The background of the cover is a stylized illustration. In the foreground, there are green hills with several trees, including a large one on the left and smaller ones in the middle. At the bottom, there are green bushes and yellow flowers. In the background, a city skyline is visible with several tall buildings, including a prominent one with a pointed top. The sky is a mix of light blue and yellow, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall style is clean and modern.

Guidebook for campaigners

Action Plan for
**“A People’s Vision
of the City”**

Towards Sustainable and Equitable Cities

Published by

Citizens’ Rights Collective (CiRiC)

(Urban Knowledge Activist Hub of ActionAid India)

This is a handbook and guiding document, to enable those interested in taking up the campaign for ‘A People’s Vision of the City’ in your city. The document may be freely quoted, reproduced, translated and acknowledged where possible.

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(Urban Knowledge Activist Hub of ActionAid India)

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The Background

What is People's vision of the city?

People's vision of the city (PVoC) is a programme initiated by Citizens' Rights Collective (CiRiC) as an attempt to address the urgent need to design and plan equitable and sustainable cities. It is a methodology to develop consensus and plans based on the aspirations and needs of the citizens, especially the most vulnerable, in order to build an imagination of an equitable and sustainable city in which they wish to live. It involves outreach, dialogue, research, campaigning and knowledge-creation on a vast scale in the cities which choose to be part of this programme.

Although CiRiC is initiating the campaign it is by no means a CiRiC campaign. It is meant to be a mass campaign, and this handbook is a guide for the campaign; for those who take it up in specific cities.

PVoC involves consensus-building around a holistic vision of the city, by constructing a multi-level dialogue among the broadest cross-section of citizens, bringing out different perspectives – social, economic, and environmental, and of the often conflicting imaginations of different sections of the citizenry. The dialogue will include, city planners, municipalities, governments, etc. In order to make sure we have a serious plan, the campaign addresses all aspects of planning and people's needs, like housing and shelter, livelihoods and employment, governance, women's safety, environmental sustainability and commons, etc. Citizens are encouraged to express themselves, listen to other citizens, engage in dialogue, negotiate differences, build common ground, which not only builds a collective

...the campaign addresses all aspects of planning and people's needs, like housing and shelter, livelihoods and employment, governance, women's safety, environmental sustainability and commons, etc.

...India's urban population grew from 286 million in 2001 to 377 million in 2011 – an increment of 91 million, which is larger than the rural population increment of 90.5 million for the first time since Independence in 1947 (Census of India 2011).

vision, but also helps to educate the common citizens on urban planning, and create democratic spaces for discourse and resolution of differences. The collective vision thus obtained will form the basis to also draft actual city plans. The campaign will start in a few cities to start with, and then expand depending on the success and popularity of the campaign.

Why “A People’s Vision of the City”

India's urban population grew from 286 million in 2001 to 377 million in 2011 – an increment of 91 million, which is larger than the rural population increment of 90.5 million for the first time since Independence in 1947 (Census of India 2011). Currently, Mumbai and other Indian metros (Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and others) are marked by a model of unsustainable development that limit access to all kinds of urban services, livelihood, etc. Smaller cities are being built in the same image.

During 2005-12, the Congress party led government set in motion what is euphemistically called ‘urban reform’ through policies like the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)ⁱ. This was more aimed to privatize public services, reduce what is regarded as ‘public’ and the role of elected bodies involved in urban governance. Under

ⁱThe Congress party is one of the largest and oldest democratically-operating political parties in the world. The Organisation was founded during the British colonial times in 1885. It was during their regime, the JNNURM was introduced in 2005-2012, which was a scheme for 63 major urban centres. This was a major scheme for city modernisation, with focus on urban services and infrastructure. It had 2 sub-missions – urban infrastructure and basic services to the urban poor.

the same JNNURM, the Union Urban Development Ministry also offered funds to carry out a programme of making City Development Plans, but admitted subsequently that almost 76 percent of the Indian cities function without a master plan, despite the recognised benefits of the plan (The Hindu, August 30, 2012). Where they did happen, the City Development Plans, supposed to evolve from multi-stake holder consultations, were rarely done in such a manner. People's participation had little role to play in drafting of the CDPs or master plans.

The flagship programme of the current BJP led government, called Smart Cities, has as its declared aims, the responsibility of ensuring socio-economic upliftment by promoting business opportunities, ensuring citizens' participation and improving e-governance for better service delivery.ⁱⁱ The key features of a Smart City is in the intersect between competitiveness, capital and sustainability. According to the government, smart cities are mandated to be able to provide good infrastructure such as water, sanitation, reliable utility services, health care, attract investments, transparent processes that make it easy to run commercial activities.

