

achieving sustainable development in India's rapidly growing cities

The rapid demographic growth in and around Indian cities is changing the physical dimensions – the size, shape, density, land uses, spatial structure and building types – of its cities. Increased urban development puts intense pressure on existing urban infrastructure to support quality of life. Urban growth often manifests itself as overcrowded and very high-density urban forms, claimed to contribute to crime, physical and mental illness and poor living conditions. The current physical form that intense urban growth takes is therefore generally considered to be unsustainable.

This research network aims to facilitate the sharing of experience, expertise and knowledge to identify arising research challenges and opportunities within the context of India's rapidly growing cities. The underlying goal of the research network is to conduct long-term collaborative research into sustainable urban form in rapidly growing cities in India.



research activities

capacity building and researcher exchange

Structured networking activities will include researcher and student exchanges and knowledge transfer workshops to key stakeholders and students in India and the UK.

understanding sustainable development for Indian cities

The CityForm-India research network of Indian, UK and international partners will:

- bring together experts to identify themes and issues for research and critically discuss gaps in knowledge in the examination of sustainable urban form in Indian cities;
- identify appropriate methodologies to measure sustainable urban form in Indian cities;
- select two cities to form study sites for a pilot study to examine and test the theoretical claims behind sustainable cities as well as identify the gaps in policy and in delivery mechanisms;
- conduct this primary research as part of Masters degree programmes at two of India's leading architecture and planning schools, SPA (Delhi) and CEPT (Ahmedabad).

disseminating knowledge

The network will facilitate knowledge transfer and exchange between the academic partners and with different urban development stakeholders. A number of non-academic stakeholders from government, industry and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will be identified to ensure that the knowledge and expertise from the network is disseminated as effectively as possible. This activity is aimed to bring about step-change in research and education into sustainable development in Indian and UK institutions. Co-authored journal articles, conference papers and working papers are planned to continue and sustain this network.

Based on the pilot study, workshops and feedback from stakeholders, a number of research grant applications are planned for future empirical research which would examine in more detail a greater number of cities in India (and, potentially, other developing countries) covering all aspects of sustainable development.



lead partners



key contacts

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other partners

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- School of Planning and Public Policy (CEPT), Ahmedabad
- Delhi School of Economics, New Delhi
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai
- Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi
- Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh
- University of the West of England, Bristol
- Politecnico di Milano, Italy

key stakeholders

- Institute of Town Planners – India (ITPI)
- Institute of Urban Designers – India (IUDI)
- Urban Management Centre (UMC)
- Vastu Shilpa Foundation (VSF)
- Town Planning and Valuation Department, Gujarat State
- EDAW, UK, Singapore

