



# Mainstreaming young children and caregiver-centric development in Indian cities

## Guidebook for Early Childhood-friendly Neighbourhood Resource Kit





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The **Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge**, was hosted by the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India, in collaboration with Van Leer Foundation and with the technical support of WRI India. The Challenge sought to incorporate neighbourhood-level improvements, that promote healthy early childhood development (0-5-year-old children), in the planning and management of Indian cities.

In furthering the young children and caregiver-oriented lens for neighbourhood development in Indian cities, the new phase of the program, **Nurturing Neighbourhoods 2.0** starting July 2024 with the support of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Van Leer Foundation, WRI India will provide technical support for 30 months to help deepen and sustain efforts in selected Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge cities, 2 Urban95 Lighthouse cities (Pune & Udaipur) and selected States. By 2027, the program will support a Network of Cities in India to lead mainstreaming of the young children and caregiver-centric development through supportive infrastructure and services, resulting in improved access to public spaces within walking distances along with enhanced health and wellbeing of young children and caregivers.

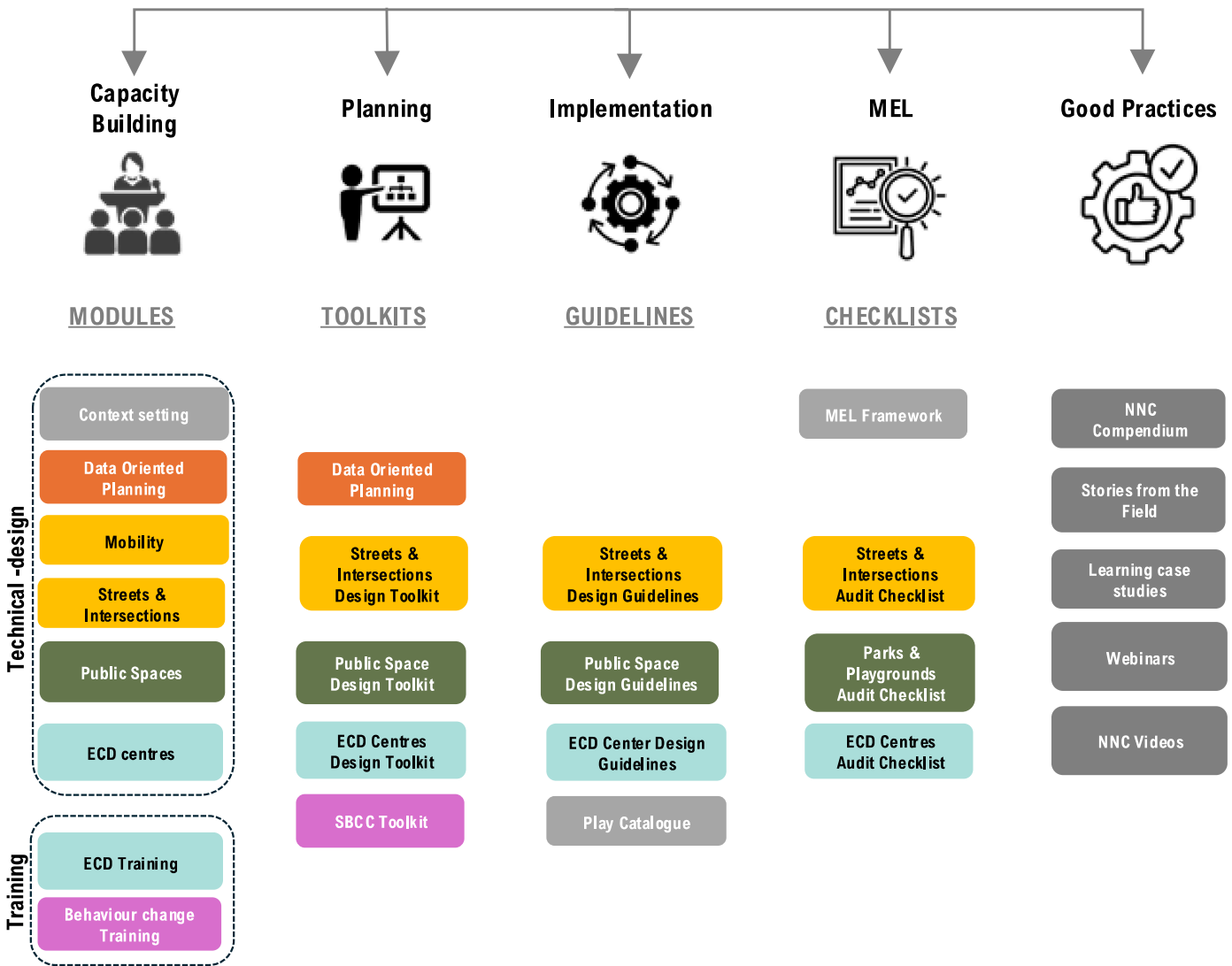
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# About the Early Childhood-friendly Neighbourhood Resource kit

