Innovation and Development of Child - Friendly Cities

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ABSTRACT

This document will help in creating & developing child-friendly cities. In planning, participation of all community members include children, young and old, large & small, urban and rural are equally important in the sense of independent mobility with safe & secure. For Children city planning and design should be more smart, safe, resilient, pleasant, healthy & inhabitable built environment. By placing children's Right at the initial & main planning stage, cities can restart the process cycle of Action Plan. The concept of child-friendly city is an emerging concept in urban planning sector in many countries across the globe including India. Because in the chaotic city surrounding, the independency & development of children in pleasant built environment is struggling. Indeed as a city planner, it is the responsibility of planner to make town pleasant for children to permit their accessibility, decor protection & liberty with typical improvement & development of children.

KEYWORDS: Child friendly cities, children development, human right, UNICEF, India

INTRODUCTION

"Urban children, especially those from disadvantaged sections, are susceptible to ill-health, poor access to water and sanitation, insufficient education, urban disasters and lack of protection. Indian cities need to have a system of local governance that is committed to fulfil children's rights. The focus of the major urban development schemes needs to be on smaller urban centres where 68 percent of the urban population is concentrated." Every fourth child in India (or 27.4 percent of the total number of children) lives in urban areas. Moreover, the number of children (0-6) in urban areas has increased by 10.3% since 2001, whereas the number of children (0-6) in rural areas has decreased by 7%. [1] As a result, urban children and kids represent a significant population group that need special care.

"The Forgotten Voices: the world of urban children in India report compiled by PwC India and Save the Children does a reality check on the situation of urban children as varying patterns of migration to cities across India make them increasingly vulnerable to a variety of risks."

"Though many child protection legislations have been brought by various governments, incidents of child abuse pose serious questions before policy makers," pointed out Shri KirenRijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs, and Government of India upon releasing the report. "I am confident that the numerous suggestions brought out in the report will help both Central and State governments in addressing this and other important concerns emphatically and decisively."[2]

"A child-friendly city is a city where children can grow up in an enjoyable, responsible, healthy and dynamic way through improvements in the physical and social environment. In a child-friendly city, a key goal is that children of different ages and backgrounds are out and about playing, exploring and living in their neighbourhoods, with or without their parents or caregivers. By contrast, the Child-Friendly Cities initiative supported by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) focuses on the process: on involving children and young people in the governance and decision-making of the city. The Child-friendly Cities Project initiated by UNICEF and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHabitat) in 1996 is the first multistakeholder collaboration to place children at the forefront of the urban agenda."

Definition of Child Friendly Cities

In order to create a child-friendly city, children must be able to use public infrastructure without adult supervision. [2] UNICEF defines child-friendly cities (CFCs) as cities, towns, communities, and other local government systems dedicated to improving the lives of children under their control by implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. A child-friendly city necessitates effective administration that prioritises the child's development and provides children with a voice in decision-making. According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, an ideal child-friendly city aspires to fulfil all of its children's human rights requirements.

Aims

Fundamentally, a child friendly city aims to guarantee the right of all young citizens to:

➤ Influence decisions about their city
➤ Give their thoughts on the city they wish to live in.
➤ Take part in family, community, and social activities.
➤ Obtain essential services such as health care, education, and accommodation.
➤ Have access to safe drinking water and good sanitation
➤ Be protected against exploitation, assault, and abuse
➤ They are able to walk securely in the streets on their own.
➤ Make new friends and have fun.
➤ Provide plants and animals with green places.
➤ Live in a non-polluted, long-term environment
➤ Take part in cultural and social activities.
➤ Receive support, love, and care, and also
➤ Regardless of ethnicity, religion, income, gender, or disability, be equal citizens who have equal access to all services..

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

"A city committed to child rights will ground its system of governance in the four general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as identified by the Committee on the Rights of the Child:"

A. Non-discrimination (Article 2): To achieve this, a city that really is "child friendly" is committed to defending the basic human rights of all children. All types of prejudice against children, including gender, disability, income and other factors, must be addressed. Using data disaggregation to reveal intra-urban differences in the scenario analysis provides an effective approach for identifying discrimination both inside and across urban groups.

