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## UNDERSTANDING INCLUSIVE CITIES

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### ABSTRACT

This paper discusses best practices which aim to bridge different gaps being experienced in the urban spaces of the global south in order to meet the different components which help to achieve inclusivity.

This paper utilizes secondary data sources. The study depends largely on online desktop research, published papers and inputs from the classroom seminar discussions. The collected data has been qualitatively and manually analyzed to come up with the results.

The results firstly outline the observations on how cities in the Global South are divided in terms of: housing locations, choices, conditions; age; gender; physically challenged; economic strata; and social statuses.

Secondly the paper identifies and highlights the best practices which have been done in some cities of the world with the aim of bridging the inequalities and achieve inclusivity in their city spaces. The paper finally maps the way forward and recommends what has to be done to achieve social inclusion, economic inclusion, age inclusion, infrastructure inclusion, inclusion of special groups.

**KEY WORDS** Children, desktop research, divided cities, economically weak, gender, Global South, high income, inclusive cities, low income, middle income, multimodal transport, physically challenged, street vendors, street children, Sustainable Development Goal 11, waste pickers, widowed women

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Cities continue to be economic engines of the world. Today, cities contribute more than 70-80% of global GDP (Bello-Schünemann, 2017). Hand in hand with economic growth and prosperity, urbanization has often helped reduce overall poverty by providing new opportunities and raising incomes. As result cities continue to attract a lot of people. Cities provide economic opportunities to people with various backgrounds, competencies and needs. The people continue to be attracted to the cities because of their expectations of decent job opportunities and improved infrastructure and services, diverse atmosphere, and modern lifestyles.

Although urbanization has brought about significant economic, social and cultural benefits, however, these among all segments are not equitably distributed among urban society especially in the cities of the Global South. The cities of the Global South are often characterized by stark contrast in social economic conditions with certain segments of the society enjoying significant wealth and access to opportunities while others struggle to meet their basic needs. This has clearly created divided segments in the cities, that is why the coining of the concept divided cities.

Florida (2017) asserts that cities are becoming increasingly divided and that there is need for the international community, national and local governments and the local community to have deliberate efforts in order to create more and equitable urban environment for enjoyment of all residents. The efforts of creating inclusive cities typically involve addressing the underlying causes of divisions and promoting greater integration and cooperation among different segments in the urban communities.

This paper, through desktop review and international visits experiences, explores the meaning of the complex concept inclusive cities and its various aspects and dimensions. The paper covers a

brief historical background of the origin and upsurge of the concept and key definitions of building blocks as the conceptual framework of the inclusive cities. For comprehension purposes the paper uses best practices from across the world cities where different initiatives on each of building blocks of inclusive city have been well demonstrated. The paper ends by coming up with concluding remarks and the way forward.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The study focusses on the following four objectives;

- To understand and conceptualize inclusive cities
- To identify the building blocks of inclusive cities
- To explore case studies and examples of inclusive cities in various parts of the world
- To provide observations and policy recommendations for creating inclusive cities

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study involved three main components: desk-based research, experiences from international field visits, and seminar discussions as a group assignment presented to a master's degree class. Additionally, inputs from classmates and the lecturer were considered to further enhance the study.

The first step of the methodology involved conducting an extensive literature review and desktop -based research. Various academic journals, books, reports, and online resources were explored to gather theoretical knowledge and understand different perspectives on inclusive cities. This phase helped in developing a comprehensive understanding of the topic and identifying key areas for further investigation.

The second component of the methodology involved international

field visits to cities known for their inclusive practices. The researchers took advantage of their previous international visit c to cities across the world that have successfully implemented some of the components of inclusive policies and initiatives. Through these visits, the researchers used their experiences observed and documented the inclusive practices, policies, and strategies adopted by these cities.

The third component of the methodology involved presenting the research findings and experiences from international field visits to a master's degree class as a group assignment. The researchers analyzed and synthesized the information gathered from the desktop search and field visits, and present it to the class through a seminar presentation. This provided an opportunity for peer feedback and discussion, allowing for the exchange of ideas and perspectives among the students. The inputs from classmates and the lecturer contributed to the refinement and improvement of the study, helping to ensure a more comprehensive and well-rounded understanding of inclusive cities.

## 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of inclusive cities has gained increased attention in recent years due to growing recognition of the challenges posed by urbanization and the need to create more equitable and sustainable urban environments. This literature review discusses the origins and upsurge of the concept of inclusive cities, as well as provides an understanding and conceptualization of the concept and its building blocks.

### 4.1. Origins and upsurge of the concept of inclusive cities

Rapid urbanization has had a significant impact on creation of divided cities. According Mazzucato (2011) rapid urbanization especially in the Global South has led to the development of divided cities which have been characterized by deep social, political and social divisions. Mazzucato argues

that these divisions are often perpetuated by political and economic elites, who prioritize their own interests over the needs of local communities.

According to scholarly research (Kemeny & Storper, 2019; Kasarda, 2011; and Veneri & Burgalassi, 2019) highlight that cities have become divided among different urban dwellers on the basis of residential segregation, ethnic and racial lines, economic inequality, unequal access to urban infrastructure, religious and political marginalization. For instance, divided cities can be observed when inhabitants within the same urban area experience contrasting living conditions. This is exemplified by certain households residing in carefully organized neighborhoods, equipped with various amenities. Conversely, others inhabit slum areas characterized by overcrowded dwellings and extremely limited or nonexistent access to fundamental services such as water, electricity, sanitation, road networks, drainage systems, and solid waste management. Essentially, a small proportion of the population revels in a paradise-like environment, whereas a significant number of individuals endure living conditions akin to hell (Acharya & Ghosh, 2019).

**Figure 1: Residential neighbourhood in Durban, South Africa**



Source: Jonny Miller

**Figure 1** shows an example of a divided city in Durban, South Africa. The division is evident through visible physical barriers tree belts, roads, planned settlements and overcrowded informal settlements, which reflect in differences in infrastructure, services, or access to resources between different parts of the city. This division might be a result of historical factors such as apartheid or ongoing inequalities in the city.

