

# Urban-LEDS II

## Newsletter

June 2020

### Highlights from this issue...

**Project synergies:** Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC)

**City in focus:** Aalborg, Denmark

**Urban champion:** Md. Zannatul Ferdous, Mayor, Singra Municipality, Bangladesh

**New project resources (New!)** - KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

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

**Start Date:** 1/4/2017

**End Date:** 31/03/2021

**Duration:** 48 months

**Total Budget:** 8,000,000 €

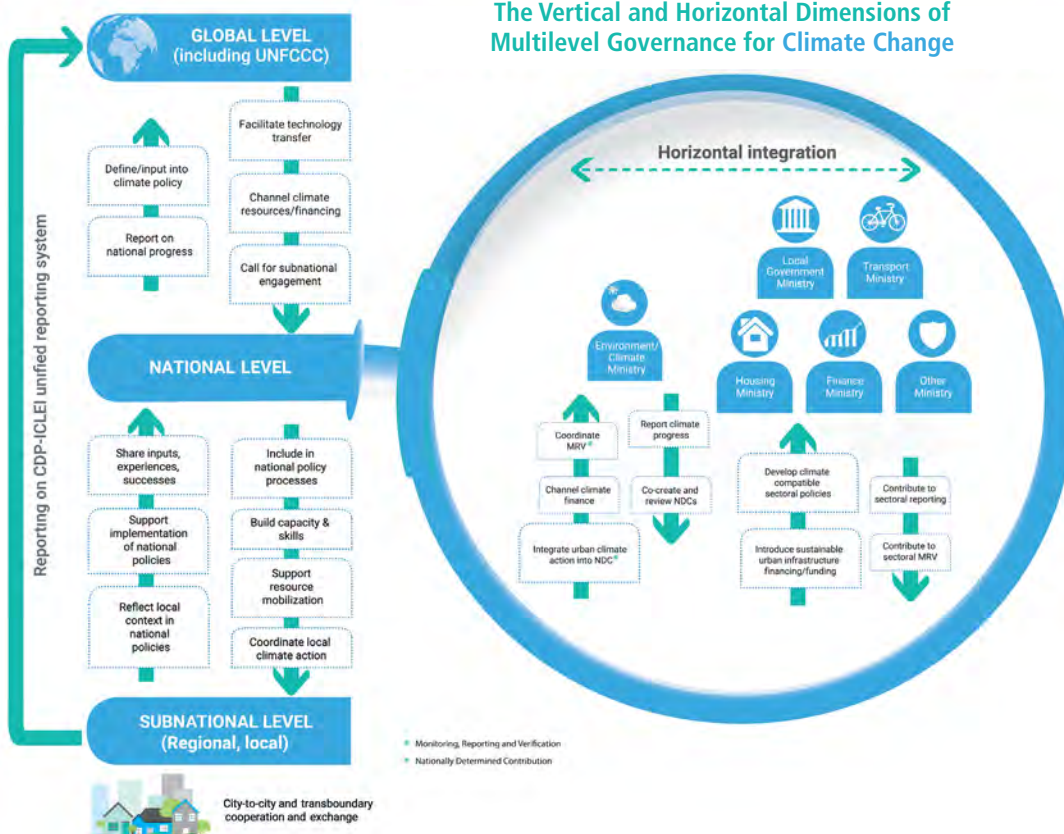
**Funding mechanism:** European Union (DCI-ENV/2017/384-555)

**Consortium:** UN-Habitat HQ and regional offices in Lao PDR, 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



Compact KZN, demonstrates that regional platforms for climate change are key places to foster cooperation between actors from different levels of government and different sectors in South Africa © ICLEI Africa

### The Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions of Multilevel Governance for Climate Change



### New project resource

This diagram has been produced by the Urban-LEDS project to show the important components of multi-level governance for climate change action. Only by supporting systems of collaboration between and within national and local government can we ensure climate change can be tackled successfully while meeting development goals.

## Urban-LEDS cities prepare impactful pilot projects to demonstrate low emissions development

Despite COVID-19, the Urban-LEDS project is pressing ahead with implementing pilot projects that demonstrate the potential of a low-emission development approach, as well as supporting participating local governments to package projects for larger-scale financing and rollout.

The issue of air quality and low emissions development are closely intertwined. That is why in both Narayanganj, Bangladesh, and in participating cities in Lao PDR, project teams are designing interventions to install ambient air quality monitoring stations to help inform policy making and community action.

