

**Swastik  
Harish**  
**Urban Development  
and Housing Expert**

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**Expertise**

**Capacity development for urbanization**

Focus on public sector institutions, governments and practitioners

**Research and policy advisory for urban development**

Focus on climate change, social sciences and housing

**Affordable housing programs, planning and implementation**

Focus on social rental housing

**Architecture for the development sector**

Focus on healthcare and education infrastructure

**Experience**

**Swastik Harish and Associates (SHA) / Founder-director**

July 2021 to present; Bengaluru

**Urban Development and Housing:** With a focus on Climate Change and Gender, I have led several consultancy, research and advisory projects on urban development. I have focused on developing innovative methods for environmental instrumentation, participatory research, social science research, and architectural modeling and simulation for service provision and heat experience.

- With the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IITH), SHA conducted long-term research into the experience of heat at the individual and household level in informal settlements in Hyderabad. Data was collected across three streams - social sciences, natural sciences and building sciences - to recreate and communicate the precise experience of heat as a creeping or slow disaster. The methods developed and key results are available at [heatingcities.in](http://heatingcities.in). The project stakeholders included civil society organizations, students and practitioners, government officials and academia.
- Previously, SHA has developed a method to rapidly create [digital twins of existing informal settlements](#), using a combination of Augmented Reality (AR) applications, high resolution drone imagery, photogrammetry, GIS and Building Information Modeling (BIM) systems, to develop the feasibility and final design and tender documentation for upgrading an informal settlement in Delhi.
- With Work Fair and Free Foundation (WFFF) and Rang De (a P2P lending platform), SHA has conducted field-based research to develop a housing loan product for migrant workers, covering source (Ganjam District, Odisha) and destination (Surat, Gujarat) requirements.
- For Prayas Center for Labor Research and Action (CLRA), SHA conducted an assessment of the NGO's work on housing issues over the previous 10 years and develop the strategic pathway ahead for the NGO.
- SHA has been commissioned by the Jindal Steel and Power Foundation (JSPF) to develop a model program and a design and operations brief for its old age home projects in Chhattisgarh. In a personal capacity, I am part of the committee in the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IITK) to develop the brief and Terms of Reference for the development of a School of Sustainability in their main campus. SHA closely supported the editing, data work and case studies for a book on urban governance in India, written by Dr. A. Ravindra, ex-Chief Secretary of the Government of

Karnataka.

**Capacity Development:** Besides projects that directly implement capacity building initiatives, SHA strives to build place-based, contextual understanding and skill- and knowledge-based abilities for problem-solving by developing innovative approaches and methods in all of its projects. The focus is on the development of the capacity of local and other stakeholders to be able to generate their own solutions. The following projects showcase some of the direct capacity building work done by SHA in the field of urban development.

- SHA was commissioned by the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) to develop a long-term strategy for the NGO that focuses on skill development and sustainability in the WASH and entrepreneurship sectors. SHA developed a 10-year value-led strategic and financial plan for CSD based on an analysis of the capacities of the organization and research with learner, employer and other institutional cohorts.
- With GIZ India, SHA developed and is delivering training programs for urban, administrative and municipal officials from four states (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Assam) on Data Analytics and Visualization (DAV), with a focus on gender, climate change, risk and evidence-based policymaking. Subsequently, SHA is also leading the development of a training manual and delivering Training of Trainers (ToT) programs for the same program, with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).
- With GIZ India, SHA supported the development of a map-based web portal to track selected SDGs in the Kochi Municipal Corporation (KMC), followed by training of KMC officials in maintaining and updating the said portal. For BORDA South Asia, SHA has developed and delivered workshops on case-writing, based on their research and practice experience in the WASH sector in small towns across South Asia.

### **ShelterSquare Foundation (SSF) / Founder-director**

August 2023 to present; Ahmedabad

**Workers' Housing Programs and Implementation:** With a focus on the issues faced by migrant workers in their housing arrangements, SSF is promoting equitable and dignified housing for workers in the unorganized and informal sector. We aim to build out four verticals of housing provision through a non-profit model - rental housing, worksite housing, improvement and upgrading and rent-to-own housing.