The movement towards inclusive cities has emerged as a response to the challenges of social, economic, and spatial divisions in cities worldwide (Amman & Jurasszovich, 2017). Advocates of this concept are guided by principles of social justice, human rights, and leaving no one behind. The concept aims for a more equitable distribution of the benefits that urban areas provide, such as employment, infrastructure, services, and opportunities (Amman & Jurasszovich).

The origins of inclusive cities can be traced back to various social and political movements of the 20th century, including civil rights, feminism, and environmentalism. These movements aimed to address issues of inequality and injustice and called

for greater awareness of the rights and needs of marginalized groups (Amman & Jurasszovich, 2017).

The United Nations has played a significant role in promoting the concept of inclusive cities, particularly through its Habitat conferences held every 20 years. The first Habitat conference, held in Vancouver, emphasized the need for equitable and sustainable urban development. The second conference, held in Istanbul in 1996, called for a new vision that recognized the diversity of cities and promoted community participation in planning and decision-making processes (Amman & Jurasszovich, 2017).

In the 21st century, the concept of inclusive cities gained broader recognition with the adoption of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals during the Habitat III conference in 2015. Goal 11 specifically advocates for inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities. The UN has further prepared the New Urban Agenda to support the implementation of Goal 11, with a strong focus on inclusion, particularly for women, children, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities (Amman & Jurasszovich, 2017)

Besides the United Nations, other non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and advocacy groups around the world have joined the movement to champion inclusive cities. These organizations include the International Council for Local Environmental Initiative, the International Institute for Environment and Development, the Cities Alliance, and Habitat International. Each organization advocates for inclusive and sustainable cities that prioritize the needs of all urban residents, including marginalized communities (International Institute for Environment and Development, 2015; Amman & Jurasszovich, 2017,).

## 4.2. Understanding and Conceptualising inclusive cities

The Oxford English Dictionary (2023) defines inclusivity or inclusiveness as the practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of minority groups. While Cambridge English Dictionary (2022) defines inclusiveness as the action of trying to include many different types of people and treat them fairly and equally.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2008) on the other hand defines as inclusiveness is the act of creating an environment or community that values and respects diversity and actively works to include and involve individuals from different backgrounds, experiences and identities. Inclusivity is the practice of intentionally and proactively including people of diverse backgrounds, experiences and identities in decision making, planning and participation in all aspects of life. It involves ensuring that systems, processes and spaces are designed in a way that allow everyone to thrive and people with different abilities, ages, races and ethnic groups, gender, religions and economic statuses to fully participate and feel valued. Inclusivity aims to create a fair, equitable and respectful environment that allows everyone to thrive and contribute to their full potential.

There are some misconceptions people may have about inclusion. Rao (2012) identifies two main conceptions about inclusion. Rao says that one of common misconception about inclusiveness is that everyone has to conform to similar bundle of values, belief and that people should not realize their individual differences and unique perspectives. This is not the case, instead inclusiveness recognizes that people have different experiences and identities and that those differences should be celebrated and respected. Another major misconception about inclusiveness is that some people should

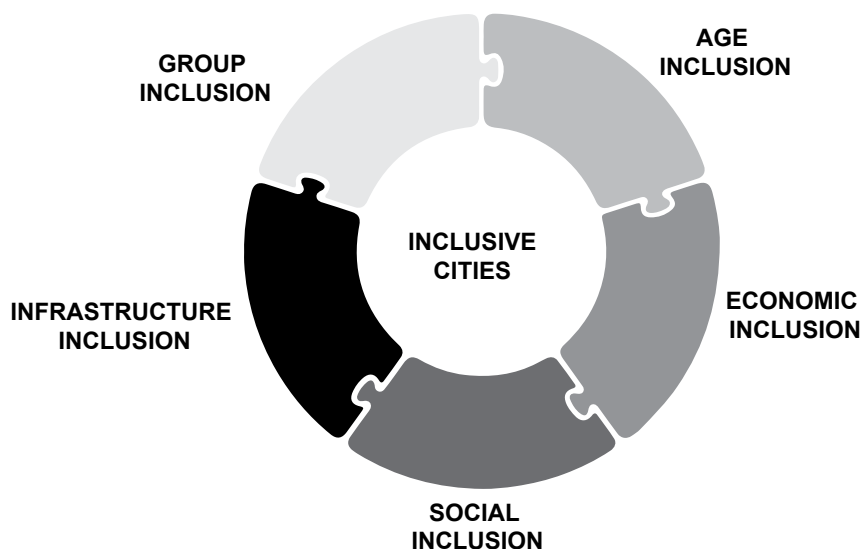
lower standards or compromise quality in order to accommodate everyone. In fact, inclusiveness should help to increase quality of work, education or other initiatives by drawing on a broader range of perspectives and experiences.

The Asian Development Bank (2017) on the other hand defines inclusive city as “a safe, livable environment with affordable and equitable access to urban services, social services, and livelihood opportunities for all the city residents and other city users to promote optimal development of its human capital and ensure the respect of human dignity and equality.”

## 4.3. Conceptual framework for inclusive cities

A conceptual framework for inclusive cities can be broken down into several components or building blocks. See figure 2. The key components as outlined by Rao (2012) are economic, social, age, and people under special circumstances. Another key component includes infrastructure conclusion.

Figure 2: Conceptual framework for inclusive cities, by author



### 4.3.1. ECONOMIC INCLUSION

Economic inclusion refers to the process of ensuring access to financial services, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities for all segments of society, regardless of their socio-economic status. On economic status, urban population is generally categorized into three or four categories in terms that is the low-income, middle-income and high-income groups. According to Purohit and Rao (2019), in India economic inclusion is categorized into four groups namely high, middle, low, and economically weaker sectors. Economic inclusion faces various challenges such as lack of access to financial services, discrimination, limited skills and education, and housing needs. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving policies that promote equal access, tackle discrimination, invest in education and skill development, and enhance infrastructure and connectivity.

