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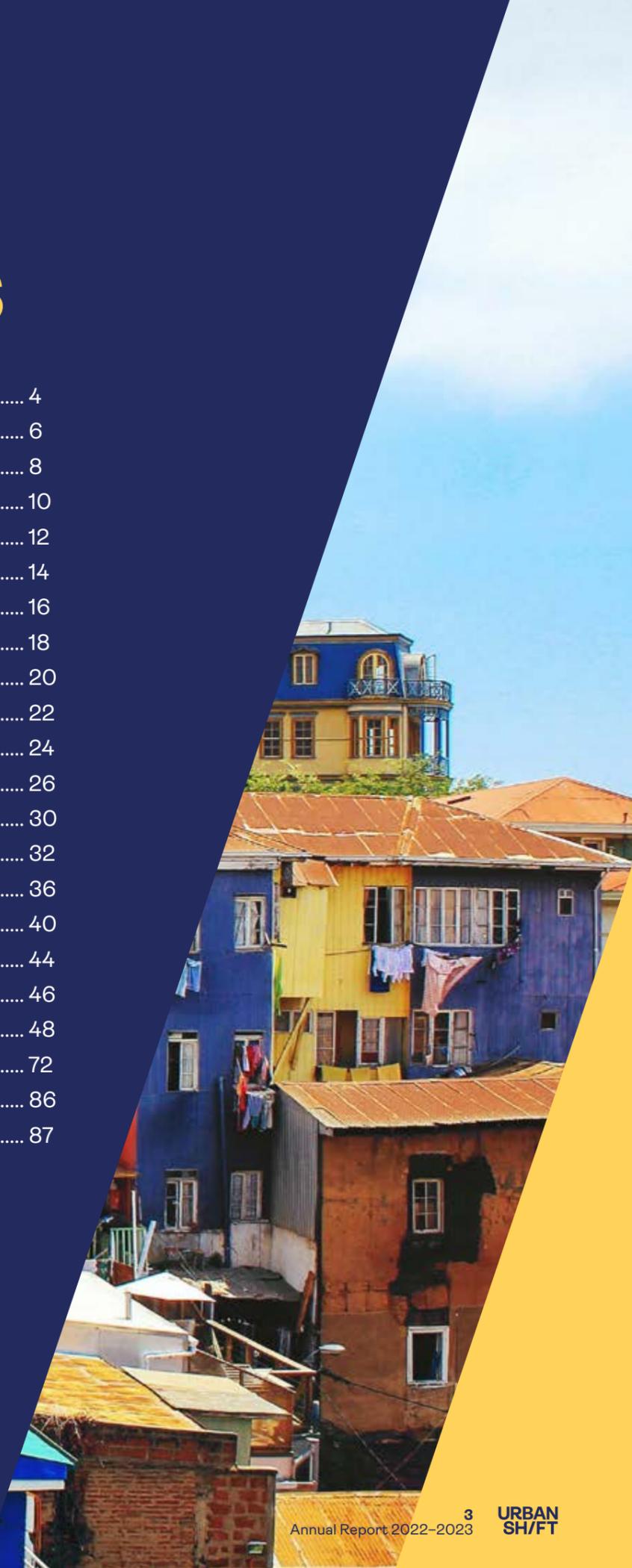
# **TRANSFORMING CITIES FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET**

**Annual Report  
2022–2023**

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**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



## ALOPE BARNWAL

Senior Climate Change Specialist and Coordinator,  
Sustainable Cities, GEF Secretariat

Cities worldwide are facing increasing pressures of climate change, nature loss and growing inequalities. However, they have come back stronger after the pandemic and are driving change for better urban lives. The multilateral environmental agreements for which the GEF serves as a financial mechanism recognize the importance of cities in achieving global climate and nature goals.

The GEF's Sustainable Cities Program, UrbanShift, is playing a vital role in this regard. The program is already supporting 50 cities in 17 countries. During the new funding cycle, GEF-8, it will likely expand its cohort to cover nearly 100 cities in more than 30 countries globally. Its global platform is bringing cities together to learn from each other, build collective local leadership for global influence and generate valuable knowledge. Moving forward, the program aims to address critical financing gaps, integrate nature in cities and promote circularity solutions while continuing to support deployment of low carbon solutions across key sectors in an integrated manner.

The value of UrbanShift to cities is evident in its ability to help them achieve their goals and plans. This was demonstrated by the successful UrbanShift Asia Forum held in New Delhi, India, in September of this year. As UrbanShift enters its fourth year, we are excited for the second UrbanShift Regional Forum, which will take place in Belem, Brazil, in April 2024.

Its capacity-building activities, such as City Academies, Finance Academies, National-Local Dialogues, Labs and webinars, will continue to offer opportunities for learning and networking for those involved in sustainable development at the local level. UrbanShift has become a major global urban program. It has created valuable public goods and facilitated strong partnerships between urban actors. This momentum is expected to continue and expand in the GEF-8 period.

The urban sustainability agenda was important at CBD COP-15 and UNFCCC COP-27 and will be even more significant in the upcoming UNFCCC COP-28. The GEF is committed to supporting urban transformation for a healthy environment and vibrant, livable cities, building on the leadership of cities and local governments and in collaboration with partners.



## SHARON GIL

Lead, Nature and Circularity in Cities  
UN Environment Programme

The science is clear: [local action is critical to achieving the global greenhouse gas emissions reductions necessary to keep global warming below 1.5°C](#). Urban areas have a profound impact on the planet's ecosystems, and cities are essential players in efforts to halt the triple planetary crises of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. We must act now, for people and planet!

UrbanShift is a GEF-funded and UNEP-led program which aims to help cities across nine countries scale up action to address these global planetary challenges in an integrated manner.

In this second year of implementation, with all the local projects having started in earnest, UrbanShift's global platform convened a range of in-person and online activities to scale up capacity within cities to mitigate and combat climate change. Our key activities this year spanned Labs in Ushuaia and Kigali; three Peer-to-Peer Exchanges; in-person City Academies in Argentina, Costa Rica and India;

four Finance Academies in Chile, South Africa, Brazil and China; and National-Local Dialogues in Argentina, China, India, Indonesia and Rwanda. This impactful year culminated with our first Regional Forum in New Delhi, India, during which we proudly launched our eight City Academy online courses, now available to all who wish to further their learning on urban sustainability and climate action (learn more on page 15).

Looking back on our key milestones this past year, UNEP is proud to have led advocacy efforts around key global goals, including encouraging local government action against plastic pollution and participation in the forthcoming Global Plastics Treaty. This past year, we also supported a new Global Biodiversity Framework that recognizes the importance of urban areas through setting a specific target to increase the quality and quantity of green and blue spaces across cities. We are proud of the role that UrbanShift partners have played in bringing this agreement to life.

As we present this annual report, we invite you to join us in celebrating the progress we've made this year, and in renewing our collective commitment to creating a sustainable future for all!

# INTRODUCTION





## THE URBAN ECOSYSTEM



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



10-12 billion tons of CO2 equivalent could be mitigated through nature-based solutions



50% lower species biodiversity is currently found in urban areas than in natural areas



50%: natural infrastructure saves 50% of costs compared to traditional grey infrastructure



290,000 km2 of natural habitat is forecast to be converted to urban land uses by 2030

Cities and nature are often thought of in opposition to each other—yet urban areas are inextricably linked to the health of our planet and our natural ecosystems. Right now, cities are facing a critical tipping point: they can continue to expand in ways that are devastating to nature, biodiversity and the human lives they support, or they can flip the script. Urban nature-based solutions can mitigate climate-related threats like flooding, poor air quality and extreme heat, while delivering multiple co-benefits to city dwellers like new jobs, improved mental health and more welcoming green spaces in which to gather.

**UrbanShift's goal is to advance an integrated, gender-inclusive and nature-positive approach to urban development.** By empowering city leaders to work together with residents, businesses, national governments and multilateral institutions, we strive to 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

## GEF-6

11 countries  
28 cities

## GEF-7

9 countries  
23 primary cities



Cities and countries  
common to the two cohorts

**\$147 million**  
in grant funding

**\$1.7 billion**  
of co-financing

**67** cities

**17** countries





## URBANSHIFT'S APPROACH

In the second full 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 that collectively reflect best practices for creating sustainable, equitable and livable cities.

### LOCAL PROJECTS

UrbanShift's implementing agencies—UNEP, World Bank, UNDP and 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 20.

### GLOBAL PLATFORM

UrbanShift's capacity-building activities, coordinated by WRI, C40, ICLEI and UNEP, connect cities with global expertise and cutting-edge research in the field of integrated urban development, as well as vital opportunities to connect and learn from each other and leaders in the space.

See chapter 4, "Global Platform," page 47.

## OBJECTIVES



**Mitigate** 170 million tonnes of CO2 emissions

*Carbon sequestered by Costa Rican forests in 18 years*



**Manage & restore** more than 1 million hectares of land

*Seven times the size of Delhi*



**Improve** the lives of 58 million people

*Combined population of Argentina and Rwanda*

## 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

# AREAS OF FOCUS



## Integrated Urban Planning

A participatory, evidence-based management process that advances a city's ability to work across agencies, jurisdictions and sectors to solve key planning challenges with the support of datasets and geospatial layers.



## Accessing Urban Climate Finance

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



## SPOTLIGHT ON CITY ACADEMY

In September 2023, UrbanShift launched the online City Academy, a foundational capacity-building activity consisting of eight courses aimed at training city-level decision-makers and urban practitioners on UrbanShift's key areas of focus. Each free, self-paced course offers up to eight hours of high-quality, rigorously curated content on each of the eight topics with a focus on the Global South context. Available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Bahasa Indonesia and Mandarin, the courses include presentations, case studies, videos and interactive elements, and learners receive a certificate upon completion. Co-developed by UrbanShift and leading organizations in the field, the City Academy democratizes access to essential knowledge resources and skill-building opportunities to create more equitable, sustainable cities.



Learn more and enroll at [shifcities.org/online-city-academy](https://shifcities.org/online-city-academy)

# WOMEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF NATURE-POSITIVE CITIES

In the heart of Alajuelita, Costa Rica, La Guapil Park is a green, bustling community space bordering the Tiribí River, filled with walking trails, gardens and places for children to play. But just a few years ago, it looked very different. "It was a place where people hid to commit crimes—full of mud, garbage and dangers," Maribel Gómez, a member of the La Guapil Community Development Association, told the Global Environment Facility this year.

Before its transformation, which was supported by the TEVU Project (the UrbanShift initiative in Costa Rica, which is funded by the GEF and implemented by UNDP and OTS) La Guapil Park exemplified many of the challenges that rapidly urbanizing areas face, from environmental degradation to inadequate infrastructure and service provision. In response to a lack of a waste management system, residents dumped trash in the area, polluting the nearby river. Lack of tree cover and healthy vegetation in the area intensified the urban heat island effect. And due to safety concerns, many residents—particularly women and children—avoided the area, which limited their mobility options within their own community.

Urban growth that does not fully consider basic service provision, integration with nature and connectivity exacerbates both vulnerability to climate risks and gender and identity-based challenges around safety and accessibility. The story of La Guapil, however, shows the immense potential of citizen engagement and female leadership in restoring ecosystems and creating functional, welcoming public space in cities. Local action to restore and protect natural urban ecosystems is essential for creating resilience against climate change. And just as women, girls and marginalized people are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, they—like Maribel Gómez—are often the most powerful advocates and leaders for transformation. The United Nations has found

that women's leadership at the local level around natural resource management results in stronger governance and conservation outcomes.

