

**URBAN
SH/FT**

TRANSFORMING CITIES FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

**Annual Report
2023–2024**



CONTENTS

1	FOREWORD.....	4
2	INTRODUCTION	6
	Financing the Cities of the Future.....	8
	Cities Leading the Way.....	10
	UrbanShift's Approach	12
	Supporting Global Urban Movements..	14
	Areas of Focus.....	16
	Gender & Inclusion	18
	Year in Review	20
3	LOCAL PROJECTS	22
	Argentina	24
	Brazil	26
	Costa Rica	30
	Morocco.....	32
	Rwanda	36
	Sierra Leone.....	38
	India.....	40
	China.....	42
	Indonesia.....	44
4	GLOBAL PLATFORM.....	48
5	MONITORING & EVALUATION	70
7	GLOSSARY	86
8	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	87

UrbanShift supports cities around the world to adopt integrated approaches to urban development, building an equitable, zero-carbon future where both people and planet can thrive. Funded by the Global Environment Facility and led by the UN Environment Programme, UrbanShift is implemented in partnership with the World Resources Institute, C40 Cities, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the UN Development Programme, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

FOREWORD



CLAUDE GASCON

*Director of Strategy and Operations,
Global Environment Facility*

Cities are the greatest lever we have for transforming our world and meeting our critical global goals around reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving biodiversity, putting an end to pollution and building climate resilience. The good news is that they are rising to the challenges of meeting these goals with leadership, ambition and action on the ground.

One essential element for achieving this transformation is finance. As estimated by various studies the financing gap in building net-zero, nature-positive and pollution free cities is huge. Long term and large-scale investments need to flow from multiple sources and to cities directly to meet their priorities. Additionally, policy coherence at both national and city levels is necessary to incentivize sustainable solutions and prevent investments that lock in carbon and cause nature loss.

Toward this, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is working closely with cities, national governments, and partners in creating enabling environment for the flow of finance to cities. As the financing mechanism of multiple environmental conventions, the GEF is blending various finances meant for climate change, biodiversity, sustainable land management and pollution reduction, and channeling them to cities through its Sustainable Cities program, UrbanShift.

Our dedicated grant funding to more than 50 cities in 17 countries to date has supported a range of innovative sustainability solutions in cities from integrated land use planning to investing in urban biodiversity and decarbonization solutions across various urban sectors. Through our global platform, which convenes cities and global experts, we have been continuously building technical capacity and facilitating cross learning for accessing large scale financing and designing innovative financing solutions. An example of this is through the UrbanShift Finance Academy series including the one held in Belem, Brazil, this year as part of the Latin American Region Forum. These academies take a proactive approach in closing the financing gap for sustainability solutions in cities by sharing new approaches, linking cities with potential investors, and discussing policy solutions to address barriers to accessing finance.

Our growing experience of financing urban transformation shows that cities must be empowered to access the finance they need to ensure transformative projects take root. In this regard, urban climate finance must be integrated to ensure that cities can invest in transformative solutions that are integrated, inclusive and impactful. To advance this, in the GEF-8 cycle, more than 40 additional cities from 20 countries will be supported with new GEF grant financing of USD 170 million and expected co-financing of nearly USD 1 billion from partners. This further reflects the growing consensus around the vital role of cities in meeting global goals. And most importantly, they represent real, on-the-ground transformation waiting to be unlocked.

As shown by this latest report, UrbanShift is working to accelerate innovation and resilience in cities and laying the foundation for much more to come. There is clearly scope for harnessing this opportunity to maximize scale and ambition in advancing urban sustainability. As we conclude the fourth year of UrbanShift, we are more energized than ever by the power of cities.



RUTH ZUGMAN DO COUTTO

*Deputy Director of Climate Change Division,
UN Environment Programme*

This year was marked by an alarming acceleration of climate impacts, with urban areas around the world experiencing unprecedented challenges. Record-breaking temperatures, intense storms, droughts and wildfires have become the new normal. Cities stand on the front lines of this triple planetary crisis, not only as pivotal contributors but also as key players in steering the world toward a sustainable future.

Amidst global turmoil and geopolitical division, local and subnational governments have ramped up their efforts to tackle the triple planetary crisis of climate, pollution and biodiversity loss as well as to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UrbanShift is at the forefront of this movement, focusing on how cities can act more effectively and rapidly through a more integrated approach.

As we reflect on the fourth year of the UrbanShift program, we celebrate progress made by 23 local projects across nine

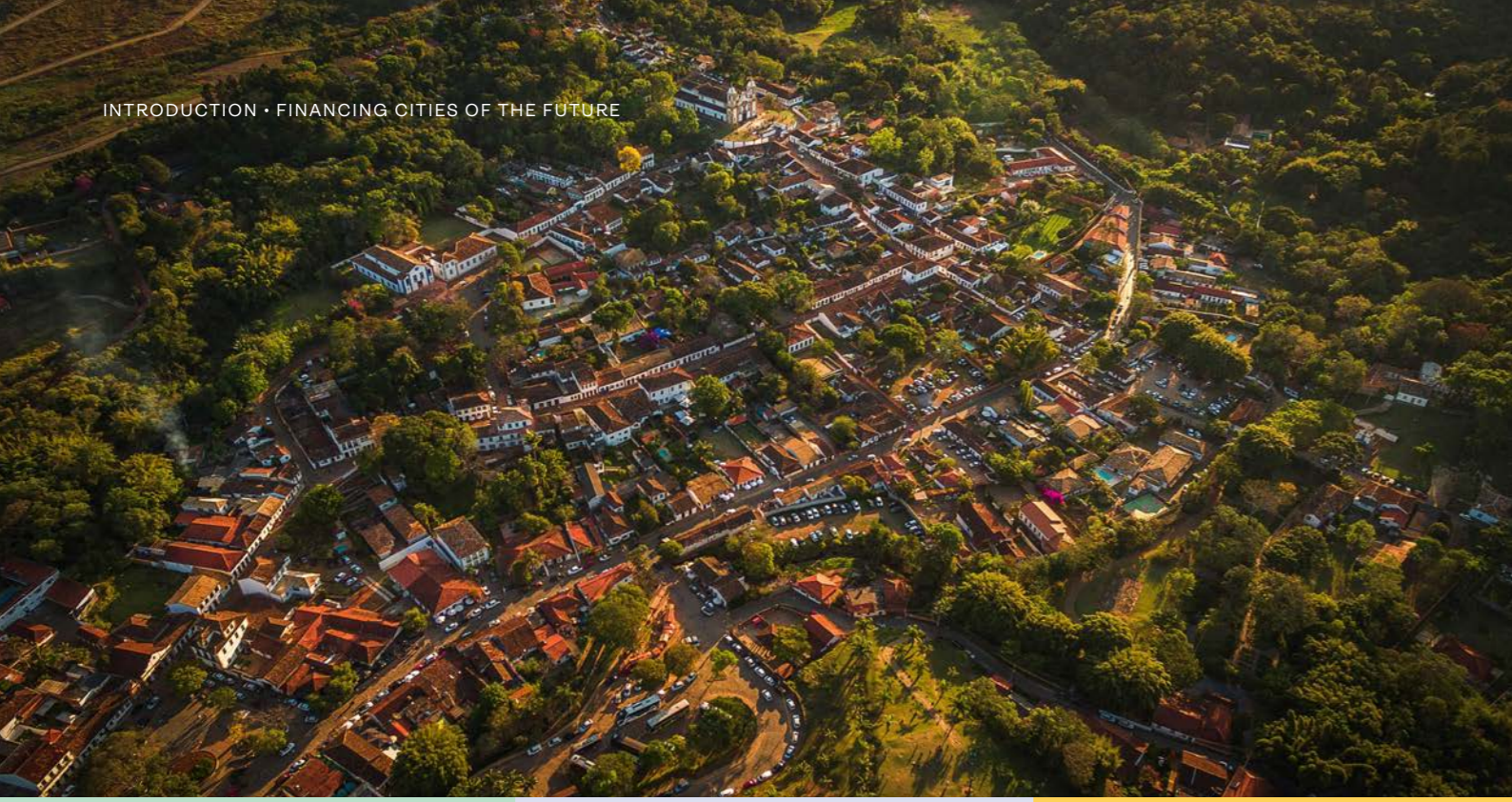
countries, from planning to action and, in many cases, to comprehensive monitoring and evaluation. UrbanShift's global platform has supported these cities by organizing a wide range of in-person and online activities. A major highlight was the UrbanShift Latin America Forum, which coincided with growing regional momentum in Latin America and catalyzed urban transformation ahead of the G20, Biodiversity COP16 and Climate COP30.

Despite these achievements, much work remains. The necessary financial support for cities to address the triple planetary crisis is still lacking. As the implementing lead of UrbanShift, UNEP is proud to have delivered stronger analytics and advocacy, contributing to a more enabling environment that empowers local and subnational governments to act. This year, we have gained strong visibility by having a mayor speak at the 6th UN Environment Assembly's (UNEA 6) opening plenary, emphasizing the importance of multi-level governance in delivering on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and other global frameworks. We also supported the growing movement toward unlocking finance for cities to drive sustainable development.

We are proud of our close partnership with the GEF, WRI, C40, ICLEI, ADB, World Bank and UNDP, which has contributed significantly to UrbanShift's successes. We look forward to continuing this important work with even more cities during the GEF-8 period, accelerating sustainable urban transformation to outpace the intensification of the triple planetary crisis.

INTRODUCTION





FINANCING THE CITIES OF THE FUTURE



By 2050, 2/3 of the world's population will live in cities



70% of global emissions come from cities



4:1 rate of return for investing in climate-resilient infrastructure



\$5.4 trillion: Annual investments needed for sustainable and resilient urban infrastructure



1%: The portion of needed climate finance that cities are currently receiving

To achieve UrbanShift's mission of advancing integrated and sustainable approaches to urban planning, unlocking climate finance is essential. Finance is the key to transforming our cities and reaching the global goals to keep the climate crisis in check. UrbanShift advocates for closing the urban climate finance gap while working directly with cities and countries to overcome barriers to accessing funding so we can create vibrant and equitable cities where:



OUR MISSION

Transforming cities for people and the planet through integrated approaches to urban development

OUR VISION

Fostering a movement of cities to lead the transition toward a resilient, inclusive, zero-carbon urban future

CITIES LEADING THE WAY

\$436 million
in grant funding

33 countries

91 cities

\$5.4 billion
of co-financing

GEF-6	GEF-7	GEF-8
11 countries 28 cities	9 countries 23 cities	20 countries 46 cities



Countries participating in more than one cycle are listed according to the most recent cycle.



URBANSHIFT'S APPROACH

In its fourth year of the program, UrbanShift scaled up its two-pillar approach to advancing integrated urban planning approaches through on-the-ground engagement with cities and capacity-strengthening across the sector, built around eight essential focus areas which collectively reflect best practices for creating sustainable, equitable and livable cities.

LOCAL PROJECTS

UrbanShift's implementing agencies – the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), World Bank, UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) – engage with national governments, local officials and urban practitioners in the GEF-7 cities to plan and execute cross-cutting solutions that address multiple urban issues and enable the shift towards resilient, zero-carbon development.

See chapter 3, "Local Projects," page 22

GLOBAL PLATFORM

UrbanShift's capacity-building activities, led by World Resources Institute, C40 Cities, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and UNEP, connect cities with global expertise and cutting-edge research in the field of integrated urban development, as well as vital opportunities to network and learn from each other and leaders in the space.

See chapter 4, "Global Platform," page 48.

OBJECTIVES



Mitigate 174 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent

Carbon sequestered by Costa Rican forests in 18 years



Manage & restore more than 1.2 million hectares of land

Seven times the size of Delhi



Improve the lives of 40.8 million people

Greater than the total population of Morocco

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



GOAL 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



GOAL 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



GOAL 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



GOAL 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation



GOAL 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



GOAL 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



GOAL 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

SUPPORTING THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR RESILIENT CITIES

Cities are at the forefront of the global environmental challenge. By 2050, two-thirds of the world’s population is projected to live in urban areas, intensifying the pressures on natural resources, exacerbating pollution and escalating GHG emissions. However, cities also hold immense potential to shape a low-carbon, nature-positive future. UrbanShift is a crucial player in this landscape, aligning with and enhancing other global efforts to transform urban spaces.

Alongside these efforts, UrbanShift fills critical technical gaps, forges connections between cities and other stakeholders and leverages resources to ensure that cities can develop and scale impactful projects. UrbanShift’s success hinges on the strength of its partnerships. By collaborating with a diverse range of partners, UrbanShift not only mobilizes additional resources but also fosters a shared sense of ownership and commitment to sustainable urban development. On this page, explore more in-depth how UrbanShift is complementing global urban sustainability efforts.



SUPPORTING NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity loss poses significant challenges for cities as they face increasing climate-related risks. However, cities can leverage nature-based solutions (NBS) to enhance resilience by protecting and restoring urban ecosystems like forests, wetlands and green spaces. This not only mitigates climate impacts such as flooding and heat but also improves biodiversity, creating healthier urban environments.

UrbanShift encourages its network of cities to participate in initiatives that support and uplift urban biodiversity. For example, Mendoza, Argentina, has joined **Generation Restoration Cities**, part of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and is using NBS to restore urban ecosystems, addressing challenges like air quality, climate change and job creation. And Chengdu, China, is part of the ICLEI-led **CitiesWithNature** initiative, amplifying its efforts to become a nature-filled “park city,” which UrbanShift is supporting.

Biodiversity and urban nature are also core elements of UrbanShift’s City Academy courses and other capacity-building offers, for which we partner with initiatives like **Cities4Forests** to pull in expertise from across this rich landscape. The value of these partnerships and trainings is already becoming evident in UrbanShift projects like Kigali’s expansive wetland restoration effort (read more on page 37).

COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

UrbanShift supports and enhances a number of global initiatives aimed at urban climate change mitigation. For example, UrbanShift’s efforts to promote distributed clean energy generation, zero-carbon freight, low emission busses and clean air zones through our various Finance Academies and Investor Roundtables support cities in reducing their carbon footprints, thereby advancing the objectives of the Paris Agreement and contributing to the global goal of limiting temperature rise to below 2°C. In line with the **Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP)** initiative, launched at COP28, UrbanShift recognizes and promotes the value of collaboration between national and local governments through its Multi-Level Dialogues to heighten alignment around climate goals. UrbanShift also complements the **Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe)** initiative, launched during COP27, by supporting cities like Chennai, Freetown and Teresina to design, write and publish their climate action plans and contribute to SURGe’s objectives to accelerate local climate action.

MITIGATING EXTREME HEAT

Recognizing that cities are on the frontline of a global extreme heat crisis, UrbanShift supports efforts to tackle extreme urban heat in several ways. We empower cities to sign onto global commitments like the **Subnational Cooling Pledge**, which coordinates and encourages city-level action on heat. So far, Teresina, Brazil, and Freetown, Sierra Leone, from the UrbanShift network have joined. Through our Geospatial Data Dashboard (read more on page 58) we equip our network of cities with actionable data they can explore to assess heat hazards, plan mitigation scenarios and consider other potential solutions. Lastly, our capacity-building activities, from City Academy courses to webinars—especially this past years’ on extreme urban heat in cities (read more on page 69)—inform city practitioners on proven heat mitigation approaches, from strategic shade and greening to passive building design and encourage network building across contexts to create a community of practice.



“UrbanShift’s emphasis on knowledge and capacity-building aims to create a ripple effect, enabling cities to learn from each other’s

experiences and adapt best practices to their unique contexts. In collaboration with the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) and the Urban Nature Program, both also supported by the Global Environment Facility’s Sustainable Cities Program, UrbanShift fosters a global community of practice where cities can exchange ideas, tools and strategies for sustainable urban development.

ALOKE BARNWAL
THEMATIC LEAD – URBAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY



Integrated Climate Action Planning

Supporting cities to increase their climate commitments and develop climate action plans to achieve climate neutrality and resilience by 2050 in alignment with national policies and international frameworks.



Accessing Urban Climate Finance

Strategies for cities to attract investment from the private sector, international financial institutions and development banks for climate- and mitigation-related infrastructure projects.



