

## **NEWSLETTER STRUCTURE**

### **SECTION 1: Director's Message**

Dear Readers,

I am thrilled to introduce our October 2023 newsletter. This edition highlights our latest blogs that showcase ongoing projects, plans for Urban October, upcoming Talking About Transitions dialogues and new team members. We invite you to delve into this content and join us on our journey to discover sustainable transition pathways for India's future.

Warm Regards,  
Vikrom Mathur

### **SECTION 2: Latest Blogs**

- AI, Climate Adaptation, and Epistemic Injustice: Vikrom Mathur, Angelina Chamuah and Hema Vaishnavi Ale explore how humanising science, policy, and practice can create spaces that value and integrate diverse knowledge systems, foster meaningful engagement with affected communities, and promote inclusive decision-making processes.
- How nature-based solutions can build urban resilience: four lessons from SEI's work in South Asian cities: In this blog, Ronika Postaria collaborated with Ridhi Saluja from SEI to delve into four critical priorities for successful NbS projects in urban areas. They detail how these four tools can enhance NbS projects and outline critical factors for creating resilient, equitable, and sustainable urban cities in South Asia to optimise NbS effectiveness and ensure long-lasting benefits that promote urban well-being and sustainability.
- Power and Politics: Reframing Urban Nature from the Bottom Up: Through our Policy Lab, Integrating Equity and Reframing Urban Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Growing, South Asian Cities, we discovered the importance of reframing NbS to address local challenges. In her blog, Ashali explores these new frames and the importance of challenging top down visions of how urban nature should be produced.
- Behaviour Change and Climate Action: As part of our work on Encouraging Low Carbon Lifestyles, we have discovered the importance of incorporating behavioural insights into policy to enable climate action. Ashali's piece for the India Development Review highlights the barriers that limit individuals from adopting sustainable behaviours and solutions for policymakers.

### **SECTION 3: Events round-up**

*Create an event story on SEI NBS event and feature it with an image*

Title: **Event Recap: Policy Lab on Integrating Equity and Reframing Nature-based Solutions**

We recently organised a Policy Lab in Colombo titled "Integrating Equity and Reframing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Growing South Asian Cities." The Lab convened a diverse group of 29 participants from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to co-create strategies for embedding NbS into urban planning and governance, addressing pressing climate, development, and biodiversity challenges confronting rapidly growing mid-sized South Asian cities.

The Lab challenged the prevailing carbon-focused perspective on NbS, highlighted innovative approaches for community empowerment, uncovered linkages between NbS and local development objectives, and identified critical policy pathways for NbS implementation. The Policy Lab proved instrumental in advancing our understanding and commitment to sustainable urban development in the South Asian context.

This event was organised in collaboration with Colombo Urban Lab, the International Centre for Climate Change and Development, and the People's Alliance for Right to Land. We were supported by the Stockholm Environment Institute's Strategic Collaborative Fund.

#### **SECTION 4: Watch out for Urban October**

*Image of Ashali with a quote announcing the PULL launch*

Transitions Research is thrilled to announce our new initiative, Building a Net Zero Society, which will envision a low carbon future for four, growing mid-sized Indian cities. We will be employing our People's Urban Living Lab (PULL) to support cities working towards net-zero, with a focus on the social dimensions of this transition. Our launch during Urban October underscores our commitment to inclusive and sustainable urban development. Stay tuned for updates from our project cities and our upcoming dialogue on Net Zero Cities on World Cities Day.

-Ashali Bhandari, Senior Urban Planner

#### **SECTION 5: Upcoming Events**

**Talking About Transitions** feature critical conversations on the systemic shifts at the interplay of technology, society and sustainability. It seeks to discover just and sustainable transition pathways for India's future. This Dialogue series provides a platform for thinking together about three major areas of change and challenge – urbanisation, climate change and digitalisation.

Transitions Research's upcoming dialogue, **Building a Net Zero Society**, will take place on Tuesday, World Cities Day, October 31st from 4:30 to 5:30 pm IST. India's rapidly growing, mid-sized cities have great potential to pioneer India's transition to net zero. This dialogue will explore how we can build a net zero society, with a focus on the social transformations that are required for a low carbon transition. Stay tuned for more details, including how to register.

## **SECTION 6: New Members**

*Brief bios*

Angelina Chamuah

Senior Research Fellow

Angelina leads the Digital Society programme at Transitions Research. Her work focuses on the social and ethical dimensions of technologies in the 4IR. Bringing a Science, Technology and Society lens to the study of AI and digital technologies, she works on the intersections of AI, sustainability futures and the platform economy. She holds an M.A. and M.Phil. in Sociology from the Delhi School of Economics.

Shantha Tara Venugopal

Shantha's research interests are in equitable development policy and local governance in India. She has explored work in numerous fields under the broad umbrella of development. Shantha is an Albright Fellow '23 and holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from Wellesley College.

## **SECTION 7: What have we been reading and listening to?**

*Highlights of books/papers people have been reading*

Angelina: What have I been listening to? The podcast called 'Your Undivided Attention' which is co-hosted by Tristan Harris and Aza Raskin, The Center for Humane Technology, and explores the incredible power that technology has over our lives — and how we can use it to catalyse a humane future.

Ashali: [The Urban Politics of Extreme Heat in South Asia.](#)

This lecture sheds light on the challenges posed by rising temperatures in South Asian cities, specifically calling out the adverse effects on vulnerable populations and the role of planning failures and socio-spatial inequities in exacerbating extreme heat.

## **SECTION 8: Calls to Action**

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