Recognizing this, UrbanShift strives to enhance the agency of women and local actors in the planning of their cities. Through trainings, webinars and City Academy courses, UrbanShift elevates the perspectives and experiences of female leaders in the spaces of urban climate action and nature-based solutions. Beyond La Guapil, UrbanShift's work on the ground emphasizes the importance of women's leadership and prioritizing the needs of stakeholders most vulnerable to climate change. In response to rising heat in Freetown, Chief Heat Officer Eugenia Kargbo is leading a program to install shading mechanisms to protect open-air market vendors, the majority of whom are women. In Chennai, a project to restore Kadapakkam Lake and upgrade surrounding recreational facilities with a play area and walking paths is centering the needs of women, children and the elderly in planning and development.

As cities strive to become more sustainable and resilient into the future, it is essential that they prioritize the leadership and needs of women and other populations that have historically been overlooked in the planning process. Doing so will create more equitable, inclusive and livable cities for all.



## WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN URBANSHIFT EVENTS

This year, UrbanShift engaged **188 people** in in-person, deep capacity-building activities like UrbanShift Labs and City Academies. Of that total, **over 55% of participants were women.**

# YEAR IN REVIEW

In its second full year of implementation, UrbanShift focused on accelerating in-person and virtual opportunities for collaboration and capacity building. In-country events, including Strategic Planning labs, Peer-to-Peer Exchanges and Finance Academies, ramped up, and on the global scale, UrbanShift elevated advocacy efforts around ending plastic pollution in cities and supporting nature-based solutions. This impactful year culminated in the first UrbanShift Forum, held in New Delhi, India, during which the online City Academy course offering was launched to the public.



DECEMBER 11-13, 2022  
**COP15 Convention on Biodiversity**  
Montréal, Canada

DECEMBER 12-15, 2022  
**Clean Energy and Buildings Finance Academy in Cape Town, South Africa**

DECEMBER 13, 2022  
**Argentina National-Local Dialogue**

JANUARY 17, 2023  
**Unlocking Investment in Nature for a Just Urban Transformation**

JANUARY 19, 2023  
**Freetown, Sierra Leone Climate Action Plan Launch**

FEBRUARY 15, 2023  
**Costa Rica National-Local Dialogue**

DECEMBER 7, 2022  
**Leveraging Nature to Create Inclusive and Equitable Cities**

MARCH 15, 2023  
**Plastic Pollution and Cities: Building Momentum Towards a Global Plastics Treaty**

APRIL 28, 2023  
**Cities Summit of the Americas: Building Resilience with Nature in Cities**

OCTOBER 25-27, 2022  
**City Academy in Buenos Aires, Argentina**

NOVEMBER 11-16, 2022  
**COP27: Catalyzing Climate Action with Nature-Positive Cities**  
Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt

NOVEMBER 15-17, 2022  
**Peer to Peer Exchange: Urban Cable Cars in Medellín, Colombia**

NOVEMBER 16, 2022  
**China National-Local Dialogue**

NOVEMBER 22-24, 2022  
**Adaptation Finance Academy in Santiago, Chile**

JULY 11-14, 2023  
**Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Zero Emission Buses in Mumbai, India**

JULY 4-6, 2023  
**Costa Rica City Academy**

JUNE 27, 2023  
**U20 Manthan Webinar: Equitable Planning Approaches to Achieve Environmentally Responsive Behavior**

JUNE 22, 2023  
**Rwanda National-Local Dialogue**

JUNE 20-21, 2023  
**Kigali Geospatial Planning Analysis Lab**

JUNE 8, 2023  
**UrbanShift at UN Habitat Assembly: Resilient Cities, Greener Neighbourhoods, Thriving Communities**  
Nairobi, Kenya

JUNE 6, 2023  
**UrbanShift Workshop at Ecocity World Summit: Greener, Healthier, Vibrant Neighborhoods**

MAY 26, 2023  
**Paris International Forum to End Plastic Pollution in Cities**

MAY 10, 2023  
**Partnership Engagement Group Meeting**

MAY 3, 2023  
**India National-Local Dialogue**

JULY 25-27, 2023  
**Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Urban Nature-Based Solutions in Barranquilla, Colombia**

AUGUST 22-24, 2023  
**UrbanShift at 7th GEF Assembly**  
Vancouver, Canada

AUGUST 22, 2023  
**Urban Cooling and Energy Efficiency**

AUGUST 23-25, 2023  
**Adaptation Finance Academy for Brazilian Cities**

AUGUST 30-31, 2023  
**Ushuaia Strategic Planning Lab**

AUGUST 30, 2023  
**Indonesia National-Local Dialogue**

SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2023  
**China Finance Academy**

SEPTEMBER 25-28, 2023  
**UrbanShift Asia Forum**

OCTOBER 10-13, 2023  
**Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Clean Energy Solutions in Ghana**

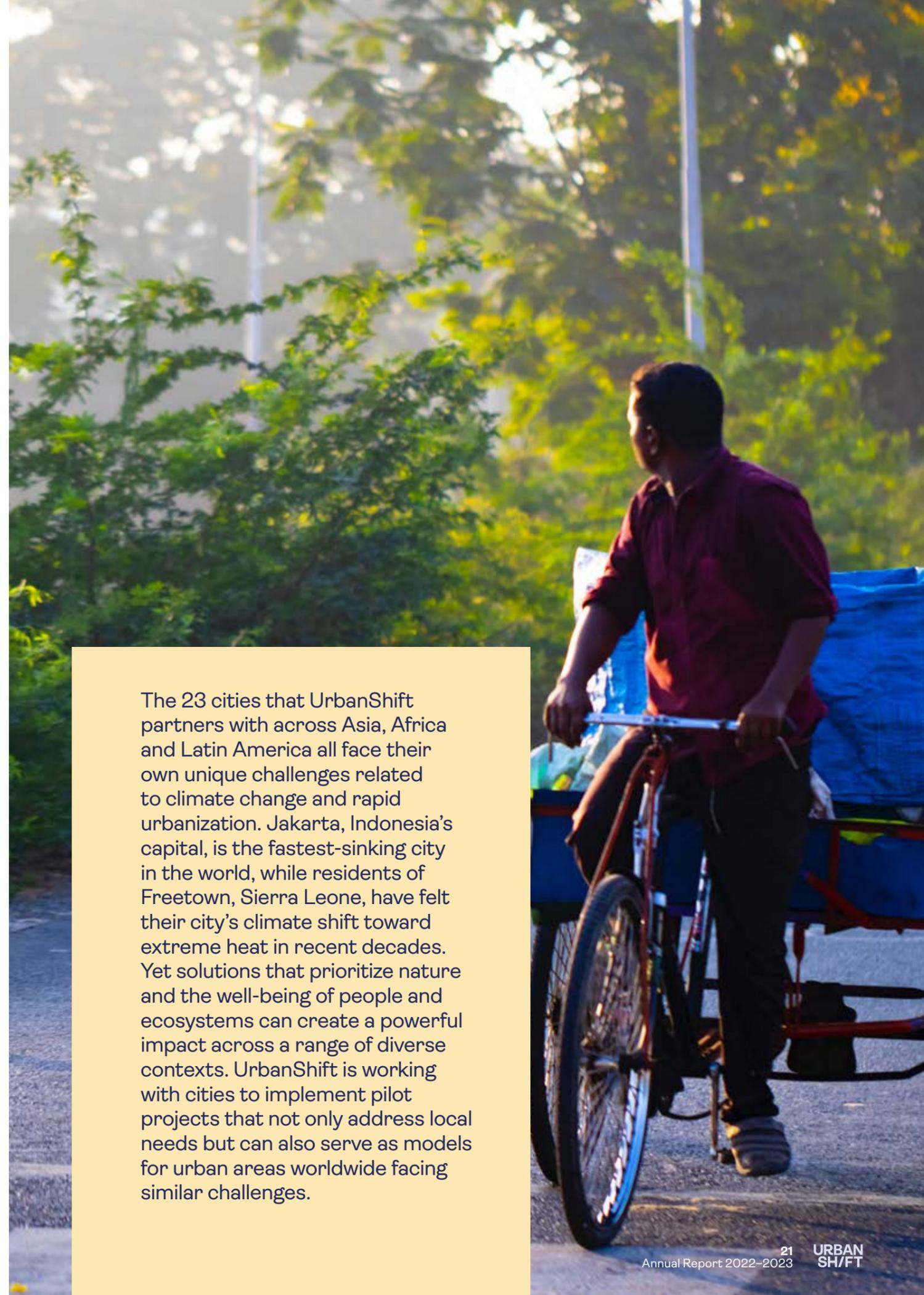
OCTOBER 17-19, 2023  
**Clean Transport Finance Academy in Costa Rica**

OCTOBER 17, 2023  
**UrbanShift at World Forum on Urban Forests: Leveraging Urban Biodiversity and Forests to Create Inclusive and Equitable Cities**  
Washington, DC, United States

# LOCAL PROJECTS



The 23 cities that UrbanShift partners with across Asia, Africa and Latin America all face their own unique challenges related to climate change and rapid urbanization. Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, is the fastest-sinking city in the world, while residents of Freetown, Sierra Leone, have felt their city's climate shift toward extreme heat in recent decades. Yet solutions that prioritize nature and the well-being of people and ecosystems can create a powerful impact across a range of diverse contexts. UrbanShift is working with cities to implement pilot projects that not only address local needs but can also serve as models for urban areas worldwide facing similar challenges.



# ARGENTINA

One of the largest economies in South America, Argentina is home to 45.4 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

- **October 2022**  
City Academy in Buenos Aires, Argentina
- **November 2022**  
Adaptation Finance Academy in Santiago de Chile
- **December 2022**  
Argentina National-Local Dialogue in Salta
- **July 2023**  
City Academy in San José, Costa Rica
- **August 2023**  
Strategic Planning Lab in Ushuaia, Argentina
- **October 2023**  
Clean Transport Finance Academy in San José, Costa Rica



**Project Budget**  
\$207.5 Million

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



**Implemented by**  
UNEP



**Executed by**  
Argentinian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS)



“ Welcoming the UrbanShift team to Ushuaia in August 2023 for the Geospatial Analysis Lab to work on ideas around nature-based solutions and urban growth complemented our city's technical, public and private actions for sustainable urban development.

**VIRGINIA RIZZO,**  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL SECRETARIAT,  
USHUAIA MUNICIPALITY

## BUENOS AIRES

Population: 13.6 million

### Challenge:

- Poor air quality, rising heat, congested roads and loss of biodiversity are affecting the city and surrounding areas.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Develop interconnected, low-emission green corridors to protect local biodiversity.

## MAR DEL PLATA

Population: 628,560

### Challenge:

- High tourism rates are pressuring urban services while threatening natural ecosystems.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Collaborate on a sustainable tourism plan for 2050 that protects local ecological reserves.

## MENDOZA

Population: 1 million

### Challenge:

- Rapid population growth is straining services while causing the urban edge to encroach on the Andes ecosystem.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Create a stronger municipal data platform while piloting a “sustainable superblock” in the city center.

## SALTA

Population: 617,183

### Challenge:

- With a population projected to nearly double by 2030, sprawl and adequate service provision are concerns.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Create transit-oriented green corridors to improve connectivity and support indigenous agriculture and production.

## USHUAIA

Population: 617,183

### Challenge:

- Rapid population growth, rising tourism and a cold climate are taxing energy and transportation networks.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Implement sustainable growth and tourism management policies through a “Sustainable Ushuaia 2050” strategic plan.



“ Argentina has been suffering severe droughts and strong heat waves.

We need cities to become livable places, and we need exchange and cooperation between different government levels because every policy made in the country has an impact on every citizen. UrbanShift's network is important because it enables cities with similar characteristics and challenges to share best practices.

**MARCELO SEIJAS,**  
CHIEF PROJECT COORDINATOR,  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ARGENTINA



# 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. The UrbanShift project in Brazil, CITinova, officially launched on August 6, 2023, in Belem, during the Amazon Dialogues, and technical implementation of the city-level initiatives is set to begin by the end of 2023.