Integrated Climate Action Planning

Supporting cities to increase their climate commitments and develop climate action plans to achieve climate neutrality and resilience by 2050 in alignment with national policies and international frameworks.



Circular Economy Strategies for Sustainable Development

An economic framework in which materials and resources are continuously cycled to rebuild natural capital and restore the value of used products while reducing pollution and creating green jobs.



Nature-Based Solutions

Cost-effective and resource-efficient approaches – such as planting trees, greening roofs and restoring wetlands – that use nature to increase a city's capacity to respond to natural disasters.



Urban Biodiversity

Data-driven practices like habitat restoration and wildlife-friendly infrastructure that protect species and ecological systems within and around cities, providing physical, cultural and spiritual benefits to urban residents.



Green & Thriving Neighborhoods

Integrated urban planning at a smaller scale, using flexible, people-centered approaches to create safe, compact and vibrant neighborhoods that reduce the need for travel across cities and strengthen the sense of community.



Accommodating Urban Growth

Planning mechanisms to provide housing, infrastructure and services for future residents through transit-oriented development, densification and conservation.



Cities have a unique opportunity to transform our environment and enhance the well-being of citizens through innovative and integrated sustainability solutions. UrbanShift recognizes that many challenges that cities face are interconnected—and that mobilizing finance is key to unlocking progress against them.

ASHER LESSELS
HEAD (A.I.), GEF MITIGATION UNIT,
UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

ADVANCING GENDER EQUITY THROUGH ACCELERATING CLIMATE FINANCE

The evidence is clear: the climate crisis is not gender neutral. As climate-change-related instability intensifies, women are increasingly subject to conflict and its externalities. Because women are disproportionately represented in informal and care sectors, they are among the most vulnerable to resource fluctuations and extreme weather events. Longstanding and deeply rooted economic, social and cultural inequities mean that women are underrepresented in government bodies, financial institutions and key sectors and consequently have less of a voice in shaping the policies that could mitigate these challenges.

Amid the climate crisis, those closest to the challenges also hold the most effective solutions. Yet women are often locked out of the climate finance systems that could catalyze the transformative changes that our cities and societies need to become more resilient. The vast majority of climate finance deals do not apply a gender lens to their structure, and women-led mitigation and adaptation projects struggle to access the capital needed to scale and generate broad impact. The underrepresentation of women in leadership and key urban sectors deprives cities of a dual opportunity to overcome gender inequity and improve climate resilience.

Numerous studies demonstrate that when women are included in leadership roles, their collaborative and participatory approach to decision-making results in more effective, equitable and sustainable outcomes. In cities, women are often tuned in to the needs of their communities and consequently are effective at organizing around solutions for resilience. Women are also often more adept at integrating climate goals into decision-making. As governments and financial institutions work to resolve the climate finance gap facing cities, it's imperative that they apply a strong gender lens to this effort. Both governments and financial institutions must make a concerted effort to elevate the leadership and perspectives of women. Cities must focus on developing programs that explicitly and effectively address challenges facing the most vulnerable and at risk, and directly support projects led by women and vulnerable people. Although financial institutions and governments are beginning to consider

gender in their climate financing decisions, it remains challenging for women to access financial resources, credit and investment opportunities—especially those in the Global South countries. By targeting grants, loans and investment opportunities specifically toward the needs of women-led climate initiatives, institutions and governments can amplify their impact and invite future innovation.

Across the UrbanShift network, we're seeing the potential of women-led efforts to drive resilience and transformation in cities. In Marrakech, for example, the woman-founded company Pikala is elevating the bicycle as a carbon-neutral way to experience the city, and alongside offering cycling tours of Marrakech, the company offers free cycling lessons to women to empower them and open up new opportunities. And in Belém, Brazil, women-led sustainable agriculture businesses are powering the city's burgeoning bioeconomy (read more on page 28).

As financial institutions and governments work toward integrating gender equity considerations into developing and funding projects, UrbanShift is elevating the critical role that women play in urban resilience and ensuring that women have access to resources, capacity building and connections within the sector to accelerate their efforts. To build truly sustainable and equitable cities, women at every level—from the community to government leadership—must be listened to, resourced and empowered. It is only when we make our systems more inclusive and representative that our cities and our planet will be all the stronger for this effort.



YEAR IN REVIEW

UrbanShift’s fourth year focused on accelerating capacity-building and collaboration around closing urban climate finance gaps and strengthening multi-level governance for shared goals. We deepened our partnerships with cities through a wide range of workshops and trainings focused on key urban development themes, while contributing to the growing global momentum to elevate the role of cities in fighting the climate crisis. This impactful year (marked from October 1, 2023 through October 1, 2024) spanned COP28 in Dubai, the UrbanShift Latin America Forum in Belém and many targeted, capacity-building events for city and country leaders.

-  Webinar
-  Virtual event
-  Local project
-  In-person event



NOVEMBER 22, 2023
Unlocking Africa’s Urban Potential: Improving Informal Settlements Through Sustainable Planning

DECEMBER 1, 2023
UrbanShift at COP28: Connecting Climate Change and Urban Development in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

DECEMBER 12, 2023
Towards Clean Air for All in Latin American Cities: The Importance of an Integrated Approach

NOVEMBER 21-22, 2023
UrbanShift Lab on Metropolitan Planning and Climate Action in Florianópolis, Brazil

FEBRUARY 13-16, 2024
City Academy in Marrakech, Morocco

FEBRUARY 20-21, 2024
C40 City-Business Climate Alliance Workshop in Cape Town, South Africa

OCTOBER 10-13, 2023
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Sustainable Energy Solutions in Accra and Kumasi, Ghana

OCTOBER 17-19, 2023
Clean Transport Finance Academy in San José, Costa Rica

OCTOBER 17, 2023:
UrbanShift at World Forum on Urban Forests: Leveraging Urban Biodiversity & Forests to Create Inclusive and Equitable Cities in Washington, D.C., USA

NOVEMBER 20, 2023
Brazil National-Local Dialogue in Florianópolis, Brazil

JUNE 26-27, 2024
UrbanShift Lab: Using Geospatial Analysis and Indicators to Prioritize Greenspace Expansion and Enhance Urban Biodiversity in Marrakech, Morocco

MAY 28, 2024
China City-Business Collaboration Accelerator (CIBIX) Workshop in Chengdu, China

MAY 21, 2024
UrbanShift Partnership Engagement Group Meeting

APRIL 16-19, 2024
UrbanShift Latin America Forum in Belém, Brazil

FEBRUARY 23, 2024:
UNEA-6 Cities and Regions Summit in Nairobi, Kenya and Online

JULY 10-12, 2024
UrbanShift Energy Finance Academy for Indonesian Cities in Jakarta

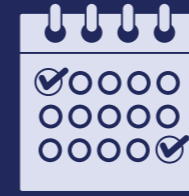
AUGUST 13, 2024
Extreme Urban Heat: Opportunities to Mitigate Risks in Cities

AUGUST 27-29, 2024
City Academy in Jakarta, Indonesia

SEPTEMBER 4, 2024
Addressing Contemporary Challenges in Historic Districts: Strategies for Implementing Clean Air Zones

SEPTEMBER 18, 2024
Mastering the New CDP-ICLEI Track: How to Report on Cities, States and Regions in 2024

SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2024
Peer-to-Peer Exchange for Latin American Cities on People-Centered Urban Climate Resilience in Rotterdam, Netherlands



21
EVENTS



1,939
PEOPLE REACHED



53%
WOMEN PARTICIPANTS

LOCAL PROJECTS



Global progress begins with local action. UrbanShift partners directly with 23 cities across Asia, Africa and Latin America to deeply understand their challenges and develop context-specific solutions that can inspire broad transformation. As Indian and Chinese cities grapple with extreme heat and the threat and reality of flooding looms over Brazil and Kenya while Morocco is building back after an earthquake in a context of continuous drought, it's clear that the time to act is now.

However, when working with projects targeting cities and national government, the need for urgency must contend with multiple political and administrative challenges. Elections at various levels of government, in some cases, have led to shifts in priorities and personnel that have created delays and disruptions in project execution. In addition, macroeconomic trends, like inflation, have impacted project financing and implementation. In the face of these challenges, UrbanShift has continued to promote multi-level collaboration, supporting cities to create urban plans and sustainable governance, as well as training technical staff with the objective of advancing integrated and resilient urban development approaches, even in the face of transitions and roadblocks.

ARGENTINA

One of the largest economies in South America, Argentina is home to 46.2 million people, of which 92% live in urban areas.

Working with five cities—Buenos Aires, Mar del Plata, Mendoza, Salta and Ushuaia—UrbanShift aims to accelerate green growth in Argentinian cities, reducing GHG emissions and land degradation and conserving biodiversity. To do this, UrbanShift is supporting cities as they develop long-term visions for sustainable urban growth, while also helping implement near-term pilots like green mobility corridors to address pressing challenges.

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- September 2024**
 Peer-to-Peer Exchange for Latin American Cities on People-Centered Urban Climate Resilience in Rotterdam, Netherlands



“

The Argentina cities project team has demonstrated unwavering dedication to advancing sustainable development and ensuring that all stakeholders, particularly women, benefit directly from its initiatives. The team made remarkable efforts to capitalize on the opportunities provided by the UrbanShift Global Platform, despite the administrative challenges that caused delays in project activities.

PAULA COBAS
 CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION
 PROJECT SPECIALIST,
 UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME



Project Budget
\$207.5 Million

GEF Grant: \$23,447,236
 Co-finance: \$183,575,335



Implemented by
UNEP



Executed by
**National Undersecretariat
 of Environment**



BUENOS AIRES

Population: 13.6 million

With UrbanShift, Buenos Aires is developing interconnected, low-emission green corridors to protect local biodiversity and improve mobility.

Through C40’s Light Touch Technical Assistance, UrbanShift supported Buenos Aires in analyzing funding sources for climate adaptation projects, resulting in roadmaps for accessing these funds.



MAR DEL PLATA

Population: 628,560

In this coastal city, high tourism rates are pressuring urban services while threatening natural ecosystems. Mar del Plata is working with UrbanShift’s support on a sustainable tourism plan for 2050 that protects local ecological reserves while cutting carbon emissions.

Participation in the Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Rotterdam offered city leaders valuable ideas to further these resilience efforts.



MENDOZA

Population: 1 million

As the city grows rapidly, UrbanShift is supporting Mendoza in piloting sustainable city block projects that improve air quality and green spaces.



SALTA

Population: 617,183

With a population projected to nearly double by 2030, sprawl and adequate service provision are concerns. UrbanShift is supporting the city in developing transit-oriented green corridors to improve biodiversity and connectivity.

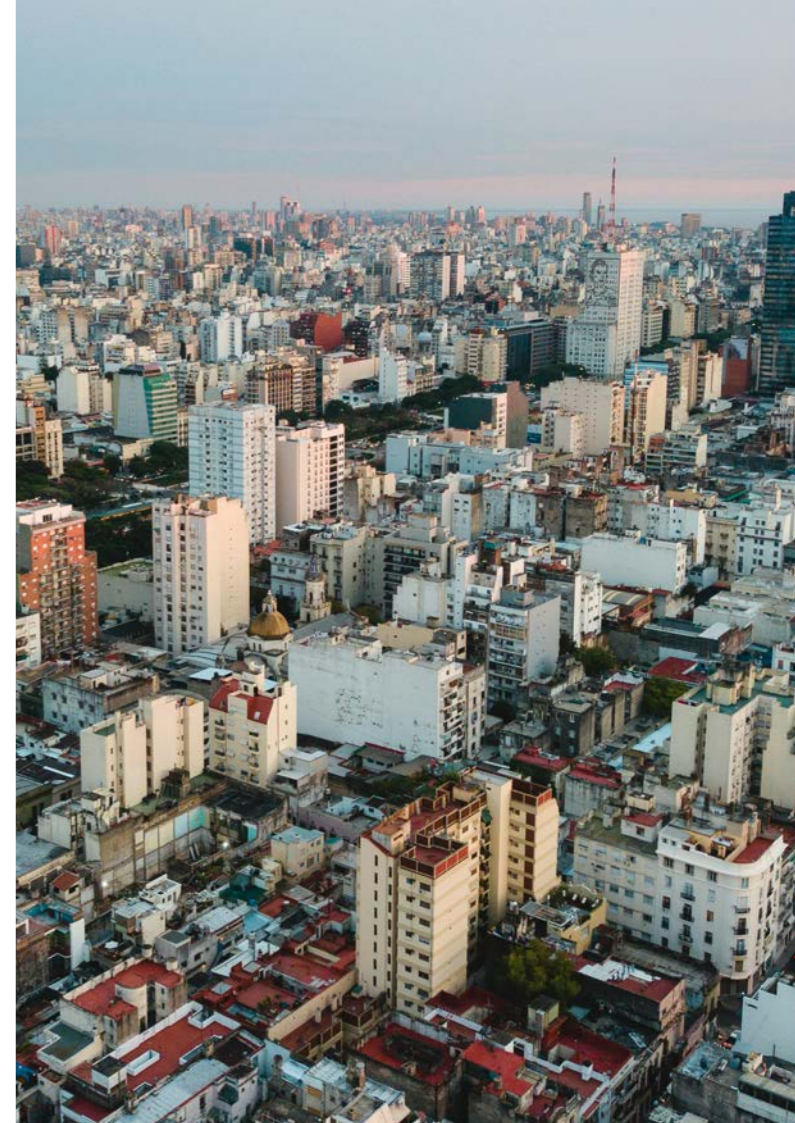
During the Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Rotterdam, Salta presented its plans to participants during the Placemaking Week Europe conference and received input on strategies to strengthen involvement of local businesses and stakeholders.



USHUAIA

Population: 77,260

Rapid population growth, rising tourism, and a cold climate are taxing energy and transportation networks in this southernmost city. To overcome these challenges, UrbanShift is supporting the city in developing a “Sustainable Ushuaia 2050” plan.



“

The connections we built during the UrbanShift Peer-to-Peer Exchange for Latin American Cities in Rotterdam are key to our future work. For instance, we’re eager to maintain contact with Belém to learn more about managing urban green spaces and biodiversity. It’s these relationships that will help us continue developing effective strategies for Salta.

EMILIANO DURAND
 MAYOR OF SALTA

BRAZIL

Brazil is the most biologically diverse country on the planet and the sixth most populous. Of its 212 million inhabitants, 87% reside in urban areas.

Working with Belém, Florianópolis and Teresina, UrbanShift is helping these regions reduce GHG emissions, conserve biodiversity, bolster resilience and improve quality of life for all residents by promoting integrated, data-informed metropolitan planning and supporting local governments with identifying financial resources for project implementation.



Project Budget \$197.34 Million

GEF Grant: \$12,552,440
Co-finance: \$184,789,243



Implemented by UNEP



Executed by Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MCTI), Brazilian Biodiversity Fund (FUNBIO), UNEP

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- **November 2023**
Brazil National-Local Dialogue in Florianópolis
- **November 2023**
UrbanShift Lab on Metropolitan Planning and Climate Action in Florianópolis, Brazil
- **April 2024**
UrbanShift Latin America Forum in Belém, Brazil
- **September 2024**
Peer-to-Peer Exchange for Latin American Cities on People-Centered Urban Climate Resilience in Rotterdam, Netherlands



“The UrbanShift project in Brazil is supporting local projects with capacity building and networking.

Representatives have been able to open up collaboration opportunities with financial institutions through UrbanShift activities and have incorporated knowledge obtained from the project activities into municipal and state initiatives.

LUIZA SCHMIDT
CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION PROJECT SPECIALIST,
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM



“For the CITinova II project in Brazil, UrbanShift has facilitated integration between state and municipal governance that has proven fundamental to our ability to address common issues jointly. I am certain that the fruits of this effort will be very beneficial for our cities.

PALMIRA FRANCISCA GONÇALVES FERREIRA
OFFICER, SECRETARIAT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE STATE OF PARÁ

BELEM METROPOLITAN REGION

Population: 2.5 million

As this Amazonian city faces rapid growth fueled by the local mining, energy and agricultural sectors, UrbanShift is supporting the city in developing approaches that emphasize sustainability, including emissions reduction plans and exploration of urban bioeconomy strategies (read more on the following page).

