

‘Realities of the Urban Poor’

A National Seminar

Organised by St. Xavier’s Social Service Society(SXSSS), Ahmedabad

November 28 & 29, 2026

A Concept Note

India is currently witnessing rapid urbanization and some of the States have almost become ‘urban’ states. Government policies also promote unbridled urbanization. Gujarat is one such state where the urban population has grown to 48-50% (NITI Ayog Report on Gujarat, 2025). The major focus of this ‘urbanisation’ is infrastructural development; this has impacted adversely on the poor. Large scale slum eviction, lack of access to adequate housing, little or no access to basic amenities like education, health care, safe drinking water, employment, are some of the major issues faced by the urban poor. There are certainly several policy interventions and schemes which have been introduced by the Government of India and by State governments to address urban poverty, housing, education and health; however, significant gaps remain in their implementation, participation, and accessibility. There are critical questions of inclusive urban planning, housing rights, access to basic services, livelihood security, and democratic participation which are central to contemporary urban debates.

St. Xavier’s Social Service Society (SXSSS), Ahmedabad **completes fifty years** since its establishment in October 1976. Accompanying the urban poor to a more just, equitable, fraternal and humane society is the *forte* of SXSSS. In this context, SXSSS is planning a two-days **National Seminar on ‘Realities of the Urban Poor’** to critically engage with the changing nature of urban poverty and exclusion in India. The seminar will be held in Ahmedabad on November 28 & 29, 2026.

The seminar aims to bring together researchers, academics, urban planners, policymakers, development practitioners, civil society organizations, community representatives, concerned citizens and other stake-holders to deliberate upon the structural realities of urban poverty and to explore pathways towards more inclusive, just and humane societies.

We invite you to participate in this National Seminar and also to present a paper.

Themes of the Seminar include:

- The changing nature of the urban poor
- The impact on the urban poor due to top-down planning models, insensitive policies, and mega development projects
- Access to basic services: housing, water, sanitation, health, education, and transport
- Social inequalities, displacement, migration, and exclusion
- Livelihoods: informal economy, and labour vulnerabilities
- Pathways towards Inclusive, Sustainable, and Just Cities
- Other relevant issues related to urbanisation and its impact on the poor

✚ Expected Outcomes:

- Publishing an edited volume (with an ISBN number) of selected complete papers.
- Developing a network and resource directory of researchers, practitioners, civil society organizations, and institutions working on urban issues.
- Initiating an on-going dialogue between academia, policymakers, grassroots organizations and other stake-holders on urban poverty and inclusion.

✚ Guidelines for the submission of complete papers:

➤ Kindly Note: *if you are willing to present a paper then,*

- An ABSTRACT of your paper (NOT exceeding **500 words**) should be submitted
- The Abstract should include the outline of the paper.
- The first page of the Abstract should contain the title of the paper, keywords, name of the author(s), institutional affiliation, address (including street address, email, mobile number).
- Additionally, (NOT exceeding **100 words**) a CV of the author/s must be included
- Complete papers should not exceed **5,000 words**
- Abstracts and Papers must be submitted in MS Word format
- Formatting: A4 size, 1-inch margin, Times New Roman, font size 12, line spacing 1.5
- References should follow EPW / APA citation style
- The papers submitted will go through a professional review process
- Only those papers which meet the criteria/focus of the Seminar will be accepted
- Authors of those papers will be formally invited to the Seminar and provided to & fro 2AC Rail fare, besides simple board and lodge during the two days of the Seminar

✚ Significant Dates and Deadlines:

- Last Date for Submission of abstract: **Saturday, 24 July 2026**
- Communication regarding acceptance: **Saturday, 1 August 2026**
- Last Date for Submission of complete paper: **Wednesday, 30 September 2026**
- National Seminar: **Saturday, 28 and Sunday, 29 November 2026**

✚ Contact for submission of abstracts/papers and further details:

Dr. Mukesh Lakum

SXSSS National Seminar Coordinator

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