



WRI INDIA

DIGEST

News
at a
glance

Jan-April 2020



BUILD BACK BETTER

CONTENTS

From the CEO's Desk.....	02
Connect Karo Update.....	03
Blogs.....	04
Insights.....	06
In the News.....	09
Quoted.....	11
Event Updates.....	13
Knowledge Products.....	21
Webinars.....	22



Dear friends,

As I write this, our staff in India has spent upwards of six weeks working from home. Due to the ongoing novel coronavirus spread, more than one-third of the world is indoors in an ongoing lockdown. In these extraordinary times our roles as individuals have altered, old routines abandoned, and new focus laid on balancing our professional and familial needs.

While countries around the globe are grappling with the obvious downsides of the pandemic: loss of human life and economic slowdown, we are also trying to understand the changes that are taking place in the levels of air pollution, consumption patterns and engagement with technology. Our focus at WRI India is on exploring the possibility to measure and map these changes and convert them into actionable research propositions. Through this pandemic, our staff has been consistently bringing out analysis and articles in the form of blogs and editorials during COVID-19 pandemic.

As we know, the post-COVID-19 world will require significant and fundamental changes in the way we look at our cities, informal sector, public transport, healthcare, climate change and global supply chains, among others. Social distancing norms are likely to significantly impact transport and urban planning and the notion of access that forms the basis of urban design.

WRI India programs are now exploring online platforms for launching their work during the lockdown. Recently, the Energy team successfully conducted an online deliberation regarding the online platform – Energy Access Explorer for India through a well-attended Zoom webinar.

It is indeed a time for compassion, kindness and patience which will allow us to develop a better understanding of imminent risks and strengthen our determination to “Build Back Better”. Now, more than ever, there is a need to build low-carbon, climate-resilient economies. There is also a pressing need for nations to find resilient models of development by learning and adapting from each other. The answer could lie in seeking global best practices for efficient use of natural resources. Going forward, WRI India’s initiatives like Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU), Sustainable Landscape Restoration etc., could help us develop into a sustainable, self-sufficient and circular economy.

I wish you and your families good health and mental well-being to navigate the lockdown and we look forward to your suggestions to help us shape our work in the post-COVID-19 times.

Thank you,

Dr. OP Agarwal



WRI INDIA

CONNECT
KARO 2020

RESCHEDULED

Our annual flagship event Connect Karo has been rescheduled from to September 2020. The new dates will be shared soon.

Visit [Connectkaro.org](https://connectkaro.org)

BLOGS



Two Cs of the new decade: Covid and climate change 🦠

Parvathi Preethan, Arivudai Nambi Appadurai and Shubham Gupta write about how the dual impact of COVID-19 and climate change present different kinds of policy problems. [Read more](#)

A post-Covid economy: Towards a sustainable and resilient recovery in India 🦠



Aman Srivastava writes about how the pandemic has reinforced the links between health, environment and the economy. There is mounting evidence that air pollution has contributed to higher COVID-19 mortality rates. [Read more](#)

From my window: A view of the COVID-19 pandemic in Mumbai 🦠



Madhav Pai talks about how inequality is shaping the way people experience COVID-19 in cities with the divide being all the more glaring in some places.

[Read more](#)

Lights out at 9: An experiment with India's energy infrastructure 🦠

Deepak Krishnan and Parul Kumar write about the grid system in India and how it fared during the Prime Minister's call to switch off lights at 9PM.

[Read more](#)

Tackling inequality in cities is essential for fighting COVID-19 🦠



Jillian Du, Robin King and Radha Chanchani comment on the critical need for social distancing that assumes that residents have adequate space, services and social safety nets to survive such an order. This is simply not the reality across cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America. [Read more](#)

Water concerns, India and COVID-19: the lesser-known battle 🦠



Sahana Goswami and Samrat Basak reflect on the spread of the COVID-19 virus and how it has reinforced the need for access to safe and assured water supply for all for preventing rapid transmission of the disease. [Read more](#)

Blues in the Green: The Budget 2020 Conundrum

Parvathi Preethan and Dr. Nambi Appadurai on the need for investing in adaptation against the backdrop of climate change manifesting itself across continents – from bushfires and heatwaves to floods, cyclones, storm surges, landslides and droughts. [Read more](#)

Connect Delhi: Learnings from pilot implementation



Revathy Pradeep points out why transportation is an essential component of the socio-economic development of a city and how public transport can play an important role in providing affordable mobility to all. [Read more](#)

Hospital in remote Jharkhand district taps solar power to improve services for patients



Pamli Deka writes about how hospitals in remote areas can tap renewable energy to deliver vital services in the face of formidable infrastructural and financial challenges. [Read more](#)

INSIGHTS



From using technology to track COVID-19 cases to setting up community kitchens, battle against pandemic has kindled innovation, ways to connect [Indian Express](#) 🦠

Dr. OP Agarwal and Kunal Kumar, Mission Director, Smart Cities Mission, write that in the ongoing pandemic, despite its high population density, India has managed to keep the number of those infected relatively low.

