

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Singapore, showing a dense urban area with a river winding through it. The buildings are mostly multi-story structures with brown roofs. There is a significant amount of greenery, including palm trees and other tropical plants. A road with a yellow center line runs horizontally across the middle of the image. The overall scene is a mix of urban development and natural environment.

IMPLEMENTING AGENDA 2030

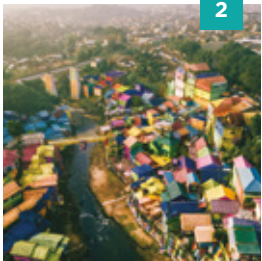









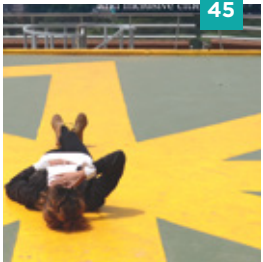
THROUGH

SymbioCity

EXPERIENCES
FROM CITIES
ON FOUR
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TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE CITIES

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EDITORIAL NOTES:

SPECIAL THANKS

This publication draws its inspiration from the work carried out by all the committed leaders, staff, communities, stakeholders and experts engaged in SymbioCity activities over the past 10 years all over the world. We wish to acknowledge and thank everyone who has contributed to finding new solutions for a more sustainable urban future.

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This publication has been produced as a part of the SymbioCity Global Programme at the Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), with funding from Sida. The content is the sole responsibility of the publishing partners and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the Sida or SALAR. You are welcome to copy, distribute and present the material, provided that you attribute the work to SymbioCity.



 The decisions we make
now will shape the future
of our cities and planet.”

TEN YEARS TO

TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

With less than 10 years left in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, we have entered into the Decade of Action which calls for accelerating sustainable solutions to the world's biggest challenges. At the same time, the world's urban population is expected to double within the next 30 years. The world is becoming urban.

The fate of our cities and the fate of our planet are interlinked. The way we manage urbanisation - how cities and towns develop and grow - will fundamentally determine the future of our planet. It is a daunting task, especially in the light of the climate crisis, inequality, poverty and resource scarcity. At the same time, urban areas hold great potential, and with the right approach, there are opportunities for developing cities which are both green and people friendly.

Local governments are right at the centre of this - the mandate for planning, developing and managing our cities and urban areas is largely theirs. The Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda give a clear direction for the changes we need to see. We know what needs to be done. But taking the step from *what* to *how* is not easy. There is an urgent need to increase capacity, find new ways of working, new methods, tools and solutions to deal with the urban challenges.

SymbioCity has been developed as an approach and methodology to inclusive and sustainable urban development, based on successful experiences of local governments in Sweden and around the world. Since 2010, with funding from Sida and Swedish Embassies, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and SKL International have used SymbioCity as an approach and a method to promote sustainable urban development and contribute to the alleviation of urban poverty around the globe. Over the past 10 years, the approach has been applied by committed urban leaders, local government staff, communities, civil society organisations and experts in 20 cities in 8 countries. Capacity development programmes covering 15 countries have been implemented. The approach has been adapted to

local needs and local resources and used to make tangible improvements to urban planning, development and management.

The experiences of local governments working with the SymbioCity approach has resulted in knowledge and methods of global relevance. From new forms of working across sectors, with communities and stakeholders, through methods for understanding local opportunities and challenges to developing visions, strategies and innovative solutions for sustainable cities.

This publication summarizes some of experiences and provides links to further resources for anyone wanting to make use of the approach. It is meant to provide inspiration and tools for other cities wishing to embark on the journey to sustainability.

TEN YEARS

WITH THE SYMBIOCITY PROGRAMME

RESPONSIVE SOLUTIONS FOR DEVELOPING CITIES

SymbioCity has been used to support local and regional governments in planning, developing and managing cities in a more inclusive and sustainable way through projects in 20 cities in 8 countries and capacity development programmes covering 15 countries.

Enabling Local Democracy and Inclusive Urban Development Through the SymbioCity Approach, covering North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Georgia and Ukraine (in collaboration with ICLD, 2015-2019).

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES



Tunisia

MAHDIA AND EL MOUROUJ (2018-2020)



Zambia

MAZABUKA (2012-2013)

Towards Sustainable Development and Local Democracy through the SymbioCity Approach, covering Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Rwanda (in collaboration with ICLD, 2011-2014).

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES



Colombia

APARTADÓ AND PITALITO (2017-2019)



Myanmar

DAWEI, KALAY AND KALAW
(2017-2020)



China

DUYUN (2012-2013)

Ethiopia

SHASHEMENE AND
DEBRE BERHAN
(2018-2020)



Kenya

HOMA BAY, KAKAMEGA,
KISUMU, KITUI, MERU,
NAKURU AND TRANS NZOIA
COUNTIES (2015-2019)

Indonesia

PALU AND
PROBOLINGGO
(2012-2013)

The SymbioCity
Approach - Capacity
Development for
Urban Sustainability,
covering Vietnam,
Thailand, Bangladesh,
and Indonesia (in
collaboration with
UNITAR, 2011-2012).

INTERNATIONAL
TRAINING PROGRAMMES

A HOLISTIC AND INCLUSIVE APPROACH

TO SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

SymbioCity provides methods, processes and tools that support local governments and urban stakeholders in planning, development, and management of urban areas in a more sustainable way.

READ MORE



SYMBIOCITY APPROACH

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

PROCESS GUIDE

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

SymbioCity promotes a holistic and inclusive approach to sustainable urban development which provides opportunities to improve living standards and well-being, safety, comfort and quality of life for all by including stakeholders and communities in urban development processes. The conceptual framework is generic and is applied in a flexible way according to the conditions and needs of the context. The framework is responsive, aiming to optimise processes already in use.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH: SEEING THE BIGGER PICTURE

The approach adopts a holistic and comprehensive way of thinking before considering specific solutions and interventions. It integrates economic, environmental, socio-cultural and spatial dimensions; and includes institutional as well as long-term and visionary perspectives. It allows the user to see the bigger picture and how different urban functions and systems are interrelated today and in a possible future. It starts by looking at the assets the city



can leverage in addressing the challenges identified using a “vision-based” instead of “problem-based” approaches. As opposed to planning and development in silos, SymbioCity promotes connections between sectors and involvement of various actors and disciplines, to allow for synergies and integrated solutions that make better use of local resources and assets.

AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH: CITIES FOR ALL

Cities should be for everyone. Different groups experience the city differently and may have different needs and aspirations.

This needs to be addressed in the planning and development of the city. Different groups are included by promoting participatory processes and the inclusion of communities, private sector and civil society to share their insights, experiences and perspectives. By putting special emphasis on gender perspectives and the urban poor, SymbioCity aims to contribute to poverty reduction and improved living conditions for all.

**A RESPONSIVE APPROACH:
LOCAL OWNERSHIP IS
THE KEY**

Local leadership and ownership are key factors to transforming an urban environment in a positive direction. The approach does not provide ready-made solutions to all urban challenges. Instead, it offers methods and tools for successfully working towards sustainable urban development and a way of moving from ideas to action. The solutions that emerge will be local. The ownership will be local. SymbioCity strives to strengthen existing structures and processes, to not introduce new ones.

KEY PRINCIPLES

All SymbioCity projects are based on a set of entry points which guide the process and working methods in an inclusive and sustainable direction.



From silos to multidisciplinary teams

- Connections between different actors and disciplines lead to synergies and integrated solutions, which make better use of local resources and assets.



From problem-based to vision-based

- A positive, shared vision of the future motivates stakeholders to look with courage and hope at the many and difficult problems they often face.



From single effects to synergies

- Synergistic solutions that solve several problems at once are often more cost-effective and sustainable, yielding more from less.



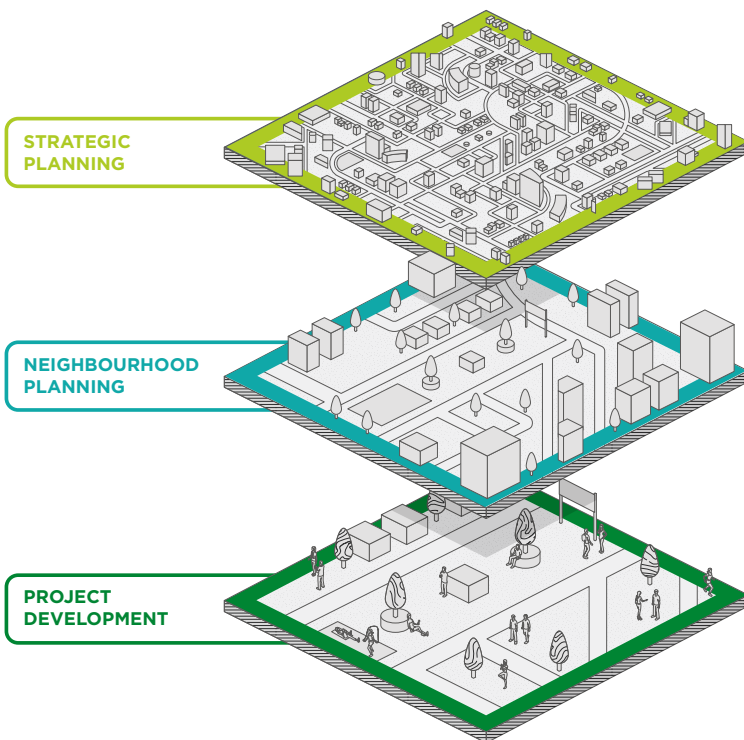
From top-down to bottom-up processes

- By empowering and engaging the people we plan for, we deliver well-adapted and long-lasting urban solutions that work for everyone.



From reactive to proactive

- Instead of reacting to problems as they emerge, a proactive approach to urban challenges can save money and avoid disasters.