- With the support and partnership of Aajeevika Bureau Trust, we launched the Republic Hostel and Mess, Sayan, Surat, Gujarat in October 2023. This pilot project, a workers' hostel for single male migrants working in the powerloom industry is designed to provide good quality accommodation and food to 160 workers while catering as a mess to another 250 workers.
- Over Aug-Nov 2024, we initiated a program to create worksite housing for construction workers in Ahmedabad. Through Aajeevika Bureau's network with developers, we have partnered with the Mount Group developers to design and install prototypes of worker housing at their construction site. The prototype has been designed with the involvement of students of architecture from the School of Environment and Architecture (SEA), Mumbai.

### **Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) / Senior Lead**

Aug 2010 - Dec 2020; Bengaluru

**Capacity Development:** I developed the Urban Practitioners' Programme (UPP), the capacity building function at IIHS, and led it for four years (2017-2020) to reach more than 7,500 public, private, academic and civil society participants from hundreds of cities in 32 states of India. I was responsible for portfolio, partner and

revenue diversification and had creative control on course design, management and (in-person and online) delivery. I built, led and mentored a dozen-strong capacity building team at IIHS and demonstrated the impact of our training programmes at scale.

- Capacity building programmes for nearly 2,500 municipal and state leadership and middle management, on regional and town planning, engineering for public health, basic services in urban areas and affordable housing, under Central government schemes such as the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) and the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U), as well as state programs on Land Use Planning and Management sponsored by GIZ India (Tamil Nadu).
- Capacity building programmes for hundreds of All-India Service (IAS, etc.) officers on urban development, basic services, housing and land records management in urban areas, as part of their career-linked training programmes under the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) and the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA).
- Cross-cutting programmes for a diverse set of researchers and practitioners from the public, private and civil society sectors on research methods, data analysis and data visualization for the development sector, with a focus on geospatial data.
- Upgrade programmes on town planning, land and housing for Community-based Organizations (CBO) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGO); on SDGs for school students; and on disaster resilience leadership for entrepreneurs and civil society.
- Admissions, academic and assessment procedures for IIHS' 9-month interdisciplinary Urban Fellowship Programme (UFP); co-anchored the fellowship's Housing Policy and Practice module.

**Research and Housing Policy Support:** I co-led the housing team at IIHS from its inception. I led several research and policy advisory projects on slum development, affordable housing, rental housing and environmental sustainability for diverse clients and donors. Several of these studies included suggestions on institutional development for housing delivery.

- Formulation of suggestions to the National Rental Housing Policy framework with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, for the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India.
- Drafting a major revision of the Karnataka Affordable Housing Policy, 2016 and the formulation of the Karnataka Slum Areas Development Policy, 2016, for the Government of Karnataka.
- Process maps and pilot implementation for community-led slum upgrading programmes under the JAGA mission of the Government of Odisha, with a focus on ease of procurement and implementation.
- Knowledge partnership on the policy pillar of the Sustainable Housing Leadership Consortium, with the International Finance Corporation (IFC).
- Study on sustainable municipal finance in small towns in Karnataka and studies on the feasibility of Central and state government housing schemes in Bengaluru's housing submarkets, for the Government of Karnataka.

- Data-driven, comparative and case-based studies on the commercial viability of national housing schemes such as the Affordable Rental Housing Complex (ARHC) scheme and *In-situ* Slum Redevelopment (ISSR) vertical of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U) in Indian cities.

**Architecture and Design Practice:** I started and led the Design Lab at IHS that works at the intersection of design and the development sector. I was responsible for design leadership and the development of design implementation frameworks for enhanced public service delivery.