Belém hosted the UrbanShift Latin America Forum in April 2024.

FLORIANÓPOLIS METROPOLITAN REGION

Population: 1.2 million

As population and tourism growth push the urban edge toward climate-vulnerable coastal areas, UrbanShift is working with the city to develop a socio-environmental zoning strategy that includes low-emission neighborhoods and ecological conservation.

GREATER TERESINA INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT REGION

Population: 1.2 million

Facing issues of extreme heat, pollution and lack of resilient infrastructure, Teresina is working with UrbanShift to develop forward-looking plans to address these challenges in an integrated, gender-sensitive, and equitable way.

Encouraged by its participation in UrbanShift capacity building events, such as the Peer-to-Peer Exchange with Barranquilla, Colombia, in July 2023, Teresina is incorporating an increased focus on nature-based solutions into its development plans. This year, the city piloted its first rain garden and started developing an afforestation plan, as part of a broader greening strategy inspired by UrbanShift.





An Urban Bioeconomy Takes Root in Belém

Departing from the Amazonian city of Belém, Brazil, in a speedboat, it takes around 10 minutes to reach the shores of Combu Island. As the skyline fades into the distance, the lush, green environment of the island comes into view, and time seems to slow down. Along the shores of Combu Island, ribeirinhos—the traditional inhabitants of the Amazon River region—navigate the waters in their own boats, cutting through the thick vegetation that borders the island. For centuries, residents of Combu Island and the surrounding region have lived in concert with the land: fishing the waters and harvesting Amazonian produce like cacao, açai and cupuaçu.

Now, the island's bounty has become its economic engine. Just inland from the docks is the restaurant Saldosa Maloca which, since its founding in 1982, has spurred the island's transformation into a culinary destination and innovation hub. Founded to showcase the diversity and delicacy of the island's natural resources, Saldosa Maloca is showing how consideration for natural ecosystems and what they produce can create the backbone of a thriving and sustainable enterprise. "Forty-two years ago, my parents founded this restaurant," Prazeres Dos Santos, owner of Saldosa Maloca, told UrbanShift. "On an island, you must think circularly; everything is reused here." The restaurant has developed a biodigester that produces biogas from its residues that is then used to cook the food. "It is like a circle," Dos Santos said.

Nearby on the Island, Filha do Combu (Daughter of Combu) takes a similarly thoughtful approach to the production of its chocolate, which has caught the attention of several renowned Brazilian chefs. Since 2006, the tree-to-bar chocolate factory run by a local woman, Izete do Santos Costa, has harvested cacao pods and transformed them into organic chocolate products, employing traditional methods of harvesting and processing the seeds. By keeping all production local and owning the entire production chain, from harvesting to sales, Filha do Combu can ensure its profits stay local and directly benefit the workers and broader community.

Saldosa Maloca and Filha do Combu are just two examples of an Urban Bioeconomy: a paradigm-shifting framework that acknowledges the interdependence of ecosystems, people and climate. During the UrbanShift Latin America Forum, hosted in Belém and focused on strategies to develop and finance more sustainable approaches to urban life, participants were able to visit Combu Island and see how the vision for an urban economy attuned to natural cycles and resources is become a thriving, vibrant reality in the biodiversity-rich Amazon region.

At its core, the idea of a bioeconomy represents a departure from traditional exploitative production models—or the linear take-make-waste system—toward a more



sustainable and circular approach. It hinges around harnessing renewable biological resources, valorizing biowaste and fostering green infrastructure. In biodiverse regions like the Amazon, transitioning to a bioeconomy model should prioritize preserving biodiversity, respecting traditional local knowledge and ensuring equitable distribution of economic benefits. Bioeconomy businesses often focus on utilizing renewable resources and adopting circular economy principles. This can lead to reduced resource consumption, waste generation and environmental impact within urban areas. By promoting resource efficiency, bioeconomy businesses contribute to the sustainability of cities by minimizing their ecological footprint.

To translate the concept of a bioeconomy from an idea to a core part of the local economy, cities and businesses both have a critical role to play. Part of the UrbanShift project in Belém revolves around bringing the concept

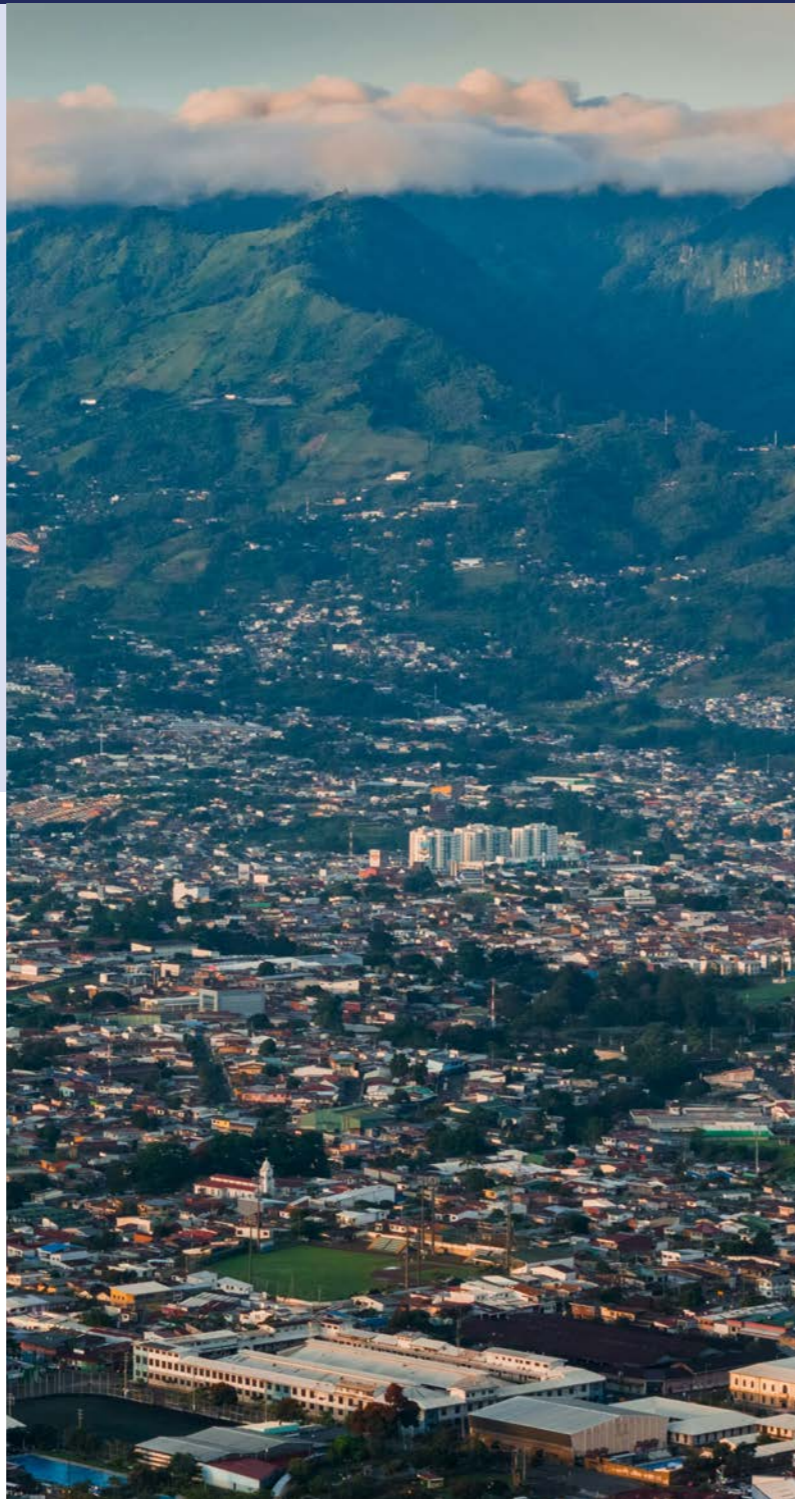
of an urban bioeconomy to life. In the Docas Station, a reimagined industrial district along the city's waterfront that now hosts numerous restaurants and cultural attractions, one of the hotspots is Cairu, which offers a large and unique variety of ice cream flavors infused with ingredients sourced directly from Combu Island. It's a small example, but a powerful illustration of what it means to be able to experience local biodiversity within a city. It's specific, circular and tangible.

The idea of an urban bioeconomy holds enormous potential to right-size the relationship between economic production and natural ecosystems. By placing nature—and the people who depend on it and have stewarded it sustainably for centuries—at the center of businesses, the concept of a bioeconomy can unlock economic potential and support the collective prosperity of communities and the planet at large.

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica is one of the planet’s biodiversity hotspots and a global leader in environmental protection. The country is home to about 5 million people, 80% of whom now live in cities, representing a rapid transformation over the past several decades from a predominantly rural society.

Working across the Metropolitan Area of San José (GAM), UrbanShift is partnering with the Transitioning to a Green Urban Economy (TEVU) project to decarbonize the GAM through fiscal and policy reform, financing circular business models and low-emission mobility projects, restoring green areas and supporting integrated planning efforts.



Project Budget
\$109.44 Million

GEF Grant: \$10,317,970
Co-finance: \$99,131,494

Implemented by
UNDP

Executed by
Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) with Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) leadership

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- October 2023**
Clean Transport Finance Academy for Latin American Cities in San José, Costa Rica
- April 2024**
UrbanShift Latin America Forum in Belém, Brazil
- September 2024**
Peer-to-Peer Exchange for Latin American Cities on People-Centered Urban Climate Resilience in Rotterdam, Netherlands

SAN JOSÉ METROPOLITAN AREA

Population: 2.26 million

As the GAM has rapidly grown, low-density sprawl is encroaching on landscapes and pressuring urban systems. UrbanShift is supporting the TEVU Project’s efforts to transition the GAM to a zero-carbon, nature-positive and circular economy.

Tibás, a municipality in the GAM, is working to improve pedestrian safety and active mobility around a local medical clinic. Incorporating learnings from UrbanShift, the project will also remove asphalt and incorporate nature-based solutions to improve water drainage during heavy rainfall events. The P2P Exchange with Rotterdam offered Costa Rica an opportunity to validate the potential of this approach. “Witnessing the power of small transformations [in the Netherlands] affirmed that we are going in the right direction with our project,” said Mariana Rojas Fernández of OTS.



This past year, the UrbanShift project in Costa Rica, Transitioning to a Green Urban Economy (TEVU), has participated in workshops where we learned about financing alternatives for local projects. Out of these workshops, several municipalities have been able to access seed resources. A highlight for us was the Clean Transport Finance Academy, which exposed how we can access more resources to execute projects.

ALBER MATA MORALES
REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISOR ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE, UNDP

TEVU PROJECT IMPACTS TO DATE



100+ hectares
of urban land rehabilitated



877 tons
of CO₂ avoided through reforestation and carbon reduction efforts



930+ people
including over 500 women, trained in integrated urban planning skills



“The TEVU project is playing a key role in promoting Costa Rica’s decarbonization and sustainable development. This year, the project has focused on developing financing mechanisms to advance active mobility, decarbonization, wetland restoration and repair-related ventures. Through dialogue and negotiations with the local and national elected leaders and the private sector, the project has accelerated electrification of public transport, water treatment and waste management.

MIRIAM MIRANDA
TEVU PROJECT COORDINATOR, ORGANIZATION FOR TROPICAL STUDIES

MOROCCO

The third largest economy in North Africa, Morocco has made enormous strides in recent years to improve the welfare of its residents and implement climate resilience targets, such as curbing greenhouse gas emissions by 45.5% by 2030.

However, economic growth coupled with climate change and rapid urbanization are placing pressure on the country's natural resources. In Morocco, UrbanShift is working in Marrakech to implement planning and policy reforms to support integrated urban planning approaches, reduce emissions, develop innovative climate financing instruments and improve management of green spaces to ensure growth can unfold sustainably.

Project Budget
\$307.97 Million

GEF Grant: \$9,416,167
Co-finance: \$298,556,388

Implemented by
UNDP

Executed by
Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment (MEM),
Department of Environment

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- February 2024**
Marrakech City Academy
- June 2024**
UrbanShift Geospatial Data Lab in Marrakech, Morocco



MARRAKECH

Population: 928,850

As the geographic footprint of Marrakech has expanded 10-fold in the last 35 years, climate change is threatening the city's stability and resources. Water scarcity and extreme temperatures are posing a challenge to daily life and to the city's tourism industry, which makes up a third of the local economy.

UrbanShift is supporting the city in implementing a broad strategy, Marrakech Ville Durable, for sustainable and resilient future development that prioritizes incorporating urban nature-based solutions, addressing water stress and strengthening biodiversity.



“UrbanShift has offered vital support to Marrakech and its stakeholders in our efforts to improve urban planning approaches that are sensitive to biodiversity and ecosystem balance, and which emphasize the use of data for all urban initiatives. From UrbanShift's capacity-building efforts, we have gained a better understanding of approaches to sustainability and we have strengthened the team spirit and commitment to implementing best practices in urban planning among local stakeholders.

KARAM AMZIL
NATIONAL PROJECT COORDINATOR, MARRAKECH VILLE DURABLE PROJECT, UNDP



In a Harsh Climate, Building a Resilient City of Trees

Marrakech, said Karam Amzil, National Project Coordinator for Marrakech Ville Durable, UNDP, “has always been considered a model garden city.” Renowned for its architecture and palm trees, Marrakech, with its 151 parks and green public spaces, knows that its urban biodiversity and vegetation is both a tourism draw and an essential part of life for its residents.

But as climate change intensifies and water scarcity and extreme heat become ever-present challenges in Marrakech, the city is reckoning with how to preserve and expand its rich biodiversity while managing its tightening water resources. Launched officially last year, the UrbanShift project in Marrakech, Marrakech Ville Durable (Sustainable City) centers around a new green framework that emphasizes biodiversity and greening as it charts a new path forward for sustainable development in the city. Tragically delayed by a significant earthquake in the region last September, Marrakech Ville Durable is now moving ahead with the promise to strengthen the city’s resilience.

Since last year, Marrakech has undertaken major urban development and greening initiatives, Amzil said, including planting 14,000 trees across the city and cultivating new urban forests. Due to the city’s growing water stress, Marrakech is emphasizing the planting of native species in this effort, as they demand less water and are more resilient in the face of harsh desert conditions. As the city advances these efforts, UrbanShift is

supporting Marrakech with data tools to map its current green spaces and assess where new trees and vegetation could be added for maximum benefit (read more about how the UrbanShift Geospatial Data Lab in Marrakech kickstarted this effort on page 59). The city is also exploring how to integrate more vegetation into its historical spaces, like the Medina, which are already quite densely developed and under historical preservation ordinances. Where broad planting of new green areas is not possible, Marrakech is considering ways to integrate nature into the existing buildings while respecting the historic character of the district. “The UrbanShift activities in Marrakech have established a collective understanding of the issues we face and approaches we can take, and have provided us with tools and scientific criteria to strengthen our green framework for the city,” Amzil said.

With several key moments for the city on the horizon, including the Africa Cup of Nations in 2025 and the World Cup in 2030, Amzil said that the city is accelerating its efforts to enhance biodiversity and boost both its attractiveness and resilience in the face of mounting heat to improve quality of life for residents and the anticipated swell of visitors. In this effort to green the city and strengthen its resilience, Marrakech envisions a collective process—one that invites the most vulnerable and historically marginalized, including women, into the process to share their expertise and contribute their knowledge and leadership to this monumental effort.



RWANDA

Through the Rwanda Urban Development Project (RUDP II), UrbanShift is working with Kigali along with six secondary cities—Huye, Muhanga, Musanze, Nyagatare, Rubavu and Rusizi—to improve service provision and enhance resilience to climate risks and natural disasters.

With city agencies, UrbanShift is supporting processes to sustainably plan for urban expansion, while encouraging the use of nature-based solutions and natural system rehabilitation to cope with issues like flooding and extreme heat.