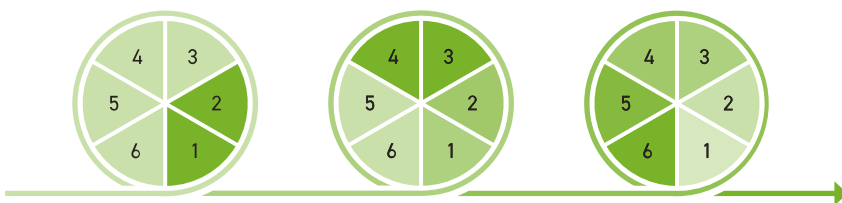


WHEN TO USE THE APPROACH?

The working procedure can be applied on different levels – the region, the city, the city-district, the neighbourhood or a single street block. For example, the process can be used for reviewing and providing strategic directions and for improving the sustainability dimensions in existing city plans; to implement existing plans and to identify and implement necessary institutional, organisational and managerial changes.

A SIX-STEP ITERATIVE PROCESS

SymbioCity provides a generic working process which can be adapted to the prevailing local conditions. There are many advantages to be gained from working in a flexible, iterative or cyclical manner. This iterative working process is structured around a six-step working procedure that includes the following main steps:



1. Define and organise the process

Good planning and organisation are crucial to the success of any project. An organisational plan should define activities, their interrelationships and all relevant stakeholders. People must form an integral part of the organisational plan, with special attention to gender-sensitive and pro-poor perspectives.

2. Diagnose current conditions

Local conditions should be mapped to identify needs, problems, challenges and opportunities. The situation of the most disadvantaged groups should be in focus. Positive features are important as assets to be protected and further supported. The cause of problems should be identified as a basis for developing effective and integrated solutions.

3. Specify objectives, indicators and targets

The aim is to articulate ambitions for the city's future without pre-judging specific proposals and solutions. Targets and indicators are drawn up to formulate measurable objectives. Objectives should be based on the preliminary diagnosis and can be qualitative or quantitative.

4. Develop alternative proposals

Alternatives should now be identified, since urban challenges are complex and often have multiple solutions. For any solution or investment to be relevant in both the short and the long term, it is essential that alternatives are flexible and focused on synergies between different urban systems.

5. Analyse impacts

The economic, social, environmental and spatial impacts of alternative proposals should be evaluated as a basis for informed decision-making. Impact analysis is an important step in developing integrated and innovative proposals, and also a core aspect of sustainability reviews. Best practice requires special attention to the conditions of the urban poor.

6. Implementation and follow up

The final proposal may highlight one preferred alternative or combine several options. Synergies between different systems are vital for optimising the effects of the planning process and on the quality of the built environment. The planning process is, however, not a linear one, going step by step, but an iterative cycle of going back and forth, re-thinking earlier conclusions, and revising them with insights gathered later in the process.



THE ORIGINS OF SYMBIOCITY

Swedish municipalities have a long-standing vision of urban development as more than the sum of its parts. This holistic way of working has resulted in Swedish cities ranking among the most sustainable in the world, with targets and strategies that encourage a green transformation. SymbioCity methods are based on these experiences, as applied and continuously refined in transition and developing countries. SymbioCity is run from the Secretariat at the head office of SKL International and SALAR in Stockholm. As part of Swedish international development cooperation, SymbioCity serves as a framework to help cities all over the world to plan and realise sustainable urban futures.

PLANNING A CITY FOR ALL

Different groups experience the city in different ways and have their own knowledge, needs and aspirations. Urban planning and development needs to address this. Through participatory processes, communities, businesses and civil society are encouraged to share their insights, experiences and perspectives, and contribute by being part of the solutions. Through a special emphasis on gender equality, children, and the urban poor, SymbioCity contributes to poverty reduction and improved living conditions for all.

GENDER EQUITY

Women and men use cities differently. Yet historically, planning has regarded the needs and experiences of men and women as the same, and developed solutions accordingly. As women many times constitute the minority in decision-making positions, it is the perceptions and priorities of men that guide infrastructure and services planning. Mainstreaming gender equity ensures that planning and services are equitable, fairly distributed, and of the same quality for men, boys, women, and girls.

URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION

Urban poverty is not only about income, it is also about a lack of access to essential health, education and urban services, amenities, opportunities, goods, and decision-making. Insufficient and ineffective urban systems and functions both cause and reinforce poverty. By involving the poor in planning, prioritising and decision-making, and by placing their needs and rights at the centre of urban planning, it is possible to address these needs and reduce poverty at the same time as creating cities that work for everyone.

PLANNING FOR CHILDREN

A city is inhabited and used by people of all ages, from the very young to the very old. Planners need to keep in mind that cities should work for people of all ages, and offer place to grow up and to grow old. Planning cities that work for children offers an opportunity to improve cities for all, and benefit the health and well-being, safety, and sustainability of communities. Planning with the needs of children in mind means creating room for play, but also more secure streets, improved places (where children's eye level perspectives are considered), greener areas, and physical access to social services.



READ MORE



**SYMBIOCITY
THEMATIC MODULES**

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

TAKING ACTION TOGETHER



Urban development is a complex process involving many different systems, sectors and stakeholders. Creating cities for all within planetary boundaries will require actions at all levels, from all sectors and many different types of stakeholders. It will require new ways of working and new forms of collaboration.

A number of success factors for taking action together have been identified through the SymbioCity projects.

1. Urban leaders must rise to the challenge and lead the way towards sustainable and inclusive urban planning.
2. Increased focus on cross-departmental collaboration within local government. A holistic perspective is necessary when planning and developing urban areas, and the different arms of local government must

work together in defining needs, vision and solutions.

3. Improved vertical collaboration between national, regional, local and sub-local levels, as well as collaboration with neighbouring local/regional governments.
4. Establishing platforms for dialogue and collaboration with urban stakeholders, enabling co-production of urban solutions.
5. Active and continuous engagement of the community in urban planning, development and management.

The leaders we need

Strong leadership is vital for sustainable, participatory and inclusive urban development processes. The leaders we need are those who see a need for change, and take uncomfortable decisions to make necessary moves for it to happen. Inclusive planning means getting on board a range of stakeholders, partners, and colleagues, and undertaking the urban development journey together.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD

URBAN LEADER

A good urban leader can:

- ☑ **Think beyond election cycles and be above political interests.**
- ☑ **Put – and keep – sustainable development on the agenda.**
- ☑ **Make the case for sustainable urbanism and mobilise support.**
- ☑ **Share insights, knowledge, and information with others.**
- ☑ **Facilitate a vision shared by diverse stakeholders.**
- ☑ **Develop – and delegate – strategic programmes and plans.**



**GET STARTED.
MOVE FORWARD!**

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

“Urban development requires leaders who have collaboration, partnerships, civic education, vision, passion and drive at the fore of their leadership strategy.”

Immaculate Shamalla, Kitale Local Urban Forum, Kenya

- ☑ **Involve communities, civil society, businesses, and the media.**
- ☑ **Recognise the strengths of team members and the importance of diverse perspectives.**
- ☑ **Extend influence across divisions.**
- ☑ **Balance immediate and long-term needs of a community.**
- ☑ **Act in the interests of current and future citizens.**
- ☑ **Make difficult decisions, and take responsibility for implementing them.**
- ☑ **Ask for, and value feedback for learning and improvement**
- ☑ **Promote participation, share ownership, and give credit.**

An integrated way of working



Kakamega integrated working group in Kenya discuss the Butere Ecopark design together with students from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

With SymbioCity, we not only bring people together, we also bring the various departments and arms of government in a working table whereby the issues addressed are seen from a wider scope of spectra. This is a very big plus.”

Stephen Sule, Pilot Coordinator for Kisumu County, Kenya

Providing opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between the different arms of local government has proven vital to successful urban development. Establishing *integrated working groups*, consisting of representatives from several sector departments involved in urban issues, enables collaboration across sector borders. This group can jointly analyse, strategize and develop solutions for the future of the city – exploring links and synergies between their respective departments. A clear mandate, purpose and workplan are important elements of an integrated way of working. Similarly, platforms for dialogue between decision-makers are necessary for ensuring coherence in decisions.

The power of partnerships and collaboration

Much of what happens in an urban area is the result of someone or an entity other than the local government. It might be a landowner, a property developer, a transport operator, a businessperson, industries, individuals, etc. In an integrated approach to development, municipalities find ways of collaborating with these stakeholders to jointly reach the desired goals.

A stakeholder mapping helps identify who these stakeholders are, and discusses which role they should have in the project. When mapping the broader range of stakeholders, consider:

- Who else influences, or is influenced by, urban development in the city?
- Who creates change?
- Who is affected by the changes proposed?



Preserving local heritage

In Kalaw, Myanmar, there is a concern that rampant construction activity, particularly high-rise buildings, will have a negative impact on the town and its unique assets of rich green nature, biodiversity and cultural diversity. There was an urgent need for local policy and legislative options as well as design guidelines for heritage conservation and regulation of new development.

In collaboration with the NGO Yangon Heritage Trust, a local team of Kalaw municipal authorities conducted a Heritage Mapping and training. An inventory of around 5000 buildings was completed, resulting in a comprehensive heritage list and map which formed the basis for further development of a robust heritage strategy in Kalaw.



EXAMPLE

SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES

IN URBAN: ADOPT A TREE

In Kiminini, Kenya, trees were planted in the central areas of town. Shop owners, families or business organisations in the vicinity were given the responsibility (and an adoption certificate) to take care of the trees. Many took up the responsibility and not only watered their tree regularly but also built additional protection to ensure roaming animals would not destroy it.

In the photo above, a shop owner is using the shade of her own adopted tree, which she has protected with a robust wood structure to avoid goats and donkeys eating it.

Planning with people

The community is one of the most important stakeholders, and a very diverse group. Planning with people is the most effective way of finding solutions that respond to the needs of different groups and build a sense of ownership among stakeholders. An inclusive city develops from this participatory process, where all stakeholders, particularly those from vulnerable sectors of the community, are included in the planning, development and management.

