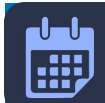


JOIN US FOR A WEBINAR



Inclusive Cities – Approaches for making Indian cities more accessible, safe, and inclusive for ALL



29th June 2021



14:00 - 16:00 IST

Background and Context:

Cities are engines of growth providing numerous opportunities for individuals and contributes significantly to the national economy. This acts as the pull factor reflected in the significant increase in urban population especially, in the last two decades. While the total population in India increased by 35%, the urban population grew by 85% during 1991 - 2011. As stated by the Hon Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, “India stands at the threshold of a critical ‘moment’ in its developmental trajectory with a need to create adequate opportunities for cities/towns to grow, flourish and become vibrant centres of investment and productivity.” To achieve this, a growth model promoting sustainability based on inclusion, ecological balance, better governance, efficient resource management and a unique identity for communities, cities and regions is essential.

The rapid industrialisation and exponential growth of the service sector has led to the high growth of our urban areas putting forth numerous challenges – keeping pace with the demand for housing, infrastructure, and social facilities, and ensuring most productive use of the human resource in cities. Urbanization in India is termed as “messy” and the critique is that the country has not fully reaped the benefits of rapid urbanization to foster faster national growth. Indian cities have, in general, experienced spontaneous growth rather than planned expansion. The cities have been unable to respond adequately to the demands arising from unprecedented in-migration as is reflected in inadequate infrastructure and the uncontrolled growth of informal settlements. With lack of access to affordable formal housing, most of the urban migrants find shelter in slums, unauthorised tenements, and settlements in peri-urban areas. This deprives them access to social facilities and income earning opportunities for various reasons including people’s perceptions and lack of mobility. Census 2011 reported 65.5 million persons living in slums which accounted for 17.4% of its urban population.



The economic and housing vulnerabilities of the marginalized segments of urban population has been highlighted in the on-going pandemic-induced crisis. The prolonged national lockdown in 2020 led to shut down of all non-critical establishments and activities. This adversely affected the income flows resulting in economic hardships, particularly for the daily wage earners and informal sector workers. In addition, the high population densities in informal settlements posed the challenge of containing the spread of the contagion. The vulnerabilities of the marginalized groups, most of whom are migrants, forced them to return to their native places resulting in reverse migration from urban centres away from the overcrowded living areas and uncertain employment prospects. The national government has responded to the pandemic and the resultant situation to promote inclusive development in cities as is reflected in the strategies to contain the spread, mitigate the impacts of the lockdown, and rebuild better.

It is in the above context that a need has emerged for an aggregated approach to urban development; one that encapsulates the various economic, spatial, digital, and structural concepts and intersects the diversities in the society w.r.t gender, abilities, and age. Under the aegis of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) with strategic support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) have formalized a ‘Inclusive Cities Centre’ (ICC) to facilitate cities in evidence-based planning and investments (for inclusive development) to improve urban productivity and quality of life for all (with a focus on the most vulnerable groups in cities including urban poor, persons with disabilities, women, children, youth and the elderly).

Inclusive Cities webinar and its outcomes

The webinar will coincide with the 45th anniversary celebrations of the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA). This important occasion will be an opportune moment to launch the ‘Inclusive Cities Centre’ and mainstream the dialogue on inclusive approach to urban development. As established earlier, cities are a congregation of not just people but of also of their diversities. Indian cities are at a critical juncture to derive optimal benefits of urbanisation, as such it necessitates an overall thrust on adopting inclusive and innovative approaches at the national, state and city levels for a transformative impact.

The event will mark the engagement of sector experts, leaders, thinkers, and practitioners in identifying and defining specific problems and strategic actions, pathways for creating an enabling system for inclusive development of the cities. The event will aim to focus on solutions of practical relevance transcending theory, based on experience and empirical evidence.



Overall, the webinar will be working towards answering the question, ‘how to facilitate cities in evidence-based planning and investments (for inclusive development) to improve urban productivity and quality of life for all?’

Some key thematic areas that would be discussed during the session will be inclusion in urban development agenda with respect to access to urban services, social facilities, public spaces, transport, built form and economic opportunities from the perspective of -

Spatial Inclusion – Planning guidelines, standards, and approaches for improved access to urban services, land and housing and social facilities for all.

Social inclusion – Understanding the intersectionality of age, gender, and abilities to facilitate equal rights and participation in policy making and governance

Economic Inclusion – Understanding formal & informal economy’s contribution, (including heritage-based activities), improved access to financing for livelihood opportunities and recovery post COVID in the cities

Digital Inclusion – Use of technological innovations and ICT for strengthening evidence-base policy formulation and planning.

Participants

A group of about 30-40 attendees with partners, stakeholders, trans-disciplinary experts, and cross-sectoral thinkers will be assembled for this webinar. Experts maybe invited from members of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, Smart City Officials, FCDO, BvLF, AMC, British Academy, UNICEF, UN Resident Coordinators Office, GIZ, World Bank, Cities Alliance, MIT, ICOMOS, University of Pennsylvania, Archaeological Survey of India, INTACH, IHCN, CEPT, Government of Rajasthan (Chief Town Planner), Government of Karnataka, UNESCO New Delhi, Private Sector representatives, Disabled persons Organization, CSOs, Academia, etc.

Structure & Agenda

The webinar will utilise virtual platform to host and engage invited stakeholders. The 120 minutes event will be broadly structured into three sessions; context setting, launch of the centre and talk by guest of honour, and panel discussion with experts and representatives from government, multi laterals, academia, and civil society. The format will help in setting the context, and vision of inclusive development, expectations from the new centre, while the third session will focus on insight building and solution marking, and focus on commitment for action. The event will be facilitated by a group of in-house experts and leadership at NIUA.

Register here:

The half day webinar will be held virtually on Zoom and broadcasted live on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

<https://bit.ly/webinar29thJune>

