

### Working Group Consultation for 'Transforming the Built Environment through Sustainable Materials'



In a pivotal move towards sustainable development, the Development Alternatives Group recently organised a Working Group Consultation on "Transforming the Built Environment through Sustainable Materials" in Bhubaneswar, as part of its Ashraye Project in Odisha. The consultation aimed to integrate decarbonisation strategies and circular economy principles into affordable housing development in the state, bringing together stakeholders from government departments, academia, and the building and construction industry.

Under the Ashraye Project, the Working Group on Policy Frameworks, along with Materials & Technology and Markets & Finance, was established to lay the groundwork for the roadmap development process. The primary focus of the discussion was on approaches to support the integration of green building practices within Odisha's current policy landscape.

Development Alternatives is currently serving as the technical partner to the Odisha State Housing Board (OSHB) and the Mahatma Phule Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Technology Limited (MAHAPREIT) in Mumbai. Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) were signed with both organisations to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the project "Transforming the Built Environment through Sustainable Materials," with an emphasis on sustainable demand-side management.

The consultation, conducted in collaboration with XIM, Bhubaneswar, featured special remarks from Ms. Sagarika Patnaik, Managing Director of OSHB. Ms. Patnaik emphasised the need for united and systematic efforts to address challenges arising from rapid urbanisation and climate change. She stated, "The consultation is dedicated to fostering the development and implementation of sustainable housing solutions, resilient infrastructure, and cost-effective, eco-friendly housing practices. Its overarching goal is to establish a noteworthy example for other Indian cities, highlighting that sustainability is more than a mere goal—a shared responsibility for the collective well-being."

The event witnessed active participation from key figures, including Ms. Rasmita Rani Rai, Secretary, OSHB, Mr. Kausika Dhal, Chief Engineer, BDA, and representatives from Tata Trusts, OUHM, OSPCCB, BSCL, and the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, among others.

Professor Kajri Mishra and Professor Tathagata Chatterjee from the School of Human Settlements at XIM University co-chaired the Working Group session. Prof. Tathagata Chatterjee highlighted the need for enabling frameworks and tools to facilitate a smooth transition to sustainable building practices, while Prof. Kajri Mishra emphasised the necessity of systemic change at every level within the built environment and the construction industry.

Stakeholders provided expert views, strategic recommendations, and action items for policy reforms aimed at mainstreaming sustainable building materials and practices. Mr. Soumen Maity, Vice President of DA, illuminated India's ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 and underscored the crucial role that mitigation of emissions in the construction sector will play in reaching this objective.



Working Group members at the Working Group Consultation on Policy Frameworks in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

This collaborative effort signifies a significant step towards transforming the built environment in Odisha, fostering sustainability, and promoting innovation. As the state strives to set an example for other Indian cities, the consultation serves as a platform for collective responsibility in ensuring the well-being of communities through sustainable housing solutions and resilient infrastructure. The integration of green building practices is not just a goal but a shared commitment to a more sustainable and resilient future for all.