Municipal building retrofits are another common area of intervention: as they can act as exemplars for local people and businesses. In Narayanganj, Bangladesh, solar PV and energy efficiency measures are being considered for a local health centre and a community centre; this project is already at feasibility stage. In Rajshahi, Bangladesh, plans are underway for an energy audit of a municipal administrative building and the training of municipal staff on energy management. Municipal buildings are also the focus of pilot projects in Colombia. The LEDS LAB process is supporting cities to develop project ideas and move them towards project feasibility. An evaluation and selection committee recently selected municipal building energy efficiency projects in Envidado and Topaga.



Solar water heaters save electricity and money – here installed on Groutville Care Homes in KwaDukuza, South Africa, as a pilot project implemented by Urban-LEDS in phase 1

In Rajshahi, a pilot project is underway to provide technical assistance to develop a local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, as well as encouraging increased groundwater recharge through a watershed catchment area management approach.

Meanwhile the frequency of high-intensity rainfall in the Urban-LEDS II model city of Thane, located close to the Arabian Sea in India, is increasing. A combination of such rainfall and high tide is making the city vulnerable to flooding and waterlogging. To address this issue, Thane has commenced a pilot project to establish an early warning system for flooding and waterlogging, with the support of the Urban-LEDS II project. This pilot intervention will help the city to improve its preparedness, reduce the response time of emergency

services, and safeguard human health and assets during incidents of flooding. The city intends to use the outcomes and experiences of the Urban-LEDS II pilot project to replicate similar actions to enhance its climate resilience.

Lastly, Nagpur city has identified planning and enhancement of biodiversity and green spaces as a key action in its low emission development strategy. Therefore, the city has commenced a baseline assessment of its floral and faunal wealth, and will develop a Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP). The LBSAP will provide strategic guidance to the city government to achieve inclusive governance and support effective management of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

These diverse and exciting pilot projects have an important role to play in demonstrating potential and impact. However Urban-LEDS also supports participating local governments to develop larger, strategic projects that can secure funding from other sources. So far in phase II, 32 city projects have been submitted to ICLEI's Transformative Actions Programme (TAP), in Rwanda, this included a project to support ecotourism in the District of Rubavu *Mount Rubavu ecotourism for environmental protection and local green economic development*. In total, 17 city projects have been submitted to donors and funders to enable the upscaling and deepening of low emission development approaches in project cities.



Rajkot, India, Urban-LEDS project city, has installed a 145kWp solar PV system to help power its Aji water treatment plant

### Bangladesh: Rajshahi and Narayanganj complete assessments of climate risks, vulnerabilities

Continuing their progress on climate resilience planning, the Urban-LEDS II model cities of Rajshahi and Narayanganj in Bangladesh have finished their climate risks and vulnerability assessments to examine the cities' fragile urban systems through a climate lens to identify their vulnerable areas, hotspots, and populations. [Read the full story here](#)



CRVA findings being presented at Rajshahi's Shared Learning Dialogue © ICLEI SAS



Heber José de Souza Municipal School, in Belo Horizonte. © Disclosure of Belo Horizonte City Hall

### Brazil: LEDES Lab identifies city pilot projects to be implemented in Brazil

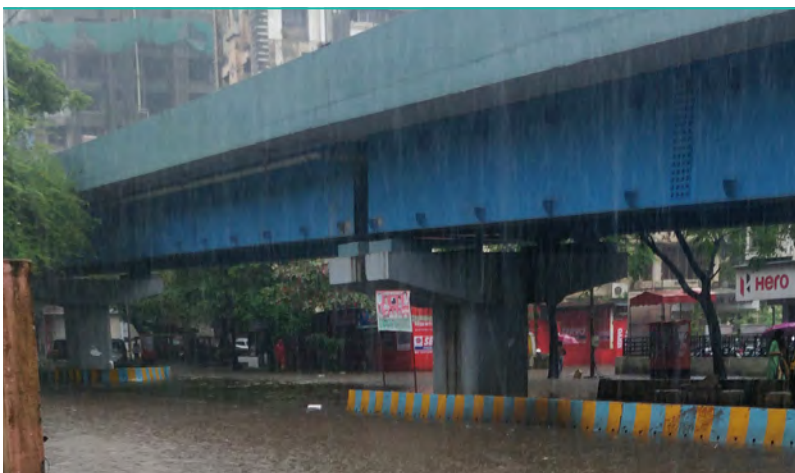
Through the LEDES Lab project support process, Recife has confirmed the project will support the energy retrofit of the Women's Hospital, and in Belo Horizonte, the energy retrofit of the Heber José de Souza Municipal School. More news will follow soon.