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

February 2024
Marrakech City Academy

Project Budget
\$158 Million
GEF Grant: \$8,072,715
Co-finance: \$150,000,000

Implemented by
World Bank

Executed by
Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA), Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA), City Administration of Kigali (CoK)



“ In the UrbanShift project’s secondary cities—Muhanga, Musanze, Huye, Nyagatare, Rubavu and Rusizi—we’ve completed a substantial amount of work in the last year. Under this project, we’ve constructed roads and standalone drainage systems, while adding greening, retention ponds and native trees. All of this is helping reduce property damage and save lives in flood-prone areas. We’re also supporting these cities to achieve their sustainable development goals, like promoting walking and cycling to reduce carbon emissions and fostering healthier, more active communities.

ESTHER B. MUTAMBA
URBAN DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT, WORLD BANK



KIGALI

Population: 1.63 million

Amidst climate-change-induced heat and heavy rainfall, Kigali’s population is growing, pushing hasty and informal development into the hills around the city, resulting in landslides, unsafe conditions, and extreme heat in already vulnerable communities.

UrbanShift is supporting Kigali’s wide-ranging effort to restore five critical wetland areas around the city, which broke ground this year. Following the city’s recent successful rehabilitation of one wetland, Nyandungu, into an eco-park, Kigali is pursuing additional restoration as both an essential climate resilience strategy and a model for spurring economic development via nature-based solutions.



“ **This year, the ground-breaking for five new wetland areas—Gikondo, Rwampara, Rugenge-Rwintare, Kibumba and Nyabugogo—for rehabilitation was a major milestone.**

Rwanda’s Minister of Environment, Dr. Jeanne d’Arc Mujwamariya, led the ground-breaking Umuganda (community service) for the rehabilitation and spoke to the financial benefits, the job opportunities and the environmental and well-being benefits of the projects for residents of Kigali.

HISHAM OSMAN
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
WORLD BANK



SIERRA LEONE

In Sierra Leone, one of the smallest countries in Africa by size, climate change and deforestation pose a risk to the expanding urban fabric and the quality of life for residents.

Through the Resilient Urban Sierra Leone Project (RUSLP), UrbanShift works with Freetown and seven secondary cities—Western Area District, Makeni, Koidu New Sembehun, Kenema, Bo, Port Loko and Bonthe—to improve integrated urban planning and service delivery, while also addressing climate risks through nature-based solutions.

Project Budget
\$56.72 Million

GEF Grant: \$6,727,262
Co-finance: \$50,000,000

Implemented by
World Bank

Executed by
Ministry of Finance,
Freetown City Council (FCC)

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- November 2023**
Webinar on Unlocking Africa's Urban Potential
- February 2024**
Marrakech City Academy



FREETOWN

Population: 1 million

As climate impacts like heat and flooding intensify, rapid population growth has spurred development of informal settlements in risk-prone areas like exposed hills or low-lying coastal areas. To respond to these complex and interconnected challenges, UrbanShift is supporting Freetown to implement nature-based solutions like tree planting to mitigate heat and landslides, while also developing a strategy for cable-car-based public transportation to serve informal settlement residents.

The city highlighted its experiences in developing resilient paths forward for informal settlements and urban expansion in an UrbanShift webinar in November 2023.



SPOTLIGHT ON RESILIENT URBAN SIERRA LEONE PROJECT



FRANCIS SAMSON NKOKA
SENIOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST, WORLD BANK

One key milestone from the Resilient Urban Sierra Leone Project (RUSLP) over the past year is developing and implementing a sustainable urban planning framework for the country. By integrating innovative urban planning practices and community-driven solutions, the project aims to enhance the country's resilience to climate change while promoting sustainable economic growth.

In Freetown, RUSLP has achieved several important outcomes:

- Enhanced Flood Resilience:** New flood mitigation strategies, including improved drainage systems and the restoration of natural waterways, have helped reduce the frequency and impact of flooding in vulnerable areas.
- Improved Waste Management:** Novel sustainable waste management practices, including better waste collection systems and community recycling programs, have not only improved the city's cleanliness but also helped reduce pollution and promote a circular economy.

- Reforestation and Green Spaces:** By supporting reforestation efforts and the creation of green spaces in urban areas, RUSLP has reduced deforestation, improved air quality and provided more recreational areas.
- Capacity Building and Training:** Through training and capacity-building workshops for local government officials, urban planners and community leaders, the project has empowered people with the knowledge and tools to manage urban growth sustainably and effectively address environmental challenges.
- Community Engagement:** RUSLP actively engaged local communities in the planning and implementation processes, ensuring that solutions were tailored to their needs and that the initiatives had broad support.

INDIA

In India, rapid economic growth and urban expansion are playing out against a backdrop of increasing climate risk due to extreme heat and flooding.

Working with Chennai, Pune, Surat, Agra and Puducherry, UrbanShift is supporting climate resilience projects and sustainable, accessible public transport in the participating cities. To help manage flood risk, UrbanShift is supporting nature-based solutions and ecosystem restoration projects, while also encouraging low-emission transit-oriented development (TOD) through the creation of green corridors, bike sharing facilities and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- **October 2023**
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Clean Energy Solutions in Accra, Ghana
- **August 2024**
Jakarta City Academy



UrbanShift has significantly built up the capacities of city officials by facilitating their participation in various national and international events. These capacity-building initiatives have strengthened our officials' ability to explore diverse pathways for improving access to climate finance. Furthermore, Puducherry officials have also been extended opportunities to participate in capacity-building programs beyond UrbanShift due to their association with the initiative. With UrbanShift's support, integrating climate actions into our planning processes will further advance low-carbon development and sustainability in the region.

R. KESAVAN, I.A.S
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT (TOWN PLANNING),
GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY



Project Budget
\$517.09 Million

GEF Grant: \$17,215,652
Co-finance: \$499,881,950



Implemented by
UNEP, ADB



Executed by
National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MOHUA), Greater Chennai Corporation



CHENNAI

Population: 11 million

With UrbanShift's support, Chennai this year broke ground on its efforts to revitalize the Kadapakkam Lake area into a functioning ecosystem and inclusive recreation space.

Besides demonstrating a nature-based approach for mitigating the effects of flood and drought, conserving biodiversity and providing a natural recreational space, the project will also evaluate the economic benefits cascading from the lake restoration and build a strong case for future investment in large-scale NBS projects. (See photo on facing page.)



PUNE

Population: 10 million

UrbanShift is supporting Pune to implement transit-oriented development around metro stations to encourage density while also advancing urban greening initiatives to minimize pollution.



SURAT

Population: 6 million

In response to rapid growth into vulnerable coastal areas, UrbanShift is supporting Surat to pursue integrated and climate-resilient coastal zone development strategies.



AGRA

Population: 1.6 million

To improve mobility in this famed tourist destination—home to the Taj Mahal—UrbanShift is supporting development green, low-emission transit corridors, based on previous experience in Pune.



PUDUCHERRY

Population: 244,377

With UrbanShift support, the city is developing Comprehensive Mobility Plans to promote low-carbon transport for three districts—Karaikal, Yanam, and Mahe—which will directly inform their in-progress Comprehensive Development Plans. Inspired by UrbanShift trainings, Puducherry is also incorporating nature-based solutions into its coastal resilience plans.



The eco-restoration of Kadapakkam Lake has officially begun as of August 2024 and is in its initial stages of execution. As the project unfolds and begins to demonstrate the benefits of nature-based solutions, we expect it to pave the way for climate finance for similar initiatives and enhance our broad climate change adaptation efforts. We look forward to participating in future UrbanShift events to open up even more favorable avenues and opportunities to finance such transformative projects.

S. RAJENDIRAN
CHIEF ENGINEER,
GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION



CHINA

As cities across China—the world’s most populous country—continue to expand, UrbanShift is working with Chengdu, Chongqing, Ningbo and Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle to achieve carbon neutrality and enhanced urban resilience through a variety of initiatives, from implementing nature-based solutions to supporting urban biodiversity.

UrbanShift is also working with cities to develop an indicator framework on green and low-carbon development to mainstream climate-responsive, integrated urban planning and management.



PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- **May 2024**
China City-Business Collaboration Accelerator (CIBIX) Workshop in Chengdu, China
- **August 2024**
Jakarta City Academy



“A highlight for the project over this past year was the GEF7 Green and Carbon-Neutral Cities Project annual thematic training in Guangzhou, organized in November 2023 by the CCUD and supported by the World Bank. Both Chinese and international experts offered technical guidance on low-carbon and eco-friendly urban development, urban green and low-carbon development indicators, conservation of urban biodiversity with nature-based solutions and combating climate change. With a focus on immersion learning, the training convened around 150 participants from 14 cities for field visits and in-depth exchanges.

KUN ZHAO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL,
CHINA CENTER FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Project Budget
\$327.60 Million

GEF Grant: \$26,909,050
Co-finance: \$300,693,050

Implemented by
World Bank

Executed by
China Center for Urban Development (CCUD), Chengdu, Chongqing and Ningbo Municipal People’s Governments

CHENGDU

Population: 21.4 million

Known as the home of giant pandas, accelerated population growth is threatening to erode the natural ecosystems surrounding the city. With UrbanShift, Chengdu is pursuing a strategy to become a “Park City” by protecting and expanding its natural assets. As of 2023, Chengdu has increased its greenery and landscape by 18.33 square kilometers and now has a total of 1,556 different parks.

With Light-Touch Technical Assistance from UrbanShift and C40, the city is also developing guidelines to scale up investments in green infrastructure.

CHONGQING

Population: 32 million

Facing two main development issues—limited availability of land for spatial urban expansion due to a hilly topography, and flooding caused by frequent, torrential rainfall—UrbanShift is supporting the city to develop spatial development and integrated energy management strategies.

NINGBO

Population: 9.69 million

Due to Ningbo’s energy-intensive export industry, the city’s per-capita carbon emission is double the national average, threatening quality of life and local ecological systems. In response, UrbanShift is working with the city to advance comprehensive strategic planning around biodiversity and natural ecosystems while also advancing an emissions monitoring system to facilitate zero-carbon development.

CHENGDU-CHONGQING ECONOMIC CIRCLE

Population: 98.5 million

To encourage this large, multi-center economic area in balancing sustainability with robust development, UrbanShift is supporting strategies that emphasize ecological connectivity and habitat restoration across the region, while also advancing improvements in waste management, biodiversity, and carbon neutrality.



“The UrbanShift Project in China is helping cities identify green financing modalities to attract private sector investment in green infrastructure, biodiversity, ecosystem services and ecological restoration. In Ningbo, for instance, the project has identified opportunities in carbon reduction and biodiversity, creating a comprehensive list of investment and financing projects aimed at climate change adaptation and biodiversity promotion. This strategic approach not only enhances financial resources for urban climate action but also integrates private sector involvement in sustainable urban development.

XIAO WU
URBAN DEVELOPMENT ANALYST,
WORLD BANK



INDONESIA

Home to over 270 million people and 12% of all known mammal species, Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world and the largest economy in Southeast Asia.

As the country grapples with challenges related to climate change and urbanization, from congestion and emissions to sea level rise, UrbanShift is working with five cities—Jakarta, Balikpapan, Semarang, Bitung and Palembang—to facilitate integrated spatial planning and urban management approaches like nature-based solutions and circular economy strategies for waste management.

PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- **July 2024**
Energy Finance Academy for Indonesian Cities in Jakarta, Indonesia
- **August 2024**
Jakarta City Academy



“The insights gained from UrbanShift's activities in Indonesia have the potential

to bridge the gap between available financing and the decarbonization agenda, thereby supporting policies and strategies that promote sustainable and integrated urban development across the country. This collaboration is a step toward enhancing Indonesia's ability to fund and implement effective energy efficiency and decarbonization measures, ultimately contributing to the broader goals of sustainable urban development.

YUKO ARAI
SENIOR URBAN SPECIALIST,
WORLD BANK



Project Budget
\$178.17 Million

GEF Grant: \$15,870,200
Co-finance: \$162,300,000



Implemented by
World Bank



Executed by
Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS)



JAKARTA

Population: 10.7 million

As informal settlements expand, the city is also facing flooding and poor air quality from waste burning, industry, and transport. UrbanShift is working with the city on strategic planning and greenspace development to address intersecting challenges, especially clean water access and flooding. [Read more about the city's greening efforts on the following page.](#)



SEMARANG

Population: 1.7 million

As increased flooding and landslides threaten stability, Semarang is also coping with overtaxed transportation and waste management systems. To alleviate these challenges, UrbanShift is working with the city to develop circular economy strategies, along with energy efficiency measures and upgrades to the public transport system.



PALEMBANG

Population: 1.8 million

Agro-industrial activity—including palm oil and rubber processing—have eroded Palembang's tree cover and polluted its air and waterways. UrbanShift is helping the city to consider its challenges holistically and pursue sustainable approaches to agriculture while revitalizing the city's natural resources.



BITUNG

Population: 232,440

As unsustainable fishing practices and pollution have degraded coastal ecosystems, and climate change threatens the city's infrastructure, UrbanShift is supporting the city to pursue robust waste management and ecosystem restoration strategies while upgrading infrastructure for resilience.



BALIKPAPAN

Population: 738,532

Balikpapan faces numerous challenges, especially air and water pollution from heavy industry activity. UrbanShift is supporting the city in pursuing strategies to reduce pollution and support quality of life for residents.

With the support of UrbanShift, Balikpapan has begun integrating solid waste management with energy generation from organic waste—an innovative approach that not only addresses waste management but also contributes to the city's energy needs. The city presented its approach during the Jakarta City Academy hosted in August 2024.





In Jakarta, a New Green Corridor Energizes Residents and Cleans the Air

In the heart of Jakarta, Tebet EcoPark is bursting with life.

Once the site of a concrete industrial channel through which the Ciliwung River—the city’s longest waterway—flowed, the 7-hectare park is now filled with the trees and greenery of a healthy, re-naturalized riverbed. Recreational paths crisscross the lush landscape, and as many as 80,000 people travel to the park on weekends to jog, picnic and enjoy the abundant natural beauty. Designed by the Singaporean firm SIURA Studio and funded by the city of Jakarta, the park has something for everyone: There is a community garden, a children’s playground and a plaza where vendors and organized events can pop up.

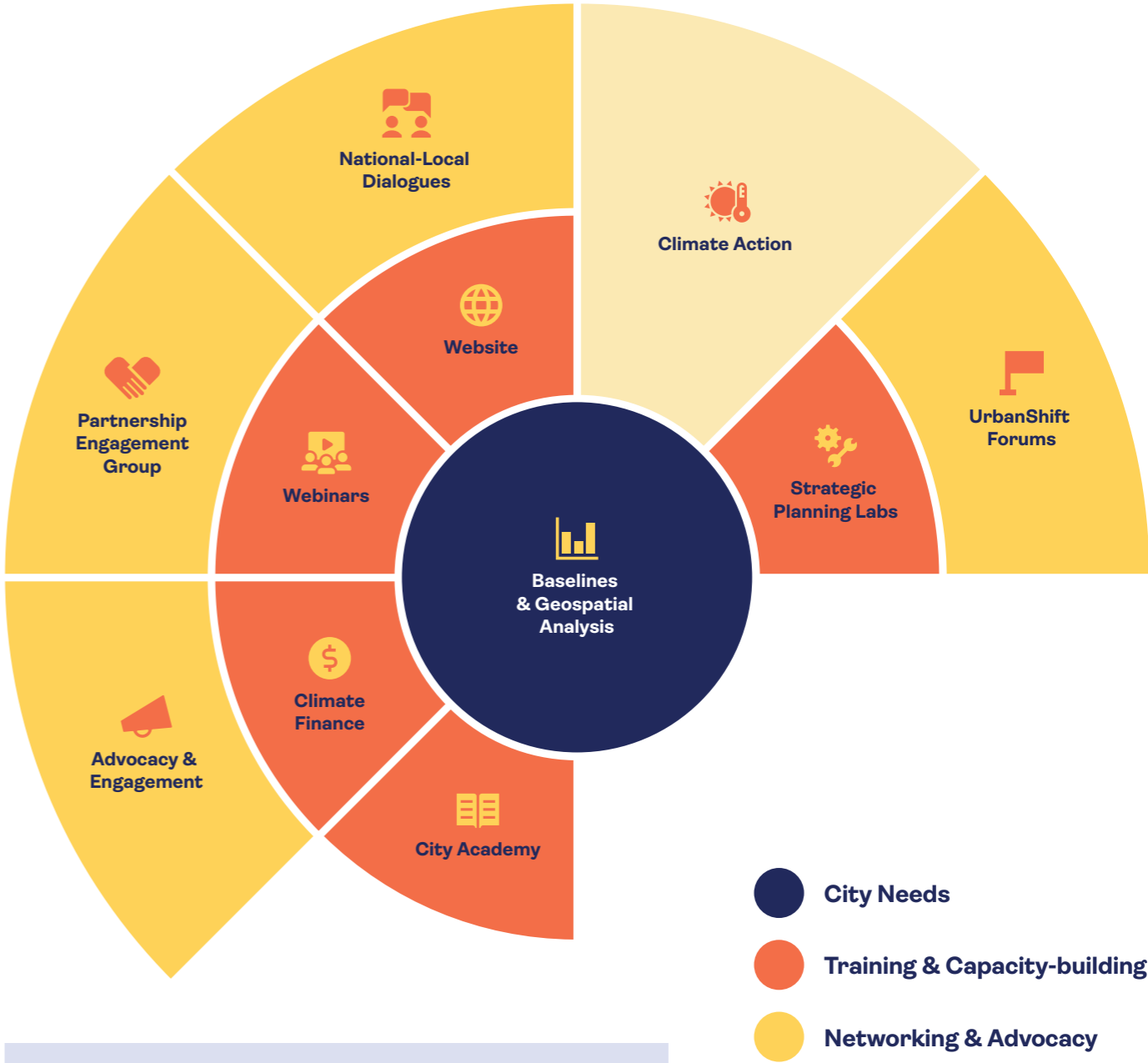
Since opening in 2022, Tebet EcoPark has become a hotspot of public life in Jakarta. But it’s also doing much more for the city. As Jakarta grapples increasingly with soaring temperatures, high pollution rates and the threat of flooding, the city is working to transform previously underutilized spaces, like the Ciliwung River, into effective sites of green-gray infrastructure that can moderate temperatures, boost biodiversity and foster resilience against climate change. Following its transformation, Tebet EcoPark has doubled the hydraulic capacity of the area,

dramatically increasing resilience against flood risk, and the approximately 1,500 new trees and 400,000 new shrubs filter both the water and the air, chipping away at the city’s pollution challenge.

