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Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Sustainable Development Goal No. 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities in Indian Cities as Per Their Classification

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Abstract: ***This article aims to discuss that how Sustainable Development Goal No. 11 i.e. Sustainable Cities and Communities can be achieved in Indian scenarios based on the class of cities as per census. Although the Goal has self-sufficed program , which don't need an explanation but what are the possible broad Challenges and opportunities that could be confronted in implementing the goal in these various types of Indian cities which are classified as per census. Although the Indian Cities varies a lot from each other in almost every aspect, therefore it becomes so unstandardized to adopt one technique/method for realizing the goal.***

Keywords: SDG No. 11, Indian Cities, Classification of Indian Cities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Scope of SDG No.11 in India

I. INTRODUCTION

The goal is to have an overall sustainable development of urban areas, particularly the so-called formal 'cities,' as the term implies. Why use a model of sustainable development? because it is a necessity in the modern era. The requirements and idea behind this are pretty straightforward: to establish a development plan that would be able to meet today's urban needs while preserving enough for tomorrow. The Goal designates itself as a "Sustainable Model" for the same reason as opposed to "Growth orientated" or "Human Development" focused historical models.

Therefore , the primary objective is to have a sustainable , safe, inclusive and resilient cities by 2030. The tremendous growth in Urban Population and Projected Growth by 2050, i.e. 6.68 billion (World Urbanization Prospects : The 2018 Revision, Online Edition, 2018) people of world would live in Urban Context; it is approximately two-thirds of total population of the World.

The successful implementation of any Goal, especially SDG-11 needs well sorted understanding of challenges and opportunities that could be variable for Goal implementation. In Indian context, the variation is tremendous, and the major ones can be understood as per the class (Census, 2011) of cities.

II. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL -11 : SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

In light of the dangerous trend of urban population growth, the Goal had established a number of targets to be met by 2030. (iPleaders, 2021). Infrastructure will eventually be provided for everyone as urban population rises, although in circumstances of extreme population inflation, upgrading the current network won't be effective.

Planning and development of new infrastructure is necessary because, if it doesn't, the strain on already-existing infrastructure would become unbearable for both old and new urban habitats (UN-Habitat, 2015). If things continue as they are, existing infrastructure will eventually collapse. According to a number of specialists, a machine needs to be updated and maintained on a regular basis in order to function properly; otherwise, it would eventually stop doing its job, making even a bright sunny day feel like night. The respective targets (JOINT SDG FUND, 2022) of SDG 11 to be achieved by 2030 are as follows :

1) Housing for All with decent facilities
2) Retrofitting of Slums with basic Infrastructure facilities
3) Inclusive and Participatory Human Urban Settlements planning & Management
4) To conserve the heritage of respective urban areas

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5) Disaster Mitigation and Reduction in Economic, Life Losses in Disasters Reduction in per capita carbon footprint or the environmental impact and special attention to Air, water, soil pollution and waste management.
6) Universal access to Social and Recreational facilities
7) Strong linkages and comprehensive planning for Urban, Peri-Urban and Rural areas for Sustainable growth the Region and State.
8) Developing Policies to support and Strengthen the other Targets.
9) Upliftment of least developed countries with economic and technical assistance and be vocal for local.

With the aforementioned aims, the goal has presented many obstacles for the stakeholders to overcome in order to realise the goal in accordance with local circumstances (HRDEF, 2022). The same is true for India, where regional social, cultural, political, environmental, and economic situations can vary significantly over a short distance. According on the geographic size and population of urban centres, this article divided the Indian scenarios into Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3 cities, accordingly. Here, an inductive scenario of different Indian city classifications has been attempted.

III. A SCENARIO OF VARIOUS CLASSIFICATION (CENSUS, 2011) OF CITIES IN INDIA : CLASS 1, CLASS 2 AND CLASS 3

The Indian scenarios varies a lot , however the micro classification of villages and smaller town have not been included here as limitation , only the major Urban Centres have been taken into account which lies in the definition of Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 respectively.

A. Class 1 Cities or Primate Cities

These cities are Megalopolis (LotusArise, 2021) or even bigger . In the Indian Context, these cities are economic hubs and exposed to various types of pollution with ghettos in pathetic condition. These cities project an image of Modern developed society which present all the good side of the coin. Rapid Urbanisation , Long transit systems, and less virgin land available. Sky High Land values at CBD. Large, Old and Notified Slums.

B. Class 2 Cities

These cities are less saturated as unlike primate cities and gives opportunities for further Urban development . Land Prices somewhat mixed type. Peri-Urban areas needs to be protected from Haphazard Growth. Good Economic potential , future requirement of Mass-Transit, Significant changes in Transport infrastructure. Home to many Medium sized slums with average Infrastructure.

C. Class 3 Cities

Relatively better Environmental conditions than Class 1 and Class 2 cities. However, some may separate Industrial Suburbs or Market Towns surrounded by villages providing raw materials. Low land values and large quantities of Virgin land. Better conditions of Ghettos. A very high growth potential for economic activities. Actual Affordable Housing available with lesser slums. High intercity travel among surrounding villages. Highly vulnerable to damage the environment if not planned and controlled.

