Understanding Urbanisation

A Consultation at RGICS

Rajiv Gandhi
INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY STUDIES

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Contents

Consultation Participants

The RGICS organised a consultation on 'Understanding Urbanisation' in October 2018 with participation of people engaged with urban research, practice, leadership and execution from both governmental and non-governmental domains. The consultation saw participation from

Kumari Selja

She was elected to the Lok Sabha in 2004 representing the Ambala constituency of Haryana. She was Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation in the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. In 2009, she became Cabinet Minister of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation and Culture and later Minister of Tourism. She was Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment in the UPA Government during the 15th Lok Sabha.

Suneeta Dhar

She is the Director of JAGORI, a Women's Resource Centre based in New Delhi. Jagori works with a diverse group of women living on the margins of society, in both the urban and rural areas of the country.

Ashutosh Dikshit

Ashutosh Dikshit heads United Residents Joint Action (U.R.J.A). URJA is the Apex body of Resident Welfare Associations of Delhi and represents a collective strength of almost 2500 elected RWAs that together look after the interests of almost 5 million households and approximately 2 crore residents of Delhi.

Abhishek Dutt

Abhishek is municipal councillor representing Andrews Ganj in New Delhi.

Ghazala Jamil

Dr. Jamil teaches at the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her core research interests are urbanisation, social movements, materiality and spatiality of culture, and minority rights.

Ashok Kumar Jain

Mr. Jain is former Commissioner (Planning) with Delhi Development Authority. He has worked on Master Plan for Delhi -2021, National Urban Transport Policy (2006) and National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy (2007). He is also a visiting faculty of School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi.

Vijay Mahajan

He is the Director of the RGICS and formerly the CEO of the Basix Social Enterprise Group which worked on rural and urban livelihood promotion and Basix Municipal Waste Ventures Ltd, which has worked to make Indore, the cleanest city of India since 2012. He was member of the Technical Advisory Group, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation 2009-12.

Kajri Misra

Professor Misra is currently the dean of Xavier School of Rural Management. She has a Master's degree in Environmental Planning from CEPT, Ahmedabad and a PhD in Planning from Cornell University, USA.

Partha Mukhopadhyay

He is a Senior Fellow at Centre for Policy Research (CPR). He joined CPR in 2006. He was previously part of the founding team at the Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC), focusing on private participation in infrastructure.

Dinesh Mohan

He is honorary professor at Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. He retired as the Volvo Chair Professor Emeritus for Biomechanics and Transportation Safety at the Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.

Madhav Pai

Mr. Pai is India Director for WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities. Madhav is a Civil Engineer from Mumbai and holds a Master's Degree in Transport Planning from University of California Berkeley.

Nirmala Samant Prabhavalkar

She is former mayor of Mumbai. She is a High Court Advocate and former Chairperson of Maharashtra State Women's Commission. She was also a member of the National Commission for Women from March 2012 to December 2014.

Sanjay Prakash

He is an architect with a commitment to energy-conscious architecture, eco-friendly design, people's participation in planning, music and production design. He runs his own design studio called SHiFt architects.

Prasanth Regy

He is a Senior Fellow with the RGICS. He is an engineer from IIT Mumbai and a public policy specialist trained at the Harvard Kennedy School. He has worked with the Basix social enterprise group, the World Bank, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India.

Ami Rawat

Ms. Rawat is municipal councillor in Vadodara Municipal Corporation. She was selected for the Young Environment Managers as the British Chevening Scholar Programme. She is an UNICEF consultant for water sanitation in Gujarat and World Bank Consultant with in Peri Urban Area Case Study for Sustainable development in rural area.

Lalitesh Pati Tripathi

He was a member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly from Mirzapur constituency.

The workshop was organised by Piyush Kumar, Junior Policy Associate, RGICS under the guidance of Mr Vijay Mahajan, Director, RGICS

Executive Summary

Urban areas in India are slated to grow rapidly. They currently bear around 30% of population while generating more than 50% of national output. However, urban India faces immense challenges, and solutions to these challenges remain elusive.

With cash starved Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) trying to service the requirements of an ever increasing population, cities and towns across India struggle with a set of obstacles that call for a systemic change in the way urban India is governed. In October 2018, the RGICS held a consultation with sector experts to understand contemporary issues relating to urbanisation. It included urban practitioners, citizen groups representatives, urban researchers, and elected urban representatives.

This consultation yielded a host of issues which challenge sustainability of an Indian city today. Among them, lack of citizen participation, whether due to citizen apathy or lack of mechanisms for implementation thereof; inadequate financing due to low tax and non-tax revenue generation; rising unemployment and low employment generation and; and rapidly depleting natural resources. These emerged as characteristics of a vitiated urban ecosystem in the country.

Based on the consultation, these challenges facing ULBs are categorised into four themes viz.

- Barriers to Civic Engagement, Representation and Devolution;
- Inadequate Financing;
- Insufficient Capacity for Planning and Management; and
- Employment and Social Issues

The gist of the consultation along with recommendations has been given in the final section. This brief will help the reader to understand broad urban issues from a practice oriented perspective. The consultation calls for strengthening urban governance institutions to make them financially and technically capable and independent to drive sustainable growth of their respective urban areas.

Background

Cities have existed in India from as early as urban civilisation of Indus valley and cities have been an important part of every phase of Indian history since then. Modern urban governance started with advent of the British to the subcontinent. Several municipalities took form in British India based on Municipal Charter of 1842. The systems of urban governance in India have evolved steadily since then.

In the last three decades, population and economic growth has pushed urban areas to the limit. Cities have been seen catching up with galloping population, largely due to migration from rural areas, demanding more than what cities can provide. Over the years, the Indian city has become synonymous with poor sanitation; sub-standard and under capacitated physical infrastructure; dilapidated institutional structures and poor service delivery.

Table 1 shows rise of urban population and number of urban areas in India. As per Census of India 2011, there are 3944 municipal bodies entrusted with managing respective urban areas and almost an equal number of census towns (Fig. 1). These numbers are expected to grow further. More than 70 percent urban population lives in cities and towns other than metropolitan cities.