### 4.3.2. SOCIAL INCLUSION

Rawal (2008) argues that there are apparent different forms discrimination and marginalization which are based on factors including race, ethnicity, cultural identities and religion especially in cities of the countries in Global South such as Nepal. Rawal further asserts that social exclusion leads to social inequality, poverty, discrimination

and lack of access to resources or opportunities. The question of what constitutes social inclusion is addressed on of what constitutes exclusion. According to O'Reilly, (2005) social inclusion comprises of promoting cultural diversity and integration by focusing on issues such as cultural identity, cultural expression and intercultural communication. It also involves providing access to cultural activities and resources.

#### 4.3.3. AGE INCLUSION

Age friendly cities have become an important focus in urban planning and policy making in recent years. Age-friendly cities are urban areas that prioritize the well-being and quality of life for people of all ages, including children, youth, and the elderly. These cities aim to create an accessible, safe, and supportive environment that meets the specific needs of different age groups.

- **Child friendly cities**

Child-friendly cities, for example, provide comprehensive facilities and services such as education, healthcare, and social support for children from families of all income levels.

- **Youth friendly cities**

Youth-friendly cities recognize the importance of young people and actively involve them in shaping their communities

- **Elderly friendly cities**

OECD (2015), states that many cities around the world are experiencing an increase in population aging. This demographic shift poses challenges in terms of providing suitable infrastructure, services, and support for the elderly. A major concern for the elderly is accessibility to public spaces, buildings, and transportation. Cities need to ensure that their infrastructure is designed in a way that accommodates the mobility needs of the elderly, such as ramps, elevators, and wider sidewalks (Bokolo,2023).

Secondly, as people age, their healthcare needs increase. Therefore, cities must have a robust healthcare system that includes specialized geriatric services, accessible clinics, and hospitals, as well as home healthcare options. Furthermore, elderly often face social isolation due to limited mobility, loss of loved ones, and retirement. Cities need to provide opportunities for social engagement through community centers, clubs, events, and activities tailored for seniors. Elderly individuals are also vulnerable to various safety risks, including crime, accidents, and emergencies. Cities should prioritize safety measures such as well-lit streets, police patrols, emergency response systems, and partnerships with community organizations to address safety concerns (OECD,2015).

Elderly-friendly cities, as promoted by the World Health Organization(WHO), encourage active aging by optimizing health, participation, and security for older individuals (WHO, 2007). Many cities worldwide have adopted guidelines prepared by WHO that guide cities to focus on enhancing the quality of life for older adults.

#### 4.4. Inclusion of people under special Circumstances

The inclusion of people under special circumstances, such as immigrants, refugees, orphans, single mothers, street kids, widowed fathers, physically challenged persons, street vendors and waste pickers requires a comprehensive and empathetic approach. These individuals often face multiple challenges in their daily lives, including discrimination, inequality, social isolation, and limited access to basic needs such as housing, education, and employment.

##### 4.4.1. IMMIGRANTS

Price and Chacko (2012) argue that it is important for cities to create inclusive environments that address the unique needs and challenges they face. This can be done by implementing policies that combat discrimination, promoting

intercultural exchange, and providing support services such as language classes and employment assistance. Price and Chacko (2012) further recommends that cities should invest in infrastructure to ensure adequate housing for migrants, as well as creating opportunities for their economic integration.

##### 4.4.2. REFUGEES

Refugees are individuals who flee their home country due to persecution, war, violence and seek refuge in another country. Refugees often face numerous challenges in their communities such as language barriers, discrimination and difficulty in assessing basic needs such as housing, education and employment.

Some authors have debated on whether refugees should live freely in the cities or they should live in refugee camps. Brooks (2015) argues that refugees should be allowed to live freely in cities as refugee camps often exacerbate the trauma and stress that refugees have already experienced. Betts (2011) on the other hand argues that debate between refugee camps and cities is a false dichotomy and that both options have their own advantages and disadvantages depending on specific circumstances of each refugee population.

Nonetheless, allowing refugees to live freely in cities can provide them with more opportunities for integration, access to better living conditions, and the chance to develop skills necessary for self-sufficiency. Cities should prioritize the integration of refugees through providing support services, promoting social cohesion, and facilitating their access to education, employment, and healthcare.

##### 4.4.3. STREET CHILDREN

Street children are one of the most vulnerable groups, facing numerous challenges in their daily lives. According to While Subedi and Dangal (2019) street children often come from backgrounds of economic hardship, family conflicts, child abuse, and lack of access to education.

To address these challenges, Lusk and Drotar(2016) suggest that cities must take a holistic approach. This includes providing support services such as shelter, healthcare, education, and psychosocial support. It is important to also tackle the underlying causes of street children, such as poverty, lack of education, and social inequality, through poverty alleviation measures and educational programs.

#### 4.4.4. SINGLE MOTHERS

Many scholars highlight the financial hardships faced by single mothers. Affandy(2023), emphasizes how single mothers are more likely to struggle with poverty compared to married or partnered mothers. Affandy(2023), further proclaims that single mothers, on average, earn less income and have fewer opportunities to advance in their careers due to additional caregiving responsibilities and limited access to affordable childcare.

While Rousou, *et al* (2019) pronounce that single mothers are faced with increased risk of mental health issues through combination of factors including stress, loneliness, and demands of single parenting can negatively impact their mental well-being. Rousou, *et al* (2019) further highlight a higher prevalence of depression, anxiety, and emotional distress among single mothers compared to their counterparts in two-parent households.

Additionally, Daryanani, *et al* (2016) argue that single mothers face unique parenting challenges due to the absence of a co-parent and suggests that single mothers tend to be just as competent and loving as partnered mothers, as a result they often face more difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities, resulting in potentially less time and resources to invest in their children.

Zhou and Taylor (2022) stress the significance of social support systems for single mothers. They discuss how the quantity and quality of support

available to single mothers can directly impact various dimensions of their lives, including emotional well-being, parenting efficacy, and socioeconomic outcomes. Support systems include family, friends, and community networks often play a crucial role in mitigating the challenges faced by single mothers.

In contrast, Vyskocil(2018) posits that single mothers, should be provided with financial assistance and resources to alleviate financial insecurity by providing them affordable childcare services and job training programs to help them secure stable employment.

