

IMPROVE YOUR CITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

A TOOLKIT FOR INCLUSIVE
URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN

GEORGIA

A group of people of various ages riding bicycles on a paved path through a park with palm trees. The path is made of reddish-brown bricks and is flanked by green grass and lush tropical vegetation. In the foreground, a young child in a blue shirt and red helmet is riding a small red bicycle. Behind them, several other cyclists are visible, including a woman in a black tank top and a man in a green jacket. The background shows a large group of people riding further down the path, creating a sense of a community event or a popular cycling route.

SymbioCity

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CONTRIBUTORS: Anna G:son Berg, David Melua, Ian Munt, Ana Nikabadze, Helena Ohlsson, Liza Sopromadze, Irakli Zhvania, Sinan Özden
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Since 2010, with funding from Sida, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and SALAR International have used SymbioCity as an approach to promote sustainable urban development and contribute to the alleviation of urban poverty around the globe. This Toolkit has been developed within the framework of the project Cooperation for Development (C4D, 2024-2028), funded by SIDA.



01

WELCOME TO SYMBIOCITY GEORGIA

YOUR TOWN, YOUR FUTURE

Across the world civic actors like you are influencing and shaping their cities – amplifying the voices of people who live and work in cities and neighbourhoods but who have often been inadequately involved.

From developing exciting visions for influencing how cities are managed and developed, to the provision of a local park, safer streets for women and girls, or improved traffic management around local schools – civic actors are bringing inspiration and problem-busting approaches.

They have proved how they can support local government in the pursuit of ‘sustainable urban development’: that means locally inspired and locally led development that keeps a careful eye on balancing the social, environmental and economic impacts and benefits of plans and projects in cities like yours.

In a context where cities are constantly changing, the catalytic role of civic actors is more important than ever. Cities offer new opportunities – more dynamic local economies, higher quality open spaces, more reliable and cost-effective services such as water and energy, new digital technologies that support government and citizens to better manage and deliver services. But where cities are poorly planned and managed the challenges go unchecked – ranging from the need to adapt to the impacts for climate change resulting in excessive heat and an increased risk of flooding, environments that are unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, or the lack of good quality public open spaces.

As a civic actor you have grounded experience of local development processes that help articulate the views and aspirations of local people. So whether you are....

- ▶ **A representative of a civil society organisation or a community-based organisation cultivating practical responses to improving your city**
- ▶ **A community leader, a group of active citizens or students, or an individual with your intimate knowledge of local issues**
- ▶ **Running a local business or social enterprise that is socially beneficial**
- ▶ **A member of a professional association, a built environment professional or academic with knowledge and experience**
- ▶ **A local government official wanting to understand how more effective approaches and tools can be used to engage with civic actors**
- ▶ **Or just a curious citizen who wants to find out more about the possible routes to improving your city**

.... your role in supporting sustainable urban development in Georgia is critical, and the SymbioCity Toolkit is here to help you on your journey.

WHAT IS SYMBOCITY?

Developed in Sweden as a way of supporting local governments and civic actors to develop their cities and towns sustainably and inclusive of everyone, SymbioCity is a tried and tested approach. It has been shared globally, and extensively applied in a network of 30 countries. Committed urban leaders, local government officials, non-government and civil society organisations, and local citizens have adapted the approach in tune with their needs and resources (including time and finance) to make meaningful improvements to the quality of their urban environments, improving living standards and the quality of life for citizens.

SymbioCity is built on the principles of an inclusive-of-all approach. It provides a flexible six-step method that can be adapted to your needs, and which will support you to address your vision and priorities, consider different responses, and identify and develop **'integrated solutions'**.

These solutions seek to optimise the impact and the tangible improvements in your city and get more value for money by addressing different challenges at the same time. We refer to this as a **'holistic approach'**. How, for example, the development of a public open space can accommodate the needs of different users (including women and girls, youth and people with disabilities), integrate the opportunity for composting, waste management and the collection of rainwater, provide a space that adapts to climate change and offers a cool space in the urban environment. This Toolkit provides you with a range of tools to facilitate the SymbioCity steps – from getting organised to organising design workshops.

SymbioCity can be used to support your needs, whether this is an aspiration for the development of a more comprehensive

Three typical applications ('scenarios') of the SymbioCity approach are provided to describe how the methods and tools presented in this Toolkit can be applied to your needs (see page 31). The scenarios are:



The development of a city/neighbourhood vision



The development of public open space



A small scale and rapid improvement to walking and cycling (a 'tactical solution')

locally-led city or neighbourhood action plan or strategy, or the desire to address more specific problems and opportunities such as the development of an open space and play area, poor air quality, stray animals or the promotion of cycling and walking. Whatever the scale of application, **SymbioCity encourages and supports a positive solution-oriented approach** based on your vision of how your city can be improved.

But however you cut the SymbioCity cloth, you must always make time to think through the environmental, economic and social impact and benefits of your chosen course of action: this is the essence in creating cities that are sustainable.

AS YOU WORK THROUGH THIS TOOLKIT REMEMBER THAT SYMBIOCITY IS:

- A **tried and tested approach** with a strong archive of experience and well documented experience from the SymbioCity network that provides inspiration and creativity
- An **adaptable, flexible, and evolving** response to sustainable urban development anywhere – and application in Georgia will further enrich the SymbioCity network
- **Rooted in collaboration and participation**

SymbioCity is built on the principles of an inclusive-of-all approach. It provides a flexible six-step method that can be adapted to your needs, and which will support you to address your vision and priorities, consider different responses, and identify and develop 'integrated solutions'.

in support of locally-led initiatives – it answers the call for a tailored approach and participatory tools that encourage respect between all actors, and at all stages of urban development

- Always starting from the principle that **cities are for us all** ('inclusive') and this means addressing the many different needs and aspirations of those who live and work there
- A pragmatic and practical way of **discovering and crafting SOLUTIONS**