Various programmes and schemes have been launched by the Central and state governments for improving quality of life in urban areas, the most notable among them being Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and the recent Smart Cities Mission. Schemes and programmes do have a role in meeting

Table 1: Decadal growth in urban population

Year	Number of Towns & Cities	Urban Population (in millions)	% of Urban Population to Total Population	Annual Exponential Growth Rate of Urban Population (in %)
1901	1917	25.8	10.84	-
1911	1909	25.9	10.29	0.03
1921	2047	28.1	11.18	0.79
1931	2219	33.4	11.99	1.75
1941	2424	44.1	13.86	2.77
1951	3060	62.4	17.29	3.47
1961	2700	78.9	17.97	2.34
1971	3126	109.1	19.91	3.21
1981	3949	159.5	23.31	3.83
1991	4615	217.6	25.71	3.09
2001	5161	286.1	27.82	2.74
2011	7933	377.1	31.15	2.76

Source: Habitat III National Report, 2017.

specific goals. However, in the absence of governance structure and processes which provided for a more comprehensive participation by citizens and their elected representatives, programmes did not address the systemic challenges that persist in urban areas all over India. This has been the experience of the 65 cities under JNNURM and the 100 odd cities selected under Smart Cities Mission.

The current system of urban governance in India took shape with passage of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 (popularly known as Nagarpalika Act and hereafter 74th CAA). Two principles at the core of this Act were (Leena, Sharma and Roy 2007):

- Making decentralized institutions capable to sense the needs of the people of their areas, and respond with need based local plans, and to implement those plans with coordinated efforts and guidance of the State Government.
- Institutionalise local authorities and make them accountable to the local community, recognizing that these authorities are better placed in
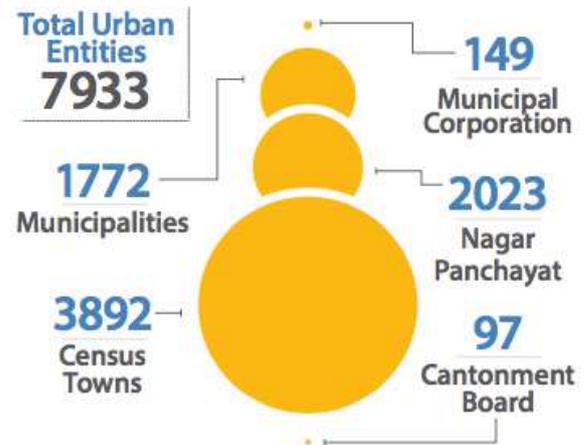

Figure 1: Urban entities in India.
Source: Census 2011

administering schemes and programs designed to address needs of the people, and to optimize the delivery of services and benefits to the people.

The 74th CAA provides for governance by elected representative ensuring accountability to the people governed; a platform for citizens to engage with the administration and contribute in Wards Committee; State Finance Commission to suitably augment municipal finances; reservation for marginal groups to ensure their empowerment; and a platform for district and metropolitan planning while devolving a number of powers and functions as given in twelfth schedule; among other provisions. However, the design as well as the implementation of this Act has left much to be desired.

The RGICS held a consultation with sector experts to understand contemporary issues relating to urbanisation. It included urban practitioners, citizen groups representatives, urban researchers, and elected urban representatives.

This consultation yielded a host of issues which challenge sustainability of an

Indian city today. Among them, lack of citizen participation, whether due to citizen apathy or lack of mechanism or implementation thereof; unsustainable financing models and low tax and non-tax revenue generation; rising unemployment and low employment generation and; rapidly depleting natural resources; emerged as characteristics of vitiated urban ecosystem in the country. Based on the consultation, these challenges facing ULBs are categorised into four themes viz.

- Barriers to Civic Engagement, Representation and Devolution;
- Inadequate Financing;
- Insufficient Capacity for Planning and Management; and
- Employment and Social Issues

The consultation called for democratised urban governance institutions, and to make them financially and technically capable, to drive sustainable growth of their respective urban areas.

In the next four chapters, we summarise the discussions and recommendations of the group about each of these issues, supplementing them with data, references and caselets. The gist of the consultation along with recommendations has been given in the final chapter. This brief will help the reader to understand broad urban issues from a practice oriented perspective.

Inadequate Devolution, Representation and Civic Engagement

Local Bodies vis-à-vis State Government

There was widespread agreement in the consultation that most state governments have been reluctant to empower local bodies. The executive power lies largely with municipal commissioners appointed by the state governments, effectively leaving mayors, who have limited tenures, with not much scope to function (Ahluwalia 2017). Ghazala Jamil stated that outsourcing of municipal functions to private entities through various mechanisms have further disempowered Mayors and elected representatives. Moreover, election process and tenures of Mayors vary greatly across states (see Table 2). Ashutosh Dikshit and Sanjay Prakash said that mayors need to be empowered to keep alive the democratic space within cities.

The 74th CAA specified a list of functions to be devolved by the state governments in the twelfth schedule, such as provision of urban amenities, water supply, public health, regulation of land use, urban planning, including town planning, etc. Mukhopadhyay asserted that the extent of financial control required to execute these functions has not been transferred to ULBs. Most of the states

Table 2: Mayoral election and tenures in select states

State	Election	Term
Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal	Indirect	Five years
Karnataka, Assam, Chandigarh, Delhi	Indirect	One year
Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh	Direct	Five years
Maharashtra	Indirect	Two and a half years

Source: Habitat III National Report, 2017.

have devolved a number of these functions to local bodies, often reserving most significant functions such as town planning (Panagariya 2014). The incomplete devolution of funds, functions and functionaries (3F), as described above, has kept ULBs disempowered.

The participants unanimously called for empowerment of local governments with effective implementation of 74th CAA. Kajri Misra called for shifting focus from 3F to 6K to empower local governments, i.e. - Karyakram (Function), Kosh (Funds), Karyakarta (Functionaries), Karyapadditi (clear norms, structure and procedures laid down of local government functioning), Karya Sanskriti (work culture) and Karyala (office).

Political Underrepresentation

The urban population is underrepresented in national and state legislatures (Burdett, et al. 2014) (Mohanty 2016). This has occurred because, first, the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1976 froze seats allocated to each state based on 1971 Census. Second, the latest delimitation done in 2008 based on 2001 Census does not fairly represent actual proportion of urban population in the seat share. A similar trend can be observed in state legislatures too. For instance, in Maharashtra, the most urbanised state in India with 47% of the population living in urban areas, only 31% seats in the state legislature are urban (Pai 2018).

As such, urban issues get way less attention of the governments than they deserve. Under representation of urban areas could be addressed by laying down an explicit requirement to set boundaries

of the seats within a state based on electorate size. This would require amendment of additional criteria laid down by Delimitation Act of 1972 of 'physical features, existing boundaries of administrative units, facilities of communication and public convenience'.