IV. EXISTING ISSUES IN VARIOUS CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN CITIES

An exclusive comparison of various Issues (Garg, 2022) that may arouse as per the class of city in achieving the respective Goal targets by 2030

TABLE I*

EXISTING ISSUES IN VARIOUS CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN CITIES

Goal Targets by 2030	Class 1 City Issues for that target	Class 2 City Issues for that target	Class 3 City Issues for that target
Housing for All	No cheap land available	Somewhat land can be arranged but still difficult	More market competition, Less No. of Buyers
Retrofitting of Slums	Slum unity	Aggression towards their favour (slums)	Majority are of temporary in nature , so way to resettle ?
Inclusive and Participatory	Large population size, tedious task for participatory	Have the tendency – My land, My rights, My	Political Biasness

Planning	planning	resources	
Conserve the heritage	Need for Natural Conservation instead of Man-made conservation	Vulnerable to Re-development	Less fame, less heritage value, less visitors
Reduction in Economic, Life Losses in Disasters	High (Venkatesham, 2015)population density	Less budget on Disaster mitigation	Low interest of stakeholders because of low population density
Reduction in per capita carbon footprint	Something utopian but expensive to achieve	People are not conscious , low efforts	People are not conscious , low efforts
Universal access to Social and Recreational facilities	Large No. of Projects to deal with	Regular maintenance and Encroachment free is a challenge	Low interest, informal behaviour towards PWD
comprehensive planning for Urban, Peri-Urban and Rural areas	Selective delineation of region and continuous expanding boundaries of region	Highly vulnerable to haphazard (Popat, 2022) growth	Low Threshold, Low Range
Developing Policies	Multiple Governments and Institutional Coordination is a big issue	Need more capacity building for Institutional framework	No such broad vision at ULB level
Upliftment of least developed countries - vocal for local	Extraordinary technical expertise	Need to support with economic boost	Need to support with technical and economic boost

*Source – Authors

V. OPPORTUNITIES AND POTENTIALS IN ACHIEVING THE AIM OF SDG 11

An exclusive comparison of various Opportunities and Potentials that may arouse as per the class of city in achieving the respective Goal targets by 2030.

TABLE 2[#]

OPPORTUNITIES AND POTENTIALS IN ACHIEVING THE AIM OF SDG 11

Goal Targets by 2030	Class 1 City Opportunities for that target	Class 2 City Opportunities for that target	Class 3 City Opportunities for that target
Housing for All	Govt. as the major contributor for funds, good political expression	Favourable conditions, excellent opportunity	Opportunity to stock up cheap land for future Housing demand
Retrofitting of Slums	A lot No. of Slum dwellers will get benefit	Change in psychology of slum dwellers – Not always everyone evicts	Pre-planning of slum developing areas through GIS and try to avoid slum settlement scheme
Inclusive and Participatory Planning	Comprehensive and satisfied development	Favourable conditions, excellent opportunity	new exposure to such type of planning
Conserve the heritage	Tourist influx : economic growth	Excellent opportunity to save the heritage from being destroyed	Conserving the unobserved

Reduction in Economic, Life Losses in Disasters	Sufficient funds, infrastructure, Human resource, expertise available	Opportunity to work in disaster mitigation policies, great political expression	prevention is better than cure
Reduction in per capita carbon footprint	To set as a Global class leading benchmark	Excellent chance to stop carbon footprint increase	Strictly not allowing any environmental concerns as it is most vulnerable
Universal access to Social and Recreational facilities	easier to maintain and a good example to showcase vision for whole country	Opportunity to address this issue	A good chance to change social behaviour
comprehensive planning for Urban, Peri-Urban and Rural areas	Favourable conditions, excellent opportunity (TERI, 2016)	As a practice session for Class-2 cities before they become Class -1 city	Rural development is a great opportunity to emphasize
Developing Policies	Great chance to unite all agencies, ULBs, etc.	Involvement of central and state Government	Rural development policy
Upliftment of least developed countries - vocal for local	Create, do, and show	Economic investment by Government , great political expression	Holistic Political winner

[#]Source – Authors

VI. INFERENCES

Every Class of city possess their attributes of hurdles and opportunities, so none of the case is easier for targets of achieving the SDG-11. However, the situation of class 3 cities are much better and favourable and possess wider scope to achieve the targets of SDG-11. These towns are in the situation of easier adoption to changes and betterment , whatever it is required.

Class 2 are in the midway situation where, still some scope and possibilities left for easier implementation of targets set by goals. The need and understanding the importance of goal targets are better understood in these towns, mainly due to high vulnerability of fast uncontrolled Urbanisation. These towns must be specific with policies and stringent laws to be enforced. At this stage, if it succeed, then it would certainly better output when it becomes class 1 town in future.