Post lockdown, Mumbai's public transport will need a complete overhaul to ensure social distancing [Scroll.in](#) 🦠

Madhav Pai writes about how in the new normal, social distancing in Mumbai will demand that only 50 people commute at any given time in a 74-seat coach. In the new system, trains will have to halt a little longer at each station to allow people to alight and board smoothly in a queue.

India's opportunity for sustainable growth [Mint](#) 🦠

Aman Srivastava writes about the recovery efforts and how the ongoing pandemic offers us the chance to make systemic changes for sustainable development.

COVID-19 and summer heat: Building our cities anew [TimesNowNews](#) 🦠



Rejeet Mathews and Akanksha Gupta write that it is time to construct cities in a sustainable and equitable way, in tune with the local climate as well as the immunity, health and well-being of its people.

Post COVID-19 lockdown, will India's public transport systems be able to maintain social distancing [Scroll.in](#) 🦠

Amit Bhatt writes about how transport is a derived demand, which means that people and goods don't use it just for its sake, but for what it produces. Delhi metro, he notes, will have to boost capacity six times to keep passengers safe.

COVID-19 and the disasters ahead are the price for not paying attention to science

[TimesNowNews.com](https://www.timesnownews.com) 🦠

Jayahari KM writes about how science is always at work. Almost all recent natural disasters have been well predicted by it. However, we ignore the red flags.

Lights Out at 9: Lessons from the experiment with India's energy infrastructure

[News18.com](https://www.news18.com) 🦠



Parul Kumar and Deepak Krishnan write about how the nationwide lockdown led to a considerable reduction in the country's peak electricity demand with significant reduction in commercial and industrial power demand.

India's electric mobility needs are beyond electric cars

[NexttrendsAsia.com](https://www.nexttrendsasia.com) 🦠

Amit Bhatt writes on how as India moves forward on its electric journey, it needs a strategy based on its unique mobility characteristics.

Why on-road safety must supersede vehicular speed in Gurugram

[Hindustan Times](https://www.hindustantimes.com)

Amit Bhatt points out how Gurugram has tried to redesign some of its dangerous intersections but these trial designs barely lasted. So, why is safety, in road design, being ignored?

Budget 2020 had many sixes and a few misses; implementation is key

[Business India](https://www.businessindia.com)



Dr. OP Agarwal writes about the Union Budget 2020 and how doubling farmers' incomes by 2022 while welcome needs a comprehensive action plan.

Data-based intervention key to address gaps in Indian urban mobility landscape

[YourStory](https://www.yourstory.com)

Prateek Diwan writes that data collection, from commuters and mobility services, can help in exploring solutions for urban mobility.

How India fared on energy efficiency in 2019 and what lies ahead

[ETEnergyworld.com](https://www.etenrgyworld.com)

Globally, energy efficiency was responsible for 12% less energy use and avoiding oil imports of 165 metric tonnes of oil equivalent (MtOE), which is equal to the combined primary oil demand of Germany, Australia and Belgium since 2000. Sumedha Malaviya writes about how India tapped into this abundant resource last year.

Skilling India's clean transport dream

[ETEnergyworld.com](https://www.etenrgyworld.com)

Neha Yadav writes about how creating a trained workforce is vital for India to gain jobs from new and sustainable mobility and enable obsolete jobs to transition. She enlists three major trends that can inform this skilling trajectory aimed at creating clean and connected mobility system in Indian cities.

Opinion | India Inc should be at the forefront of the climate war [Mint](#)



Jamshyd Godrej and Ashwini Hingne write about how acting on climate is no longer just a political imperative, but defines business leadership in today's carbon-constrained world.

How smart strategies, minimum funds can help India breathe free [Moneycontrol](#)

The Rs. 4,400 crore allocated in the Union Budget for cleaning air in cities, can be a good beginning if used optimally. While this is a relatively modest allocation for the enormous task at hand, it sets a precedent, and has the potential to become a multi-year effort, writes Dr OP Agarwal.

Hotter days ahead, but cooling India can't be only about air-conditioning [ETEnergyworld.com](#)

Sumedha Malaviya writes about the need to think of alternative cooling methods to combat the increasing impact of heatwave conditions for both urban as well as rural India.

Buildings are a hidden source of Indian cities' extreme heat [TheCityFix](#)

Bharath Jairaj and Sumedha Malaviya point out how urban heat islands are directly linked to the shape, arrangement and use of buildings, and their relationship to streets.

TN can become clean energy leader [The Hindu Business Line](#)

Bharath Jairaj and Deepak Krishnan spotlight Tamil Nadu's early adoption of renewable energy and the four significant steps the state took to create renewable energy infrastructure.

What is preventing the adoption of renewable energy in rural India, and how to fix it [Quartz India](#)



Pamli Deka writes that poor power quality affects service delivery organizations and how such organizations, in remote rural areas, can benefit by leveraging renewable energy resources.

Improved access to finance can boost electricity access for rural healthcare in India [PowerForAll](#)

In developing geographies not all healthcare institutions have access to electricity. While renewable energy (RE) technology is available, such institutions also need access to affordable finance to enable RE adoption, write Bharath Jairaj and Pamli Deka.

Nudging energy saving behaviors [Youris.com](#)

Sumedha Malaviya talks about the application of nudge behavior in energy savings and shares the results of a research conducted in collaboration with Technology Informatics Design Endeavour (TIDE).