"Mayors need to be empowered"

Ashutosh Dikshit,
United Residents Joint Action, New Delhi

Civic Engagement

As an idea, citizen participation is a dynamic process wherein people are empowered and take initiative to influence key decisions affecting them. The consultation defined the challenge of inadequate citizen participation as one where an engagement mechanism is missing and the reliance on top-down structures, backed by higher levels of governments, is common. Occasional and short lived 'consultations', information asymmetry and lack of assistance to the people characterise this challenge.

Academic research also suggests that there is a huge gap in theory and practice of citizen participation in India. Kumar and Prakash (2016) argue that participation processes are designed in a way as to only win legitimacy of the public. Coelho et al. (2011) highlight how practices of participation are deployed instrumentally to advance neoliberal governance needs of reform, disregarding the idea of empowerment of people. An appraisal of

JNNURM mandated stakeholder consultations conducted by Grant Thornton in 2011 indicated that economically weaker sections, despite being the major intended beneficiaries of the program constituted only 9% of the total interactions. Similar issues impair contemporary urban interventions too (Kumar and Prakash 2016).

To address the challenge, a mechanism for the public to continuously engage with administration is required as against only project based consultations. The 74th CAA aims at creating such a platform under Article 243S that provides for constituting Wards Committee for one or more wards in an urban area. Kerala and West Bengal lead as examples where Wards Committees have been functioning effectively for more than a decade (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017). These structures have the potential of operationalising direct democracy in decision making. Kerala government has implemented a formal public engagement framework in policy making and implementation, building on Wards Committees and Gram Sabhas (World Bank 2010). Other states must make use of this provision by passing enabling legislations.

Prof. Dinesh Mohan highlighted the significance of public leaders as part of the solution, as they can encourage vital community level discussions on local issues and coordinate representations to the administration. Apart from creating Wards Committees, experts called for a wider and more inclusive urban development ecosystem involving range of actors such as ULB functionaries, civil societyresearch institutions in the area and business groups, which is capable of sustaining a continuous process of working on challenges faced by their respective areas.

Inadequate Financing

Sources of Funds for Urban Development

Over the years, total municipal revenues in India as per cent of GDP has fallen (See Table 3). In 2007-08, this figure was 1.08% as against 1.03% in 2012-13 (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017). The same figure was 7.4% for Brazil, 6% for South Africa and 4.5% for Poland; and much higher for developed nations (Mohanty 2016). This can be attributed to narrow tax base of municipal bodies in India. In most cases, ULBs can tax property (land and buildings); entertainment; advertisements; etc. which are not very significant sources of revenue. Other sources include duties, fees for various services and utilities. In comparison, municipalities in large number of countries, both federal and unitary, have power to tax income and/or goods and services, which explains municipal revenues being high.

The table below indicates the various sources of financing for municipal bodies in 2007-08 and 2012-13. Later data is not yet available.

Table 3: State of Municipal Finances (all states) in India

Structures	2007-08		2012-13	
	INR (billions)	percent	INR (billions)	percent
Own Revenues				
Tax Revenue	183.66	37.2	309.12	32
Non-tax revenue	91.34	18.5	190.02	19.7
Sub total	**275.01**	**55.7**	**499.13**	**51.6**
Transfers				
Government of India	35.15	7.1	53.87	5.6
Finance Commission	9.86	2	37.60	3.9
State devolution and assignments	93.42	18	185.37	19.2
State grant-in-aid	66.53	13.5	148.09	15.3
Others	13.55	2.7	42.32	4.4
Sub total	**218.51**	**44.1**	**467.27**	**48.4**
Own source revenue as per cent of GDP	0.6		0.48	
Total municipal revenue as per cent of GDP	1.08		1.03	

Source: Habitat III National Report, 2017.

Taxation Reforms

Improvement in local government's taxation system and reforms in state and central government's taxation reforms need to go in tandem. Goods and Services Tax (GST) reform was an opportunity to incentivise state governments to devolve more power to ULBs. Gradually, local governments can become part of GST regime. Since GST is a consumption based tax and urban areas account for most of formal consumption and are projected to drive 91 per cent of global consumption growth between 2015-2030 (McKinsey Global Institute 2016), making local governments part of the tax structure would lead to a robust revenue stream for ULBs to undertake planned development. In short term, given the limited tax basket with local governments, a major opportunity lies in using technology to improve tax base and monitor and enhance compliance.

Institutional Transfers

The 74th CAA provides for a State Finance Commission (SFC) within a state with a mandate to improve finances of municipalities within the state under Article 243Y. Unfortunately, state governments have not empowered SFCs enough having no incentive to share revenues with local governments. To make SFCs effective, stringent criteria for their composition may be laid out and their constitution may be synchronised with Central Finance Commission. Prasanth Regy and Prof. Kajri Mishra pointed out that the Fourteenth Finance Commission made grants available to panchayats and municipal bodies. This can be supplemented with SFC grants making predictable cash in-flow for local bodies for a five-year period. It will lead to better planning and execution of developmental works in urban areas.

In countries where municipal tax basket is similar to that in India, there are sizeable formula based transfers form central government, often up to 70% of municipal revenue (Mohanty 2016). In international practice, there are different ways in which national governments ensure predictable finances to local governments (see Box 1).

Box 1: Fiscal relations in international practice

In South Africa, local governments receive direct transfer from central government that form a part of the annual national budget. Between 2008 and 2011, these transfers amounted to around 8% of the central government's total revenue. In addition, there are grants and loans facilitated by the central government to aid infrastructure development.

In Brazil, Municipalities received 22.5% of federal income tax and value-added tax on manufactured goods; 50% of federal rural land and property tax and state tax on motor vehicles; 70% of federal financial operations tax on gold; and 25% of state value-added tax on goods and interstate and intercity transportation and communication services, in 2005. In China, local governments keep 25% of value-added tax, respectively. For a city like Shanghai, this roughly amounts to USD 4.5 Billion. Municipalities also get around 30% of Business tax, the most important tax in China. In the Philippines municipalities receive 34% of national internal revenues.

Source: Financing cities in India: municipal reforms, fiscal accountability and urban infrastructure. 2016, by P. K. Mohanty

Lack of Devolution and Autonomy

As the current sources of finance for ULBs described in previous section reveal, the fiscal powers devolved to ULBs are very limited. In mobilising their revenues, while there is lack of devolution, municipal bodies are not endowed with sufficient financial autonomy either (Panagariya 2014). The user charges for public utilities provided by ULBs are fixed by state governments. For Property tax, which is a major revenue stream for ULBs, tax rates and exemptions are set by state governments. In some states, municipal taxes are often used to gain political mileage. For example, there have been instances in states of Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana, where state governments raised exemption limits and/or lowered tax rates conveniently before assembly elections (Ahluwalia 2017).