The Early Childhood-friendly Neighbourhood Resource Toolkit is a compilation of knowledge products developed as part of the Nurturing Neighbourhoods program. This comprehensive resource kit is designed to support cities in creating young children and caregiver-friendly public spaces that prioritize their health and wellbeing. It includes a diverse range of practical tools such as guidelines, checklists, and toolkits to support city authorities, urban practitioners, institutions, and other stakeholders throughout the public space development process. The resource kit provides guidance to strategize and scale neighbourhood level interventions in destinations frequented by young children and their families, such as parks, gardens and open spaces, streets and intersections, transit stations, ECD facilities and amenities, towards long-term monitoring and positive behaviour change in relevant stakeholders. The resource kit is structured across five critical domains – Capacity Building, Planning, Implementation, MEL, and Good Practices, towards helping cities integrate a family-centered planning and development into their mainstream agenda.

The Guidebook, developed as a complementary document to the Early Childhood-friendly Neighbourhood Resource Toolkit, is a guide for navigating through and utilizing the resources available within the toolkit. The framework is designed to address distinct phases and aspects of urban interventions, and enable stakeholders identify the appropriate resources based on the nature and stage of their intervention.




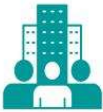
## Early Childhood-friendly Neighbourhood Resource Toolkit



### LEGEND

- Data oriented planning
- Public Open Spaces
- Streets and Mobility
- ECD
- Behaviour change

### 3 Target audience for the resource kit

Who can use this resource kit?	In what capacity?
 <p><b>City Authorities</b></p>	<p>Government authorities across departments including parks and gardens, roads, public works departments, health, education, women and child development, planning and urban development agencies, transportation agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity Building Modules</b></li> <li>• <b>Toolkits</b></li> <li>• <b>Guidelines</b></li> <li>• <b>Checklists</b></li> <li>• <b>Good practices</b></li> </ul> <p>Building capacities of city officials across all levels. Guidance in planning, design, implementation and monitoring public spaces, streets, ECD facilities and amenities. Adopting softer measures towards positive behaviour change.</p>
 <p><b>Technical Experts/ Organizations</b></p>	<p>Technical experts and organizations collaborating with city agencies on the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of public spaces, streets and ECD facilities and amenities within cities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity Building Modules</b></li> <li>• <b>Toolkits</b></li> <li>• <b>Guidelines</b></li> <li>• <b>Checklists</b></li> <li>• <b>Good practices</b></li> </ul> <p>Training and sensitization of stakeholders. Guidance in planning, design, implementation and monitoring public spaces, streets, ECD facilities and amenities.</p>
 <p><b>Institutions/ Academicians</b></p>	<p>Institutions and academicians involved in education and research across disciplines such as design, architecture, urban planning, health, and social development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity Building Modules</b></li> <li>• <b>Toolkits</b></li> <li>• <b>Guidelines</b></li> <li>• <b>Checklists</b></li> <li>• <b>Good practices</b></li> </ul> <p>Building capacities and incorporating young children- and caregiver-friendly principles into urban development practice and research.</p>
 <p><b>Community</b></p>	<p>Community-Based Organizations, Resident Welfare Associations, Civic Society Organizations, private stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity Building Modules</b></li> <li>• <b>Checklists</b></li> </ul> <p>Actively engage in monitoring and other activities to foster positive behaviour change towards young-children and family-oriented development.</p>



# Capacity building

This section features various capacity building modules designed for sensitizing and training of city officials across all levels, including city leaders, mid-level officials (engineers, architects, planners, etc.) and supervisors of frontline workers, technical experts, academia and community. The modules are designed to establish the need as well as design and planning guidance for creating safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces, streets and Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres that are tailored to the needs of young children and their families.

C1

## Context setting



The Context setting module introduces development focused on young children and caregivers, highlighting their key characteristics and needs, emphasizing the significance of the approach in planning and design of cities.

C2

## Data oriented planning



The Data-oriented planning module highlights the data-driven approach to analyze the needs of young children and caregivers at various scales and prioritize interventions.