Class 1 towns have extreme high land prices and almost negligible to absorb the alteration. These towns needs specific innovative techniques along with least disturbances during implementation process for smooth functioning of such an important town. The prioritization is somewhat oriented towards these towns due to their economic importance.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

As due to inferences, each particular target of SDG-11 for every class of city must have a different/unique vision/plan/method/technical expertise in order to realise the Goal-11; instead of one comprehensive statutory method. Moreover it is already being stated for India in beginning of the article, “local conditions gets differ in few kilometres in India whether, social, cultural, political, environmental, and economic”.

Although the targets of SDGs are well positioned in Centrally sponsored schemes(CSS) like AMRUT, PMAY, HRIDAY, Smart City Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission, etc., but those are not complete to fully foster the aims of the SDGs. These targets of SDG-11 must be thoroughly aligned with local development plans of respective towns and cities. The integration of targets in these plans must not be piecemeal and sectoral in nature, they must be comprehensive in nature. And most important it must be planned through ICTs.

For class 3 towns, SDG-11 targets can be integrated with local area plans or town development plans or master plans.

For class 2 cities, similarly it can also be integrated with City Development plans and Comprehensive Mobility Plans.

For class 1 megacities, the targets of SDGs must be aligned with the Regional plans of the Respective region or District.

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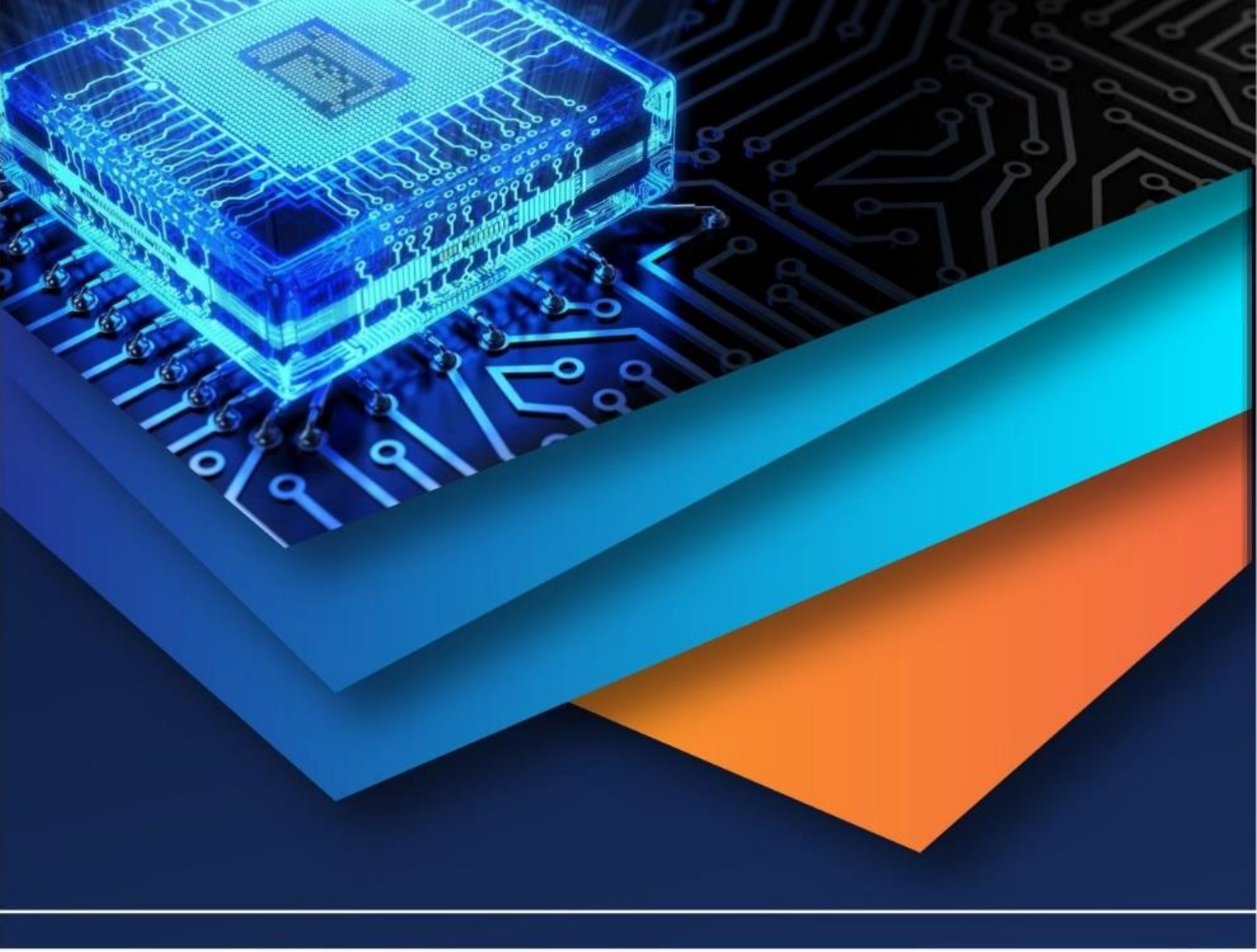

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