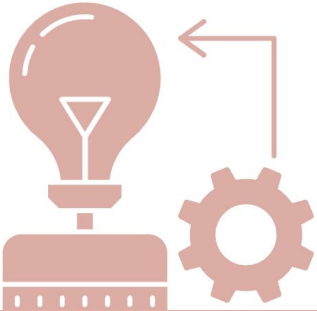UNITED NATIONS INDIA

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
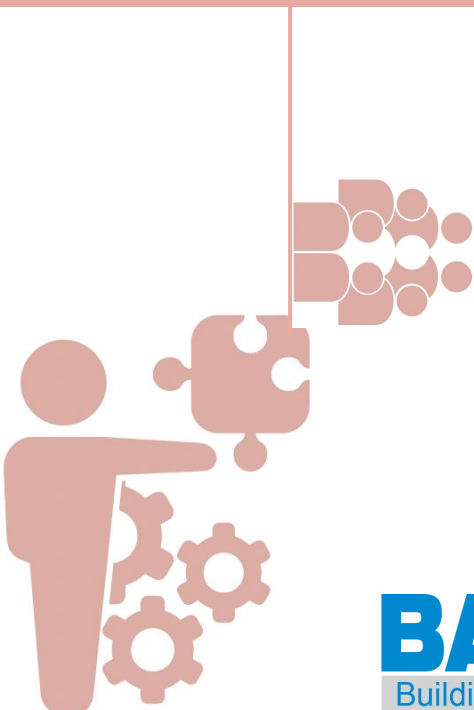Government of India

NIUA
National Institute of Urban Affairs

Smart Solutions Challenge & Inclusive Cities Awards

A call for technological solutions to make Indian cities more accessible and inclusive for all

BASC
Building Accessible, Safe & Inclusive Indian Cities

Background

The growth of India's cities is fuelling the world's largest urban transformation. India's urban population is projected to increase from about a third to 40% by 2030 - that would mean 600 million living in India's urban centres. Roughly 8 million persons with disabilities, or a third of all persons with disabilities in India are estimated to be living in cities, a number that is expected to increase. These facts juxtaposed together often means that persons living with disabilities, women & girls, elderly and other vulnerable populations are constantly competing for access to essential resources with the rest of the population. A tall order with increasing odds that eventually increases their vulnerabilities and curtails their access to transport services, sanitation, health, education, and other public services.

The pandemic has demonstrated the necessity to reimagine the nature and use of public spaces and infrastructure especially with the accelerating trends. These include digitalization and use of advanced ICT-enabled infrastructure and services, data-driven decisions and operations for enhanced citizen services, and the quality of life of its residents. There is an urgent need to raise awareness and foster learning and knowledge sharing among urban planners, practitioners, and policymakers around universal design and the immediate need for accessible and inclusive urban development through citizen-centric and participatory approaches.

The Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Awards is an initiative of the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and the United Nations (UN) in India to address city-level accessibility and inclusion challenges faced by persons with disabilities, women and girls, and the elderly. The initiative seeks to crowd-source innovative solutions to align with the New Urban Agenda and promulgate the principle of 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 11, particularly Target 11.7 - 'By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible, green, and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons, and persons with disabilities'.

The 'Smart Solutions Challenge' is designed to identify smart innovative solutions which can be easily adapted or replicated, and potential ideas or prototypes which can be incubated by the cities. The 'Inclusive Cities Awards' is designed to identify innovative solutions, initiatives, programmes already implemented within cities in India that are addressing accessibility and inclusion needs of the target population. The Awards seeks to encourage such innovation within Indian cities by acknowledging and recognizing their efforts for creating inclusive and accessible urban spaces for all.

Objectives

Through the launch of the Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Awards, NIUA and UN in India aim involve the citizens in the nation-building process by crowd-sourcing innovative ideas, technologies, products, and business solutions that can potentially;

- Break-down and resolve the complex city-level inclusion and accessibility challenges faced by women and girls, the elderly, and persons with disabilities; and
- Be easily adopted and implemented by cities for mainstreaming gender and disability inclusion into urban planning for creating inclusive, accessible, safe, and resilient urban spaces.