Finding the right level and means of engaging the community in different parts of the planning process requires careful consideration. Approaches may vary depending on which group you are addressing. Participation is useful both in planning, implementing and managing urban areas.

EXAMPLE

URBAN SAFETY ASSESSMENT IN APARTADÓ, COLOMBIA



In the city of Apartadó in Colombia, the urban sustainability review included consultations with citizens who were invited to indicate the three areas that most urgently needed to be addressed in improving urban safety.

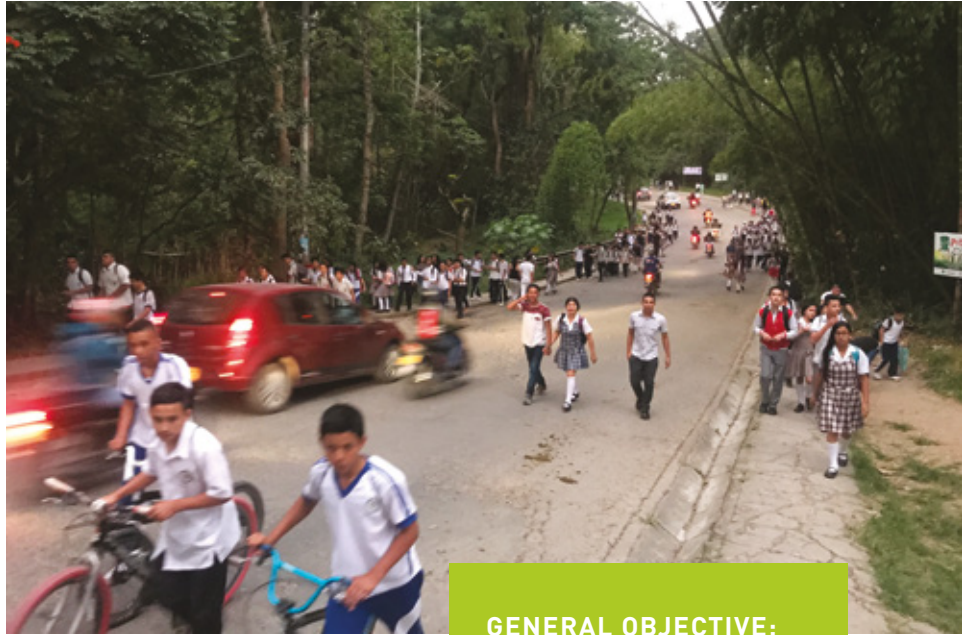
A participative public event in Apartadó with the aim of learning more about local security conditions.

LEADING FOR CHANGE - THE EXAMPLE OF PITALITO

Pedestrian spaces and bike paths as a driving force for urban renewal were some of the elements of Pitalito's new urban mobility strategy – the result of a new way of working within the municipality, turning Pitalito into an attractive and inclusive city.

In Pitalito, Colombia, urban mobility had long been interpreted as developing infrastructure for cars. Public investments in transport therefore mainly went into development and pavement of vehicular roads. A transport study carried out by the SymbioCity Working Group showed that walking, cycling, and public transport are the dominant modes of transport among the urban population, especially among children and the poor. It also showed that women to a higher degree are dependent on being driven by someone else by car or moped.

Inspired by this data, and a site visit to Sweden, the Mayor of Pitalito spearheaded an initiative to invest in more sustainable mobility solutions for the city. The first step was to develop a *Strategy for Sustainable Mobility*. In the analysis, design and decision process, the city involved a number of stakeholders, including three schools. Google Forms surveys were used as one tool in this endeavour. A total of 450 adults and 114 school children were interviewed about mobility habits and transport modes as part of the project development process. The citizens were interviewed either on the street, by the schools or through WhatsApp. The data was disaggregated by



gender and age. Based on the survey, an analysis of different modes of transport in relation to gender is described in the mobility strategy.

The finished strategy covered, among other things, a proposed bicycle network for the city, wider sidewalks and improved public transport but also how to integrate more greenery into the city. The strategy also influenced the development of the Comprehensive Plan where the proposed bicycle network now has been included. A collaboration with

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

Develop pedestrian spaces and bike paths, as a driving force for urban renewal, taking advantage of the environmental potential, public space and strengthening civic culture turning Pitalito into an attractive and inclusive city.

the local university was established, in part as a strategy to ensure the long-term continuity of the project across political cycles.

Turning the strategy into action, the city then decided to pilot urban mobility improvements through a tactical urbanism initiative. This consisted of widened sidewalks and bicycle path that has been designed on an 800-meter-long street that passes by three schools. The path also connects the centre with a neighbourhood of lower socioeconomic status. The new street layout will improve mobility for pedestrians and people on bicycles

We've wanted a mobility strategy for 20 years but due to lack of funds we have never developed one since the work is always assigned to consultants. Now we have one! It may not be to the same high standards, but it has the essential elements – and was developed by us in the municipal working group."

Oscar Cardona Fernandez, Pitalito Working Group Member

going to and from the schools. Cycling was also encouraged through new innovative approaches:

- Municipal events within sports, recreation and health were adjusted to enable and encourage cycling.
- The bicycle network is constructed on existing road space to enable the construction of a city-wide network quickly and at a moderate cost.
- The municipality leads the way by remodelling its car parking to also include bicycles and employees were allowed to use working time for commuting to work by bike.

In competition with other municipalities, Pitalito then applied for funds from the National Agency of Road Security (ANSV) for the implementation of the walk and bicycle path. ANSV approved and provided them with financial resources and technical support to implement the intervention. The city has continued working with this street stretch and improved the walk path on the other side of the road as well as providing LED-lights in order to increase safety in the evening. The city also continued to implement more bicycle paths with internal funding.



The Mayor of Pitalito, Miguel Antonio Rico Rincón





KNOWING YOUR CITY

Achieving a joint understanding of your city provides a foundation for moving forward through visions, strategies and action. How did the city get to be where it is now, and what are the core sustainability issues? What are the opportunities, challenges and needs expressed by different groups?



The SymbioCity conceptual model provides a useful framework for carrying out the Urban Sustainability Review.

By carrying out an Urban Sustainability Review (USR), urban stakeholders can jointly identify needs, challenges and opportunities, as well as understand why things are as they are in the city. The USR process also has social and democratic value. It provides opportunities for communication with stakeholders which is likely to

facilitate interaction and contribute to better understanding between the different stakeholders. When we jointly see the city as a whole, it is easier to see how we can all contribute to its development.

The SymbioCity conceptual model provides a useful framework for carrying out the Urban Sustainability Review.



Duyun, China

THE URBAN SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR:

- **Understanding the city's current opportunities, challenges, and their underlying causes.**
- **Establishing a joint, collective knowledge base.**
- **Stakeholder engagement (local businesses, community, civil society, and national level government and agencies).**
- **Open and transparent discussions.**
- **Community asset mapping, to build on what exists already.**
- **Making decisions and selecting priorities based on the relevant evidence and information you have gathered.**

Analysis should always be approached holistically, although the scale of analysis might be different depending on its purpose. A strategic plan would need a broad analysis, while a project plan could have a narrower focus. For example, a sector project focusing on water would analyse the water sector, but also other issues and sectors which link to water, such as waste management, land use, housing etc.

Community participation and stakeholder consultations are methods of identifying which issues are important in the local context. Rather than trying to cover everything, an inclusive process will help identify the priority urban sustainability issues to be discussed in detail.

READ MORE



GUIDELINE FOR URBAN SUSTAINABILITY REVIEWS

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

Methods for knowledge and data collection

CASE

CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL

MEETINGS TO SHARE

INFORMATION AND DATA

Sharing data and plans between departments is crucial for a more holistic way of working. Getting different sectoral departments in the city to meet around the same table to discuss their understanding of challenges and opportunities is a good starting point for developing an urban sustainability review. In Dawei, Myanmar, an integrated working group was formed together with representatives from national and regional levels to discuss the future of the town.



CASE A CITY PROFILE FOR KALAW

Local data is crucial in understanding the reality of a town and making informed planning decisions based on knowledge and facts. In Kalaw, Myanmar, a City Profile was carried out, providing a set of town level data related to urban planning and development. Local authorities carried out a survey covering approximately 10% of all households in Kalaw using the software KoBoToolbox and hand-held devices. The questionnaire addressed access to services, service satisfaction, as well as the respondent's perceptions for key priorities and challenges. This ward level comparison enabled government officials to understand the intra-city dynamics of service delivery and need for infrastructure in specific areas that

are deficient in provision of services. In parallel to this, a land use map of the whole city was put together using GPS plotters and GIS software, using existing land-use numbering and colour coding system.

For the next steps, the team plans to develop methodology of data management in Kalaw. This includes identification of responsible department, data storage, frequency and methods for data update. The analysis from the results will be also used as references for their urban service management and town planning. The learnings from this pilot project will be shared to modify and develop standard methodology to replicate to other cities in the future.



CASE

WALK-THROUGH EVALUATION

Walk-through evaluations are a practical way of analysing space and considering how it is experienced by different groups in the city. In these evaluations, working group members walk through a defined route and note down their observations, covering different aspects of sustainability and inclusion. For instance, in Kalay, Myanmar, the issue of public space and access for women was discussed at length.



“I’m impressed with the methods and processes which help us to learn how to develop our dreams, and how to deal with the obstacles we can encounter in achieving the dreams we have developed.”

U Kyaw Myin Tun, Staff officer, Environmental Conservation Department, Dawei, Myanmar

CASE

USING VIRTUAL REALITY TO UNDERSTAND URBAN SPACES

Virtual interactive walk tours were used as tool for analysing and understanding urban spaces and their use by different stakeholders in Dawei, Myanmar. The results were documented directly on the 360 degree image where it could be used as a basis for discussion.

UNDERSTANDING AHERO TOWN

EXPERIENCES FROM KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

The urban sustainability review in Ahero Town, Kisumu County, Kenya, was done through a number of activities and methods for fact-finding and analysis of the situation, but also for information dissemination and involvement of stakeholders.