#### 4.4.5. WIDOWED MEN

Widowers face unique challenges, both personally and socially, as they navigate life after the loss of their spouses. According to Nasir and Giménez-Llort (2023) widowed men often struggle with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness after the death of their spouse. Van Baarsen, *et al* (1999) earlier asserts that the loss of a spouse often leads to social isolation for widowed men, as they may have fewer close relationships or support networks. While Chavda and Nisarga (2023) insist that when a man becomes a widower and is left to raise children alone the society usually sympathizes on how they balance work and life, childcare responsibilities, and access to parental support networks.

Another crucial debate involves widowed men's prospects for finding love or entering new relationships after the loss of their spouse. Carr (2004) indicates that widowed men faces challenges of dating women at old stage, blending families, and drawbacks of remarriage. Daggett (2002) further laments that following the death of a spouse, widowed men often times face financial difficulties due to the loss of income or potential changes in lifestyle.

However, Cacciatore *et al* (2021) recommends that widowed males should receive assistance in dealing with their grief and feelings of loneliness. This

support can be provided through various means such as counseling services and participation in grief support groups. Additionally, practical help can be offered in managing financial matters (such as pensions, insurance, and other forms of aid), household tasks, and healthcare.

#### 4.4.6. ORPHANS

A critical analysis of orphans reveals the deep-rooted issues and challenges surrounding the concept of being without parents or a stable family structure. Orphans are children who have suffered a significant loss, often due to their parents' death or abandonment, leaving them vulnerable and in need of care. According to Hawar, and Shiffman, (2023) losing one's parents at a young age can lead to feelings of grief, loneliness, and insecurity and the absence of parental figures results in a lack of emotional support and stability, which is crucial for a child's development. The trauma associated with losing parents can have long-lasting effects on their mental health and well-being, potentially leading to issues such as depression, anxiety, and attachment disorders.

Mutiso and Mutie(2018) posit that parental guidance and financial support, orphans often struggle to access basic necessities, including food, education, and healthcare. This lack of resources creates a vicious cycle of poverty, which can severely limit their opportunities for a better future. Orphaned children may also become victims of exploitation, abuse, and trafficking due to their vulnerable status.

According to Zimmerman (2005), orphans need safe and nurturing environments to thrive. Instead of overcrowded and under-resourced orphanages, efforts should be made to strengthen family-based care options such as kinship care or foster care. Comprehensive support services, including healthcare, education, and psychosocial support, should be provided to ensure their overall development.

#### 4.4.7. PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSONS

Agarwal and Steele (2016) assert that one aspect the physically challenged people's face is accessibility of public spaces and infrastructure. These scholars note that the physically challenged individuals often encounter barriers in accessing buildings, public transportation, and other facilities. Additionally, the employment opportunities and job market is another area of concern for people with disabilities. Remnant et al (2022) point out that there are several barriers that prevent them from participating in the workforce, such as discrimination, lack of suitable job opportunities, or limited accessibility of workplaces.

Physically challenged persons require accessible infrastructure and accommodations in urban spaces. Public spaces, buildings, and transportation systems should be designed to be accessible for people with disabilities. Employment and educational opportunities should also be inclusive and provide reasonable accommodations to enable their full participation (Shahraki, 2021).

#### 4.4.8. STREET VENDORS

Street vendors play a significant role in the informal economy of many countries, providing a range of goods and services to locals and tourists alike. While they serve an important purpose by offering affordable and convenient options, studies reveal some key concerns worth considering.

Bromley (2000), reveals that lack of regulation and oversight is one of the main issues facing street vendors in developing countries. In many cases, these individuals operate without proper licenses or permits, which can lead to safety hazards and health risks. Without strict regulations, it becomes challenging to ensure that the food or products being sold meet necessary standards, potentially endangering the public's health and well-being.

Zaman and Ahmed (2023) further insist that the presence of street vendors contribute to congested and cluttered streets, particularly in heavily populated areas. Such conditions create challenges for pedestrians and traffic flow, leading to an overall decrease in the quality of urban life. Furthermore, the often haphazard nature of street vending can result in visual pollution, as stalls and makeshift structures may not adhere to any particular aesthetic standards

Husain, *et al* (2015) complain that informal nature of street vending can hinder economic growth and development since vendors often operate outside the formal economy, and therefore contribute to tax evasion and lack of transparency in financial transactions. This generally impacts government revenues, making it harder to provide essential public services such as education, healthcare, and other urban infrastructure. Furthermore, Husain, *et al* (2015) claim that the presence of street vendors contributes to negative effects on established businesses. For example, established retail shops do face unfair competition from vendors who have lower overhead costs and do not adhere to the same regulations and standards. This results in a decline in business viability and potential job losses within the formal sector.

Addressing these issues through appropriate regulations and support mechanisms is essential to ensure a fair and sustainable environment for both vendors and the wider society. Although accommodating street vendors in cities therefore is a complex and challenging task in many cities of the world especially in the developing countries, some cities have implemented strategies that recognize and support street vending, while others have taken more punitive measures such as bans and confiscation of the merchandise (Tonda & Kepe, 2016).

#### 4.4.9. WASTE PICKERS

Waste pickers, also commonly known as scavengers or informal

recyclers, play a crucial role in waste management systems around the world. These individuals collect, sort, and recycle various types of waste materials, contributing to environmental sustainability and resource conservation. However, waste pickers often live in poverty and face numerous social, economic, and health challenges.

Gutberlet and Carenzo(2020) outlined two main significant contributions of the activities of performed by waste pickers. Firstly, is waste recycling. These individuals retrieve valuable materials from waste streams, including plastics, metals, paper, and glass, which would otherwise end up in landfills or incinerators. By doing so, waste pickers reduce the overall quantity of waste and support the circular economy by reusing and recycling materials, conserving resources, and reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of virgin materials. Secondly, waste pickers provide an essential informal labor force in waste management systems, especially in developing countries where formal waste management infrastructure may be insufficient or non-existent. Their work complements the efforts of formal waste collectors and recycling industries, making waste management economically viable in places where it might not otherwise be affordable.

