SESSION ON LESSONS FROM KNOWLEDGE HUB/PLATFORM ON GEF IAP/IPS/PROGRAMS

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Sustainable Cities
**GEF SUSTAINABLE CITIES PROGRAM**

- **51 CITIES**
- **17 COUNTRIES**
- **$ 310 Mi GEF GRANT**
- **$ 4 Bi CO-FINANCE**
- **GEF-6 – GPSC**
- **GEF-7 – URBANSH/FT**

Country and city-level interventions => integrated sustainability solutions and investments in selected cities and countries.

A global platform and coordination project to connect participating cities with global expertise and cutting-edge research for integrated urban planning, city-to-city knowledge exchange, learning and sharing of best practices.
URBANSHIFT GLOBAL PLATFORM WORK STREAMS

NATIONAL DIALOGUES
CAPACITY BUILDING – CITY ACADEMIES
ADVOCACY
FINANCE
BASELINES
WEBINAR SERIES
CAPACITY BUILDING – URBANSHIFT LABS
CLIMATE ACTION
GLOBAL PLATFORM ACTIVITIES TO DATE

Webinar series: 20 webinars on key urban development topics with regional focus and providing simultaneous interpretation. 5 delivered with combined attendance of 1,300.

City Academies: 9 in-person academies with regional participants, multiple tracks, local speakers and case studies, and simultaneous interpretation. 1 delivered in Kigali, Rwanda with 75 participants form 20 cities.

Finance Academies: 9 academies around thematic clusters. 1 delivered virtually for African cities with 46 participants from 17 cities.

Labs: 9 labs focusing on strategic planning topics identified at the local level. 1 delivered in San Jose, Costa Rica, with 48 participants.

Advocacy: 20 high-level, regional and side events at strategic global conferences. 8 organized to date with combined attendance of 2,500.

Website: Launched in January 2021. Features Resource Library (32 publications), Country Pages (9), Events Page, Blog posts (19), and Staff Profiles for all GP and Child Project Staff. 12,000 visitors to date.

Newsletter: Quarterly newsletter providing recap of project activities and preview of upcoming events. 2 sent to date to 5,000 subscribers from 155 countries with 23% open rate.

Online Courses: 8 MOOCs under development on 8 central integrated planning themes, scheduled to launch on the edX learning platform in January 2023.
Global Platform for Sustainable Cities – GEF 6

• GPSC was created under GEF 6 SC-IAP aimed to create global knowledge on a range of urban sustainability topics.

• GPSC has produced a number of knowledge products on various themes that advance integrated approaches for urban sustainability.

• The platform has expanded its network with strong demand from cities seeking support for nature-smart development through its new Cities4Biodiversity (C4B) initiative.

• GPSC’s activities continue to promote an integrated approach to development, driven by analytics, peer-to-peer sharing, and lessons learned through case studies.

New C4B Initiative – joint technical and political approach

Technical level

Targeted technical support to a group of cities

Deep-dive learning & knowledge sharing

Political level

GEF City Benchmarking

New Urban Growth Models

Gender and Sustainable Cities

Building Back Better

Integrated Urban Planning Approaches

See the latest platform news: www.theGPSC.org
LESSONS FROM GEF 6 PILOT

- Direct Communications Channel with Participating Cities
- More Emphasis on Peer Exchanges with non-SCIP cities
- Stronger Financial and Private Sector Engagement
- More Coordination Between Child Projects and Global Platform
**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.

**UrbanShift Labs (9)**: 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 (9)**: Participatory and online trainings focused on eight key themes that combine technical presentations with practical demonstrations, webinars and exercises.

**Finance Academies (9)**: Intensive workshops that bring cities together with financial and technical experts to design bankable projects.

