

WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

Policy Workshop on

"Integrating Vulnerable Community Inputs for Inclusive Policy Design

&

Action for Urban Flooding in India"



Prepared by

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This document is an outcome of the workshop on "Integrating Vulnerable Community Inputs for Inclusive Policy Design and Action for Urban Flooding in India," held on 28th February 2024. The workshop was co-organised by IRADe & Mahila Housing Trust (MHT).

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Acknowledgement

We extend our sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the high-level policy workshop on "**Integrating Vulnerable Community Inputs for Inclusive Policy Design and Action for Urban Flooding.**"

We express our appreciation to our esteemed Chair and Panelists, whose profound insights have greatly enriched our understanding of this critical issue. Their sensitivity and depth of knowledge have been instrumental in shaping the framework we present to policymakers and implementers.

Our appreciation extends to Mr. Kunal Satyarthi, Joint Secretary, NDMA and Dr. Debolina Kundu, Director, NIUA, for their keen interest and encouragement, which have been instrumental in refining and advancing our framework.

We are thankful to **Prof. Jyoti Parikh, Executive Director, IRADe**, for her valuable support and guidance throughout the project.

The IRADe and MHT teams merit our heartfelt gratitude for their dedication over the past six months, propelling this discourse forward through meticulous field surveys, comprehensive data gathering, and engaging dialogues with policymakers at various levels.

Rohit Magotra

Deputy Director, IRADe

1. Background

Urban flooding poses a severe challenge for cities, with incidents of severity and frequency of urban floods on the rise. It disproportionately impacts urban poor households, causes loss and damage to their hard-earned physical assets, and increases debt burden.

Recognising the critical importance of integrating their perspectives into policy and action, Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRADe), in collaboration with Mahila Housing Trust (MHT), organised a high-level policy workshop on **“Integrating Vulnerable Community Inputs for Inclusive Policy Design and Action for Urban Flooding”** on 28th February in New Delhi. The workshop presented policy gaps in urban flooding guidelines and underscored the importance of inclusive urban flooding frameworks that incorporate community perspectives and resilience-building initiatives to effectively tackle urban flooding challenges.

The workshop, hosted by IRADe, in association with MHT, brought together key stakeholders, policymakers, experts, and representatives from vulnerable communities to highlight the need for a collaborative and inclusive approach to tackle urban flooding. Supported by the Adaptation Research Alliance and UKaid, the initiative aims to enhance India's national disaster management guidelines by developing community-led templates for managing urban floods.

2. Executive Summary

The workshop on **“Integrating Vulnerable Community Inputs for Inclusive Policy Design and Action for Urban Flooding”** was co-organised by IRADe and MHT. Urban flooding poses a significant challenge for cities, particularly impacting vulnerable communities and exacerbating existing socio-economic disparities. To address this pressing issue, IRADe and MHT jointly organised a high-level policy workshop titled "Integrating Vulnerable Community Inputs for Inclusive Policy Design and Action for Urban Flooding" in New Delhi on 28th February 2024.

The workshop aimed to bridge the gap between policy guidelines and community needs, advocating for inclusive urban flooding frameworks. Supported by the Adaptation Research Alliance and UKaid, the initiative focused on developing community-led templates for urban flood management to enhance India's national disaster management guidelines.

The inaugural session highlighted the workshop's significance, with Prof. Jyoti Parikh, Executive Director, IRADe emphasising the workshop's role in identifying challenges and devising policy-level interventions. Ms. Bijal BrahmBhatt, Director, MHT, outlined MHT's commitment to incorporating community perspectives into flood management strategies.

Mr. Rohit Magotra, Deputy Director, IRADe, presented policy gaps in current frameworks and stressed the need for decentralisation and community participation. Chief Guest, Mr. Kunal Satyarthi, Joint Secretary, NDMA, underscored the importance of preserving natural catchments and fostering collaboration for innovative solutions.

Dr. Debolina Kundu, Director, NIUA, made special remarks on the need for ecological balance amidst urban development and integrating disaster management into city planning.

Thematic sessions delved into policy gaps, impacts on vulnerable communities, and inclusive policy design. Panel discussions featured experts like Prof. Chandan Ghosh, Former Head (Resilient Infrastructure Division), NIDM, Ms. Mukta Girdhar, Senior Consultant, DDMA, Dr. Aditi Kapoor, Co-Founder, Alternative Future, Mr. Atul Goyal, President - URJA - United Residents Joint Action, Ms. Kanika Bansal, Lead- Universal Design and Inclusion, NIUA, Prof. Ajit Tyagi, Senior Advisor, IRADe, and Mr. Shashikant Chopde, Senior Advisor, TARU, who highlighted the need for proactive disaster response, sustainable development practices, and inclusive infrastructure design.

