

Building local resilience in post-COVID world

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 | 11:30 AM (IST)

The COVID-19 pandemic showed the importance of a quick response and what difference it can make in people's lives. As cases began to decline, city administrations quickly took up the task of preparing for future waves of the pandemic, keeping in mind the havoc that cities witnessed during the first wave. However, despite that, the number of infections and deaths due to COVID increased and crossed all previous records. So what can local, regional governments (LRGs) do to be ready for future waves, or worse, pandemics?

This brings us to the need of building resilience. It is important to note that globally, cities bore the major brunt of the pandemic as their health infrastructure almost collapsed. People scrambled for beds, and frontline warriors worked non-stop to match the demand for medical attention. This cannot go on and needs to be corrected. Cities must augment the development of their hospitals and medical equipment and increase the ratio of health professionals to the total population. Additionally, cities need to develop quick response plans to be used if and when another pandemic hits the world, which is a very real possibility, according to experts.

On the other hand, cities also need to rethink how their development and economic policies are shaped. Focusing on only one segment of society is not going to be sufficient. Urban development must account for the poor as well. This is even more evident as experts have time and again clarified that a pandemic cannot be eradicated until everyone is safe. One of the quickest methods of doing this is to vaccinate the population. LRGs, in this scenario, play an essential role as they are the prime link between the government and the public and are capable of reaching the lowest strata of society. Lastly, cities also have to better their civic services. According to a report by UNICEF, one of the most basic civic amenities, water, is inaccessible to over 50 million people in urban India. Therefore, ensuring everyone has access to safe drinking water is essential.

Following these methods will help realise SDG 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, and 11. Building resilience in post-COVID cities is also a step to realising the localisation of the SDGs.

To address issues and challenges related to making post-COVID cities resilient, the **All India Institute of Local Self-Government**, in collaboration with **CITYNET**, is organising a Webinar on '**Building local resilience in post-COVID world**' on **Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at 11:30 AM (IST)**. This is the third webinar in a series of monthly webinars supported by Foundation EMDA Southasia, Renewable Energy Mart, and 3R Waste Foundation.