Sustainable Cities and Communities

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Introduction

As cities grow, the urban poor's population density will likely increase, and they will likely concentrate in the most precarious parts of the city. The urban poor are moving to cities seeking a better life, and the sources of many jobs tend to be in polluting industries. As urbanites grow richer, they consume more electricity and are more likely to pursue private vehicles. These individually rational choices have serious social consequences. urban areas can make sharp environmental progress in just a few decades. When millions of people and thousands of firms choose to locate near each other and share air, roads, and rivers, pollution tends to rise unless polluters have an incentive not to pollute. To mitigate pollution, government intervention is the textbook solution. But government officials face conflicting goals as they promote economic growth with limited information.to credibly monitor polluters inhibiting their ability to implement fines and environmental regulations Such progress requires a delicate balance of urban planning and leveraging market forces to send proper signals of resource scarcity. Improvements in information technology and advances in knowledge of how to mitigate pollution and the health benefits of such steps suggest that more cities will pursue "smart" sustainable growth. Urban officials now have real-time information about the subgroups of their constituents most at risk and the technology to connect with them more efficiently. Cities that can improve their environmental performance will benefit from having a healthier, more productive populace that enjoys a better quality of life. Clean air, clean water, and low risk facilitate the development of human capital for the young and increase the likelihood that they will become productive adults. Because human capital is the engine of economic growth, urban policies that encourage "greenness" promote the population's health. Ensuring the population's health is not merely an aesthetic choice it is a cornerstone for a productive society.

Areas Requiring Specific Attention and Associated Key Challenges

Populations in Slums and Informal Settlements

In urban population, lived in slums or informal settlements, which are characterized by lack of adequate housing, tenure security, and access to basic infrastructure and services. This included nearly two-thirds of the urban population in Bangladesh. Although the proportion of people living in slums is decreasing, the absolute number is still increasing .

Financing Gap

According to a range of projections, the current deficit in investment for Bangladesh infrastructure is estimated to be over trillion with this investment gap being particularly dire in developing countries and emerging economies. The total

infrastructure investment needs for the region are estimated to reach with most of this investment required in urban areas.

Urban air Pollution

The risk of stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory diseases due to air pollution continues to rise at an alarming rate, especially in the region's low-income cities where concentrations .

Solid Waste Management

Urban areas in the region generate about 700 tons of municipal solid waste a day. By 2025, this amount is estimated to more than double, to 1000 tons per day. Waste collection rates and segregation of waste streams in developing countries are low, and collected waste is often just dumped, highlighting an urgent need for improved solid waste management in urban centers.

Urban Sanitation

It remains a persistent challenge, especially for Bangladesh, meanwhile, in 2015 only 58 per cent of the urban population had access to basic handwashing facilities.

Disaster Risk

The high density of people, jobs and assets that make cities so successful also make them extremely vulnerable to disaster risks. Disaster related damage and losses are high, Disasters in cities and peri-urban areas are also likely to exacerbate existing inequalities

Promising Innovations and Best Practices

Slums and Basic Services

With respect to access to adequate housing, tenure security and basic infrastructure, proven holistic and people-centered approaches to slum upgrading and community empowerment. Both use community organization and community savings to then disperse collective loans for housing and settlement improvement, while enhancing communities' capacities to among other things collect data, negotiate with landowners, handle finances and direct technical construction projects.

Disaster Resilience

 Key to success has been the institutionalization of the DRR office and integration of DRR programs and projects in the regular programs and projects of the local government.

Inclusive and Gender-responsive Governance

A good practice and example of participatory governance has been the participatory and gender-responsive budgeting process. Action plan was developed that focused on economic security for all, freedom from gender-based violence, just distribution of power and influence and gender responsive and participatory governance. Approaches used included online surveys, town hall meetings and working groups.

Informal Employment and SWM

The work has focused on integration of occupational health and safety into the union's general work activities; documenting case studies on health and safety, improving the organization's health, safety and social security data collection systems

Data and Statistics

Given huge gaps and limited resources and capacities for urban-level data collection, analysis and dissemination for evidence-based policy making, different types of organizations and stakeholders are striving to collect alternative forms of data from surveying and mapping of informal settlements

Priorities for Action

Governance

Increased urbanization and devolution of responsibilities to the local level, it becomes very important that policy-making, as well as the legal and institutional frameworks allow for effective multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance. Lack of clear responsibility, capacity and resources is seriously hampering good urban governance in cities and towns of Dhaka and Chittagong.

Financing

To achieve goal and the other urban-related issues successful leverage of finance is paramount. It in turn depends on reforms that empower local governments through intergovernmental transfers, own source revenue collection, and enhanced creditworthiness of cities to create certainty for subnational investment. Local governments must improve their governance structures and institutional capacities to manage long term debt, leverage their own finances

Urban Resilience

Both urban resilience to natural disasters and climate change as well as urban resource efficiency and circular economy approaches need to become much more prominent aspects of urban development if goals is to be achieved.

Inclusive Cities

More needs to be done to make cities more inclusive and accessible for different social groups such as women and girls or persons with disabilities. This includes improving safety and availability of public transport or street lighting or making all parts of the city accessible to wheelchair users or the visually impaired.

Integrated Urban Planning

Traditional urban planning needs to be rethought along lines of being more integrated, people centric, and focusing on area-based development. The importance of evaluation, new partnerships, and better technology should be emphasized, and urban needs mainstreamed into national economic planning.

"Localizing" and Integrating the Policies

Local governments and other urban stakeholders crucially need to be enabled to understand and use international development frameworks such as the SDGs in their local context. "Localizing" the SDGs is one way to enable them to plan, advocate, implement, and monitor and evaluate not only SDG 11 but all other urban-related goals – which cannot be achieved without focused, transformative action at the local level.

Indicators and Data for "Localizing"

Goals need to be simplified and decentralized and 'translated' for different urban stakeholders. Moreover, not all SDG indicators related to measuring progress in cities have been clearly defined or "localized" and even where the indicators are clear and measurable, significant limitations in resources and capacities hamper collection, analysis and reporting of good quality, timely and disaggregated data.