Uhunamure *et al* (2021), postulate that waste pickers face many challenges, including social stigma, unsafe working conditions, and lack of legal recognition and protection. Waste pickers often work in informal settings, such as open dumps or landfills, which exposes them to hazardous substances, sharp objects, and diseases. The lack of proper equipment, such as protective gloves and masks, further exacerbates these health risks. Additionally, waste pickers often endure low wages, exploitation, and discrimination, as they are usually not considered part of the formal workforce and lack access to social security benefits and decent working conditions.

Uhunamure *et al* (2021) further argue that waste pickers, are predominantly marginalized and vulnerable populations, and often subjected to social exclusion and discrimination due to their occupation. This, in turn, limits their access to education, healthcare, and other essential services, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and preventing their social and economic integration into mainstream society.

Buch, *et al* (2021) recommends that waste pickers' livelihoods and working conditions should be improved by formalizing their work, providing training, and integrating them into the formal waste management sector. Buch, *et al* (2021) further affirms that initiatives such as establishing cooperatives, providing access to social protection, and investing in infrastructure have shown positive impacts in terms of enhancing waste pickers' income, safety, and social status.

#### **4.5. Other Infrastructure Inclusion**

Infrastructure inclusion refers to the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, transportation, energy and other physical infrastructure to all residents regardless of their socio-economic status or location in the city. Inclusive cities should therefore recognize that access to infrastructure is a fundamental right. Such infrastructure include transport, green and open spaces and other social services.

##### **4.5.1. INCLUSIVE TRANSPORT**

Urban transport is a critical aspect of modern cities and plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of life for its residents. However, it also presents numerous challenges that need to be addressed to ensure efficient, sustainable, and inclusive transportation systems. Mavlutova, *et al* (2023) cite congestion as one of the primary challenges in urban transportation. As cities grow, the increasing number of vehicles on the road leads to traffic jams, longer commute times, and increased pollution

levels. This poses a significant burden on both individuals and the environment. Addressing congestion requires adopting smarter transportation solutions such as better traffic management systems, promoting public transportation, and encouraging alternative modes of transportation like walking and cycling.

While Perrotta(2017) acknowledges affordability as another critical aspect of urban transportation. Many individuals, especially those from low-income communities, struggle with the financial burden of commuting. Public transportation has the potential to alleviate this issue by providing affordable and accessible services. Governments and authorities should focus on improving the quality and coverage of public transport networks to ensure that transportation remains affordable for all segments of society.

Duca *et al* (2022) suggest that implementing a multimodal approach to urban transportation is the most effective way to cater to the diverse mobility needs and preferences of individuals. This approach aims to ensure accessibility and convenience for everyone living in urban areas, by promoting the integration of different modes of transportation, including buses, trains, bicycles, motorcycles, walking, and shared mobility services. The goal is to provide a wide range of options for people to select from.

##### **4.5.2. GREEN AND OPEN SPACES**

Cities are bustling hubs of human activity, often characterized by crowded buildings, busy streets, and limited outdoor spaces. However, the presence of green and open spaces within urban environments holds significant importance for the well-being and social fabric of cities.

Green and open spaces, such as parks, plazas, and public squares, play a vital role in urban living. Numerous scholars have highlighted their significance in fostering physical and mental well-being, community cohesion, and environmental

sustainability. According to Mitchell and Popham (2008), access to green spaces positively influences individual physical health, reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases, obesity, and mental health issues. Furthermore, Kaczynski and Henderson (2007) emphasize the role of these spaces in promoting physical activity, leading to lower rates of sedentary lifestyles and associated health problems.

For the community, green and open spaces serve as social gathering places, supporting social interaction, and creating bonds within neighborhoods. Brownson *et al.* (2001) proposed that public parks act as essential venues for social integration, enabling people from diverse backgrounds to interact and forge meaningful relationships. Additionally, the presence of green spaces within urban areas improves air quality, reduces noise pollution, mitigates the heat island effect, and supports biodiversity (Haluzá *et al*, 2014).

Despite their manifold benefits, green and open spaces in cities often face challenges in terms of inclusiveness. Various journal articles have raised concerns about the unequal access to these spaces, particularly for marginalized communities. Grimshaw and Ravetz (2014) argue that urban planning decisions sometimes prioritize the interests of affluent populations, resulting in the displacement and exclusion of vulnerable communities from green spaces.

Furthermore, uneven distribution of parks and recreational areas can create disparities in access for different neighborhoods. Marmot (2003) observes that disadvantaged areas often suffer from limited access to green and open spaces, perpetuating social inequalities and exacerbating health disparities. Studies have also shown that safety concerns, inadequate transportation options, and insufficient facilities in these spaces act as barriers to inclusivity (Veitch *et al*, 2013).

To ensure equitable access to green and open spaces, it is crucial to address the challenges of inclusiveness and prioritize the needs of all city dwellers. Journal articles have highlighted the importance of participatory urban planning processes that actively engage communities in decision-making, allowing diverse perspectives to shape the design and management of these spaces (Foster *et al*, 2017).

Additionally, initiatives focusing on the creation of pocket parks, urban gardens, and green corridors can help improve accessibility, particularly in areas lacking larger open spaces. Adopting a health equity lens, Schüle *et al*(2017) emphasize the necessity of integrating health considerations into urban planning, ensuring that green and open spaces are located strategically to serve disadvantaged neighborhoods.

## 5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 5.1. Economic inclusion case study: Happinest Palghar in India

Through experience of international field visit in India, the Happinest Palghar project is considered a good practice in economic inclusion because it aims to provide housing options for residents at different income levels. **Figure 3** shows part of the Happinest Palghar Project. This project, developed by Mahindra Life spaces, offers housing units at competitive prices, making it more accessible to a wider range of people.

**Figure 3: Happinest Palghar in India**



Source: Internet

Specifically, the project includes units that are specifically available for economically weaker sections of society. These units are designed to accommodate those with lower incomes and provide them with an opportunity to own a home. Additionally, the project also offers housing options for low-income, middle-income, and high-income families, ensuring that there is a diversity of residents within the community.

