

# Urban-LEDS II

## Newsletter

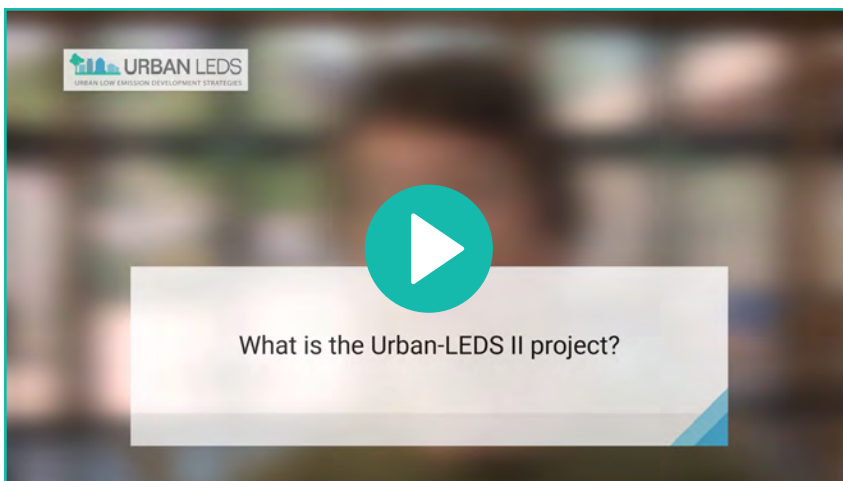
October 2019



Participants at the European study tour, June 2019

## Urban-LEDS II project: what's it all about?

Watch this video to find out more about what the Urban-LEDS aims to achieve:



### Highlights from this issue...

Country News from the 8 project countries

Urban-LEDS European Study Tour a big success

Project synergies with the Ambitious Cities Project

City in focus: Rajshahi, Bangladesh

Urban Champion: Alice Umuhorakeye, City of Kigali, Rwanda

**Name:** Accelerating climate action through the promotion of Urban Low Emission Development Strategies (Urban-LEDS II)

**Start Date:** 01/04/2017

**End date:** 31/03/2021

**Duration:** 48 months

**Total Budget:** 8,000,000 €

**Funding mechanism:** European Union (DCI-ENV/2017/384-555)

**Consortium:** UN-Habitat HQ and regional offices in Lao, Rwanda and Colombia, ICLEI World Secretariat and 5 ICLEI regional offices active in Europe, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, India, Lao PDR, Rwanda and South Africa



Participants during the 2019 Urban-LEDS European Study Tour

## European study tour a big success


Peer learning is a core component in the Urban-LEDS II project. 28 representatives from 24 Urban-LEDS II cities from 16 countries enjoyed an intense European Study Tour in June 2019. The ambitious 8-day programme included visits to Helsinki (Finland), Bologna (Italy) and Warsaw (Poland) – all leaders in climate action. It brought together Urban-LEDS cities, supported by staff from ICLEI and UN-Habitat, helping to not only learn from relevant activities but also to foster peer exchange and build climate partnerships in countries around the globe.

The three European host cities shared their most replicable and front running integrated climate action solutions, as well as their challenges and climate change-induced risks, with their peers coming from 16 different countries.

First stop -Helsinki: One of Europe's most ambitious cities aiming for **climate** neutrality by 2035, the Finnish capital introduced its peers from across the world to the City's "Climate-Smart Helsinki" Action Plan.

Next stop - Bologna: Participants focused on the benefits of active involvement and integration of citizens and the role of culture in the development and implementation of local sustainability action plans and strategies.

Last stop - Warsaw: The capital city of Poland shared its experience in managing the largest District Heating System (DES) in Europe and, reflecting on a long history of coal dependence, provided valuable and practicable lessons for transforming energy markets and embedding sustainability in urban planning processes.

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The direct exchange with peers from across the world and across sectors left Urban-LEDS cities with new ideas and inspiration, and strengthened partnerships and cooperation opportunities for the development of their low-emission development and adaptation strategies.



