

URBAN INDIA



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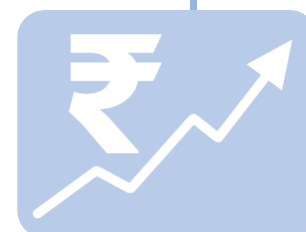


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Special Issue on Migration

Overview of Migration
Seasonal Migration
Gendered Migration
Migrant Child Labour
Job Search and Labour Market Outcomes
Migration and Conflict
Legal Aspects of Migration
Book Reviews
Workshops





Editor-in-charge

Debolina Kundu

Associate Guest Editor

Mukta Naik

(Centre for Policy Research)

National Institute of Urban Affairs

The National Institute of Urban Affairs is a premier institute for research, capacity building and dissemination of knowledge for the urban sector in India. NIUA conducts research on urbanization, urban policy and planning, municipal finance and governance, land economics, transit oriented development, urban livelihoods, environment and climate change and smart cities.

The Institute supports policy formulation, programme appraisal and monitoring for the Ministry of Urban Development and other Ministries and Departments of the Government of India and also undertakes research and capacity building projects with multilateral and bilateral agencies and private sector organizations.

The Urban Data Centre at NIUA promotes research and evidence based planning and management of the urban sector in India.

NIUA publishes Urban India, a bi-annual journal and maintains the India Urban Portal, which provides information on models and good practices created under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission.

CALL FOR PAPERS

URBAN INDIA invites contributions on issues related to urban development, management and governance including urbanisation, poverty, environment, municipal finance, e-governance among others.

Papers sent for publication should not have been published earlier or simultaneously submitted for publication to another journal.

Guidelines for submission of manuscripts:

- Articles should not exceed 8000 words, including notes and references.
- Articles should be accompanied by an abstract of a maximum of 150-200 words.
- Research notes or book reviews must be not more than 4000 words.
- Graphs and charts need to be prepared in MS Office (Word/Excel) and not in jpeg or other formats.
- Full citation for all references and sources must be provided.
- Articles should be sent by email in MS Word format to the Editor, Urban India along with the declaration that the article is unpublished.
- Authors are requested to provide full details for correspondence (postal and email address).

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BOOK REVIEW

'Urbanization in India - Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward' Edited by Isher Judge Ahluwalia, Ravi Kanbur and P. K. Mohanty by Sage Publications, New Delhi.

Chetan Vaidya

Director (SPA, New Delhi)

In 2011, India's urban population was 377.1 million. 31 percentage of the country's total population live in urban areas. In India, there is a strong realization that its urban areas need to improve for the country to achieve fast and sustained economic development. In this context, this book on urbanization in India is undoubtedly an important contribution to the limited literature on this subject in the country. Edited by three experts with different backgrounds- Dr. Isher J. Ahluwalia, a leading economic researcher, Dr. Ravi Kanbur, an academican and Dr. P. K. Mohanty, an administrator, the book presents an in-depth analysis of the present and future challenges and opportunities of urban India.

The volume consists of 10 papers. These papers are grouped under three headings: Urban Planning, Infrastructure and Sustainability; Finance and Governance and Inclusion; and Governance. The papers cover a wide range of issues such as Planning and Markets for Urban Development in India; Sustainable Urban Living; Urban Infrastructure and Service Delivery; Municipal Financing Framework; Market Worthiness and Urban Local Governments; Public Private Partnership (PPP); Governance and Fiscal Federalism; Generating Demand for Good Governance; Integrating Redevelopment of Slums in City Planning; and Affordable Housing in Urban India. These papers have been authored by policy makers, researchers and practitioners who have been working in the development sector for a long time. These include Dr. Isher J. Ahluwalia, Dr. P. K. Mohanty, Dr. Montek S. Ahluwalia, Dr. Ajay Mathur, Dr. Jessica Seddan, Mr. Vikram Kapur, Dr. Govinda Rao, Dr. Richard Bird, Prof Samuel Paul, Dr. Bimal Patel, Mr V. K. Phatak and Mr Deepak Parekh.

The First Chapter by Dr. Isher J. Ahluwalia, Dr. Ravi Kanbur, and Dr. P. K. Mohanty provides an "Overview of Challenges of Urbanisation in India". This framework discusses recent interest in economic focus on agglomeration benefits. It



argues that, once a process of agglomeration (urbanisation) starts, there is tendency for it to continue to a point where the benefits are overtaken by costs of agglomeration. Therefore, while on one hand high productivity and incomes of cities are appreciated, the congestion, pollution and crime become the downside of the same phenomenon. The challenge lies in bringing private cost-benefit in line with social cost benefits. The theoretical analysis provides mechanism to solve the problems like degeneration, proper functioning of land and capital markets, infrastructure development and increasing role of private sector. This framework views the role of government to reduce the gap between private benefit and social costs, and achieving inclusive cities.