The issue trickles down to ward level, wherein limited resources available with the ULB are spent in favour of commercially important wards. Wards seem to have limited say in the way expenditure plans are drawn for the city.

Other Possible Sources of Funds

State owned parastatal agencies, e.g. Delhi Development Authority, which are involved in urban infrastructure development, often dent potential revenue source for the ULBs. While these structures undertake capital works and create land markets, ULBs are left with maintaining and operating the infrastructure generated (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017). Partha Mukhopadhyay asserted that if the town planning function is assigned to local governments, they could unlock land value to undertake infrastructure development, especially smaller urban areas where land values are still low.

The Public Private Partnership or PPP model, which has not been very successful in creation of capital intensive urban infrastructure in past experience (Pratap 2014), can be revamped using new approaches such as viability gap funding, better risk assessment and appropriate revenue forecasting. Some cities such as Ahmedabad and Pune have managed to raise funds from the capital market by issuing municipal bonds. See Box 2 below:

Box 2: Pune Municipal Corporation issues bonds

In June 2017, Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) raised INR 200 Crore via bonds in open market as a first tranche of its planned 5-year 2300 crore bond program. The money was raised for Pune's '24X7 Water Project' which aims to ensure availability of water to the city for next 30 years. It became the first ULB to issue bonds since the publication of 'Issue and Listing of Debt Securities by Municipalities Regulations, 2015' by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). PMC was rated AA+ for the issue based on its structured payment mechanism wherein the property tax, water tax will be included in the escrow account in addition to a debt service reserve account (DSRA), an interest payment account (IPA) and a sinking fund account (SFA) to be managed by debenture trustees.

Source: Pune's Pathbreaking Success in the Municipal Bond Market: A Case Study, March 2018 by: Kunal Kumar, Ulka Kalaskar, Kunal Mandwale, Prasad Thakur.
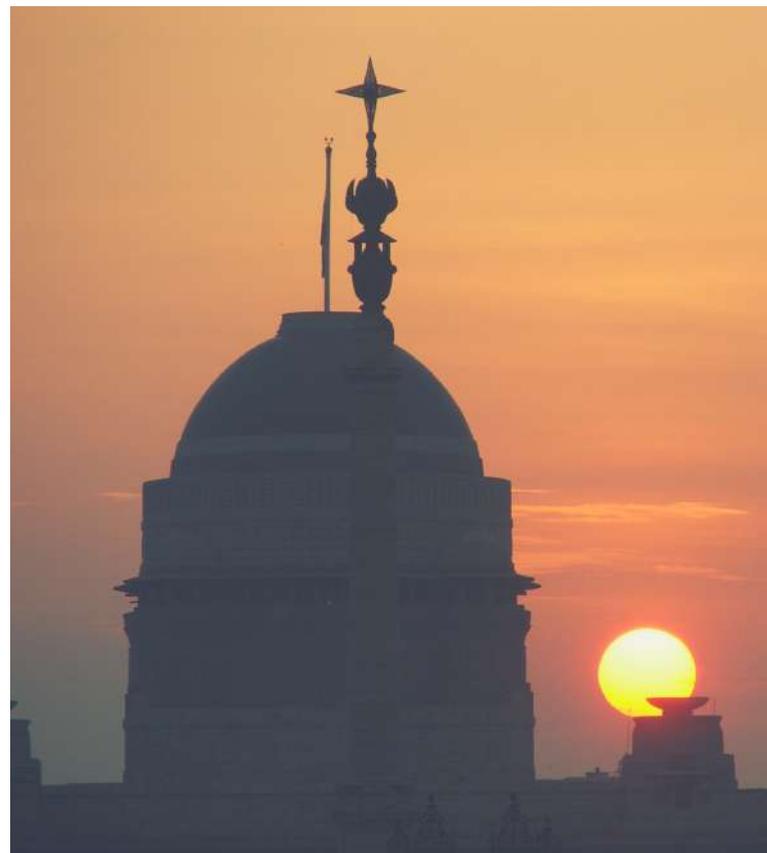
Inadequate Capacity for Planning and Management

Institutional Capacity

Urban governments are tasked with a range of functions. To deliver on these, ULBs need appropriate financial, technical and administrative capacity. Unfortunately, as experience and literature suggests, local governments are grappling with inadequate capacity to address challenges of urbanisation.

Prof. Kajri Misra explained how cities without requisite administrative and technical capacity could not take advantage of JNNURM. She pointed out that there is dearth of research on population living in smaller urban areas and metropolitan areas get disproportionate focus of researchers as well as the government. She highlighted the role of a range of habitat professionals who could catalyse urban planning and implementation.

The participants in the consultation felt that capacity for the provision of basic municipal services needed to be prioritised. Interventions such as JNNURM or Smart City Mission have also not added capacity to ULBs. Instead, planning under these missions is outsourced to Project Management Units (PMUs). Both Misra and A. K. Jain cautioned that PMUs are not directly accountable to the citizens. Overuse of such PMUs, and the lack of institutional capacity within the ULBs, prevents the ULBs from being able to deliver basic urban services. Instead of controlling municipal bodies, state governments could aid building capacity within ULBs in the areas of planning, financial management and new governance techniques. Additionally, similar efforts are required in other departments, such as education and health, as well. In this regard, Prof. Dinesh

Mohan suggests that efforts must be placed in developing institutions in each city, within an educational/research institution or otherwise, in order to develop a large number of experts with a mandate to provide solutions to respective urban area's issues. He also points out that, for this solution to work, creating jobs in this domain would be crucial.

"Develop institutions in every city to create expertise"

Dinesh Mohan,
Honorary Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

Land Use Planning

Urban sprawl

Land being a scarce resource, ensuring land supply for organized urban growth has been a major challenge. Informal land markets and land divisions have spread in most cities paying high dividends to squatters (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017), as unlawful developments are often regularized (Zimmer 2012). While rendering low levels of quality of life and inefficient use of resources, these processes also fuel urban sprawl. Urban sprawl can be understood as development with low density housing, both commercial and residential, segregated land use with high personal vehicle use and low public transportation. Large metropolitan areas in India have experienced considerable urban sprawl as they account for huge proportion of new urban population, putting immense pressure on land.