IN THE NEWS



Experts brainstorm over transforming Bhubaneswar into a global city [Orrisa Diary.com](#)

The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) organized a workshop to seek opinions of experts to guide the expansion of Bhubaneswar in a sustainable manner. In the workshop, Rejeet Mathews, gave a presentation on Methodological Framework on CDP Preparation Process which was followed by an interactive Q&A session.

India needs to prioritize solar rooftop among residential, industrial users: Report

[Economic Times](#)

For India to achieve its 100 GW solar energy target by 2022, and to emerge as a climate action leader, it needs to prioritize solar rooftop photovoltaic (PV) among two key users - residential buildings and the industrial sector. According to WRI reports, demand aggregation can help accelerate energy efficiency.

Promote better food, land use practices in India

[PTI](#)

The Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) launched the India platform, which comes against the back-

drop of climate change threatening food security. FOLU India is a joint collaboration of the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and WRI India.

Hyderabad's Hitec City junction to become more pedestrian-friendly [New Indian Express](#)



WRI India and the Cyberabad Traffic Police redesigned a junction on a trial basis to encourage pedestrian safety and traffic efficiency. This is the first time the city saw such a redevelopment of a junction by a technical organization.

Let there be water: Why we need community-driven measures to conserve the natural resource

[*The Hindu, Daily Pioneer*](#)

WRI India's aqueduct tools highlight how India ranks 13th for overall water stress and 'has more than three times the population of the other 17 extremely highly stressed countries combined' — which includes arid regions in West Asia and North Africa.

Soon travel to BKC on e-bikes [*The Hindu*](#)



The Yulu bikes initiative is an outcome of the Station Access and Mobility Program (STAMP) challenge, which was conducted by MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority) and WRI India.

Centre's challenge for Indian cities: How would you design your city for a 3-yr-old

[*Hindustan Times*](#)



MoHUA, WRI India and Bernard van Leer Foundation launched the *ITCN-Urbang95 India Challenge* — an open call for all Indian cities to plan and design cities with an infant, toddler and caregiver-centric (ITCN) approach.

“QUOTED”

“Industries in these (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu) states are scaling down output in response to global and local economic pressures.”

Deepak Sairam Krishnan in [Financial Express](#)

“From using technology to track COVID-19 cases to setting up community kitchens, battle against pandemic has kindled innovation, ways to connect.”

Dr. OP Agarwal in [Indian Express](#)

“More than Rs 100 lakh crore is being invested in the National Infrastructure Pipeline, but we should avoid lock-in to high carbon energy and transport infrastructure and invest in climate-resilient low-carbon infrastructure.”

Ulka Kelkar in [DailyHunt](#)

“The Budget missed out on the replenishment of the much-needed National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC). If there is no fund flow or new projects, it would affect the resilience capital of the respective agro-ecological zones, which would, in turn, affect our Nationally Determined Contributions.”

Arivudai Nambi Appadurai in [The Hindu Business Line](#)

“While yellow number plates are required for commercial bike taxis, allowing bike sharing will help two-wheeler owners use their white-board bikes. In fact, many delivery logistics firms could also utilize their vehicles for bike pooling. But if it's not regulated, the

city will be flooded with more bikes.”

Sudeept Maiti in [ET Auto](#)

“Though the power sector is facing financial challenges, health of citizens and environment considerations are critical. It could offer a variety of benefits, including better health, environmental and social benefits (by curbing degradation of local community lands).”

Deepak Krishnan in [Times of India](#)

“The images that have been shared as satellite images are not really satellite images. These are in fact results of the GEOS-5 Model which are visualized and shared by windy.com. The ones shown in images are forecasted levels of SO₂ and are not observations.”

Raj Bhagat Palanichamy in [AltNews](#)

“Data will never be perfect. But the question is, should it stop us from making sensible decisions? The people share an intense socio-cultural connect with the sea....Their festivals are centred around it, their friendships and social associations are woven around the sea.”

Ulka Kelkar and Lubaina Rangawala in [BLINK](#)

“In India many researchers have done correlation between indoor air pollution and health.... We don't have India- specific concentration response function--which is the relationship between health and the exposure.”

Dr. Ajay Nagpure in [IndiaSpend](#)

“There should be a mobility impact assessment to understand how people will access the new developments and how will the transport systems respond to this increased demand. There should be an impact assessment not just for surrounding areas but for the influence zone, which is usually spread over a couple of kms.”

Amit Bhatt in [Hindustan Times](#)

“With nearly 77 per cent of India's population exposed to air pollution levels above the National Ambient Air Quality Standards safe limit, Rs 4,400 crore, allotted for clean air schemes, is positive news indeed.”

Dr. Ajay Nagpure in [Economic Times](#)

“But the how part — the institutional and incentive structures that drive the implementation — is missing. The budget missed out on the replenishment of the much-needed National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC). For two consecutive years, this has been ignored.”

Nambi Appadurai in [Hindustan Times](#)

“The allocation of Rs 1,70,000 crore for the transport sector is significant. However, there could have been a stringent and more targeted push towards adopting cleaner fuels and electric mobility to target air-pollution.”