Urban planning and development at different levels

CITY LEVEL

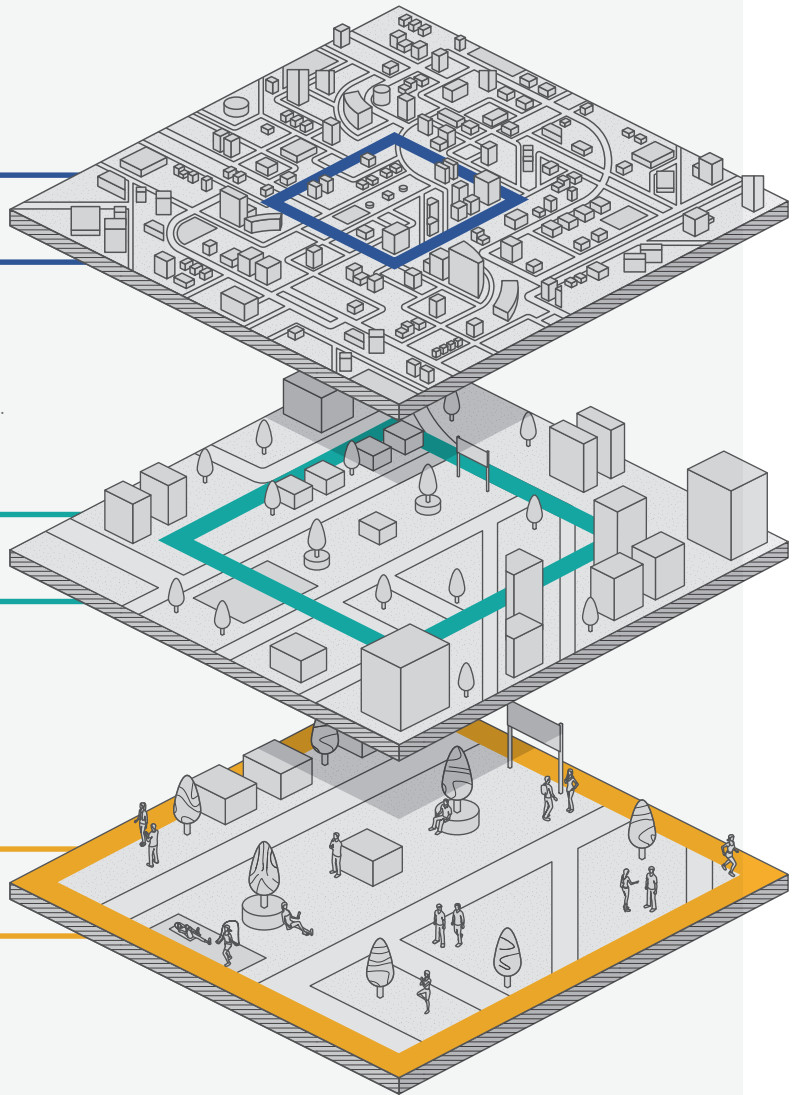
E.g. preparing a locally-led vision for your city to influence the revision or development of urban plans, or the development of influencing strategies for addressing specific issues (e.g. street safety, a greener environment, better pedestrian/cycle facilities) or city campaigns (e.g. affordable housing, help for the low income, a cleaner city)

NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL

E.g. preparing a locally-led neighbourhood vision and plan to influence the revision or development of urban plans and prioritise solution ideas

ACTION LEVEL

E.g. a new or renovated public park, creation of a youth club, a meeting place for elderly citizens, pop-up trading opportunities, temporary tactical solutions that can be delivered quickly but with a view to more permanent change



HOW CAN SYMBIOCITY HELP YOU?

As a committed civic leader, you are likely very busy and short on time. The SymbioCity method and tools in this Toolkit acknowledges this, and you can adapt the method and tools according to your needs and focus, and according to:

- Whether you want to address city-wide issues or a single issue (such as poor air quality, excessive summer heat, dedicated space for youth, the preservation of culturally significant buildings or the better management of tourism)
- Where you are in your journey in actively influencing and improving your city - whether you are just starting out or have already well-developed ideas on what you want to do in improving your city

SYMBIOCITY CAN BE USED:

- By a facilitator to work with civic actors in applying SymbioCity most effectively, or taken up and used by you independently as a self-curated application
- To design an approach that reflects your circumstances and resources, and optimises your contribution to inclusive urban development – the Toolkit will guide you on how best to design your method and select the most appropriate tools

AND THEN APPLIED:

- To identify, develop and implement a range of solutions
- At different geographical scales – from a whole-city approach to a neighbourhood or defined area (such as natural area), a street or smaller area
- For longer term activities (e.g., developing locally-led city-wide or neighbourhood visions and plans) or very rapid initiatives

Whatever the scale of application, SymbioCity encourages and supports a positive solution-oriented approach based on your vision of how your city can be improved.

(e.g., a discussion group on a priority issue such as road safety or the loss of tree cover)

- For both identifying and developing physical solutions (e.g., a renovated park or local flood defence) and non-physical solutions (e.g., a campaign for a cleaner town or a community charter designed to influence local government plans)
- To identify both high-tech/high cost (e.g., digital innovation that facilitates citizen participation through digital civic labs, flood protection measures, or renewable energy) and low-tech/low cost (e.g., tree planting, community gardening, or pop-up farmers markets) solutions

WHAT DRIVES SYMBIOCIETY?

SymbioCity is driven by a fundamental principle: good urban planning and development must be **inclusive of the needs and aspirations of everyone**. Doing so recognises we use our towns and neighbourhood in different ways, and we have different needs and priorities. But the design of city environments and services too often discount the perspectives, aspirations and needs of certain groups – especially women and girls, children and the elderly, and people with disabilities – resulting in unsafe environments and facilities that result in their exclusion (e.g., street design, public and private facilities, transport and public open spaces).