**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

- **October 2022**  
City Academy in Buenos Aires, Argentina
- **July 2023**  
City Academy in San José, Costa Rica
- **July 2023**  
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Urban Nature-Based Solutions in Barranquilla, Colombia
- **October 2023**  
Adaptation Finance Academy for Brazilian Cities in São Paulo, Brazil
- **October 2023**  
Clean Transport Finance Academy for Latin American Cities in San José, Costa Rica



“The capacity building and opportunities for exchange across levels of government that UrbanShift has provided have created

a deeper understanding of each city’s sustainability challenges and opportunities. The relationship between project partners has strengthened over the last year, and we have a strong understanding of the projects and initiatives that are moving toward implementation.

**MARCELA ABOIM RAOSO,**  
PROJECT NATIONAL DIRECTOR,  
BRAZILIAN MINISTRY OF SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION



“Teresina suffers a lot from climate change. Mapping our vulnerabilities is the first step to mitigating such effects, especially for our most vulnerable populations.

UrbanShift is supporting us to develop tools to plan our city more sustainably and helping us with financing options to carry out large projects.

**PAMELA NATIELLE BASILIO E SILVA,**  
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT ANALYST,  
MUNICIPALITY OF TERESINA



## BELÉM METROPOLITAN REGION

Population: 2.5 million

### Challenge:

- Continued and rapid growth fueled by the local mining, energy and agricultural sectors is pushing urbanization into the nearby Amazon.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Develop emissions reduction solutions for the city center and implement a demonstration of sustainable agroforestry practices on Combú Island.



## FLORIANÓPOLIS METROPOLITAN REGION

Population: 1.2 million

### Challenge:

- Population and tourism growth is pushing the urban edge toward climate-vulnerable coastal areas.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Develop a socio-environmental zoning strategy that includes low-emission neighborhoods and ecological conservation.



## GREATER TERESINA INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT REGION

Population: 1.2 million

### Challenge:

- Population growth and limited financial resources are intensifying issues including pollution, sprawl and lack of sustainable transportation.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Develop gender-sensitive inter-municipal governance and management processes to address these challenges in an integrated and equitable manner.



# 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), which comprises 31 municipalities, 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 (MINAEC) leadership

## PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- October 2022**  
City Academy in Buenos Aires, Argentina
- November 2022**  
Adaptation Finance Academy in Santiago, Chile
- February 2023**  
Costa Rica National-Local Dialogue
- July 2023**  
City Academy in San José, Costa Rica
- July 2023**  
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Urban Nature-Based Solutions in Barranquilla, Colombia
- October 2023**  
Clean Transport Finance Academy for Latin American Cities in San José, Costa Rica



## SAN JOSÉ METROPOLITAN AREA

Population: 2.26 million

### Challenge:

- As the GAM has rapidly grown in population, low-density sprawl is encroaching on the agricultural and natural landscapes and pressuring transportation and waste management systems, creating spillover environmental impacts.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Support the TEVU Project’s efforts to transition the GAM to a zero-carbon, nature-positive, and circular economy through a variety of initiatives, from policy to sustainable waste management to environmental restoration.



“

**There are many reasons to be proud of TEVU, but the most important is the true commitment of its interdisciplinary team working tirelessly to improve the quality of the environment and the lives of Costa Ricans living in the Metropolitan Area of San José.**

For TEVU, UrbanShift has been providing valuable support and technical expertise to the project since the partnership launched. As we look to next year, our objective is to continue improving green and blue spaces and conditions for sustainable mobility across the GAM, emphasizing ecosystem services and connectivity of biodiversity areas.

**LUDMILLA DINIZ,**  
REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISOR ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE, UNDP

## TEVU PROJECT IMPACTS TO DATE



**101.8 hectares**

of urban land rehabilitated



**877.18 tons**

of CO2 avoided through reforestation and carbon reduction efforts



# Building a Sustainable, Circular Economy in Costa Rica's Capital Region

**At the Virilla River in the Greater Metropolitan Area of Costa Rica, a bright yellow barrier, 78 meters long, spans the waterway.** The barrier, installed in May 2023, is simple yet effective: it's designed to trap and recover waste and plastic pollution before it flows down the river and into the ocean. After two months in place, the barrier had already trapped nearly 1 ton of plastic waste. As the most polluted river in the GAM, the Virilla is an ideal location to pilot this technology. The river also flows through property owned by Corporation Pedregal, a construction and manufacturing company based in Heredia, Costa Rica, and a key player in this multi-partner effort to install the barrier that includes the TEVU Project, the United Nations Development Programme's Plastic-Free Landscape Project, Televisora de Costa Rica, OneSea Foundation, Delfino and the Organization for Tropical Studies.

Every two days, staff from Pedregal come out with a mechanical rake and pull in the waste that's piled up against the barrier and along the riverbanks. Within Corporation Pedregal's facilities, the waste is sorted and either recycled or processed and transformed into synthetic sand that can be incorporated into building materials, like bricks. By 2030, Pedregal and the partnership consortium expect to recover

200,000 tons of waste nationwide, both through this barrier and three others proposed for rivers in Costa Rica, and stop 80% of waste that originates in the GAM from ending up in the ocean. In the process, they aim to establish a model for a circular economy in Costa Rica's capital region—one of the key tenets of the TEVU Project.

As regions like the GAM rapidly urbanize and add population, plastic waste is becoming a pressing crisis, and one that UrbanShift has worked to raise the profile of through its advocacy work and partnerships this year. Plastic waste—75% of which originates in cities—pollutes the air, the soil, freshwater and the oceans, causing serious human health impacts, choking wildlife, damaging soil and poisoning water. Local-level mitigation solutions, like the TEVU-supported barrier in the Virilla River, stand to make a significant impact on reducing pollution. And Costa Rica is also showing the way forward on how to transition to a circular economy: In 2023, Costa Rica's Ministry of Environment and Energy introduced a National Circular Economy Strategy, which will create economic and policy frameworks to support more sustainable and regenerative models across the country—and ideally, inspire similar approaches across the region.



In Alajuelita, we are working intensively on environmental awareness and education in this vulnerable community to involve residents in sustainable management of this area. Looking to the next stage of this project, we will create a bio-garden to sanitize the water flowing through our community.

**MODESTO ALPÍZAR,**  
MAYOR OF ALAJUELITA  
[READ MORE ABOUT ALAJUELITA'S COMMUNITY RESILIENCE EFFORTS ON PAGE 16]

# 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 exerting pressure on the country's natural resources. The UrbanShift project in Marrakech, which launched in May 2023, will 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

## MARRAKECH

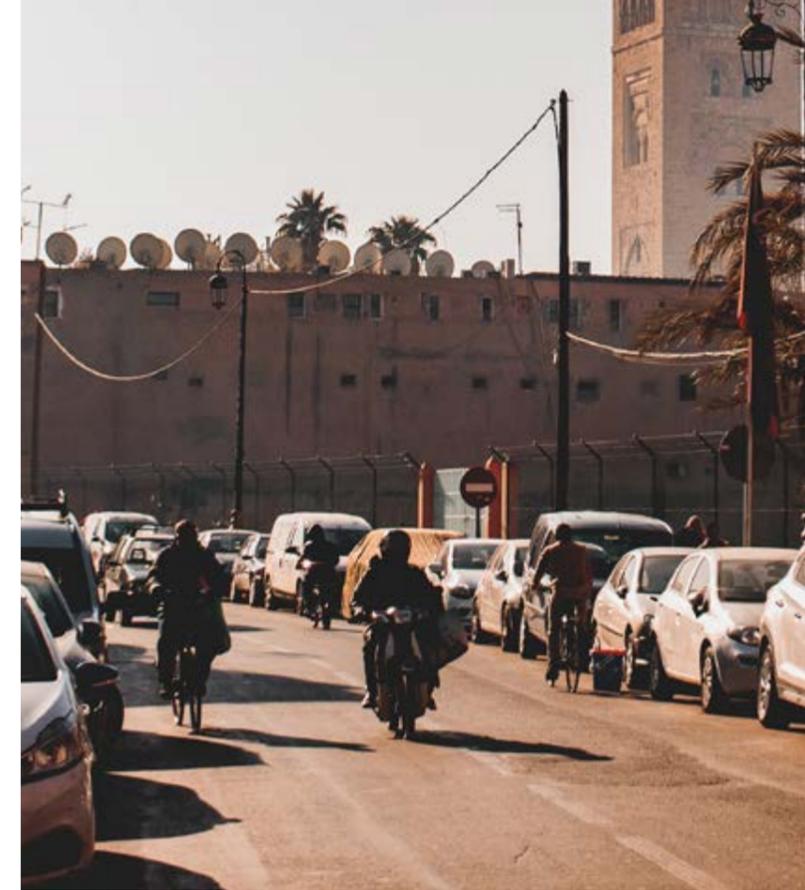
Population: 928,850

**Challenge:**

- 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 Solution:**

- As Marrakech and the surrounding areas start the rebuilding process from the earthquake, UrbanShift will continue will continue supporting the city to pursue sustainable and climate-resilient urban planning.



***This year has also highlighted cities' ongoing vulnerabilities to unpredictable natural disasters. On September 8, 2023, a powerful earthquake hit Morocco. The epicenter was roughly 70km south of Marrakech.***

*Sadly, 3,000 people lost their lives and many thousands more were injured in Marrakech and the surrounding areas. Rocked by the earthquake, the old quarters of Marrakech—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—suffered extensive damage. Domestic and international aid has flowed in swiftly to those who were affected, and to the agencies now focusing on rebuilding communities.*

*The UrbanShift team presents its sincere condolences to the team in Marrakech.*



**“ In the aftermath of the powerful earthquake, the city of Marrakech faces the urgent task of rebuilding.**

UNDP recognizes the immediate need to integrate sustainable and resilient strategies into the reconstruction process. UrbanShift, in collaboration with the City of Marrakech, is also expected to support these efforts. Our upcoming project activities are strategically aligned to contribute to the City's recovery by implementing innovative approaches for sustainable urban development. By leveraging our combined technical expertise, we aim to fortify the City's infrastructure and ensure that the rebuilding process serves as a catalyst for transformative and sustainable change.

**SALIOU TOURE,**  
REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISOR ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE,  
UNDP

# 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 climate-related issues like flooding and extreme heat.

## PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- **June 2023**  
Geospatial Planning Analysis Lab in Kigali, Rwanda
- **June 2023**  
Rwanda National-Local Dialogue
- **July 2023**  
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Zero-Emission Buses in Mumbai, India

**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)



## KIGALI

Population: 1.63 million

### Challenge:

- 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 from loss of green cover in already vulnerable communities.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Support the restoration of wetland areas around the city to mitigate flood risk while advancing efforts to upgrade and improve service provision to new settlements and plan proactively for new, sustainable development areas.



“UrbanShift’s technical workshops showcase what other cities are doing to achieve sustainable and integrated urban development, and how local data can support implementation of best practices in Rwanda.”

This collaborative approach is enabling climate resilient development in Rwandan cities by supporting alignment with national climate change efforts and revealing barriers and opportunities for implementation.

**HISHAM OSMAN**  
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER  
WORLD BANK



## Harnessing Nature-Based Solutions in Kigali to Mitigate Flood Risk

In Rwanda, wetlands play a vital role in the country’s rich biodiversity: they are home to numerous species of endemic birds, fish and plants, act as natural filters for local water supplies, and buffer against stormwater during periods of heavy rainfall. But Rwanda’s rapid urbanization has threatened the integrity of its wetland areas, resulting in the loss of some wetlands and the degradation—the fastest of all of Rwanda’s ecosystems—of many others.

