

Project Initiation Meeting at Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Development Alternatives Group organised the project initiation meeting for “Transforming the Built Environment through Sustainable Materials’ at, Odisha State Housing Board (OSHB), Kharavel Nagar. The project is being implemented in four countries (India, Bangladesh, Ghana and Senegal), coordinated by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and supported by Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany). In India, Development Alternatives Group is implementing the project in Odisha and Maharashtra state. With the participation from government officials of the Department of OSHB, the Odisha Urban Housing Mission, academia (CEPT- CARBSE, IIT Bhubaneswar and CSIR- IMMT). The meeting covered various aspects around the three thematic areas of policy frameworks, markets and finance and carbon and material footprints which will eventually facilitate the Roadmap development process at a sub-national level.

Zeenat Niazi, Senior Vice President, and Chief Knowledge Officer of Development Alternatives Group, welcomed the gathering with her address, touching upon the need for a spirit of collaboration and the importance of a shared vision and goals to achieve systemic impact in the affordable housing sector through this initiative.

Jonathan Duwyn (Programme Officer, UNEP) spoke about the project's global significance and elaborated on the features of the roadmap development process and the GlobalABC methodology of roadmap development formulated by UNOPS and the GlobalABC team.

Sagarika Patnaik (IRPS, Special Secretary to Housing and Urban Development Department and Managing Director, Odisha State Housing Board) chaired the open discussion and invited comments from the stakeholders present.

Officials from Bhubaneswar Development Authority elaborated on the potential of streamlining the process for the smooth procurement of construction, demolition and industrial waste. Representatives from Industries Department gave their insight on the potential greening or decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors and their consequent impacts on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). They were also invited to give insight into the process and criteria of material selection and procurement for affordable housing projects under the under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Urban (PMAY-U).

The meeting ended with a fair amount of motivation among government officials and other stakeholders to participate and support the upcoming project activities for transforming the built environment and setting up Odisha as a model state to design a sub-national level roadmap for construction sector.