

## KRUTIKa PATEL

### OUR CITY ACCESSIBLE CITY LETS REALIZE THIS DREAM TOGETHER

At present each and every person wants to live luxurious life. Everyone has a dream of healthy and happy life. One always wants to live hurdle less life, so does : challenged person do.: They also have some desires ambitions and dreams. Like any physically and mentally healthy person Divyang people can't achieve their goals easily.

From their childhood Divyang persons have to face many difficulties. They have to face much differences of society. As a challenged person Divyang must know his/her duties as well as rights.

Accessibility should be and is slowly becoming a concern all over the world, but cities have often been behind the times. Despite the idea of smart cities rising in popularity and many urban areas embracing technology to improve everything from user experience to safety, accessibility hasn't had the same attention as these 'glamorous' innovations. Today, the world as we know it is changing, and cities will have no choice but to readdress their current accessibility or lack of it.

### **Positive Outlook Of The City**

We are living in megacity like Ahmedabad. Here many Divyang persons come for securing their future in studies , special skilled courses and jobs . They pursue their degrees in various streams . They travel across the city on a daily basis . They often use public transport for travelling.

Here we have lots of benefits as a Divyang persons. We have quite good transport system like BRTS and AMTS. Sometimes they use otariksha also. We have some accessible buildings of colleges and NGOS Blind People's Association Of India Ahmedabad is an ideal structure of accessible building. Saint Xavier's college, etc also accessible for Divyang people. 70% of People of Ahmedabad city are very generous and helpful by nature.

### **Why Cities Need To Be Inclusive And Accessible**

Why do we need anything to be accessible? Aside from the moral reasons behind accessibility, the fact is our disabled population is growing and so are their needs. Working, socialising and tourism are the pillars of the world economy, and people with physical or learning disabilities have become a large and important part of it.

World Health Organisation says that 15% of the world's population lives with an impairment or disability.As the world's population increases more people will live in cities. This means more people with disabilities will be living in cities.

As cities grow in size we need to think about how they are built and who they are for.

For too long cities have been built without thinking about how physical and social barriers affect Divyang people.

If cities are built with accessibility in mind Divyang people will feel included socially.

Non-discrimination policies will also help to protect housing rights for Divyang people.

Divyang people are young, old, women, men, and of every race and ethnicity.

Unsurprisingly, the UN has identified accessibility as a major challenge with the current infrastructure of most cities simply not up to the task.

### **The City Which Is Falling Short On Accessibility**

On theory and on paper we should all be working towards a completely accessible future.

Ministry of social justice and empowerment has launched: Accessible India Campaign Or Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan in 2015. Accessible India is a program to serve differently abled people of a country. The program comes with an index to measure the design of Divyang-Friendly buildings and human resources policies.

Unfortunately, these laws are often flouted or simply worked around. Ignoring or meeting the bare minimum of today's accessibility standards isn't working for the world's disabled population and many continue to face everyday obstacles. Not only is this a physical barrier to their access, but can often create a sense of fear and anxiety that is a significant contribution mental barrier as well.

Cities and urban areas are often the guilty parties and cite their own barriers to accessibility. Old and historical cities contend with strict heritage laws while others simply feel they can't begin to change a huge area of established buildings and spaces. Today, people with all types of disabilities continue to face common and often easily solved obstacles.

Physical mobility disabilities – for wheelchair users and those with limited mobility, barriers can include no or blocked wheelchair ramps, no lifts, inaccessible toilets and shops without step-free access.

Audio and visual disabilities – often no or very little operational visual and audio cues around key areas such as train stations and buses.

Learning disabilities – those on the autistic spectrum can suffer from the clutter and noise that city areas present.

### **How Our City Likely To Be?**

**As Albert Einstein said: "If the facts don't fit the theory, change the facts".**

That's true we need to improve our infrastructure arising to Differently abled people.

1 To decrease traffic in a city people must use public transport for traveling.

2 Crowded places like markets and shops must have wheelchair accessible entrance .

3 Public transport must have audio visual display so that Divyang could easily get their path and it must be wheelchair accessible.

4 Railway provides special which for Divyang people but they doesn't get it's benefits they should put a guard to securely bring Divyang people to the which and make sure that nothing goes wrong with them.

5 Government should renovate public buildings like hospitals , schools,some hotels, theatres, moles, government officials and all the work places.

there should be awareness in public for differently abled people.

6 While planning a new buildings engineers must take advice of differently abled people about accessible amenities .

All the cities currently putting serious efforts into accessibility have shown that a goal of 100% accessibility is not only achievable but also necessary if real progress is to be made. From historical sites to countries not typically known for their focus on equality, all the above examples highlight that any accessibility challenge can be overcome with the right infrastructure in place.

I have already talked about accessibility in general sense, which includes all kinds of disabilities. But now I would like to draw your attention particularly on accessible cities , in which what is needed for visually impaired persons.

285 million visually impaired people worldwide are facing this challenge every day, including blind, partially blind or colour blind persons, as well as elderly people with reduced vision.

When you can't rely on visual signage, daily tasks like navigating complex urban environments, crossing busy intersections or identifying road names become challenging. And with the speed of city life constantly increasing, it is getting harder for visually impaired people to discover urban centres, and sometimes they avoid these spaces completely.

Inclusivity is a fundamental requirement of any 'smart city', so here are some examples of how new technologies and smart city solutions can help visually impaired persons navigate urban sites and fully experience city life.