Recently, the city of Kigali and Rwanda Environment Management Authority undertook a comprehensive effort to restore the Nyandungu wetland on the east side of Kigali. Through a multi-year, US\$5 million project, REMA cleared the wetland area of polluting industrial activities, allowing the native fig forest and the streams and ponds of the wetlands to regenerate naturally. The agency planted over 17,000 trees and plants from 55 indigenous species, which bolstered

local biodiversity and provided habitat for insects, birds, reptiles and mammals. Now, the restored 120-hectare wetland is once again functioning at improved capacity to clean and filter the local water supply. The increased vegetation cover and water flows create a cooling effect for the surrounding area and provide a restorative place for residents and visitors.

Building on the success of the Nyandungu restoration, the UrbanShift-supported RUDP II is planning to restore four more wetlands in the Kigali area—Gikondo, Rugenge-Rwintare, Kibumba and lower Nyabugogo—all of which have been degraded through industrial practices and rapid urbanization. While managing flood risk in Kigali requires a multi-faceted and multi-sectoral approach, the restoration of natural ecosystems will enhance resilience while providing residents with more green space to enjoy.



**In Rwanda, urban residents are facing climate-change-related challenges including flooding, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, air pollution, food insecurity, unplanned neighborhoods and insufficient infrastructure. We recognize the critical role that cities need to play in combatting the climate crisis.**

Through dialogue, advocacy and knowledge exchange, UrbanShift is supporting the Government of Rwanda’s efforts around integrated development approaches to transforming our cities into livable places that address environmental issues.

**JULIET KABERA,**  
DIRECTOR GENERAL,  
RWANDA ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

# 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 six secondary cities (Koidu New Sembehun, Bo, Kenema, Port Loko, Bonthe and Makeni) to improve integrated urban planning and service delivery, while also addressing climate risks through nature-based solutions.

**Project Budget**  
\$56.73 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 2022**  
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Urban Cable Cars in Medellín, Colombia (see more on page 55)
- **December 2022**  
Clean Energy and Buildings Finance Academy in Cape Town, South Africa
- **January 2023**  
Launch of Freetown Climate Action Plan



“The technical capacity to design appropriate interventions for climate action is limited at the national level and often lacking at

the subnational level. Consequently, collaboration and coordination of actions across levels of government, which UrbanShift supports, is very important for successful implementation of actions aimed at climate change mitigation or adaptation.

**ADAMS SANPHA KARGBO,**  
DIRECTOR,  
FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION DIVISION  
IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE



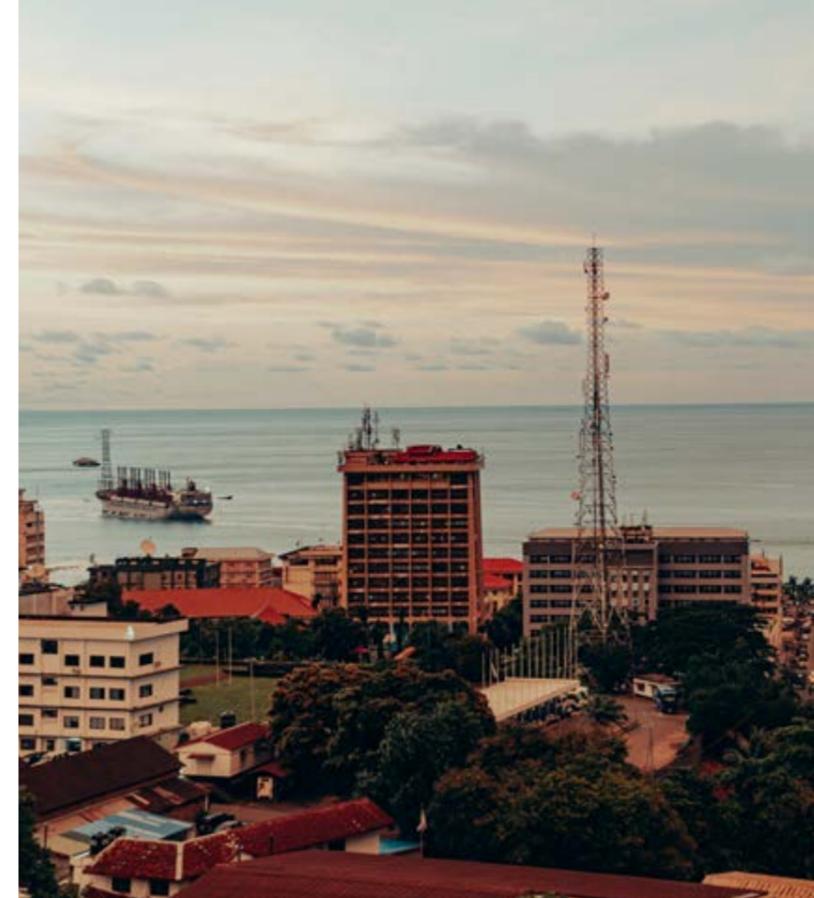
**FREETOWN**  
Population: 1 million

**Challenge:**

- 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.

**UrbanShift Solution:**

- Implement nature-based solutions like tree planting to mitigate heat and landslides, while also developing climate-resilient infrastructure in cities that will experience rapid growth in the coming years.



“The city has received tremendous and valuable assistance from the Urban Shift program over the past two years. Engagement with leaders and programs in other cities that are also working toward addressing issues of climate change and increasing urban resilience has reinforced and strengthened our own work.

**MODUPE WILLIAMS,**  
INTEGRATED EXPERT IN URBAN PLANNING,  
FREETOWN CITY COUNCIL



# Explore Freetown's Climate Action Strategy

**Freetown's Climate Action Strategy is the city's first attempt toward delivering on its commitment to the Paris Agreement** and presents innovative, evidence-based solutions to help the city adapt to climate risks and strengthen mitigation and future sustainability plans.

Aligned with the Government of Sierra Leone's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and mirroring Freetown City Council's "Transform Freetown" Agenda, the Climate Action Strategy focuses on urban energy, mobility and sanitation as part of its mitigation efforts, and on ecosystems and land restoration, disaster risk management, water and urban planning to foster adaptation.

Read more at:  
[Freetown Climate Action Strategy](#) |  
UrbanShift ([shiftcities.org](http://shiftcities.org))



“  
**This Climate Action Plan is not a document that sits on a shelf. It's a living tool that we all have to use. We've all got to make commitments to do the things we can do to save our climate, our city, and ultimately, our planet.**

**YVONNE AKI-SAWYERR,**  
MAYOR OF FREETOWN

# 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 and Surat, 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

- May 2023**  
India National-Local Dialogue
- September 2023**  
UrbanShift Asia Forum in New Delhi, India
- October 2023**  
Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Clean Energy Solutions in Ghana



**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), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MOHUA), Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC)



## CHENNAI

Population: 7.1 million

### Challenge:

- As a coastal city, Chennai is vulnerable to climate change and rapid urbanization, and its flat terrain exacerbates flood risk.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Support restoration of Kadapakkam Lake as part of an ecosystem-based adaptation effort to mitigate flood risk, increase green cover and improve habitat for biodiversity.



## PUNE

Population: 10 million

### Challenge:

- Known as a higher learning and industrial hub, Pune's rapid growth is aggravating congestion and air quality issues while eroding space for parks and nature.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Implement Transit-Oriented Development around metro stations to encourage density while also advancing urban greening initiatives to minimize pollution.



## SURAT

Population: 6 million

### Challenge:

- Projected to be the world's fastest growing city through 2035, Surat's land area is now encroaching into coastal flood-prone zones, increasing its climate risk.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Implement integrated and climate-resilient coastal zone development strategies, including sustainable transportation and nature-based solutions like permeable pavements.



The potential of supporting city-level sustainable development projects in India is immense, but we need adequate capacity building measures and to ensure that key learnings are disseminated amongst other cities to make a widespread impact. It is heartening that the UrbanShift project is structured to follow this approach.

**HITESH VAIDYA**  
DIRECTOR  
NIUA





## Pune's Neighborhood-Scale Sustainability Efforts

This past year, UrbanShift got the chance to sit down with Pune Smart City Development Corporation Limited's (PSCDCL) former Chief Knowledge Officer, Aniruddha Shahapure, to learn more about Pune's approach to sustainable development.

*"Pune's urban challenges, like traffic congestion, are interconnected with environmental challenges, like air pollution and loss of tree cover," Shahapure told UrbanShift. "The UrbanShift project will help Pune to address these challenges in a cohesive way, focusing on integrated, transport-oriented planning and respecting the city's existing demography and unique needs."*

In Pune, a comprehensive approach to transit-oriented development is taking root alongside neighborhood-scale nature-based solutions and urban greening projects. Every Smart City participating in India's national program is allocated specific neighborhoods in which to pilot these approaches; Pune has been allotted three areas—Aundh, Baner and Balewadi—and within those areas,

the city is implementing a wide variety of replicable projects.

One that Shahapure is optimistic about is community farming. In the Smart City areas, Pune is working with residents to convert unused or degraded plots of land, which would typically become dumping sites, into organic community farms. The city encourages residents to use the plots to grow and sell their own produce or participate in classes on urban farming. They've set up composting plants at the farms, and residents are learning firsthand about the benefits of zero-waste systems. "It's a self-sustaining model that we hope to replicate in other parts of the city," Shahapure said.

While many types of sustainable development that UrbanShift supports require high-level coordination—climate action planning, for example, or zoning overhaul—Pune's initiative demonstrates that efforts at the neighborhood level can effectively complement large-scale transformation and encourage learning and buy-in among residents in the process.



“

The GEF-7 funded UrbanShift Country Project envisions catalytic transit-oriented development in Pune with the objective of enhancing access to public transit, promoting a shift towards shared modes of transportation, and consequently mitigating traffic congestion and air pollution. We look forward to positive and sustainable outcomes from the project, and hope for this development blueprint to be emulated within the country and across the globe.

**VIKRAM KUMAR (IAS),**  
MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER,  
PUNE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

# CHINA

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

To support these efforts, UrbanShift is also working with cities to develop a high-quality indicator framework on green and low-carbon development that can help mainstream climate-responsive, integrated urban planning and management at the city level.



## PARTICIPATION IN KEY URBANSHIFT ACTIVITIES

- **November 2022**  
China National-Local Dialogue
- **September 2023**  
Climate Finance Academy in Beijing, China
- **September 2023**  
UrbanShift Asia Forum in New Delhi, India



Climate change is a cross-sectoral issue managed by many different government agencies. National, provincial and city-level governments all play a critical role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to the impacts of climate change, and promoting sustainable development.

**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: 21.26 million

- Challenge:**
- Projected population growth threatens to erode the natural ecosystems surrounding the city.
- UrbanShift Solution:**
- Support Chengdu’s “Park City” strategy by helping to map and plan around connecting its natural assets, while involving the private sector in financing green investments.

**CHONGQING**  
Population: 32.13 million

- Challenge:**
- The city faces 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 Solution:**
- Prepare a spatial development strategy for the Bishan District, while also supporting integrated energy management in the historical Yuzhong District.

**NINGBO**  
Population: 9.61 million

- Challenge:**
- Due to Ningbo’s energy-intensive export industry, the city’s per capita carbon emissions is double the national average, threatening quality of life and local ecological systems.
- UrbanShift Solution:**
- Support citywide strategic planning around biodiversity and natural ecosystems while also advancing an emissions monitoring system to facilitate zero-carbon development.

**CHENGDU-CHONGQING ECONOMIC CIRCLE**  
Population: 87.24 million

- Challenge:**
- As a large, multi-center economic area, the region aims to balance sustainability with robust development.
- UrbanShift Solution:**
- Support ecological connectivity and habitat restoration across the region, while also advancing strategies for waste management, biodiversity and carbon neutrality.