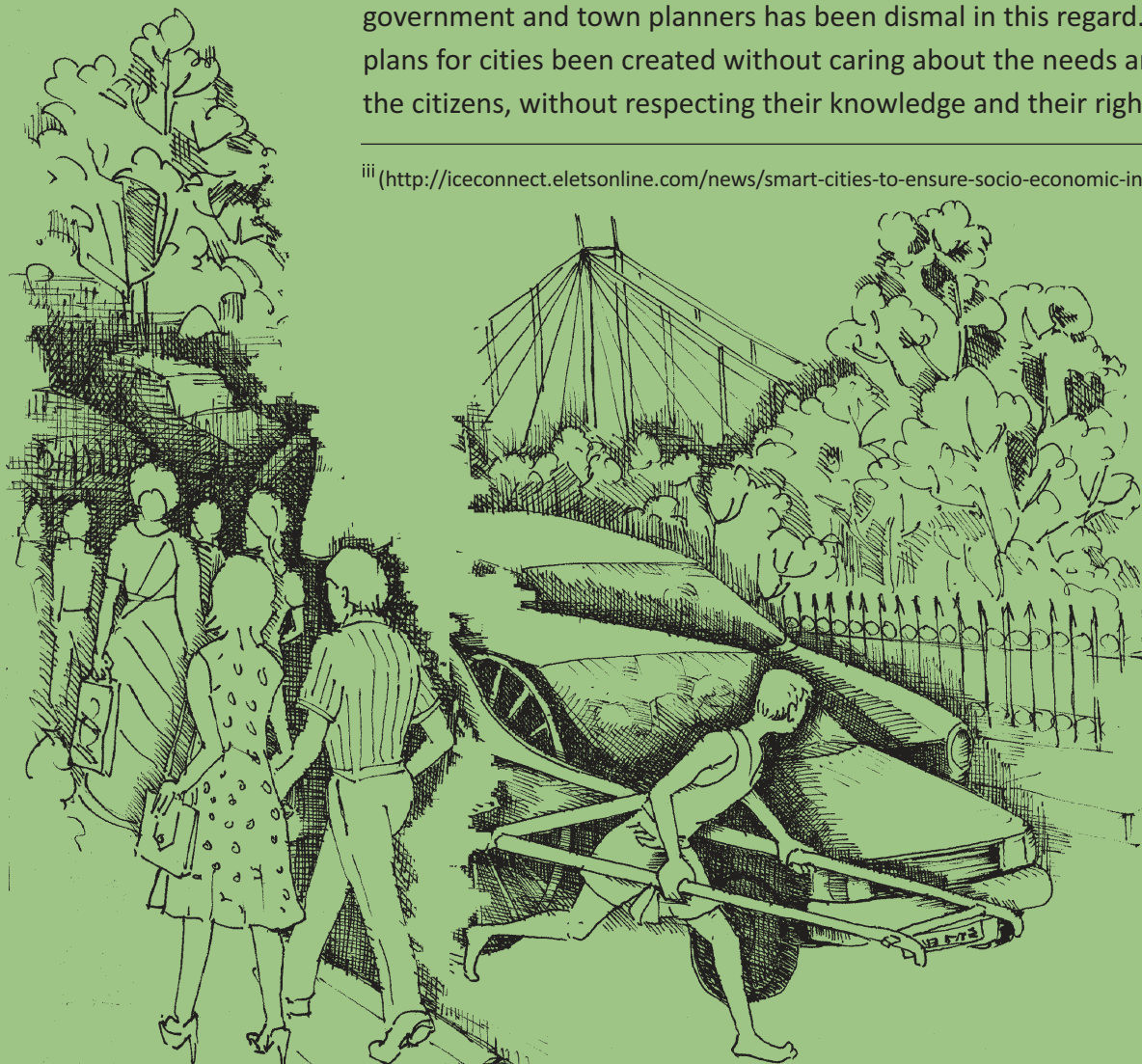
The government also claims that Smart Cities will be addressing the question of equity by offering economic and employment opportunities to a wider section of people, and slum redevelopment, providing houses



ⁱⁱ As of 2014, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is the country's largest political party in terms of representation in the national parliament and state assemblies.

for all urban poor, skill development of urban poor for increased employment.ⁱⁱⁱ Given such an ambitious urban development programme in which vast amounts of money will be spent, it becomes essential to engage with people's groups/constituencies to imagine their own vision and to make sure that their ideas and demands go into the planning of their city. The record of the government and town planners has been dismal in this regard. Too often have plans for cities been created without caring about the needs and aspirations of the citizens, without respecting their knowledge and their right to the city.

ⁱⁱⁱ (<http://iceconnect.eletsonline.com/news/smart-cities-to-ensure-socio-economic-inclusivity-venkaiah-naidu/>).



Who we are

ActionAid India is an anti-poverty agency that supports people in their efforts to build a world free of poverty, exclusion, patriarchy and injustice. CiRiC is a policy-advocacy hub set up by ActionAid India working on issues of urban poverty, and the building of sustainable and equitable cities. Our commitment is to focus on urban issues from the viewpoint of the common citizens whose voices and interests should take priority in policies governing the city. CiRiC's main constituency comprises the marginalised and excluded urban populations. CiRiC aims to create 'knowledge' and 'activist' forums on critical issues of urbanisation and urban development by bringing together civil society groups, activists, academics, social movements and research institutions.



What we want to do

“People are at the centre of sustainable development and, in this regard, in the outcome document, the promise was made to strive for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive and the commitment was made to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and thereby to benefit all, in particular the children of the world, youth and future generations of the world, without distinction of any kind such as age, sex, disability, culture, race, ethnicity, origin, migratory status, religion, economic or other status.” (Source: Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals, 2014)