Land Acquisition

Slow land acquisition has become another challenge to urban growth. Often pace of economic growth outstrips that of infrastructural development, such as in Bengaluru. Different strategies have been used to facilitate availability of land for urban development such as land pooling in Delhi, and Andhra Pradesh for new capital of Amravati; negotiated land purchase in Chhattisgarh for new capital of Naya Raipur; land sharing model used in Vijayawada; and Town Planning Scheme in Gujarat. These are few successful models implemented across the country. Ami Rawat said that land titles must to made conclusive so as to address claims and counter claims that impede the pace of acquisition and challenge the development of land. Land record digitisation holds potential in doing so. Karnataka and Odisha in addition to four union territories have completed land record digitisation under Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme of Government of India.

Land Development

A. K. Jain advocated for a certain percentage of new land development to be reserved, especially in housing, for low income groups. A. K. Jain pointed out, and Ashutosh Dikshit agreed, that in the process of urban development, mixed land use could be an important driver of employment growth in urban areas. Mixed use development of urban has the potential to generate social capital and activate deteriorated zones of a city and unlock greater land value (Nabil and Eldayem 2015).

Transportation Planning

One of the key component of urban life is daily commute. In absence of a capable and robust public transportation systems, under capacitated urban roads are choked with personal vehicles, wasting time and fuel, and adversely impacting air quality. Public transport systems also have an important role to play in promoting gender equity in urban areas.

New approaches to urban mobility such as mass rapid transit systems (MRTS) or 'metro' must be appraised in this context. Last mile connectivity remains a critical issue wherever such initiatives have been undertaken (The Hindu 2018). There is growing consensus among experts that bus transport is the future of urban mobility (Mukherjee 2018), as metro struggles with high capital investments, delays in construction due land acquisition issues, absence of viable last mile connectivity, etc. In doing so, additional buses need to be added while reducing cost of travel and incentivising public travel (see Box 3).

Box 3: Estonia makes public transport free

After successful implementation of free public transportation in capital city of Tallinn that started in 2013, Estonian Government has offered free public transport all over the country from July 2018. The program is intended to reduce carbon emissions by promoting public transport. Under the program, counties in Estonia are free to opt in and offer free public transport in lieu of additional funding from national budget.

Major European cities in France and Germany are drawing similar plans to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, while the United Kingdom has started testing free weekend bus travels in Wales.

Source: World Economic Forum 2018

Regional and Ecological Planning

Planning Institutions

Kajri Misra advocates for a spatial land use plan at the district level. Many experts in the consultation highlighted the need of regional and/or district planning, stating that an opportunity lies in activating District Planning Committees (DPC) and Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPC) as provided under 74th CAA. These institutions carry the mandate to produce regional plans for their respective areas. An array of planning authorities at different levels could be replaced by a DPC with clear and absolute planning authority to direct the growth of concerned urban areas, which is accountable to people. Some states have created DPCs and MPCs, however, they need more clarity on the process and financing to make them effective institutions of long term regional planning.

Samarth Zillas

A regional planning approach that recognises the rural-urban continuum of development, holds the potential to drive sustainable growth. Vijay Mahajan proposed a program called 'Samarth Zillas', wherein district headquarter and smaller towns in a district become centre and regional hubs, respectively, to drive planning and growth of urban areas along with their respective rural hinterlands. 'Samarth Zillas' has been proposed to have around 1000 units. Such an approach can help create employment where the workforce is, reducing the need of work related migration; providing better services to rural and urban areas; and improve infrastructure across the country.

"We need to think beyond Smart Cities, we need Samarth Zillas"

Vijay Mahajan,
Director, RGICS, New Delhi

Ecological Sustainability

Issues related to land and spatial planning have an inescapable effect on an area's ecological sustainability. As urban areas are characterised by high concentration of population, they put immense stress on the carrying capacity of the area and impact biodiversity, while limiting the quality of life to a suboptimal level and creating inequity in distribution of resources.

Sanjay Prakash said that Indian cities do not have the liberty of following the model of growth and development used by western cities, which is based on assumed unlimited supply of fossil fuels and is highly unsustainable. Keeping India's environmental commitments in Paris Agreement and needs of growing urban population in perspective, the neo-liberal developmental agenda being pushed through various channels to orient urban growth in India starts to fall apart. India needs ingenious ways of creating habitable areas.

Foremost areas of concern are depletion of water sources, both groundwater and surface water such as lakes, ponds and wetlands; reduction in vegetation cover and air pollution. There are well documented cases of lakes in urban areas being encroached upon and 'developed' (see Box 4) affecting local climate patterns.

Decreasing vegetation cover and increasing built-up area is putting urban areas at greater risk of disasters, for example, severity of Chennai floods of 2015 is attributed to improper watershed area management, landfilling of lakes andponds for reclamation decreasing permeability of the soil, and improper storm water drainage systems. Rising air pollution levels due uncontrolled use of fossil fuels for meeting energy needs, faulty construction practices, etc. are causing serious health issues among urban population (see Box 5).

Box 4: Disappearing lakes in Bengaluru

In 1962, city of Bengaluru had 262 ponds, lakes and marshy wetlands. By 2007, while city's built-up area increased by 466%, this number has gone down to 127 of which 81 are live. This drastic change is attributed to anthropogenic activities under population pressure and unplanned urbanization in and around the city. Lake beds have been used to develop public and private infrastructure instead of reviving the ecosystem that was crucial to Bangalore's climate. For example, Kempegowda Bus terminal is built on Dharmambudi Lake; Kateerava Stadium is built on Sampige Lake; and Hennur Lake is converted into HBR Layout. The remaining lakes are not in a good condition either, with large amount of untreated industrial effluents making their way to the lakes. Some of them catch fire spontaneously and make frequent headlines, most ominous being the Bellandur Lake.

Source: Namma Bengaluru Foundation

Box 5: Delhi's air pollution puts population at higher risk of diseases

A 2005 study conducted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to effects of air pollution in Delhi on its citizens found that lower respiratory symptoms such as dry cough, breathlessness and chest discomfort was 80% more prevalent in Delhi; while upper respiratory symptoms including sneezing and sore throat were 50% more prevalent; both these variables positively associated with respirable suspended particulate matter (RSPM). 40% of Delhi's residents had significantly reduced lung function which positively correlated with particulate air pollution. There were observed cell-level changes in sputum of citizens of Delhi highly correlated with PM10 level. Delhi's non-smoking population had 230% more micronuclei than non-smokers elsewhere indicating high genotoxicity, which increases risk of developmental and degenerative diseases. Since then, Delhi's pollution levels have only increased, grabbing international headlines while putting its population at ever increasing risk of dangerous and chronic diseases.

Source: Epidemiological study on effect of air pollution on human health (adults) in Delhi, 2008. Central Pollution Control Board

Capacity of Various Stakeholders

In meeting the requirements of fast changing urban scenario, all stakeholders (other than governmental institutions as detailed above) need to be capable of understanding the breadth of issues that confront them. These stakeholders include citizens, non-governmental organisations, political leaders, communities, professionals and businesses.