Planning for and with all means keeping the needs of different gender, age, income and disability groups in mind when designing urban solutions – and doing so provides tangible benefits in:

- **Increased relevance** by addressing the needs and priorities of different groups in the urban solutions - e.g., if a public space or service is safe and comfortable for a young child, it will be safe for everyone
- **Maximised benefits** through increased inclusivity and accessibility - spaces and services that work for everyone get more support and people are more likely to pay for services when they serve their needs
- **Promoting equity and reducing poverty** through the active targeting of the needs of all interest groups
- **Higher levels of support** because solutions have been planned for and with all stakeholders
- **Smoother implementation**, through the creation of buy-in and ownership among the community
- **Meaningful empowerment** by addressing the needs of often excluded groups such as women, children and people with disabilities in the design of solutions

YOUR SYMBIOCIETY JOURNEY STARTS HERE

This Toolkit provides you with the practical method and tools that you can use selectively in addressing your specific needs, designing solutions with others and supporting sustainable urban development in your city. Inspirational examples of sustainable urban development solutions from other countries will help you interpret the SymbioCity approach. The Toolkit puts you in the driving seat and guarantees your experience of SymbioCity is locally-shaped and results in:

- **Better plans and projects**, that are more relevant, better designed, and more meaningfully address the needs of citizens
- **Improved collaboration between different actors**, helping to leverage resources and leading to new solutions
- **Empowered civic actors and communities** with ownership of the process and contribute to the results



Workshop for Bicycle Masterplan for Batumi, Love to Ride Batumi

Your toolkit at a glance

1

SYMBIOCITY & YOU | Introduces you to the SymbioCity approach, how it might be applied in Georgia and how you can make best use of the Toolkit according to your needs

2

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA | Introduces you to the the Georgian planning system, the most prominent urban development problems and opportunities, and possible solutions

3

SYMBIOCITY HELPS CIVIC ACTORS IN GEORGIAN LOCALLY-LED SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT | Establishes the principles for locally-led development

4

THE SYMBIOCITY STEPS

01 LEAD

02 COOPERATE

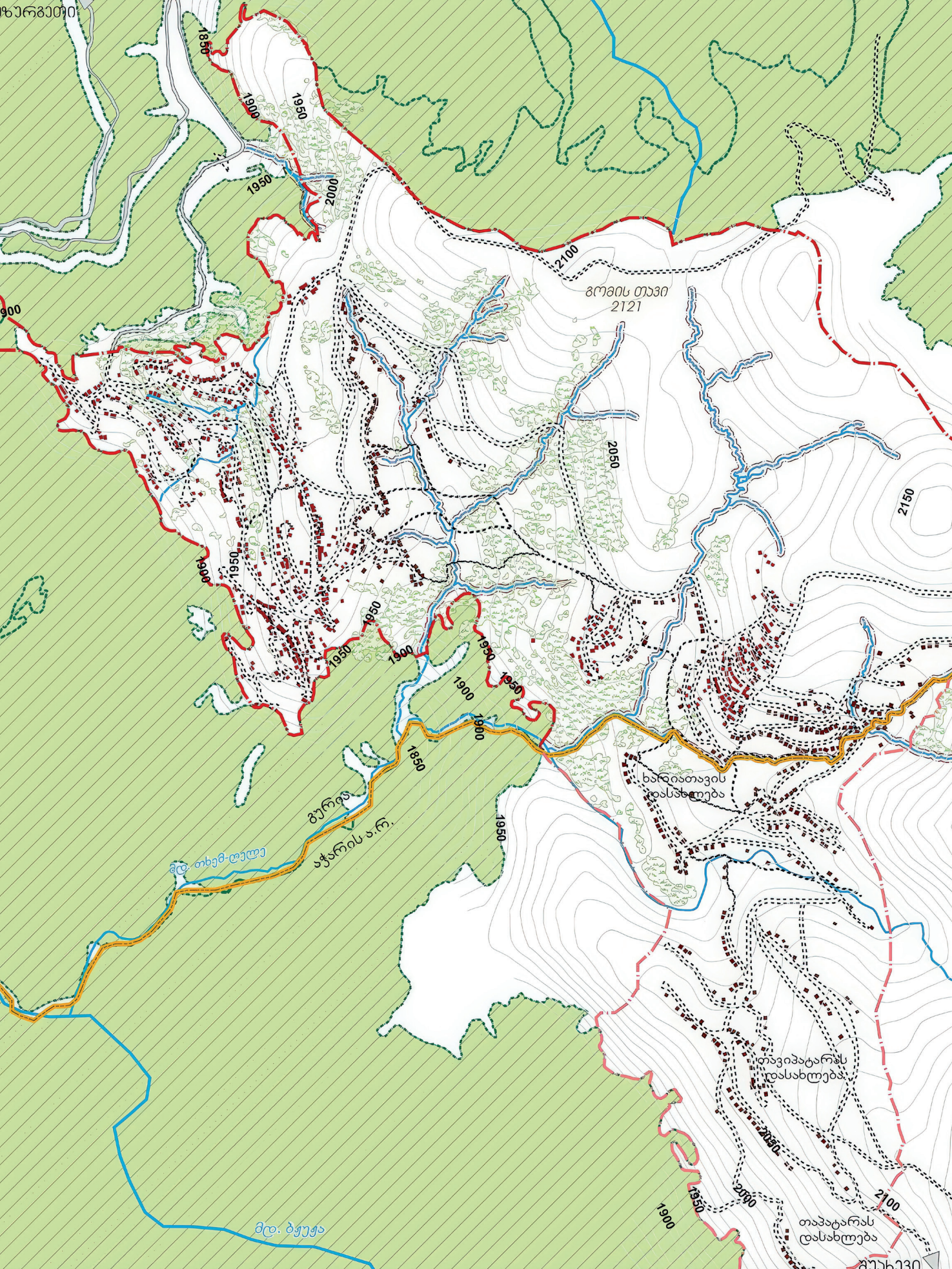
03 INFLUENCE

Describes the SymbioCity steps and how you can use them to support your needs



5

SYMBIOCITY TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS | Introduces you to a range of tools to support the SymbioCity approach and how they might be applied in different circumstances



02

URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA

The primary tool for guiding the physical development of cities in Georgia is the urban plan as explained below. Your city may already have one, be in the process of elaborating it, preparing to start one, or reviewing an existing version.

This chapter explains how Georgia's planning system works and how you can take part in shaping plans for your community.

However, the future of our cities relies on more than planning alone — it involves challenges such as housing affordability and adapting our environments to climate change, and the influence of socio-economic planning and management.

Here, we outline these issues, explore possible solutions, and encourage all civic actors to contribute to sustainable urban development.

HOW DOES THE PLANNING SYSTEM WORK IN GEORGIA?