C3

## Mobility module



The Mobility module establishes the importance of improving mobility for young children and their families, with guidance to plan and design mobility solutions, as per their specific needs.

C4

## Streets and Intersections module



The Streets and Intersections module highlights the importance of creating safe, green, accessible, playful and inclusive streets for young children and their families. This module provides a step-by-step guide to adopt young children and caregiver friendly street and intersection design.

C5

## Public Open Space module



The Public open space module builds capacity around the specific needs of young children and their caregivers in public spaces and how these can be adopted to suit their age-specific needs.

**C6****ECD centres module**

Capacity building module on planning Early Childhood Development Centers for young children and caregivers



The ECD centres module sensitizes around adopting a data-centric approach for the availability, accessibility and suitability of ECD infrastructure and services for young children and caregivers.

**C8****ECD, Responsive Caregiving and Parental Wellbeing**

Capacity building module on planning Early Childhood Development Centers for young children and caregivers



The Early Childhood Development module focuses on promoting responsive caregiving, early stimulation, play, and caregiver well-being to support the holistic development of young children. By strengthening the knowledge and capacity of the workforce, the module ensures that messages around these reach families, fostering environments where young children and caregivers can thrive.

**C9****Behaviour change module**

Capacity Building module on Behavior Change towards young children and family-oriented development



The Behavior change module helps in building capacity around the importance of incorporating Social and Behavior Change Communication approach as part of the project development to develop a supportive public realm.

# Planning



This section features various toolkits designed to support development and scaling of physical infrastructure, use of data driven approach for the same and positive behaviour change towards young children and caregivers – centric urban development. The various toolkits provide guidance that can support the planning and strategizing stages of urban development projects, to meet the needs of young children and their families.

## P1 Streets and Intersection Design Toolkit



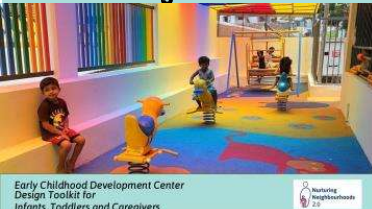
The toolkit offers insights including guidance on data-based approach in planning, design strategies and introduction to various tools to design a safe and accessible street addressing specific contexts.

## P2 Public Open Space Design Toolkit



The toolkit offers a step-by-step process for planning public open spaces for young children and caregivers, as actionable strategies including understanding of behavioral barriers to ensure a comprehensive and informed approach.

## P3 ECD Center Design Toolkit



The toolkit suggests data driven approach for scaling ECD facilities at three levels- city, ward and site, helping to identify service gaps and strategies for scaling.

## P4 Data oriented planning



The toolkit provides guidance on data collection and analysis. It focuses on data collection at the ward and city levels to inform planning, while integrating evaluation and monitoring to ensure continuous improvement of interventions and policies for enhanced outcomes.

## P5 SBCC Toolkit



The toolkit discusses a range of tools to integrate Social and Behaviour Change Communication in various legs of project cycle and processes in planning for young children and caregivers.

# Implementation



The implementation phase includes several challenges such as addressing diverse community needs, limited resources, and ensuring equitable access. This section includes guidelines that provide structured recommendations for creating safe, inclusive, playful, green, and accessible spaces for young children and their caregivers. These guidelines aim to ensure high-quality and consistent designs, based on good practices, to effectively meet the diverse needs of the young children and their families in the public realm.

## 11 Street and intersections Design Guidelines



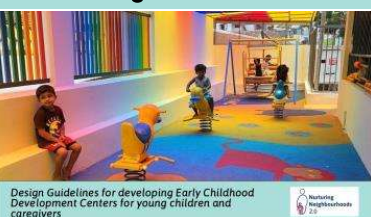
The guideline showcases various street design elements for young children and caregiver friendly streets including detailed specifications for creating safe, accessible, and engaging streets focusing on pedestrian safety, inclusive infrastructure, and play opportunities.

## 12 Public Open Space Design Guidelines



The guideline provides design guidelines for creating young children and caregiver-friendly public open spaces, detailing various age-appropriate elements supporting young children's developmental needs from infancy to early childhood.

## 13 ECD Center Design Guidelines



The guideline offers guidance on the implementation of various ECD centers, how these spaces can be adopted to the needs of young children and caregivers.

## 14 Play Catalogue



The document serves as a guide to adopt unique elements that advocate for age-appropriate play equipment supporting young children's development. These elements may be adopted at any public space to be designed for young children and families.



# Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) is essential in development projects for young children and caregivers as they help assess the effectiveness of interventions, highlight areas for improvement, and foster ongoing learning to improve outcomes and impact. The ready to use checklists in this section will help users to audit spaces, align development with key design principles and improve outcomes.

## MEL 1

### MEL Framework



The MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning) framework is essential for assessing the efficiency and impact of the project. Monitoring involves collecting data on key indicators using specific tools. Evaluation, including baseline, midline, and endline reviews, measures effectiveness, efficiency, and impact, while learning captures insights to improve implementation and inform future decisions.

## MEL 2

### Street and Intersections Audit Checklist



The checklist is a ready reckoner for evaluating urban streets and intersections to ensure they are safe, accessible, and inclusive for young children and caregivers. It helps assess key features such as pedestrian-friendly pathways, traffic calming measures, safe crossings including rest and play spaces.

## MEL 3

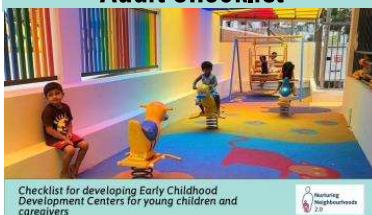
### Public Open Space Audit Checklist



The checklist ensures that public open spaces are equipped with appropriate play equipment, secure environments, and supportive features that promote the well-being and engagement of both young children and caregivers.

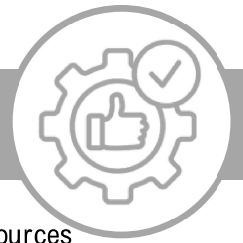
## MEL 4

### ECD Center Audit Checklist



The checklist helps assess ECD centers to ensure they are safe and age-appropriate, track design effectiveness, measure impact, and identify areas for continuous improvement in creating optimal environments for young children and caregivers.

# Good Practices



Learning from good practices is highly effective and crucial for driving meaningful change. The resources in this sections such as compendium, webinars, videos, and other resources – showcase successful strategies and stories from cities that have created young children and caregiver-friendly environments. These examples offer valuable insights and inspire other cities to adopt similar approaches, improving life for young children and families.

GP 1

## NNC Compendium



This document highlights the efforts of the 10 winning cities of the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, showcasing projects and processes in scaling of neighbourhood-level interventions, aligned with existing programs, and fostering community partnerships to improve the quality of life for young children and families.

GP 2

## Stories from the field



The document showcases efforts of 25 Cohort cities (from NNC) and serves as a reference for city agencies, local stakeholders, and urban practitioners to develop integrated pilot solutions for young children and caregivers, driving long-term transformation.

GP 3

## Learning Case Studies



These documents highlight the NNC journey of selected cities, drawing on their challenges, processes, devised solutions, scale-up strategies, programs, behavioral transformations, and innovations to make their city young children and caregiver-friendly.

GP 4

## Webinars



The webinar series explores key scale-up strategies adopted by the ten cities (of NNC), each adopting a context-specific scale up approach. These unique stories can serve as inspiration for other cities, towards creating young child- and caregiver-friendly environments.

[Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge Stories from Jabalpur & Warangal](#)  
[Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge Stories from Rourkela and Indore](#)  
[Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge Stories from Bengaluru, Kochi, and Vadodara](#)  
[Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge Stories from Indore, Kochi, Kohima and Rourkela](#)