### Colombia: Tópaga and Envigado selected cities for LEDES Lab to develop financeable projects

The LEDES Lab initiative aims to improve the installed capacity of city halls in the elaboration of financeable projects with a clear climate approach. [Read the full story here](#)



City of Envigado. © Fredy Amariles García



Water logging in low-lying area at Panchpadki in Thane city during monsoon © ICLEI SAS

### India: Thane commences pilot action to strengthen climate resilience

Thane has commenced a pilot intervention to establish an early warning system for flooding that will help the city to improve its preparedness, reduce the response time of emergency services, and safeguard human health and assets during incidents of flooding. [Read the full story here](#)

### Indonesia: Balikpapan City awards ICLEI SEAS for its Outstanding Contributions to Sustainable Development

The ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability Southeast Asia Secretariat received the “Outstanding Development Figure Award” during Balikpapan’s 123rd Anniversary for its unwavering support and proactive role in shaping the City’s sustainable development. [Read the full story here](#)



Mayor Rizal Effendi handing the award to ICLEI SEAS represented by Senior Project Officer Selamat Daroyni © ICLEI SEAS



Meeting the participants at the District Office of Pakse city © ICLEI SEAS

### Lao PDR: Urban-LEDS II conducts GHG emissions inventory and climate risk vulnerability assessment for Lao Cities

ICLEI Lao PDR Project Office supported and guided the review of integrated climate action plans in model cities, Pakse and Kaysone Phomvihane. [Read the full story here](#)

### Rwanda: Three Rwandan districts drives local climate action planning

New research completed in three Rwandan districts drives new insight and vigour for climate change mitigation and adaptation planning. [Read the full story here.](#)

The ICLEI Africa team meets with city officials in Rwanda to discuss the Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory and Risk and Vulnerability Assessments that were done by The Green House © ICLEI Africa



### South Africa: Twelve local climate solutions in five communities in South Africa to implement at community-level: African solutions that really work

Through the Urban-LEDS Phase I project, ICLEI Africa assisted local communities at five locations in South Africa to implement climate and energy solutions in community buildings. Three years later, we revisit them to find out if the solutions were, in fact, sustainable. [Read the full story here.](#)



Doornkop Community Centre benefited so much from the solar panels installed on the roof, they are now able to provide aftercare services where the students can not only do their homework, but also learn about solar PV. © ICLEI Africa.

## Project synergies: [Global Platform for Sustainable Cities \(GPSC\)](#)

Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) is a comprehensive support mechanism to participating cities of the Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Pilot (SC-IAP) program.

The GPSC is designed to help cities address the challenges of urban growth, development, and infrastructure and comprises of 28 cities across 11 countries, including Brazil, India, and South Africa. In its new phase (GEF 7), the Sustainable Cities Impact Program (SCIP) will include Rwanda and Indonesia.

As a Resource Partner, ICLEI is providing strategic guidance and capacity building for participating cities through peer-to-



Global Platform for Sustainable Cities

peer learning, city academies, webinars, workshops, and a range of tools and knowledge products. Urban-LEDS cities have benefited from these activities. City activities have included the participation of Kigali and Recife in GPSC events, as well

as a webinar on fundraising and project pitching [in November 2019](#). In 2020, a GPSC webinar will feature Bogor Regency sharing good practice. Recife also won the GPSC Sustainable Cities Award and its Climate Action Plan will integrate nature-based solutions, addressing both Urban-LEDs and GPSC project aims.

## City in focus: Aalborg's affordable energy transition dream



View of Aalborg, Denmark © Rahbek Media on Unsplash

We need energy for almost all aspects of our daily lives. When looking for ambitious examples of redesigning local energy supply systems, city planners and Urban-LEDS cities had to look no further than the Danish municipality of Aalborg. Aalborg is one of the European resource cities in the Urban-LEDS project.