B. Best interests of the child (Article 3): A city that prioritises children's welfare ensures that the interests of children are taken into account in all decisions pertaining to children. All parties responsible for ensuring that children's rights are protected must work together to ensure that their best interests are protected. Mechanisms for public participation in monitoring can assist everyone, including children, in determining if children are given "primary consideration" in city life. School, health care, and early childhood development are not the only locations where children's best interests are considered.. Is public transport system accessible to youngsters and mothers with small children? Are roads, parks, and other public areas built with the intention of encouraging children's natural curiosity, socialisation, and play? What consideration is given by the city to the impact of economic and development strategies on children?

C. The right to life and maximum development (Article 6): A child-friendly city seeks to ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop and attain their full potential. The city is concerned with providing basic services, ensuring a healthy and safe environment, and providing educational opportunities and early stimulation and care. Even if local governments run services independently or rely on national programmes, they still have a responsibility to keep an eye on and supervise the quality of the city's interventions while also including the people who will be impacted by them to make sure their needs are met."

D. Respecting the opinions of minors (Article 12): A child-friendly city promotes children's active participation by ensuring that children's freedom to express themselves and their views are given adequate weight in all issues that affect them.. Many places, both nationally and locally, are embracing the benefits of involving children in decision-making processes. There are, however, no laws to reflect these concerns. Because they are based on the benevolence of an inspired official, they tend to be patchy and discriminatory. There is still a lot of work to be done in the field of encouraging and sustaining the engagement of children. As a result, children acquire scepticism about democracy and are dissatisfied with their expectations."

E. "The obligation to meet the needs and fulfil the rights of children lies with the state. However, if practice is not developed locally, state-level commitments risk remaining mere declarations of intent. Local government is best positioned to

translate national-level commitments into practice suitable to the local conditions. Families (to which the Convention gives primary responsibility for the child) and, by extension, communities have a primary role in helping local government respond to this new challenge. In a responsive, transparent and inclusive system of municipal governance, local government and families/communities are natural partners in addressing children's rights. Other stakeholders, such as NGOs, civil society organizations, the media, and research and academic institutions are important allies. Children and children's groups play a critical role in developing the vision and proposing practical solutions for the city they want."

The Right to Play in a Crowded City

"A number of countries, particularly high-income nations including Sweden and Canada but also Lebanon, have given priority to the environmental transformation of cities in response to children's need for free movement and recreation. They have focused on the right to play through recreational activities, green spacesand traffic control and road security, recognizing that most cities are unfriendly to children in the way they are designed and organized. Re-designing spaces from the point of view of children represents a new challenge for most city governments."

ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERTS

"A child friendly city needs to move beyond municipal officials and experts and be progressively reflected in academic curricula and addressed by research. Postgraduate courses are being offered by a number of academic institutions, usually to architects, planners, environmental psychologists and social science graduates, to prepare the new designers of child friendly cities. A new professional expertise is evolving, along with knowledge creation built on research and intellectual analysis. Knowledge and expertise, however, need to support efforts at the grassroots, in the neighbourhoods or barrios where children live. A child friendly city practitioner should be first and foremost a facilitator of community participation and development and an advocate of child friendly policy and plan development. In a child friendly governance system, all actors – children and children's groups, community and civil society organizations, NGOs, experts, practitioners and municipal authorities – are committed to setting up mechanisms that prevent discrimination, protect the best interests of children, ensure survival and maximum development of all children and respect children's views."

"In the context of the Convention, a child friendly city can no longer run sectoral programmes, services and interventions independently. As the Convention addresses the child as a whole, with an indivisible body of legal provisions, a child friendly city has to deal with the child holistically, ensuring that all sectors converge to provide an integrated response to the indivisible demands of children. A child friendly city is not achieved through adopting one more ad hoc project or multiplying interventions haphazardly. On the contrary, foundations are laid by assessing needs and existing responses in order to gear up systems to respond to children from all perspectives. Once such mechanisms are in place, the whole system gives consideration to children in all city actions, overcoming a tendency to create a ghetto for children, as for the elderly, the disabled, women and other minorities."

CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE
Child Friendly Institutional Framework
Some "general measures" that city governments adopt when they are devoted to ensuring that children's rights are realised may be recognised when looking at data from cities throughout the globe that have worked to establish child-friendly institutions. " To ensure that the action plan is followed out and that policy and practise are embedded in the system, special institutional processes are put in place. A separate unit for children should be formed to manage and oversee the plan's execution, as well as to ensure that it is linked to all relevant agencies within the local government and includes community stakeholders."