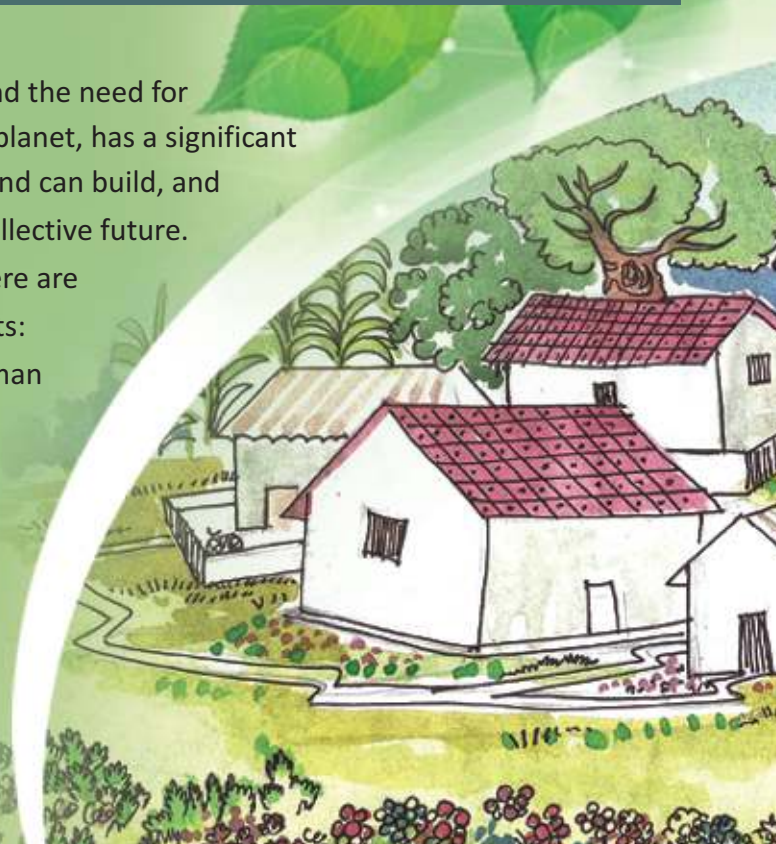
The global discourse on sustainability of our habitat, and the need for “Sustainable Development Goals” in order to save the planet, has a significant resonance with the idea of the kind of city we should and can build, and what we cannot afford to build in the interest of our collective future.

Among the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): there are many which are directly concerned with human habitats:

Specifically Focus area 13 is “Sustainable cities and human settlements” and Goal 11 of the proposed SDGs is:

“Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” If the SDGs are not to remain on paper it will have to be part of the aspirations of the citizens and the plans at the level of each city.

PVoC is expected to evolve an alternative model of city planning and development. It is conceptualised



within the framework of Sustainable Cities and the Right to the City, which demand a transformed and renewed approach to urban life. It advocates collective right to access and enjoy urban resources, and to build up collective efforts to re-structure the city space. The city plan/s that will be designed under this programme will view cities from the lens of sustainability, equity, safety, resilience, aesthetics etc. The PVoC will consciously build upon economic/ecological/social justice and democratic principles in viewing the urban space from a feminist perspective. The PVoC will engage in building alternative models of city building, and advocate for implementation, equitable distribution of resources, transparency and accountability, which will contribute to a sustainable form of development.

...If the SDGs are not to remain on paper it will have to be part of the aspirations of the citizens and the plans at the level of each city.

The People's Vision of the City campaign will:

- ***Initiate a collective citizens' vision and approach to their own city***
- ***Advocate and ensure participatory planning to city development***
- ***Design, comprehensive city plans encompassing various issues related to urban development***
- ***Engage with the discourse on SDGs and the contours of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable human settlements.***





When and how

The following is a summary of the regional and national level processes of the campaign:

➤ *Selection of cities/towns:*

The selection of the cities/towns will depend on the possibility of change. The main criteria will be: contacts with citizens and local bodies, possibilities of physical and social impact. This is a critical step in the campaign.

The focus will preferably be on smaller cities and towns in the first phase. In general, small and medium towns have been kept out of the ambit of major investments and schemes. These cities require our attention since they are going to be future metropolises of India. Most importantly, the possibility of change is much higher in the smaller cities.

➤ *Anchoring state level processes:*

Identification of key partners at the first stage to mobilise towards each of the various parameters is crucial for the inception of the programme. A state campaign team will be crucial, composed of people/organisations which will



lead the process, working at the city level, with issue-based experts, researchers, academicians, activists, planners, representatives from other organisations etc. This team will be in charge of **coordinating the programme, identification of issues, drafting of the city level plan etc** at a city level. This will lay the foundations for the broadest process, making sure that the process is not skewed or broken, and so that the objectives of the campaign are achieved.

This also means interacting with a number of people who may not be working together, who have major or minor differences with each other. For instance, the PVoC should include Resident^{iv} Welfare Associations (RWAs) and middle class, even business groups, who are more often than not, extremely inimical to the interests of poorer citizens for example on the question of slums. They still need to be made part of the process, and the urban space of the city needs to be negotiated amongst all sections of the people in order to come to minimum areas of understanding. A sectoral plan which comes from only one section of the people will have very little chance of success.

The PVoC process will have accomplished its objective only if it succeeds in building the democratic debate and build consensus across sectors, which is essential in making social change.

^{iv} **Resident Welfare Association (RWA)** is a civic body that represents the interests of the residents of a specific urban or suburban locality in Indian cities. In India, citizens can form RWAs to represent their interests, needs and demands. RWAs have become increasingly involved in municipal politics and decision-making since the early 2000s and continue to grow in importance.



The challenge is to make sure the discourse does not exclude, and is in fact led by those who have hitherto been voiceless and excluded and therefore disadvantaged. And finally we will also engage with the state governments, municipalities, bureaucrats etc. in order to make sure that the plan becomes a reality.

 ***National level processes:***

At a national level, CiRiC will help to put together the necessary campaign material, anchor research, consolidate the plans and data coming in from the various cities, provide information with respect to resource people. It will standardize the envisioning process in a form that is possible to consolidate in the form of a vision of a sustainable and equitable city. It will coordinate the objectives, parameters, plan and activity of the campaigns. This will be done with the help of organisations, experts, policy makers who are willing to devote time to the research and campaign.