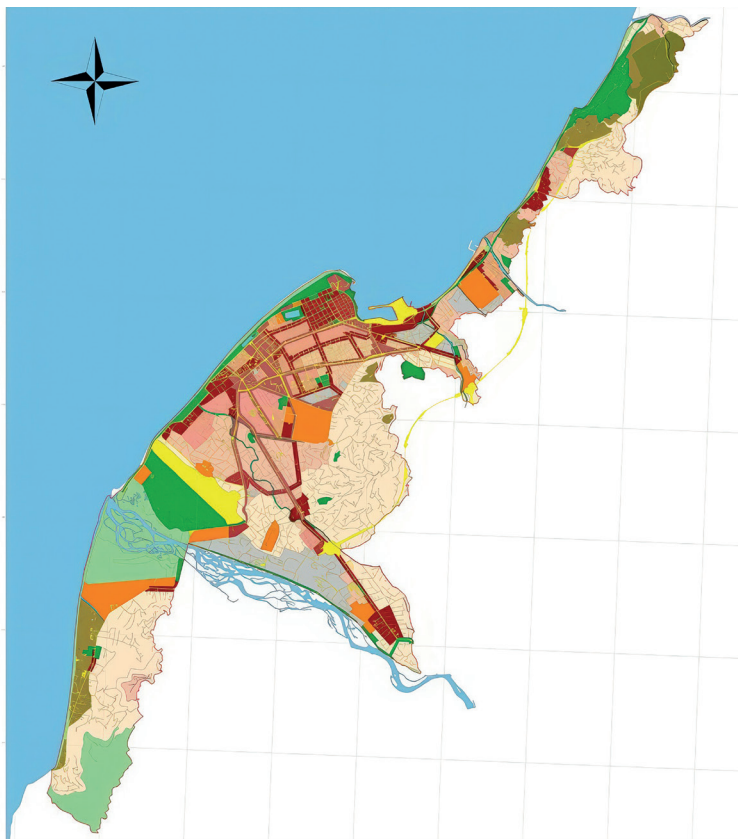
Knowing how the planning system works provides you with a better understanding of how you can participate in and influence urban plans (see the Pocket guide to urban planning, plans and development in Georgia at the end of this chapter to learn more). Planning, development, architecture, and construction across Georgia is regulated and guided by law (Code of Georgia on Spatial Planning, Architectural and Construction Activities).

It is the national **Spatial and Urban Development Agency (SUDA)** that is

responsible for defining and implementing spatial and urban planning policy and which can participate in and coordinate preparation of spatial and urban planning documents and provide expert evaluation of various parts of plans. But it is **municipalities that are responsible for elaboration and approval of spatial and urban development plans** in accordance with the procedure established in law (except in special regulation areas and zones where SUDA reviews and the government approves plans).

The plan system is hierarchical meaning that each plan must be in conformity with the level above. The level of detail and site specifics increases with the lowest level plans (e.g., development plan and detailed development plan).

► Batumi Land Use General Plan, Concept Phase, zoning map



ქ. ბათუმის გენერალური გეგმის კონცეფცია კონკრეტული ზონებით

- პირობითი აღნიშვნები**
- მუნიციპალიტეტის საზღვარი
 - სოფლისა და სოფლის სოფლის საზღვარი
- ფუნქციური ზონები**
- დარბაზური ზონა (მზ-2)
 - კურორტული ზონა (მზ-5)
 - სეზონური ზონა (მზ-3)
 - მრავალ-ინტენსივობის საცხოვრებელი ზონა (მზ-4)
 - სახალ-ინტენსივობის საცხოვრებელი ზონა (მზ-3)
 - დაბალი ინტენსივობის საცხოვრებელი ზონა (მზ-2)
 - სანოღო-საწარმოო ზონა
 - საკომერციო-საწარმოო ზონა (მზ-4)
 - განყოფილებული ტერიტორია
 - მრეწველ-დაცემადობის ტერიტორია
 - სასაბუნო ზონა
 - სპორტული ზონა
 - სპეციალური რეკრეაციის ზონა
 - სასაბუნო ტერიტორია ზონა (მზ-4)
 - სატრანსპორტო ზონა

პროექტი - ქ. ბათუმის საქრთიო განვითარებისა და განათვისების მნიშვნელოვანი საკითხების შესახებ

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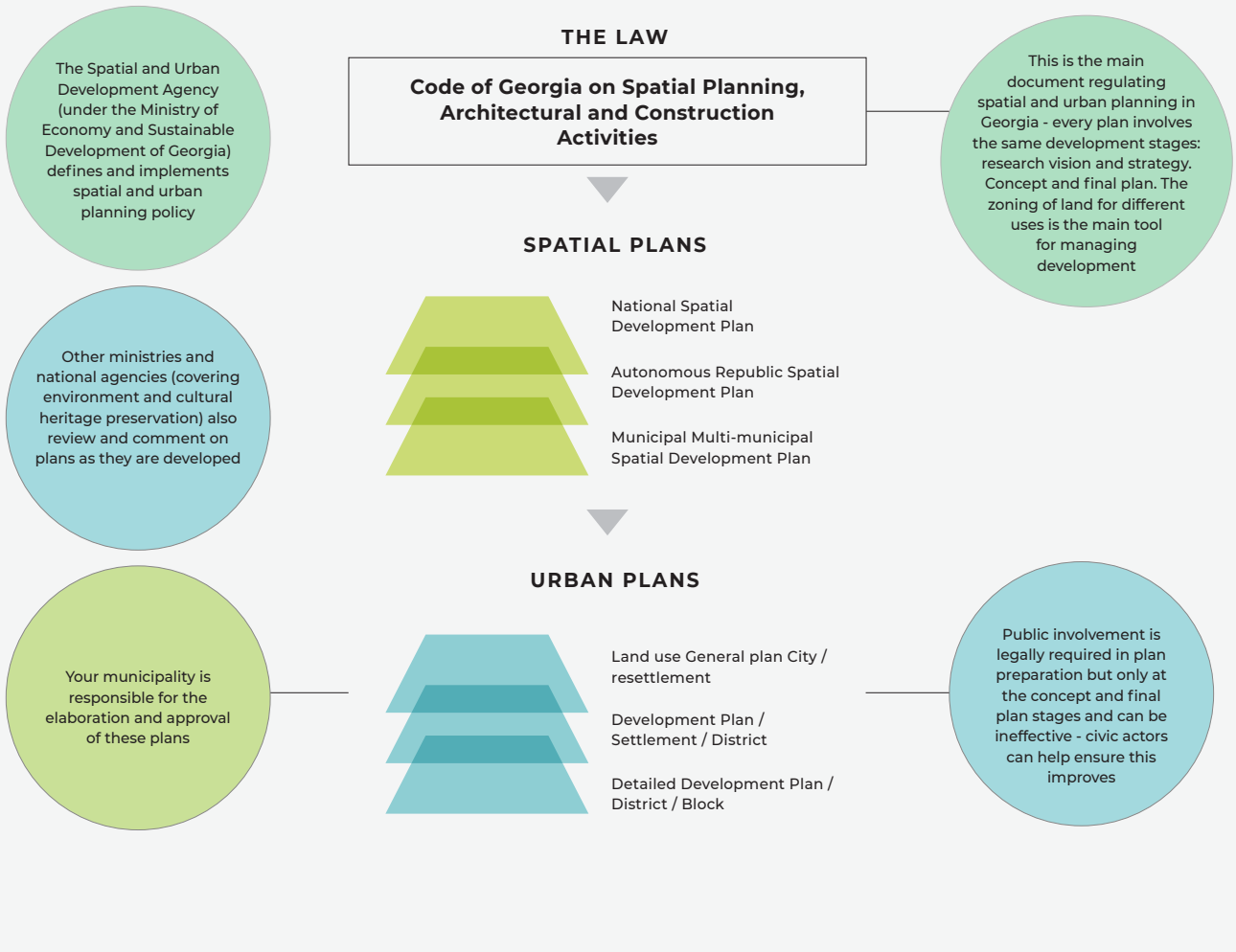
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ბათუმი 4 ვადების მონაპაზე (კონსტრუქციის)
4.2 ვადების მონაპაზე შედარებით
კვანძები

