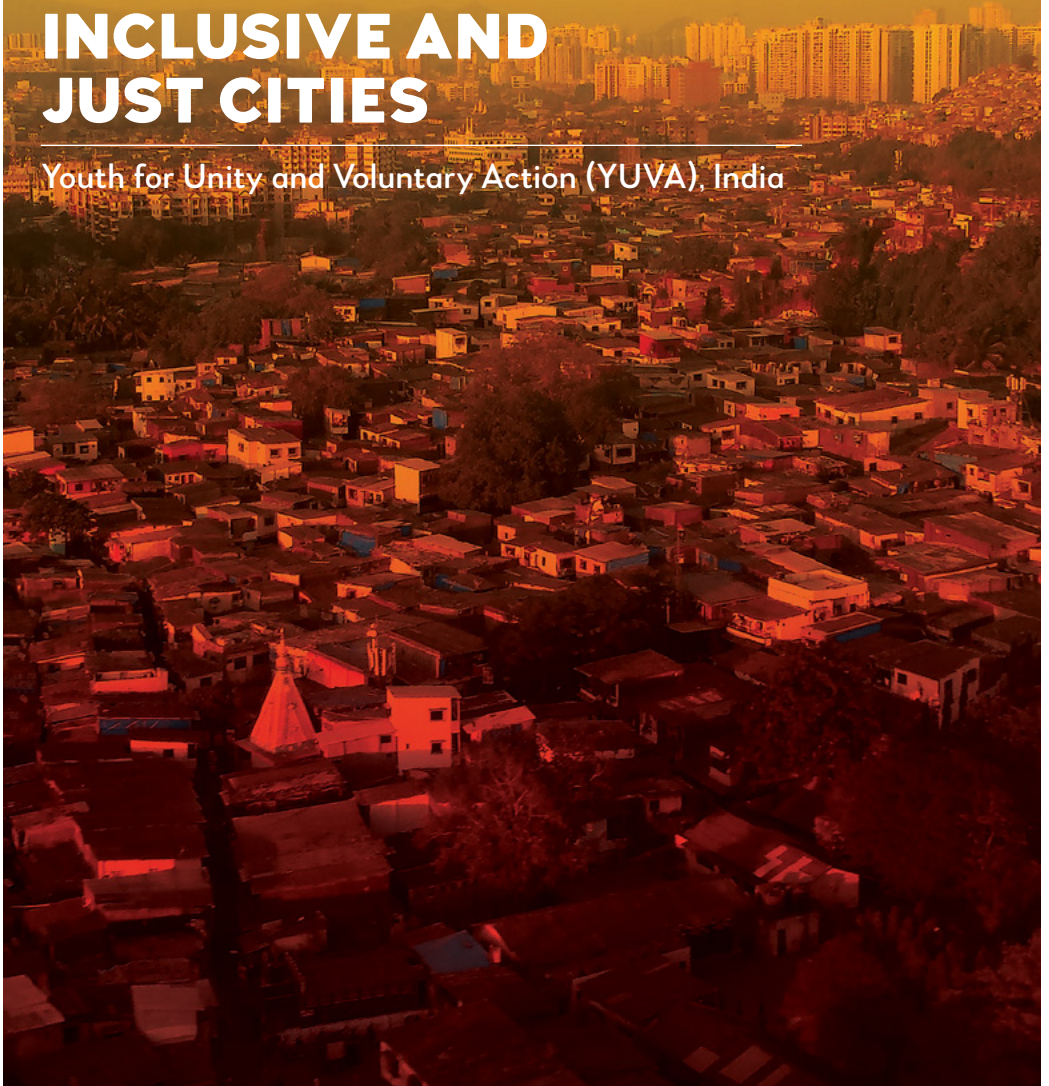




# OUR WORK TOWARDS CREATING INCLUSIVE AND JUST CITIES

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA), India

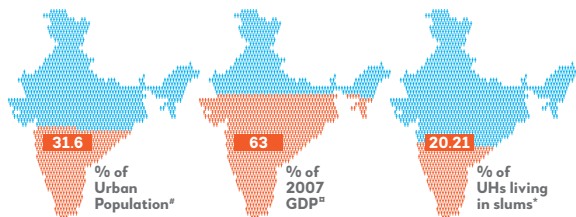


## ABOUT US

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) is a non-profit development organisation committed to enabling vulnerable groups to access their rights. YUVA encourages the formation of people's collectives that engage in the discourse on development, thereby ensuring self-determined and sustained collective action in communities. This work is complemented with advocacy and policy recommendations. Founded in Mumbai in 1984, currently YUVA operates in the states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Assam and New Delhi.

YUVA has facilitated people's participation at the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Habitat II, Habitat III, World Social Forum and in consultative meetings of the MDGs and SDGs.