The project also goes beyond just providing housing and offers a range of amenities for the residents. These amenities include a fully equipped gym, jogging track, multipurpose hall, retail center, and children's play area. This not only enhances the quality of life for the residents but also promotes a sense of community and interaction among residents from different income groups.

### 5.2. Social inclusion case study: Maasai in Dar es Salaam

The Maasai communities living in Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania, provides one of the good practices of social inclusion. As observed from international visit, the Maasai despite their traditional way of life, they have migrated from rural areas to urban

centers and well integrated in economic opportunities and urban fabric in Dar es Salaam.

**Figure 4: A Maasai in Dar es Salaam**



Source: Internet

According to Munishi,(2013) the Maasai have well established communities in various parts of the Dar es Salaam City, including Kingamboni, Mbagala, and Temeke. The residents of these urban areas have accepted and welcomed the Maasai, allowing them to become a part of the urban fabric.

Despite living in an urban environment, the Maasai in Dar es Salaam have managed to balance and preserve their culture and traditions. They continue to wear their traditional attire called the Shuka and decorate their bodies with beads and other ornaments. **See figure 4.** Additionally, they still practice initiation ceremonies for young men, which involve circumcision.

In terms of their economic activities, the Maasai in Dar es Salaam are generally involved in small-scale businesses. They engage in selling handmade jewelry and slip-ons, and some also work as car park caretakers.

### 5.3. Age inclusion case studies

#### 5.3.1. KIDS CITY IN AHMEDABAD

From international field visit, the authors consider Kids City in Ahmedabad, India as a testament to the city's commitment to being child-friendly. This unique establishment not only provides entertainment for children but also offers educational opportunities. By allowing children to explore and engage with a miniature city, they gain a deeper understanding of how various institutions and industries function.

Kids City replicates a real city, complete with roads, vehicles, and a range of activities. Children visit a bank, fire station, science laboratory, radio station, police station, court room, and prison. They do also explore a dental and medical hospital, theatre, BRTS (Bus Rapid Transit System), heritage gallery, town governance center, IT center, newsroom, and even an ice-cream factory. **Figure 5** shows some of the activities kids role play at Kids City in Ahmadabad, in India.

**Figure 5: Some of the activities at Kids City**



Source: Internet

By providing a miniaturized version of a city, Kids City offers children a chance to learn and develop essential skills. They understand the importance of money and finances by visiting the bank, learn about safety and emergency procedures at the fire station and police station, explore the wonders of science at the laboratory, and grasp the workings of governance through the town governance center.

Kids City not only provides education but also ensures that children have a fun and engaging experience. They actively participate in various activities and role-play scenarios, truly immersing themselves in the mini-city environment. This hands-on approach allows children to learn through experience, making the educational process more enjoyable and effective.

Ahmedabad's initiative to establish Kids City is commendable, as it promotes the overall well-being and development of children in the city. By providing a child-friendly environment that combines education and entertainment, Kids City contributes to a holistic approach to learning. Other cities can take inspiration from Ahmedabad and consider similar initiatives to create child-friendly spaces that prioritize education and fun.

#### 5.3.2. NEW YORK AS A YOUTH-FRIENDLY CITY,

New York City in the United States poses as One of the best practices in as far as a youth friendly city is concerned. Pines(2023) opines that New York City has implemented a range of initiatives to make the city more youth friendly including developing youth focused public spaces, providing free internet and computer access, creating mentorship programs for young people and improving public safety

Additionally, Quinn, J. (1999) indicates that New York City has focused on providing accessible and affordable youth services such as educational and recreational programs. The city has established numerous community centers and after-school programs that offer a wide variety of activities and support for young people. These centers not only provide a safe and nurturing environment but also offer opportunities for personal growth and skill development.

Furthermore, Krysan *et al* (2018) reveal that New York City has actively involved youth in decision-making processes through youth councils and advisory boards. These platforms give young people the opportunity to voice their opinions and contribute to the policies and programs that directly affect them. This inclusivity ensures that the diverse voices and perspectives of young people are taken into account in the city's governance.

According to Brandtner, *et al* (2017), another aspect that makes New York City youth-friendly is its transportation system. The city has a well-connected and extensive public transportation network, making it easier for young people to navigate and access opportunities in different parts of the city. Additionally, initiatives like discounted public transportation fares for students help alleviate financial burdens and promote mobility for the youth.

New York City's commitment to providing comprehensive healthcare services is also noteworthy. The city has established youth-friendly clinics and health centers that cater specifically to the needs of young people (Sangraula *et al.*, 2017). These facilities offer confidential and affordable healthcare services, including reproductive health services, mental health support, and nutritional guidance.

### 5.3.3. TOKYO AS AN ELDERLY-FRIENDLY CITY

One of the best practices of the elderly friendly cities in the world is Tokyo, in Japan. Tokyo has implemented a number of initiatives to make the city more accessible and supportive for older citizens including installation of public toilets and benches, providing free public transport for seniors and establishing a network of community centers (Yuen, 2022).

Tokyo's efforts to create an elderly friendly city have had a significant impact on improving the quality of life for older citizens. The installation of public toilets and benches throughout the city has made it easier for elderly individuals to navigate and enjoy the city without worrying about access to essential facilities. These amenities ensure that older citizens can comfortably spend time outdoors and engage in various activities (Yuen, 2022). Figure 6 shows the elderly in Tokyo sitting on the bench as a place of rest and socializing.

Additionally, Dahl (2018) narrates that Tokyo's provision of free public transport for seniors has been instrumental in promoting mobility and independence by removing the financial barrier associated with transportation a move which encourages older individuals to participate in social and community activities, access healthcare services,



Source: Internet

While the World Health Organisation (2007) acknowledges the establishment of a network of community centers in Tokyo as one of the best initiative in the world to create an elderly friendly city. These centers serve as gathering places for older citizens, providing opportunities for socialization, recreation, and learning. They often offer a wide range of programs and services tailored to the needs and interests of the elderly population, including health and fitness classes, educational courses, and cultural activities. These community centers play a vital role in combating social isolation and improving the overall well-being of older individuals.