**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 (6)**: 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.
THEMATIC FOCUS

**STRATEGIC URBAN PLANNING**
Find out about collaborative management processes with an emphasis on integrated planning and participatory approaches, ensuring access to resources, and creating sustainable cities.
11 Nov 2021

**CLIMATE FINANCE**
Understand how city governments can utilize innovative sources of investments for infrastructure projects that address climate adaptation and mitigation strategies.
11 Nov 2021

**URBAN BIODIVERSITY**
Learn about urban practices and strategies to protect, restore, and diversify species, genetic diversity, and ecological systems within and around cities.
11 Nov 2021

**SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN**
Learn about inclusive and collaborative city planning, rooted in community engagement, and how this approach can help create safe, vibrant, and healthy neighborhoods.
11 Nov 2021

**NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS**
Explore resource-engineering infrastructure and other nature-based solutions—cost-effective approaches to prepare cities for climate change impacts.
11 Nov 2021

**CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING**
Strengthen your understanding of how can develop local climate action plans aligned with the Paris Agreement, to achieve ambitious sustainability and climate mitigation targets.
11 Nov 2021

**CIRCULAR ECONOMY**
Discover materials within the circular economy and how to balance resource recycling with economic development and social equity, underpinned by a transition to renewable energy.
11 Nov 2021

**MANAGING URBAN GROWTH**
Hear about the need for local governments to address and manage urban sprawl in the global South, which is increasing pressure on city infrastructure and biodiversity systems.
11 Nov 2021
DELIVERY AND COMMUNICATION

• **Two-layer approach with thematic areas that are globally relevant and localization of content during delivery**
  − Regional events for relevance and opportunities for cross learning
  − Translations, local speakers, identification of local case studies by regional coordinators to be highlighted in learning events and documents
  − Tailor activities to very specific local demands and needs (Labs, Geospatial Analysis)

• **Effective capacity-building requires resources assigned to pedagogical aspects of implementation**
  − Interactive activities in face-to-face and online trainings
  − Adequate presentation of materials for online courses

• **Excellent website and a well-resourced communication strategy** allows for the materials to reach their audience

• **Interactive training** proves to be much more successful than traditional lecture style. Participants like to share their thoughts, engage in discussions, and have the opportunity to present and highlight their experiences
GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

• The Regional Coordinators are proving to be an effective way to communicate with cities and help bridge communication gaps between the global and country projects. City training must be demand-driven, and this involves face-to-face conversations with city officials.

• Working with WRI, C40 and ICLEI and engaging them in their areas of strength has been very effective. WRI, ICEI and C40 have extensive networks, and for global reach they have tapped into their existing networks and relevant working groups to amplify reach.

• Through the PEG (Partnership Engagement Group), we have been able to engage with an array of partners. For example, we reached out to IUCN, TNC and IISD to enrich the Kigali event (their participation as funded by the project).

• Advocacy events led by UNEP proved to be another avenue to engage PEG members, including CCFLA, and to support cities’ roles and ambitions in contributing to the 2030 SD agenda and Paris Agreement. Bringing new partners together allows for mainstreaming integrated approaches with a view to transformational change.

• Multi-level governance: working with national governments (i.e., national dialogues) is well appreciated by countries and allows policy coherence between national and sub-national governance levels and across cities' different secretariats.
**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Focus:** Universe of stakeholders participating in learning is very diverse (levels and skills sets). Pitching training at the right level and in the right way becomes increasingly complicated.

- **Timing:** Child projects starting over a year later than the global project
  - The city needs assessments have proven to be difficult to undertake when the city teams have not been appointed and the global projects have already developed their knowledge products.
  - The global project is ready to deliver capacity and training, but the country projects are not ready to receive support – the global project is having to adjust to this reality.
  - Having the GEF 8 project start early to help with country project design could be problematic and exacerbate the disconnect in timing.
  - We suggest that the global project and country projects start at the same time and that the PPG phase of the global project is used to support child projects with design

- **National/local level:** Projects are often developed at the national level because the national level controls GEF funding – and this can cause a disconnect with the city needs and ownership.

- **Communication between the global project and the cities:** We have developed communications protocols between the global and country project teams, but it has been difficult for the global project team to have direct contact with cities. This might improve as the child projects start, staff are hired, and trust is built. The regional coordinators are proving to be an excellent vehicle to overcome this challenge.

- **Well-resourced communication stream:** Good communications requires a dedicated communications expert.

- **Remote training:** It is becoming a more standard approach to train remotely, and we should take advantage of this (MOOCS, interactive websites, etc.)

- **Define main beneficiaries:** It is important to clarify who the beneficiaries are. Are the main beneficiaries the country projects (child projects) that join the programme? Should they include previous programme countries/cities and non GEF Cities?
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