

Institutionalizing the Urban Health & Climate Resilience

Surat City Experience

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Resilient cities show maturity of processes in handling climate induced health impacts. The fourth fastest growing city of India, Surat shows high climate change and health vulnerability. Repetitive floods, river side city location, changing rainfall pattern, city limit extension and high population density, highest immigrant population, rapid industrial development activities, high potential of vector & water borne disease transmission, and experience of resurgent infections contribute in making city vulnerable.

In response to this scenario, city government has set up unique example of institutionalized body- the Urban Health and Climate Resilience Centre of Excellence (UHCRCE). The centre is operational since 5 years, initially as a funded project and later as an institution.

The center is playing key role through systematic actions like

Surat city Public Health Adaptation– a spatial vulnerability study at four levels- municipal corporations of Gujarat, administrative zones of Surat city, census wards of city, and three sample slums.

Heat & Health Action Plan was built on retrospective and prospective analysis of climate data and by further showing their association with mortality and morbidity. On basis of this evidence, 'Heat and health Action Plan- Surat (HHAP-S)' was phase-wise being implemented as the first coastal city plan in India.

Advocacy for strengthening Disease surveillance to Health management Information System involved the documentation of disease surveillance during routine and during disasters, institutional memories and importance of real time surveillance for disease prevention.

Community Resilience Action models-piloting was carried out through multistakeholder collaborations. The models included health dialogue forums, cross learning platforms between academia and administration, peer educator schools and promotion of urban agriculture.

UHCRCE works as a "Climate and health observatory for city government and community". It has endorsed that the resilience becomes more effective if it is formalized in institutionalized platforms.