Session 1 delved into policy considerations with Dr. GN Qasba, Senior Advisor at IRADe and Former Municipal Commissioner, Srinagar, chairing the discussion. Prof Chandan Ghosh, Former Head (Resilient Infrastructure Division) at NIDM, and Ms. Mukta Girdhar, Senior Consultant at DDMA, explored critical gaps and opportunities in urban flood policies, advocating for proactive measures to strengthen resilience.

Session 2 focused on urban flooding's impact on vulnerable communities, led by Ms. Bijal BrahmBhatt, Director of MHT. Dr. Aditi Kapoor, Co-Founder of Alternative Future, Mr. Atul Goyal, President of URJA - United Residents Joint Action, and Ms. Kanika Bansal, Lead of Universal Design and Inclusion at NIUA, discussed community-centric strategies and the imperative of inclusive infrastructure to mitigate vulnerability.

Session 3 addressed inclusive policy frameworks chaired by Mr. Hitesh Vaidya, Former Director of NIUA. Prof Ajit Tyagi, Senior Advisor at IRADe, highlighted the necessity of comprehensive urban flood guidelines and capacity-building efforts. Mr. Shashikant Chopde,

Senior Advisor at TARU, underscored the importance of integrating disaster management into urban development planning for sustainable outcomes.

The workshop served as a platform for diverse stakeholders to exchange insights and strategies for effective urban flood management. The emphasis on inclusive policies and community-led action plans highlighted the importance of addressing the needs of vulnerable communities. The integration of innovative technological interventions showcased a forward-thinking approach to mitigating urban flooding challenges. The multidimensional perspectives underscored the critical role of collaboration, resilience-building, and sustainable strategies in tackling the complex and evolving nature of urban flooding. This collective effort sets a strong foundation for fostering resilient and inclusive urban environments resilient to the impacts of flooding.

3. Inaugural Session

3.1 Opening Remarks

Prof. Jyoti Parikh, in her inaugural address, highlighted the prevalence of flood incidences as a primary hazard in India, surpassing other climate-related risks historically, with flooding bearing short-term, medium-term, and long-term repercussions for vulnerable communities owing to factors such as their proximity to rivers, poverty, and slum settlements. She emphasised the significance of the workshop in identifying challenges and devising policy-level interventions to tackle these issues.

3.2 Setting the context by Ms. Bijal BrahmBhatt, Director, Mahila Housing Trust (MHT)

Ms. Bijal BrahmBhatt cited that we will be proposing a framework focused on insights from vulnerable communities, which will serve as a guideline for developing urban flood action plans. This emphasises MHT's commitment to incorporating community perspectives into policy design, ensuring that flood management strategies are inclusive and effective. She highlighted the importance of inclusive policy design, sparking a transformative dialogue that prioritises the resilience and well-being of all urban residents amidst flood-related challenges. Her insights provided a solid foundation for fostering collaboration and ensuring that the resulting policies resonate with the needs and realities of those most affected by urban flooding.

3.3 Project Approach and Outputs by Mr. Rohit Magotra, Deputy Director, IRADe

Mr. Rohit Magotra presented the policy gaps in the current policy frameworks and guidelines for urban flooding in India. He stressed the need for promoting decentralisation and community participation in flood management. The current policy framework lacks specific guidelines for the most susceptible sections of society, including women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, presenting a critical gap in ensuring an inclusive and comprehensive approach to flood management. While presenting the framework for vulnerable community-focused urban flooding action plans developed by IRADe, he provided a detailed overview of the preparedness, response, relief, rehabilitation, and mitigation strategies for integrating vulnerable community perspectives into policy design and action. He quoted that infrastructure investments are critical for building climate-adaptive and resilient cities in India.

3.4 Chief Guest remarks by Mr. Kunal Satyarthi, Joint Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

Mr. Kunal Satyarthi underscored the importance of preserving natural catchments and water bodies in the cities, cautioning against the disruption of natural drainage patterns inherent in standard elevation models. He warned of the potential consequences if these pathways are obstructed, leading to water reclaiming its original course. Expressing a commitment to collaboration, he expressed eagerness to work with responsible ministries and stakeholders to pilot innovative solutions and scale them for broader application. His remarks underscored the urgent need to embrace sustainable water management practices and emphasised the imperative of collective action in tackling the complex challenges posed by urban flooding.