Madhav Pai highlighted the importance of building a standard minimum level of capacity of political leaders such as MLAs and Councillors in this regard, as they are responsible for taking major decisions. Otherwise, over reliance on 'experts' from consultancies will be perpetuated. Capable leadership is also in a better position to break the information asymmetry and guide citizens.

Inadequate Attention to Employment and Social Aspects

Employment – Formal and Informal

Skill Development

Indian cities, traditionally, are known for specific skill set that their workforce possess, and a unique product wherein skill development took place through informal structures, e.g. Benarasi sarees, Kohlapuri chappals; Rampuri knives, etc. Due to various factors such as ban on cattle slaughter affecting leather industry; glass bangle industry in Firozabad being in Taj Trapezium Zone; fierce challenge of cheap China made goods; etc., these traditional industries are struggling to hold ground (Wilkes and Bhardwaj 2017) (Chaturvedi 2017). Some policy support can revive many traditional arts and crafts by creating a market for these products. Alternatively, workforce needs to be reskilled to enter small and medium scale industries, which are positioned strategically to drive urban employment growth and reduce poverty. Unfortunately, this has not happened either, as formally skilled workforce constitutes under 3 percent of total, according to Labour Bureau Report of 2013-14. Madhav Pai calls for identifying major job anchors specific to cities looking beyond IT sector. In context of spurring employment growth through
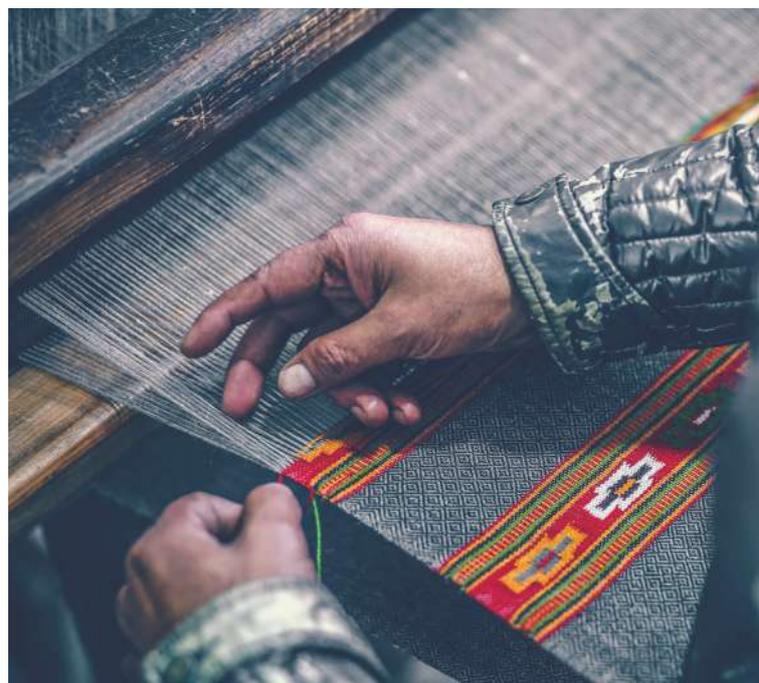
small and medium scale industries, metropolitan areas could utilise economies of agglomeration to manufacture labour intensive products.

Cities Matter

Urban areas hold the key to employment generation and steady economic growth. The state governments and political leadership have long neglected this fact due to various reasons (see section on political underrepresentation). For example, the state of Punjab having reaped the fruits of green revolution, did

not outline its urbanisation and industrialisation strategy post economic reforms of 1991. As a result, cities in Punjab could neither drive state's economic growth, nor transform its agricultural base to take it up the value chain (Ahluwalia, Chaudhari and Sidhu 2008). Consequently, state's economic growth has remained stagnant and below national average in past two decades, as per Economic Statistical Organisation (Punjab) data.

There is evidence and experts agree that non-farm activities have driven job growth and also fuelled urbanisation in India. From 2004-05 to 2011-12, while share of industry and services combined in employment increased from 45.5 percent to 52.9 percent, employment in India grew by meagre 1.5 percent. In urban India, employment grew by 17.5 percent in the same period, majority of it (almost 90%) as informal employment. In 2001-11 decade, urban population increased by more than 90 million, an unprecedented climb (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017).

Informality

Employment in urban India is largely informal. From 2004-05 to 2011-12, share of informal employment in total remained above 90 percent. Even in organised sector, share of informal employment grew from 48 percent to 54.6 percent over the same period, as per the Economic Survey 2015-16. This informality has to be seen as an opportunity in strengthening livelihood activities while promoting micro and small industries. Key feature of informal structures is the utilisation of social capital. Social capital which refers to connections, trust and reciprocity among

individuals and within communities, and the resources that it generates (Nabil and Eldayem 2015), is helpful in accessing minimum sources of livelihood (Mitra 2010). Government's response to urban poverty through improving livelihood must take cognizance of such areas where social capital plays a significant role. This has the potential of generating employment in micro, small and medium enterprises, which have the highest share of informal employment.

Women

Engendering Institutions

Women have occupied considerable share in urban workforce with participation rate growing at 5.4 percent per annum, largely in the unorganised sector (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017). This reality is yet to be accommodated in urban policies of the country. Suneeta Dhar, Director of Jagori, contended that women need to be identified as autonomous beings irrespective of their employment status. Huge differences in wage rates, unavailability of support infrastructure for women working as domestic help has made it difficult for them to improve their livelihoods. Suggesting gender analysis of annual budgets, policies and schemes of the government, Dhar called for application of a rigorously developed checklist for this purpose. Gender responsive budgeting has been in practice around the world (See Box 6).

Government of India also introduced gender budgeting in 2005, however, first, it is restricted to public expenditure and does not extend to non- governmental agencies or organisations; and second, it is in the form of review of

existing budgets through a gender lens as against designing ex-ante programs for women. Ex-ante programs call for sensing the needs of women in an iterative process, formulating appropriate strategies, making plans and preparing budgets accordingly, implementing the plans and continuous monitoring and evaluation of the whole process (Rudra 2018).

While Government of India has come up with separate budget component called Nirbhaya Fund, aiming to enhance security of women in cities, most of it remains unutilised. Instead, Dhar suggested that the fund should be also used for installing other provisions for women in public places. Apart from correcting disparity in provision of basic public utilities in terms of number available for men and women, other provisions such as sanitary napkins dispensers, etc. must be made available in greater number.

