



EDITORIAL

Urban India, with its teeming cities and ever-growing towns, is in the crosshairs of a worsening crisis caused by a confluence of factors: heat stress, the double whammy of flooding and water scarcity, diminishing green cover, and inadequate infrastructure. The malevolent manifestations of climate change can be blamed for much of this, abetted as they are by failings of a very human kind.

The people hit hardest by our urban woes are those least equipped to cope with them — the poor and the marginalised. Our cover story details how a clutch of programmes, supported by the Tata Trusts and implemented by our partners, is easing the burden of working and living for the urban poor. Operational in seven states, these programmes cover heat stress, water availability and, perhaps most importantly, enabling the urban underprivileged to become climate resilient.

India's cities and towns are also the main deal in our interview segment, where Debolina Kundu, director of the New Delhi-based National Institute of Urban Affairs, explains how we can make the country's urban spaces more habitable. Dr Kundu dispels the notion of a rapidly urbanising India, while offering insights on issues ranging from slums to the collective responsibility of citizens (a word that originally meant city-dweller).

Rural India is the focus in this edition's Centre Stage section, which explores how village communities in Rajasthan are restoring their 'commons' — a term that refers to natural and other shared resources — while fuelling systemic change and giving women the agency to make a difference. From Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, we feature a story with women again at the forefront, this time in an animal husbandry effort that is paving the way to financial well-being.

Also in the current edition of *Horizons* are a fellowship initiative that is helping women and children in Karnataka and Bihar secure legal rights and access government schemes, and an excellent Tata Trusts campaign aimed at understanding and managing dementia, a condition that casts a shadow over patients as well as their families. Additionally, we have a piece on the potential of a path-breaking detection tool that diagnoses vector-borne diseases at a lower cost, and a plea on behalf of animals distressed by heatwaves. Unlike us humans, they don't have a voice.

Christabelle Narasimha

We hope you will help us make Horizons better with your valuable feedback. Please do write to us at horizons@tatatrusters.org.