Working Group meetings



Stakeholders' meetings



Site visits



Hot spot mapping



Fact finding through documents, maps and strategies



Interviews with departments



Clean-up days



Official programmes



Exhibition on recycling and composting



Partnership with women NGOs



Local radio broadcasting



Theatre play on environmental awareness



CLEAN RIVERS, CITY PARKS AND POVERTY

THE WANTS, HAVES AND DON'T WANTS OF PALU, INDONESIA

At Palu's assets and visions seminar, students, teachers, young people, representatives from the local government, street vendors, religious groups, academics, environmentalists, journalists, and other stakeholders met to discuss the "wants", "don't wants", "haves" and "don't haves" of Palu. This is what one group found.



DREAMING TOGETHER

A vision is more than a dream of a better future. It is a guiding statement for long-term strategic planning, and a constant motivation for stakeholders, communities, and leaders. The secret to an effective vision is that it is achievable in the long-term, and that it is created from priorities developed during the stakeholder engagement and analysis phases.

Setting Visions, Goals and Objectives is a way of jointly agreeing, together with stakeholders, on a desired future. Well formulated goals will help steer planning and project development in an inclusive direction. Shared visions also enable different stakeholders to contribute to reaching the vision, each from their own perspective.

CITIZENS' DREAMS AND PROPOSALS IN APARTADÓ, COLOMBIA

The city of Apartadó in Colombia conducted an urban sustainability review to assess their current situation and to create a common knowledge base before moving to making decisions. The process included consultations with the

private sector as well as with citizens. A participatory event was organised in two parks in central Apartadó, where citizens of different ages and social groups were invited to indicate which three areas were the most urgent to address, choosing between health, housing, waste management, job opportunities, drinking water, security, mobility, education, civic culture, recreation and green spaces. They were also encouraged to describe their dreams and make proposals and suggestions of their own. The review resulted in a better understanding of the reasons for the current situation in the city and trends, as well as how different areas and sectors were interconnected. Based on this analysis, the working group of Apartadó were able to make informed decisions about which issues to prioritise for further development.





EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

There is often more than one way to solve a problem or reach a goal. Looking at alternative solutions - different ways of doing things - and comparing the pros and cons of different options is an important part of finding the right way forward. Through a scenario matrix exercise, planners from Dawei, Myanmar, analyse alternative solutions to the city's problems, and their impacts and agree on a preferred option.



Working group members in Dawei City, Myanmar, use a scenario matrix exercise for analysing alternative solutions and their impacts for the development of the city.

A vision and strategy for Kalay

Based on the Urban Sustainability Review and stakeholder engagement, a multi-sectoral working group developed a vision for a sustainable development of Kalay, Myanmar.



By 2040, Kalay is a trade centre and transport hub which is resilient to disasters by focusing on proper management of natural resources, job opportunities, capacity development and citizens' engagement."

OBJECTIVES

1 Sustainable transportation and basic infrastructure are improved and developed for all users, and future developments provide well-built basic infrastructure.

2 Good balance is achieved between urban and rural development where one part of the urban-rural linkages is the increased delivery of high-quality local products.

3 Happiness and peacefulness is significant for Kalay with a strong trade economy that have made it the trade centre of North West of Myanmar.

4 As a green town resilient to natural disasters, natural resources and cultural heritage is utilized and developed in conjunction with the development of human resources.

5 Kalay citizens are healthy, wealthy with a high level of education and basic social infrastructure is provided.

6 All urban citizens are included and allowed to participate and collaborate in urban administration and development.

Ontulili Meru County

Our Town: Well- planned, Managed and Economically Sustainable

Ontulili – ‘Sodom apples’ in Massi

A multi-cultural town 210 km north of Nairobi City, and gateway to the great Meru County.

Located on the highway connecting Kenya to Ethiopia, on the border with Laikipia County and Nanyuki town, and adjacent to Mount Kenya, it is strategically placed to benefit from the economic regional drivers of agribusiness and tourism.



Communicating the vision and strategy

To build broad ownership of the urban strategy and vision, it is important to communicate it. Working groups in Meru and Kitui Counties, Kenya, asked local artists to produce popular versions of the vision and strategy to easier communicate these with communities and local stakeholders.

Urban Sustainability Review

22 years from now, we want Kwa Vavasi to be a thriving, university town with a vibrant economy and sustainable green environment. A range of stakeholders – including students and local students, county and national government officials, university staff and students, faith and community based organisations – have come together to formulate this vision.

We have identified Kwa Vavasi's main sustainability challenges, their solutions, and our own priorities, in an Urban Sustainability Review.

An Urban Sustainability Review involves reflecting over how our town can become an even more delightful place to live in for all of us.

Our Priorities

Together we identified three priorities for action:

1. The county need to address water supply and distribution issues.
2. The development of a sustainable economic base through informal and water management services and other social enterprises and recreational spaces.
3. The county need to ensure well planned the development of services.

We will begin to address our priorities by **strengthening water supply and safety** at our public facilities, starting with **rain-water harvesting and floodlight provision** at the Kwa Vavasi Primary School, Dispensary and Secondary School.

we hope the world is a better place, it will be that great, a world for us to enjoy, for all of us.

with a strategy which 'thinks' that ends - we'll be able to do that. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that.

we believe that this is a step to a better world. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that.

we want a world that is better than the world we live in. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that. We will be able to do that.

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DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS

FOR A SUSTAINABLE URBAN FUTURE



In integrated planning, goals are reached through a combination of actions. These can include land use plans, capital investments, policies, legislation, improved management, and behavioural change. Rather than formulating a project, integrated solutions include efforts across several sectors and by different stakeholders. This broader holistic approach will result in more innovative solutions, and leverage resources through collective action.

FINDING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER

To better understand the priorities of the community in relation to the development of their city, the working group in Mahdia, Tunisia, organised participatory workshops

in two schools in Hiboun. The solutions formulated by the schoolchildren demonstrated good consistency with the workshops carried out by the working group and met the overall sustainability objectives formulated during the entire planning process.

In Shashemene, Ethiopia, waste collection workers were involved in design of the new solid waste management system. This resulted in a better project design, and strong ownership.

Key tips for developing integrated solutions

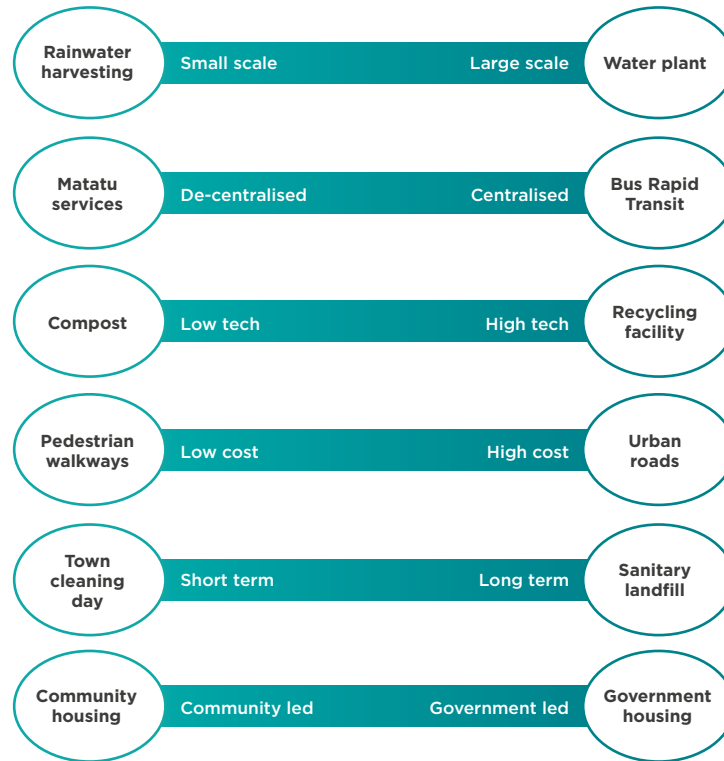
- Take a programmatic approach rather than a project approach. A good solution often consists of several different components.
- Take an integrated approach by finding solutions that cut across sectors (such as water, transport or waste) and time (by suggesting short, medium- and long-term responses).
- Consider collaborative approaches, where the various stakeholders involved in urban development can contribute and play an active role.
- Ensure that your solutions are inclusive (meeting the needs of different groups) and are developed in a participatory way, where end users and beneficiaries are involved in the design and development of solutions.
- Consider different ways of reaching the project goals. By comparing alternative scenarios or options, it is easier to find the right approach.
- Continuously assess the benefits and disadvantages of different options. Is it appropriate, realistic, feasible, and sustainable?
- Be realistic. Plans are only useful if they can be implemented.



CONSIDERING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

Rather than quickly agreeing on one project, planning option, or a certain way of doing things, take some time to look at what the possible options are. There are almost always alternatives to high-cost, long-term, large-scale, government-led interventions. It's a good idea to consider alternatives early in the planning process. Some alternatives might be better suited to the immediate budget or timeframe and together can go a long way toward achieving holistic sustainable urban development. This is not to say that incremental approaches or lower-cost solutions are necessarily better. All solutions should be evaluated in terms of their costs and benefits in the short, medium and long term. For example, weigh up the impact of easier, cheaper, short-term improvements in a particular area, with more expensive and long-term interventions that might ultimately be more sustainable.

Different approaches to planning challenges



VISUALIZE THE PLAN

Model building and simple sketches are effective ways of visualising plans and projects and providing a 'common language' for discussing project designs. By visualizing the plan or project it becomes easier to understand, and thereby it is easier for all groups to comment and contribute. In SymbioCity Kenya, artists were engaged to put the working group discussions into images, and simple model building was used to allow everyone to contribute with ideas.



FROM INTERCONNECTED PROBLEMS TO INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

THE STORY OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN SHASHEMENE

Shashemene is a quickly growing secondary city in Ethiopia. Solid waste management has however not kept pace with the rapid growth, and waste is now impacting negatively on many aspects of life in the city.