Access to Transport

As per Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), higher percentage (often twice as much) of women walk to their workplace as compared to men in all major cities in India. Based on various studies, ITDP points to characteristics of women's transportation in urban India. Women's use of bicycles remains very low as compared to men. Women depend largely upon bus transport to commute, varying form 25 percent in Mumbai to 37 percent in Bhopal. The share increases in economically weaker sections to as high as 67 per cent women using bus services.

Box 6: Australia shows the way for Gender Responsive Budgeting

Australia is a pioneer in gender responsive budgeting having initiated the same from budget of 1984-85 by announcing a Women's Budget Statement. It had its roots in 1970s and early 1980s when institutionalization of feminism was at its peak and Australia developed national women's policy machinery. During this time, a considerable number of feminist activists engaged within state bureaucracy, as the movement viewed government's machinery as an avenue to promote social justice. This movement was supported by the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 at the national level and anti-discrimination laws at state level. Another legislation in support was the Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986, aimed at preventing sexual discrimination in the workplace through education and standards setting. The Office of the Status of Women was established in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet providing policy direction to gender focal points in government departments. Financial support was made available to women's advocacy groups and women's services; and monitoring was done by means of a parliamentary committee.

On account of active leadership from within the government and outside, there were far reaching reforms in Australia leading to better terms for women in sectors with high proportion of women employees, tax benefits, better child care support, maternity allowances, etc.

Source: A Case Study of Gender Responsive Budgeting in Australia, 2017, The Commonwealth.

Women take shorter trips than men and usually depend on off-peak peripheral routes which are dominated by informal public transport systems as compared to radial routes connecting city's centre.

Transportation facilities or lack thereof, affects women more than men, as women make higher number of trips for various purposes, making travel costlier. On top of all this, sexual harassment of women in public spaces and public transport remains a serious concern. Crowded public transport options in cities, with higher probability of violence and insecurity, lead to forced immobility. These concerns have yet to be fully incorporated in urban mobility policies. Various solutions have been proposed to tackle this, such as, benchmarking in urban transport plans and defining gender responsive indicators; increasing cycling share of women; creating safer environments for travel and work considering measured mobility and work patterns; engendering public transport authorities, etc.

buildings, workplaces, commercial activities, public utilities, religious, cultural, leisure or recreational activities, medical or health services, law enforcement agencies, transport infrastructure, among others.

In 2015, the "Accessible India" (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) campaign was launched with an objective to make it convenient for persons with disabilities to access buildings and transport facilities. The Smart City Mission also has objectives for assisting persons with disabilities to ensure access to pathways and public transportation and to design accessible buildings, hospitals, recreational areas, public toilets, etc. The same can be valid for the elderly. Indian cities can learn from the city of Barcelona, Spain in which 20 percent of the population is over the age of 65. It launched an internet based solution, 'Vincles BCN' to address isolation of the elderly (Refer Box 7). The project was conceptualised and implemented by Barcelona City Government focusing on city's specific challenge.

The Disabled and the Elderly

Indian cities are exceptionally unfriendly to the disabled and the elderly and severely restrict their mobility without assistance from others such as family members. India has around 80 million people with disability, which may be age related, accident related or due to some medical conditions. According to the Word Bank, one in every 12 households in India has a person living with disability. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, tried to address some of the concerns faced by differently-abled persons in India. The Act specifically refers to ease of access to public or private

Box 7: Vincles BCN: building a social media network to support senior citizens

Barcelona, Spain estimates that one in four of its citizens will be over 65 by 2040. The city believes that dependence on fragile informal networks results in an increasingly isolated ageing population. This not only reduces quality of life, but also creates a healthcare burden: lonely individuals are more likely to develop health complications. Vincles BCN: Collaborative Care Networks for Better Ageing aims to use a customised social media application on web-enabled tablet computers to more tightly connect the senior population.

Vincles means 'social ties' in Catalan – ties to family, caregivers, neighbours. Vincles BCN app allows its users to engage in activities with their trusted networks, such as making calls, sending and receiving multimedia content, sharing a calendar and transferring money easily and safely, so that they no longer feel isolated or lonely, and can more easily find help when they need it, while at the same time continuing to live independently. The project was awarded winner of Bloomberg Philanthropies European Mayors Challenge 2014.

Source: LSE Cities, 2014

Poverty

As per official estimates urban poverty reduced from 25.70 percent in 2004-05 to 13.7 percent in 2011-12, with steepest fall of around 7 percent coming in last two years (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GoI 2017). While issues with defining poverty line remain, counting poor in the cities has always been challenging given circular and seasonal migration of large casual workforce working in industries like construction, quarrying, etc. Also, a uniform poverty line cannot be applied countrywide, as cost of living varies greatly among states and cities. A report on Estimating the Investment Requirements for Urban Infrastructure Services (2011) by High Powered Expert Committee suggests that incidence of poverty is greater in smaller urban areas than in metropolitan areas.

Under JNNURM, the Urban Infrastructure and Governance component was well-funded, while the Basic Services to Urban Poor component was poorly funded (Coelho and Maringanti 2012). Such segregation carries on into various urban governance structures by targeting the poor, which is enhanced by identification technologies such as biometrics based UID. Addressing urban poverty requires focus on generating employment and better opportunities for improved livelihoods.

There exists spatial segregation of population based on caste, religion, ethnicity and regional background in Indian cities, as per Ghazala Jamil, author of the book "Accumulation by Segregation: Muslim Localities in Delhi".

Market forces often fail to rectify this segregation, in fact sometimes even reinforcing and monetising the prejudices upon which these are based. For example, someone from Muslim community may not be able to buy a house in upper class Hindu colonies even if they have the financial resources at their disposal, said Jamil. This process is operationalised through spatial reconfiguration based on class inequalities. The consequent exclusionary citizenship is challenged by these marginalised groups.

Spatial segregation based on various differences seems to have made social fabric of the cities vulnerable to communal instability and created a room for identity politics. Cases of discrimination and violence against people from northern states in Mumbai and north-eastern states in Bengaluru are well documented. As per Jamil, segmentation of labour markets manifests

in the form of spatial segregation; wherein caste and communal prejudices operationalise labour immobility. For example, in urban areas, jobs in sanitation are still largely with Dalit community. The above-mentioned communal forms of segregation converge with class based segregation (Fernandes 2004).

To conclude the consultation, it was widely asserted by the participants, that while citizen participation and representation in governance processes – planning, budgeting, monitoring of services and so on, was weak in general, it was virtually non-existent as far as the informal sector workers, women, the disabled, the elderly and the poor were concerned. This will have to change if Indian cities have to become more inclusive habitations.