Overview of the Georgian planning system



A particular weakness is that public involvement is not required at the crucial early stage of planning (the decision to initiate a plan). At both the Concept and Final Plan stages, public discussions are required but notification through website postings and local notices are often inadequate.

Formal public hearings at municipal centres yield limited results and for most of the public, complex plans are difficult to understand; many are interested only in their development rights. There is a need to extend and develop processes and tools for involving citizens in the development and planning process, and this Toolkit presents ways in which this can be achieved.

Your efforts can help address the challenges in the planning system and improve city plans, policies and solutions shaped for people and with people. You can positively contribute by:

- Providing better – grounded – data about your city and priorities for presentation to municipalities and supporting consultants procured to develop plans
- Support better and more effective participation by organising the inputs of all stakeholders and making sure the voice of the community is heard from the start of plan development
- Championing integration through the identification and design of practical solutions that respond to priority challenges and that can be included in urban plans (e.g., low-cost solutions that are relatively easy to implement primarily targeted on improving open public spaces and infrastructure for social activities)

THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BE POSITIVE, AND GOOD AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICE DOES EXIST:

- 1 The preparation of the Dusheti General Plan included a student workshop and use of social media for communication leading to a larger participation of youth. Donor-funded projects (ADB, World Bank, GIZ) introduced more robust participatory processes
- 2 The Kote Aphkhazi Street rehabilitation in Tbilisi involved NGOs, residents, and professionals in continuous dialogue, building trust and easing implementation



► Public meeting on Dusheti Land-Use General Plan in Dusheti, Georgia, Dusheti Youth Center (Facebook)



► Workshop for Old Batumi Neighbourhood Concept with civic actors in Batumi, Georgia (Irakli Zhvania)



THE DIGHOMI MEADOWS: DEFENDING NATURE

Since 2020, the civic initiative Dighomi Meadows has been fighting to protect Tbilisi's last remaining riparian forest and meadow ecosystem from private development. Located on the northern edge of the city, along the Mtkvari River, this green enclave provides a rare refuge for urban wildlife — including many red-listed and protected species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and plants.

Because of its riverside location, private construction companies had been using the area as a dumping site for construction waste and for illegal gravel extraction. In response, the group mobilized community support, initiated legal actions, and even prepared a strategic vision for landscape rehabilitation.

The struggle continues, but Dighomi Meadows has already become a symbol of environmental solidarity and civic perseverance. Today, guided walks, educational events, and public discussions are organized to raise awareness and inspire appreciation for the area's unique floodplain ecosystem — turning activism into education, and protection into pride.

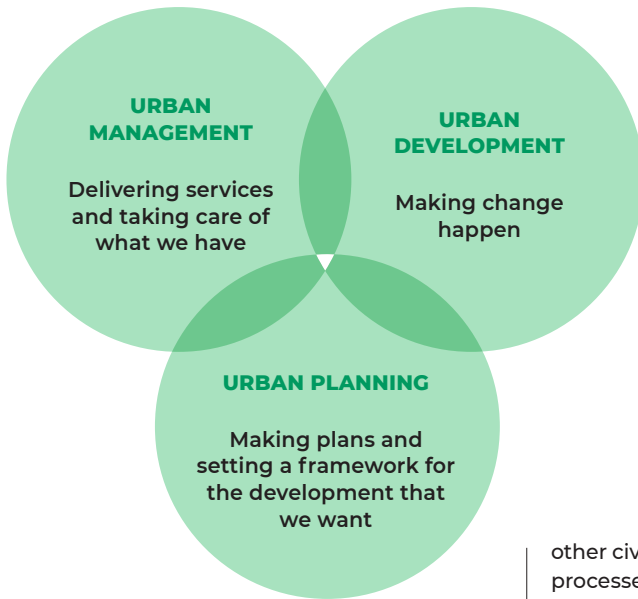
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Dighomimeadows>; <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31191694.html>

HOW ARE CITIES MANAGED?

The management of cities extends beyond the planning system. Depending on the size of a municipality various departments will be mandated with a range of urban management responsibilities. In big cities these include departments in charge of urban planning, architecture and construction permits, transportation, environment and green spaces, infrastructure improvements, monitoring and supervision, waste management, judicial matters, sports and culture, youth and education, healthcare and social security, economic development, finances, and procurement. In smaller less urbanized municipalities, departments may be unified and cover several urban management activities.

Municipal boundaries frequently include land or infrastructure controlled or maintained by national agencies or ministries (e.g., national parks, state highways, and pipelines). In some cases, the management of certain assets may be delegated from national to municipal authorities, as in the case of listed monuments of cultural heritage in Tbilisi. The private sector also plays a crucial role in urban management of cities providing critical services such as gas, electricity, water supply, and telecommunications – and is procured to construct and maintain public infrastructure (e.g., roads and schools).