## Project synergies: Ambitious City Promises project

The [Ambitious City Promises](#) (ACP) project (2017-2020), funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU) through the International Climate Initiative and led by ICLEI is designed to advance sustainability in large cities in Southeast Asia by enabling local governments, engaging citizens, and driving climate action through Low Emission Development Strategies. In Indonesia, a mutual project country, Urban-LEDS

II cities have gained valuable lessons related to citizen engagement and low emission measures from [DKI Jakarta](#), which serves as model city of the ACP project. Cities from both projects took part in the [Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogue](#) series organized by Urban-LEDS II in 2018 and 2019, including the [City-to-City Dialogue](#), [City-to-Province Dialogue](#), and the [SIGN-SMART training](#) (the national GHG inventory system) that took place in April 2019. Cities have also shared experiences during the Urban-

LEDS [Indonesian Study Tour](#) (April 2019) and the [EU study Tour](#) (June 2019). The two projects also share the same [National Advisory Group](#) to ensure national coordination and to reduce duplication. Further opportunities for capitalizing on synergies are explored in 2020.

**AMBITIOUS CITY PROMISES**  
Engaging citizens. Driving climate action.

## Country News in Brief

### Bangladesh: shared learning dialogues help to assess climate risks to urban systems in Bangladesh

ICLEI South Asia recently organised two Shared Learning Dialogues in Rajshahi and Narayanganj to conduct detailed climate vulnerability assessments, including validation of climate trends and past hazards, identification of climate-impacted urban systems, vulnerable places and actors and their risk assessment, as well as adaptive capacities. Read the full story [here](#)



Participants in Rajshahi, Bangladesh take part in a Shared Learning Dialogue

### Brazil: Fortaleza's climate action plan shared as good practice example

Fortaleza, Urban-LEDS model city, hosted a group of 20 students from Boston-based Northeastern North American University to learn about the successes and challenges of taking climate action in the city. Read the full story [here](#) (in Portuguese)

### Colombia: Local governments trained on Municipal GHG inventories in South America

230 participants from 47 cities and 7 countries in South America, including many Urban-LEDS cities, took part in a Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) inventory training between 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

The training demonstrated the practical application of the Global Protocol for GHG emissions at the community level (CPG). Read the full story [here](#) (in Spanish).

SOLUCIONES PARA CIUDADES SUSTENTABLES



Participants at the Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogue in Indonesia

### Indonesia: 2<sup>nd</sup> Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogue held in Indonesia

The Urban-LEDS project, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), the Association of Indonesian Municipalities (APEKSI), and Sustainable Districts Association (LTKL), organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> Indonesian Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogue on 9 April 2019 in Jakarta, with the theme, Breaking Barriers and Working Together to Ensure the Achievement of Indonesia's Climate Commitment. Read the full story [here](#)

### India: Project Advisory Group assembled for the first time

The PAG bring together relevant stakeholders as an expert group that provides practical and strategic advice to the country project team for effective implementation of the project. The Indian PAG met for the first time in May 2019. Read the full story [here](#)



Participants at the first Indian NPAG meeting

### Lao PDR: 1st Climate change training conducted

The first in a series of capacity building training on climate change and low emission development was completed in Pakse. Over 40 individuals representing national, provincial, and local governments participated in the activity. Read the full story [here](#)



Participants presenting the outcomes of group work exercise

### Rwanda: 3<sup>rd</sup> National Urban Forum in Rwanda

The Third National Urban Forum “NUF3” was held on 6-7 February 2019 at the Kigali Convention Center and convened 300 hundred participants from different countries. It was led by the Ministry of Infrastructure of Rwanda (MININFRA) and received support from different stakeholders in the urban sector, including UN-Habitat, Global Green Growth Institute, International Growth Centre, World Bank, Enabel and ICLEI Africa. Read the full story [here](#).



UN-Habitat's Executive Director shares her thoughts during the NUF in Rwanda

### South Africa: Integrated MRV Workshop in South Africa

In order to unpack the opportunities and challenges the different spheres of government are faced with during the process of developing a greenhouse gas inventory, ICLEI Africa together with Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA) held an Integrated Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) workshop on 11 June 2019 in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Mpumalanga, South Africa. Text Read the full story [here](#)



Unpacking integrated MRV in South Africa





## City in focus: The green city of Rajshahi, Bangladesh steps up its climate action

“Our vision started with making Rajshahi City clean, healthy and ecofriendly, which led us to undertake a number of actions, including those involving the environment and climate change. With these actions, Rajshahi is currently the greenest city in Bangladesh. One can find cheerful living spaces, social harmonious neighborhoods and well-connected mobility everywhere in this city. People respect and support each other and it is a place where citizens and government share power.”