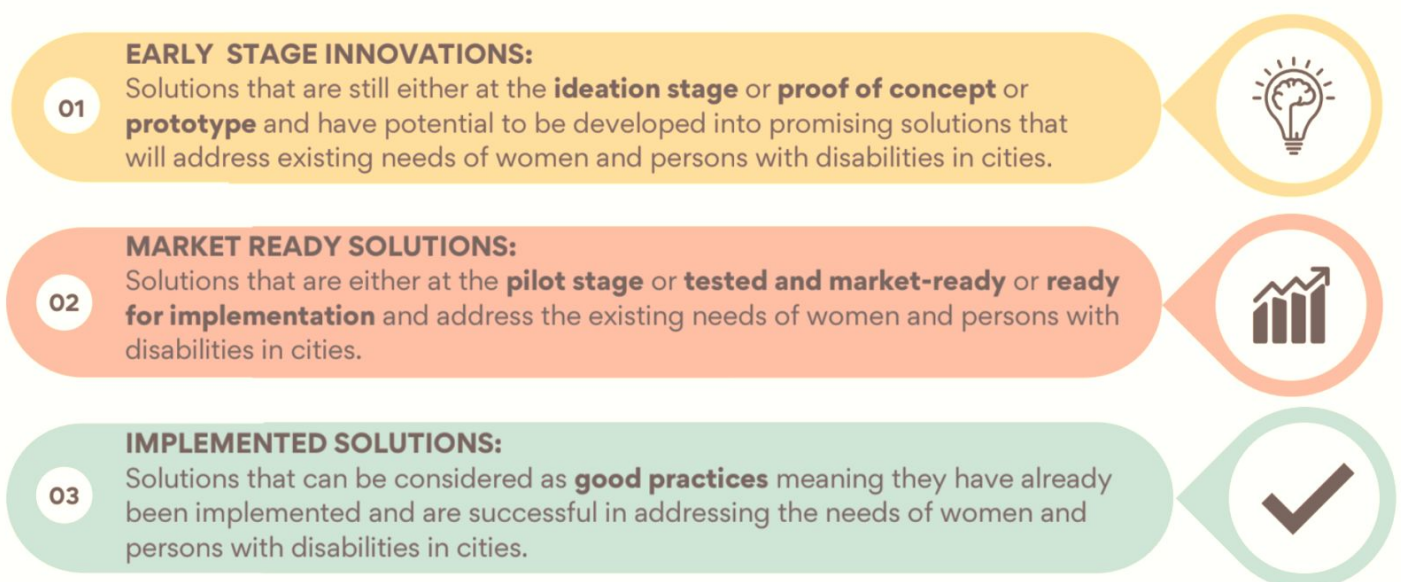Timeline: The challenge will run for a 40-day period starting the launch on 27 April, 2022 to 6 June, 2022. The Presentation Ceremony will be held on 23 June, 2022.

Challenge Launch		Evaluation Period		Presentation Ceremony
*27 April 2022	6 June 2022	7 - 16 June 2022	17 June 2022	23 June 2022
	Application Submission Deadline		Winner Announcement	

Key Thematic Areas: The challenge will seek solutions in the following five thematic areas:

01	POLICY & GOVERNANCE
02	MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION
03	HEALTH & SANITATION
04	DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
05	DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION / DATA MANAGEMENT

Categories: The challenge will seek entries in for technological solutions for pan-city development, innovative assistive technologies, and business models for scaling such innovative solutions in the three categories:

01 EARLY STAGE INNOVATIONS:
Solutions that are still either at the **ideation stage** or **proof of concept** or **prototype** and have potential to be developed into promising solutions that will address existing needs of women and persons with disabilities in cities.

02 MARKET READY SOLUTIONS:
Solutions that are either at the **pilot stage** or **tested and market-ready** or **ready for implementation** and address the existing needs of women and persons with disabilities in cities.

03 IMPLEMENTED SOLUTIONS:
Solutions that can be considered as **good practices** meaning they have already been implemented and are successful in addressing the needs of women and persons with disabilities in cities.

BASIIC
Building Accessible, Safe & Inclusive Indian Cities

Outcomes: The Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Awards will crowd-source and provide cities with technological solutions that will help:

1. Identify and address some of the most-pressing accessibility and inclusion needs within Indian cities;
2. Provide adaptable solutions that can be incubated by or pilot-tested and implemented in Indian cities;
3. Achieve and scale up citizen participation in urban planning and design for inclusive and accessible cities;
4. Promote peer-learning among cities by encouraging and highlighting cities working around accessibility and inclusion needs of their citizens;
5. Create a repository of innovative solutions and good practices within India for adapting or replicating between and within cities and between and within countries.
6. Localise the tenets of LNOB by leveraging technology to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and bridge the digital divide for access to socio-economic opportunities for all.