Independent Mobility in Different Environments
Children's levels of independent mobility influence their physical, social, cognitive and emotional develop-ment. H. uttenmoser (1995) was able to show a decline in the motor and social development of 5-year olds who were not able to play independently outdoors, in the streets and in yards. Also other studies have emphasized the importance of spontaneous outdoor play for children's motor development and physical health (Armstrong, 1993; Davis & Jones, 1996). Prezza et al. (2001) found that children who were more spatially independent played more often with their peers, both indoors and outdoors. Mobility restrictions can also affect the development of emotional bonds between children and the natural environment (Kong, 2000; Children's levels of independent mobility influence their physical, social, cognitive and emotional develop-ment. H. Uttenmoser (1995) was able to show a decline in the motor and social development of 5-year olds who were not able to play

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The physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development of children is influenced by their ability to move independently. Children are no longer able to play outside the home, even on the street or cross the road, because of the rise in motors and cars. Moreover, a lack of mobility might affect the development of children's emotional ties to the natural environment and their developing sense of personal responsibility for the preservation of the environment.[3]

Child Impact Assessment and Evaluation
"Law, policy and practice are systematically assessed, monitored and evaluated. A new notion of child impact assessment has been evolving along the lines of environmental and gender impact assessments. This seeks to ensure that all policy and practice developed by the city are assessed with respect to their impact on children. Although on-the-ground examples are rare and experimental in nature, more traditional forms of monitoring and evaluation take place in several cities, where a concerted effort is made to devise quality indicators and monitoring systems within the framework of a multisectoral, city-level intervention in favour of young citizens."

Children's Budgets
"As new development targets for children are set, resource mobilization needs to be increased. As a complementary instrument to city-level plans for children, children's budgets ensure that due consideration is given to children in resource allocation. Measures range from the allocation of special resources for children, to increasing transparency in decision making and the management of such resources. There are some cases where specific funding is earmarked for children, and the responsibility for developing the budget is assigned to children themselves, who decide expenditure on the basis of priorities they set themselves."

A Situation Analysis of the City's Children
"Regular gathering of data on the status of the city's children is a prerequisite for planning; it informs decisions on setting priorities and provides a basis for political and social debate on the condition of the city's young. Involving children and families in collecting data on existing initiatives and issues affecting children helps the community learn about the situation and empowers it to propose solutions. A situation analysis carried out in the different neighbourhoods and synthesized at the city level supports a bottom-up approach in planning. The school system is best positioned to facilitate children's involvement in this highly educational process. Some cities have prepared a State of the City's Children Report as a regular contribution to planning processes, monitoring progress against planned targets and increasing awareness among the community and policy makers."

Independent Advocacy for Children
"The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has promoted the creation of independent human rights institutions to promote children's rights. There are about 40 children's ombudspeople or commissioners

for children operating within national human rights institutions. A few city governments have established comparable mechanisms within their jurisdiction, although statutory systems are still rare. There is scope for involving children in providing input to the establishment of such institutions."

Involving Children and Respecting Children's Views

"The participation of children in decision-making processes makes them partners in the city's governance system. Child participation entails more than providing forum for meeting and expressing their views. The unique perspective of children has to be taken into account in the decisions made by the city. This imposes a shift in the way political and planning processes normally take place. Child participation is not just another activity or step in the planning process but a practice and method informing all levels of the process as described here."

CASE STUDY
Child Friendly Cities around the World

"A movement of child friendly cities has been developing across the world as a growing number of city governments in low, middle, and high-income countries recognize that promoting initiatives for youth and children is not only a much demanded need of families and communities but also an indicator of good governance. This implies active involvement by the community, gives a new leadership role to the mayor to act as a defender of children, strengthens ongoing democratization processes and calls for a transparent system of governance. Child friendly city initiatives are easily understood by the community – in particular by children – and make political sense to elected representatives."

"Propelled by such good reasons, the growth of the child friendly city movement has been largely spontaneous. Many municipalities have declared themselves child friendly, have developed city-wide plans for children, have framed child-focused policies, carried out budgetary reforms, involved children in decision making and adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a framework for developing municipal agendas for children. This has produced a rich variety of experiences in urban areas in different regions. In countries such as the Philippines, Spain and Italy, it has developed into a nationwide movement where central government guidelines and national political support elicit action in favour of children across cities and towns. Incentives are provided, such as public recognition and positive competition among urban innovators. Whether the effort is coordinated at the national level or – as is more often the case – generated at a municipal one, a number of patterns can be identified."