Dr. OP Agarwal in [Urban Transport News](#)

“However, Yulu makers could put in a filtering mechanism in the mobile app which asks the prospective users their age, purpose of using,

to ensure that frivolous trips go down and the correct usage goes up.”

Amit Bhatt in [Hindustan Times](#)

“Inadequate connectivity between any two locations often results in longer distances that need to be travelled--this directly contributes to more CO2 contributed by the transport sector.”

Chaitanya Kanuri in [IndiaSpend](#)

“In Bogota, Colombia, all historical crashes were mapped on arterial roads and this was followed by speed assessment at different times of the day under the Bloomberg Initiative for Global Road Safety. All the arterial streets had maximum speeds of 60kmph and these were reduced to 50kmph. Six months later, there was a huge difference. 25% road fatalities had fallen and travel during peak hours had increased by a mere 14 seconds.”

Dhawal Ashar in [Times of India](#)

“It is not a sensible solution to open up these lands as these natural reserves provide a lot to the city. There are smarter ways to create affordable houses within the current available housing stock.”

Lubaina Rangwala in [Hindustan Times](#)

Supporting the development of agroforestry systems – that combines timber, fruits, fodder, and fuelwood with food crops – could provide a win-win solution to mitigating climate change risks, improving farmers income, food and nutritional security, agrobiodiversity and increasing farmers capacity to adapt to climate risks

Dr. Ruchika Singh in [Mongabay](#)

UPDATES



WRI India Ross Center gets a grant from Omidyar Network India

December 4, 2019, Delhi | Update

WRI India Ross Center for Sustainable Cities received a grant of Rs. 12.6 crore from Omidyar Network India. The work, enabled through this three-year grant, will focus on making planning processes more data-driven, at the neighborhood, city and regional level, using geospatial information. The objective of the Cities program is to enable cities to effect transformative solutions by supporting them in their journey to be low carbon, resilient and sustainable. [Read more](#)



Village Development Planning Workshops

December 13 and 17, 2019, NCR | Workshop

Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) and WRI India conducted village development planning workshops in Rajokri and Ghoga, in Delhi NCR, to encourage participatory planning in villages. Based on previous field studies, and community needs assessments undertaken, the workshops facilitated design charettes that involved collaborative planning as resident communities came together to discuss, modify and prioritize the proposed solutions based on local relevance and sustainability.



Workshop on Affordable Housing

December 19-20, 2019, Delhi | Workshop

The workshop on Affordable Housing, conducted by WRI India and GNCTD, focused on improving affordable housing visioning and implementation in Delhi. The first day comprised of a hands-on capacity building program for officials from the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB). Day 2 focused on a high-level roundtable that focused on strategies and implementation.



Electric Mobility State Level Workshop: Corporate Adoption of Electric Mobility

December 20, 2019, Gurugram | Workshop

The Electric Mobility workshop, conducted by WRI India, involved corporate businesses that offer drop and pick-up services for their employees. Speakers guided the attendees not only on ways to adopt EVs

but also on various business models, associated infrastructure and government initiatives with a focus on emerging micro-mobility service providers.



Low Carbon Pathways to the New Comprehensive Development Plan Workshop

January 9, Bhubaneswar | Workshop

The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) in association with SMART-SUT (Consortium of GFA consulting group, WRI India and Wuppertal Institute) organized a workshop to develop consensus over the methodological framework for the terms of reference (TOR) to prepare the Low Carbon Comprehensive Development Plan for 2040. Led by experts from WRI India, the workshop brought together stakeholders and subject matter experts who also discussed the approaches other cities have undertaken while adopting a similar exercise.



Kochi Mapathon

January 9, Kochi | Workshop

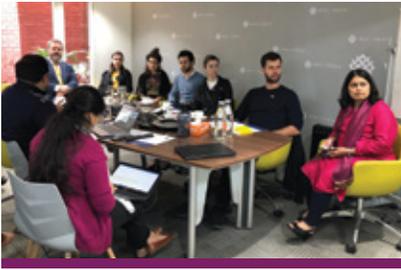
A three-day mapathon, conducted under the global *Cities4Forests* project, saw WRI India partnering with the Kochi Corporation. The mapathon was conducted to identify the city's existing blue-green cover and to devise strategies to augment it. Inaugurated by Soumini Jain, the mayor of Kochi, ward councilors, RWA, civil society members and other stakeholders actively mapped the different wards in Kochi during the event.



Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) launched in India

January 10, Delhi | Knowledge Product Launch

The *Food and Land Use* Coalition (FOLU) India initiative seeks to promote diversification of food production and sustainable land-use practices, improve farmers' livelihoods, enhance forest cover and productivity of farmlands, reduce food waste and promote healthy eating. FOLU India is a joint initiative between the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and WRI India.



WRI India meets Delegation from Quebec

January 28, Delhi | Meet

Dnyaneshwari Talpade (Public Affairs, Culture & Education Advisor, Bureau du Quebec, Mumbai) along with a delegation of research students from Quebec met the WRI India team in the Delhi office. Marie Duraisami, from the Sustainable Landscapes and Restoration program, and Tirthankar Mandal, from the Energy program, showcased presentations on the work of their respective teams. All attendees explored potential projects that they could collaborate on.



