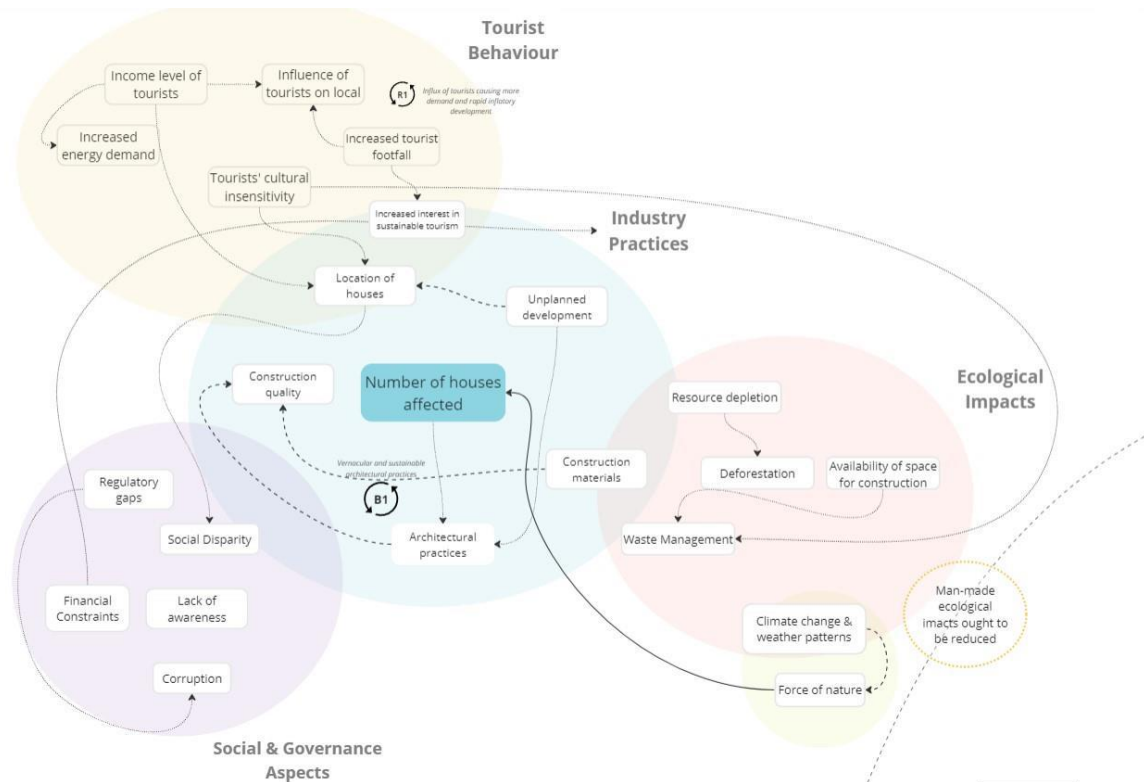


Nurturing Environmental Leaders: TARA's Systems Thinking Module at Anant National University



Systems Map prepared by the Group of Students

In a dynamic world where the delicate balance between nature and human development is increasingly crucial, the role of education becomes pivotal. Addressing this need, Development Alternatives (DA) has designed a comprehensive module on 'Systems Thinking and Built Environment' for the Built Environment Fellows of Anant National University through their incubation engine, TARA.

The module, led by experts from the Development Alternatives Group, was a knowledge-rich experience aimed at fostering a profound understanding of sustainable practices within the built environment. Ms Zeenat Niazi, the Chief Knowledge Officer, and Senior Vice-President of Development Alternatives, alongside Mohak Gupta, Assistant Programme Director, lead the initiative by delivering insightful lectures on diverse subjects like Urban Nature-based Solutions, Systems Thinking, and Circular Economy. The sessions were facilitated by Nitika Banhani, Research Manager, and Shubhayan Modak, Learning and Development Manager, fostering engagement through a mix of lectures, group activities, working sessions, and final presentations.

Over the course of 8 days, the module immersed 13 scholars from Anant National University's Built Environment Fellowship in an intellectually stimulating environment. The cohort was strikingly diverse, consisting of scholars hailing from four countries: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nigeria. The convergence of minds from various cultural backgrounds enriched the learning experience, reflecting the global nature of the environmental challenges we face.

The module's structure was carefully designed to nurture holistic learning. Scholars were introduced to the core principles of Systems Thinking, enabling them to perceive the built environment as an interconnected web of elements where every action triggers a chain of consequences. This approach encouraged a broader perspective, ensuring that future leaders in the field consider the long-term effects of their decisions on both humanity and nature.

The students were also acquainted with innovative toolkits that are indispensable for addressing the challenges of environmental sustainability. Urban Nature-based Solutions and Circular Economy concepts were dissected, providing scholars with practical frameworks to develop eco-friendly urban spaces and promote responsible resource management.

The success of this module marked the third consecutive year of DA's partnership with Anant National University. With each passing year, the program evolves, becoming a beacon of transformation for aspiring environmental leaders. The scholars not only gained knowledge but also developed critical skills to navigate the complex nexus between development and ecology.