Governance and Planning For Rights of the Child

"Countries such as the Philippines, Spain, Brazil, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Colombia, Honduras, Nigeria and Croatia focus on the opportunity that the Convention on the Rights of the Child offers to develop local systems of governance that include children as a primary concern and even as players. Such experiences prioritize the development of permanent municipal systems, such as work plans and city-level strategies for children, and to partnerships among stakeholders such as the municipal government, mayor, communities, NGOs and children. Spain launched the CiudadesAmigas de la Infancia (Child Friendly Cities) programme in 2000, expanding the experience developed in the 1990s with the Mayors Defenders of Children initiative. This has a transparent administrative framework and defined city-wide objectives for children. The main objective is to sensitize mayors and city councils, to ensure that children feature in their political agenda and that they develop city-level policies for children. The initiative embraces an alliance including UNICEF, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Local Area Network in Favour of Children's Rights and the University Institute of Children's Rights. A competition is organized to select the best-performing city, granting special recognition to experiences based on child rights, especially in the areas of participation, health, education, environment, play and leisure, developing policies for children and supporting development programmes through partnerships with and by cities."

"In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the child friendly cities initiative started as a pilot project in 1996 to assist communities living in densely populated areas under very difficult conditions. Its objective was to support decentralization processes, promote community participation and translate the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the daily lives of children, families and communities. Local communities were selected according to criteria set by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in cooperation with community-based organizations. Child activity centres were developed as special settings for children, arranging events in collaboration with the local community and, in particular, and children. Fifteen of these centres (nine in the West Bank and six in the Gaza Strip) have been established and rely on youth volunteering to function."

"Some 15,000 children have been enrolled in their activities, which focus on the young child, with special emphasis on girls and children in need of special protection, although adolescent and youth leaders are also actively involved and have been trained as animators to work with children and parents; the centres also seek community and regional resources to support their activities. A rapid-appraisal evaluation of these centres in 1998 revealed that they had provided good community-based and community-run opportunities, which were complementary to nationallevel interventions. Community participation mobilized by local volunteers was found to be effective, and the project has also successfully integrated educational and recreational activities for children."

"In Croatia, in 1999, a broad coalition including the Union of Societies – Our Children, Croatia, the Croatian Society for Social and Preventive Paediatrics, the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Motherhood and Youth, and UNICEF launched the Croatian Towns and Districts Friends of Children initiative, with the aim of promoting action to fulfil the rights and meet the needs of children. The programme builds on the partnerships developed by the Mayors Defenders of Children initiative launched during the Balkan war as a way of assisting displaced children. A large coalition of municipal stakeholders monitors achievements on the basis of a multisectoral set of rights-based indicators. The media also play a role in assessing progress and in highlighting the impact of the initiative."

INITIATIVES

"In India, child friendly cities have emphasized the fundamental needs of children and the need to strengthen the delivery of basic social services to meet development targets and to fulfil human rights, especially in the areas of child survival and development."

"In India, universal elementary education is a national goal, and state governments had an obligation to provide free, compulsory education to all children under the age of 14 by the end of 2000. Normally, programmes focus on rural areas where the problem is felt to be more severe. Recognizing that there is still a large gap in the education system in urban areas, especially among the urban poor, the SarvaShikshaAbhiyan initiative was launched in 1999 to improve the performance of schools and extend community-owned quality education in cities. States have been encouraged to transfer the management of schools to local urban bodies. Examples of special initiatives include:"

A. The Pratham initiative of Mumbai's municipal corporation, which aspires to provide universal primary and pre-school education. Over 50,000 children aged three to five are served by 3,000 balwadis (preschool centres), with 300 courses available for students aged six to fourteen.

B. Calcutta's Shikshalaya Prakalpa (Education Movement), which aims to enrol 45,000 out-of-school children and is a collaboration of education, child welfare, and urban governance stakeholders. It is built on a network of 50 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that is coordinated by a city-wide network of organisations."

C. Amrut: The Indian government's Atal Mission Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation programme. Under the scheme, each city has to develop child friendly parks and open spaces. 50% finance will be beard by GoI, 30% by State government and rest 20% by Local Bodies. Amrut 2.0 has been extended till 2026. It aims to achieve the goal 11 of UN mission SDG, 2030.

Protecting Urban Children from Human Rights Violations

"Acommon entry point in child friendly cities is child protection. Examples from Calcutta (India) and Bangladesh illustrate how addressing the most intolerable violations of child rights as an urgent priority provide an effective strategy for progressively embracing a wider child-rights agenda."

