

FORGING ALTERNATIVE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PATHS



# URBAN LEDS

Learnings from the Urban-LEDS project.  
An invitation to partner with ICLEI.



IMPLEMENTED BY:



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



FUNDED BY:



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## SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE COMMON CHALLENGES. WHAT ARE THE SMART LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS?



### CHALLENGE: LANDFILL REACHING CAPACITY

COMMON RESPONSE:  
Expand existing site or find a new one.

SMART LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS:  
Identify and cost opportunities for creating a sustainable waste economy built on waste and recycling avoidance. Explore options for waste to energy and/or methane recovery.



### CHALLENGE: TRAFFIC CONGESTION INCREASING & ROADS DETERIORATING

COMMON RESPONSE:  
Build more roads for private vehicles.

SMART LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS:  
Retrofit road network to allow for public transport, cycle lanes and pedestrian access.



### CHALLENGE: BULK WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURE INSUFFICIENT TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND

COMMON RESPONSE:  
Expand and upgrade infrastructure.

SMART LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS:  
Look for opportunities to better manage water demand so that the specifications for the refurbishment are less onerous, and facilitate water stewardship arrangements with large private sector consumers of water.



### CHALLENGE: ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION NETWORK INSUFFICIENT TO MEET GROWING DEMAND

COMMON RESPONSE:  
Expand and upgrade network

SMART LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS:  
Assess the costs of demand management that alleviates the need for upgrading transmission networks.

## URBAN-LEDS PROJECT: PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES IN PHASE 1



## THE PRESSING QUESTIONS

Many sub-national governments, particularly in the southern hemisphere, face rapid urbanisation. They are compelled to deliver services, such as transport, energy, and water at an unprecedented scale. Simultaneously there is a global shift to low-carbon energy and an increasing focus on the growth patterns of urban areas.

- Can these challenges be an opportunity to drive new types of economic development?
- How can sustainability approaches allow emerging cities to “leapfrog” toward a more equitable society and environmentally responsible growth path?
- What resource alternatives do we have when the traditional ones become scarce, expensive, or harmful to people and the environment?

## THE URBAN-LEDS PROJECT

Through the Urban-LEDS project (Promoting Low Emission Urban Development Strategies in Emerging Economy Countries), ICLEI Africa, in partnership with UN-Habitat, supported seven municipalities in South Africa to become models of sustainable development. The global project was co-ordinated by the ICLEI World Secretariat and implemented by 5 regional ICLEI offices.

From 2012 – 2015 we helped strengthen the transition to a low-carbon future through strategy formulation, leadership development, technical training, demonstration projects, community involvement, and peer-to-peer learning with 30 other cities from South Africa, India, Brazil, Indonesia and Europe. Implementing this project generated a wealth of insight on how to transform local development trajectories.



## OUR TRIED AND TESTED APPROACH

ICLEI's GreenClimateCities Methodology guides our approach, and recognises that every municipal context is unique. Our experience has taught us that:

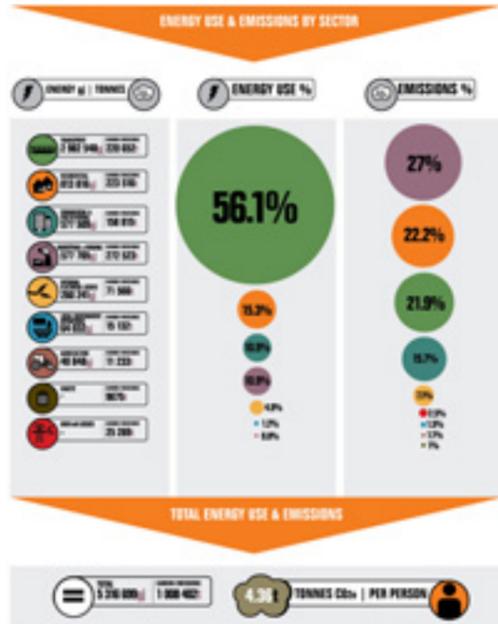
- Municipal officials are experts in governmental processes. They and their community constituency understand their needs best; yet they do not always have the resources (human or financial) nor the time to act more strategically and holistically;
- Success comes from integrating sustainability into existing plans and projects; building on existing momentum while incubating longer-term thinking;
- Government institutions are in search of integrated approaches to dealing with service delivery, informality, sustainability and economic development;
- Champions and strong leaders can pioneer innovative responses to the challenges of urbanisation.