Tokyo's commitment to creating an elderly friendly city serves as a model for other urban areas around the world. The inclusion of infrastructure, transportation, and community support ensures that older citizens can age in place with dignity, stay connected with their communities, and actively participate in city life.

### 5.4. Inclusion of people under special circumstances

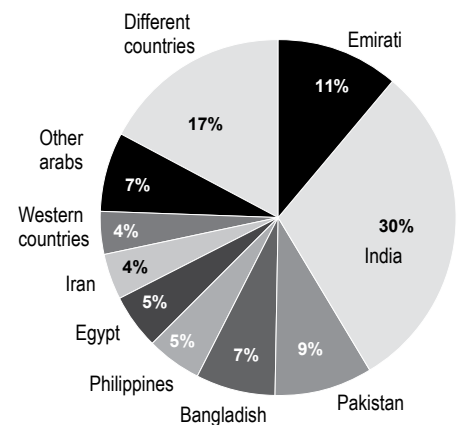
#### 5.4.1. IMMIGRANT CITY (ABU DHABI),

Abu Dhabi is considered as one of the strange and good practices that has created an inclusive and welcoming environment for immigrants in a city. Abu Dhabi has a large population from different countries and cultures. In fact, the population of immigrants makes up the majority of the population in Abu Dhabi than the United Arab Emirates (UAE) nationals which are a minority. According to the Abu Dhabi Statistics

Centre, in 2020, the population of Abu Dhabi was around 3.2 million with approximately 89 percent being immigrants (World Population Review, 2023). See figure 7 which shows the population composition of Abu Dhabi according to nationality.

The city has attracted a diverse range of migrants from countries in Asia and Africa. The government of the UAE has implemented various policies and initiatives to facilitate the integration of immigrants in the local community. Among the notable initiatives include: Provision of economic opportunities which offer a range of employment opportunities particularly in construction, hospitality education and other service sectors; offer of free languages classes for immigrant to learn Arabic which helps them to communicate with the local population freely and feel more connected to the community; and establishment of cultural centers and associations to promote intercultural understanding (Elessawy, F.M. (2020).

Figure 7: Population composition for Abu Dhabi.



Source: World Population Review, 2020

By creating welcoming and inclusive environments for immigrants such as provision of basic needs, education, employment opportunities many cities in the Global South can thrive and become dynamic places where immigrants and local can live together harmoniously.

## 5.5. Refugees (Amman city)

Amman, the capital city of Jordan has made significant efforts to support refugees and create welcoming environments for them. The city has established community centres and programs that provide education, healthcare and employment opportunities to refugees from Syria (Sullivan *et al*, 2019). The centres are staffed by both Jordanians and Syrians and they help the refugees integrate into new communities and provide them with new communities and provide them with opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge (Hussein, 2015).

### 5.5.1. STREET CHILDREN (RIO DE JANEIRO - PROGRAMA RUAS),

The city of Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, for example, has implemented a program called *Programa Ruas* which provides support to street children through outreach activities education, vocational training. The program also works with families to provide support and to address the root causes of child homelessness. The *Program Ruas* has been successful in reducing the number of street children in Rio de Janeiro and has also helped to improve the social and economic well-being of children and families in the city (UNICEF, 2012).

### 5.5.2. SINGLE MOTHERS (REYKJAVIK),

Reykjavik, the capital city of Iceland, has been a strong and outstanding city in the World supporting single mothers. According the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018), Iceland has the highest female employment rate among OECD countries and this is partly due to policy of provision of affordable and high-quality childcare services which allows them to work or attend school while their children are cared for.

According to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018), in Reykjavik, single mothers, access

these services at reduced cost as the government provides subsidies to help them to cover the costs. Apart from quality public day care centres, the city provides various social services to support single mothers including financial assistance, housing and healthcare. Additionally, the city's social services department offers counselling and support to single mothers to help them manage the challenges of raising children alone. Furthermore, Reykjavik has a number of privately-owned day-care centres, and these providers are also eligible for government subsidies which help to make childcare more affordable to single mothers.

### 5.5.3. WIDOWED MEN (AUCKLAND),

Payne (2002) finds that Auckland, in New Zealand has several resources and support systems that are meant to cater for widowed men. The city for example has hospice organisations that offer grief support groups and counselling services for widowed men; senior centers that offer programs and services such as social outings, fitness classes educational workshops; men's sheds which are community spaces where men gather to work together on projects, socialize and support each other. Payne (2002) further explains that some of these sheds offer grief support groups and resources for men who have lost spouses. By investing in the wellbeing of widowed men, such cities as Auckland are contributing to the creation of more equitable and inclusive societies.

### 5.5.4. ORPHANS (SOS VILLAGES),

Sharif and Shoaib (2021) applauded SOS Children Villages as one of the best residential institutions across the world which offer holistic child care for these vulnerable children.

Ahiadeke, *et al* (2013) explored the role and impact of SOS Children's Villages in Africa which is part of the SOS Children Villages International organisation which provides alternative care for children who have lost parental care. Ahiadeke, *et al* (2013) narrate that the SOS

Children Villages have been successful in providing a family like environment for orphaned children by creating small, family style homes and providing care by trained caregivers. By examining cases in Ghana, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, the authors argue that orphaned children who lived in SOS Children Villages had better outcomes compared to those living in traditional residential care institutions. Specifically, they found that children in SOS Children's Villages had better access to education, health care and psychological care. The case of SOS Children Villages portrays the best practices on how governments, cities, other institutions and individuals should design orphanage programs in order to help the holistic development of this rather vulnerable group children.

### 5.5.5. PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSONS (STOCKHOLM),

Stockholm in Sweden is renowned for being highly accessible for individuals with physical disabilities. Stjernborg (2019) asserts that the city has addressed the needs of these individuals through various measures: (1) The transportation system, including buses, trains, and subways, has been equipped with features such as low floors, ramps, and designated areas for wheelchair users, ensuring full accessibility; (2) Buildings have been made accessible with ramps, elevators, and wider doors to accommodate disabled guests, and adaptive equipment like wheelchairs, walkers, and scooters is readily available for their use; and (3) Pedestrian infrastructure has been designed with flat surfaces and tactile paving in order to support visually impaired individuals.

### 5.5.6. STREET VENDORS (CAPE TOWN).

The Street Trader Project in Cape Town, South Africa is a successful street vending intervention that has had positive impacts on both street vendors and the city as a whole. Implemented by the Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID), the project focused on infrastructure

improvements in areas where street vendors operated. This included improvements in water, sanitation, and waste management (Horber, 2018). One significant achievement of the project was the collaboration between the CCID, street vendor representatives, and local government to amend regulations on street vending. These changes made it easier for vendors to obtain permits and legal recognition, improving their status as legitimate stakeholders in the city's economy.

A study conducted by Didier *et al* (2013) evaluated the impact of the Street Trader Project and found several positive outcomes. The project led to improvements in the organization and infrastructure of street vending, reducing negative impacts such as congestion and littering. Additionally, the social and economic well-being of street vendors was enhanced, with increased income and improved working conditions.

Overall, the Street Trader Project in Cape Town serves as an excellent practice for other cities in the Global South. By improving the livelihoods of street vendors and promoting a more inclusive and equitable urban development, the project has demonstrated the potential for success in street vending interventions.

#### 5.5.7. WASTE PICKERS (PUNE MUNICIPALITY)

According to Chikarmane (2012) acknowledges that the integration of waste pickers into the solid waste management system by the Pune Municipal Corporation in India has had the following positive outcomes. Firstly, it has provided these previously marginalized individuals with proper recognition and protection as formal employees. This has improved their social status and reduced the stigma associated with their occupation. Secondly, by providing waste pickers with identity cards and safety gear, their safety and well-being have been enhanced. They are now equipped with personal protective equipment and are

more aware of the potential risks associated with their work. This has resulted in a decrease in accidents and injuries among waste pickers.

In addition, Chikarmane (2012) asserts that fixed monthly salary provided by the municipality has ensured a stable income for waste pickers. This has helped alleviate their economic uncertainties and improved their overall standard of living. They no longer have to solely rely on the unpredictable earnings from selling recyclable materials. Furthermore, the training and support provided by the municipality have helped waste pickers become more efficient in their work. They are taught proper waste segregation techniques and how to identify valuable materials for recycling. This not only has led to increased efficiency in waste management but also has enhanced the economic viability of recycling.

### 5.6. Infrastructure inclusion case study

#### 5.6.1. TRANSPORT - BRT, MULTIMODAL, BOLT IN DAR ES SALAAM

Figure 8: BRT system in Dar es Salaam



Source: Internet

Morten *et al* (2020) notes that Dar es Salaam has implemented the Bus Rapid Transit(BRT) system that operates on dedicated lanes and provides fast and reliable transport system. In Dar es Salaam, the authorities also recognized the importance of inclusive transport system that cater to the diverse needs of the city's population. **Figure 8** shows a BRT system in Dar es Salaam.

Divall *et al* (2020) narrates another milestone intervention in Dar es Salaam that has created a more inclusive transport system in the city which is the introduction of ride-hailing applications such as Bolt. The Bolt, which include motorbikes, three wheelers, and compact cars owned by individuals who have signed up with the application, has made transportation more accessible and affordable particularly for marginalized groups in terms of convenience, safety and completion of the first-last mile connectivity. Generally, such interventions which have been showcased by Dar es Salaam can make transportation in cities especially in Africa, more accessible, affordable, convenient and safe for all city dwellers.

### 5.6.2. GREEN AND OPEN SPACES IN CHANDIGARH

Chandigarh, the capital city of the northern Indian states of Punjab and Haryana, is a well-planned and organized city known for its distinct architectural design and infrastructure. According to the Chandigarh Master Plan 2031, the city is divided into 63 sectors. One of the notable features of Chandigarh's urban planning is the inclusion of green and open space within each sector. These open spaces, known as "pocket parks," are designed to provide recreational areas, walking paths, and breathing spaces for the residents. The concept reflects the vision of Le Corbusier, the renowned architect who designed Chandigarh, to create a harmonious balance between nature and built environments (Bedi *et al*, 2020). **Figure 9** shows the cityplan of Chandigarh comprising of green and open spaces in each sector.

**Figure 9: Chandigarh Master Plan 2030**



Source: Chandigarh Administration (2009)

## 6. OBSERVATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The lessons learned from case studies point to the fact that a fragmented approach have been focused by many cities of the world as they might be popular on just one of the components of the inclusive cities concept and do not address other components sufficiently enough.

The best practices discussed in this paper give indicative standards which can be effective if they are put together as pieces of the jigsaw puzzle as efforts to build assets in one inclusive city that benefit all residents of the city.

For individual components to be successful there is need of joined efforts starting from the international community, regional, national, municipal and local community in order to hold hand to achieve the ambitious movement of inclusive cities.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This paper has looked at the building blocks that makes a city more inclusive. The paper has found out that economic inclusion will create opportunities for all residents with initiatives such as job training programs, microfinance programs and housing programs for all income groups. The paper also has discussed how best social

inclusion can be achieved to make sure that all residents have a sense of community and belonging particularly those who may feel marginalized.

The paper has further discussed how cities can be designed to meet the needs of residents of all ages from infants to the seniors. The paper has also discussed how cities can be planned and managed to meet the needs people under special circumstances such as the orphans, refugees, immigrants, single mother and the physically challenged.

Finally, the paper discussed how best cities should manage inclusive transport systems, waste management systems and street trading in order to serve the needs of all residents and improve their well-being.

In general, the paper recommends that an integrated approach is essential for creating truly inclusive cities that address the diverse needs of all residents including those who may be marginalized or vulnerable. Cities all over the world particularly those from the Global South, should emulate some of the best practices discussed in this paper or any other from either the Global North or Global South and contextualize them comprehensively in their situation in order to make a meaningful implementation of this movement of inclusive cities which is also highly touted by the United Nations through SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda. This approach is believed that it can promote social cohesion and economic prosperity for all residents in urban areas all over the world which currently makes up more than half of the total global population.

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