While municipalities and government representatives hold the primary responsibility for planning, urban development is shaped by many different actors, including you. Changes occur not only through government projects (e.g., roads, water supply and energy) but also through local business activities and community-driven actions.



Urban planning, development and management are critical to achieving sustainable urban development

WHO ARE THE MAIN ACTORS IN PLANNING?

PUBLIC SECTOR

Georgia has 5 self-governing cities and 59 rural municipalities with elected mayors (executive) and councils (representative). Cities and municipalities are responsible for managing services and transport as well as approval of spatial and urban plans. However, rural municipalities face severe shortages of qualified staff in fields of planning and depend on support and guidance from SUDA.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Businesses and investors are the main drivers of urban development. As significant contributors to both cities and national GDP, they heavily influence urban policies and lobby for their interests. Through official tendering procedures, architectural and planning firms are selected to elaborate spatial and urban plans, which they submit to municipalities, SUDA, relevant ministries and agencies. Private consultants can be encouraged by active members of local communities and

other civic actors to broaden participatory processes through techniques ensuring stronger engagement.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

CSO/NGOs in Georgia are diverse with contributions to governance and active in advocacy for local democracy, decentralization, environment, mobility, inclusivity, and heritage. They had provided some training to central/local governments pre-2024 through international partners and projects on urban development issues (environment, mobility, quality of life, cultural heritage, inclusivity). However, CSO/NGOs need more resources and capacity to become effective civic actors in sustainable urban development.

ACADEMIA

Educational offerings in urban planning in Georgia are currently limited, though universities play an important role in developing the country's planning capacity. A couple of universities offer master's and doctoral programs in urbanism and urban development. Some universities include urban planning components within their Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral architecture programs. However, most of these programs are primarily integrated with architectural studies and focus more on design approaches.

An aerial night photograph of a densely populated city, likely Manila, Philippines. The image shows a vast expanse of urban development, with numerous high-rise buildings and a complex network of streets illuminated by city lights. A prominent river, the Pasig River, flows through the city, and a large, modern building with a distinctive curved facade is visible in the upper right. The overall scene conveys a sense of intense urban activity and growth.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT?

Here are some of the main urban development challenges we face in Georgia, and the possible responses to them. Armed with your local knowledge you are best placed to build on this list, identify which matters most to you, and focus on and tackle your priority challenge(s).

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT



Public awareness on climate change issues is low. Heatwaves and short heavy rains are more frequently hitting cities causing landslides and flash floods. Developments in natural hazard risk areas put lives in danger. Melting glaciers threaten many mountainous settlements with debris flows and floods. Air pollution is a threat to health in several cities and towns (car exhausts in Tbilisi, cement plant in Kaspi, mining in Chiatura). Waste separation and recycling is not happening.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Planning for climate change which requires understanding the impact and risks
- ✓ Integrating natural hazard studies into plans
- ✓ Enhancing the quality and quantity of green spaces
- ✓ Increasing permeable surfaces
- ✓ Introducing sustainable drainage solutions
- ✓ Creating more urban shading through trees and awnings
- ✓ Developing waste recycling facilities
- ✓ Promoting reduce, reuse, recycle through community campaigns

- ✓ Managing car exhausts and construction dust
- ✓ Limiting altering the natural landscape
- ✓ Harvesting rainwater from roofs and runoff
- ✓ Creating green roofs
- ✓ Managing climate risk and hazard mitigation plans (requested by civic actors)

OVERDEVELOPMENT IN LARGE CITIES (TBILISI, BATUMI)



High-density developments which exceed the permitted building standards create overcrowded neighbourhoods with limited sunlight and aeration, traffic congestion, deteriorating air quality, and social challenges arising from increasing segregation as high price gated communities multiply. In these areas public open and green spaces are shrinking, infrastructure is underprovided and public transit capacities become insufficient.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Enforcing the permitted building standards
- ✓ Setting standards for healthy environment
- ✓ Improving public transport options

◀ LEFT
Sea Storm in Batumi, Georgia. Batumi Boulevard, Facebook

◀ Smoggy and Overdeveloped Tbilisi. Chemi Kalaki Mklavs, Facebook

► *Hobby VS Income Source for many in Georgia's Seaside City of Batumi*

- ✓ Planning for and provide walking and cycling facilities
- ✓ Providing social infrastructure
- ✓ Creating public open and green spaces
- ✓ Prioritising public over private interest
- ✓ Attending council hearings on granting additional coefficients to developers and requesting justification required by the law

URBAN SPRAWL

The creation of new areas outside of cities and beyond built-up boundaries – and dominated by residential use – is happening at the expense of natural landscapes. It increases car dependency and contributes to traffic congestion and air pollution. These settlements are poorly served by public transport, and limited infrastructure provision has resulted in costly and isolated communities.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Restricting developments that result in sprawl
- ✓ Promoting a compact city approach with walkable neighbourhoods
- ✓ Respecting the built-up boundary
- ✓ Developing and protect natural landscapes
- ✓ Conducting general impact assessments (by civic actors) for urban sprawl projects and present to the public

SHRINKING CITIES

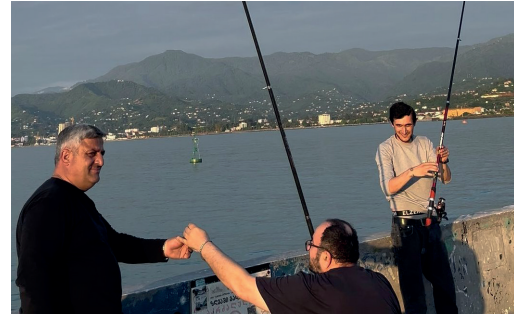
Many regional urban centres and towns experience economic decay resulting in deteriorating infrastructure, depopulation and loss of human capital.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Strengthening decentralized governance (e.g., more efficient intra-municipal administrative structures, enhanced capacity of local civil servants)
- ✓ Investing in infrastructure that targets the need for local economic development
- ✓ Planning strategically to harness potential but untapped competitive advantages

► *A Mining City of Chiatura, Georgia. Natela Grigalashvili / Chai Khana*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT



Tbilisi as the capital and the major economic hub contributes to more than a half of national GDP. It houses around a third of the total population. Together with Batumi, these cities provide the most attractive employment opportunities. Such asymmetrical economic development means stagnation for many regions and cities (other than Tbilisi and Batumi) in Georgia and requires an approach that supports economic development throughout the country.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Diversifying local economies where possible
- ✓ Encouraging domestic and foreign investments
- ✓ Developing Infrastructure investment that supports productivity
- ✓ Creating sustainable economic policies
- ✓ Undertaking regional economic development