Parameters

The set of parameters that are priority in any city may differ, depending on the history, conditions, size, economic activity, political balance of forces etc. However the needs of citizens can be identified under some broad parameters. So also the factors to be taken into consideration for the planning of a truly sustainable, equitable, inclusive and safe city can be identified.

ALL these parameters have to be taken into consideration in order to create a credible and workable city plan.

The PVoC team has identified the basic parameters for the campaign as follows (the divisions are for convenience in organising the data. There is bound to be a lot of overlap):



1. **Housing and Physical infrastructure**

- Housing and shelter
- Transport/mobility and roads
- Water supply and conservation
- Renewable energy
- Sustainable waste management
- Sanitation systems
- Pollution
- Building materials
- Density
- Conservation
- Disaster management

3. **Labour/employment**

- Employment opportunities
- Skill building
- Spaces for livelihood, vending zones
- Wages and cost of living
- Social protection
- Levels of organisation
- Conditions at work
- Crèche and child care facilities at work

2. **Social infrastructure**

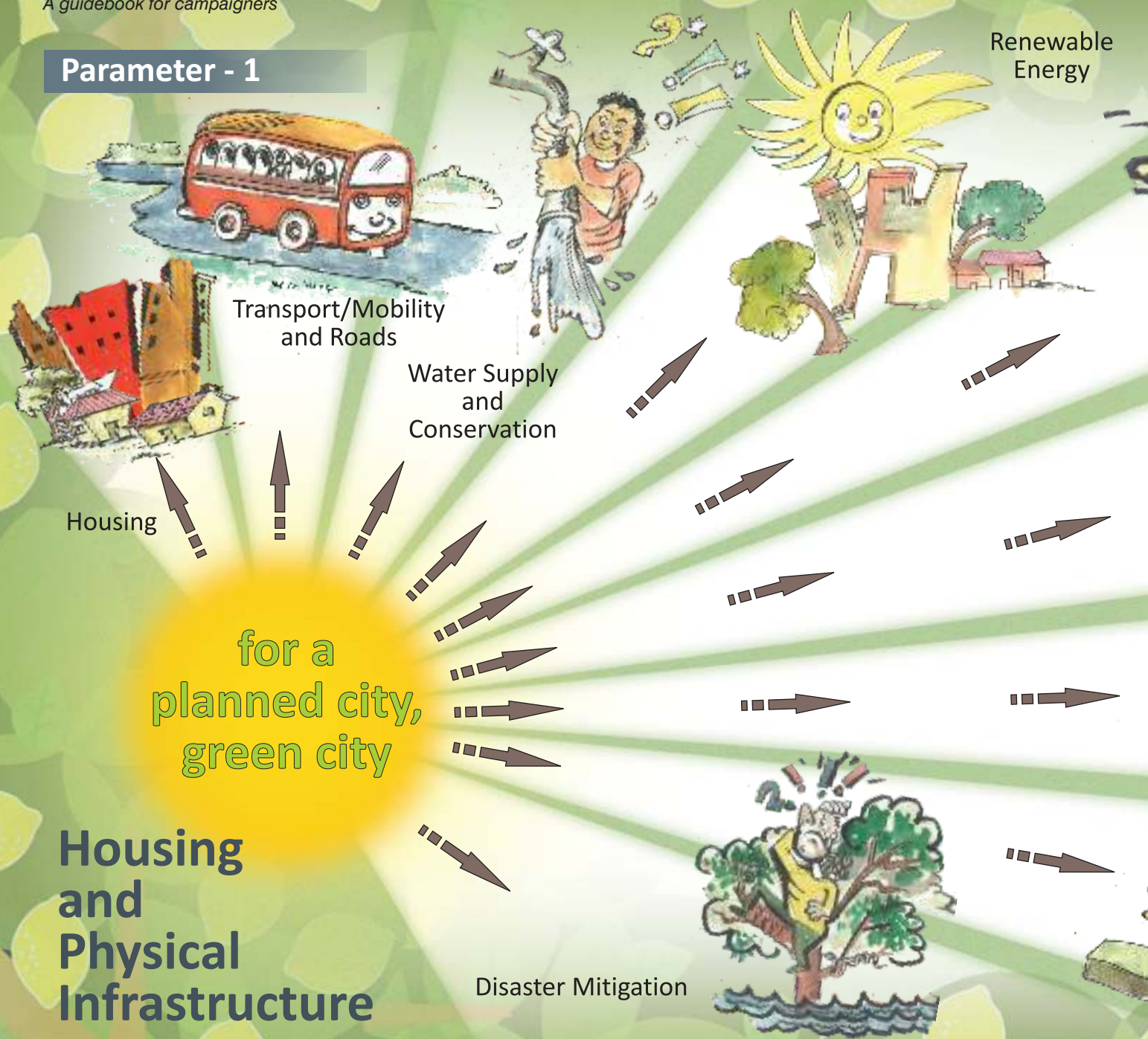
- Land use and zoning
- Education
- Leisure, recreation
- Sports
- Aesthetics and lifestyle
- Universal health care
- Safety and security
- Social harmony
- Open spaces and commons
- Cultural spaces
- Disabled friendly spaces
- Tolerance

4. **Governance**

- People's participation
- Comprehensive planning
- Economic justice
- Social justice
- Institutions
- Consultative process

