

Youth Sabha 3

Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), organised the third online Youth Sabha on the theme of “Work – Live – Travel in Delhi” on 8th October 2020 from 03:00 pm onwards. This Sabha was anchored by youth representatives from NIUA, DDA along-with IGSSS and PRIA that are CSOs working with youth. Over 740 registrations were received for this youth sabha, out of a total 1020 that registered for the whole event.

The Youth Sabha was so designed as to get feedback from each present participant. Based on the theme, the main concerns shared by the participants were about **Integrating gender sensitivity in urban planning, recognizing the needs of healthy workspaces and employment opportunities, providing adequate and diverse housing choices for all, providing a seamless travel experience for everyone across gender, diverse socio-economic and geographic construct, and finally physical and mental well-being of the youth today.**

The main concern voiced by the majority of the youth participants was the high influx of new population/ migrants from neighbouring states, which in turn reduce their housing and employment opportunities. The youth highlighted the issue of insufficient student housing, traffic/ congestion on the roads, women safety, and displacement of slum / low income housing inhabitants being the biggest hurdle in achieving a superior quality of life.

Insufficient forms of affordable public transport and first/ last mile connectivity, people end up spending up to 4/5 hours a day commuting, which can get very unsafe for women in the later hours of the day, hence reducing the mobility of women. They felt the need for safe socialising, meditation, reading and venting spaces for youth/ co-workers where they can spend quality time which is well connected to public transport as well. The need for improved quality of housing for example youth hostels with improved facilities, accessible paying guest accommodation, affordable rental housing, safe co-living spaces, peaceful neighbourhoods and accessibility to market spaces/ medical facilities was emphasised upon.

Participants also suggested implementation of better safety measures for the “walkers” in the city. Pedestrians are often the most neglected in the city, even though they constitute maximum in number. Proportionate importance must be given to them in terms of effective round the clock CCTV surveillance, road and public safety. Development practitioners present among the youth also suggested that the Delhi Master Plan 2041 ought to address the importance of regional planning. An effective, robust regional plan for the National Capital Region is one key to the effectiveness and

successful implementation of Delhi Master Plan largely, which the MPD 2041 should mandate in possible ways.

Address by Vice Chairman, Shri Anurag Jain

The Vice Chairman of DDA, Shri Anurag Jain addressed the session and appreciated that the youth of the city is actively taking part in the preparation of the master plan, considering the group is and would be the major stakeholder and end user of this Master plan of Delhi 2041. He acknowledged that the youth's way of thinking is different from older generations, thus they can provide fresh perspectives and insights, which can feed into the master plan, starting now when the policies and strategies are still in the formulation stage. He emphasized that the pertinent issues such as gender sensitivity and safety must be ingrained in the master planning process and appreciated some big ideas such as public conveniences for the transgender and changing housing needs from ownership to affordable rental housing models. A number of these radical changes would be driven by the changing needs of the millennials. He highlighted DDA's pioneering initiative of launching a website for citizen engagement and information dissemination, where the youth can keep on engaging with DDA on the master plan by voicing their suggestions and concerns under citizen's corner. It was emphasized by him that these engagements are a continuous process and this generation being technologically strong must keep putting in their ideas and thoughts in the next stages in course of the master plan preparation.

The participants appreciated the session, efforts of the organizing bodies and requested the relevant policy makers to keep the youth in the loop and encourage their participation during policy formulation.