This project is part of a broader initiative to make the city more livable and resilient in the face of climate change. By leveraging a green infrastructure approach, Jakarta is making strides in ensuring that nature becomes an integral part of the city’s future, balancing development with environmental preservation for the benefit of current and future residents. Jakarta is not alone in the challenges it faces among Indonesian cities—or cities around the world. The UrbanShift project in Indonesia, led by the country’s Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas) is focused on integrating nature-based solutions into the urban planning and development of five cities, including Jakarta. Recognizing the exemplary power of this project, UrbanShift capped off its City Academy in Jakarta (read more on page 53) with a visit to Tebet EcoPark to guide participants from across the UrbanShift network in Asia through the transformative potential of green infrastructure.



GLOBAL PLATFORM



Building more sustainable and resilient cities requires knowledge and robust buy-in from a broad range of stakeholders, from the community to the global level. Through a suite of activities tailored to city planners and leaders, from Forums to Finance Academies, the UrbanShift Global Platform supports capacity-building around critical urban development topics to equip cities to pursue ambitious projects and access the financing they need to turn their ideas into transformative realities. Through UrbanShift events, city representatives come together with national governments, the private sector and leaders in this space to learn from one another and collaborate on meaningful solutions. Read on for highlights and takeaways from an activity-filled year for UrbanShift.



LATIN AMERICA FORUM

APRIL 16-19
BELÉM, BRAZIL

As the flagship events of the UrbanShift program, Forums unite city leaders from across each of UrbanShift’s regions—Asia, Africa and Latin America—for networking, capacity building and collaboration around solutions to shared challenges.

In April 2024, UrbanShift gathered nearly 300 people from 35 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean, along with several from Asia and Africa for the UrbanShift Latin America Forum—four intensive days of collaboration around strengthening financing for green and resilient cities. Hosted in Belém, Brazil, amid the vast Amazon River delta, the setting elevated the vital connection between cities and natural ecosystems and underscored the need to foreground the health and well-being of people and nature in urban development. Organized by World Resources Institute under the UrbanShift program, in collaboration with the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI) and the City of Belém, the Latin America Forum catalyzed important discussions around evolving urban climate finance to meet pressing challenges and championing the role of cities in achieving global climate goals.



“

We are in an emergency due to climate change, and there are more conflicts and disasters that require us to rebuild. We must be able to respond in a coordinated way and use this moment to rebuild our response infrastructures.

ANACLÁUDIA ROSSBACH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UN HABITAT

OPENING CEREMONY

Hosted at the remarkable Docas Station—the revitalized port of Belém—the Forum’s Opening Ceremony laid a powerful foundation for the event. A majority-women panel of experts offered observations and calls to action around how global climate financing structures need to evolve to ensure resources flow to cities. Leaders from across Brazil, including Marcia Barbosa, Secretary of Strategic Policies and Programs for MCTI, emphasized the importance of Brazil’s biodiversity-rich landscape as a critical backdrop for this dialogue. “We can’t discuss the environment without looking at cities,” said Minister of Cities Jader Filho.

INVESTOR ROUNDTABLE

Focused on strategies for financing adaptation projects and hosted by the C40 Cities UrbanShift team and the Global Covenant of Mayors, this roundtable brought 12 cities into dialogue with leading financial institutions to receive input on strengthening their own adaptation projects to attract investment.

CITY-BUSINESS HUB

The City-Business Hub convened a wide-ranging discussion on how cities can work with the private sector to improve urban climate adaptation and resilience, create good green jobs and develop urban bioeconomies that prioritize green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and circularity.

CITINOVA WORKSHOP

Organized by MCTI, this workshop brought together representatives from Brazilian cities and governments and speakers from banks and international organizations for discussions on the opportunities and challenges for investments in urban climate mitigation and adaptation solutions within the framework of CITInova II, the UrbanShift project in Brazil. “In Brazil, the GEF’s contribution through UrbanShift allows us to think and innovate on how to create effective governance systems for metropolitan areas,” said Marcela Aboim Raposo, National Director of the CITInova project.



CITY-BUSINESS CLIMATE ALLIANCE WORKSHOP

This workshop explored various pathways to reduce energy and water consumption from urban tourism, while ensuring destinations adapt to increased climate risk. The C40 UrbanShift team convened experts from Orla Brasil, Rio de Janeiro Municipal Tourism Company, Accor Americas and Sistema B Brasil to offer insights and inspire discussions on solutions to a range of tourism-related challenges, informed by C40’s white paper on city-hotel collaborations to future-proof tourist destinations.

CITY ACADEMY

During the second half of the Forum, city delegates split into three groups for capacity building around Accessing Urban Climate Finance (led by ICLEI), Accommodating Urban Growth (led by C40) and Circular Economy Strategies for Sustainable Development (led by ICLEI). The courses offered context-specific solutions for the Latin America region, in which urbanization is posing challenges to equity and resilience.

SITE VISITS

To contextualize the learnings from the Forum and absorb the unique Amazonian context of Belém, participants visited three sites across the city over the course of the Forum: The Docas Station, which highlighted approaches to sustainable urban regeneration; Mangal das Garças, an urban ecopark that reflected the region’s vast biodiversity; and Combu Island, where participants could see firsthand how sustainable resource production can unfold in proximity to cities. Read more about the sustainable businesses on Combu Island on page 28.



“

With COP30 on the horizon in Belém, the UrbanShift Latin America Forum spurred an important discussion

on accelerating the mechanisms for urban climate financing. We need to recognize and take action around the pivotal role of cities in achieving climate goals. This convening heightened commitment and coordination across the region on important goals. We need to advocate for including urban climate finance targets in global conversations and foreground the importance of urban biodiversity and climate action in our fight against climate change.

ROGIER VAN DEN BERG
GLOBAL DIRECTOR, WRI ROSS CENTER
FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES



CITY ACADEMY

UrbanShift’s City Academy offers in-person trainings in each of the nine program countries. These two- to three-day sessions combine presentations and interactive exercises with the sharing of best practices and site visits in the host city. Through the City Academy, participants acquire in-depth knowledge on topics such as the circular economy and nature-based solutions, gain exposure to international experts and connect with other cities working on similar issues.



The UrbanShift Indonesia City Academy provided a great platform for urban leaders to gain hands-on expertise in nature-based solutions, the circular economy and integrated climate action planning. Each of these themes are essential and have tremendous scaling potential—especially when we bring them together as part of a sustainable development approach. Moving forward, the knowledge and tools shared here—along with the opportunities for partnership and collaboration forged—will help to foster urban resilience, reduce carbon emissions and advance sustainable development across Asia.

MARYKE VAN STADEN
DIRECTOR OF CARBONN CLIMATE CENTER, ICLEI



JAKARTA, INDONESIA August 27-29 2024

BUILDING CAPACITY TO TACKLE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENCOURAGE GREEN DEVELOPMENT IN JAKARTA

As cities in Asia face mounting challenges with rapid expansion and climate change, the UrbanShift Indonesia City Academy, held in Jakarta from August 27 to 29, 2024 in partnership with the World Bank and Bappenas offered valuable insights on the role of nature-based solutions, circular economy and integrated climate action planning in addressing these issues. Around 100 urban leaders, planners and sustainability experts from Indonesia, India, China, Philippines and Malaysia gathered for three days to engage in intensive training sessions and workshops focused on these three critical themes.

Jakarta offered a compelling backdrop for this City Academy. The city—and Indonesia as a whole—is increasingly vulnerable to climate risks like extreme weather and flooding, and waste management is a growing challenge. Additionally, as Indonesian cities expand—and as they prepare to establish a new capital city location—strong and integrated climate action planning is essential. While participants in the City Academy were split among the three courses, the themes and insights that stemmed from them are interconnected, and each plays a vital role in creating cities that are resilient, inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

For cities coping with intensifying climate risks, nature-based solutions can play a vital role in mitigating challenges. This is well-known among practitioners, but accessing funding for NBS projects is often opaque. The UrbanShift training, led by WRI, sought to demystify the tools and processes for making the economic case for NBS. The Circular Economy course, led by ICLEI, guided

participants through the concept of redefining growth by decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources. Given the significant waste management challenges in rapidly urbanizing Asian cities, the circular economy has tremendous potential to offer a sustainable model for resource efficiency and waste reduction—one that will lead to healthier communities and ecosystems. Led by C40 Cities, the Integrated Climate Action Planning course emphasized coordinating with multiple levels of government, prioritizing impactful climate actions and tracking progress to ensure that cities meet their climate targets. Jakarta, Beijing and Chennai shared their experiences in developing and executing climate action plans that address local sustainability challenges—from rising heat to waste and pollution—while contributing to broader environmental goals. From these case studies, participants gained insight into how to weave together a range of priorities, sectors and departments under a unified and ambitious climate action framework.

Participants left the training energized and ready to translate the learnings back to their home cities. Jawahar Packirisamy, Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Secretary to Government (Science, Technology & Environment and Local Administration), Puducherry, India reflected on the benefits of programs like UrbanShift that seek to elevate exchange and connection between cities. “In my view, the era of megacities is over: This is the age of secondary and tertiary cities. There is a strong need for collaboration and learning between these cities.”

EXPLORE URBANSHIFT’S ONLINE COURSES

In September 2023, UrbanShift launched the online City Academy, a foundational capacity-building resource consisting of eight free courses on UrbanShift’s key areas of focus. Available in six languages and offering everything from interactive learning modules to city-based case studies, the courses democratize access to learning opportunities to build more equitable and resilient cities. In the past year, over 3,400 learners have availed themselves of the free, self-paced courses to build their skills and bring cutting-edge knowledge to their cities.

Learn more and enroll at shiftcities.org/online-city-academy.

ADDITIONAL CITY ACADEMIES:

- **February 2024**
Urban Biodiversity and Accessing Urban Climate Finance
Marrakech, Morocco
- **April 2024**
Accessing Urban Climate Finance, Circular Economy and Accommodating Urban Growth
Belém, Brazil



PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES

UrbanShift's Peer-to-Peer Exchanges facilitate knowledge sharing around integrated urban development solutions among cities. Participating cities travel to visit a peer city from which they can learn directly about the practical implementation of a solution, from technical aspects to financing and processes. In this way, UrbanShift cities have learned, among others things, about cable cars in Medellín, and urban water resilience in Rotterdam.



“

UrbanShift's activities are very important for us. Every time I return to Teresina from an activity, I come full of ideas to share and test. From the last Peer-to-Peer Exchange, in Barranquilla, we came back with ideas that we are piloting now, like the first rain garden in the city and our afforestation plan. Now, from Rotterdam, we learned a lot from local projects and from the university. We plan to take these learnings and implement them in Teresina to continue improving our urban resilience strategies.

LEONARDO MADEIRA MARTINS
COORDINATOR OF THE TERESINA 2030 AGENDA



ADDITIONAL PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES:

- **October 10-13, 2023**
Sustainable Energy Solutions
Accra and Kumasi, Ghana

📍 ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS September 24-27, 2024

CREATING HUMAN-CENTERED CITIES THROUGH CLIMATE-RESILIENT PLANNING

Across UrbanShift's network of cities in Latin America, increasing resilience to climate risks like flooding has become a pressing priority. Successful mitigation projects, however, extend beyond addressing core environmental issues—they also enhance quality of life for residents by creating inviting public spaces, fostering social connections and beautifying urban environments.

During a weeklong Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Exchange in Rotterdam, UrbanShift brought together participants from Latin American cities, including San José, Costa Rica; Mar del Plata and Salta, Argentina; and Belém, Florianópolis and Teresina, Brazil; along with Project leads from Ciudades Sostenibles (Argentina), CITInova (Brazil) and TEVU (Costa Rica) and special guests from Brazil's National Front of Mayors and representatives from Porto Alegre and Niterói, Brazil. The purpose was to learn how to integrate placemaking best practices into urban climate resilience projects.

Rotterdam, known globally for its collaborative and innovative approach to urban development, offered a comprehensive perspective on urban climate resilience. Participants engaged with a wide network of Dutch experts from institutions such as the Global Center on Adaptation, Deltares, TU Delft and the City of Rotterdam, gaining deeper insights into people-centered resilience strategies.

This P2P Exchange was intentionally organized around Placemaking Week Europe, an annual event featuring workshops, dialogues and interactive tours focused on human-centered and sustainable urban design. Participants from Latin America not only attended the conference but also hosted an interactive workshop on September 25. During this session, they presented their in-progress integrated planning and resilience projects, inviting feedback and collaboration from the 50 attendees in the room to strengthen their initiatives.

With Rotterdam's dynamic and innovative urban environment as the backdrop, this exchange spurred meaningful dialogue on strengthening resilience and building healthier, more connected communities. By the end of this insightful week, each delegation had developed a customized action plan to integrate the ideas and strategies discussed and continue collaboration with the experts and institutions they met through the exchange.





FINANCE SUPPORT

Finance is essential for transforming integrated planning concepts into tangible, impactful projects. UrbanShift offers participating cities a range of support in the early stages of project development to assist in developing bankable projects, understanding barriers and how to overcome them, connecting to potential investors and ultimately implementing and scaling infrastructure projects that support sustainable urban development.



SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA October 17-19, 2023

EMPOWERING LATIN AMERICAN CITIES TO TACKLE CLEAN TRANSPORT FINANCING CHALLENGES

If cities across Latin America replaced their current fleets of buses and taxis with electric vehicles right now, by 2030 the region could save around \$64 billion and avoid over 36,000 premature deaths from air pollution. These are enormous and transformative impacts, and interest in electric buses is growing across Latin American cities as they rapidly expand and develop.

The UrbanShift Clean Transport Finance Academy harnessed this energy and directed it into a productive, three-day workshop

focused on overcoming challenges to the essential transition to electric buses. Organized by the C40 City Finance Programme’s Clean Transport Workstream, with support from C40, ZEBRA, UrbanShift, the Global Covenant of Mayors and Bloomberg Philanthropies, this Academy offered a constructive space for Latin American cities to explore issues, from budget constraints to technical capacity, and learn from best practices taking root across the region. Representatives from the national governments of Costa Rica, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay

and from cities in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico attended the event and met directly with financiers and e-bus project sponsors to discuss needs and collaborate on solutions and project proposals. These three days of dialogue and coordination helped governments across Latin America lay the groundwork for expanding electric buses across cities and meeting significant climate and equity goals.

