Structural, Organizational and Operational issues of citynet as seen by Kirtee Shah (ACHR & ASAG) following 20+ years of work with Citynet

1. Has not been very strategic in its engagement and as a consequence has marginalized itself by operating on the margins of issues. Citynet is not strategic in its working.

2. Yet to establish its profile, niche and influence as a regional urban spokes agency.

3. Has rarely used the resources, strengths and power base of its own constituency and members.

4. Engaged mainly in project activity of non-strategic nature, Citynet has seldom worked for and advocated critical ‘reforms’ and ‘changes’ in directing urbanization and managing the region’s cities. It has not been innovative enough and has not created its brand such as ECLEI for a region that is so special and rich in its urban characteristics.

5. Citynet, for all its years and work, has not been able to inspire “ownership” among its members. Not many call it “my organization.”

6. Remains centralized operationally though democratic in its instinct and nature. Has not been able to develop effective and workable decentralized structures despite efforts in form of National Chapters and Thematic Clustering.

7. Citynet is not been able to throw up inspiring, making—things—happen – leadership.

8. For an organization whose challenge is to generate ideas and capacitate its members to deal with their challenges effectively Citynet’s own resource base is weak. It neither has adequate manpower nor enough money to play its roles effectively.
Strengthening Citynet: kirtee Shah (ACHR + ASAG)
agenda for reform and change of Citynet as a member of Ex com.

1. Think big and act strategic

2. Change style, procedures and systems. Appear, behave and act less like an UN agency and more like an organization of the city authorities and civic organizations

3. Become a member driven organization in spirit, image, operational style, procedures, work agenda and communication

4. Establish presence and develop relevant agenda at the national level

5. Develop strong leadership, besides an efficient and pro-active secretariat. Leadership from the members.

6. Make serious efforts to build relationship between member cities and between city authority members and civil society members

7. Find more resources to invest in activities over and above administration and running of the secretariat

8. Develop insight and capacity in the areas of (a) poverty alleviation (b) climate change (c) employment creation (d) slum development / affordable housing, and (e) sustainability

9. Ensure NGOs and civic groups position in the hierarchy and office.
10. Decentralize. Activate National Chapters in at least 50% of the member countries by 2020.

11. Build substantial partnerships with the Corporate and Business and development assistance agencies in the major donor countries and some of the developing countries (such as Nissan in Japan, Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, L.G. In Korea, Tatas in India, Philippines Business for Social Progress in the Philippines and many others) on:

- Global warming and climate change
- Sustainable Transport
- Alternative Energy Sources
- Solid waste Management
- Water Management
- Employment Training for the urban poor youth
- Poverty Alleviation Strategies

12. Establish 100 Million Dollar Urban Poor Fund, on the ACHR model, linked to slum upgrading and affordable housing for the urban poor to be managed jointly by the city authorities and the NGOs.