### GPS Wayfinding Apps

The implementation of accessible design into architectural planning is already standard in urban planning, yet orientation and navigation still pose challenges. Especially in unfamiliar areas, visually impaired people rely on assistive technologies to find their way.

The most popular solutions are GPS-powered navigation apps such as Seeing Eye GPS or BlindSquare. The user can enter their destination via voice command or type with the help of VoiceOver function, which is available on nearly every device. The GPS signals can tell users their location, calculate routes and transmit directions on mobile devices by sound or vibration signals.

This helps blind people get from A to B and participate in everyday life. But as helpful as these applications may be, they are not perfect. GPS signal can lack in accuracy and does not work indoors, making it hard to navigate around train stations or shopping centres. That's where smart cities can turn to beacon technologies and other positioning systems.

### Beacon-powered Smart Cities

Beacons are small transmitters placed around buildings that send real-time site information directly to mobile devices. They can be installed in public buildings, offices or small locations like bus stops.

Beacons send accurate location data to mobile devices in the area and work both indoor and outdoor. But they are capable of doing a lot more than that.

Adjusting to the specific location needs they can provide real-time information about the location of entrances to buildings, correct platform numbers and live information on approaching bus routes in a station, or information on the nearest assistant service providers. Visually impaired people with mobile devices can be notified via vibration or sound. This kind of responsive technology allows visually impaired people to not only navigate complex buildings faster, but it also makes it much easier to plan a journey with public transport, to react to temporary changes and to travel independently without relying on external help.

### Tactile and Talking City Maps

Physical maps serve as a unique addition to their digital counterparts, positioning apps and beacons. While mobile devices can help someone to navigate on-site, physical maps have the scale to provide a global overview of a space. This kind of knowledge is crucial to helping people with visual impairments feel empowered, confident and safe in a city. Tactile city maps are easy to read and can offer useful details on distances, building structure, street gradients and other topographical features. Combine this with audio components and you get rich additional information like street and place names and even live transport data.

This creates tactile and talking maps, tailored to the needs of blind people, like the ones developed by the LightHouse organisation. Audio-tactile technology allows the maps to maintain a clean design and provide easily changeable information. The information can be accessed with smart pen and doesn't rely on the users' Braille skills. With the rise of 3D-printing the production of tactile maps is getting much faster, easier and cheaper. This technology allows embossed maps to be printed with architectural diagrams of the current state of buildings within just a few minutes. When cities invest in making the software for topographic maps accessible, visually impaired people will be able to print out up-to-date maps at home before starting a trip.

Here I would like to give some examples, in which remarkable progress can be seen in this field: When analyzing the accessibility level of cities there are several markers. For example, the European Commission grants since 2010 the Access City Award, an award that recognizes the efforts of the inclusive cities in the old continent. This award takes into account the following areas of action:

- The built environment and public spaces
- Transport and related infrastructure
- Information and communication, including new technologies (ICTs)
- Public facilities and services

Cities like Avila (Spain), Salzburg (Austria), Berlin (Germany) and Gothenburg (Sweden) have been recognized with the Access City Award in the last five years.

Social inclusion: another key factor

Architectural barriers represent enormous obstacles

It is important to note that a city does not become accessible only by adapting its structures to all kinds of people. Social inclusion is also key in providing equal conditions for its inhabitants.

The platform Dealing with Different, a global source specialized in information of interest to disabled people, explains that there are some factors to talk about fully accessible cities.

For example, the ease with which a disabled person can access a job and the possibility of keeping it is another factor analyzed by this platform and not in vain the European Commission states that "people with disabilities represent one-sixth of the EU's overall working-age population, but their employment rate is comparatively low."

On the other hand, apart from the removal of architectural barriers, it is important to have into account the weather conditions: it is not the same to use a wheelchair on dry, wet or snowy pavement. The quantity of fitness centers, rehabilitation clinics and specialized health centers per capita are also an important indicator.

In a list recently compiled by Dealing with Different cities like Nantes (France), Stockholm (Sweden), Pamplona (Spain), Albuquerque (New Mexico), Orlando (Florida) or Chicago (Illinois) are outlined as accessible and inclusive cities.

Accessible cities and tourism

Playa del Carmen is an accessible tourist destination

The cities that fit their environments not only to its residents but also to its visitors deserve a special mention. The prestigious travel guide book publisher Lonely Planet has compiled a list of destinations that have adapted their infrastructure, sometimes very complicated for people with disabilities, to allow all travelers visiting historical monuments, hiking through natural landscapes, activities as scuba diving... In this list we can find destinations like Playa del Carmen (Mexico), Galapagos and Amazon (Ecuador), Barcelona (Spain), Sicily (Italy), Melbourne (Australia) or Ljubljana (Slovenia).

Smart Cities for All

In the end, making a place accessible is all about communication. Technologies like apps, beacons and audio-tactile maps offer new and inclusive ways to communicate location-based data that don't rely on visuals alone. Incorporating technologies like these ensures that every member of a city's population has access to the information they need in a format they can access, constituting a major step towards a truly inclusive smart city'.

Here I want to mention some real gems of accessible India Doctor Bhushan Punani who has dedicated his entire life to Divyang people, Pranav Desai who is working for Divyang

people and their well-being and lastly special thanks to our prime minister who has taken the initiative to improve the situation of Divyang people.