LIGHT-TOUCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Led by C40 City Finance Program, Light Touch Technical Assistance (LTTA) helps cities tackle sector-specific, finance-related challenges to implementing their climate action plans. Following Finance Academies, participating cities are invited to apply for LTTA funding totaling \$17,000. Nine cities will receive LTTA support through the UrbanShift program across the energy, adaptation, waste and transportation finance sectors. Six projects are currently in progress across Freetown, Sierra Leone; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Chengdu, China; Teresina, Brazil; San José, Costa Rica; and eThekweni, South Africa.

INVESTORS’ ROUNDTABLES

These annual regional convenings unite finance and technical climate experts from cities and financial institutions for discussions about sector-specific financing challenges. Investors Roundtables are structured according to the needs of participants and can foster high-level strategic discussions or offer an opportunity for cities to present their projects for direct feedback from financiers and investors.

TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIONS PROGRAM (TAP)

Led by ICLEI, this global initiative assists subnational governments and local businesses in turning their sustainable infrastructure ideas into solid, investment-ready projects. Supported by a consortium of specialized partners, TAP connects projects with potential investors and project preparation facilities and provides personalized support for project development. Projects are submitted annually and reviewed by financial and technical experts at ICLEI for quality, strength and potential impact. TAP also offers state-of-the-art guidelines, publications and training materials—all publicly available—to help anyone shape strong projects.

FINANCE ACADEMIES

Led by C40, Finance Academies bridge urban climate finance gaps by encouraging knowledge sharing between cities, technical experts and financial institutions. Finance Academies equip cities with technical knowledge on specific finance approaches and instruments and provide opportunities for cities to establish or deepen relationships with finance institutions, project preparation facilities and climate funds.



OTHER FINANCE ACADEMIES:

July 2024
Energy Finance Academy for Indonesian Cities
Jakarta, Indonesia



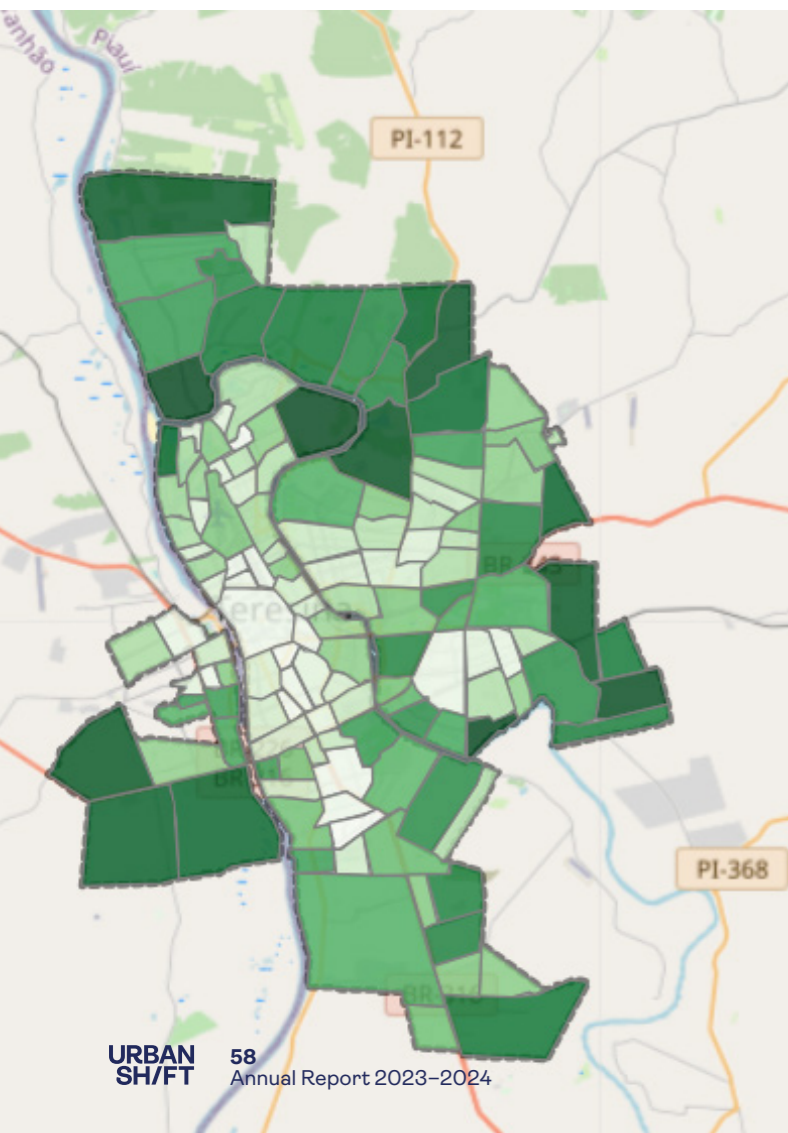
“Through our finance workstream, UrbanShift is catalyzing transformative investments in climate solutions, resilient urban infrastructure and clean technologies. Our Finance Academies, Investors Roundtables and targeted technical assistance are unlocking greater investor interest in urban project pipelines across our cities. We are confident that this momentum will drive meaningful, positive change, improving the lives of urban residents and fostering sustainable growth.”

ANDREA FERNÁNDEZ
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CLIMATE FINANCE,
KNOWLEDGE AND PARTNERSHIPS, C40 CITIES



GEOSPATIAL DATA

The UrbanShift data team works closely with beneficiary cities to identify, provide and analyze geospatial layers and key sustainability indicators, serving to highlight critical urban challenges and suggest integrated solutions backed by data. Geospatial analysis forms the backbone of UrbanShift’s Labs (see more on this page) and guides how UrbanShift supports cities on climate action planning (see page 66).



Urban data analytics is essential for understanding the challenges that cities face, and also the path forward. It’s inspiring to see how the support that UrbanShift offers to cities around geospatial analysis is unlocking new ways of looking at issues and new ways of implementing effective solutions for integrated planning. While each city is unique, the need for robust data and the ability to apply it is universal, and UrbanShift is proving to be a crucial partner for cities in this space

PABLO LAZO
URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, WRI ROSS CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES

SPOTLIGHT ON THE CITIES INDICATORS DASHBOARD

Data is essential for cities to understand the impacts of climate change—and how nature in the urban environment can help build resilience to future impacts. UrbanShift’s geospatial indicators dashboard, co-developed in 2023 along with the Cities4Forests initiative, helps cities visualize the local connections between climate change and the urban environment. Covering all 23 UrbanShift cities and 12 Cities4Forests cities, the dashboard offers a window into local factors like air quality, emissions and surface reflectivity so cities can assess their on-the-ground conditions and prioritize effective mitigation strategies.

Access the dashboard at <https://citiesindicators.wri.org/>



URBANSHIFT LABS

UrbanShift Labs are interactive two- to four-day workshops that illustrate the importance of integrated, evidence-based city planning approaches and demonstrate an alternative to siloed decision-making. The labs help shape policy and catalyze projects, providing a concrete example of multi-stakeholder coordination in participating cities. The UrbanShift team works with each city to understand their strategic needs and how the Lab should be structured to support them.

OTHER URBANSHIFT LABS:

- **November 2023**
Metropolitan Planning and Climate Action Lab
Florianópolis, Brazil



MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

June 26-27, 2024

USING GEOSPATIAL DATA TO PRIORITIZE NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN MARRAKECH

In Marrakech, the heat of the sun is unrelenting. The city’s iconic palm trees provide sparse shade, and the growing threat of water stress looms. Against this backdrop, UrbanShift gathered 29 representatives from Marrakech, Agadir, Beni Mellal, Rabat and Tangier, along with national government officials, local NGOs and academics, to address these critical challenges.

Over the course of two days, UrbanShift, with the support of WRI, C40 Cities and UNDP Morocco, guided participants through exercises to explore data-informed approaches to conserving and expanding urban green spaces and biodiversity—key goals of Marrakech Ville Durable, the UrbanShift-supported project in the city.

Exploring both geospatial data and the city itself on a guided tour, participants were struck by the inequitable distribution of green spaces across Marrakech. Tree-covered areas in historical gardens provided a welcome respite from the heat and the contrast with exposed areas underscored the need to ensure the presence of nature and green spaces throughout the city. But in working toward this goal, context matters. In the Medina, for example, high density and historical protections pose barriers to more conventional approaches to greening, while in other parts of the city the coverage of water reuse and irrigation infrastructure is crucial.

During the Lab, participants brainstormed innovative alternatives like integrating nature into existing buildings to respect the historic character of the district while achieving benefits for health and heat mitigation. In contrast, the geospatial data revealed that the city’s rapidly expanding new developments offer ample opportunities to integrate green spaces into new unfolding plans. The barrier in this context, participants learned, is water scarcity. Prioritizing indigenous and endemic tree species in expansion plans would ensure ample shade and contribute to ecosystem health while minimally stressing the city’s already strained water supply.

When considering the need to expand urban greenspace, the tour that participants took through Marrakech underscored that it’s not just a matter of the quantity of nature, but the quality of ecosystem services that urban nature can provide. In a harsh climate like Marrakech, urban nature must be efficient and meet the needs of the people who share the environment with it—from providing shade to balancing water consumption.

With a clear understanding of the city’s landscape and needs, participants in the Lab set to work on a context-sensitive greenspace expansion plan that will inform the city’s climate action plan.



ADVOCACY

UrbanShift’s advocacy effort aims to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities on the path to sustainable cities through international platforms and events. In collaboration with the Partnership Engagement Group, UrbanShift promotes the urban sustainability agenda at these forums, with a particular focus on key program themes like nature-based solutions and multi-level governance and provides a space for city and national stakeholders to share their experiences with a global audience.



SPOTLIGHT ON PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

The UrbanShift Partnership Engagement Group (PEG) is a high-level, external coordination body that provides strategic guidance on the implementation of key urban initiatives, alliances, networks and projects that align with the program’s vision and that can complement and expand our work. The PEG meets at least once a year to discuss opportunities for collaboration and pathways to direct UrbanShift’s capacity-building and advocacy efforts. This year’s PEG meeting took place on May 21, 2024.



“The UNEA-6 Cities and Regions Summit key message was clear: the journey to a sustainable planet begins in our cities. The Summit empowered cities and regions to share their stories of transformation, showcasing their leadership in building climate-resilient, nature-positive communities. The Summit also emphasized the importance of a multilevel governance approach, stressing the need for national governments to work more closely with subnational governments in developing and implementing policies and programs.

GULNARA ROLL
HEAD, CITIES UNIT, UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

OTHER ADVOCACY EVENTS:

- October 2023**
UrbanShift at World Forum on Urban Forests: Leveraging Urban Biodiversity & Forests to Create Inclusive and Equitable Cities
 Washington D.C., USA
- December 2023**
UrbanShift at COP28: Connecting Climate Change and Urban Development
 Dubai, United Arab Emirates

NAIROBI, KENYA February 24, 2024

ELEVATING THE NEEDS AND POTENTIAL OF SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

“What you do in your cities resonates across the world. When you make your cities green and sustainable, you are not just local heroes, you are global heroes.” Those were the inspiring words that Inger Anderson, Director of the UN Environment Programme, shared with attendees of the UNEA-6 Cities & Regions Summit in Nairobi in February, ahead of the 6th Session of the UN Environment Assembly.

Without a doubt, cities are at the heart of climate action. Home to half the world’s population and responsible for around 70% of global CO₂ emissions and over half of global waste, cities are home to both the drivers of the three interconnected environmental challenges—climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution—and to many of the solutions to address them. But cities do not operate in a vacuum. Policies and actions in cities influence significant global frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals and depend on the political and financial support of national and global governance structures to implement transformative change.

The UNEA-6 Cities and Regions Summit offered a platform for city and regional leaders to call on national governments to formalize institutional arrangements and procedures for subnational participation in implementing global and regional multilateral agreements and commitments while also providing resources for implementation.

During the Summit, leaders shared concrete examples and opportunities to drive progress. Colombia, host of the Convention on Biological Diversity COP-16 at the end of 2024, announced a Cities Day to provide a space for further discussion on multi-level governance and the transition toward climate-resilient and biodiverse cities. And local and regional leaders highlighted how international organizations like the UN can develop and enhance metrics, indicators and environmental reporting platforms to reflect and measure subnational progress in addressing the triple planetary crisis.

Following the Cities & Regions Summit, Mayor Joy Belmonte of Quezon City, Philippines, ensured that the learnings and insights from the event were shared with the member states participating at the opening plenary of the 6th Session of the UN Environment Assembly, highlighting the need for cities and regions to be at the center of climate action. “In unison,” she said, “voices from local municipalities to regional bodies, national governments and international organizations resoundingly underscored the importance of working together, including local communities and the private sector. We eagerly anticipate productive discussions at UNEA-6. With your leadership, we can build resilient and sustainable cities to realize the world we aspire to.”



CITY-BUSINESS COLLABORATION

Cities are central to the global response to the climate, nature and well-being crises. However, city governments cannot solve urban sustainability challenges by working alone. Collaboration, especially between cities, communities and businesses, becomes the bridge that connects ideas with action. UrbanShift supports cities in collaborating with the private sector in the following ways:



CITY-BUSINESS HUBS

In these global events, UrbanShift convenes city and business leaders to discuss the most pressing regional challenges and ways of addressing them in partnership. The Hubs are organized as part of the regional UrbanShift Forums.

CITY-BUSINESS CLIMATE ALLIANCE WORKSHOPS

Led by C40, these workshops provide a platform for cities and leaders of local business networks to exchange ideas on how to accelerate local climate action through public-private collaboration. In the CBCA Workshops, the C40 UrbanShift team supports cities in using their formal and soft powers to influence, regulate and collaborate with the private sector to achieve ambitious climate actions. Read more about this year's CBCA Workshop on responsible tourism and city-hotel partnerships, hosted during the UrbanShift Latin America Forum, on page 51.

CITY-BUSINESS COLLABORATION ACCELERATOR (CiBiX)

The City-Business Collaboration Accelerator (CiBiX), led by ICLEI, is an ideation workshop program that brings cities and businesses together to define challenges and identify collaborative and innovative urban sustainability solutions for them. CiBiX workshops increase cross-sectoral understanding of opportunities in the climate action space and encourage integrated approaches to program development and implementation. Read more about the CiBiX workshop hosted in Chengdu this year on the next page.



CHENGDU, CHINA May 28, 2024

COLLABORATING ON CONCEPTS FOR A ZERO-WASTE CITY

As Chengdu works toward its goal of becoming a green, sustainable city, ICLEI and UrbanShift gathered global and national experts to address a key element of this plan: eliminating waste. The China City-business Collaboration Accelerator (CiBiX) Workshop offered a platform for discussing the challenges Chengdu is facing around green and low-carbon development and exploring solutions.

Supported by Chengdu City, China Centre for Urban Development under the National Development and Reform Commission, the World Bank, UNDP and the European Chamber of Commerce in China, the event fostered a productive cross-sector dialogue. Business representatives from TOMRA, Lvdoya, Tianqi Lithium and Tongwei Solar participated and offered suggestions, informed by previous experience, for Chengdu's path toward sustainable development.

Jet Chang, Vice President of TOMRA Public Affairs in Beijing, shared how TOMRA generates value from their recycling centers across Norway and China. Xirui Lian, Founder of Sichuan Lvdoya Information Technology, shared the concept of "carbon cabins" with the group. These small structures, outfitted with meters to measure carbon-reduction impacts, can be integrated into parks, schools and community spaces to encourage broad uptake of recycling.

Weina Wang, Director of ESG and Sustainable Development of Tianqi Lithium Corporation, presented the experience of constructing a near-zero carbon emission zone with repurposed and recycled materials in Shenzhen. And Heng Song, Senior Manager of Carbon Emissions Management for Tongwei, shared how the company is innovating around using recycled materials for solar panels. All these concepts sparked lively discussion around how Chengdu could strengthen its own recycling and waste-management processes and resulted in a draft summary of proposals that the city can consider as it moves toward its ambitious goals.



