

Mainstreaming Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) in National Urban Policies and Programmes in South Asia

Enhancing Accessibility and Inclusion in Schools

Pilot Training Programmes in Delhi

Background

Every child in India has the fundamental right to elementary education. Making schools accessible by eliminating any barriers faced by children is a mandatory condition to achieve this right. Towards this purpose, UN-Habitat India with support from the Department of Social Welfare, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD), and IIT Kharagpur have envisaged a city-level Capacity Building Programme titled "Enhancing Accessibility and Inclusion in Schools" which is an endeavour to sensitize stakeholders that are part of the school ecosystem, develop competencies, and evolve advocacy on provision of barrier-free and accessible schools for all, especially for children with disabilities. It is being implemented as a pilot training programme in schools in Delhi.

UN-Habitat is implementing the "Mainstreaming Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) in National Urban Policies and Programmes in South Asia" project to strengthen national governments and local urban institutions to center LNOB, especially disability inclusion, in national policies, and facilitate evidence-based localization of national policies and SDGs 11 & 6 in urban areas. The project draws on the collective expertise of UN-Habitat, UNESCAP, and UN-OICT to use the convening power for ensuring inclusion and well-being of various social groups to facilitate the vision of the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. Under this project, training programmes, policy briefs, accessibility audit toolkits, and knowledge products responsive to the needs of the persons with disabilities are being developed, and an impactful stakeholder network has been established to ensure that knowledge translates into tangible urban policy action.



The first phase of the pilot training programme conducted in 2 schools under GNCTD jurisdiction in December 2022 included training sessions for the awareness and sensitization of students, parents, caregivers, school faculty and staff, and special educators. The content of the training modules has been adapted for stakeholders of the school ecosystem and builds on the regional e-learning modules developed under the Mainstreaming LNOB project on the fundamental concepts of disability inclusion, global good practices, and mainstreaming disability in urban planning as well as thematic modules on public spaces. The training content and supporting material developed for the live training sessions conducted under this pilot programme will further be designed as a self-paced online course which will be accessible on a global learning platform.

Implementing Partners



Department of Social Welfare
Government of NCT of Delhi

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



Programme Highlights



Day 1: 19 December 2022



Govt. Boys Senior Secondary School, Defence Colony

A pre-training reconnaissance of the school was conducted along with the nodal coordinator, Mr. Ashish Singh, who is a special educator. The routes for conducting the simulation exercise were decided during this reconnaissance.

Welcome of participants and chief guests from GNCTD was done by the school administration in the school auditorium. The auditorium was almost full with approximately 200 participants, including 95-100 students from 5th-9th & 11th standards and 95-100 subject teachers and special educators. The programme was hosted by Ms. Adishree Panda, National Project Coordinator, and Mr. Parul Sharma, Regional Advisor, from LNOB project, UN-Habitat India.

The programme began with opening remarks and welcome address by Shri Mukesh Chand, DDE (South-East District), Directorate of Education, GNCTD. He elaborated on the importance of inclusivity and accessibility in schools and motivated the stakeholders to participate in the process. He highlighted the need for improving infrastructure in schools for children to have a better learning environment. He also stressed upon the need for sensitizing the Public Works Department officials and providing them with the necessary technical guidance to make improvements in schools.

The participants were introduced to the concept of Leave No One Behind (LNOB) and the vision and purpose of the Mainstreaming LNOB project as well as the pilot training programmes targeted to enhance inclusivity and accessibility in schools in Delhi. This introduction was provided by Ms. Mansi Sachdev, Senior Urban Planner, UN-Habitat.



3



Images 1 & 2: Participants sharing their experiences and feedback
Image 3: Orientation for the simulation exercises
Image 4: Shri Rahul Aggarwal, DoSW-GNCTD, providing his insights

Shri Rahul Aggarwal, Deputy Director, Department of Social Welfare, GNCTD, stressed upon various aspects of physical and digital accessibility which are necessary for enhancing inclusivity in schools. He lauded the UN-Habitat and IIT-Kharagpur teams for taking this initiative and also thanked the school administration for rendering the necessary support.

Prof. Subrata Chattopadhyay from IIT Kharagpur then explained the specific objectives, scope, structure, and outcome of the training programme. He also mentioned the multiple stakeholders in the process of achieving inclusion in schools - (i) children (with and without disability), (ii) school administration, (iii) teachers and staff, (iv) parents of children (with and without disability), and (v) technical experts. He briefly explained the pedagogy of the training as well as the zones of the school that will be covered as part of the modules.

Prof. Haimanti Banerji from IIT Kharagpur presented the technical content of the programme focused on building accessible physical infrastructure which will enable physical, social, and digital inclusion. Simulation exercises (role-playing) was conducted with volunteers from the school, including students and school staff, which was facilitated by the team from IIT Kharagpur and with support from UN-Habitat India team members.

In a feedback and wrap-up session, closing remarks were given by the school vice-principal, Mr. Chitranshi Ramendra, along with a summary of activities by IIT Kharagpur and vote of thanks by UN-Habitat.