BMTPC and WRI India Accelerator workshop

January 28-29, Delhi | Workshop

Building Materials Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC) and WRI India, as knowledge partner, conducted an accelerator workshop (under ASHA-India sub-component of GHTC-India) for the selected cohort. The workshop offered one-on-one interactions with key stakeholders such as government procurement agencies, certification and standardization agencies, builders and developers, angel investors, venture capitalists, and research and development institutions (IITs). These interactions were curated to equip participant's innovations with strategic advice and networks toward scaling up in the Indian market. WRI India's urban development team, headed by Rejeet Mathews, worked closely with MoHUA (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs) to facilitate the same.



Land Accelerator South Asia launched

January 29, Delhi | Launch

The inaugural *Land Accelerator South Asia* was launched in Delhi in partnership with Sangam AIC and with funding from the IKEA Foundation. The 4-month long program invites applications from agriculture entrepreneurs who restore degraded forests and farmland. [Know more](#)



WRI India at the World Urban Forum (WUF)

February 10, Abu Dhabi | Update

The Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Government of Telangana and Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), with WRI India's technical support, made an impressive pitch at the World Urban Forum for the *Hussain Sagar Living Waters Project* — a holistic transformative project that aims to bring back clean water, biodiversity and people in and around Hyderabad's iconic lake. Involved right from the ideation stage, WRI India developed the high-level funding pitch documents with the project's finance need pegged at \$125 million for execution. [Watch the video](#)



India-US Track II Dialogue on Climate Change and Energy

February 3, Delhi | Meet

Staff from WRI's US and India offices joined other leading groups for the 9th India-US Track II Dialogue on Climate Change and Energy in New Delhi. WRI India Chairman, Jamshyd Godrej, is the co-founder and co-chair of the dialogue, along with John Podesta, founder of the Center for American Progress. Dr. OP Agarwal, Andrew Light and Dan Lashof led discussions on Climate and Energy in the US, the Dialogue's Working Group on Electric Mobility, the Working Group on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants and Solar Geoengineering. Dan Lashof presented at the WRI India's Delhi office, on sub-national climate action by US states, cities and companies, drawing from the Accelerating America's Pledge report.



India Energy for All Summit

February 4-5, Delhi | Meet

WRI India joined hands with the Clean Energy Access Network (CLEAN) and other partners to co-organize the *India Energy for All Summit 2020* (IEAS 2020). Pamli Deka moderated a discussion on *Energy Access for Climate Vulnerable Areas* that explored how access to energy can support socio-economic development in climate vulnerable areas. Bharath Jairaj participated in a roundtable titled *Inter-state Lessons on Energy Access*, hosted by CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies) which focused on WRI India's work on energy for development.



Road Safety Training under Mobilize your City

February 7, 12, 17, Kochi, Ahmedabad, Nagpur | Workshop

Road Safety Training (under the Mobilize your City program) is an initiative taken up by Urban Mass Transit Company Limited (UMTC), in association with WRI India as a knowledge partner, for building stakeholder capacity in three Indian cities: Kochi, Ahmedabad and Nagpur. A one-day workshop was organized in each city to introduce the safe-system approach for road safety and propagating safer infrastructure as the key to improving it. Stakeholders from development agencies, traffic police, smart cities, municipal corporations, universities and special safety forces were among the participating organizations.



Energise 2020

February 11-13, Hyderabad | Meet

Energise 2020, organized by Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE), brought together key stakeholders to help build a culture of energy efficiency in India. WRI's Jennifer Layke spoke at the opening plenary session on the *Role of Energy Efficiency in energy transition roadmaps*. WRI India's Bharath Jairaj was part of a panel discussion on *Changing Consumption Behaviors for an Energy Efficient Future* while Sumedha Malaviya presented a paper on *Characterizing Common Area Energy Use to Assess Clean Energy Opportunities in Apartment Complexes of Bengaluru*.



Planning Workshop: Advancing City Climate Action

February 20, Bhopal | Workshop

Organized by WRI India and the Environment Planning and Co-ordination Organization of Madhya Pradesh, Dr. OP Agarwal set the context at the workshop with MP government officials in attendance. The focus of the workshop was to devise mechanisms for data sharing and intersectoral action on climate and development in cities. Key takeaways from the sessions included the importance of citizen involvement, raising awareness on climate smart cities and building public demand for inclusive climate action planning. WRI India's Ulka Kelkar, Chirag Gajjar and Avni Agarwal participated in the workshop.



WRI India team facilitates Bloomberg and Union Minister meeting

February 20, Stockholm | Meet

WRI India's transport team, headed by Amit Bhatt, facilitated a meeting between Bloomberg Philanthropies, WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Union Transport Minister, Nitin Gadkari, was also present at the meeting. The discussion was on how to ambitiously move forward to improve road safety. In addition to cities work, the Bloomberg team expressed interest in supporting national level work on road safety.



Safer Streets Workshop for Delhi Traffic Police

February 20, Delhi | Workshop

WRI India's transport team of Priyanka Sulkhlan, Revathy Pradeep and Advait Jani conducted an interactive one-day Safer Streets workshop that brought together infrastructure development and enforcement agencies to jointly develop road safety strategies for the city. The main focus of the workshop was to sensitize the Delhi traffic police, Municipal

Corporations of Delhi (MCDs) and Public Work Department (PWD) on road safety and to discuss design and engineering interventions to improve pedestrian safety and designing safer streets for all.



