WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2022

TOWARDS A RESILIENT PLANET:
ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUTURE

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EUROPEAN UNION | Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection | giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH | teri school of advanced studies

Data-driven Governance for Urban Resilience in Smart Cities

THEMATIC TRACK SUMMARY

Venue: Chinnar

Date: February 18, 2022

Time: 02:45 PM - 04:15 PM (IST)

Suggested Citation

Actionable Messages

Message 1: Database and data analytics can address the gap which is particularly present in the science, policy, and practice interface in the context of urban resilience. Hence, the future lies in evidence based data driven policymaking.

Message 2: Smart Cities Mission is trying to solve the challenges of three core areas; the quality of life, economic growth of the city and sustainability. This is being done by leveraging technology along with non-technology initiatives to address these three areas.

Message 3: Moving forward, what is required is the inclusion of data to manage and govern the extrapolated population projection for the future.

Message 4: There is a need to have any conversation about data with an understanding of the social and institutional context in which data has been collected and used.

Narrative

The session was deliberated towards *'Data Driven Governance for Urban Resilience in Smart Cities'* with the welcoming remarks coming from the **Mr Sanjay Seth, Senior Director, Sustainable Habitat Programme, TERI**. He further directed the session towards the importance of discussing the relevance of data in today's world and mentioned that "the recent COVID-19 pandemic gave a better outlook as to how data driven governance could bring a boom in the sphere of urban resilience." He also mentioned that the use of technologies and innovative pedagogies changed the course of traditional measures which were insufficient in controlling the pandemic. Hence, it was imperative to discuss the use of data driven governance in the realm of urban resilience to enhance policy recommendations, management and city planning techniques through integration of various stakeholders.

This was followed by the comments made by **H.E. Mr Ugo Astuto, Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to India**, who suggested that "to recover from the economic slump caused by the pandemic, policies must be designed in a way that it does not compromise the low carbon transition that we need in the years to come." It was **H.E Mr Freddy Svane, Ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy in India** who brought the Indo-Danish partnership and the difference in nature of the two countries in terms of technological know-hows in the session, he mentioned that "Denmark and Europe in general, loves 'high tech' but it is very costly and the footprint it leaves on climate is immense, therefore I think we could learn a lot from India in terms of low cost technological interventions so that it is affordable and accessible to all."

Ms Rhea Srivastava, Research Associate, TERI set the context of the session towards a resilient urban environment by adapting to data driven governance. She suggested that resilience in the urban context comprises of three aspects, firstly, a resilient city can adapt and recover from shocks and stresses, while shocks are sudden disasters such as flooding, wild fire, or earthquakes, stresses pressure the city over longer periods of time like poor air quality, ageing infrastructure and poverty. Secondly, she mentioned that the resilient cities considers urban areas and communities that are vulnerable to these shocks and stresses, particularly the vulnerable groups of society including elderly, people with disabilities and low income groups. The third aspect that was discussed by her was about, what enables urban resilience? She emphasised that while there are many actions points needed to build resilience, 'data' stands out. She said that "it is often referred to as the new oil and hence, data is currently revolutionising government approaches towards service delivery in Smart Cities". She also talked about how data driven governance provides multitude of opportunities in resilience discourse by taking a proactive approach rather than a reactive one. With state of the art digital advancements through artificial intelligence, and big data, decision makers become well equipped to plan, manage and monitor risk.

Mr Hitesh Vadiya, the chair of the session further elaborated on this and mentioned that "we are all dealing with day to day affairs of the city and data becomes a backdrop of these affairs."

Mr Rahul Kapoor, Director, Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, further developed on the topic and talked about creating data ecosystems that will help people get the right kind of evidence to understand where the gaps are, what are the outcomes that needs to be achieved and where do we stand today in terms of achieving the benchmarks. He mentioned about Smart Cities Mission and how it is trying to solve the challenges of three core areas in the city, namely; the quality of life, economic growth and sustainability. He said that "this is being done by leveraging technology along with non-technology initiatives to address these three areas".