- Evidence-based process redesign and architectural revamp of the Out-patient Departments (OPD) and Emergency Departments (ED) of 10 District Hospitals in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Our suggestion for the incorporation of 'filter clinics' to streamline patient load was implemented in several hospitals.
- Guidelines for the development of Primary Health Centres (PHC), Community Health Centres (CHC) and Auxiliary Nurse and Midwife (ANM) Sub-centres for the Government of Karnataka, incorporating climate-responsiveness and incremental retrofit process flows.
- Guidelines for the development of Covid Care Centres (CCC) and Dedicated Covid Health Centres (DCHC) in resource-constrained settings.
- Strategic and physical development plan for the Tamil Nadu Institute for Urban Studies (TNIUS), Coimbatore, integrating programmatic, physical infrastructure and financial phasing.

### **Architecture/Design Consultant and Faculty / Independent Practitioner**

Jun 2000 - Jul 2010; Various Locations

I led and supported projects on architecture, art and design. These were residential, industrial, institutional and art installation projects. I was a core and visiting faculty at several architecture schools.

- Architecture and design advisor to Tokai Rubber Auto-parts India Pvt. Ltd.; I advised the company on land acquisition from the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) and assisted in the design and development of their key manufacturing unit, along with several warehouses and office spaces in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Independent residential buildings, apartment buildings and institutional campuses for several clients in Delhi and Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Architecture design studios at Sushant School of Art and Architecture, Gurugram, BMS College of Engineering (Dept. of Architecture), Bengaluru and the School of Planning and Architecture, Vijayawada.
- Art direction and support for design and art studios, as well as film and television productions.

## Publications, Articles and Media

Harish, S., Nalla, V., Ranjit, N., & Satish, N. (n.d.). [Landlordism, Social Relations and Built-form in Informal Private Rental Housing Markets in India](#). Journal of Housing and the Built Environment, Forthcoming.

Harish, S., & Raveendran, S. (2023). [In situ redevelopment of slums in Indian cities: Closing a rent gap?](#) Housing Studies, 1–25.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2023.2180494>

Harish, S. (2021). [Affordable rental housing complexes and private rental housing in indian cities](#). Economic and Political Weekly, LVI(16).

Harish, S., & Lala, R. (2020, May 6). [Rent control amidst pandemic](#). The Hindu.

Harish, S. (2019, October). [Building the next superpower: India's urban growth](#). Domus Italy.

Harish, S., & Vasudev, E. (2019, Oct 1). [Housing crisis, untouched](#). The Hindu.

Harish, S. (2019). [Urban development, housing and 'slums.'](#) In O. Goyal & S. Patel (Eds.), The Contemporary Urban Conundrum. Routledge.

Harish, S. (2016). [Public social rental housing in India: opportunities and challenges](#). Economic and Political Weekly, 51(5).

Harish, S. (2016, Dec 16). [Mind the gap: Indian cities need 18 million houses – even as nine million houses lie vacant](#). scroll.in.

Harish, S. (2015). [Case study on the MMRDA Rental Housing Scheme](#). IIHS and Rockefeller Foundation.

Harish, S. (2015). [Making rental housing work: a case for slum households and ULBs](#). Administrator, 65(2).

Harish, S., Bhan, G., Arakali, A., Deb, A., & Anand, G. (2014). [Exclusions in access to urban housing](#). In Center for Equity Studies (Ed.), India Exclusion Report 2013-14. Books for Change.

Harish, S., Bhan, G., & Anand, G. (2014). [Policy approaches to affordable housing in urban India: problems and possibilities](#). IIHS and Rockefeller Foundation.

Harish, S. (2009). [Dholavira: ancient water harnessing system](#). Context - Built, Living and Natural, VI(1).

[Short films and visual archives] [Public housing typologies in Mysore, Karnataka](#) ([link](#)), [Rental housing in India](#) ([link](#)), [Medieval rainwater management systems in six cities of Rajasthan](#) ([link](#)) and [Housing Research Archive of the Tacit Urban Research Network \(TURN\) project](#) ([link](#)).

## Education and Fellowships

**Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA)** / Visiting Fellow  
Oct 2012 - Jan 2013; TU Delft and OTB Institute, Netherlands

**School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi** / B. Arch  
Aug 1995 - May 2000; New Delhi