ITCN-Urban95 India Challenge

February 21, Mumbai | Launch

Supported by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), WRI India and Bernard van Leer Foundation launched the *ITCN-Urban95 India Challenge*. This is an open call for Indian cities to plan and design cities with an infant, toddler and caregiver-centric approach. The initiative also aims to build a platform for peer-to-peer learning and exchanging best practices between cities, besides facilitating capacity-building for officials and developing a network of champions across cities. [Know more](#)



MYBYK, part of STAMP launched

February 22, Mumbai | Launch

STAMP (Station Access and Mobility Program) is a Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), WRI India Ross Center and Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) last-mile connectivity initiative. As part of *STAMP*, *MYBYK* launched its bicycle feeder service for Mumbai Metro One Private Limited (MMOPL) from the Jagruti Nagar Metro station in Mumbai. R.A. Rajeev (Metropolitan Commissioner Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority) was the chief guest for the launch.



Workshop on Surat Clean Air Action Plan

February 25, Surat | Workshop

A workshop on the *Surat Clean Air Action Plan: Controlling Emissions from Solid Waste Management Sector* was inaugurated by the Surat Municipal Commissioner. As a follow-up to a previous workshop, the event was attended by different stakeholders directly or indirectly involved with municipal solid waste management and who have developed an understanding on its contribution to air pollution. Banchhanidhi Pani (Commissioner, Surat Municipal Corporation) and WRI India's Dr. Ajay Nagpure and Bhavay Sharma participated in the launch.



Mumbai Streets Lab launched

February, Mumbai | Launch

The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), with WRI India as its knowledge partner, officially launched a first-of-its-kind street design challenge, *Mumbai Streets Lab* (MSL), for architects and urban designers to draft and pilot human-centric, innovative and inclusive contextual street design solutions in Mumbai. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Uddhav Thackeray, attended the exhibition. MSL scales up WRI India's street design work under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety.



Workshop on Smart Cities and Transport

March 3, Delhi | Workshop

An international workshop on *Smart Cities and Transport: Steering to a more Sustainable Future* was launched as a part of the international workshop for the Under Reform project under the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) sponsored Indo-UK joint research project *Understanding Indian Urban Governance Reform: A comparative analysis of the Smart City Mission reforms and Their Impact on Sustainable Urban Mobility*.



Panel discussion by WRI India on India: Land and Development Conference, 2020

March 2-4, Delhi | Meet

At the WRI India panel discussion at the ILDC 2020, Dr. Ruchika Singh delivered the opening speech. The discussion on *Enabling Conditions, Incentives and Barriers for Scaling Agroforestry in India* was attended by Yogesh Sawant of the BAIF Development Foundation, Amba Jamir of the Sustainable Development Forum Nagaland, Shri AK Shrivastava, DG of Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF), and Anupama Sreeramaneni, Director of Operations of the Livelihoods-Ara-ku project at the Naandi Foundation.



Urja Dakshata Information Tool (UDIT)

March 2, Delhi | Launch

Shri Sanjiv Nandan Sahai, Secretary, Ministry of Power, launched the Bureau of Energy Efficiency's (BEE) first-ever data visualisation portal BEE UDIT (Urja Dakshata Information Tool) in partnership with WRI India. Launched as part of BEE's 19th Foundation Day event, BEE UDIT tracks the energy savings, carbon reduction and monetary savings due to energy efficiency schemes under the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power.



Junction design launch

March 12, Mumbai | Launch

Aditya Thackeray, Maharashtra Environment and Tourism Minister, inaugurated the newly built Bindu Madhav Thackeray junction redesigned by WRI India. This junction aims to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility with ramps, safer crossings and refuge areas.



First Coastal Public Space Challenge

February – June 2020 | Launch

Part of WRI's Cities4forests global initiative, WRI India's first coastal public space challenge was conducted in collaboration with the Kochi Municipal Corporation. The Challenge sought innovative technological solutions that prevent the drifting back of suspended solid waste and water hyacinth on to the Mahatma Gandhi beach in Fort Kochi, Kerala. Entries to the challenge closed on March 10. [Read more](#)

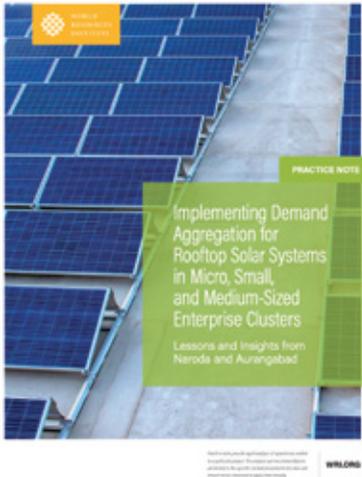


WRI Ross Center Prize for Cities open for submissions

February 10 | Update

The WRI Ross Center Prize for Cities is a global award that seeks to inspire urban change-makers across the globe by elevating trailblazing initiatives and telling impactful stories of sustainable urban transformation. On February 10, Prize for Cities opened submissions from initiatives that show how to live and thrive by tackling both the climate crisis and urban inequality. A sum of \$250,000 will be awarded to one grand prize winner and \$25,000 each to four runners-up. Applications closed on 7 May. [Know more](#)