The problems are many: clogging of drainage channels, flooding, diseases and air pollution through burning of solid waste. In addition, littering and dumping of waste creates a feeling of unsafety for the residents. The pollution of the city's groundwater is threatening the economic activities in Shashemene which depend on clean water. Many urban poor are living in close proximity to the open dumpsite where women and children are among the most negatively affected.

From this dire situation, the city stakeholders decided to take action.



The desire was to create a more attractive and sustainable urban environment with increased feeling of safety. With participation from waste collectors (85% women), government officials, business sector, NGOs, the working group analysed how the system currently was working, its strengths and weaknesses, where and how it impacted different groups in the city.

A vision and plan for a new solid waste management system was developed and a pilot project was started to test the system in one city district.

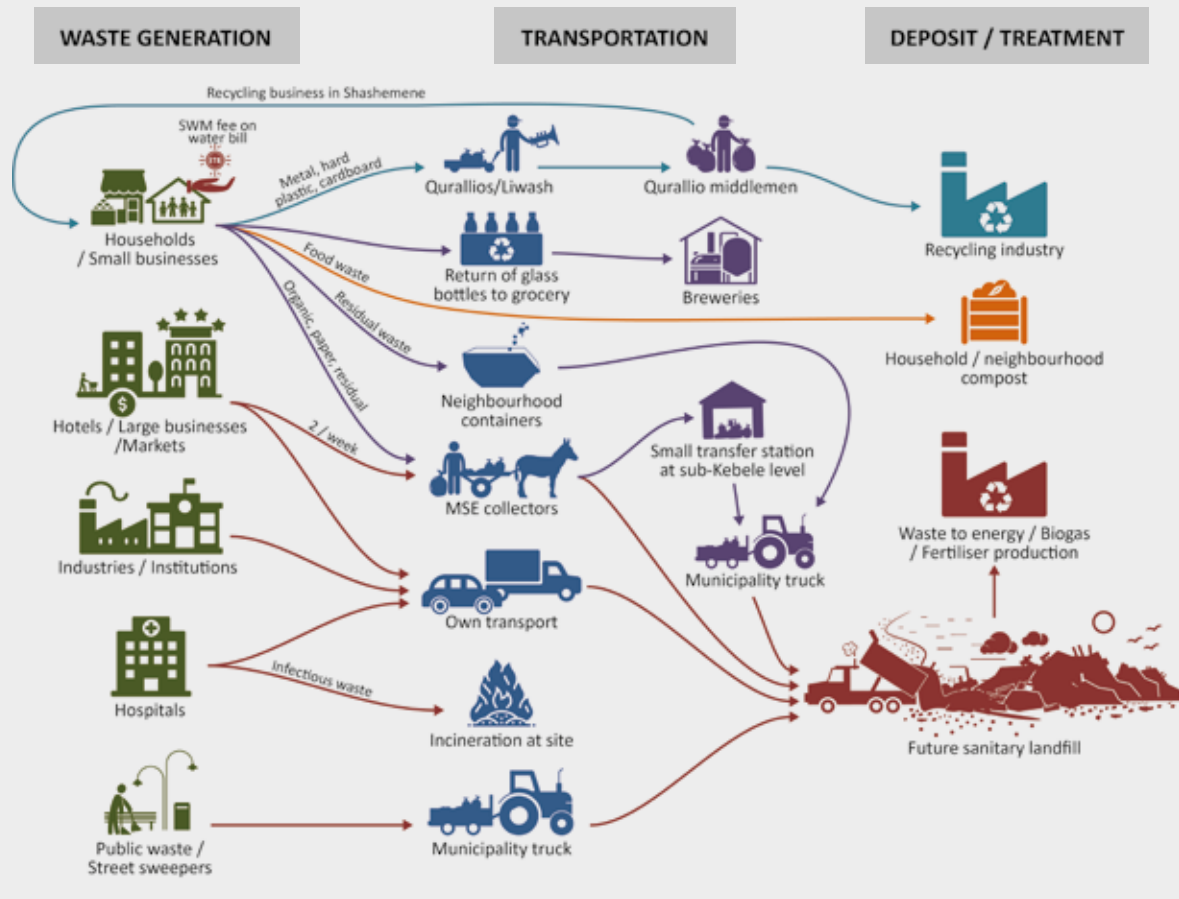
The city has attracted the attention of the World Bank funded 'Ethiopia Urban Institutional and Infrastructure Development Program' which grants funds to cities showing good planning and solid investment cases.

The project has shown that a lot can be achieved by improving urban management and leveraging the resources of other stakeholders. It has left Shashemene well on the way to creating a 'green and clean city' for all.

Vision: Shashemene a clean, green city with well informed and responsible community, which leads by example and creates jobs in the environmental protection sector."

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE NEW SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

- GIS mapping to create a collection scheme for micro-enterprise waste collectors and for monitoring of collection.
 - Promotion of labour-intensive approaches such as door-to-door collection by donkey cart.
 - Payment of waste collectors at transfer stations, rather than by each household, with sustainable funding by bundling the waste collection fee as part of the water bill.
 - Household separation of waste in three fractions, and introduction of composting for organic material.
 - Construction of transfer stations at smaller *kebele* level for use by waste collectors with municipal transport to the dumpsite.
 - Installing community waste containers for condominium houses and establishing a playground on reclaimed land.
 - A plan for managing hazardous waste, e.g. from repair shops.
 - A long-term plan to create a sanitary landfill
- In addition, some 20 community clean-ups have been carried out in places which were identified as the most polluted.**



Overview of vision of how the solid waste management system in Shashemene will work in the future.

DEVELOPING THE DAWEI RIVERFRONT



Challenges in the market area today is mainly lack of space, lack of waste management, pollution, insufficient infrastructure and storage for vendors.

The city of Dawei, Myanmar is undertaking an ambitious project to redevelop the riverfront space along Kannar Lane.

THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS:

- ☑ Public Space
- ☑ Waste and Water
- ☑ Sustainable Mobility
- ☑ Job Creation
- ☑ Economic Growth

Kannar Lane occupies a central position in Dawei and has a large social and economic importance in the city. It connects the city's main boat jetty to Kamyagan Bridge, hosting the women's market, and serving as an important thoroughfare for the city. Using the SymbioCity approach, the Dawei working group analysed the area, came up with a vision and strategy and identified integrated solutions for the area.

Vision

“By 2025, Kannar Lane Market will be a safe, urban, green area with parks and recreational spaces that incorporates blue-green infrastructure; sustainable transportation with bicycle and pedestrian lanes, and public transport; waste management; and a vibrant economic area creating jobs for the town of Dawei.”

The proposal included aspects of public space development, safety, mobility, cultural and built heritage and upgrading of the women's market (including improvements for ventilation and lightning, adequate sanitation facilities for the vendors, childcare facilities, waste management and parking space).

OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL



River bank park

Multifunctional public space including walkways, playground, green-blue integration, facilities for exercise, pier into the water and public water taps and toilets.

Market area

Upgrade of Kannar Lane Market, including improved roofing with solar panels, upgrading drainage system and integrating with landscape design, waste management, public toilet, increased accessibility and better conditions for informal vendors.

City street

City street integrated in the urban fabric with greenery, lightning, several safe pedestrian crossings, food stalls, accessibility to public transport, lanes for buses, pedestrians and bicyclists.

Secondary street

Secondary street including greenery, lightning, bus traffic, bike lanes and sidewalks for pedestrians.

Inner street

Internal streets in and around the market area with walkway and bicycle lane.

Market street

Pedestrian streets inside the market.

Illustration plan for the overall development proposal of Kannar Lane and Market.



TRANSFORMING PUBLIC SPACE IN MAHDIA

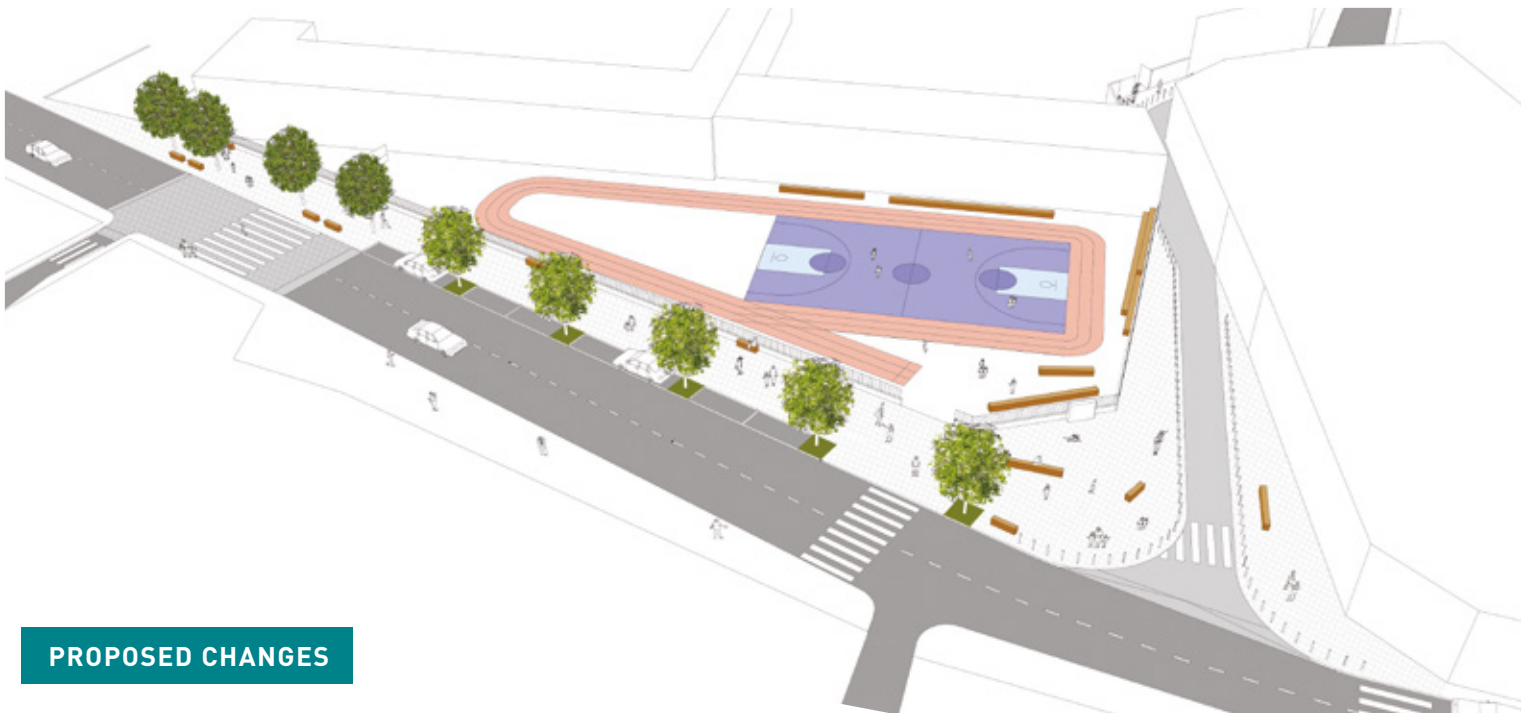
The City of Mahdia, Tunisia, presents a great wealth of public spaces: the dense network of alleys and squares from the Medina, the sandy beach with its cornice and cafés, the splendid cemetery by the sea as well as the forecourt of the large mosque where children play football in the evening. However, this wealth is unequally distributed in the city.