400+

participants from both schools, including students, school staff, teachers & special educators



LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Programme Highlights



Day 2: 20 December 2022



Shaheed Hemu Kalani Sarvodaya
Bal Vidyalaya, Lajpat Nagar

The teams from UN-Habitat and IIT Kharagpur conducted a pre-training reconnaissance of the school along with the nodal coordinator, Mr. N.K. Sharma, who is the school principal. Two routes were identified, one 'accessible' and one 'non-accessible', during this reconnaissance for conducting the simulation exercises.

The programme began with opening remarks and welcome address by the school principal who introduced the collaborative initiative and emphasized its importance. A Special Address was given by Shri Mukesh Chand, DDE (South-East District), Directorate of Education, GNCTD, who elaborated on the importance of inclusivity and accessibility in schools and motivated the stakeholders to participate in the process.

Remarks were then provided by Shri Ajay Singh, Officer on Special Duty, and Smt. Stuthi Gaur, State Academic Coordinator, Inclusive Education Branch, Directorate of Education, GNCTD. They highlighted the need for improving infrastructure in schools for children to have a better learning environment. They also stressed upon the need for sensitizing the Public Works Department officials and providing them with the necessary technical guidance to make improvements in schools.

UN-Habitat and IIT Kharagpur introduced the Mainstreaming LNOB project as well as the specific objectives, scope, structure, and outcome of the training programme respectively.



Simulation exercise for disability in movement being conducted with a student & teacher volunteer pair in different school zones

Simulation exercises conducted for three types of disabilities –

- (i) Disability in movement (non-ambulant), or those who move on wheelchairs;
- (ii) Disability in movement (semi-ambulant), or those who move with crutches; and
- (iii) Disability in seeing

Different types of disabilities and barriers experienced by children in different zones of the school, such as campus, classrooms, library, play areas, laboratories, and the specific needs were explained with the support of relevant photographs along with some good practices. A short briefing on the United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), New Urban Agenda, Accessible India Campaign (2015), Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009, the Rights for Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) 2016, and Global and Indian Universal Design Principles was provided.

Simulation Exercise (role-playing) was conducted with volunteers from the school, including children and school staff, which was facilitated by the team from IIT Kharagpur and with support from UN-Habitat India team members. The following steps were conducted:

- A team of volunteers (6 students and 6 teachers) were mobilized and divided into pairs of one role-player & one helper and were trained to use the props required for the role-playing for three types of disabilities.
- The volunteer pairs (one role-payer and one helper) moved in the previously identified routes being guided by the trainers.
- Live-streaming of the entire exercise being conducted with the volunteers outside was done for the benefit of the participants who were inside the training venue.
- The volunteers were then invited to share their experiences and they were also requested to fill in a brief feedback form to elaborate on the challenges/barriers they faced and how they overcame the challenges.

In a wrap-up session, closing remarks were given by the school principal along with a summary of activities by IIT Kharagpur and vote of thanks by UN-Habitat.

Mainstreaming Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) in National Urban Policies and Programmes in South Asia

Key Takeaways

The pilot training programmes provided a co-learning platform for interaction and knowledge-sharing between officials of Delhi government, international leaders on accessibility and academic experts as reviewers of training modules, children (with and without disabilities), teachers, special educators, and the school management authorities. Approximately 200 students (95-100 students per school), participated in both the training programmes, which included few students with disabilities in each school. They were made aware of the importance of inclusion and accessibility through interactive lectures and simulation exercises. It was observed from the feedback sessions conducted that the students were quite geared up to extend support to the children with disabilities in their classes and help in making the schools more accessible.

Approximately 200 school staff & special educators (95-100 attendees in each school) were sensitized about existing barriers in different zones of the school. They were informed about relevant good practices and guidelines for making the school buildings, campuses, and infrastructure safe, accessible, and inclusive for all.

The training modules and simulation exercises developed for these pilot programmes can thus be utilized to disseminate the learnings to other students of the school and also to other schools in Delhi or other cities.



Image 1: Pilot session at Shaheed Hemu Kalani
Images 2 & 3: IIT KGP professors presenting the training modules for the participants
Image 4: Shri Mukesh Chand, DoE-GNCTD, providing his remarks

The brief and engaging sessions were specifically designed to involve both the students and teachers which facilitated in developing a student-teacher network that will support in further dissemination of knowledge and sensitization at the ground-level. The medium of communication for the programmes was kept bi-lingual, i.e., a combination of English and Hindi language for easy understanding. Sign language interpreters were also present.

A second phase of these pilot training programmes has been conceptualized for the training of representative technical experts and urban professionals. The takeaways from the pilot programmes will be disseminated through the involvement of a network of active stakeholders, social media outreach, and knowledge exchange between school faculty and management authorities and local government departments.



Inclusive

Informative



Interactive

Contact Us



unhabitat.india@un.org



<https://www.unhabitat.org.in/projects/Mainstreaming-Leave-No-One-Behind>