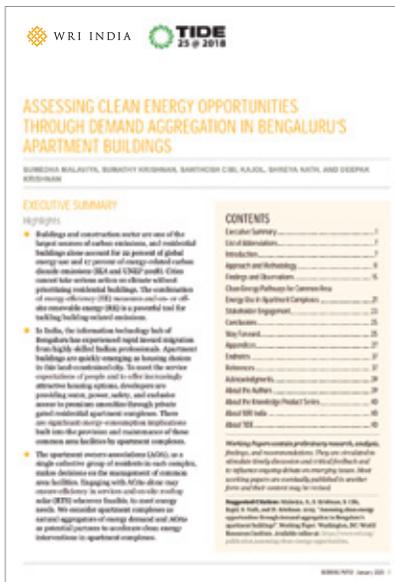
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



Implementing Demand Aggregation for Rooftop Solar Systems in Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprise Clusters

by Kajol, Jessica Quezada Medina, Ashok Kumar Thanikonda and Deepak Sriram Krishnan.

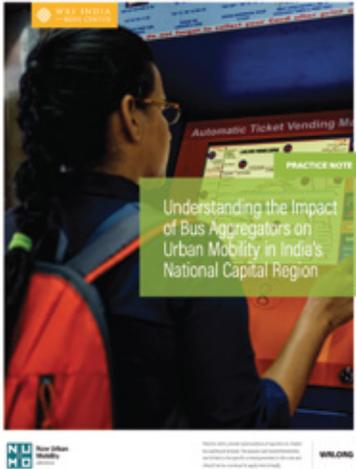
India has 63.3 million Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs). 31% of these are manufacturing units, which account for 25 percent of the industrial sector’s energy consumption. Advancing the implementation of clean energy measures in the MSME sector can play a key role in India’s clean energy transition. The aim was to demonstrate the aggregation potential for the solar rooftop PV system in 2 industrial clusters based in Aurangabad, Maharashtra and Naroda, Gujarat in India. We estimated a total of 4 mega-watt peak (MWp) of distributed SRT PV potential in Aurangabad and 1 MWp in Naroda. This practice note captures our experience of working 2 industrial clusters, the processes, barriers and key lessons, which can help advance additional aggregation strategies going forward. [View](#)



Assessing Clean Energy Opportunities Through Demand Aggregation in Bengaluru’s Apartment Buildings (in partnership with TIDE)

by Sumedha Malaviya, Sumathy Krishnan, Santhosh Cibi, Kajol, Shreya Nath and Deepak Sriram Krishnan.

India has ambitious renewable energy targets, a portion of which must be met through rooftop solar in residential buildings. Major Indian cities are seeing a trend towards gated apartment buildings where residents share common areas that provide communal amenities. As such, the energy used in common areas is the aggregate use from all residents for the services. This working paper co-authored by WRI India and TIDE describes the findings from examining demand aggregation potential in ten apartment complexes in Bengaluru. We define demand aggregation as the act of grouping together multiple residents in an apartment complex as a single consumer of the services provided in a common area. The study found that there was significant potential to save energy in common services in apartment buildings and use solar energy to meet most needs. Apartment Owners Associations (AOAs) that manage common services can be the anchors for implementing these clean energy measures in apartment complexes. [View](#)



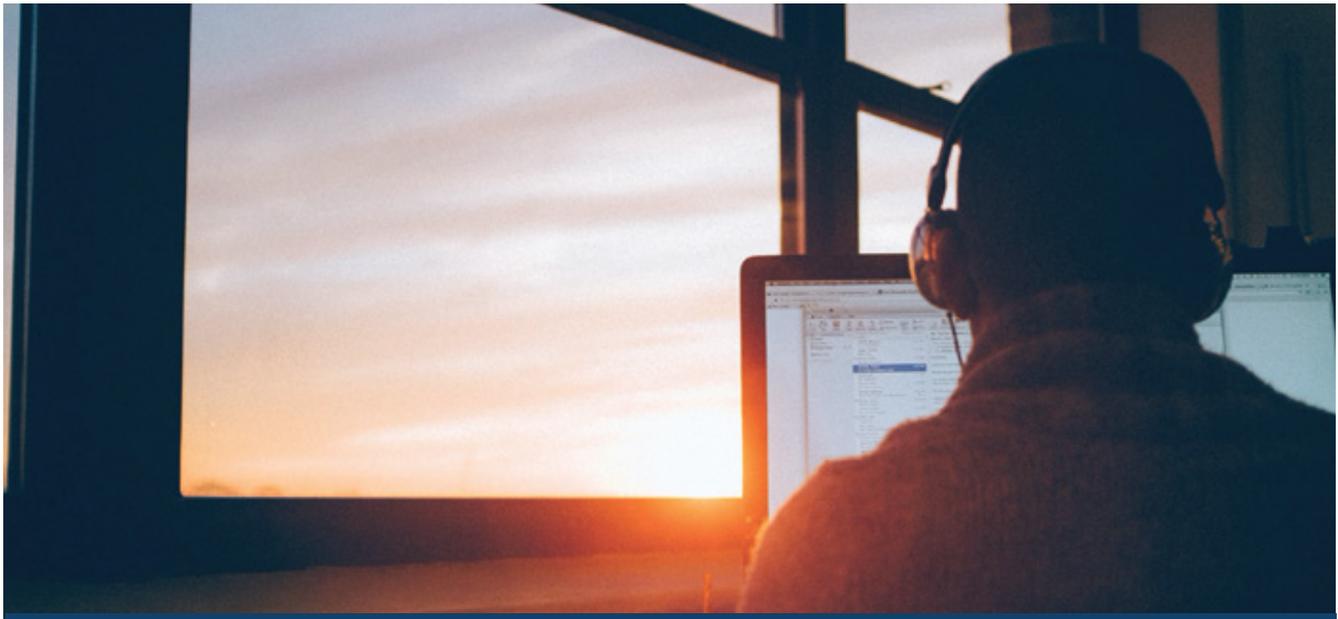
Understanding the Impact of Bus Aggregators on Urban Mobility in India's National Capital Region