Each Parameter has been represented by a graphic in the following pages

Parameter - 1



Sustainable
Waste
Management



Pollution,
Building
Material



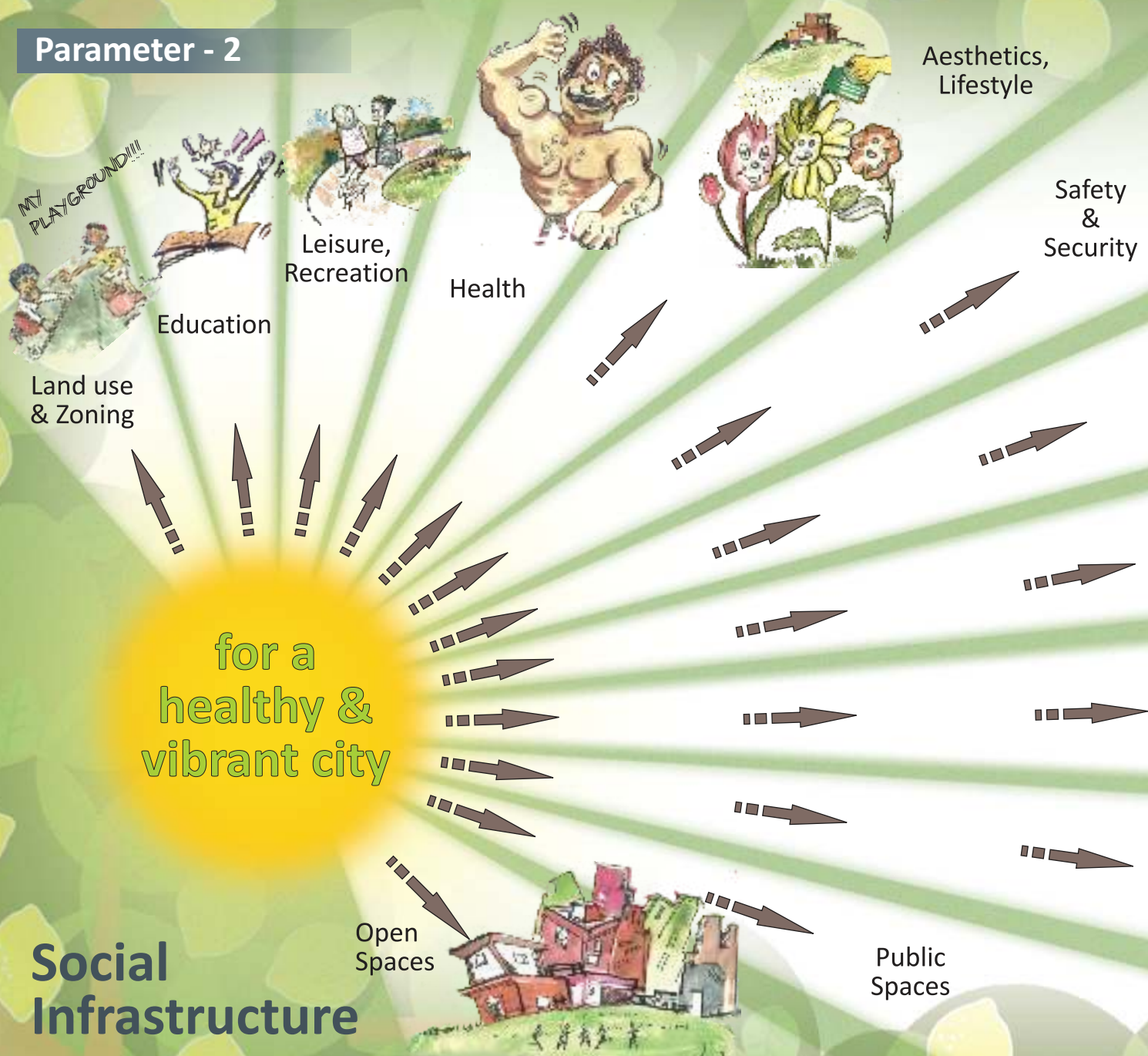
Density



Conservation



Parameter - 2





Social
Harmony



Gender
Friendly



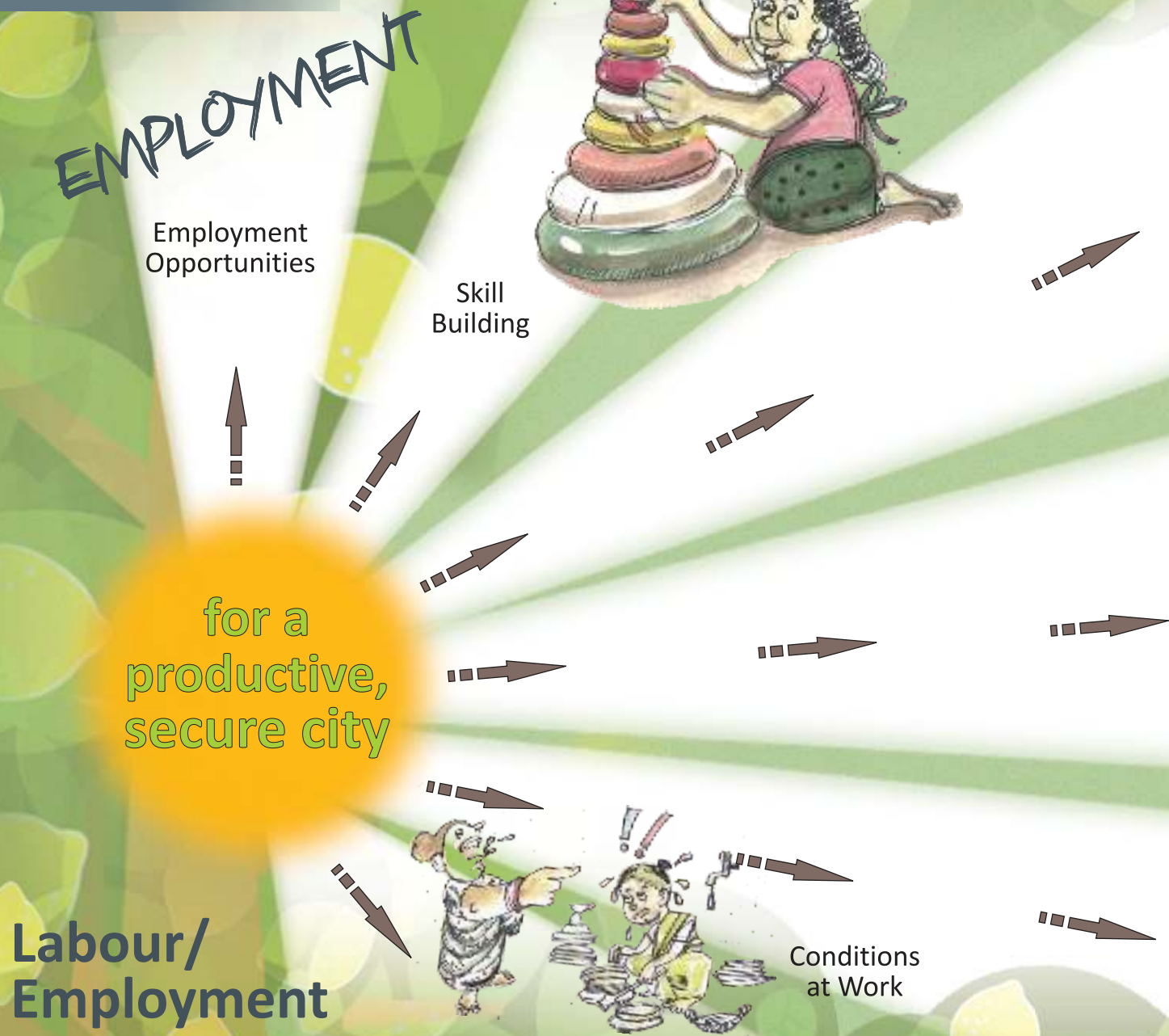
Child
Protection



Commons



Parameter - 3



Wages
&
Cost of Living



Social
Protection



BENEFITS

INSURANCE

PENSION



Levels of
Organisation



Parameter - 4

**More
parameters
may be
added by
groups in the
focus cities**

**for an
inclusive &
equitable
city**

Governance

PLANNING



INSTITUTIONS



CONSULTATIVE
PROCESS





Support and Expertise

This envisioning exercise will need the support of urban planners and architects, urban researchers, data management experts, academics and policy makers, media, senior activists working in various sectors, relevant government bodies (where possible), national leaderships of people's movements, etc. This may not always be available in every city, but this expertise will be available from outside where needed. It is also important to use the right to the 74th amendment to the Indian Constitution which has been little used in the urban space.

Groups which wish to participate in the campaign are welcome to take a lead, but it would be useful to keep us informed so that each city can benefit from the experience of other cities; from experts and citizens movements that are already involved. Anyone can take up the campaign but the rules of inclusion, in terms of parameters, and sectors will have to be maintained if it is to maintain the spirit of the People's Vision of the City campaign. More importantly, for it to have any measure of success, it will need a comprehensive approach.



Methodology - Phase I

MONTH 1

- **Activity:** Lay the ground for the campaign.

***Details:** Prepare campaign toolkit, with handbook, source material, logo, slogans etc.*

- **Activity:** Form ad-hoc State level campaign group. Hold discussions on the concept of sustainable cities.

***Details:** Identify groups and experts under each of the parameters.*

Step 1