Chapter on “Urban Infrastructure and Service Delivery” is by Dr. Isher J. Ahluwalia. It brings out investment requirements for urban infrastructure for the period 2012-31 based on the High Powered Expert Committee (HPEC) Report on Urban Infrastructure 2011. It has brought out its implications for financing and made number of recommendations. It has emphasised that investment alone will not ensure public service delivery unless financing and governance mechanism involve reforms. The chapter also presents an assessment of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). It suggested that the processes of planning and implementing urban infrastructure projects should be economically viable and sustainable.

The paper on Planning and Markets for Urban Development in India by Dr. Isher and Dr. Mohanty focuses on reorientation of urban planning to address the challenges of cities. It presents a review of major aspects of urban planning in India. It has brought out the role of flexible floor space index in urban design, need for integrating public transport and land use planning, and addressing challenges of inclusive cities. It has presented alternatives to bulk acquisition and development land model such as town planning scheme, private public partnership in ‘land development and land pooling’. In the section on financing by unlocking land values, international initiatives in Canada, Denmark, Hongkong, and Colombia have been summarised. Indian examples of unlocking land values such as Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai, impact fee in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka cess on land-based taxes are also discussed. The central theme of the paper is that India’s urban planning needs a major overhaul and needs to move from rigid public controls to promoting integrated development in consonance with market forces.

Dr. Montek Ahluwalia and Dr. Ajay Mathur’s paper on Sustainable Urban Living has focused on four areas – reducing use of electricity in building;



reducing energy used in transportation; meeting demand for water in cities sustainable manner; and management of municipal solid waste. The section on energy examines feasibility of designing energy efficient buildings, promoting energy efficient appliances, roof top solar electricity generation, linking public transport with land use planning, increasing use of public transport and technology to reduce fossil fuel use. The water management section deals with increasing usable water supply, use of water saving devices, low-cost technology for reuse of sewage and appropriate pricing of water. Municipal solid waste section brings out the need for scientific waste management, financial viability and citizen involvement. It brings out that government agencies typically act in silos and do not take coordinated steps. Efforts at higher level are required to mandate such coordination. The paper concludes that successful strategy will include regulation, appropriate pricing, subsidy and targeted public investment. All these measures seem to be feasible but one wonders why they are not planned and implemented.

PPP is often suggested as an option for improved investment in urban infrastructure. Mr. Anand Sahasranaman and Mr. Vikram Kapur in their Chapter on PPP, view private involvement in terms of mobilization of private resources in public infrastructure and deployment of private sector's expertise to improve service delivery. It has discussed development of municipal bonds market in India and examples of PPP in Bus Service, Water Supply and Outer Ring Road Projects. It states that experience of PPP in India has been mixed and suggests that new projects should absorb lessons from earlier failures and look at structuring risks in project development. Needless to say, these projects have to be supported by fundamental reforms in governance.

Prof Samuel Paul, in his chapter titled "Generating Demand for Good Governance" surveys the Indian experience with demand side management, looking specifically at civil society initiatives at sub-national and national levels. The tools proposed at the sub-national level are social audits, community score cards, citizen report cards and public expenditure tracking and budgeting. At the national level, the appropriate tools include public interest litigation and citizen movement. It is clear that these initiatives have applicability at all levels of government. Though impact of these measures is unpredictable and may vary with time. However, there have been many noteworthy gains too. One such impact can be seen with emergence of a new party in Delhi.



Dr. Bimal Patel and Mr V. K. Phatak have presented a paper on “Integrating Redevelopment of Slums in City Planning”. Unfortunately, in India slums are generally ignored in the urban planning process. Interestingly, this paper discusses the idea of integrating them in the planning process through a comparison of Mumbai and Ahmedabad. The paper has brought out that household incomes in Mumbai are higher than Ahmedabad. But more people are living in slums in Mumbai than Ahmedabad, owing to a different topography and unfriendly master planning and regulations in Mumbai. The paper has described how regulations in the two cities affect the costs of development. It has also analysed how subsidised housing, developer incentives or inclusive zoning cannot provide answer to our affordable housing problems. In Indian cities, slums are stepping stones to upward mobility. Therefore, for an effective strategy government should view itself as a facilitator and work with market, focus on slum upgrading (as opposed to full- fledged housing) and the supply of services for poor households.

The overview chapter has brought out lessons from the Indian Experience. Investments requirement in urban infrastructure are less but these are less than fuel and fertilizers subsidies. Urban India faces a significant challenge of reforming institutions and governance. Another message is building capacity of local government. The editors have identified that the volume does not address major challenges like migration and employment, informal cities, urban design, urban conservation and climate change. The first chapter provides a broad framework for the volume. However, this framework was not followed through in most of the papers. A final concluding section could have helped in consolidating or identifying the constraints faced by the government to fulfill the role of balancing private benefits and social costs and options of change in three thematic areas that are identified as challenges. The book has also not discussed the on-going debate on the growth versus development which is relevant to the urban sector in India. Moreover, the book could have focused more on lives and concerns of the under-privileged population which account for about 29 percent of the total urban population. Nevertheless, this volume will stimulate interest in further research in the urban sector. It will also help the Government to review urban policies and programs. The papers in the book make very important contributions in areas of urban infrastructure, planning, housing, financing and governance in India. Urban planners, practicing professionals, policy makers and academicians must read this book.