by Jyot Chadha, Ojas Shetty and Srikanth Shastry.

Demand-responsive bus services provided by technology-led companies are a recent entry into the transportation ecosystem in cities across the world. Known as bus aggregators in India, these companies are capitalizing on limited mobility options in India's expanding cities. Bus aggregators operate on routes where commuters have few public transportation options and poor last-mile connectivity. They largely cater to commuters who live in residential hubs that are a significant distance (usually greater than 30 kilometres each way) from where they work. However, bus aggregators are also perceived as providing unfair competition to public transit and siphoning off customers from the transit system's most profitable routes. This practice note evaluates the environmental impact of Shuttlr, a leading bus aggregator operating in India's National Capital Region (Delhi-NCR). More specifically, it asks whether Shuttlr's services have helped mitigate urban transportation emissions and thereby reduced the environmental costs for Delhi-NCR.

[View](#)

WEBINARS



Sustainable Financial mechanisms and Innovative Business Models for Electric Vehicles in India

December 16 | Conducted by Vibhuj Binani from D'accord Incorporated on December 16, 2019, the webinar looked at e-mobility from a larger perspective and discussed challenges in adoption. [Watch it here](#)

Circular Economy Strategy for the Batteries in India: Social, Technical, Environmental and Economic Aspect

January 17 | Conducted by Rohan Singh Bais, Director-Product and Technology, Ziptrax Cleantech Pvt Ltd. [Watch it here](#)

Fundamentals of Tactical Urbanism | February 18 | The first in a series of webinars on tactical urbanism, Part 1: Fundamentals of Tactical Urbanism, was hosted by WRI India and Wuppertal Institut. Ideas for urban design and how to plan better cities were discussed with 70 participants actively engaging with the presenters.

[Watch it here](#)

Electricity Pricing and Charging Strategy for Electric Vehicles in India | February 24 | The webinar was held by Abhishek Ranjan, AVP & Head, Renewable and DSM Initiatives, BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. Developed by WRI India Ross Center, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation and Electric Mobility Forum, the webinar covered electricity and charging infrastructure utilities, policy makers, OEMs, and EV component manufacturers.

[Watch it here](#)

Disruptive Potential Of Fuel Cell Technology In The Indian Transportation Sector | [March 24](#) |

The recent growth in EV adoption has raised the question of how EVs affect the current ecosystem — including the market, R&D, policies, etc. — and discussion around Disruptive Technologies. A disruptive technology is one that displaces an established technology and shakes up the industry, or a ground-breaking product that creates a completely new industry. This webinar address issues like: are these new forms of disruptive technology in India, and what should we know about them right now? The speaker at the webinar was Dr. Prakash C Ghosh, Professor, Department of Energy Science and Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. [Watch it here](#)

Energy Access Explorer platform launched | [March 26](#) | WRI India launched the Energy Access Explorer (EAE) platform for Jharkhand state in India. This was a virtual soft launch held on March 26. It was the first time WRI India launched a new tool virtually, coping with the lockdown mandated due to COVID-19. EAE is an interactive online platform that compiles and analyses several spatial datasets across development and electricity sectors. As one of the key efforts aimed at visualising the energy access gaps in the country, with a focus on unmet and under-met institutional and social loads (electricity requirements in healthcare and educational facilities, for example) these maps provide both a state of play as well as establish benchmarks for future decision-making in the sector.

New Mobility Responses to COVID-19 Lockdown | [April 30](#) | In this webinar we hear first-hand perspectives from new mobility enterprises on how they're supporting essential mobility, through the lockdown and the private sector's outlook for urban transportation as we look ahead to a gradual transition out of the pandemic. [Watch it here](#)

ABOUT WRI INDIA

WRI India is a research organization with experts and staff who work closely with leaders to turn big ideas into action to sustain a healthy environment - the foundation of economic opportunity and human well-being. We envision an equitable and prosperous planet driven by the wise management of natural resources. We aspire to create a world where the actions of government, business, and communities combine to eliminate poverty and sustain the natural environment for all people.

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