Activity on Rue Rakada

In some neighbourhoods, there are few or no parks or open spaces. In many more recently planned neighbourhoods, there are open spaces available, but maintenance is neglected, and the design does not respond to the needs of citizens. Improving public space in the city would have positive impacts on urban identity, lifestyles, mobility, road safety, schools, local economic development, environmental awareness, and social diversity.

Avenue Bourguiba, near two primary schools was selected as the pilot

project site. The neighbourhood lacks public spaces. The entrances to the schools are facing the street where sidewalks are too narrow and where there is no space to wait or sit down. The streets also lack safe passages for pedestrians and serious accidents involving children have occurred. The schoolyard includes sports facilities that are used informally also during evenings and weekends. These aspects could be developed to better meet local needs identified. The approach is scalable and directly connected to the sustainability of the city.



PROPOSED CHANGES

An analysis, synthesis and prioritization of solutions emanating from the workshops with children and stakeholders were transcribed in the form of an urban project outline and a strategy for public space in Mahdia. The main solutions identified by the working group are as follows:

- Improve access to meeting places by creating waiting and resting places for mothers outside schools and for pedestrians and cyclists. Ensure accessibility for people with reduced mobility.
- Improve safety through lighting and adequate sidewalks in front schools and reorganize traffic through a one-way street and parking lots.
- Promote access to sports and cultural facilities for all by improving the existing spaces in the two schools and outside by making a connection to the youth club. Create a sense of security for children, especially girls, by improving the visibility between the school's sports field and the outside.
- Reduce sedentary lifestyle by promoting and improving conditions for safe walking and cycling.
- Enhance the local identity through the use of local materials in the facilities.
- Increase employment opportunities by strengthening the profile of sport and culture in the district, and through economic activities around the use of bicycles.
- Improve the cleanliness and sustainability of space through sustainable management of rainwater, planting of suitable plants and by promoting sustainable waste management and raising awareness in and around schools.



The municipal working group is planning to implement the project in several steps. The first step is a tactical urbanism approach, where the ideas are tested in full scale by temporary measures such as paint and flowerpots. After this evaluation of the viability, the municipality will search financing for a permanent remake of the streetscape around the schools.

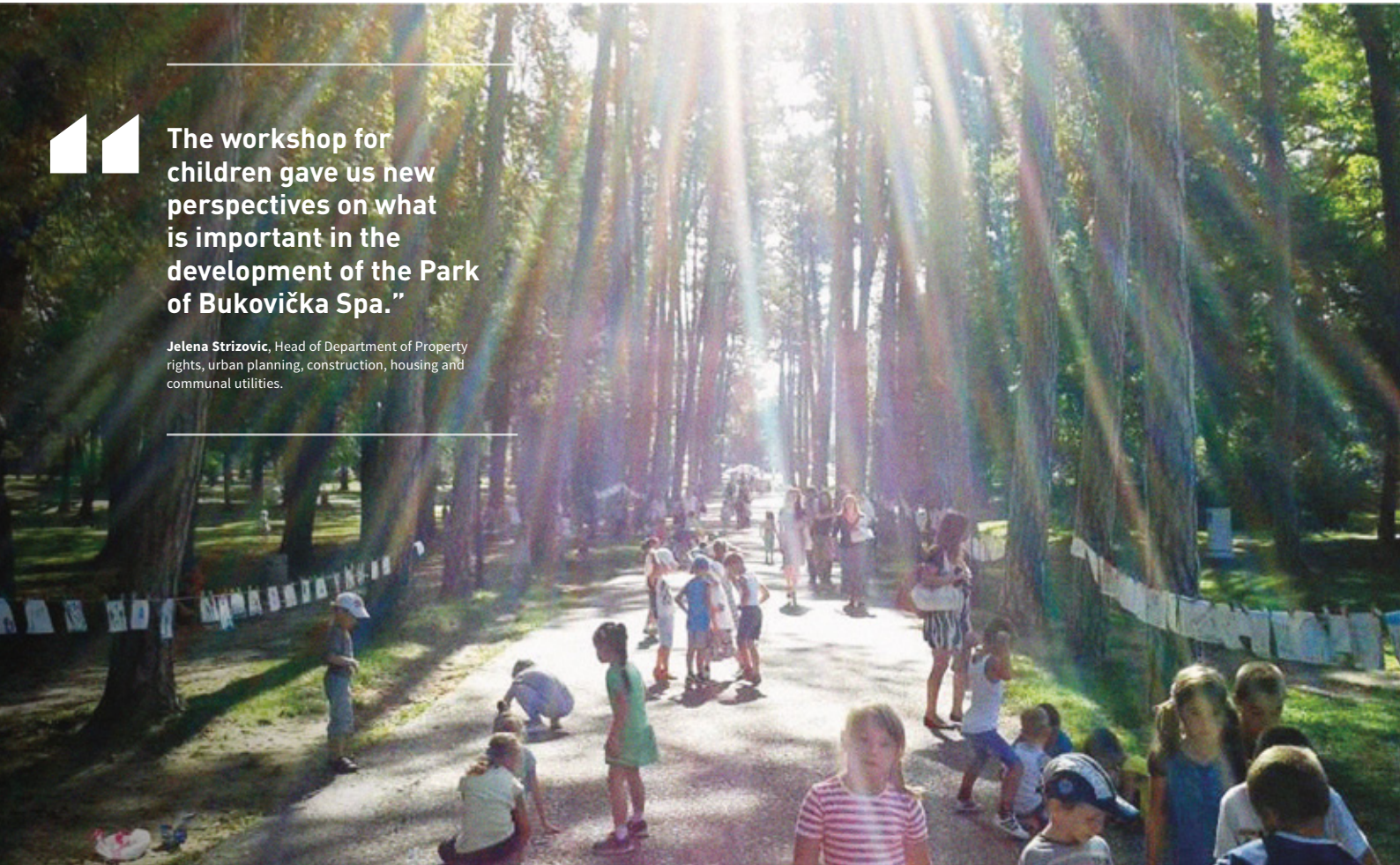
ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Assessing how different plans and project options reach agreed goals, and what their impacts are, is an integral part of ensuring sustainability and inclusivity. Assessing benefits and impacts is done as part of the project design. It is not something which happens after a plan or project has been agreed.



The workshop for children gave us new perspectives on what is important in the development of the Park of Bukovička Spa.”

Jelena Strizović, Head of Department of Property rights, urban planning, construction, housing and communal utilities.



By doing this continuously, potential negative impacts or risks are identified at an early stage, and it is more likely that the project design can be revised accordingly. Different solutions will have varying social, environmental, and economic impacts, which each need to be evaluated in order to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative ones. During project design, it is useful to assess whether your plan:

- reaches the set objectives;
- is inclusive, in that it works for different groups of people;
- delivers the maximum positive benefits;
- has the least possible negative impacts;
- addresses the root problems identified in the analysis, rather than treating symptoms;
- is feasible and realistic in terms of risk, implementation, budget, political will, etc.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

Women, men, people of different age groups and physical abilities, and different income and education levels have different needs and capabilities. Understanding how the project impacts different groups is best done together with those the project affects. An inclusive design should ensure affordability, accessibility, availability and acceptability of different groups.

In the Municipality of Arandjelovac, Serbia, an artistic day and exhibition was organised with children from a local pre-school to get their views on the proposal for upgrading a public park.



IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN DAWEI

Working group members in Dawei, Myanmar, discuss how well different development scenarios contribute to the agreed project goals. Based on its contribution to social,

economic and environmental goals, a preferred scenario can be agreed, and changes can be made where necessary to increase positive benefits.