This is the first time that Chengdu is implementing a GEF-supported project, and it has progressed very well in the last year. We have set a vision to become a Park City, and the support of the GEF will help Chengdu in achieving this goal and advancing the city’s transition toward carbon neutrality

**JIAN CHEN,**  
CHIEF ECONOMIST AND PMO DIRECTOR,  
CHENGDU MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AND REFORM COMMISSION



In the last year, the project in China has made significant progress, and all project management offices in the cities are operational. We are proud to see that the three project cities, and more cities in China, are benefitting from the knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning activities supported by UrbanShift and the World Bank.

**XUEMAN WANG,**  
SENIOR URBAN SPECIALIST  
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

- **August 2023**  
Indonesia National-Local Dialogue
- **September 2023**  
UrbanShift Asia Forum in New Delhi, India



“The lessons learned while participating in the UrbanShift Asia Forum 2023 in New Delhi have not only succeeded in broadening the perspectives of the Palembang city government but have also raised our fighting spirit, despite our limitations in regional financing capacity, to make the city of Palembang greener and more comfortable to live in.”

**IR. H. HARREY HADI, MS,**  
HEAD OF THE PALEMBANG CITY  
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING,  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



**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

### Challenge:

- As informal settlements expand, the city also faces flooding and poor air quality.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Support planning to address challenges like clean water access and flood control.



## SEMARANG

Population: 1.7 million

### Challenge:

- Inefficient urban systems, along with flooding and landslides, reduce quality of life.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Implement circular economy strategies while improving energy efficiency and public transport



## PALEMBANG

Population: 1.8 million

### Challenge:

- Agriculture and urban expansion have eroded tree cover and natural ecosystems.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Implement strategies to integrate agriculture and urbanization more sustainably.



## BITUNG

Population: 229,795

### Challenge:

- As climate change threatens urban infrastructure, industry is eroding coastal ecosystems.

### UrbanShift Solution:

- Strengthen restoration plans while upgrading infrastructure for resilience.



## BALIKPAPAN

Population: 733,396

### Challenge:

- Heavy industry strains local ecosystems and increases air and water pollution

### UrbanShift Solution:

- As the Indonesian capital will move near Balikpapan, UrbanShift will support sustainability and quality-of-life improvements, including better flood management.



UrbanShift’s deep-dive training sessions have benefited project stakeholders at both the national and local levels with new knowledge and connections. The Indonesian delegates who participated in the UrbanShift Asia Forum in New Delhi were able to present their city’s challenges and explore how shared best practices around financing climate projects could support solutions.

**YUKO ARAI**  
URBAN SPECIALIST  
WORLD BANK



# GLOBAL PLATFORM



- City Needs
- Training & Capacity-Building
- Networking & Advocacy

To achieve sustained action at the city level, government officials and urban practitioners must be empowered with the technical knowledge and tools required to transform their urban environments. UrbanShift offers a specialized suite of activities such as labs, workshops and webinars to enhance integrated planning capacity in GEF-7 cities while leveraging the power of dialogue, networking and advocacy to reduce emissions and spur sustainable investments.



# ASIA FORUM

## SEPTEMBER 25-28

### NEW DELHI, INDIA

**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.**

The UrbanShift Asia Forum, the program’s first forum, took place in New Delhi, India, from September 25 through 28 with the theme of Financing Climate Action in Cities. For four days, over 250 local leaders and practitioners from cities in India, Indonesia, China, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Malaysia and Jordan convened to address one of humanity’s most pressing challenges: sustainable urban development. Organized by ICLEI in collaboration with NIUA and MOHUA under the UrbanShift program, the Asia Forum provided a pivotal platform for leaders from across the region to gather, share their specific challenges, collaborate on solutions and build solidarity around the potential of cities to shape the planet’s response to climate change.

#### HIGH-LEVEL OPENING PLENARY

To begin the Forum, regional and programmatic leaders shared their thoughts around the importance of collaborating on innovative solutions to financing and scaling up urban climate action. Inaugurating the Forum, India’s Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri, issued a strong call to action to the leaders gathered, saying that cities need to take this moment to localize climate action agendas and create innovative financing instruments to ensure projects are implemented.



#### INVESTOR ROUNDTABLE

During the High-Level Investors Roundtable, facilitated by C40, city officials and investors discussed financing for e-bus and e-freight deployment, with a particular focus on the growing market opportunities around electric vehicles in the Global South, and strategies and financing models that can ensure robust project development.

#### CITY-BUSINESS HUB

Following the official launch of the Public-Private Collaboration to Accelerate Sustainable Urban Development: A Guide for Global South Cities, the C40-led City Business Hub hosted a series of panel discussions with representatives from cities and private-sector ventures from across Asia, who shared their experiences and insights around productive and impactful ways to partner for climate action. Access the full guide at [shiftcities.org](http://shiftcities.org).

#### CITY ACADEMY

On days two and three of the Asia Forum, city delegates split into two groups for capacity building around Accessing Urban Climate Finance (led by ICLEI) and Accommodating Urban Growth (led by C40). The content of the courses was specifically tailored to the context of rapidly expanding Global South cities, particularly in Asia, that are facing the interlocking challenges of climate change and population growth and need to move quickly to implement impactful solutions at scale.

#### SITE VISIT

The Asia Forum concluded with a visit to the New Delhi Municipal Council’s Smart City Integrated Command and Control Center (ICCC), an innovative facility powered by real-time data. With dashboards monitoring 19 urban services from waste management to smart street lighting, the ICCC illustrated how data-driven decision-making can enhance responsiveness to local needs and local governments.



We were proud to host UrbanShift’s inaugural Forum in New Delhi, India and provide a platform for regional leaders to address some of humanity’s most pressing challenges: sustainable urban development and financing climate action. Climate finance is not merely an investment; it’s a commitment to building a future where every urban center thrives, powered by the resilience and innovation that financial support from the global community can uniquely provide.

**EMANI KUMAR,**  
DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ICLEI AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
ICLEI SOUTH ASIA



“C40 delivered three key activities during the Forum: the City-Business Hub; an Investors Roundtable on the theme of decarbonizing transportation,

in which financiers and city representatives discussed challenges and exchanged solutions; and the City Academy, which engaged leaders on how to manage growth in the face of climate change. These efforts inspired innovation, collaboration, and shared best practices in the Global South.

ANDREA FERNANDEZ, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CLIMATE FINANCE, KNOWLEDGE AND PARTNERSHIPS, C40



# 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.



“  
**All challenges facing our planet are interconnected.**

These innovative courses encourage leaders to think across siloes and understand how to create transformative change that addresses social, economic and environmental goals together.

**ROGIER VAN DEN BERG,**  
GLOBAL DIRECTOR OF WRI ROSS CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES, WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

## 📍 SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA July 4-6, 2023

### SPOTLIGHTING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS AND INTEGRATED CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING IN COSTA RICA

UrbanShift’s second City Academy in Latin America united 57 participants from 30 cities in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Costa Rica for three days of intensive learning on Nature-Based Solutions, led by WRI, and Integrated Climate Action Planning, led by C40, in partnership with the GEF-funded project Transitioning to an Urban Green Economy (TEVU). Over the course of the event, participants engaged in hands-on sessions around how green infrastructure and promoting biodiversity can create more resilient, thriving cities, and on strategic planning for climate action. International and local experts from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, the C40 Cities Finance Centre, ICLEI Africa Centre for Biodiversity in Cities and ICLEI Mexico shared insights, knowledge products and case studies with participants to further their learning.

On the last day of the Academy, the delegations experienced best practices on nature- and climate-positive development firsthand through two innovative projects implemented in the Metropolitan Area of San José. In the La Guapil neighborhood of Alajuelita, women- and community-led efforts, funded by the GEF’s Sustainable Cities Program, have recently transformed a dump site into a thriving community park (read more on page 16). Nearby, representatives from Corporation Pedregal, a local construction and manufacturing company, showed participants how a barrier in the Virilla River is trapping plastic waste before it flows into the ocean so it can instead be transformed into construction materials (read more on page 28). Witnessing these projects in action grounded the learnings of the past two days for participants, and they came away from the training energized by the opportunity to learn from cities across the region, and ready to bring innovative solutions back to their home cities.



### ADDITIONAL CITY ACADEMIES:

- **October 2022**  
**Urban Biodiversity and Green and Thriving Neighbourhoods**  
Buenos Aires, Argentina
- **September 2023**  
**Accessing Urban Climate Finance and Accommodating Urban Growth**  
New Delhi, India

### EXPLORE THE ONLINE CITY ACADEMY

In 2023, UrbanShift launched the Online City Academy—eight free, self-paced online courses that bring the rigorous content of the in-person City Academy to a global audience of urban practitioners, leaders, and learners. Learn more and enroll at [shiftcities.org/online-city-academy](https://shiftcities.org/online-city-academy).





# PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES

UrbanShift's Peer-to-Peer Exchanges facilitate knowledge sharing around integrated urban development solutions among cities. These in-person events span two to three days and bring UrbanShift city representatives to non-UrbanShift counterparts to explore practical solutions to a challenge selected by the participating city.



“

The P2P exchange increased awareness of the benefits of a cable car system as an integrated mass transit solution for Freetown. Seeing the cable car in operation and getting responses to questions and concerns has assisted the delivery of a Feasibility Study of the Freetown Cable Car project, funded by the C40 Cities Finance Facility.

**SAAD BARRIE,**  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,  
FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION DIVISION IN THE  
MINISTRY OF FINANCE,  
SIERRA LEONE



## ADDITIONAL PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES:

- **July 11-14, 2023**  
**Zero-Emission Buses**  
Mumbai, India
- **July 25-27, 2023**  
**Urban Nature-Based Solutions**  
Barranquilla, Colombia
- **October 10-13, 2023**  
**Sustainable Energy Solutions**  
Accra and Kumasi, Ghana



## MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA

November 15-17, 2022

### CABLE CARS AS A SOLUTION FOR URBAN EQUITY

In Medellín, UrbanShift brought senior-level officials from Freetown, Lima and Sierra Leone's national government to learn how the city's successful cable car network could provide a model to meet Freetown's and Lima's transportation needs. Medellín's cable cars connect residents of marginalized areas, which are clustered in the city's steep hills, with economic hubs and bolster equitable and inclusive development in the city. As Freetown and Lima both face similar challenges of steep topography and economically disadvantaged populations being isolated in the hills, witnessing how Medellín was able to improve the quality of life for marginalized communities through inclusive and adaptive public transportation and services sparked inspiration. Through presentations, interactive sessions, site visits and networking opportunities, representatives from Sierra Leone and Lima gained in-depth knowledge of the technical, socioeconomic and political aspects of implementing a successful transit-oriented development scheme.

Following the Peer-to-Peer Exchange, which was co-delivered by UrbanShift and the C40 Cities Finance Facility, the City of Freetown and the government of Sierra Leone have made strides toward implementing a similar cable car scheme for Freetown, whose steep hills have previously posed a barrier to accessible and equitable public transportation. The Ministry of Transport for Sierra Leone is partnering closely with Freetown's Mayor and City Council to chart out a roadmap for implementing a cable car scheme for the city. UrbanShift will continue to support the collaboration around this effort, which exemplifies the vital role of knowledge-sharing across contexts in making progress toward more sustainable and equitable cities for all.



# 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.



## SANTIAGO, CHILE November 22-24, 2022

### CONNECTING ADAPTATION PROJECTS WITH FINANCING TOOLS

Over the course of three days, participants from the national governments of Argentina, Costa Rica, Chile and Paraguay along with representatives from 19 cities came together to explore financing solutions for climate adaptation projects.