HOUSING



Rising real estate values and high interest rates

on bank loans make housing affordability a significant issue. The absence of social housing and housing policy further exacerbates the problem.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Elaborating housing policy
- ✓ Developing social housing and self-build
- ✓ Committing to a strategy that diversifies the housing market
- ✓ Campaigning on the importance of access to and affordability of housing

MOBILITY



Although public transport infrastructure is improving in big cities (with bus-lanes and a renewed bus fleet in Tbilisi, and new routes and buses in Batumi), other urban strategies are not aligned. Mobility issues are not prioritised when planning new developments. Public transport is overcrowded during peak hours, and high car dependence and traffic congestion remain major challenges. Smaller cities are also underprovided with public transport options.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Finalising the network of bus lanes
- ✓ Providing sufficient public transport options
- ✓ Increasing walkability
- ✓ Developing bike lanes where possible and improve the bike network
- ✓ Investing in intra-city and inter-city rail
- ✓ Planning transit-oriented development
- ✓ Raising awareness on the efficiency of different modes of transport through civic campaigns

HERITAGE

Despite massive urban cultural heritage and rehabilitation projects, poor physical conditions still pose danger to many listed buildings and historic built environments. New developments are frequently not in line with heritage preservation policies. Different levels of legal frameworks in this sphere are not harmonised, and regulations are not always sufficiently enforced. Insufficient financing and low-quality work are a challenge.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Strictly monitoring cultural preservation zones
- ✓ Investing more in cultural heritage
- ✓ Incentivising heritage rehabilitation
- ✓ Training for craftsmanship
- ✓ Improving heritage policies and elaborate preservation plans
- ✓ Developing civic-led capacity on approaches to cultural heritage rehabilitation and preservation

PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

Privatization of formerly public open spaces and construction in green zones remains an issue across Georgia. Public open spaces suffer from underinvestment in regional cities. Rehabilitation of urban parks lack application of modern sustainable and eco-oriented approaches.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Reclaiming public open spaces
- ✓ Redesigning public open spaces to respond to the needs of all users
- ✓ Creating more green spaces in urban areas to contribute to biodiversity and climate change adaptation
- ✓ Improving the management (operations and maintenance) of public open spaces

URBAN MANAGEMENT

An overly politicised environment negatively affects urban management and limits stakeholder collaboration. Poor communication between different agencies results in prolonged unresolved issues. Private

◀ *Car-oriented mobility in Tbilisi, Georgia. Green Alternative*

development interests are frequently favoured over public interests and short-term thinking prevails over long-term visions. This results in a reactive rather than proactive approach to urban management. Masterplans and strategies are not being followed together with frequent unjustified changes in land use zoning. Generally poor urban management poses various safety risks for citizens.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Keeping a balance of interests and amplify the voice of the community
- ✓ Increasing effective public participation
- ✓ Closing the gap in regulations
- ✓ Promoting cities as a public realm asset, not just an economic asset
- ✓ Introducing new technologies to support better urban management and planning
- ✓ Prioritising long term sustainable solutions
- ✓ Following adopted visions and plans
- ✓ Strengthening the capacities for local governance

SOCIAL INCLUSION



Our cities need to be inclusive and reflect the needs of all users. Public participation in Georgia's urban planning is legally recognized but practically weak. Laws mandate discussions mainly at later stages while early-stage involvement is largely absent and plans remain hard for the public to understand. There is a need to find new ways of growing the quantity and quality of participation beyond the legal requirements. There is a

need to address unequal access to services and facilities and remove the current barriers experienced by groups with special needs including women and girls, children and the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Responses to these challenges include:

- ✓ Championing inclusivity as a guiding principle in planning, the design and implementation of solutions, and the delivery of services and facilities
- ✓ Identifying needs of local communities through participatory activities at the beginning of planning process
- ✓ Ensuring public involvement in the early stages of urban plan development
- ✓ Promoting multiple channels of informing the public through clear communication
- ✓ Gathering ideas and facilitate initiatives on urban interventions according to priorities of community members and civic actors
- ✓ Building the capacity and confidence of citizens to influence planning
- ✓ Promoting interactive tools that allow all citizens to shape their cities
- ✓ Developing outreach methods to involve usually excluded groups (people with disabilities, women and girls, and senior citizens)
- ✓ Promoting and support community-led initiatives
- ✓ Promoting gender and child sensitive initiatives, tools and solutions that ensure the needs and aspirations of women and girls are addressed
- ✓ Ensuring the participation of people with disabilities in all stages of the planning and solution design process
- ✓ Ensuring equal access to critical urban services (e.g., water supply, energy, health, social care, education)

► *Women from Georgia's Mountainous Regions, Green Alternative*

A POCKET GUIDE TO URBAN PLANNING, PLANS AND DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA

Spatial and urban planning and urban development in Georgia is regulated by the Code of Georgia on Spatial Planning, Architectural and Construction Activities, a national law which establishes the:

- System of spatial planning and urban development plans of Georgia
- Fundamental principles, goals, and objectives
- Hierarchy and structure of spatial and urban development plans
- Rules for their preparation and approval
- Conditions for using land plots for construction and the basic requirements for buildings and structures
- Rules for issuing construction permits, construction supervision, specific types of construction violations and measures of liability
- Rules of administrative proceedings related to the consideration of construction violation cases

The Code is complemented by two ordinances:

1. Ordinance No. 260 regulates the development, financing, and approval of spatial and urban plans. It also sets requirements for preplanning studies and plan content. It provides guidelines on plan structure, graphics (colours, legends, scales, base maps), data matrices, settlement classifications, planning unit allocation, and general building aesthetics. Stakeholder engagement documentation is required through methods including interviews, meetings, and surveys.
2. Ordinance No. 261 sets rules for construction and non-construction areas, functional zones (living, mixed, industrial, special), sub-zones, and protection zones. It regulates land plot development through parameters (coefficients, height standards), building placement, and boundary rules. When urban plans or zoning documents are

absent, Ordinance 261 serves as the default framework. However, despite covering many aspects, its regulatory tools are limited and often difficult for municipalities to apply when issuing construction permits.

