criteria. This will be done based on the full text if freely available, but otherwise only on abstracts. Texts included only based on abstracts will be reviewed for inclusion once full texts have been accessed, at a later date.

Where over 50 hits were returned, only the first 50 were assessed. Relevant sources were recorded in a spreadsheet format with fields for all the relevant details (author, date, title, abstract, etc).

The 'snowballing' search involved the following:

- Searching through documents referenced by selected 'key papers'[7]
- Searching through documents that reference the 'key papers'

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[7] An initial set have been selected by the research team, further 'key papers' will be selected on an ongoing basis by the team.

- Searching the website of key organisations working in the field

Sources retrieved through snowballing will be judged for inclusion/exclusion based on the same criteria (above).

Search strings

The following search strings were used, exactly as listed below.

Transport
Urban AND transport AND governance

Urban AND transport AND "political economy"

Urban AND transport AND politics

Urban AND transport AND incentive

Urban AND transport AND institutional

Urban AND traffic AND governance

Urban AND traffic AND "political economy"

Urban AND transit AND governance

Urban AND transit AND "political economy"

Solid Waste Management
Urban AND waste AND governance

Urban AND waste AND "political economy"

Urban AND waste AND politics

Urban AND waste AND incentive

Urban AND waste AND institutional

Urban AND garbage AND governance

Urban AND garbage AND "political economy"

Urban AND rubbish AND governance

Urban AND rubbish AND "political economy"

Housing services
Urban AND "social housing" AND governance

Urban AND "social housing" AND "political economy"

Urban AND "social housing" AND politics

Urban AND "social housing" AND incentive

Urban AND "social housing" AND institutional

Emergency services

Urban AND fire AND governance

Urban AND fire AND "political economy"

Urban AND fire AND politics

Urban AND fire AND incentive

Urban AND fire AND institutional

Urban AND emergency AND governance

Urban AND emergency AND "political economy"

Urban AND ambulance AND governance

Urban AND ambulance AND "political economy"

Urban AND rescue AND governance

Urban AND rescue AND "political economy"

Water and sanitation

Urban AND sewerage AND governance

Urban AND sewerage AND "political economy"

Urban AND sewerage AND politics

Urban AND water AND governance

Urban AND water AND "political economy"

Urban AND sanitation AND governance

Urban AND sanitation AND "political economy"

Multiple services

Urban AND "service delivery" AND governance

Urban AND "service delivery" AND "political economy"

Urban AND "service delivery" AND institutional

Urban AND "service delivery" AND incentive

Urban AND "service delivery" AND politics

"Urban service delivery" AND governance

"Urban service delivery" AND "political economy"

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