# PROJECT IMPACTS

During the Urban-LEDS project, we worked with in-house experts, partners and consultants. The following outputs and their impacts arose:

## 1 Baseline assessments

Greenhouse Gas Emissions inventories allow governments to calculate baselines, set targets, draft actions plans, raise local awareness, and build capacity to conduct future assessments. ICLEI Africa also supports the vertical integration of climate change actions, and assists sub-national government to link to national and international reporting and advocacy platforms such as the carbonn Climate Registry and the Compact of Mayors.



## 2 Strategic planning & facilitated discussions

Through strategic planning processes and facilitated discussions, we assist officials and politicians to think holistically and outside the box. Policy and budget reviews, interdepartmental and stakeholder dialogues and scenario planning, allow municipalities to identify gaps and locally relevant opportunities, turning them into integrated low-emission development strategies and action plans.



## 3 'Actions speak louder than words'

By providing independent, expert advice, we help officials procure and implement low-carbon solutions. "Showcase projects" demonstrate that resource efficiency and sustainability are relevant (and beneficial) for people across the socio-economic spectrum.



## 4 Training, capacity building and peer-to-peer learning programmes

Sub-national governments enhance their effectiveness, broaden their thinking, and are stimulated through our training, capacity building and peer-to-peer learning programmes. We provide a link to international initiatives, knowledge platforms such as the Solutions Gateway, and a vast network of supporting organisations.



To discover all the outputs of this project in South Africa, including videos, research materials and green building guidelines, please visit [www.africa.iclei.org/resources/low-carbon-development](http://www.africa.iclei.org/resources/low-carbon-development)

## TESTIMONIALS

**“There are huge economic opportunities in reducing emissions. But knowing where to start can be difficult. With ICLEI Africa’s long-term support through the Urban-LEDS project, we are capacitating our staff, forging local partnerships, and charting a path to a low-emission and prosperous future for our Municipality.”**

Sikhumbuzo Hlongwane,  
Executive Director, Economic Development and Planning, KwaDukuza Municipality.



Our strategic municipal visioning processes bring together diverse stakeholders.

**“I do not have adequate words to describe how it has been working with ICLEI. We have just unveiled the solar system, and we have seen how the community stands to benefit. If you see the infrastructure that has been installed, if you see the lights on, the refrigerator can be used... you see that this thing is possible. So I can describe it as a very exciting experience.”**

Mike Masina,  
Mayor, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.

## CONTACT US

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is the world’s leading association of sub-national governments dedicated to sustainable development. The ICLEI Africa Secretariat – the regional office in Africa – builds leadership and networks for change by offering a wide suite of training and capacity building tools and projects, exchange programmes and sharing of good practice.

Our sustainability professionals have a wealth of experience in enhancing the sustainable development trajectory of local governments. We are backed by a well-established global programme of work, and many years of experience in implementing a range of energy, biodiversity, resilience and water-related projects and programmes with all levels of sub-national government and their partners.

We invite stakeholders from national governments, association of local authorities, institutional or funding partners, and local/provincial governments to get in touch with us if you have an interest in:

- Supporting local authorities in countries across the continent to mainstream sustainability principles into their energy, transport, water, waste, spatial planning, and human settlement functions.
- Supporting and developing joint project proposals.
- Partnering with a trusted intermediary to integrate sustainability principles into local municipal plans and processes.



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