Organized by C40 Cities in collaboration with C40 Cities Finance Facility, Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and Gobierno Regional Metropolitano de Santiago, the event brought participants into dialogue with leading financial and technical experts from multilateral banks and international organizations such as CAF, IADB, World Bank, BANOBRAS, Fundación Avina and more to gain

firsthand insights on developing and financing viable projects.

Throughout the Academy, participants worked on sample project preparation bids for financing adaptation, receiving feedback directly from a panel of financial institution representatives. City representatives shared insights on project development and financing from their own contexts, which has created positive ripple effects throughout participating cities. Inspired by Mexico City's presentation on its Green Infrastructure Special Program during the event, the Metropolitan Government of Santiago is now developing 33 Bosques de Bolsillo (Pocket Forests) across the city,

which will cover over 30,000 square meters by 2024 and aid the city's efforts to mitigate heat and pollution while providing new green spaces for residents. Participants came away from the Academy with concepts for effective adaptation projects and the tools and connection needed to finance them. Following the Academy, said Patricia Martínez Barba, General Director of IMEPLAN, Metropolitan Region of Guadalajara, "We have access to information that allowed me to have a point of reference for feedback on my work and that of the team, and to find areas of opportunity."

### LIGHT-TOUCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Cities that participate in Finance Academies can apply for bespoke, light-touch technical assistance from UrbanShift as they develop their projects. Through this offering, the UrbanShift Global Platform will grant roughly \$20,000 in finance-specific support to meet the needs laid out by cities. Freetown, inspired by a tax incentive scheme for small-scale solar energy systems that Salvador shared during the Clean Energy and Buildings Finance Academy in December 2022, applied for and is receiving support to determine the viability of implementing a similar scheme locally.

### INVESTORS' ROUNDTABLES

Hosted during UrbanShift's regional Forums, investors' roundtables foster collaboration between cities and investors around specific urban opportunities, from climate mitigation to electric buses. These discussions result in projects that align with both financial goals and urban development objectives and provide clarity to city leaders on how best to structure initiatives to receive supportive financing.

### TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIONS PROGRAM

Led by ICLEI, the Transformative Actions Program (TAP) is a global initiative that supports local and regional governments in developing robust, bankable sustainability projects. Cities within the UrbanShift network are invited to submit their sustainable infrastructure projects to TAP to have them assessed for potential impact and alignment with climate goals. If needed, TAP will recommend improvements or adjustments to strengthen the project. Selected projects are connected to TAP partners for development and financing support.

### FINANCE ACADEMIES

UrbanShift's Finance Academies focus on accelerating and scaling up infrastructure investments for urban solutions that deliver global environmental benefits. These intensive three-day workshops held at the regional level bring together city officials, technical experts, private sector representatives and financial institutions to address financing challenges and identify solutions for a range of issues, from climate adaptation to clean transportation.



### OTHER FINANCE ACADEMIES:

- **December 2022**  
*Clean Energy and Buildings Finance Academy*  
Cape Town, South Africa
- **July 2023**  
*Adaptation Finance Academy for Brazilian Cities*  
São Paulo, Brazil
- **September 2023**  
*China Climate Finance Academy*  
Beijing, China
- **October 2023**  
*Clean Transport Finance Academy*  
San José, Costa Rica



“Without access to the necessary finance and understanding how to draw investors, communities

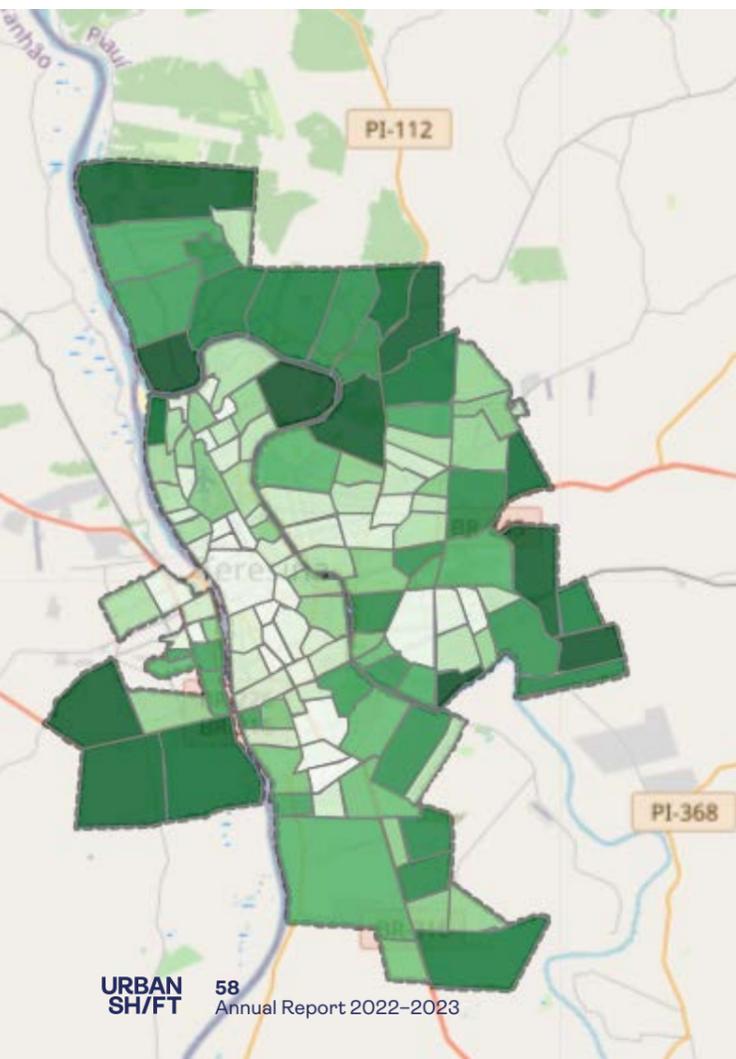
cannot implement their transformative initiatives. Innovative financing approaches underpin an indispensable blueprint for building integrated and resilient urban landscapes, propelling us collectively towards a sustainable future.

**MARYKE VAN STADEN,**  
DIRECTOR,  
CARBONN CLIMATE CENTER, ICLEI WORLD  
SECRETARIAT



## 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 the following page) and support for cities on climate action planning (see page 68).



Through UrbanShift, WRI has taken comparative urban data analysis to a new level, providing information on key parameters like biodiversity and flood risk to cities so they can develop specific climate actions and, at the same time, evolve in their policymaking and unlock finance for city-led initiatives.

**PABLO LAZO**  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

### 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. In 2023, UrbanShift, along with the Cities4Forests initiative, developed a dashboard of geospatial indicators to help cities visualize the local connections between climate change and the urban environment. This tool is available for 35 cities and provides data on indicators across seven key themes relevant to sustainability, such as air quality, flooding and greenhouse gas emissions. For each theme, the dashboard provides multiple indicators that describe current baselines, recent trends, or projected changes. Cities are already making use of the dashboard: Freetown is using the data to map areas of low surface reflectivity to understand where to prioritize cooling measures like reflective roofs and tree cover. This information can better help these cities understand the factors influencing their assets and risk levels, prioritize and prepare for hazards, set goals, or implement targeted strategies to enhance assets or mitigate impacts.

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.



## USHUAIA, ARGENTINA

August 30-31, 2023

### LAYING THE BLUEPRINT FOR SUSTAINABLE PLANNING IN A CHALLENGING CLIMATE

Ushuaia, Argentina, is the southernmost city in the world. The gateway to Tierra del Fuego National Park and much of global tourism to Antarctica, this small city of just over 77,000 residents has been grappling with an increasing influx of visitors and confronting how the city will need to evolve to accommodate growth. Over the course of two days at the end of August, UrbanShift convened around 44 local leaders for a data-informed workshop on strategies for sustainable development that consider Ushuaia’s unique challenges, from its cold climate to its geographic constraints.

As Ushuaia is in the process of updating its Local Climate Action Plan, UrbanShift is supporting the city to lay out a strategic plan for accommodating growth and tourism while reducing emissions. In Ushuaia, where energy demand is already high due to the need to heat buildings and active mobility has not been prioritized due to the cold climate, this effort requires comprehensive planning around transit, densification and efficient building standards. To demonstrate these concepts, UrbanShift is supporting Ushuaia to pilot a sustainable development zone in one of its newest neighborhoods, the San Martín urbanization. Through the Lab, participants dove into the city’s unique context and challenges, explored geospatial analysis and territorial data to evaluate risk and future demands and discussed best practices on urban growth management, energy efficiency and bioclimatic urban design. The results of the Lab are helping inform the city’s Climate Action Plan process.

### OTHER URBANSHIFT LABS:

- **June 2023**  
**Geospatial Planning Analysis Lab**  
Kigali, Rwanda



# ADVOCACY

UrbanShift’s advocacy effort, led by UNEP, 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.



## VANCOUVER, CANADA

August 22-24, 2023

### SPOTLIGHT ON URBANSHIFT AT THE GEF ASSEMBLY

Held in Vancouver, Canada, the Seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility convened leaders from 185 countries in a pivotal moment for the planet and its inhabitants. Building on recent diplomatic breakthroughs around biodiversity loss, toxic chemicals and protecting the oceans, the GEF Assembly took stock of progress toward 2030 goals around climate action and conservation, and officially launched the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund to protect species and ecosystems across the world.

Against the backdrop of these significant negotiations, UrbanShift supported two events that foregrounded the role of cities in protecting nature and the overall health of the planet. Through an interactive workshop hosted by UrbanShift and the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC), city participants collectively envisioned what the nature-positive cities we all need to thrive could look like. And during a high-level roundtable convened by the GEF in collaboration with UrbanShift and GPSC, representatives from cities and national governments discussed how cities can take decisive action and use integrated and nature-based solutions to promote low carbon development and foster a healthier relationship between cities and surrounding ecosystems.

## OTHER ADVOCACY EVENTS:

- **November 2022**  
*UrbanShift at COP27*
- **December 2022**  
*UrbanShift at Biodiversity COP15*
- **January 2023**  
*World Economic Forum: Unlocking Investment in Nature for a Just Urban Transition*
- **April 2023**  
*Cities Summit of the Americas: Building Resilience with Nature in Cities*
- **June 2023**  
*EcoCity World Summit: Greener, Healthier, Vibrant Neighborhoods*
- **June 2023**  
*U20 Manthan Webinar: Equitable Planning Approaches to Achieve Environmentally Responsive Behavior*
- **June 2023**  
*UN Habitat Assembly: Resilient Cities, Greener Neighbourhoods, Thriving Communities: The Power of Nature-Based Solutions*
- **August 2023**  
*7th Global Environment Facility Assembly: Integrating Nature in Cities*
- **October 2023**  
*World Forum on Urban Forests: Leveraging Urban Biodiversity and Forests to Create Inclusive and Equitable Cities*



“The Paris Forum to End Plastic Pollution in Cities successfully created a space for local governments

to share their experience and challenges with the international community gathered for the Plastics Treaty negotiations.

**ELSA LEFEVRE,**  
URBANSHIFT ADVOCACY LEAD,  
CITIES UNIT, UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

## PARIS, FRANCE

May 26, 2023

### SUPPORTING MOMENTUM FOR A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK ON ENDING PLASTIC POLLUTION

Against the challenge of mitigating and ending plastic pollution, cities have a significant role to play: Around 75% of plastic waste originates in cities, and urban infrastructure like municipal waste management systems bears much of the responsibility for coping with mounting pollution. Following the UN Environment Assembly’s adoption of the landmark resolution “End Plastic Pollution: Towards an International Legally Binding Instrument,” in March 2022, UrbanShift has worked to ensure that local governments have a voice in ongoing negotiations.