Road to a People's Vision of the City

Step 3

- **Activity:** Form broader People's Vision City Campaign Teams (CCT) at focus-city level with campaign partners & experts trying to cover most if not all the parameters.

***Details:** CCTs will do the outreach and networking on each of the parameters, with all the citizens, receive the data and the results of the consultations across issues and, evolve the vision. They will identify and include experts needed for the process and the plan.*

MONTHS 2 & 3

Step 2

- **Activity:** Identify city/cities in each region (starting with one city in each state).

***Details:** Decide on focus cities/towns based on the following criteria: contacts with citizens and local bodies, possibilities of significant physical and social impact.*

- **Activity:** Identify key actors, core team for campaign and research at the focus-city level and hold meetings to discuss campaign strategy.

***Details:** The core team will understand the campaign, the material, be able to conduct the outreach and the research effectively. They will make sure of inclusiveness, and will oversee timelines, and outcomes.*

Road map to A People's Vision of the City

(continued on next page)

Methodology - Phase I (continued)

MONTHS 5, 6 & 7

Road map to A People's Vision of the City

(continued from previous page)

Step
4

- **Activity:** Organise theme meetings/seminars in each focus-city on each theme, until theme consensus is achieved on a common minimum agenda.

***Details:** Involve the largest numbers of organisations, citizens movements, NGOs, experts and ordinary citizens who are interested, across class, political affiliation, to achieve the broadest consensus with all opposition neutralised or won over.*

Road to a People's Vision of the City

MONTHS 8 & 9

Step
5

Road to a People's Vision of the City

- **Activity:** CCT to put together all information evolving out of the thematic meetings, in order to start drafting a city vision document. Try to engage local govt, elected representatives, political parties and government.

