



CityLinks Snapshot

ICMA CityLinks™ is based on the premise that well-managed cities are the key to efficient service delivery, economic growth, sound management of resources, community health, and political stability—and that cities learn best from other cities. ICMA designed its CityLinks program to allow city officials in developing and transitioning countries to draw on the resources of their U.S. and international counterparts to find sustainable solutions tailored to the real needs of their cities. from each other's experience. CityLinks' current projects include:

ASEAN Cities Climate Change Partnership

The ASEAN Cities Climate Change Partnership creates peer-to-peer learning opportunities among participating cities through interactive training, knowledge sharing conferences, exchange trips, and virtual advice from climate specialists about developing climate-resilient approaches. Chiang Rai, Thailand, and Legazpi City, Philippines, are collaborating with Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to produce climate change adaptation strategies designed to strengthen urban resiliency. The partnerships were established in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Durban - Southeast Florida Climate Change Partnership

The Durban - Southeast Florida Climate Change Partnership connected Broward County and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with Durban, South Africa, to address the impacts of climate change and strategies for adaptation. CityLinks facilitated exchange visits that allowed the partners to explore the benefits and challenges of collaborating with nearby jurisdictions to implement regional climate adaptation strategies.

Durban - Dar es Salaam Climate Change Partnership

To support global implementation of the Durban Adaptation Charter, CityLinks fostered a partnership between Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Durban, South Africa. Experts from Durban are working with officials from Dar es Salaam to identify and address key vulnerabilities in the city in light of climate change, with specific emphasis on sea level rise and coastal management. In conjunction with the CityLinks team, officials from Durban are providing capacity building opportunities related to climate change for local government officials in Dar es Salaam.

Georgia Waste Management Project

Under a four-year cooperative agreement, ICMA is assisting the government of Georgia in designing adequate waste management and recycling systems in the Kakheti and Adjara regions. The Waste Management Technology in Regions project includes pilots in selected municipalities to support a cleaner and healthier environment, minimize adverse impacts from waste on human health and natural resources such as air, water, soil, and biodiversity, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from landfills.

Honduras Pilot Partnership to Strengthen Violence Prevention Through Environmental Design

In a CityLinks pilot, the cities of La Ceiba and Choloma in Honduras participated in a city-to-city partnership with Los Angeles, California. The pilot applied the CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) methodology, which improves the conditions that enhance citizen security while simultaneously addressing risks associated with the effects of climate change.

The CityLinks Model

One of the most innovative aspects of the CityLinks model is that it can work for communities of any size and tackle any technical area. The technical areas in the most recent iteration of CityLinks are based on the President's Global Health Initiatives. Over the years ICMA has used its CityLinks model in programs outside the CityLinks funding umbrella and in programs funded by donors other than USAID:

In Mexico, Costa Rica, and Argentina, ICMA established CityLinks partnerships that helped jurisdictions improve their credit ratings and increase their ability to borrow for infrastructure improvements.

ICMA has partnered U.S. cities and counties and their police/sheriff's departments with their counterparts in Panama, El Salvador, and Guatemala to share practices in community-based crime and violence prevention.

In Kosovo, ICMA facilitated a CityLinks partnership to address downtown traffic congestion and scarcity of parking as top priorities for the city of Gjilan. The U.S. partners evaluated traffic flows; recommended improvements for intersections, pedestrians, and parking; and examined the possibility of a local circulator bus—and received a certificate of appreciation from the Gjilan mayor.

Results from past CityLinks projects:

A consortium of more than 50 cities in Bulgaria, together with a national foundation and U.S. partners, established a local economic development program that resulted in the creation of a website, approximately 4,000 new jobs, and substantial investment in new and expanding businesses.

Two tsunami-ravaged cities in India designed and built community playgrounds, educated citizens about public services, improved access to reliable, safe drinking water for 20,000 citizens, and increased water service revenues by \$150,000 per year.

In Jordan, CityLinks partners designed and implemented new practices for reduction, collection, and disposal of medical and industrial waste, resulting in significant improvements in medical waste management that helped safeguard the country's precious water supply and the health of the community. The project was so successful that USAID awarded ICMA a follow-on project to continue the work and expand its scope to address other sources of hazardous waste. The number of hospitals that agreed to use the incineration services and manage their waste safely grew steadily from 3 to 21 by the end of 2005. Now, seven years later, 109 hospitals, medical clinics, and other medically related businesses are disposing their waste safely with JUST. JUST incinerates 3 tons per day and burned more than 467 tons, using safety measures, in 2012. In addition, the university now manages about 61 percent of all medical waste in Jordan.

San Juan de los Lagos, Mexico - Bullhead City, Tolleson, AZ, and Brea, CA

The cities of Campbell, California, and Rioverde, San Luis Potosí, Mexico, were paired in 2001, when the program was known as Resource Cities. Although the official program ended, Campbell and Rioverde have continued their relationship for almost ten years, focusing on training, technical assistance, and the donation of surplus equipment and vehicles.

Following a series of technical exchanges, the Campbell city council authorized the donation of three surplus vehicles and other surplus equipment to Rioverde, along with the donation of surplus fire equipment from the Santa Clara County Fire Department, which provides contract fire protection services to Campbell. Representatives of Rioverde traveled to Campbell in 2003 to collect the vehicles and transport them and the donated equipment to Mexico.

Following several changes in administration in Rioverde, the two cities reconnected in 2007 when the new mayor at that time, Sergio Gama Dufour, contacted the city of Campbell with a request for donation of equipment and vehicles. Over the course of several months, emails and photographs of equipment and vehicles were exchanged, culminating in a visit by the Rioverde mayor to Campbell in late 2007.

In early 2008, two surplus garbage trucks packed with high-quality surplus fire protection and emergency response equipment were transported via trailer to Laredo, Texas, where they cleared customs and were driven eight hours south to Rioverde by local officials.

In 2010, another significant donation of surplus fire equipment was shipped to Laredo, where it was collected and transported to Rioverde for use by the Rioverde volunteer fire department. Campbell and Rioverde are

currently working on another donation of equipment as well as coordinating a technical exchange for the current Rioverde administration.

"We've enjoyed the ongoing relationship with Rioverde that developed out of the ICMA program," says Campbell City Manager Dan Rich. "Sharing our city's professional knowledge and expertise with our neighbors has been a rewarding opportunity to help others. At the same time, we benefit by looking beyond the borders of our own community, expanding our understanding of common municipal problems, and reflecting on the challenges facing local governments from a different perspective."

Tirana, Albania - Catawba County, NC

Under the ICMA CityLinks program, Catawba County, North Carolina, and Tirana, Albania, began working together in 2001 to improve environmental conditions at the landfill, expand waste collection services, and strengthen management of Tirana's infrastructure. The partnership, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, successfully connected the county's public works expertise with Tirana's new mayor, who was committed to improving local government services after years of neglect.

The CityLinks program successfully raised awareness of the environmental benefits of proper waste management, laid a foundation for citizen commitment to neighborhood cleanliness and recycling, encouraged schools to become more involved in recycling, and provided a model for similar clean-up days in seven additional neighborhoods.

The CityLinks team also developed an English language recycling handbook, which was then translated into Albanian to guide future municipal efforts.

Success stories