3.5 Special remarks by Dr. Debolina, Kundu, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)

Dr. Debolina Kundu underscored the importance of maintaining ecological balance amidst expanding urban population. She emphasised that while urban development falls under the purview of state governments, it is imperative to remain mindful of the holistic ecosystem. In particular, the impact on the marginalised communities necessitates immediate action and long-term planning. Focus on peri-urban areas, preservation of green and blue infrastructure, and preventing the conversion to grey infrastructure are paramount. Addressing the contamination of water bodies by solid and liquid waste is an urgent imperative that cannot wait for centralised directives. She further stressed the imperative for synergy among policymakers, experts, and implementation agencies, advocating for integrated solutions that strike a balance between development and ecological sustainability.

4. Session 1 - Policy Gaps and Opportunities for Strengthening Urban Flooding

Thematic Presentation: IRADe

In his presentation, Mr. Magotra addressed the policy gaps and potential opportunities for improving urban flood management in India. He presented a review of the urban flooding management policies in India and highlighted that the policy guidelines need to incorporate advancements in flood management technology and practices. He pointed out the absence of tailored guidelines for the most vulnerable groups in society, such as women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, which is crucial for fostering an inclusive and effective flood management strategy.

He suggested several key areas for policy improvement, including adopting a decentralised approach to flood mitigation, defining clear roles for urban local bodies in flood management, and actively involving vulnerable communities in the planning, response, recovery, and mitigation processes. He also recommended enhancing early warning systems, improving response and relief coordination at the city level, and promoting community awareness, advocating for climate-resilient urban planning.

Session Chair: Dr. GN Qasba, Senior Advisor, IRADe and Former Municipal Commissioner, Srinagar

Dr. Qasba underscored the critical need to address past oversights in urban planning, especially in light of events like the Srinagar floods. He emphasised the imperative of integrating disaster management strategies into urban master plans, highlighting that previous failures in doing so have left urban areas vulnerable to catastrophic events. Specifically citing the development of critical infrastructure in flood-prone areas in Srinagar, he urged for an immediate review and reconsideration. Dr. Qasba advocated for designating these areas as no-construction zones to preserve their natural ability to absorb water, a measure overlooked in previous planning endeavours.

Furthermore, he stressed the importance of learning from past incidents and translating these lessons into regulations and standards for future urban development. He emphasised the need to update and digitise outdated drainage plans, which have proven insufficient during recent crises. Additionally, he highlighted the necessity of better communication and safety measures

to safeguard all segments of society, particularly individuals like seasonal workers who may be unaware of impending dangers. Concluding, he emphasised the urgency of maintaining an ongoing dialogue on these issues and revisiting town planning standards to ensure the resilience of urban areas against future disasters.

Panel Discussion:

4.1 Prof. Chandan Ghosh – Former Head (Resilient Infrastructure Division), National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)

Dr. Chandan Ghosh emphasised several critical insights that underscore the evolving landscape of urban development. He highlighted the enduring impact of infrastructure projects, such as metro construction, in driving significant technological advancements within urban landscapes. Moreover, he emphasised the effectiveness of successful implementations, such as rainwater harvesting guidelines, as a means of leveraging available resources to address urban challenges efficiently. His call for updating methods and materials in line with current technological standards emphasised the ongoing necessity for continual innovation and adaptation in urban planning practices.

Furthermore, he underlined the persistent trend towards more sustainable urban development solutions, citing the increasing affordability and accessibility of efficient technologies compared to previous years. He underscored the necessity for proactive approaches to address systemic issues related to poor planning and maintenance, particularly concerning drainage systems. Additionally, he advocated for citizen engagement and highlighted the pivotal role of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups in driving innovation to successfully navigate urban challenges. As the discussion concluded with a call to explore sustainable alternatives to manual drain cleaning through pilot projects, Prof. Ghosh's insights resonated as a timeless reminder of the critical importance of innovation and proactive planning in shaping resilient and sustainable urban environments.

4.2 Dr. Mukta Girdhar, Senior Consultant, Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)

Dr. Mukta Girdhar led a discussion focused on the practical implementation of disaster management guidelines at the ground level. She emphasised the necessity for a proactive approach to disaster response, highlighting the utilisation of special technology by UNDP and

the establishment of shelters across various districts. Dr. Girdhar underscored the positive impact of aligning district efforts with proper architectural planning and cleanliness standards.

Additionally, she highlighted the use of WhatsApp groups for coordinating on-the-ground efforts and facilitating the sharing of experiences among stakeholders. She reiterated the importance of drawing lessons from past experiences to enhance future responses to disasters like floods. Furthermore, she emphasised the pivotal role of coordinating agencies in both reporting and managing these events, underscoring the need for effective collaboration in disaster management efforts.

5. Session 2- Urban flooding and its impacts on Vulnerable Communities

Thematic presentation: MHT

Ms. Bijal Brahm Bhatt highlighted the key findings from surveys conducted in Ahmedabad and Jodhpur, revealing the challenges faced by urban communities during flooding events.

Further, Mr. Jai Kumar from MHT highlighted the focus group discussions in Jodhpur and Ahmedabad, drawing attention to the challenges encountered by vulnerable communities in these regions. MHT community representatives, including Ms. Kusumlata, a councillor from Jodhpur, shared insights from the vulnerable communities and underlined the local initiatives undertaken at the ward level to alleviate the effects of flooding.

Session Chair: Ms. Bijal Brahm Bhatt, Director, MHT

Panel Discussion:

5.1 Dr. Aditi Kapoor, Co-Founder, Alternative Future

Dr. Aditi highlighted the far-reaching implications of climate change and poor infrastructure, citing the example of Meghalaya. She emphasised the urgent need for solutions on a broader scale. Recognising that these challenges are not confined to a single region, she proposed a comprehensive approach that addresses both immediate and long-term needs. She underscored the importance of pioneering disaster management plans that align with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and prioritise climate resilience through an ecosystem-wide development strategy.

She suggested the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies as a tool for planning and implementing sustainable infrastructure projects. This approach allows regions

to meticulously chart green, blue, and grey infrastructures, empowering planners, policymakers, and experts to enact sustainable solutions. By adopting such solutions globally, nations can mitigate the impacts of climate change, enhance infrastructure resilience, and foster sustainable development for current and future generations.

5.2 Mr. Atul Goyal, President - URJA - United Residents Joint Action

Mr. Atul emphasised the critical need for sustainable development practices, particularly in floodplains and the development of forest areas. He pointed out that floodplains are particularly vulnerable to encroachment, exacerbated by plantation and forest development activities. This encroachment not only disrupts the natural flow of rivers but also compromises the integrity of ecosystems and increases the risk of flooding. He strongly advocated for a policy that prohibits any form of encroachment within a 2-kilometer buffer zone on either side of rivers, underscoring that such measures are crucial to prevent flooding and ensure environmental conservation. He highlighted that by implementing and rigorously monitoring policy-driven guidelines, the ecological balance can be maintained, thereby mitigating the adverse effects of unauthorised land use and drainage encroachments which often lead to catastrophic flooding events.

Furthermore, he highlighted the need for developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and enhancing the capacity of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and bureaucracy. He pointed out that equipping government officials through capacity building and fostering proactive actions are essential steps towards sustainable environmental management. He highlighted that making executing agencies accountable is pivotal in the actualisation of these goals. By instilling a sense of responsibility and ensuring accountability, he underlined that effective and efficient implementation of environmental policies can be achieved.

5.3 Ms. Kanika Bansal, Lead- Universal Design and Inclusion, NIUA

During the discussion on Urban Flooding and its Impacts on Vulnerable Communities, Ms. Kanika Bansal emphasised the critical need to understand the needs of women, children, the elderly, and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and their intersectionality into Disaster Risk Flood Resilience and Management strategies. She stressed that true inclusivity can only be achieved when we understand challenges at a human scale and incorporate relevant strategies, echoing the adage of ‘Leave No One Behind.’

Furthermore, she highlighted the importance of leveraging people-centric data and developing localised, inclusive, and resilient infrastructure. She also addressed the skill versus will aspects, emphasising the necessity for thorough research, proper training for implementers, sensitisation of leadership, and dedicated ground staff to effectively tackle the challenges posed by urban flooding on vulnerable communities.

6. Session 3 Inclusive Policy Design and Action Framework for Urban Flooding

Thematic Presentation: IRADe

In his presentation, Mr. Magotra highlighted the impacts of urban flooding on vulnerable communities in Jodhpur and Ahmedabad, including damage to housing and infrastructure, loss of wages and livelihoods, the spread of waterborne diseases, and significant work disruptions. He also presented the current urban flood management practices in the project cities, which included mapping of waterlogged areas, developing comprehensive drainage project reports, issuing alerts, and establishing flood control rooms and committees. Despite these measures, he highlighted significant gaps in flood management, such as the lack of early warning systems, insufficient relief provisions, rescue routes, and a comprehensive municipal-level flood drainage and prevention strategy.

He proposed a framework to provide a holistic and inclusive approach to mitigate the challenges of urban flooding, emphasising preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. Some of the recommended measures for flood preparedness and management include mapping flood hotspots, setting up emergency operation centres, distributing relief materials, restoring essential services, processing insurance claims, and investing in robust flood prevention infrastructure.

Session Chair: Mr. Hitesh Vaidya, Former Director, NIUA

Mr. Hitesh Vaidya emphasised the critical importance of microscale data acquisition for effective flood management in metropolitan areas like Delhi and its satellites such as Gurugram. Recent strides in on-ground microdata collection, led by various governmental departments, provided invaluable insights into local rainfall patterns, enabling targeted flood mitigation measures tailored to each city's unique characteristics. Proactive initiatives in cities like Chennai and Mumbai, exemplified by the establishment of 150 automatic rain gauge stations, highlighted the necessity of integrating advanced technology into urban flood

management. While early warnings were pivotal, a holistic approach, incorporating data-driven decision-making, proactive governance, and community engagement, was essential to effectively mitigate the multifaceted challenges of urban flooding and foster resilient cities for the future.

Panel Discussion:

6.1 Prof. Ajit Tyagi, Senior Advisor, IRADe

Prof. Ajit Tyagi remarked on the gap between the comprehensive urban flooding guidelines established in 2010 and their practical application, especially highlighting deficiencies in early warning systems within cities like Delhi, which is inadequately equipped with only two rainfall observatories to monitor potential flood hotspots. He underscored the critical need for improvement in cities prone to flooding, like Chennai and Mumbai, advocating for the integration of coastal flood warning systems. Prof. Tyagi suggested that for early warning systems to be truly effective, they must be supported by robust governance, continuous monitoring, and active collaboration with the India Meteorological Department (IMD). His critique points towards a broader issue of implementation lag, stressing the importance of a cohesive approach that involves both governance and the leveraging of scientific expertise to enhance urban resilience against flooding.

Further addressing the challenge, he called for a comprehensive strategy that encompasses capacity building across various domains—medical, administrative, and community—to bolster cities' responses to flooding. He highlighted the necessity of incorporating climate change impacts and projections into urban planning, advocating for a multi-hazard model that integrates scientific data and climate projections at the city planning level. This approach, he argued, would foster a synergistic relationship between state and national government efforts, ensuring that disaster planning and governance at the city level are both scientifically informed and adequately funded. Prof. Tyagi's insights stressed the need for a paradigm shift towards more proactive and preventive measures in urban planning and disaster management, aiming to mitigate the effects of urban flooding through improved preparedness and infrastructure adaptation.

6.2 Mr. Shashikant Chopde, Senior Advisor, TARU

Mr. Shashikant emphasised the paramount importance of scaling up "islands of excellence," such as those in Surat, Indore, and Gorakhpur, to address climate change and integrate disaster management more effectively into urban development planning. He underscored the necessity of adopting comprehensive strategies that encompass the inclusion of climate change considerations in mainstream development planning, enhancing resilience through district-specific disaster management plans, and fostering horizontal coordination across various levels of governance. Furthermore, he advocated for a handbook that details the mainstreaming of disaster management practices, emphasising the need for a coherent framework that can guide the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into the planning and execution phases of urban development.

He proposed a dual-focus strategy to effectively tackle urban flooding and its implications on sustainable development. Firstly, there must be a concerted effort to incorporate risk analysis and vulnerability assessments, with a specific emphasis on climate dimensions, into the creation of disaster management plans. This includes understanding the specific risks faced by districts and crafting plans that are resilient and adaptive to these challenges. Secondly, he called for the integration of climate and disaster risk considerations into annual departmental planning and budget allocations, thereby ensuring that finances are not just linked but strategically directed towards mitigating the impacts of such disasters. This approach necessitates a significant shift towards viewing climate disasters as integral components of development planning, rather than isolated incidents. By doing so, governments and organisations can better align their efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly by gathering and utilising data on disruptions caused by disasters to inform policies and actions. He highlighted that this integrated approach is not merely about responding to disasters but pre-emptively incorporating the potential impacts of climate change into the fabric of urban planning and development.

Way forward:

As we embark on this journey, we recognise that this is just the initial step towards integrating these invaluable insights into our ongoing efforts on multistakeholder engagement for policy design and action. Our steadfast commitment drives us to continue sharing the knowledge we have gathered, enriching discussions, and advancing the evolution of inclusive framework for urban flooding policy design and action focussed on vulnerable communities.

Workshop Agenda

9:30 AM-10 AM	Registration and Tea
10:00 AM-10:45 AM	<p style="text-align: center;">Inaugural Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Remarks by Prof. Jyoti K. Parikh, Executive Director, IRADe • Setting the context by Ms. Bijal BrahmBhatt, Director, MHT • Project Approach and Outputs by Mr. Rohit Magotra, Deputy Director, IRADe • Chief Guest remarks by Mr. Kunal Satyarthi, Joint Secretary, NDMA • Special Remarks by Dr. Debolina, Kundu, Director, NIUA
10:45 AM- 11:45 AM	<p>Session 1 - Policy Gaps and Opportunities for Strengthening Urban Flooding</p> <p>Thematic Presentation: IRADe</p> <p>Session Chair: Dr. GN Qasba, Senior Advisor, IRADe and Former Municipal Commissioner, Srinagar</p> <p>Panel discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Chandan Ghosh – Former Head (Resilient Infrastructure Division), NIDM • Ms. Mukta Girdhar, Senior Consultant, DDMA
11:45 AM- 12:30 PM	<p>Session 2- Urban flooding and its impacts on Vulnerable Communities</p> <p>Thematic presentation: MHT</p> <p>Session Chair: Ms. Bijal BrahmBhatt, Director, MHT</p> <p>Panel discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Aditi Kapoor, Co-Founder, Alternative Future • Mr. Atul Goyal - President - URJA - United Residents Joint Action • Ms. Kanika Bansal Lead- Universal Design and Inclusion, NIUA
12:30 PM-1:30 PM	<p>Session 3 Inclusive Policy Design and Action Framework for Urban Flooding</p> <p>Thematic Presentation: IRADe and MHT</p> <p>Session Chair: Mr. Hitesh Vaidya, Former Director, NIUA</p> <p>Panel Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Ajit Tyagi, Senior Advisor, IRADe • Mr. Shashikant Chopde, Senior Advisor, TARU
1:30 PM	Lunch

About IRADe

IRADe is a reputed think tank and research institute in Asia. IRADe carries out multidisciplinary and multistakeholder perspectives concerning development issues and promotes broader consensus through research and analysis on effective policies. Since 2008, it has been designated as the Center of Excellence (CoE) in the area of "Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation" by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India, addressing critical issues related to urban development and climate resilience in India. IRADe has been actively supporting the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in designing and implementing heat action plans in India. IRADe's work has supported policymakers at the national, state, and city levels. MoHUA has recommended Disaster resilience guidelines developed by IRADe for integration into Smart city plans in India. More: www.irade.org

About MHT

Mahila Housing Trust (MHT) works to strengthen grassroots collectives of women in the urban informal sector to advance constructive dialogue and action on improving their housing, living, and working environments. MHT works in cities across the Global South, including in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, to provide services to the poor and make the voices of women heard at the intersection of climate resilience, city-level planning, and governance processes. Since its establishment in 1994, we have mobilised women to exercise their civic rights and empowered them to take charge of their habitat improvement process. This has led to the development of over 15,000 women leaders and directly impacted the lives of 3.7 million poor individuals. MHT's work has been recognised nationally and internationally and has received numerous awards, such as the Ashden Award for Cooling in Informal Settlements, the United Nations Global Climate Action Award for Women's Action Towards Climate Resilience for Urban Poor in South Asia, and the United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction, among many others. More: www.mahilahousingtrust.org

About Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA)

The Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) is a global coalition committed to action for adaptation research that strengthens resilience in communities most vulnerable to climate change. ARA membership comprises researchers, funders, policymakers, development bodies and community-based organisations that support a paradigm shift in the way adaptation solutions are generated. ARA endorses the Adaptation Research for Impact Principles framework for action-oriented research driven by user needs, co-produced with local experts, and equitable in practice. As an advocate, facilitator, and catalyst for action-oriented research, the ARA delivers resources to those working for adaptation in countries at the frontline of climate change. The ARA is funded by UK AID from the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), and its secretariat is hosted at SouthSouthNorth. More: www.adaptationresearchalliance.org

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