

ANJANA MURALI | Dr.Priyanjali Prabhakaran

Planning for Healthy Cities: Approaches to Strengthen Active Living in Kollam City

Planning for healthy city is very important to improve community health by shaping the environments where people live, work, and play. Globally about 23% of adults and 81% of adolescents (aged 11- 17 years) do not meet WHO recommendations on physical activity for health (World Health Organisation, 2019). Regular physical activity is a necessary factor to prevent the leading non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and also improve mental health, quality of life and well-being.

The focus of this study is on the application of detailed framework developed for the domain- Active living. Active living is identified as one among six domains derived from various literature studies (active living, healthy food system, social cohesion, health status, environmental exposure and emergency response) to evaluate a healthy city. For the application of framework developed, an area is selected and assessed on different scale (city level, neighbourhood level and on individual scale) so as to evaluate the level of physical activity and built environment conditions provided for sub-domains derived for planning for active living- active transportation, walkability/ bicycle friendly, recreation and safety.

Kollam city is selected for the application, because of its highest prevalence of non-communicable diseases in the wards (Asramam and Uliyakovil), mainly due to lack of physical inactivity as reported by the National Health Mission of Kollam and Kollam Urban Primary Health Centres in 2018-2019. The assessment of the area involves data collected from secondary source as well as from primary study, which includes a questionnaire survey to understand the level of physical activity among randomly selected 180 respondents in the ward. The study intends to identify challenges and opportunities to provide supportive built environments that encourage physical activity among individuals in the area.

Accordingly, the study suggests necessary interventions/ recommendations to be done at city level, neighbourhood level and at ward level so as to support physical activity that can strengthen active living in Kollam.

Keywords: *Healthy city, physical activity, active living, non-communicable diseases, framework.*