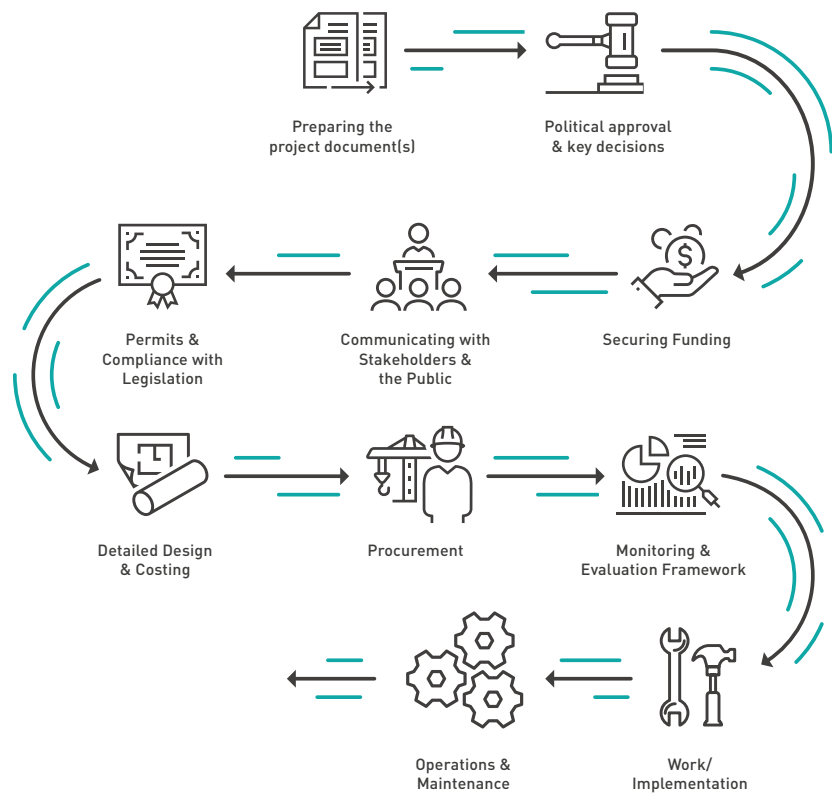
MANAGING RISK

Urban planning is associated with a high degree of risk and uncertainty. Carrying out a risk assessment is a helpful way of mapping the potential threats to the project, their likelihood and discussing how these can be managed. In SymbioCity Kenya, simple risk assessments were made at an early stage to guide project development.

What are the risks to your project?	Likelihood	Impact	How do you plan to respond to, and mitigate, the risks identified?
Political rejection	Low	High	Bringing politicians on board to understand the benefits.
Destruction of young trees by floods	High	Medium	Regular maintenance of and unclogging of the drainage systems.
Theft and Vandalism of project materials	Medium	High	Public awareness campaigns and advocacy. Engagement of security officers to enforce rules and regulations.
Rejection by the community	Low	High	Thorough stakeholder engagement and awareness creation
Economic inflation	Medium	High	Timely procurement

FROM PLANNING TO ACTION

Moving from visions and plans to action can be difficult. It is one thing to identify possible solutions and another to implement them on the ground. With a good strategy for implementation, the plan or project is more likely to be successfully implemented and result in tangible change.



Achieving change and concrete results often requires a mix of hard infrastructure and soft infrastructure, as well as political and financial support. The implementation of urban improvements requires continuous commitment from cities to ensure its long-term sustainability. While the details of the journey toward implementation will vary depending on the type of plan or project being prepared, these same aspects will often need to be considered:



Information meeting for school students in Debre Berhan about solid waste management.



Vice Mayor of Shashemene giving a speech at the start of the clean-up campaign.

NOT ALL CHANGES TAKE TIME

Eager to see results from their work, the working group in Shashemene, Ethiopia, together with NGOs, carried out approximately 20 clean-up campaigns with a total of about 26,000 people participating. These clean-up days have also been used to increase awareness of sustainable solid waste management. In addition, both Shashemene and Debre Berhan have carried out several awareness activities such as meeting with religious leaders, having radio awareness campaigns, awareness meeting with transport organisation at bus stations, and schools. Part of the awareness activities have targeted stakeholders such as households and solid waste workers in the selected pilot areas, informing about health benefits of improving solid waste management and reducing littering, and about the improvements that the city administration is planning to implement.

A SEED FUND FOR INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

Attracting funding for innovative and integrated projects can be challenging. In cooperation with the Council of Governors in Kenya, and funded by the Embassy of Sweden to Kenya, a SymbioCity Seed Fund was created for seven towns around the country to implement small-scale urban improvements. These demonstration projects would serve as generators for further innovative solutions to urban challenges, and as demonstration projects they could be replicated by other cities and towns in the region. Projects should contribute to reducing urban poverty and improving the urban environment. These solutions were developed with the SymbioCity methodology and covered issues such as placemaking, urban greening,

public space, water and sanitation, management of solid waste and development of local economic development. The seed fund allowed the counties to make an immediate link between planning and implementation, thereby seeing the results of their plans on the ground.



Toilet facilities being constructed in the Butere Ecopark, Kakamega County

PLACEMAKING – CREATING PUBLIC SPACE TOGETHER

During one day in September, an under-used plot opposite the ward administrator’s office in Kiminini, Kenya, was transformed into a lively public space bustling with life. This became the starting point for the transformation of the town.

Placemaking is a way of creating successful public space, but it is also a tool that has many other impacts on a society. When you work with placemaking you also create meetings and interactions between people. When you create a space where the community is involved the place will have a new meaning for them. Maybe it will be a place where a child took its first steps, a place where you met a new friend or a space to celebrate local culture and entrepreneurship.

Placemaking is a bottom-up approach that seeks to empower and engage local communities in ways that the traditional planning process do not. The approach draws on the community’s assets and skills rather than relying only on professional “experts”. The co-creation of place contributes to people’s sense of ownership and pride of their community which assures long term sustainability.

In 2018 a placemaking project was implemented in Kiminini, Trans Nzoia County in Kenya. The project aimed to make Kiminini a green and vibrant town for all by transforming an ignored public space into a mini-park where residents could meet, relax and enjoy themselves. The placemaking approach was used to engage the people in Kiminini and create a park that responded to their actual needs.

11 PRINCIPLES FOR PLACEMAKING

1. The community is the expert!
2. Create a place, not a design
3. Look for partners
4. They always say “It can’t be done.”
5. You can see a lot just by observing
6. Have a vision
7. Form supports function
8. Triangulate
9. Experiment: Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper
10. Money is not the issue
11. You are never finished

As a first step, the park and its possible usages were marked out on the ground with chalk to show different possible uses and activate the space. Existing fence posts were coloured bright by people passing by. The shaded areas that were provided with the help of umbrellas put on sticks showed clearly that people gather when they are protected from the sun, so a roof structure will be an important part of the design. The architects leading the placemaking



process talked to people to get their views and incorporated this in their sketches in real time.

The designs were then shared with the residents in the ward administrator’s office. Based on the resident’s opinions, the designs were reviewed, and a final design proposal was made. During the implementation, the residents were involved in the construction and local reused material was used. By contributing to creating a place, people gain ownership and feel pride, and this assures sustainability.

READ MORE



SYMBIOCITY PLACEMAKING GUIDE

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

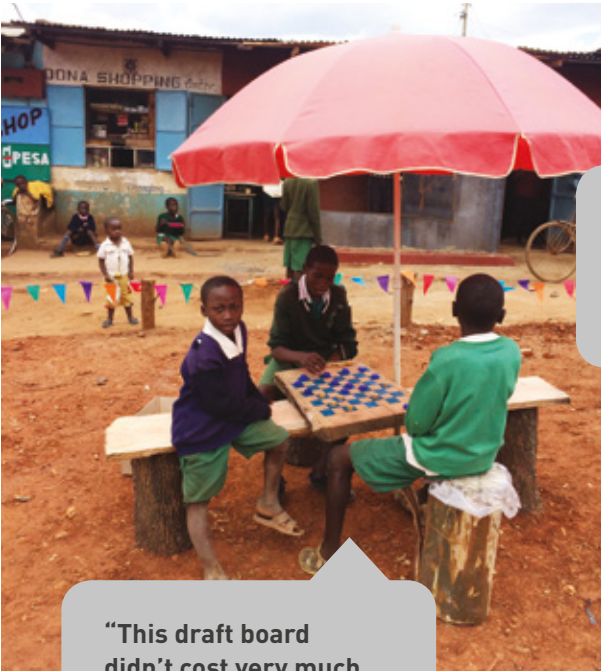


I already see Kiminini demonstrating to other towns that creating green spaces does not necessarily need large spaces."

Faith Muthoni, Environmental Planner, Trans-Nzoia County



"We can make this fence more beautiful with some colours while we wait for it to be changed."



"I didn't know this space could be used for wall painting and shoe shining..."



"Today so many people came and met under these umbrellas!"

"This draft board didn't cost very much but so many people come to play!"



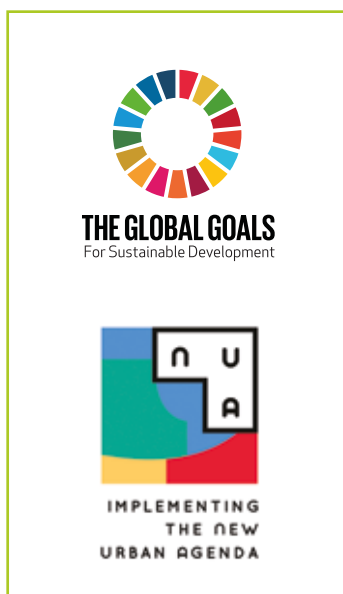
"The community is the expert! And they had so many ideas..."



SCALING UP

– INSTITUTIONALISING CHANGE

The experiences from SymbioCity projects all over the world have shown the potential in adopting a more holistic and inclusive approach to sustainable urban development. In order to reach the Sustainable Development Goals within this decade, it is necessary to scale up, and to institutionalize these approaches within local governments. For this to happen there is a need for change at many levels; from the global to the local.



Global policy and mutual learning

Both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) recognise the significance and potential of urbanisation for a sustainable future by stressing the importance of a holistic, integrated and inclusive approach to urban development. The role of local authorities in coordinating holistic planning and finding systemic urban solutions together with public, private and academic actors is thus crucial for the achievement of the SDGs.

SymbioCity has aimed to support this development by providing tools that move from displaying *what* needs to be done to show *how* to turn the SDGs into action. A wide range of guidelines and tools have been developed and made available to cities, including practical tools for strengthening the focus on poverty and inclusion, gender and equity, resilience and climate change. At the global level, SymbioCity has been actively advocating for the importance of these perspectives,

and the experiences of local governments, for example through involvement in the World Urban Forum and collaboration with partners such as UN-Habitat, UNDP, SDI International and Cities Alliance.