In parallel with the second session of the International Negotiating Committee on plastic pollution in Paris in May 2023, UrbanShift and the City of Paris organized the Paris International Forum to End Plastic Pollution in Cities in partnership with the AIMF, Bloomberg Philanthropies, GIZ, the Geneva Cities Hub, Region4, the Scientists’ Coalition, the Tara Foundation, UCLG, UNDP, UN-Habitat, the WEF, the WWF and Zero Waste Europe. The forum brought together global mayors, scientists and representatives from NGOs and philanthropies to discuss the crisis of plastic pollution and how cities can lead the way on innovative local solutions for curbing upstream and downstream plastic waste impacts. Bima Arya Sugiarto, Mayor of Bogor, Indonesia, shared the city’s successful effort to ban single-use plastic bags in markets, and Pratistha Mangain, Commissioner of Ambikapur, India, outlined the city’s successful, women-led waste management system, which earned Ambikapur the title of cleanest small city in India in 2017.

Over 200 people joined in person, along with 1,300 on the livestream to witness these powerful examples of local action against plastic pollution. Following the Forum, UrbanShift partners prepared an advocacy statement, endorsed by a coalition of mayors, and delivered it to the secretariat of the International Negotiating Committee to affirm the need for city representation in this effort.



# 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.



## VIRTUAL May 10, 2023

### REFLECTING ON SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The 3rd UrbanShift annual PEG Meeting was hosted on May 10, 2023. Members, including United Cities and Local Governments, Global Covenant of Mayors, United Nations Development Programme, World Economic Forum, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the GEF convened to discuss UrbanShift’s past achievements and future activities, share updates and identify synergies for upcoming work. During the meeting, UrbanShift presented its advocacy strategy and workplan for 2023, inviting input and identifying opportunities for collaboration with PEG members.

This PEG meeting cast light on the importance of urban transformation and both long-term and short-term approaches to creating change, from shifting government mindsets to directly improving urban life. As UrbanShift works across levels of government to effect change, PEG members were able to weigh in on how their work aligns with and can support UrbanShift’s ongoing efforts. Future PEG meetings over the course of the program will assess progress to date and open up additional opportunities for alignment and collaboration.





# CITY-BUSINESS COLLABORATION

City governments cannot solve urban sustainability challenges by working alone. Collaboration with the private sector is an integral source of innovation and action. Through a range of activities and resources, UrbanShift works with cities to support public-private collaboration to catalyze climate action.

## CITY-BUSINESS HUBS

In City-Business Hubs, organized as part of the regional UrbanShift Forums, UrbanShift convenes city and business leaders to discuss the most pressing regional challenges and ways of addressing them through cross-sectoral partnerships.



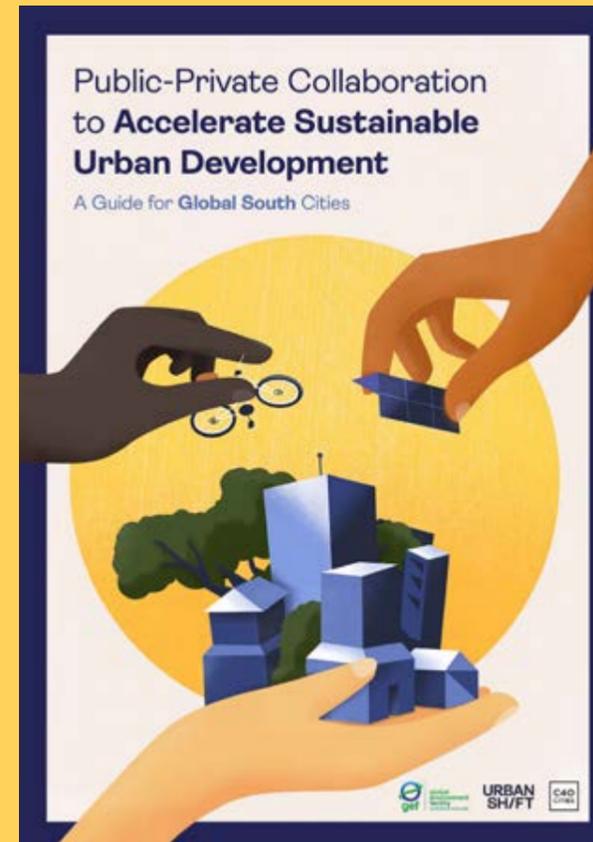
## CITY-BUSINESS CLIMATE ALLIANCE

The City-Business Climate Alliance (CBCA) is a joint initiative between C40, CDP and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development to support city leaders in partnering with local businesses to set joint climate agendas and implement programs.

With the support of UrbanShift and C40, Buenos Aires launched their own City-Business Climate Alliance in October 2022. Made up of 10 companies and city representatives, the group is collaborating on circular economy strategies for the construction industry and establishing a protocol for working outdoors during heatwaves. UrbanShift supports Buenos Aires through coaching, writing guides and facilitating peer learning opportunities with other cities.

## CITY-BUSINESS COLLABORATION ACCELERATOR

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.



## PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT: A GUIDE FOR GLOBAL SOUTH CITIES

This UrbanShift guide, developed by C40, showcases real-world success stories and best practices from 30 Global South cities, where innovative partnerships between governments, businesses and communities have not only reduced emissions but also improved the lives of urban residents. These city case studies illustrate a set of five models of collaboration—Non-commercial Convening, Enabling Innovation, Market-Shaping Policy and Regulation, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Business-Focused International Partnerships—along with tactics that can help cities successfully implement these models.

Access the guide at <https://www.shiftcities.org/activities/city-business-collaboration>



# 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.



## OTHER NATIONAL-LOCAL DIALOGUES:

- **November 2022**  
*China National-Local Dialogue*
- **December 2022**  
*Argentina National-Local Dialogue*
- **February 2023**  
*Costa Rica National-Local Dialogue*
- **May 2023**  
*India National-Local Dialogue*
- **June 2023**  
*Rwanda National-Local Dialogue*
- **August 2023**  
*Indonesia National-Local Dialogue*

## BEIJING/VIRTUAL November 16, 2022

### FACILITATING MULTILEVEL COORDINATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

China's first National-Local Dialogue convened 36 representatives from the World Bank, China Center for Urban Development, Ministry of Finance, ICLEI East Asia Secretariat and the cities of Chengdu, Chongqing and Ningbo. Hosted by the World Bank, this event also marked the launch of the GEF-7 China Green and Carbon-Neutral Cities Project.

Through this virtual dialogue, participants from the national and local governments discussed the need for Chinese cities to support urban biodiversity and low-carbon urban development, framed by keynote speeches from local subject-matter experts.

By discussing and collaborating around these issues across levels of government, national and local representatives furthered their understanding of the latest developments around implementing measures to support urban biodiversity and low carbon development and what challenges the various agencies are facing—from policy governance to financing—to implementing solutions. This convening opened the door for subsequent dialogues and exchanges between the national and local governments, and for increased collaboration around these cross-cutting challenges and goals.





# 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 declarations, initiatives and mayoral leadership. UrbanShift's partnership with cities contributes to how they shape their climate action plans and connect with peer cities working toward similar bold goals.



“The future of city planning is directly linked to climate planning. Cities need to adopt a multisectoral,

climate-sensitive and integrated approach to their plans and policies. UrbanShift builds the bridge between actors and sectors so cities can adopt integrated approaches to sustainable urban development.

**MATHEUS ORTEGA,**  
CLIMATE ACTION SENIOR MANAGER,  
C40 CITIES

## SUPPORTING CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING IN TERESINA

The city of Teresina, Brazil, launched its first-ever Climate Action Plan in October 2023. Developed by Teresina's Municipal Secretariat of Planning and Coordination, the plan assesses the city's current greenhouse gas emissions and offers projections of medium- and long-term scenarios for major climate impacts, like heatwaves, fires, floods and landslides.

UrbanShift was proud to support this important plan's public launch. During the event, Matheus Ortega, C40's Senior Climate Action Manager for UrbanShift, delivered a master class to the parliamentary body of Teresina on the impacts of climate change in cities and how plans such as this one can guide local action to mitigate the worst impacts and build resilience. To share this plan with the broader public in Teresina, UrbanShift supported the city to develop a graphic poster that lays out the city's climate risk and what the government is doing to address this crisis.

On the following page, you can see the poster in Brazilian Portuguese that summarizes Teresina's Climate Action Plan.



### Plano de AÇÃO CLIMÁTICA de Teresina

A cidade tem metas estabelecidas para mitigar e se adaptar às mudanças climáticas.

A mudança do clima tem consequências drásticas para Teresina. Mas juntos podemos fazer a diferença e construir uma cidade mais resiliente e sustentável.

- 1. Fomento à Economia Verde**
  - Fomentar a ampliação e manutenção de hortas urbanas.
  - Fomentar o desenvolvimento de negócios e empregos verdes.
  - Estabelecimento de padrão para compras públicas sustentáveis.
- 2. Carbono Neutro**
  - Melhorar o transporte público local.
  - Eficiência energética nos prédios públicos e na iluminação pública.
  - Incentivos à geração distribuída de energia solar.
  - Promover o uso de bicicletas e mobilidade ativa.
- 3. Educação Ambiental e Climática**
  - Promover e capacitar multiplicadores de educação ambiental e sanitária para a sociedade.
- 4. Aumentando a Resiliência**
  - Aumentar e proteger os espaços verdes da cidade.
  - Fortalecer a atuação da Defesa Civil Municipal.
  - Promover a conservação e restauração de ecossistemas naturais.
  - Melhorar a drenagem e aumentar permeabilidade do solo.
  - Aprimorar os serviços de saneamento básico.
  - Promover a melhoria da qualidade ambiental dos recursos hídricos.
- 5. Governança Climática**
  - Fomentar o uso de dados no conceito de Dados Abertos Governamentais.
  - Estabelecer uma governança climática e ambiental e uma política de enfrentamento à mudança do clima.

**A análise de risco climático**  
do plano apontou as seguintes tendências na cidade:

- Dias consecutivos sem chuva ↑ = ↑ Secas
- Precipitação acumulada ↑ = ↑ Inundações e deslizamentos
- Temperatura ↑ = ↑ Sensação de calor
- Dias quentes ↑ = ↑ Ondas de calor

**Teresina** SEMPLAN Agência Municipal de Planejamento e Coordenação **AGÊNCIA TERESINA 2030** **URBAN SH/FT**



# 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:

- March 2023**  
*Plastic Pollution & Cities: Building Momentum Toward a Global Plastics Treaty*
- August 2023**  
*UrbanShift and Energy Exchanges Webinar on Urban Cooling*



## VIRTUAL December 7, 2022

### VIRTUAL LEARNING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURE FOR CITIES

How can creating nature-positive cities advance equity for all? That is the key question that the seventh UrbanShift webinar, led by UNEP, aimed to answer. Through an in-depth discussion with global experts, this webinar on “Leveraging Urban Nature to Create Inclusive and Equitable Cities” explored the challenges connected with unequal access to urban green spaces and the great potential of urban nature to leverage inclusiveness and equity in cities.

Beginning with an overview of the environmental and socio-economic benefits of urban nature, and the challenges derived from the lack of equal access, global experts from UNEP and WRI discussed how access to nature should be both the means and the objective of achieving equity and inclusivity in cities. Representatives from the Secretariat of the Environment of Mexico City then presented their best practices in collaboration with local NGOs and academics, and highlighted how a well-planned city-wide network of urban gardens could spur social cohesion, improve food security and empower women. Building on this concrete example, C40 opened the broader applicability of these lessons to cities across the globe and highlighted the best strategies to overcome socio-economic and environmental justice barriers in the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

This online event attracted more than 200 people from more than 120 cities across the globe, with a majority from the Global South. Offered in English, French and Spanish, the webinar has successfully informed a broad audience about the critical importance of urban nature to ensure a just transition towards sustainable cities for people and the planet.