Gist of Consultation on Understanding Urbanisation

Participation, Governance, ULB Capacity and Financing Issues

Themes	Issues / Problems	Recommendations
Citizen Participation in Governance and Ensuring Accountability of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)	• ULBs still largely controlled by appointed officials who are not accountable to the electorate. State governments are reluctant to give powers to urban local bodies. • There is too much top-down decision-making. (e.g. truck traffic diversion from Delhi or moving industries out from Delhi. • Lack of consultative mechanism to consult citizens. • Lack of accountability due to no clear departmentalisation of work. • Running programs and services through PMUs is reducing administrative accountability.	• Need better implementation of 74th Amendment which created and gave powers to ULBs. • (Voter aggregation) through delimitation issue requires amplification. Will provide adequate political representation. • Delimitation being done with political motives, impacting reservations. • Need to maintain a balance between state govt. and ULBs powers distribution. Give more autonomy to ULBs. • Need to develop processes for continuous engagement with the public. Taking public into confidence is public leaders job. • Community level discussions should be encouraged. Direct democracy in decision making can be tried through digital technology –Kerala govt. attempted. • Instead of focus on devolution of 3Fs (funds, functions and functionaries). Focus on 6 Ks (Karyakaram, Kosh, Karyakrata, Karyapaditti, Karyasanskrati, Karyalya) • Police and judicial reforms also required for holistic change. • Citizen engagement will enhance accountability of local leaders and bureaucrats. • Establishing an urban development ecosystem by involving a range of actors–ULBs, Civil Society, Universities and Research Institutions, Business and Industry, etc. as illustrated for the revival of Pittsburgh in the book by Katz and Novak (2017) "New Localism", Brookings.

Themes	Issues / Problems	Recommendations
Capacity Building of ULBs	• Urban towns could not take advantage of JNNURM due to lack of technical and administrative set-up • Public sector constitutes only 3% of the population. The capacity of ULBs is still quite weak. • Consultancy Raj' should be discouraged as it requires low level knowledge and is deprived of any institutional accountability	• Capacity building of elected representatives essential. • Special focus is required on this account. Identifying a range of habitat professionals. • Need to develop institutions in every city to provide solutions to the city's problems. • Need to develop large number of experts. • Providing 'respectable' government jobs will lead to expertise. • Focus on enhancing accountability and professionalism while building institutions. • Local embedded expertise should be preferred but one which has knowledge of global best practices
Financing Urban Development	• Urban development has largely been financed by city authorities (like DDA) acquiring agricultural land, developing it into urban, and selling at a premium, or building access infrastructure like ring roads and metros and financing those through sale of large tracts to private developers (as in Hyd) has been the model so far. • Monetary returns to decision-makers is becoming the primary motive behind approval of projects is setting wrong precedent. Citizen's mandate is not reflected in the decision making.	• As 60% of the urban population resides in the small towns. Land Value in these towns is comparatively low which broadens the scope for more democratic approach. Can be done through providing more financial control to the urban local bodies. • Need to ensure the funds from the centre reaches to district level. • Finance Commission can give direct funds to the cities or centre should use its funds to persuade state govt. to give more powers to local bodies. • Intra-city distributions of funds needs to be more equitable – at present only a few rich wards get most of the funds

Social, Economic and Technical Issues

Themes	Issues / Problems	Recommendations
Social and Gender Concerns	• How to improve women's access to public transport and public spaces? More than 90% working women are in unorganised sector. How to ensure their livelihoods are improved. • Urban spaces are ghettoized into different segments based on class, caste, communities. Contrary to popular belief, communities are not solely responsible for segregation. • Outsourcing of the government services to NGO/civil society is transforming the relations between different classes and the state.	• Need to recognise women as autonomous beings in urban sector policy. Changing the mindset will require long term and more holistic policies women. • Gender analysis of policies and programs must be done. CCTV cameras will not be effective. Focus on adequate toilets for women. • Markets tend to monetise the prejudices leading to further segregation of the marginalised communities. Need to focus on process of segregation and counter market forces through state and community action.
Employment and Livelihoods	• Non-farm activities bigger cause of urbanisation • Caste and communal prejudices are mechanisms through which immobility of labour are operationalised, e.g. SCs in sanitation. • Premature deindustrialisation through SC/NGT judgments cause of unemployment in Delhi.	• Mixed land use can help in generating employment opportunities. • Identify 3-4 major job anchors in each metropolitan city, look beyond IT sector. • So-called "illegal" informal sector activities, often allowed through corruption, generate a lot of jobs and provide much needed services affordably, so should be re-evaluated.
Urban or Regional (Rurban) Planning	• Need to promote Area/District specific planning. • Planning needs to improve but there is a need to focus on implementation and ensuring basic routines are well-managed. • Disproportionate attention given to metropolitan cities. Lack of research on urban towns with smaller population. • Over-emphasis on finding causal relationship major limitation of urban sector research.	• Local bodies should prepare plans for social justice and economic development (as specified in the Constitution). • Governance system of each city should take into cognizance multiple factors like size, legal framework, administrative setup etc. • Cities should focus on both lovability and livability – which means not only good infrastructure and services for the better-off segments, but also for all and the opportunity to make a living through jobs. • Focus on the basic necessities first. Solid waste management, water and sanitation programmes should be prioritised. • Need to make cities affordable, especially housing. This is directly dependent on land pricing.

Themes	Issues / Problems	Recommendations
Urban or Regional (Rurban) Planning (Continued)	• Strong land policy required – a spatial land use model for districts. • Long term planning is absent as the elected representatives have no background or training in this and ULB staff hardly has any planners. • Need to focus on the last mile connectivity and not just metro network expansion. • Cannot replicate western model. Do not have the fossil fuels or labour at our disposal like western cities. • Excessive emphasis on infrastructural growth is exclusionary for urban poor. • The smart city idea has not worked because it is narrowly conceived, both in terms of infrastructure and services as livelihoods.	• Promote streets as public spaces – Rahagiri. • Focus on regularizing informal land titles. • Rethink zoning and permit mixed land use. Fixed percentage of LIG flats. • Need to protect water bodies – data is easily available. • Focus on next 1000 cities or rather urban – rural regions after the first 100 smart cities. Move from Smart Cities to Samarth Zillas, where district HQs and smaller towns along with their rural hinterland are the units of planning for both infrastructure & services and livelihoods.

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Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies

Jawahar Bhawan,
Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road,
New Delhi-110 001
India

rgics.org

Rajiv Gandhi
INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY STUDIES