**Ashrafal Haque,**  
Chief Engineer, Rajshahi City Corporation

Rajshahi is a city located in west-central Bangladesh, close to the border with India. It is the fourth-largest city with a population of over 700,000 people. The city might be well-known for its mangroves, but it is gaining even more recognition for its effective measures on urban sustainability.

Three years ago, Rajshahi made headlines for achieving the largest reduction in the levels of harmful PM10 particulates between 2014 and 2016, as per UN data. It was the result of several initiatives taken by the city authorities over several years.

These initiatives have transformed Rajshahi into a ‘green city’ – it is now known for its abundant greenery and open spaces – helped to reduce air pollution, besides bringing other social and environmental benefits for its citizens. Meanwhile, the city authorities have continued to implement other strategic interventions:

- The Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) runs a programme called Zero Soil, which aims to cover all open spaces and pavements with plants to reduce the amount of dust particles. The city’s Mayor A H M Khairuzzaman Liton recently offered to give property tax waivers to residents who plant trees in their premises and build rooftop gardens.
- The city’s government has focused on adopting low emission solutions in its street lighting infrastructure. About 180 solar streetlights have been installed within the municipal area, supporting the country’s Solar Street Lighting programme and the national target that aims at 10% electricity consumption from renewable energy sources by 2020. To further scale up this action, the RCC has recently submitted a proposal to the Government of Bangladesh for modernization of its entire street lighting system.
- The RCC has recently introduced smart e-rickshaws to enable people to move around the city in a more environmentally-friendly and well-manged way

The remarkable motivation of the city authorities to persevere with efforts to address climate change and urban sustainability might be a result of the optimism of its citizens, as their city was reportedly voted the Happiest in the World by the World Happiness Survey in 2006. As a model city in Urban-LEDS phase II, Rajshahi will focus on developing a climate action plan that brings together its mitigation and adaptation efforts, formulating a long term city-wide greening strategy, and carrying out energy efficiency pilots in its public buildings.

## Urban champion:

**Alice Umuhorakeye**, Environment Protection Officer,  
City of Kigali, Rwanda



*Each newsletter, we hand over the mic to local government staff in Urban-LEDS cities, so they can tell you their story of promoting low emission development in their municipalities*

The city of Kigali, one of the three Urban-LEDS II project cities in Rwanda, implements climate action activities that illustrate on the ground tangible change whilst responding to Rwanda's National Climate Change Plans and Strategies." Since the beginning of Urban-LEDS II, Alice has mostly been excited about the LED Pilot project. This project will demonstrate the opportunities of a low emission development approach focusing on promoting water resilience through rainwater harvesting and energy efficiency at a local health centre in Kigali. She says: "Small interventions such as the installation of energy efficient fixtures will have a huge impact as it will reduce the cost of electricity payments whilst reducing greenhouse gas emissions." Her favourite part of the project so far has

been the peer-to-peer learning exchanges she has participated in. By showcasing what other local governments are undertaking as part of the project, she has built her capacity in activities, such as low emission urban planning. The Kigali Municipality vision is to make Kigali the "Centre of Urban Excellence in Africa" which will be achieved through Social Inclusion, Sustainable Development, and Economic Growth. Alice hopes that the City of Kigali will be a champion City in implementing actions meant to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, especially in the transport sector. For her, one important part of this will be increasing the amount of green open spaces; enabling co-benefits of environmental rehabilitation of wetlands and the development of eco-tourism.


## Upcoming events: The Tenth Session of The World Urban Forum (WUF10)


**Abu Dhabi, UAE**  
**8 - 13 February 2020**

For more information visit [www.unhabitat.org/wuf](http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf),  
or contact us via email [unhabitat-wuf@un.org](mailto:unhabitat-wuf@un.org)



### For more information on the Urban-LEDS project;

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