"The city of Calcutta has a city-level programme of action for street and working children (CLPOA). This operates through six zone committees coordinated by a central body whose membership includes Calcutta Municipal Corporation, the sectoral departments of the state government (health, education, social welfare, labour, etc.)and the police, the Human Rights Commission, the Juvenile Welfare Board, UNICEF, the British Council, the India Medical Association and 50 NGOs. The programme addresses primarily the excluded – child workers, street children, rag pickers, child sex workers, the children of sex workers and trafficked children. Yearly city-level and zonal work plans are developed jointly. The work plan identifies activities for implementation and provides a framework for area-based monitoring. The partnership structure allows a citywide holistic approach rather than the usual project-based, ad hoc approach to child protection. The programme has grown in strength and now manages large investments for children and also influences policymaking and programme development for children."

"One example of this is the child-friendly police initiative, throughwhich the Calcutta police have resolved to become child friendly. To date, 42 police stations have become involved. Children receive a child protection card, jointly issued by the police and an NGO acting as guarantor for the child. The card can be issued to any child but is particularly useful to children who live on the streets, in stations and in the markets and who have inadequate family support. The programme coordinates with Calcutta police in conducting training courses for police officers, to sensitize them to the rights and needs of deprived children and juvenile offenders and to link them with social and protection services. The police also organize self-defence training for vulnerable children, especially girls. On the basis of a city plan, each police station coordinates with a set of NGOsoperating in its area of jurisdiction and hosts a weekly health clinic."

Indian Scenario

"UNICEF has formulated various urban planning strategies and guidelines focusing on children and families having children, to benefit children life and their role in decision making in planning processes. These guidelines are classified under various principles, where each principle covers cardinal needs and requirements of children for their overall development in the urban surroundings."11,168 children died in road accidents in 2019, up 11.94 percent from the year before, according to the latest Ministry of Road Transport and Highways statistics. The 11,168 kid deaths represent a frightening 31 deaths a day, and they account for nearly 8% of all road crash deaths. [7]

Table:-1 Age profile of road accident related deaths during 2017 to 2019

Age-group	Number of Persons killed			%-age change in 2018 over 2017	%-age change in 2019 over 2018
	2017	2018	2019		
Less than 18	9,408	9,977	11,168	6.05	11.94
% Share in total	6.4	6.6	7.4		
18-25	34,244	32,777	33,206	-4.28	1.31
% Share in total	23.2	21.6	22.0		
25-35	39,549	39,960	39,023	1.04	-2.34
% Share in total	26.7	26.4	25.8		

Source: MORTH. (2018). Road Accidents Dashboard. Retrieved 01 15, 2021, from Ministry of Road Transport and Highways: https://morth.nic.in/

URGENTLY NEED OF CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES

"Children face a lot of challenges in Indian cities which are, rapid and chaotic growth concentrated on informal, slum settlements with inadequate infrastructure; open defecation; parks not being accessible; lack of footpaths, streetlights, and safe places to cross roads; and children in some neighbourhoods needing to use public transport, which is not child friendly, to get to the nearest school."

"India's rapid urbanisation presents an enormous opportunity for all sections of society to achieve a higher quality of life. Children are among the most deserving sections of the urban population that will benefit from this growth if policies are planned and adopted taking into account the factors that shape childhood and can promote healthier development of their childhood. India has the world's highest infant population. Children (0-18 years of age) make up 472 million of Indian community members (39%). Of these, 128 million children (27%) live in urban areas. Children account, in total, for one third of India's current urban population."

CONCLUSION

"Children have an extreme dating to their surroundings. This way the making plans and land-use rules of a society affect profoundly on their bodily, social, and intellectual fitness. The 5 concepts mentioned: home, public amenities, playgrounds and parks, road and public transit in addition to water and sanitation to create healthy, toddler pleasant towns ought to be on the pinnacle of each planner's list."

"In India, the scenario of city kids isn't always satisfying, as diverse troubles were mentioned concerning every principle, for this reason toddler pleasant practice in Indian towns isa pressing want as a Child Friendly City has several fitness advantages. The apparent advantages of bodily fitness are derived from having secure locations to play and walk able neighbourhoods. Less apparent advantages to fitness consist of decrease pressure and advanced cognitive functioning. Integrating kids into society and giving them get entry to amenities, thru empowerment allows elevated self-confidence and improves social and intellectual fitness. The healthiest choice for kids is a secure, green, accessible, inclusive society."

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