## WHY CREATE INCLUSIVE AND JUST CITIES



**Urban India is home to 377 million people who account for 31.6% of the country's total population (Census 2011).**

**In 2007 India's 8,000 cities contributed to around 63% of the GDP and this is expected to go up to 75% by 2021 (Zerah et al 2011)<sup>a</sup>.**

While cities contribute to the economic development of the country, the expansive informal workforce constituting more than 93% of the population (NCEUS 2007) is largely unaccounted for; and urban development is most often exclusionary with 20.21% of the total households in urban areas living in slums (SECC 2011)<sup>a</sup>.

YUVA believes that increased participation and inclusion of the marginalised in decision making can improve the way our cities develop and transform. Fostering inclusion and social justice as values of urbanisation is essential to promote equitable human development. While our work in cities is focused on issues of habitat, livelihood and governance, the critical continuum between the rural and urban is an essential component of our work on the environment.

### References::

<sup>#</sup>Zerah, Marie-Helene, Veronique Dupont, Stephanie Tawa Lama Rewal (eds). 2011. Urban Policies and the Right to the City in India: Rights, Responsibilities and Citizenship. New Delhi: Centre for Human Sciences and UNESCO.

<sup>a</sup>National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector. 2007. Report on Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihood in the Unorganised Sector. New Delhi: Government of India.

<sup>\*</sup>Ministry of Rural Development. 2011. Socio-Economic Caste Census-2011. New Delhi: Government of India



**WHAT  
WE  
DO**





**Inclusive Urban Planning:** YUVA's work is aimed at making urban planning evolve into an inclusive and people-driven process. Through direct work in communities and through campaigns we negotiate a crucial space for marginalised groups to articulate their spatial needs. Training, research and capacity building are essential components of our work on urban planning.

## LIVELIHOOD

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YUVA builds inter-linkages with habitat and livelihood. From a just work perspective, our engagement with construction workers, street vendors, truck drivers, rag pickers and domestic workers is centred on advocating the right to work and demanding safe and fair conditions of employment.

**Migrant Resource Centre:** Through the Migrant Resource Centre YUVA engages migrant workers in Navi Mumbai to access entitlements, social security and wage recovery. YUVA works towards ensuring fair wages through a labour wage recovery helpline for construction workers. Every year we help recover several lakhs of rupees of unpaid wages for workers.

**Facilitating Empowerment of Informal Workers:** YUVA's efforts are directed towards strengthening workers' solidarity by organising capacity building programmes to promote and protect their rights. As a member of national networks and campaigns, YUVA works to ensure implementation of legal provisions for informal workers.

**Facilitating Women's Empowerment:** YUVA has aided in forming women's groups in various communities. These groups have taken the form of self-help groups that have evolved into livelihood generators and as monitoring groups for welfare schemes in the community.

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Through our 360-degree, rights-based approach, we focus on building capacities of young people to participate in democratic dialogue and address the issues that most affect them. YUVA engages children and youth living in informal settlements, resettlement colonies and those living in street situations.

## HABITAT

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YUVA's Habitat programme is located across the breadth of the housing continuum. This includes work with the homeless, pavement dwellers, residents of informal settlements and resettlement colonies with a goal to secure the right to land and housing.

**Curbing Homelessness:** YUVA's intervention with the homeless and pavement dwellers includes community empowerment and advocacy. We support a people's led collective that empowers the homeless to advocate for their rights. In partnership with campaigns, we advocate for the inclusion of homeless shelters in the city development plan.

**Anti-Eviction Support and Basic Service Facilitation:** Forced evictions accentuate the cycle of poverty and are a violation of human rights. YUVA's Anti-Eviction Support Cell provides preventive and curative support for communities under the threat of forced evictions. Through Basic Service Facilitation Centres (BSFC) we facilitate access to legal entitlements and basic infrastructure.

**Land and Tenure Security:** YUVA facilitates provision of tenure security in informal settlements and support people-led housing upgradation.

## Children

**Enabling Access to Healthcare and Education:** YUVA runs preschool centres for children below the age of 6 in areas where government facilities are absent or not in sufficient number. Here children are provided essential preschool education and nutritious food on a daily basis.

**Enabling Safe Spaces:** YUVA runs Child Resource Centres (CRC) where children find a safe space to engage with peers within their neighbourhood. Facilities at the CRC include counselling, regular educational activities, a reading library, digital learning, educational games and sports for development. Dance movement therapy is a process we run with at risk children.

**Developing Citizenship:** Bal Adhikar Sangarsh Sangathan (BASS) or Collective for the Struggle for Child Rights is a collective for children to come together, build solidarity and claim their rights. In communities, Child Protection Committees are capacitated towards convergence with District Child Protection Unit services.

## Youth

**Fostering Leadership and Participation in Governance:** Fostering leadership and participation in governance: Youth groups in communities we work in are capacitated to take action on issues that affect them and their communities. These include issues of water, sanitation, housing, gender justice and claiming places to play.

**Enabling Access to Livelihood:** Certified skill upgradation courses and livelihood training programmes are provided in partnership with government and private agencies. Job fairs are conducted for youth in search of employment while also linking youth to scholarship programmes and higher education opportunities.

