



Transitions Research

Summary

Creating real impact requires meaningful collaboration. In August, we focused on engaging with experts across the fields of climate, technology, and policy. Our team members participated in insightful discussions about the role AI can play to accelerate India's energy transition, analysed how local and indigenous knowledge can enhance climate resilience, and explored the significance of urban planning in improving adaptation efforts. Additionally, we released two new episodes of MAP (Monsoon Academy Podcast), which highlighted the inspiring career journeys of experts in policy and communications.

Catch the latest on MAP: Inspiring Career Journeys of a Climate Communicator and Policy Manager!

In our ongoing exploration of the career journeys of people driving sustainability transitions in India, the August episodes of MAP covered unconventional career paths, essential skills in communications and policy management, and the crucial role of mentorship.

Back in the 1990s in India, when climate change was still a new concept, a young journalist was covering stories such as the Narmada Bachao Andolan, the impact of agricultural chemical factories in Gujarat, the mercury thermometer factory in Kodaikanal, and other significant issues that have shaped India's climate action narrative. Later, this journalist became the Campaign Director at [Greenpeace](#), where he held major industries accountable for their environmental impact. Today, he continues to fight environmental degradation. The story of [Shailendra Yashwant](#), a senior communications and policy advocacy expert, highlighted the importance of conviction as the fuel for success, while also shedding light on the essential skills needed to navigate a career in climate communication in today's media landscape. Listen to 'The Art of Communicating the Story of Climate Change' [here](#).

Also in August, we covered [Anuja Malhotra's](#) journey as the Policy Manager at the [Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment](#). Anuja recounted her unconventional transition from a non-science background to working at the forefront of the science-policy-practice interface in India, showing how important it is to be able to learn on the job. Listen to 'Learning on the Job', [here](#).

Follow MAP [here](#).

Events

In the latest dialogue of our Talking about Transitions series, Transitions Research hosted a webinar titled 'Can Digitalisation and AI Accelerate India's Energy Transition?' on August 20th.

AI and digital technologies are often seen as catalysts for accelerating energy transitions. But are we equipped to meet the complex demands of the transitions in the energy sector, and ensure equity and inclusion?

Our latest dialogue featuring [Priya Danti](#), Co-founder and Chair at [Climate Change AI](#); [Simran Grover](#), Co-founder and CEO at the [Centre for Energy, Environment & People](#) (CEEP); [Siddharth Sareen](#), Professor in Energy and Environment at [Fridtjof Nansen Institute](#); and [Angelina Chamuah](#), Senior Research Fellow at [Transitions Research](#) delved into the relationship between the digital and energy transitions in India. Our experts explored how India can navigate this landscape to ensure social equity as well as improved access in the long term.

Watch the recording of the session [here](#) or read the transcript [here](#).

Senior Research Fellow, Angelina Chamuah, shared her insight on the impact of AI on critical thinking and workforce skills at the #IGPPExpertTalks Series.

[Angelina Chamuah](#) was invited as a guest speaker on #IGPPExpertTalks, an interview series by [Institute for Governance, Policy and Politics \(IGPP\)](#). In her conversation with [Heena Goswami](#), Editorial Consultant at IGPP, Chamuah spoke about the possibility of artificial intelligence posing a risk to critical thinking, which might result in the loss of skills among working professionals.

Her talk drew on observations from Transitions Research's latest report, [User Journeys with Generative AI: Navigating the Future of Work and Society](#), and also highlighted the importance of legislation in ensuring that advancements in artificial intelligence improve, rather than reduce, human capacities.

Transitions Research organised a symposium in Bangkok to exchange insights and learn from community members about key issues in the social impact ecosystem.

In our role as the lead for Tracking, Learning, and Sharing (TLS) at the [Adaptation Research Alliance \(ARA\)](#), we organised a symposium in Bangkok designed to gather knowledge from the ARA Asia-Pacific community on critical issues such as locally-driven climate adaptation, indicators for assessing adaptation effectiveness, indigenous and local knowledge systems, and heat resilience.

We will be disseminating the results of these intellectually stimulating discussions in more detail soon. If you'd like to read our full report , [send us a message on LinkedIn](#), and we'll deliver it to your inbox.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all participants for their invaluable contributions!



Participants at the Bangkok symposium, who made it such a vibrant and rich exchange of ideas!

Vikrom Mathur, Director at Transitions Research, chaired an engaging discussion at NIAC on strengthening climate adaptation strategies at the subnational and municipal levels.

[Vikrom Mathur](#) chaired a panel session on ‘Levers of Action’ at the National Impacts and Adaptation Convening (NIAC) organised by the [India Climate Collaborative](#) and the [Khemka Foundation](#).