***Details:** Make sure that no material/data is lost, no one's opinions left out. The collection of data and storing and processing may need the help of data management expertise.*

- **Activity:** Formal meetings with urban local bodies, planners, government, to present and discuss the contours of the City Vision plan that is evolving, and a City Development Plan based on the vision.

***Details:** Conduct meetings with local bodies and government with the people backing the process. We will have the help of trained urban planners to start creating a City Development Plan based on the vision.*

- **Activity:** CCT to put together all the data and formulate the People's vision for the (specific) focus-city based on the consensus.

***Details:** The city vision document focus on the alternative plan, not on critique of earlier plans or current policy. That can be done in supporting documents and articles.*

MONTH 10

- **Activity:** City level conference on the People's vision of that city. Launch campaign for implementation.

***Details:** The exercise in each of the cities will result in a vision document coming from each of the focus-cities.*

Step
6

Road to a People's Vision of the City

MONTH 11

- **Activity:** All India: Collection and processing the knowledge gained from the city level plans at a national level.

***Details:** Formulation of a vision for Indian cities which is sustainable, equitable, safe, peaceful.*

Step
7

Methodology for Phase II

In the second phase – i.e. the next year, the attempt will be to implement the People's Plan, and the People's Vision in the focus cities.

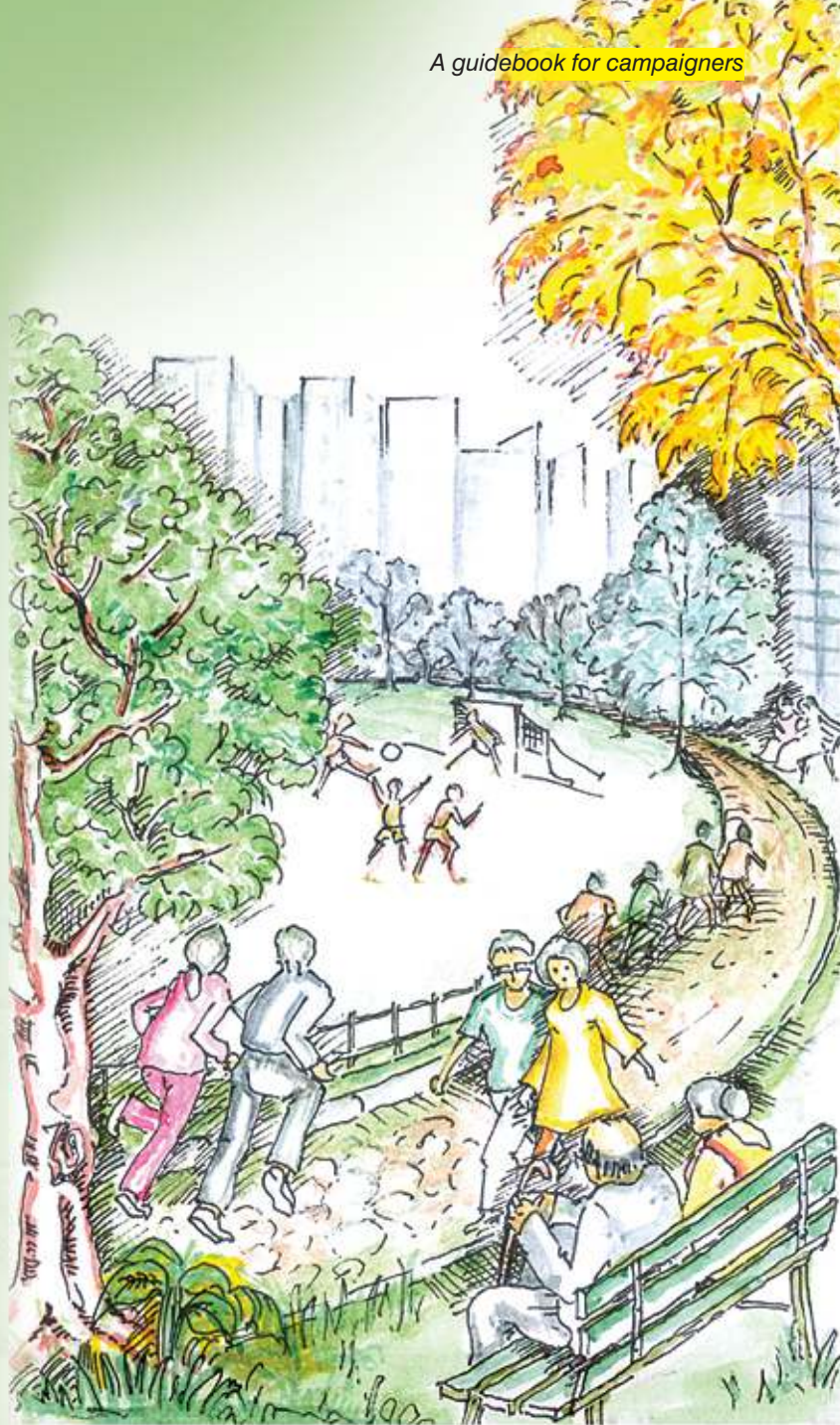


Major actions/activities under PVoC

- Creation of campaign tools – handbook, source material, logo, slogans etc.
- Research on sustainable cities and sustainable urban development.
- Inception workshops at the national level on people's vision of the city campaign.
- National level workshop on sustainable cities.
- City level meetings with planners, architects and experts on the various issues of urban planning.
- Focus-city level meetings and consultations on each parameter over a period of time until there is consensus.
- Gathering of data/opinions/discussions and drafting of consensus based city vision.
- Meeting with ULBs and bureaucrats for sharing of the people's plan in each focus-city.
- Putting together a broader vision for Indian cities.
- Conference on People's Vision of the City: Building Sustainable and Equitable cities in Delhi.