NATIONAL-LOCAL DIALOGUES

Coordination across levels of government is essential for making progress on integrated and equitable urban development. UrbanShift's National-Local Dialogues provide a convening space for different levels of government and departments within a country and facilitate constructive discussions on national policies for sustainable urban planning and financing. For each country, UrbanShift hosts two National-Local Dialogues.



“

National-Local Dialogues pull on the levers of change through frank discussions that encourage leaders to co-design effective solutions that unlock ambitious, prioritized, inclusive and accelerated local climate action and investment flows. NLDs are critical tools for national and local stakeholders to come together to meet the ambitions of multilevel governance through the CHAMP initiative.

ALYSSA CHENAULT
URBANSHIFT GLOBAL MANAGER, ICLEI

FLORIANÓPOLIS, BRAZIL November 20, 2023

STRENGTHENING MULTILEVEL COLLABORATION FOR RESILIENCE IN BRAZIL

As part of the UrbanShift activities, the 1st National-Local Dialogue in Brazil was held in Florianópolis on November 20, 2023. Organized by ICLEI South America in collaboration with WRI Brasil, MCTI and the Superintendence of Development of the Metropolitan Regions of Santa Catarina (SUDESC), the event was supported by the Brazilian Ministries of Cities (MCID) and Environment and Climate Change (MMA).

Hosted at the State Civil Defense headquarters, the dialogue brought together 30 representatives, from the three UrbanShift metropolitan regions in Brazil (Belém, Florianópolis and Teresina-Timon), as well as from UNEP, ICLEI South America, WRI Brasil, the CITinova II project, the National Institute for Space Research, the State Metropolitan Agency of Belo Horizonte, the State Civil Defense of Santa Catarina, MCID, MCTI, Pelópidas Silveira City, the Institute for Planning and Development Management of the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area, SUDESC, the State Secretariat of Environment and Sustainability of Pará and MMA.

The event facilitated discussions and the exchange of experiences on governance models for metropolitan planning, focusing on the challenges and opportunities in combating climate change impacts in Belém, Florianópolis and the Teresina-Timon urban agglomeration. Through strategic reflections from government representatives, the dialogue emphasized the need for improved coordination between federal, state and municipal levels, the importance of sustainable urban planning and the potential for integrating various stakeholders, particularly civil society and academia, into governance processes.

Setting the stage for the UrbanShift Lab, which took place on November 21-22, 2023, the dialogue also focused on integrating climate action into metropolitan planning. Together, the workshops promoted SUDESC's role as a body for multilevel and interdisciplinary planning, increasing its visibility among local and state-level stakeholders. Despite the recent trend in Brazilian states to dissolve their metropolitan agencies, the discussions enhanced the recognition of these bodies as institutions capable of devising regional strategies and effectively coordinating actions. In the words of SUDESC's Superintendent, Rafael Biff, "The National-Local Dialogue and the UrbanShift Lab promoted a shift in institutional vision toward seeking coordinated action at the metropolitan level and strengthened the role of metropolitan agencies as part of this governance structure."





CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING

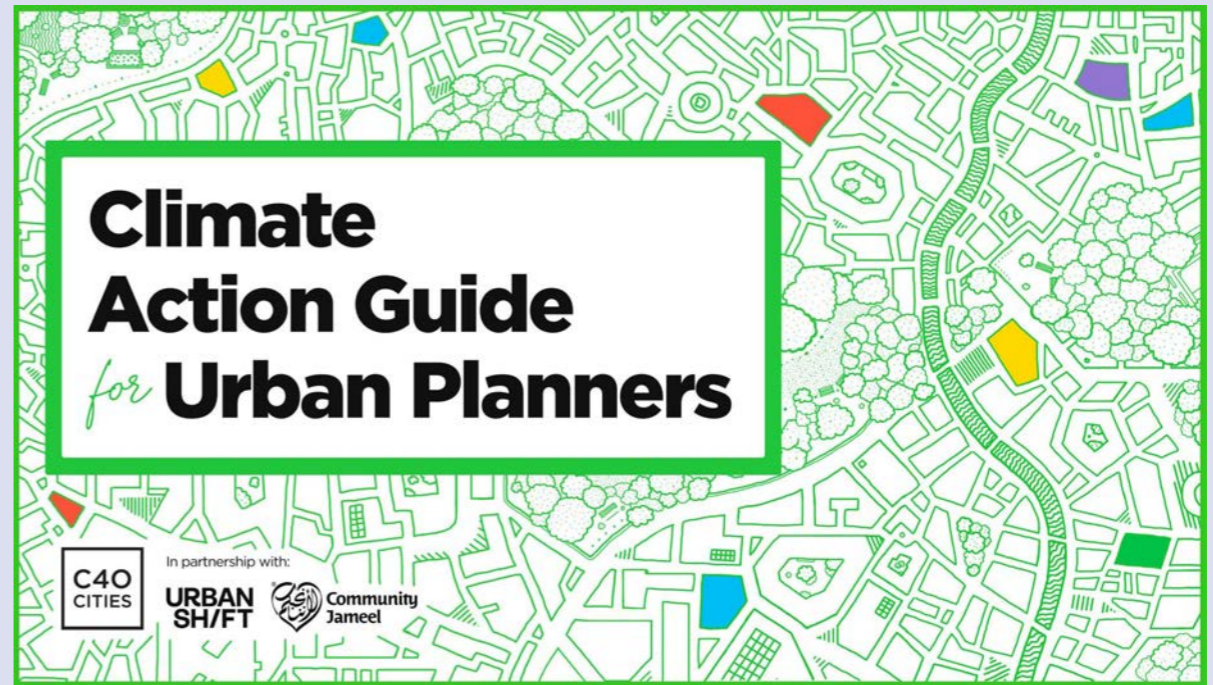
The UrbanShift team provides a range of tailored support and guidance to cities to address the climate crisis at the local level through ambitious commitments, initiatives, know-how and knowledge products. UrbanShift's partnership with cities contributes to how they shape their climate action plans and connect with peer cities working toward similar bold goals.



“Cities are expanding at a strikingly fast rate, with 90% of urban growth in the Global South occurring in or near

hazard-prone areas. To ensure a more sustainable and equitable world, we need robust urban planning. This guide, developed over the course of the UrbanShift program, offers a valuable starting point for city practitioners.

MATHEUS ORTEGA
CLIMATE ACTION SENIOR MANAGER,
C40 CITIES



SPOTLIGHT ON THE CLIMATE ACTION GUIDE FOR URBAN PLANNERS

By 2050, two out of every three people on Earth will be living in cities. Facing this projected growth, cities have a significant responsibility to assess their development patterns and reorient toward more sustainable and resilient models.

In this landscape, every urban planner must also be a climate action planner. Recognizing this, C40 Cities, along with Community Jameel and UrbanShift, this year released a comprehensive guide to climate action for urban planners. Available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Arabic, the guide aims to support urban planners from cities around the world to play their full part in tackling the climate crisis. Of all city functions, urban planning is the one that offers the greatest opportunities to set cities on low-carbon and climate-responsive development pathways.

The guide offers practitioners strategic and actionable guidance for evolving urban plans—also often called strategic spatial plans, master plans, or land use plans—to reflect climate considerations. One core area that urban plans can address is how cities plan to expand in the face of population growth. Typical patterns have emphasized outward geographic expansion

to accommodate new people, which leads to vast and sprawling cities that encroach on natural resources and climate-vulnerable areas. As illustrated through the guide, climate-smart urban planning approaches can shift this paradigm and emphasize dense development, urban proximity, and nature-based solutions, while minimizing sprawl and resource drain.

And beyond making the case for urban planning as a tool to drive impactful climate action, the guide offers tangible pathways for urban planners to incorporate a climate lens into their work. The guide shows how climate change considerations can be embedded into each of the ten stages of preparing and delivering an urban plan, and identifies and explains seven key planning policy areas for climate action. With examples ranging from creating more resilient informal settlements in Nairobi and São Paulo to emphasizing transit-oriented development in Jakarta and Delhi, the guide offers inspiration and concrete action to create greener, healthier, and more equitable cities.

Explore the guide here:
<https://www.shiftcities.org/publication/climate-action-guide-urban-planners>



WEBINARS

UrbanShift’s free, open access webinars spotlight critical and emerging topics related to urban sustainability, climate resilience and mitigation. Featuring insights from leaders and subject-matter experts from the program’s three regions, these webinars emphasize the vital role of traditionally marginalized groups and outline the limitations and opportunities to foster inclusive, sustainable urban growth in the global South.

OTHER WEBINARS:

- November 22, 2023**
Unlocking Africa’s Urban Potential: Improving Informal Settlements Through Sustainable Planning
- December 12, 2023**
Towards Clean Air for All in Latin American Cities: The Importance of an Integrated Approach
- September 4, 2024**
Addressing Contemporary Challenges in Historic Districts: Strategies for Implementing Clean Air Zones Approach



EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES TO MITIGATE EXTREME URBAN HEAT

August 13, 2024

With summer 2024 in the Northern Hemisphere recorded as the hottest on record, extreme heat is top of mind across the world. “We’ve witnessed unbearable heat waves with temperatures going beyond 50 degrees centigrade in many regions, and we see the devastating impacts: this is a health crisis, it’s disrupting food systems and straining critical infrastructure,” said Gulnara Roll, Head of the Cities Unit at UNEP, during UrbanShift and World Resources Institute’s webinar on extreme urban heat.

Intensifying heat poses a significant risk to cities by exacerbating and causing health issues, straining infrastructure and amplifying socio-economic disparities. Extreme urban heat causes heat-related illnesses, increases mortality rates and burdens healthcare systems. Additionally, the stress on energy systems from increased air conditioning use can lead to power outages, while transportation and water systems can also be compromised. Vulnerable communities, often lacking resources to cope with extreme heat, suffer disproportionately, underscoring the urgent need for targeted mitigation strategies such as green infrastructure, improved building designs and community-based resilience programs.

Co-organized by UrbanShift, WRI Ross Center’s Urban Development team, the UNEP Cities Unit and the UNEP-led Cool Coalition, this webinar built on UrbanShift’s “Urban Cooling” webinar, hosted in August 2023. Drawing from extensive and innovative data-driven efforts, experts from WRI briefed attendees on how to use geospatial data and analysis to think about urban heat hazards, to measure the impact of heat risks in cities and to test the

cooling potential of interventions (learn more about geospatial data resources on page 58).

Drawing on their examples from Cape Town, Medellin and cities across India, resilience leaders discussed the various innovative strategies and solutions that cities can utilize to mitigate extreme heat, including green infrastructure, building design and efficiency and community-scale interventions. When it comes to extreme urban heat, “the bottom line is that we cannot air condition our way out of this problem,” said Jaya Dhindaw, Director of the Cities Program at WRI India. The webinar explored how around the world, cities are exploring and implementing solutions to cool themselves down and equitably equip residents with tools to empower themselves against the challenges of urban heat.

For those who joined the webinar, Eleni Myrivili, the Global Chief Heat Officer, at UN Habitat and a Nonresident Senior Fellow at Arsht-Rock encouraged learning from resources like the International Labor Organization’s new guidelines on protecting workers amid rising heat, and tapping into networks and efforts like the UNEP-led Global Cooling Pledge and the Cool Coalition to access direct support to cities on heat mitigation and opportunities to connect with practitioners advancing effective solutions.

It is vital for cities to realize that while heat is experienced at the level of the individual, pathways for action are unfolding across levels of government and across the whole world. This webinar reminded participants that by connecting globally, cities can equip themselves to act locally, urgently, and effectively against this growing challenge.



“

As the risks of extreme urban heat grow, cities need to take action to protect human lives and well-being and maintain economic productivity. Our webinar on mitigating extreme heat brought data-driven solutions and key learnings from cities proactively grappling with this challenge to a broad audience of nearly 400 urban practitioners eager to take steps to protect their residents.

JOHN-ROB POOL
 SENIOR MANAGER FOR URBANSHIFT, WRI ROSS CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES

MONITORING & EVALUATION

The UrbanShift program comprises ten individual projects: nine country-led projects (see page 22) and one global platform (see page 48) which serves as a capacity-building platform that reinforces and supports on-the ground implementation of the country projects. Together, these projects will positively impact people, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

Figure 1 shows the target impacts for the overall program. To support biodiversity, the program aims to improve management of or restore 1.24 million hectares of terrestrial and/or marine areas. By avoiding the release of over 174 million metric tons of CO₂, the program will contribute to climate change mitigation efforts. And overall, UrbanShift aims to improve the lives and livelihoods of more than 40 million people.

To measure progress toward these targets, the UrbanShift program uses a flexible Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) results framework that the country-led projects can adapt for their individual contexts and priorities. The UrbanShift Program Results Framework (Figure 2) is structured around **four overarching components**. Each component corresponds to one of **four outcomes**: positive changes in the world, at least partially attributed to UrbanShift, that are expected to be achieved over the lifetime of the program. **Eleven corresponding indicators** measure progress toward these outcomes.

During the design phase of the UrbanShift program, country-led projects were asked to select which of the global program indicators their projects are most aligned to, and track progress against them. Figure 3 maps out the specific indicators that the country-led projects and global platform are supporting achievement of and monitoring progress toward.

FIGURE 1:
UrbanShift Program Indicators

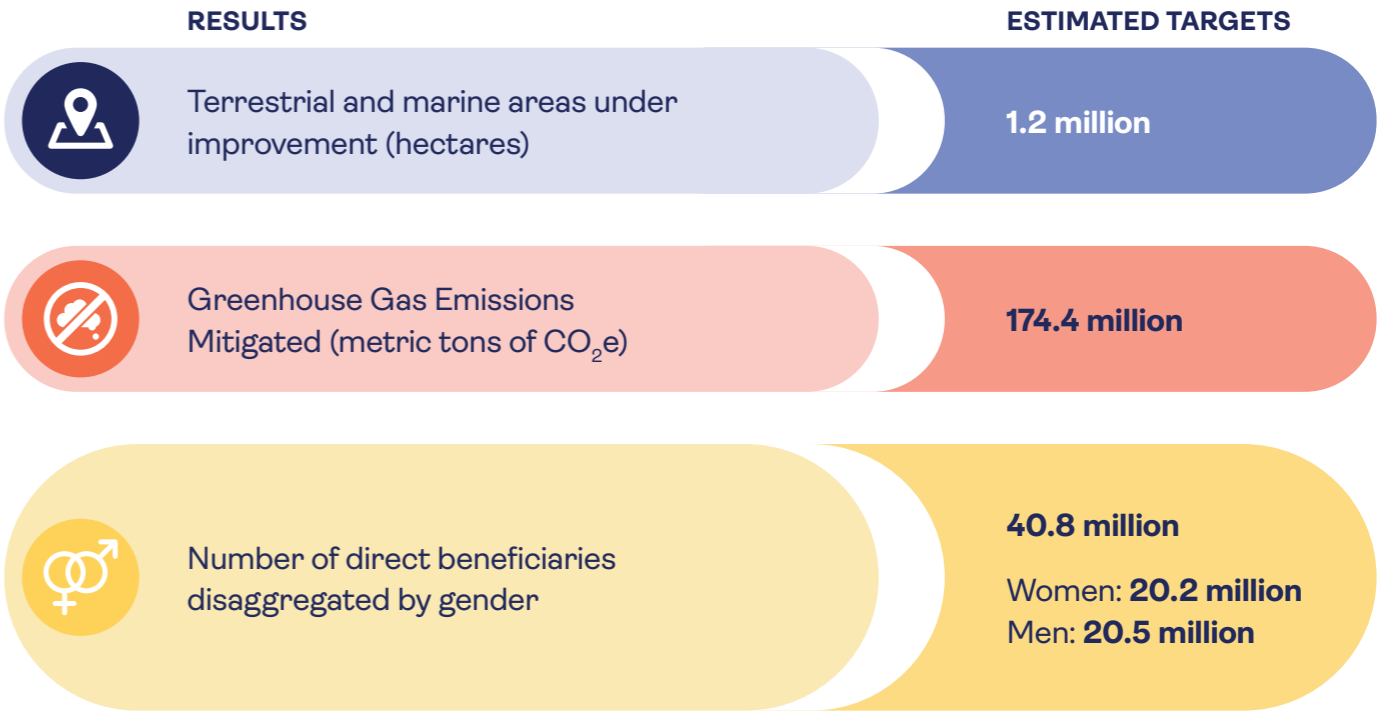




FIGURE 2:
UrbanShift Program Results Framework and Indicators



FIGURE 3:
Updated mapping of how the global platform and country project indicators align with the overall program indicators

 Components	 Indicators	Global Platform	Argentina	Brazil	China	Costa Rica	India	Indonesia	Morocco	Rwanda	Sierra Leone
1 Sustainable and integrated urban planning and policy reform	1. No. of countries that improve enabling framing conditions to support multilevel integration and policy reform	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2. No. of cities with improved, evidence-based, sustainable, inclusive, gender-sensitive and integrated plans and processes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 Sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient conservation or land restoration investments in cities	3. USD of sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient conservation or land restoration demonstrations and/or investments			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	4. No. of cities with sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient, conservation or land restoration investment plans or project pipelines		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
3 Innovative financing and scaling up	5. No. of cities with enhanced access to financing for scaling up sustainable urban solutions	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
	6. No. of cities and countries that have initiated innovative financial mechanisms and/or business models for scaling up sustainable urban solutions		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	7. USD leveraged through innovative financial mechanisms and business models for scaling up sustainable urban solutions			✓		✓					
4 Advocacy, knowledge exchange, capacity-building and partnerships	8. No. of resolutions and/or commitments to advance urban sustainability and inclusiveness in high-level policymaking events	✓	✓	✓							
	9. No. of urban practitioners that used the knowledge acquired from the training or materials of the global platform (gender disaggregated)	✓				✓	✓		✓		
	10. No. of cities that have more ambitious environmental targets for their sustainable and inclusive integrated plans				✓						
	11. No. of cities that have shared their good practices and lessons learned with the global platform	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Local projects used the Program Framework Design (PFD) indicators and adapted them to their individual contexts.

PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE URBANSHIFT OUTCOMES

Since the beginning of the UrbanShift Program in 2021, the projects have made strides toward achieving a wide range of programmatic goals

UrbanShift tracks this progress through yearly Annual Report questionnaires, reporting documents, and continuous engagement with country and global platform teams. It is important to note that not all of the country-led projects are advanced enough in on-the-ground implementation to measure quantifiable progress against their indicators. In these cases, qualitative and anecdotal evidence of impact is used to describe progress.



Outcome 1: Local and/or national governments have strengthened governance, institutions, processes and capacities to undertake evidence-based, sustainable, inclusive and integrated planning and policy reform

INDICATOR 1: NO. OF COUNTRIES THAT IMPROVE ENABLING FRAMING CONDITIONS TO SUPPORT MULTILEVEL INTEGRATION AND POLICY REFORM

The Resilient Urban Sierra Leone Project (read more on page 38-39) has emphasized and enhanced collaboration between local and national governments to enable transformative outcomes related to the project’s goals of reducing landslides and heat risks while adding climate-resilient infrastructure in vulnerable areas. For instance, following an UrbanShift Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Medellín, the **Freetown** City Council’s strengthened relationship with the Ministry of Finance facilitated a collaborative approach to financing large-scale infrastructure projects to bolster urban resilience.

Following the UrbanShift Asia Forum, co-hosted by NIUA in September 2023, **Puducherry** has updated its Comprehensive Development Plans to emphasize climate resilience and low-carbon mobility—key points of learning from the Forum. Inspired by the exchanges with other cities and national agencies on climate challenges, Puducherry has also created Coastal Resilience Plans that incorporate nature-based solutions to protect its coastline.

INDICATOR 2: NO. OF CITIES WITH IMPROVED, EVIDENCE-BASED, SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE, GENDER-SENSITIVE AND INTEGRATED PLANS AND PROCESSES

Over the past year, **Marrakech** has completed two strategic studies to inventory and assess the vulnerability of urban biodiversity. These studies have informed a new plant charter and ecological corridor framework for the city, which will improve biodiversity, air quality, and climate resilience. UrbanShift’s capacity-building activities in the city (read more on pages 34 and 59) have bolstered local and national expertise in urban biodiversity and sustainable planning. Overall, the UrbanShift project in Morocco has actively promoted women’s participation in both capacity-building activities and urban planning initiatives.



Outcome 2: Local and national governments have undertaken sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient conservation or land restoration investments in cities

INDICATOR 3: USD OF SUSTAINABLE, INTEGRATED, LOW-CARBON AND RESILIENT CONSERVATION OR LAND RESTORATION DEMONSTRATIONS AND/OR INVESTMENTS

As of May 2024, the Costa Rica country project has invested USD 14.3 million to advance decarbonization, enhance biodiversity protection and develop sustainable urban infrastructure. Guided by the National Decarbonization Plan, these efforts also target renewable public transit, zero-emission vehicles and waste management. The impact of this investment is already evident in Costa Rica’s progress toward biodiversity preservation, wetland restoration and GHG reduction, marking significant progress toward Costa Rica’s ambitious climate and sustainability goals (see more on page 31). Additionally, Costa Rica is pioneering financial mechanisms and business models to support a green economy transition, from a circular economy framework to a new plastic-processing facility to a regional nursery for native plants to bolster reforestation effort across the **San José** Greater Metropolitan Area.

In 2024, Rwanda made substantial progress toward its UrbanShift-supported goal of rehabilitating five wetland areas in **Kigali**. This project, now 5.5% complete, aims to improve biodiversity, reduce flood risks and restore vital local ecosystems. With the recently completed and successful transformation of the Nyandungu Wetland into an urban eco-park as a model, this wide-ranging initiative is ensuring that the new jobs and community benefits stemming from this project equitably benefit women and people with disabilities. Under the leadership of Rwanda’s Minister of Environment, Dr. Jeanne d’Arc Mujwamariya, this approach not only protects Rwanda’s environment but also promotes inclusivity and resilience in urban planning.

INDICATOR 4: NO. OF CITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE, INTEGRATED, LOW-CARBON AND RESILIENT, CONSERVATION OR LAND RESTORATION INVESTMENT PLANS OR PROJECT PIPELINES

Argentinean cities participating in the UrbanShift program have achieved significant milestones. **Mar del Plata** completed the “Sustainable Intermodality and Tourism” pre-project, along with its technical specifications. **Salta** approved a detailed design and construction plan for the pilot green corridor along Avenida Yrigoyen, advancing its pre-project goals. Similarly, **Mendoza** finalized the approval of a detailed design and construction plan for the sustainable hub pilot pre-project. These outcomes demonstrate progress toward sustainable urban development in these cities.

Outcome 3: Local and national governments initiate innovative financing and business models for scaling up sustainable urban solutions

INDICATOR 5: NO. OF CITIES WITH ENHANCED ACCESS TO FINANCING FOR SCALING UP SUSTAINABLE URBAN SOLUTIONS

Through participating in the City Academy course on Accessing Urban Climate Finance in Marrakech, officials from **Sierra Leone** have gained skills in developing and packaging urban infrastructure projects to attract climate finance. The RUSLP has successfully mobilized financial resources to construct climate-resilient infrastructure like the Western Area landfill, which will replace overused open dumpsites in the region and reduce carbon emissions. With this enhanced knowledge, future projects in the country are now more likely to attract funding from bilateral and private sources, scaling up sustainable urban solutions across Sierra Leone.

INDICATOR 6: NO. OF CITIES AND COUNTRIES THAT HAVE INITIATED INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL MECHANISMS AND/OR BUSINESS MODELS FOR SCALING UP SUSTAINABLE URBAN SOLUTIONS

Chengdu, Ningbo and **Chongqing** are exploring the adoption of innovative green financial strategies to drive sustainable urban transformation. Chengdu is creating guidelines to scale up investments in green infrastructure and ecological projects, while Ningbo is collaborating with local banks to boost financing options for carbon reduction and biodiversity initiatives. Chongqing is curating a portfolio of investable green projects, designed to attract private sector funding and accelerate the city's shift to a low-carbon economy. These efforts are collectively strengthening innovative financial support for environmental sustainability to promote a greener, more resilient urban future in China.



Outcome 4: Advocacy, knowledge exchange, capacity-building and partnerships

INDICATOR 8: NO. OF RESOLUTIONS AND/OR COMMITMENTS TO ADVANCE URBAN SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IN HIGH-LEVEL POLICYMAKING EVENTS

The **UrbanShift Global Platform** has been instrumental in raising the ambition of participating cities, as demonstrated by their public commitments to enhanced climate action targets. In 2024 alone, **Freetown** and **Teresina** joined the UN's Subnational Cooling Pledge. During the UrbanShift Latin America Forum, **Belém** made two important commitments aligned with C40's Urban Nature Accelerator: The city will ensure that 30-40% of its total built-up area is green or permeable space and will enhance equitable access to nature by connecting 70% of the city's population to quality green or blue spaces within a 15-minute journey.

INDICATOR 9: NO. OF URBAN PRACTITIONERS THAT USED THE KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED FROM THE TRAINING OR MATERIALS OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM (GENDER DISAGGREGATED)

More than 11,000 people have directly benefitted from the UrbanShift Global Platform by participating in UrbanShift's technical assistance and capacity building activities, advocacy events and webinars. Nearly 4,000 people have registered for UrbanShift's Online City Academy courses.

INDICATOR 10: NO. OF CITIES THAT HAVE MORE AMBITIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS FOR THEIR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE INTEGRATED PLANS

Ningbo, Chengdu and **Chongqing** have made strides toward aligning their efforts with China's climate and environmental goals to reduce carbon emissions, preserve critical ecosystems and foster more resilient cities. Ningbo has developed a comprehensive biodiversity strategy to transform ecological value into economic growth by conserving local ecosystems and setting carbon-neutral targets. Chengdu's initiatives focus on ecological restoration, particularly for Giant Panda habitats, enhancing biodiversity and supporting carbon neutrality through strategic investments. Meanwhile, Chongqing is pioneering low-carbon community designs, improving livability and reducing emissions as part of its carbon-neutral roadmap.

INDICATOR 11: NO. OF CITIES THAT HAVE SHARED THEIR GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED WITH THE GLOBAL PLATFORM

In Indonesia, UrbanShift has encouraged five Indonesian cities – **Balikpapan, Bitung, Jakarta, Palembang** and **Semarang** – to collaborate and share best practices across four islands. This effort has significantly strengthened these cities' capacity to tackle shared challenges and led to more informed decision-making and tangible improvements in the quality of life for Indonesian urban residents.



GLOSSARY

A

ADB: Asian Development Bank

B

BAPPENAS: Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning

C

C40: C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group

CBCA: City-Business Climate Alliance

CBD COP: Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity

CCEC: Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle

CCUD: China Center for Urban Development

CDP: Carbon Disclosure Project

CHAMP: Coalition for High-Ambition Multi-level Partnerships

CiBiX: City-Business Collaboration Accelerator

CO₂: Carbon dioxide

CoK: City of Kigali

COP: Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC

E

EV: Electric vehicle

F

FCC: Freetown City Council

FUNIBO: Brazilian Biodiversity Fund

G

GAM: Metropolitan Area of San José (Costa Rica)

GCC: Greater Chennai Corporation (India)

GDP: Gross domestic product

GEF: Global Environment Facility

GEF-6: GEF Sixth Replenishment Cycle

GEF-7: GEF Seventh Replenishment Cycle

GHG: Greenhouse Gas

GIZ: German Agency for International Cooperation

I

IAS: Indian Administrative Services

ICAP: Integrated Climate Action Planning

ICCC: Integrated Command and Control Center

ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

L

LiDAR: Light detection and ranging

LTTA: Light-touch technical assistance

M

MCTI: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Brazil)

MCID: Ministry of Cities (Brazil)

MEM: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment (Morocco)

MINAE: Ministry of Environment and Energy (Costa Rica)

MININFRA: Rwandan Ministry of Infrastructure

MMA: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (Brazil)

MOHUA: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (India)

N

NBS: Nature-based solutions

NIUA: National Institute of Urban Affairs (India)

NGO: Non-governmental organization

O

OTS: Organization for Tropical Studies (Costa Rica)

P

P2P: Peer-to-peer

PEG: Partnership Engagement Group

PMC: Pune Municipal Corporation (India)

PMO: Project Management Office

PSCDL: Pune Smart City Development Corporation Limited (India)

R

REMA: Rwanda Environment Management Authority

RUDP II: Rwanda Urban Development Project

RUSLP: Resilient Urban Sierra Leone Project

S

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

SMC: Surat Municipal Corporation (India)

SUDESC: Superintendence of Development of the Metropolitan Regions of Santa Catarina

SURGe: Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation initiative

T

TAP: Transformative Actions Program

TOD: Transit-oriented development

U

UCLG: United Cities and Local Governments

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNEA: United Nations Environment Assembly

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

W

WRI: World Resources Institute

Z

ZEBRA: Zero Emission Bus Resource Alliance

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AUTHORS

Eillie Anzilotti (WRI)

Urvi Patel (WRI)

John-Rob Pool (WRI)

Tania Daccarett (UNEP)

Wei Huang (UNEP)

CONTRIBUTORS

GEF

Aloke Barnwal

Mia Linnea Callenberg

UNEP

Ruth Zugman do Coutto

Gulnara Roll

Sharon Gil

Elsa Lefevre

Jiya Dhillon

Nicole Leichum

Asher Lessels

Paula Cobas

Sudhir Sharma

Luiza Schmidt

Yulia Rubleva

Manoj Kumar

WRI

Rogier van den Berg

Mariana Orloff

Pablo Lazo

Bruno Incau

C40

Andrea Fernández

Jessy Appavoo

Viola Follini

Matheus Ortega

Emily White

Wanjiku Ngare

Zöe Fitzgerald

Anelise Rosa

ICLEI

Maryke van Staden

Karishma Asarpota

Alyssa Chenault

Avantika Arjuna

Medhiansyah Putra

Ding Xi

Matteo Bizzotto

UNDP

Karam Amzil

Alber Mata Morales

Saliou Toure

Amal Nadim

WORLD BANK

Xueman Wang

Hisham Osman

Davison Muchadenyika

Yuko Arai

Esther Mutumba

Francis Nkoka

ADB

Arunkumar S. Abraham

EDITING & DESIGN

EDITED BY

Callan LaJuett

ThompsonStenning

Creative Group

DESIGNED BY

Callan LaJuett

ThompsonStenning

Creative Group

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Thiago Solyno Fotografia:

Page 19, page 27, page 29,

page 51, page 56, page 62,

pages 66-67, page 73, **Bahasa**

Global: Page 52, page 63,

Roberto Carlos Sanchez:

Page 12, page 57, pages 68-

69, page 77, **Unsplash:** Annie

Spratt (cover, pages 32-33),

Diego Carneiro (page 8),

Andrea Leopardi (page 25),

Cesar Badilla Miranda (page

30), Protias Benjamin Mugenzi

(page 36), Xavier Praillet (page

37), Abdulai Sayni (page 38),

Random Institute (page 39),

Jason Chao (page 42), Aviv

Rachmadian (page 79), **Pexels:**

Pieter van Noorden (page 3),

Yesica Rocio Volpi (page 7),

Evando Pereira (page 14), Tom

Fisk (page 15, page 45), Gaby

Lopez (page 24), Kelly (page

26, page 78), Al Fariz (page 44),

Climate Visuals: Aji Styawan

(page 17), **Ismail Idrissi:**

Page 23, page 35, **Pixabay:**

Eddypellegrini (page 41), Zuper

Dragon (page 43), **SIURA**

Studio: Page 47, **Mathilde Nai:**

Pages 54-55, **Youssef Tachine:**

Page 59, **Jeffrey Sauke:** Pages

60-61, **Daniel Pereira,** Pages

64-65, **City of Kigali:** Page 37,

page 76, **Greater Chennai**

Corporation: Page 40.

All remaining photos property of UrbanShift and partners



SUPPORTED BY:

LED BY:

**URBAN
SH/FT**



UN
environment
programme

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE



WORLD BANK GROUP

ADB ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK