

Urbanization and Climate Resilience in India: A Governance and Human Rights Approach for Sustainable Cities

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Abstract: *Urbanization in India is accelerating rapidly, presenting both opportunities and challenges for sustainable urban development. This article explores urbanisation, climate resilience, local governance and human rights in the context of pathways toward sustainable cities. The vulnerabilities highlight the urgency of responding to climate change across urban areas in India these cities face to climate-informed risks, such as flooding, heatwaves and water access, all of which have disproportionate impacts on marginalised sectors of Indian society. By critically analysing governance frameworks such as the Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT, this study brings out the need for the local governments to mainstream climate resilience into urban planning. The article encourages adopting a rights-based approach to address multiple forms of inequality including in housing, water and sanitation to be inclusive in the climate adaptation agenda. Technological solutions, namely IoT (internet of things) in combination with data-driven urban concepts are discussed, with these solutions being seen both positively as highly useful for resilience, while critically raising questions about the existence of digital divides, ownership and privacy of data. The article concludes with a call for a more equitable, human rights-based path to technology integration, with local government strengthening at the heart, to ensure Indian cities are sustainable and resilient to urban and climatic challenges.*

Keywords: Urbanization, Climate Resilience, Local Governance, Human Rights, Sustainable Cities, India