



# Urban RAASTA

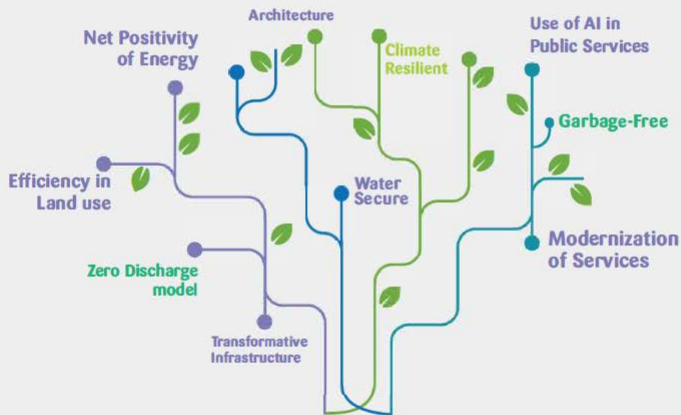
Resilient & Accelerated Advancement  
with Sustainable & Transformative Actions

# Urban RAASTA – Resilient & Accelerated Advancement with SUSTAINABLE & Transformative Actions - a brief

## Background

Cities are finally gaining recognition as the centers of action for achieving the global sustainable development agenda and responding to the triple planetary crisis. With an urban system of more than **4,000 city jurisdictions**, and another **3,000 on the brink of being recognized as urban**, India has strong impetus for **planning, governance, and financing of cities**. An urban future will pave the way for sustainable LIFE complemented with achieving the USD 5 trillion economic milestone.

The country's need of the hour as articulated by the Union Budget as well is to have well-planned cities that are "garbage-free, water-secure and climate-resilient."



<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1903260>

## Need for reimagining urban planning and local financing

The urgency to re-imagine the city-urban ecosystem and empower the local actors/stakeholders must be underscored with absolute certainty. Indeed, it is the local communities, and their ULBs guided by city mayors, chief town planners and municipal commissioners, anchored with private sector that are collectively responsible for translating the national vision into local realities. Transforming the urban-ecosystem requires dynamic, integrated and easily implementable urban development frameworks and instruments covering the entire gamut including policy, master planning, bye-laws and codes, projects, financing models, among others. The local stakeholders must be adept at understanding various urban development instruments and their implications to truly participate as equals and meaningfully contribute towards their city's development future.

# What is the Urban RAASTA?

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## Intent and Scope

URBAN RAASTA is developed for **local stakeholders and actors**, especially in **India's intermediary cities**, to endeavour towards a **healthy, sustainable, and green development pathway** which is rooted in India's traditional ways of conservation and moderation. The framework emulates a T-shaped approach, i.e. multi-sectoral horizontal integration and intra-sectoral comprehensive vertical deep dive, which is necessary to develop "fit for purpose" recommendations for urban development instruments and financing.

**The cornerstones of the framework to bring together capabilities for data and innovation, strategic foresight, and impact monitoring, with unique value addition are:**

**Spatial Equity** - enhanced and improved access to public goods, services and infrastructure for one and all, reduced localized inequalities so no one and no place is left behind

**SDG Localization** - recognising subnational contexts and translation of global goals to locally driven actions including co-creation of solutions for the achievement of the Agenda 2030

**Climate Resilience** - ability of cities to cope and manage the impacts of climate change where nature-based solutions (NBS), blue/green and hybrid infrastructure, and other integrated approaches offer a transformative opportunity to enhance this ability

**Inclusive Economy** - equal and enhanced access by all stakeholders to participate in varied economic opportunities strive towards shared prosperity

## Who is the Urban RAASTA for?

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### Beneficiary and Objectives

Beneficiaries and Stakeholders	What will it do?
Citizens, Grassroot Organizations, Private Sector, Potential Donors, Mayors and elected officials	Facilitating periodic review of intra-city sectoral performance and give insights on <b>spatial equity and inclusion</b>
City Managers, Commissioners, Policymakers, Town Planners  State and Local Planning Departments, Municipalities	Provide a <b>GIS-based master plan</b> review, monitoring and revision
City Managers, Commissioners, Policymakers, Town Planners, Engineers  Planning Departments, Municipalities	Efficient resource allocation for prioritization of development projects and tracking of <b>urban infrastructure</b> and financial decisions.

## Beneficiaries and Stakeholders

City Managers, Commissioners,  
Policymakers, Town Planners, Engineers  
State and Local Planning Departments

Private Sector, Sovereign And  
Non-Sovereign Investors

## What will it do?

On-ground convergence of National and  
State missions through **spatial mapping**

Pre - Feasibility Pipeline of "**Green  
Projects[1]**" that are climate smart and  
carbon neutral

<sup>10</sup>A 'green project' classification is based on the following principles: • Encourages energy efficiency in resource utilization • Reduces carbon emissions and greenhouse gases • Promotes climate resilience and/or adaptation • Values and improves natural ecosystems and biodiversity especially in accordance with SDG principles.\* <https://dea.gov.in/sites/default/files/Framework%20for%20Sovereign%20Green%20Bonds.pdf>

