



TRANSFORMING CITIES FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

UrbanShift supports cities to adopt integrated approaches to urban development, shaping a resilient, inclusive, zero-carbon future where both people and planet can thrive.

September 2021

**URBAN
SH/FT**

WHO WE ARE

UrbanShift is enabling nature-positive, human-centric development in cities worldwide.

From coastal management measures in Surat, India to low-emission zones in Teresina, Brazil and upgraded informal settlements in Kigali, Rwanda, **UrbanShift's mission is to transform cities for people and planet through integrated urban development.** We engage with more than 23 cities across 9 countries (China, India, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Morocco, Costa Rica, Brazil and Argentina), bringing together local and global stakeholders to build a greener, more equitable urban future for all.

OUR FUNDER & PARTNERS

UrbanShift is the brand name for the **Sustainable Cities Impact Program**, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It is led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), in partnership with the World Resources Institute (WRI), C40 Cities, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). UrbanShift builds on the lessons and experiences of the GEF's Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Pilot.

WHY CITIES?

Entrenched social inequity, lack of accessible green spaces, deteriorating air quality – cities today face a range of critical challenges, compounded by the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Cities in the global South are especially vulnerable, with more than 90% of urban growth projected to take place in Asia and Africa.

As our planet urbanizes at a rapid rate and demands on limited natural resources multiply, the need for cities to transform their development trajectory has never been more urgent.

THE URBAN CHALLENGE

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



70% of global CO2 emissions are produced by cities



1.4 billion city dwellers are at high or extreme risk of climate hazards



25% of all city dwellers reside in informal settlements, the majority of them women



4 million ha of tree cover has been lost to urbanization in the past 20 years



The challenges may seem insurmountable, but cities also drive the world's economic and creative growth, and as such, possess enormous potential for change. By empowering cities to lead, citizens, businesses, institutions and governments can work in unison to create healthy, vibrant communities where natural ecosystems are restored and protected and carbon emissions neutralized, tilting the balance in favor of people and our planet.

WHAT WE DO

UrbanShift's approach to transformative urban development is rooted in integration and equity.

We support cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America to develop cross-cutting strategies that foster inclusive growth; conserve biodiversity; and bolster resilience to a changing climate. Our approach to achieving this transformation is two-fold:

LOCAL INTERVENTIONS

Through on-the-ground projects in participating cities, UrbanShift collaborates with local officials, urban practitioners and national governments to implement solutions that enable the shift towards zero-carbon, nature-positive development. These solutions range from the circular economy to sustainable mobility, green infrastructure, disaster management, and more.

CITIES LEADING THE WAY

The map below depicts the cities participating in both GEF-7 and GEF-6 funded programs of

UrbanShift. The GEF-6 cycle was launched in 2017 with 28 cities in 11 countries. The GEF-7 cycle was launched in 2020 and supports 23 primary cities in 9 countries.

GLOBAL INITIATIVE

To complement the local interventions, we've created a suite of capacity-strengthening activities to connect participating cities with global expertise and cutting-edge research in the field of integrated urban development. These activities tap into the unique capabilities of our partner organizations and offer cities the opportunity to enhance their urban planning skills, engage with the private sector and mobilize new sources of financing.

OUR SUITE OF ACTIVITIES

City Assessments: A framework that provides a baseline for each city, pinpoints capacity needs in relation to integrated planning and identifies relevant investment projects and policies.

Climate Action: Tailored support for cities to commit to ambitious climate action, consisting of online trainings, regional workshops and discussions with decision-makers.





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UrbanShift Labs: Hands-on workshops to improve a city's ability to operate across agencies, jurisdictions and sectors on a strategic urban planning challenge.

Geospatial Analyses: Critical spatial data layers and analytics using global, open-source data to facilitate evidence-based decision-making.

City Academies: Participatory and online trainings focused on eight key themes that combine technical presentations with practical demonstrations, webinars and exercises.

- Strategic Urban Planning
- Data Governance
- Nature-based Solutions
- Circular Economy
- Finance
- Sustainable & Integrated Neighborhood Design
- Integrated Climate Action
- Managing Urban Growth
- Urban Biodiversity

Finance Academies: Intensive workshops that bring cities together with financial and technical experts to design bankable projects related to climate mitigation and resilience.

Investor Roundtables: A convening space for cities to engage with external stakeholders –

including the private sector and development finance institutions – during the various stages of municipal infrastructure projects.

UrbanShift Forums: Regional events for cities to network, identify good practices, share insights, and consider opportunities for private sector collaboration.

Peer-to-Peer Exchanges: Opportunities for cities to learn firsthand from one another's experiences and successes on an urban sustainability topic.

National Dialogues: High-level national events to stimulate dialogue, with the goal of improving multilevel governance and addressing specific urban challenges and opportunities.

Advocacy: Co-creating strategic events and facilitating networking opportunities to build momentum for political commitments and resolutions and raise city and country ambitions for sustainable urban development.

Partnership Engagement Group: A collaborative space for key urban initiatives from around the world, working to identify opportunities for meaningful partnerships and the uptake of innovative urban solutions.



LOW-EMISSION GREEN CORRIDORS IN BUENOS AIRES



SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY SOLUTIONS IN MARRAKECH



NATURE-BASED INVESTMENTS IN CHENNAI

BRAZIL

Cities: Belém, Florianópolis, Teresina
Focus Areas: Evidence-based planning;
Low-emission development; Biodiversity
conservation; Innovative financing

ARGENTINA

Cities: Buenos Aires, Mar de Plata, Mendoza,
Salta, Ushuaia
Focus Areas: Climate resilience; Low-carbon
development; Biodiversity conservation;
Circular economy; Sustainable tourism

COSTA RICA

City: San José Metropolitan Area (GAM)
Focus Areas: Fiscal and policy reform;
Low-carbon development; Urban greening;
Innovative financing; Sustainable mobility

MOROCCO

City: Marrakech
Focus Areas: Policy reform; Land restoration;
Renewable energy; Advocacy; Innovative
financing; Sustainable mobility

RWANDA

Cities: Kigali / additional cities
Focus Areas: Upgrading informal settlements;
Flood resilience; Biodiversity conservation;
Municipal infrastructure planning

SIERRA LEONE

Cities: Freetown / additional cities
Focus Areas: Urban management; Municipal
infrastructure planning; Emergency & disaster
management; Nature-based solutions

INDIA

Cities: Chennai, Pune, Surat / additional cities
Focus Areas: Sustainable mobility; Flood
resilience; Sustainable tourism; Biodiversity
conservation; Nature-based solutions

CHINA

Cities: Chongqing, Chengdu, Ningbo /
Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle
Focus Areas: Biodiversity conservation;
Nature-based solutions; Low-carbon
development; Data sharing; Urban
regeneration

INDONESIA

Cities: Balikpapan, Bitung, Jakarta,
Palembang, Semarang
Focus Areas: Circular economy; Renewable
energy; Sustainable mobility; Biodiversity
conservation; Innovative financing

Through UrbanShift's local interventions and global initiative, the program is expected to:



Mitigate more than 130 million tonnes of CO₂e emissions

≈ Carbon sequestered by Costa Rican forests in 15 years



Manage & restore 1 million hectares of land

≈ 7x the size of Delhi



Improve the lives of 58 million people

≈ Combined population of Argentina and Rwanda

**The above targets are subject to change in line with individual project approvals*

CONNECT WITH US!

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