# MONITORING & EVALUATION



Recognizing the challenges and opportunities that accompany urban growth, UrbanShift's objective is to strengthen cities' abilities to implement integrated planning strategies that create demonstrable positive impact at the local level and produce long-term, global environmental benefits. UrbanShift measures progress towards this objective through a flexible Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework that the program's country projects can adapt for their individual contexts and priorities. The UrbanShift Program Results Framework is structured around four overarching components, four outcomes (positive changes in the world, at least partially attributed to UrbanShift) that are expected to be achieved by the end of the project's implementation period, and eleven indicators (metrics that can be used to measure progress towards achievement of these outcomes) (Figure 1).



**FIGURE 1:**  
**UrbanShift Program Results Framework and Indicators**



**FIGURE 2:**  
**Updated mapping of how the global platform and country project indicators align with the overall program indicators**

Figure 2 maps out the Program Results Framework components with the specific indicators that the country projects and global platform are working towards under each outcome<sup>1</sup>. The table below demonstrates where the UrbanShift global platform and country project-specific indicators align with the overall program indicators, and therefore contribute to the program’s overall outcomes, using specific “examples of progress” from the country projects and global platform, under each component<sup>2</sup>.

Components	Indicators	Global Platform	Argentina
1 Sustainable and integrated urban planning and policy reform	1. No. of countries that improve enabling framing conditions to support multi-level integration and policy reform	✓	✓
	2. No. of cities with improved evidence-based sustainable, inclusive, gender-sensitive and integrated plans and processes	✓	✓

Brazil	China	Costa Rica	India	Indonesia	Morocco	Rwanda	Sierra Leone
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**📍 CHINA**  
**📍 Indicator 2**  
 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

In China, three cities—Ningbo, Chengdu and the Bishan District in Chongqing—have committed to developing a targeted biodiversity strategy aligned with the global Convention on Biodiversity, which will prioritize three areas for analysis and action.

**📍 COSTA RICA**  
**📍 Indicator 1**  
 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

In Costa Rica, four legislative proposals centered around waste management and circular economy have been finalized for review and approval by the legislative chamber.

**📍 MOROCCO**  
**📍 Indicator 1**  
 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

In Morocco, the “Marrakech Sustainable City” project has supported the formation of a broad-based partnership of national and local government institutions to upgrade the industrial zone, with a committed funding package of US\$15 million. The project is seen as a lever for territorial development, with a strong scaling effect.

<sup>1</sup> The mapping of country project and global platform indicators against the Program Results Framework components and indicators was a subjective exercise carried out by the UrbanShift Global Platform team using information from country project implementation reports, project results framework documents, and CEO Endorsement documents.

<sup>2</sup> The examples of progress towards the indicators were taken from country project reports, responses to the UrbanShift Annual Report Questionnaire, and from discussions between the country project and global platform teams.

 Components	 Indicators	Global Platform	Argentina
<b>2 Sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient conservation or land restoration investments in cities</b>	<b>3. USD of sustainable, integrated, low-carbon, and resilient conservation or land restoration demonstrations and/or investments</b>		
	<b>4. No. of cities with sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient, conservation or land restoration investment plans or project pipelines</b>		

### ARGENTINA

#### Indicator 4 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Argentinian cities are developing sustainable, integrated and low carbon plans and pilot-project pipelines. For example, Mar del Plata is working towards an agreement with the Argentinian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development on the implementation of a pilot intervention to enhance and scale up the quality of public and nonmotorized transport as well as its interconnectedness throughout the municipality. The following projects are in the design phase: investments in sustainable tourism in Laguna de Los Padres, and education and agroecological production in the Biosphere Reserve and its surrounding areas.

Brazil	China	Costa Rica	India	Indonesia	Morocco	Rwanda	Sierra Leone
							
							

### COSTA RICA

#### Indicator 3 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Across the 20 municipalities<sup>3</sup> in the Greater San José Metropolitan Region of Costa Rica that participate in the program, more than 100 hectares of urban land have been rehabilitated, and more than 350 hectares in peri-urban areas are under improved land management practices.

### RWANDA

#### Indicator 3 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

In Kigali, wetland rehabilitation designs have been completed with inputs from LiDAR surveys and nature-based solutions scans and studies. In 2024, the project will initiate the implementation of wetland rehabilitation works, offering flood mitigation, biodiversity and climate change mitigation benefits to the local communities.

### SIERRA LEONE

#### Indicator 3 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

In Sierra Leone, Freetown has planted more than half a million trees and shrubs in the Western Area Peninsula, under ambitious plans to build resilience to climate risks, outlined in the newly released Freetown Climate Action Plan. Freetown has leveraged US\$1 million from the Bloomberg Global Mayor's Challenge, which it is using to build and implement a self-financing system for tree planting and monitoring.

<sup>3</sup> Alajuela, Alajuelita, Barva, Belén, Cartago, Curridabat, Desamparados, Flores, Goicoechea, Heredia, La Unión, Montes de Oca, Oreamuno, Paraíso, San José, San Pablo, San Rafael, Santa Bárbara, Santo Domingo and Tibás

 Components	 Indicators	Global Platform	Argentina
<b>3 Innovative financing and scaling up</b>	<b>5. No. of cities</b> with enhanced access to financing for scaling up sustainable urban solutions	✓	
	<b>6. No. of cities and countries</b> that have initiated innovative financial mechanisms and/or business models for scaling up sustainable urban solutions		✓
	<b>7. USD leveraged</b> through innovative financial mechanisms and business models for scaling up sustainable urban solutions		

	Brazil	China	Costa Rica	India	Indonesia	Morocco	Rwanda	Sierra Leone
		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	✓		✓					

### GLOBAL PLATFORM

#### Indicator 5 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Having received technical assistance from the UrbanShift Global Platform through the Transformative Actions Program, Kigali’s “Resilient Food Systems” project is currently exploring potential collaboration with GIZ’s Resilience Initiative Africa and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food which would entail additional financing for project preparation.

### ARGENTINA

#### Indicator 6 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Buenos Aires’ project “Mobility Plan for the Future” has received dedicated technical assistance from the UrbanShift Global Platform through ICLEI’s Transformative Actions Program. The project was presented to investors at ICLEI’s Daring Cities Conference in 2022 and has since been awarded additional technical assistance from the Gap Fund to prepare the project for further investment.

### ARGENTINA

#### Indicator 6 EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Four cities in Argentina (Mar del Plata, Ushuaia, Mendoza and Salta) are developing Terms of Reference for business models, covering themes such as circular economy practices, collective purchasing models to implement energy efficient construction in collaboration between the local municipality and the private sector, as well as for the financial sustainability of municipal and provincial protected and urban green areas.

 Components	 Indicators	Global Platform	Argentina
<b>4 Advocacy, knowledge exchange, capacity-building and partnerships</b>	<b>8. No. of resolutions and/or commitments</b> to advance urban sustainability and inclusiveness in high-level policymaking events	✓	✓
	<b>9. No. of urban practitioners</b> that used the knowledge acquired from the training or materials of the global platform (gender disaggregated)	✓	
	<b>10. No. of cities</b> that have more ambitious environmental targets for their sustainable and inclusive integrated plans		
	<b>11. No. of cities</b> that have shared their good practices and lessons learned with the global platform	✓	✓

Brazil	China	Costa Rica	India	Indonesia	Morocco	Rwanda	Sierra Leone
✓							
		✓	✓		✓		
	✓						
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

## GLOBAL PLATFORM

### Indicator 9

#### EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Through UrbanShift Global Platform—as of June 2023—5,254 beneficiaries (51% women) have accessed enhanced knowledge and understanding about the importance of integrated urban development through participating in capacity building and awareness raising activities such as City Academies, Finance Academies, Peer-to-Peer Exchanges, UrbanShift Labs, Webinars, National-Local Dialogues and Advocacy events.

## COSTA RICA

### Indicator 10

#### EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS

Through the Costa Rican country project Transition to an Urban Green Economy (TEVU), 20 municipalities in the Greater San José Metropolitan Region have committed to including environmental criteria in their projects to improve urban public areas through a gender-sensitive approach. These municipalities have integrated ambitious environmental goals into their work plans, including incorporating green infrastructure elements into pedestrian mobility projects, managing urban trees in parks and using native species in reforestation projects.

**FIGURE 3:**  
**Status of country project M&E systems and data collection**

The country projects are at various stages of implementation. Figure 3 details the status of each country’s M&E plan and team, and the intended frequency of data collection. According to information received by the country project teams, quantitative data for most, if not all, of the country projects will start to become available in 2024.

Country	Start date of country project	M&E System		
		Is there a country-level M&E plan in place?	If yes, what version of the M&E plan is it?	Is there a dedicated team or person responsible for M&E in place?
Argentina	February 2022	Yes	Final draft, under review	Yes
Brazil	August 2023	Yes	Final	Project Manager hired, full M&E team to be hired by end of 2023
China	September 2022	Yes	Final	Yes
Costa Rica	March 2022	Yes	Final	Yes
India	October 2022	Yes	Final	Yes
Indonesia	December 2022	No	N/A	The M&E Specialist will be hired once the Project Management Support (PMS) is in place.
Morocco	May 2022	Yes	TBC	The M&E Specialist for the project will be hired in 2024.
Rwanda	February 2021	Yes	Final	Yes
Sierra Leone	September 2021	Yes	Final	Yes

M&E Data Collection		
How often will M&E data be collected?	When will data be collected?	When are the first quantitative M&E data expected to be available?
Quarterly	March, June, September, December	June 2024
Semi-annually	April, October	End of 2024
Annually	February	February 2024
Quarterly	March, June, September, December	June 2023
Quarterly	September, December, March, June	September 2024 (baseline data)
TBC	TBC	TBC
Annually	June	TBC
Monthly	January-December	Data from 2023 are already available
Semi-annually	October to March, April to September	September-December 2023

# GLOSSARY

## A

**ADB:** Asian Development Bank

**AIMF:** International Association of Francophone Mayors

## 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

**CBiX:** City-Business Collaboration Accelerator

**CO<sub>2</sub>:** Carbon dioxide

**CoK:** City of Kigali

**COP:** Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC

## E

**EV:** Electric Vehicle

## F

**FCC:** Freetown City Council

**FUNBIO:** 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 Service

**ICCC:** Integrated Command and Control Center

**ICLEI:** Local Governments for Sustainability

**IMEPLAN:** Institute for Planning and Development Management of the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area

**IPCC:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

## L

**LiDAR:** Laser imaging, detection, and ranging

## M

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

**MEM:** Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment

**MINAE:** Ministry of Environment and Energy (Costa Rica)

**MININFRA:** Rwandan Ministry of Infrastructure

## N

**NAP:** National Adaptation Plan

**NbS:** Nature-based solutions

**NDC:** Nationally Determined Contribution

**NIUA:** National Institute of Urban Affairs (India)

**NGO:** Non-governmental Organization

## O

**OTS:** Organization for Tropical Studies

## P

**PEG:** Partnership Engagement Group

**PMO:** Project Management Office

**PSCDL:** Pune Smart City Development Corporation Limited (India)

## R

**REMA:** Rwanda Environment Management Authority

**RUDP:** Rwanda Urban Development Project

**RUSLP:** Resilient Urban Sierra Leone Project

## S

**SDG:** Sustainable Development Goal

## T

**TAP:** Transformative Actions Program

**TEVU:** Transition to an Urban Green Economy

**TOD:** Transit-Oriented Development

## U

**UCLG:** United Cities and Local Governments

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Programme

**UNEP:** United Nations Environment Programme

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**UNFCCC:** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

## W

**WEF:** World Economic Forum

**WRI:** World Resources Institute

**WWF:** World Wildlife Fund

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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