GP 5

## NNC Videos



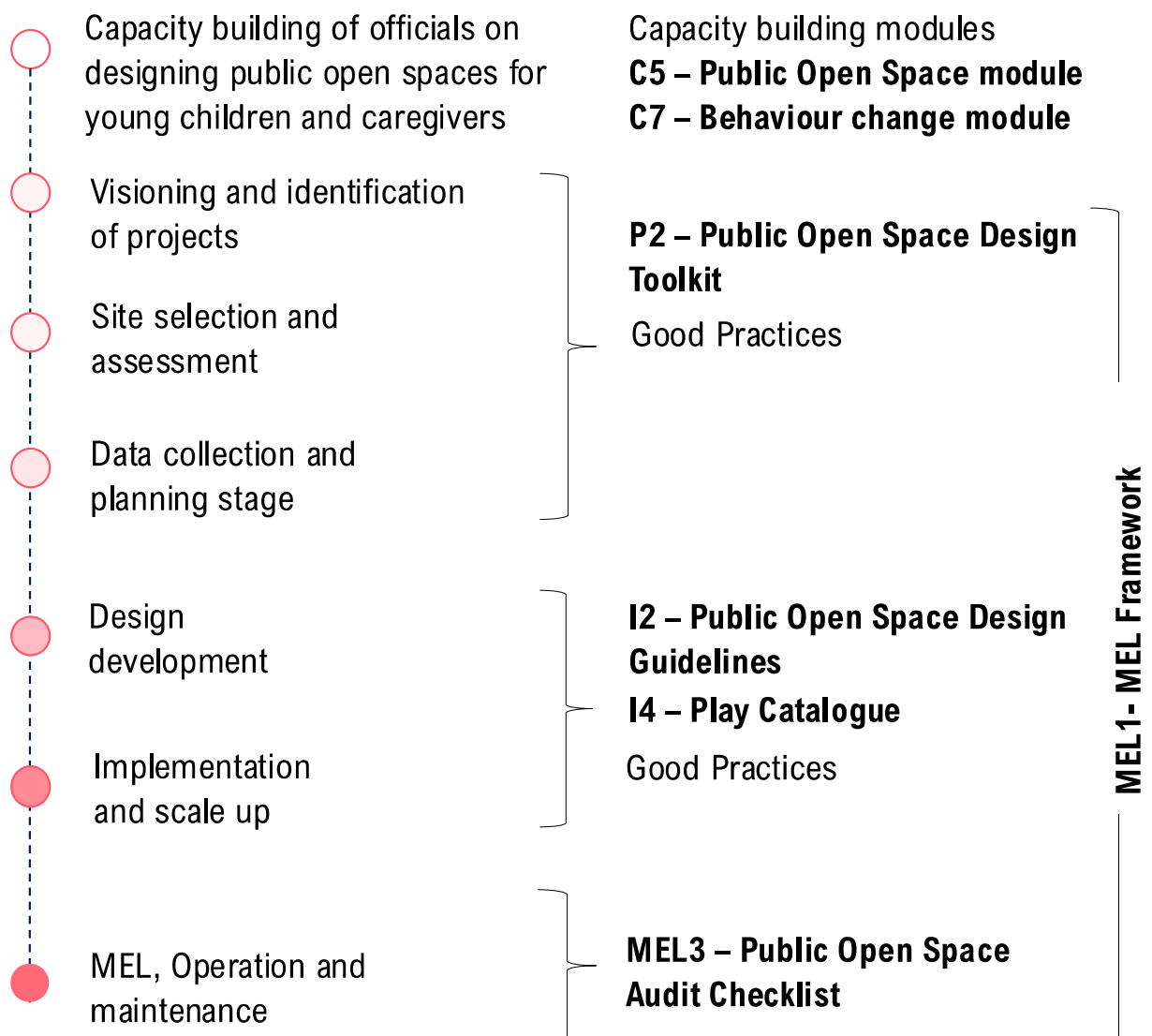
The short video compilation features stories from 8 cities, highlighting their unique approaches and successful projects. Narrated by the stakeholders involved, these stories showcase innovative solutions that can inspire other cities in creating young children and caregiver-friendly neighbourhoods.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZRD7Vii90o&list=PL4SspM0FrMP0zv3KKmx4mKyYkINaLUdwf&index=1>

## How to use the Resource Kit

The resources provided are designed to support different stakeholders at various stages of projects to make them young children and caregiver-friendly. Referring to the documents at the specific stages will ensure the most effective and efficient application of these tools. Using the resources in the recommended sequence allows stakeholders to address key project aspects at the right time, ensuring that the project progresses smoothly, and objectives are met.

For example, if a city agency wants to develop/improve parks for young children and caregivers in their city, they may follow the sequence as below:



## Remote technical support

Need-based remote technical support will be provided for the cities that have joined the network. A capacity-building workshop will be organized based on the best alignment with ongoing or upcoming projects in the cities. The workshop will also include an orientation to the resource kit - what is included, how to use it, and a hands-on activity to familiarize participants with the guidelines. Need-based remote technical support, including design suggestions and reviews, will be disseminated afterward. A quick snapshot of the remote support is as below:



- A coordinator from WRI India Nurturing Neighbourhoods team shall be appointed for each Network City.
- The coordinator shall contact the nodal officer atleast once in a week and track progress of the work in Cities and provide need-based support for the City such as providing concept design ideas, sharing design reviews and recommendations, sharing resources etc. through online meetings.
- Nodal officer can contact the coordinator anytime during the working hours on working days with prior notice to raise any support requests included in the scope of work as agreed between the agencies.

If you are an Urban Local Body who would like to access any of these documents, please write to us at [team.nurturingneighbourhoods@gmail.com](mailto:team.nurturingneighbourhoods@gmail.com)