The panel featured prominent speakers, including [Divya Sharma](#), Executive Director, India Chair at [Climate Group](#), and board member at Transitions Research; [Shruti Narayan](#) from [C40 Cities](#); and [Rishika Das Roy](#) from the [India Climate Collaborative](#). The discussion focused on climate adaptation capabilities and administration at the sub-national and municipal levels.

The panel explored how enhanced urban and master planning could serve as crucial starting points for effectively integrating and coordinating adaptation efforts across the country. They also highlighted adaptation financing as a vital catalyst for transformation. Additionally, the discussion emphasised the need for improved monitoring, stronger institutional structures, and a more resilient risk architecture.



Divya Sharma, Shruti Narayan, Vikrom Mathur, and Rishika Das Roy (from left to right) at the session on 'Levers of Action'

Research updates

Transitions Research is partnering with the [Global Resilience Partnership](#) to explore urban resilience solutions in informal contexts across the Global South. We are working to identify the roles, opportunities, and challenges for the private sector (startups, social enterprises, SMEs) and the not-for-profit sector (academia, civil society, UN agencies) to drive innovative solutions to build communities' resilience against climate change.

If you're engaged in building urban resilience in informal contexts, please take a moment to fill out our survey (link below) and share it with anyone in your network working on similar solutions. Stay tuned for more insights soon!

New joinees

We are pleased to welcome two new members to our growing team.

[Evita Rodrigues](#) is a public policy professional from Goa, specializing in urban governance and climate change at Transitions Research. With a background in Political Science and Economics, she is passionate about the intersection of politics, socioeconomics, and environmental sustainability. As a former PRS LAMP Fellow, she aided legislative research at the Indian Parliament including work on India's first climate migration bill. Later, as a Swaniti Global Associate in Assam, she worked on last-mile development, focusing on participatory governance and strengthening citizen-government relations. Always curious about new food and cultures, she's always on the lookout for her next travel adventure.

[Diksha](#) is a dedicated public policy professional with a deep-rooted interest in climate change and sustainability. She completed her Master's in Public Policy from the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, where she developed a strong foundation in policy analysis and environmental governance. Diksha has been involved in a range of projects, including renewable energy initiatives and climate adaptation efforts. Currently, she is contributing to the Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) Secretariat Strategic Learning and Tracking Partnership project at Transitions Research.

What we've been reading/watching/ listening to

I recently read an article, '[Sustainability Transitions in the Global South](#)', by Lucy Oates which delves into how urban services in low- and middle-income countries can shift towards sustainability. The case studies from Ahmedabad, India, and Jinja, Uganda, highlight the role of grassroots innovations in addressing challenges like inequality and urbanisation. These efforts, such as solar energy initiatives in slums and waste management by informal workers, show how community-led projects can provide essential services, empower marginalised groups, and reduce environmental impacts. The research also calls for adapting the traditional multilevel perspective framework to better fit the unique conditions of the Global South.

–Diksha, Research Assistant

This month, I've been reading *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* (2012), a compelling non-fiction work by Katherine Boo, which explores life in the Annawadi slum near Mumbai's international airport. This was something Vikrom recommended to me as I began research for an ongoing project on urban resilience in informal contexts. Boo's detailed reporting uncovers the complex socioeconomic dynamics within urban informal settlements, shedding light on issues like inequality, survival, and the fragile balance between hope and despair in one of India's rapidly growing cities. It's provided a valuable, human perspective that complements the formal reports and project briefs I've been working through.

–Evita, Urban Governance Associate

Upcoming at Transitions

Talking about Transitions: “Transitioning Transport for Low Carbon Futures in Indian Cities” on Friday, October 4th, 2024, at 5:30 pm (IST)

The way we move contributes to almost a [quarter of greenhouse gas emissions](#). Over the last twenty years, India has experienced a surge in mobility and transportation related emissions, with [GHG emissions increasing 224% between 2000 and 2019](#). Cities, which are rapidly growing, have felt the brunt of this mobility shift, with many cities experiencing unbearable congestion, poor public transportation provision, and rising air pollution. India is at a pivotal moment to shape the future of transport emissions, especially given that only [30% of urban residents rely on private vehicles](#).

Our upcoming dialogue, on Friday, October 4th, will explore approaches to transition to low carbon urban mobility. Register for the dialogue here:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_G62jfb3-SCeRsXrGyuIsdA

Call to Action

Follow us on [social media](#). Subscribe to our [newsletter](#). Visit our [website](#). Get in touch [for collaborations](#). [Write to us](#) to join the conversation around the transition to an equitable and livable future.