Prof Dr Ing Anke Karmann-Woessner, Head of Urban Planning Department, City of Karlsruhe, Germany, gave her perspective on data driven governance and said "For us it's embedding digital principles, digital ethics in the governance and project management's when including new services and solutions that define data driven governance."

Mr Ole Larsen Director, Climate Adaptation Living Lab, Copenhagen brought an interesting outlook towards cities and instead of following the prevalent line of though, he said "Cities are not the cause of climate change, they are actually a solution to building a more sustainable society". He further explained how moving forward to a new future would require the inclusion of data to manage and govern the extrapolated population projection of the future. In the end Dr Vikrom Mathur, Founder, Transitions Research, got an interesting point to the panel and suggested how data cannot be viewed in silos, it is also the politics, norms, and accurate behavior and incentives to act right that plays a critical role in building city resilience. The session was ended with summarizing some important points that were the crux of the discussion by the chairs, Mr Vaidya and Ms Kamilla Kristensen Rai.

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" The recent COVID-19 pandemic gave us a better outlook as to how data driven governance could bring a boom in the sphere of urban resilience. The use of technologies and innovative pedagogies changed the course of traditional measures which were insufficient in controlling the pandemic.

Mr Sanjay Seth
Senior Director, Sustainable Habitat Programme, TERI

" To recover from the economic slump caused by the pandemic, policies must be designed in a way that it does not compromise the low carbon transition that we need in the years to come. There is no contradiction between growth and climate action.

H.E. Mr Ugo Astuto
Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to India

" This summit has a scope of going beyond what we are doing in the discourse of climate change by reaching out to the citizens and I sincerely believe that data driven tools can help us strengthen this knowledge more. We need to secure and protect places and data should not create problems in that sense but should enhance the role of governance in doing so.

H.E. Mr Freddy Svane
Ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy in India

" We are all dealing with day to day affairs of the city and data becomes a backdrop of these affairs. We need to choose between governance driven data or data driven governance.

Mr Hitesh Vaidya
Director, National Institute for Urban Affairs

" When we speak about resilience, we also need to connect and have the same platform in our understanding of such words in the context of urban. Urban resilience can be viewed through three different lenses: human resilience; city resilience; infrastructure resilience.

Ms Kamilla Kristensen Rai
Counsellor, Delegation of the European Union to India

" There are two trends that we have seen locally that has caught our focus; one is of course, urbanization and the second is disasters. Smart cities mission is trying to solve the challenges of three core areas; the quality of life, economic growth of the city and sustainability. This is being done by leveraging technology along with non-technology initiatives to address these three areas.

Mr Rahul Kapoor
Director, Smart Cities Mission, MoHUA, Govt. of India

" How can a data driven approach towards resilience drive good governance? For us it's embedding digital principles, digital ethics in the governance and project management's when including new services and solutions. In the city of Karlsruhe, smart cities are associated with a vision that aims to preserve the quality of life in the city and build resilience together with the citizens.

Prof Dr-Ing Anke Karmann-Woessner
Head of Urban Planning Department, City of Karlsruhe, Germany

" Cities are not the cause of climate change, they are actually a solution to building a more sustainable society. We want to decarbonize the world, decentralize services and digitize governance.

Mr Ole Larsen
Director, Climate Adaptation Living Lab, Copenhagen

" Data management and data analytics is something that has to drive the top down and bottom up governance. The database needs to be at the bottom of the pyramid, wherein at the top we are targeting solutions, policies, strategies or action plans, depending on the maturity of the database and analytics.

Prof Shaleen Singhal
Dean, Research and Partnerships, TERI School of Advanced Studies

" There is this misconception that science and data is the only driving action on resilience planning in cities, it is also the politics, norms, and accurate behaviour and incentives to act right that plays a critical role.

Dr Vikrom Mathur
Founder, Transitions Research