# Four stages of Urban RAASTA

## Intent and Scope

### ASSESS - Urban Sustainability Baseline

Rooted in the principles of evidence-based planning and management of urban areas, URBAN RAASTA is intended to identify strengths and weaknesses in multiple thematic areas or sectors of sustainable urban planning for each city where the framework is applied. By gathering spatial evidence, URBAN RAASTA has the potential to orient city's priorities and directing its resources to meet the desired vision and goals of the city's master plan. URBAN RAASTA collects data across 131 indicators with around 235 data points. Each indicator is scored on a seven-point scoring gradient which encourages cities to undertake continuous self-evaluation and improve their scoring against the indicators. Further, there are six mandatory spatial indicators which are critical in assessing spatial equity of public goods, basic services and their catchment areas. The results from the application of the baseline assessment are captured in an Urban Sustainability Indicators (USI) report which provides output on multiple scales of implementation. It is recommended to conduct this assessment every two years to monitor impact of on-ground green project implementation through movement on the indicators.

### DIAGNOSE - City Profile & Diagnostics

With the wealth of information gathered through the USI report, a comprehensive, evidence based, sectoral profile of a city can be developed. It captures insights from all relevant documents, policies and programs governing city's planning and undertakes critical assessment of these documents. Based on the outcomes of the USIR, the process yields critical analysis of the least and best performing sectors of the city and has the potential to direct the city planners and managers to determine the city's development trajectory. As a next step- key diagnostic issues faced by a city can be identified along with the sectoral interlinkages contributing to the issues and challenges faced by the city. Overall, the steps in the process yield a multisectoral roadmap of the issues faced by the cities which pave way for a spatial strategic plan to reduce the GHG inventory of the city.

### STRATEGIZE - Sustainable City Strategies

This step recognizes and addresses specific issues, opportunities and constraints as identified by the city profile and diagnostic report. A sustainable city strategy is a spatially strategic plan, which through a set of specific actions and interventions provide ways for the cities to develop with a low carbon footprint, enable managers to drive future development based on quantifiable data. By encouraging cities to devise

spatial city strategies, this step facilitates cities to devise an action-oriented plan to encourage equity amongst distribution of resources and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through strategic 'green projects'. This step also advocates stronger link with the city's capital investment plans (CIPs) employing innovative mechanisms to finance the spatial strategies.

### IMPLEMENT - Green Project Pipeline

As a result of the spatial city strategies identified in the previous step, this step equips the cities to design strategic interventions based on specific planning principles. These interventions usually take the form of on-ground green projects, which are, ranked for prioritization in implementation based on their GHG emissions reduction potential. For example, if principles like transit-oriented development are identified as an outcome of the analysis, then actionable interventions like developing 'complete street' sections, developing well designated transit system, developing multimodal hubs could be a few interventions to respond to the needs of the city.

For each "green project" a pre-feasibility stage project report is available covering the following areas:



**ASSESS**

Collect and enter data points to compute indicators  
USIR Excel Tool

**Action 2**

Create overall Sectoral Performance Wheel  
Performance Wheel Tool

**Action 4**

Prepare draft Urban Sustainability Indicators Report (USIR)  
USIR Template

**Action 6**

Prepare final USIR and get stakeholder endorsement

**Action 8**

**Action 1**

Orientation on RAASTA

**Action 3**

Verify and resolve data discrepancies with stakeholders

**Action 5**

Undertake detailed stakeholder mapping  
Stakeholder Mapping Template

**Action 7**

Consult stakeholders on USIR

**Action 9**

Assess Sectoral Performance Wheel  
Performance Wheel Tool

Consult stakeholders on City Profile and Diagnostic Report

**Action 16**

Identify 4 priority issues

**Action 14**

Conduct quantitative, qualitative and spatial analysis

**Action 12**

Identify lowest-highest performing sectors and inter-sectoral relationships

**Action 10**

**STRATEGISE**

**Action 18**

Identify planning principles to guide strategy for each priority issue

**Action 17**

Prepare Final City Profile and Diagnostic Report

**Action 15**

Prepare draft City Profile and Diagnostic Report  
City Profile and Diagnostic Report Word Template

**Action 13**

Assess sectoral GHG emissions impact

**Action 11**

Prepare strategy focused review of policies+plans  
G.A.F.T: For metropolitan, territorial and regional management\* | M.G: A Framework for Capacity Assessment\*\* | SDG Project Assessment Tool\*\*\* | Law and Climate Change Toolkit

Develop spatial strategy to address each priority issue

**Action 19**

Develop set of actions and interventions for each strategy  
Interventions table template

**Action 21**

Draft Sustainable City Strategy and interventions  
SCS Template

**Action 23**

Prepare final Sustainable City Strategy  
SCS Template

**Action 25**

**Action 20**

Prepare strategy focused review of policies+plans  
G.A.F.T: For metropolitan, territorial and regional management\* | M.G: A Framework for Capacity Assessment\*\* | SDG Project Assessment Tool\*\*\* | Law and Climate Change Toolkit

**Action 22**

Categorize interventions into - policy or project or institutional

**Action 24**

Consult stakeholders on draft SCS & interventions

**Action 26**

List projects under each strategy  
Project Preparation Study Template

Prepare PPS for green project pipeline  
PPS template

**Action 30**

Identify SDG alignment

**Action 29**

Calculate GHG savings  
GHG emissions tool

**Action 28**

Prepare block cost estimates  
Block cost estimate tool

**Action 27**

**IMPLEMENT**