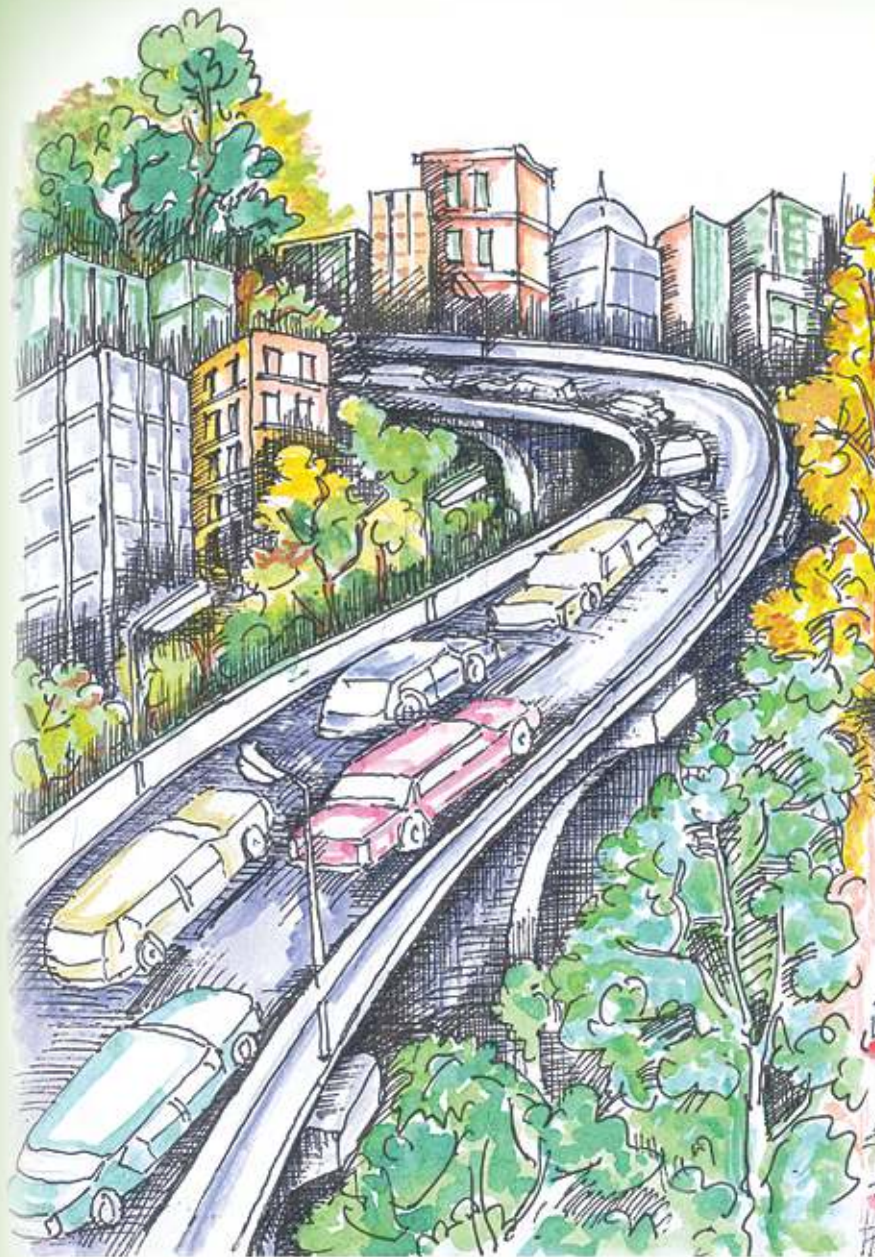
Basic guidelines

1. **Basic principle guiding the campaign**
– **Right to the city, rights of women, and the poorest and most vulnerable.**
2. **PVoC is meant to be a broad inclusive process, and will not work as the vision of a few people alone. It has to follow a comprehensive process.**
3. **The city level plan document should cover all the parameters and sub-parameters to evolve a comprehensive city level vision document.**



Knowledge output

- Campaign material on People's Vision of the City.
- People's Vision of the city plans (booklets) from focus-cities.
- Body of literature on what constitutes sustainable and equitable cities in the Indian context.
- Guideline document at the end of Phase I on planning of Indian cities.





What can be achieved

- Empowering, educating and organising of citizens, including the most vulnerable sections, in planning, designing the city, and campaigning for its implementation.
- Body of knowledge on sustainable, equitable cities in India through the process, seminars, research and publications.
- Formation of network and platforms in the focus-cities for taking forward the idea of implementing the people's vision.
- Evolving of actual and workable city plans in selected cities with the engagement of state govt, local urban bodies.
- Experience of implementing the 74th Amendment in a meaningful and effective way.
- Building sustainable cities in some selected cities/towns in the country.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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Our main constituency comprises the poor and marginalised communities. We work with researchers, academicians, lawyers, journalists, trade unions and civil society organisations on issues of urbanisation and urban development.

ActionAid India, is an anti-poverty agency, working in India since 1972 with the poor people to end poverty and injustice together.

Together with the people, we claim legal, constitutional and moral rights to food and livelihood, shelter, education, healthcare, dignity and a voice in decisions that affect their lives.

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/CitizensRightsCollective



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