There is also an urgent need for mutual learning and knowledge exchange between cities, both within the same country and across countries and continents. Cities have a lot to gain through joint sharing of experiences and solutions. This type of networking between countries has been an integral part of all SymbioCity projects. International training programmes have provided platforms for learning across countries and cultures. City project teams have been paired with counterparts in Swedish local governments, taking the SymbioCity journey together. And there has been an exchange between the different SymbioCity projects where teams have been encouraged to learn from each other.



PUT YOURSELF IN

SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

At the SymbioCity booth during the World Urban Forum 10, visitors were asked to take the role of either a child, an informal vendor, a wheelchair user, a student or a municipal official. Together they then analysed a market street in Kalaw, Myanmar, from their respective perspectives and proposed improvements.

SHARING EXPERIENCES BETWEEN CITIES

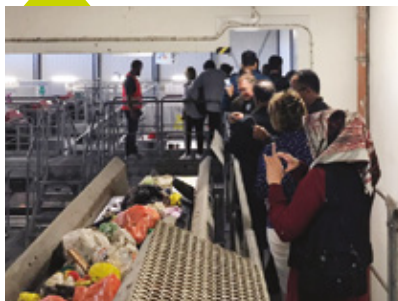
Representatives from Trans Nzoia (Kenya), Apartadó (Colombia), Probolinggo (Indonesia) and Helsingborg (Sweden) share experiences during World Urban

Forum 9 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during the networking event *Walking the Talk of Holistic and Inclusive Urban Development* organised by SymbioCity.



INSPIRING EACH OTHER

Inspired by a study visit to Eskilstuna, Sweden, officials from El Mourouj, Tunisia, established a partnership with neighbouring municipalities in managing solid waste.



Representatives from Probolinggo, Indonesia, experience the bike sharing system in Stockholm, Sweden, during a study visit.

Change at the national level

I find the SymbioCity methodology very strong; the ‘diagnosis’ creates a great foundation for sustainability work. And because the approach is so flexible, parts of it can be made to fit into the local context under our Green City Development Programme”.

Endra Atmawidjaja, Deputy Director of Urban Development Policies and Strategies at the Directorate General of Spatial Planning and Development, Indonesia.

A GREEN CITY TOOLKIT

Through the involvement of the Indonesian Ministry of Public Works and Transport and the local government association APEKSI in the SymbioCity projects in Palu and Probolinggo, a local version of the SymbioCity approach was developed in the form of a Green City Toolkit to spread the experiences further to other cities in the country.



National strategies, enabling frameworks and financial resources are necessary in supporting local governments in dealing with urbanisation in a sustainable way. Supporting relevant national level stakeholders has been an important element of institutionalising the SymbioCity approach. Local government associations play an important role in this regard, for example by:

- Influencing national government policies and shaping the urban debate
- Developing processes, tools and methods adapted for the local context.
- Facilitation knowledge sharing between cities.
- Capacity development for urban development professionals and urban leaders.

A NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES

In Myanmar, the SymbioCity project helped build the capacity of the Urban Research and Development Institute (URDI), established under the Ministry of Construction. In order for URDI to build its long-term function as the key capacity building platform for urban development in the country. It has been supported in developing an exhibition centre, a new website and a digital and physical urban library. In cooperation with SymbioCity, URDI has also hosted public lecture series once a month with the purpose to serve as a central node for transmission of knowledge on urban affairs and common knowledge sharing platform, and to engage the public in the ongoing transformation in Myanmar’s urban areas. Since the



start of the lectures in March 2018 the series remains the only forum for public deliberation on urban affairs in Myanmar and has offered an avenue for public engagement and discussion. The majority of the lectures are in Myanmar language and draw regular crowds of 50-75 people including members of the Myanmar Architects Association, university students, civil society, media and other interested citizens. The lectures have had an additional dissemination through broadcasting on national TV. URDI has also been instrumental in capacitating a new generation of urban planners in Myanmar, equipped with new methods and tools.

STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE KENYAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

In Kenya, SALAR established an institutional partnership with the newly formed Council of Governors (CoG), the body representing all 47 counties in the country. Under the new constitution from 2010, counties were allocated the

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PLANNING OUR TOWNS

<https://symbiocity.org/resources/>

mandate for urban planning and the Council of Governors played a critical role in turning the new planning framework into concrete action. The SymbioCity project was developed to support the Council of Governors' capacity to respond to counties' needs in terms of urban planning, management and development. An Urban Support Team was established to support the political committee and manage systematic interaction and dialogue with national and international stakeholders on urban matters. Strategic knowledge sharing on urban issues was facilitated, for example through the development of national toolkits and guidelines for urban development.

Institutional changes at the local level

“The SymbioCity process has been a very significant experience. We have found other ways to work with communities. We have also opened our way of working and thinking to plan projects that impact the town.”

Marcela Restrepo (to the right) Adviser, Department for Territorial Planning, Apartadó Colombia, together with **Nancy Pardo Estrada**, (to the left) Civil Engineer, Department for Infrastructure, participating in a working visit in Stockholm.



An overall goal of the SymbioCity activities has been to institutionalise a new way of working at the local level; a holistic and iterative planning process, a more integrated way of working across sectors, a more inclusive way of engaging communities and stakeholders, and a stronger focus on sustainability aspects.

This new way of working, these tools and perspectives have been institutionalised by the cities and are replicated in many different ways in the planning, development and management of urban areas. While it is not always possible to incorporate all the aspects of the approach, the flexible framework allows for it to be used in different ways and with different levels of ambition depending on needs, context and resources. It is an approach meant to be localised.

CAPACITATING A CRITICAL MASS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

Strengthening the capacity for sustainable and inclusive urban planning has been a key objective in the training programmes of SymbioCity, which has engaged some 250 urban development professionals in more than 15 countries around the world. In cooperation with the International Centre for Local Democracy and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, participants have been

exposed to new planning methods, inspiring examples and new global networks. Working with a combination of lectures and hands-on planning through 'change projects', the training experiences have been applied to planning projects at the local level. The working process and its tools have been institutionalised in the local governments through peer-learning.

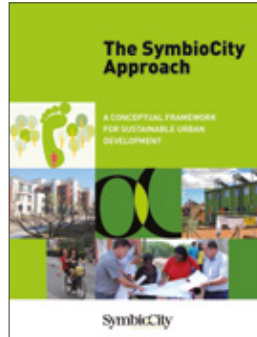




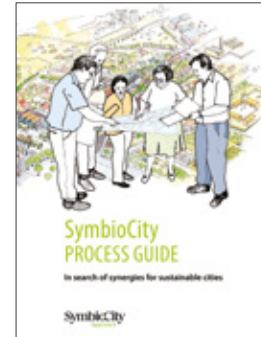
SymbioCity



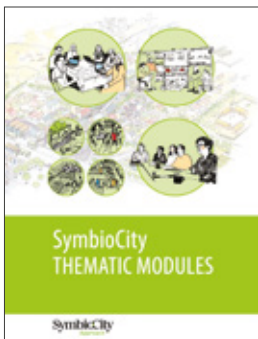
Check out the SymbioCity.org website for all links and further information about SymbioCity.



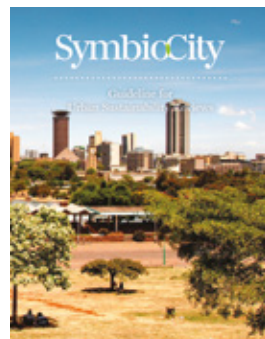
The main SymbioCity publication explains the conceptual framework with methods, tools and process-oriented support to urban development.



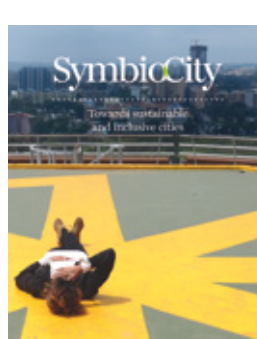
A guiding manual on the SymbioCity process which offers detailed guidelines, practical advice, methods and tools to carry out a SymbioCity project



Thematic guidance on how to include gender, urban poverty reduction, participation and local economic development.



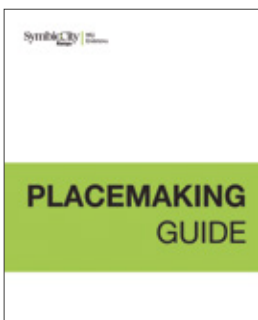
Recommendations, instructions and templates for cities and experts that want to carry out an Urban Sustainability Review.



A brief explanatory brochure of SymbioCity as a method and how it is used to foster inclusive and sustainable cities globally.



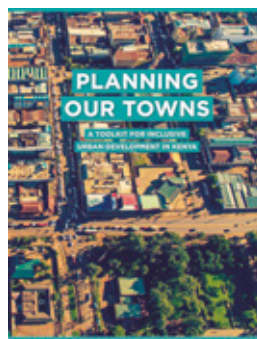
Provides guidelines for city leaders on facilitating sustainable urban development.



This guide for placemaking is created to guide communities in how to create good and successful public spaces.



An introduction to Sweden and Swedish experiences in the field of sustainable urban development, with special emphasis on local and regional government levels.



This toolkit offers guidelines for integrating an inclusive, participatory and holistic perspective into urban planning and development in Kenya.



Provides methods and examples of how gender can be mainstreamed in sustainable urban development (in Spanish).

WITH LESS THAN 10 YEARS LEFT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 2030, WHAT HAPPENS IN CITIES AND TOWNS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.

Over the past 10 years, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions has been supporting local and regional governments in more than 20 countries to plan and develop more sustainable and inclusive urban areas, through SymbioCity. This publication summarises some of these experiences, providing inspiration and tools for others working to shape the cities of tomorrow.



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