Aalborg's relentless pursuit of affordable, energy efficient, zero-emission energy supply for its citizens has put its goal of becoming 100% fossil fuel free by 2050 within reach. Longstanding national Danish strategies and policies in the field of sustainable energy, known as "grønne omstilling", have made the country an internationally recognised frontrunner of the green energy transition and set the scene for Aalborg's local energy transition in recent decades. Since the late 1980s, Aalborg has moved its strategic energy and heat planning forward with

a focus on district thermal network solutions. As a result, the municipality is now looking at an extensive district energy network covering around 80% of the municipalities' heat demand. Providing for flexibility in integrating volatile renewable sources, the thermal networks are an important backbone of the city's energy action plan (2011-2030). As such, a mix of renewable heat and cold sources, including local biomass, wind, solar, heat pumps, waste and geothermal heat, as well as an envisaged total of 40-50% in energy savings is foreseen to bring down emissions from the network in the future. Complementary to its longstanding, forward looking approach to energy planning, the municipality has put in place a motivational and encompassing concept to support climate friendly behaviour in the public and private sector as part of a wider

Sustainability Strategy. The current strategy was formulated in close consultation with citizens, civil society, educational institutions, business and industry, supporting initiatives such as the [Green Shops](#) scheme to sustain competitiveness of local companies and make sustainability an accepted principle in private, professional and public life. Taking an active part in the transition, Aalborg's citizens engage in regular household energy saving campaigns, competitions for neighbourhood energy saving rates and the highly popular annual [sustainability festival](#).

The example of Aalborg shows that even though change does not happen overnight, ambitious agenda setting, and sustainability as a principled approach in city planning, have the ability to transform the operation of an entire city and to turn the carbon free vision into a feasible reality. [Find out more here.](#)

## Urban champion:

**Md. Zannatul Ferdous**, Mayor, Singra Municipality,  
Bangladesh

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



Singra is an Urban-LEDS II satellite city in the north-western region of Rajshahi division, Bangladesh. The city's location on a floodplain, the extreme weather events it experiences, and the presence of numerous brick kilns make it very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and unsustainable development. In this context, Singra city, led by

Mayor Md. Zannatul Ferdous, has been taking several low-carbon and climate resilience initiatives such as afforestation, installation of solar streetlights (covering 40% of the city's streets in 2017) and promotion of electric mobility.

Under the mayor's stewardship, the city developed a climate resilience plan in 2017 through the support of Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN) initiative. In 2018, Singra won the "Urban Resilience Award" at the Third Annual National Conference on Urban Resilience to Climate Change for excellence in climate action. The city's climate resilience plan will be reviewed under the ongoing Urban-LEDS II project.

Mayor Ferdous has also spearheaded the introduction of e-rickshaws and e-ambulances in the municipality to promote low-cost and eco-friendly transport options, with support from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic

Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and in collaboration with GIZ and ICLEI South Asia. Singra city's "Promoting E-Rickshaw as a Public Transport and Emergency Health Supporting Services" project won the Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative's first Global Urban Mobility Challenge in 2018.

These e-rickshaws and e-ambulances have now been mobilised to support home delivery of essential items to citizens and for emergency medical services, respectively, following the national lockdown to curb the coronavirus outbreak. Mr. Ferdous says, "These e-rickshaws are a sustainable solution and have helped us to support people staying at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, if we can deliver all consumables to them." The success of the initiative has been acknowledged on national and global platforms. When it comes to promoting low-carbon and people-centred initiatives, Mayor Md. Zannatul Ferdous and Singra city choose to lead by example.

## Upcoming events and important announcements

**NOTE: COVID-19 may affect event schedules**

### [Urban-LEDS cities launch online city exchanges to promote access to climate finance](#)

On 9 June 2020, the Urban-LEDS project organised its first Climate Project Nursery Workshop on Accessing Climate Finance. The interactive workshop brought Urban-LEDS cities together online to discuss access of climate finance and enhance bankability of local projects.




**Daring Cities 2020 - The Bonn Forum for Urban Leaders Taking on the Climate Emergency.**  
**7-28 October 2020. Online!**  
<https://daringcities.org/>


### New project resources


#### [KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa](#)

The Central KwaZulu-Natal Climate Change Compact, South Africa is a platform fostering multi-level governance for climate change. This platform fosters both the vertical (across different levels of government) and horizontal (across different organisations at the same government level) integration of climate change governance in South Africa. [Read the full story here.](#)

For more information on the Urban-LEDS project;

 [www.urban-leds.org](http://www.urban-leds.org)

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