**Socio-Political Education:** YUVA has a broad engagement in non formal and participatory learning processes with youth. This includes a 10-month diploma course on 'Youth Development and Social Change' in partnership with the Centre for Lifelong Learning of Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS Mumbai). A course on 'Inclusive Cities' is conducted for youth from cities who have been engaging on civic issues, along with media training courses.



Stemming from a strong belief in democratic processes, YUVA promotes participatory governance that is inclusive of all vulnerable groups.

## Creating Mohalla Samitis

Mandated as per the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, Mohalla Samitis are committees at the local level that allow for people to make decisions for the area, which contribute to decisions made by the urban local body. Mohalla Sabhas i.e. meetings of Mohalla Samitis are initiated towards officially forming Mohalla Samitis in the various cities in which we work.

## Campaigns on Inclusive Cities

Through active membership in networks and campaigns on inclusive urban planning and governance YUVA facilitates people to negotiate with local governments to democratise governance processes.



## ENVIRONMENT

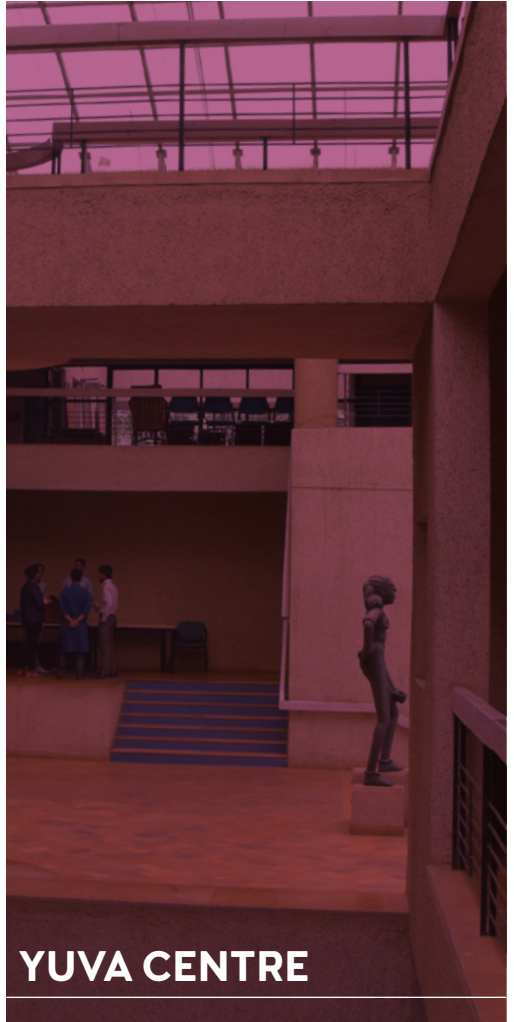
YUVA's vision includes the development of sustainable societies, which includes addressing issues along the rural-urban continuum. Through a variety of programmes we work towards holistic development of urban and rural areas.

### Rural Sustainability

With farming communities YUVA engages in the thematic areas of natural resource management and livelihoods. In the rural areas of Akola and Wardha districts in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, we support least intensive sustainable farming practices as well as livelihood enhancement measures for marginalised subsistence farmers living in drought prone areas.

### South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP)

In partnership with the SANDRP project, YUVA supports work on issues related to transparent and participatory governance surrounding water and environment, monitoring India's water sector and bridging the gap between civil society, research organisations.



## YUVA CENTRE

YUVA Centre is the hub of all training programmes facilitated by YUVA. It includes a facility that is available for use by other like-minded organisations for training and capacity building processes. By organising strategic training programmes, YUVA Centre aims to provide support to human rights work across the country and beyond. A curated Information Resource Centre serves to enable knowledge creation on issues relating to urbanisation, migration, governance and urban-rural sustainability.



# YUVA'S APPROACH

Based on a human rights perspective, YUVA's approach is a synergistic combination of three methods:

## **1. 360-Degree Approach**

At the community level YUVA has developed a 360-degree approach. This approach uses an integrated community development model towards empowerment; through interventions with different population groups on issues of habitat, livelihood environment and governance.

## **2. Research, Capacity Building and Advocacy**

The work with communities contributes to research that is evidence-based. YUVA creates knowledge that enhances capacity building, and directs discussion to influence advocacy towards policy-making.

## **3. Networks and Campaigns**

YUVA believes in the power of collectives to further the vision of just and inclusive cities. Through participation in and by providing leadership to several campaigns on inclusive and just cities, YUVA seeks to provide solidarity and build partnerships for change.





## TO DONATE

<http://www.globalgiving.co.uk/donate/28441/youth-for-unity-and-voluntary-action-yuva/>

## CONTACT US


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Also see our brochure on 'Our work with Children and Youth in Urban India'

**YUVA is an accredited NGO with UN ECOSOC**