Land use zoning is a primary tool for regulating development of areas and land plots:

- The code defines buildable (development) and non-buildable (landscape, agriculture and forestry), social infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, engineering infrastructure and water body territories.
- Where construction is allowed, four general and thirteen specific zones (Functional Zoning) determine permitted land uses, types of development (perimeter, grouped, free, combined, etc.), parameters for buildings (Coefficients K1, K2) and open spaces (Coefficient K3). Regulations for each zone define offsets from street and public spaces, adjacent property lines, rules for placing doors and windows and so on, to be respected when designing a local plan or a building. Stricter regulations apply for cultural heritage and water body protection zones.
- Urban plans may include red lines, beyond which buildings should be located, and blue lines, on which buildings must be placed.
- The Georgian Cadastral Code records a unique identifier for every land plot allowing a property to be located on a cadastral map. You can access information on-line to confirm the property owner, land use, size, rights and restrictions (Public Registry).

Depending on the location, scale and detail of the plan, it may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment, an archaeological study, a cultural heritage survey, and geological and hydrological studies. Plans can prescribe types of construction materials to be used within the planning unit for aesthetic and heritage considerations. Transportation studies are required but are superficial and fall short on data.

03

LOCALLY LED SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The development of cities proves to be most sustainable when it **is inclusive, transparent, rooted in, and responsive to the lived experiences of local communities.**

This means developing city plans, policies and solutions shaped **for people and with people** that truly reflect the community's needs and values.

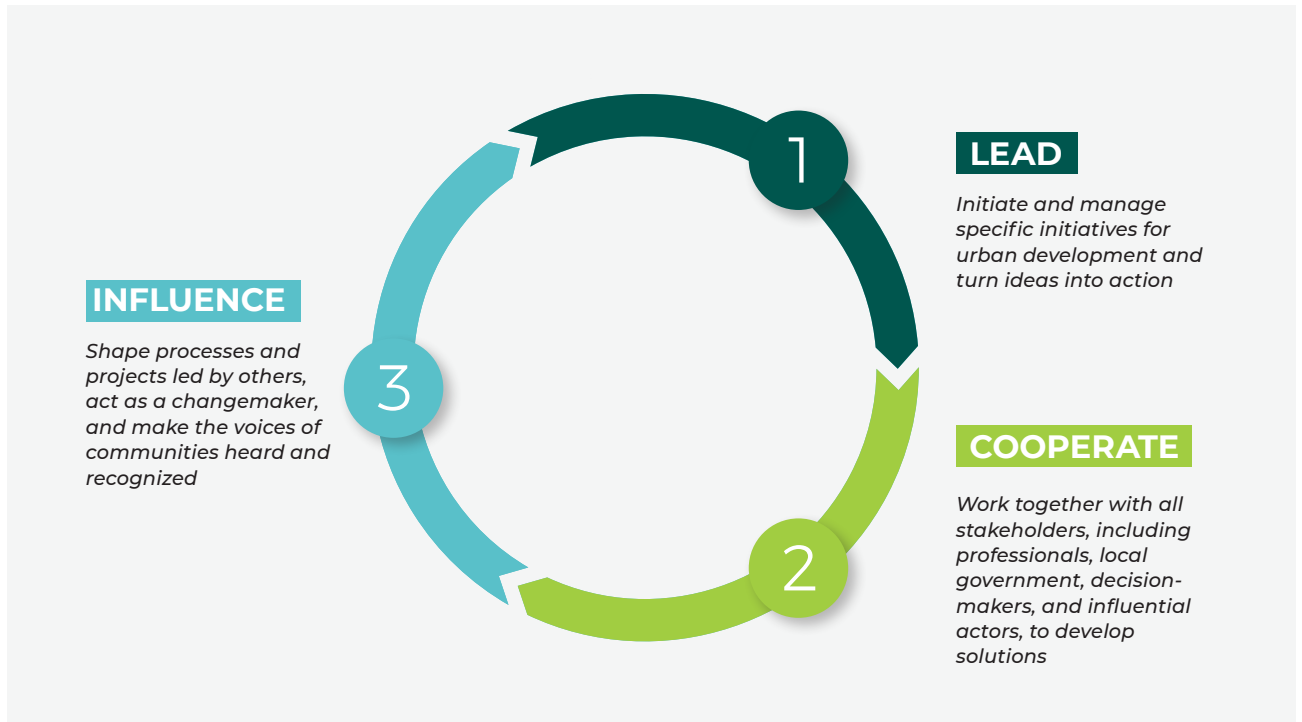
Civic actors play a unique and vital role in ensuring this locally led development is achieved, and that the more traditional approach to government-led urban development is complemented by locally-anchored approaches. SymbioCity provides you with the methods and tools to optimise an inclusive approach that is shaped by the people who live in the community, involves all key stakeholders, and wherever possible taking a holistic approach.

No matter the scale of your ambitions (see the scenarios pages 31-41), there are three practical ways for you to engage with the development of your city by: leading, cooperating, and influencing.

When engaging in urban development processes, you should:

- ✓ Select the most relevant approach (working groups, advisory committees, forums, campaigns) based on your context and resources
- ✓ Mobilize local communities and facilitate formulation of shared vision of your priority challenges and solutions
- ✓ Build legitimacy by representing broad community voices, not just organizational agendas
- ✓ Document and communicate your approach and achievements to strengthen accountability and transparency
- ✓ Leverage networks with other civic actors to amplify influence and share experiences

Remember - You have the right to request information from your municipality and public agencies'



¹ The Constitution of Georgia (Article 18, Paragraph 2) guarantees access to public information as a fundamental right. The General Administrative Code of Georgia (Articles 10, 12, 28, 36, and 37) establishes public institutions are obligated to proactively publish public information and to provide it upon request within legally established deadlines, unless the information is confidential.



Photo by Hope Raisers

CLAIM THE STREETS FOR DEMOCRATIC AND SAFE PUBLIC SPACE: AN EXAMPLE FROM KENYA

HopeRaisers, a community-based organisation, occupies the streets for different events once a month. Their aim is to increase the level of street activation in order to reclaim public space for community empowerment and social engagement, showing that process and involvement can be as important or more important than the 'product' of a built-up place.

Although it began as a band, Hope Raisers Youth Initiative now organises events in the streets of Korogocho to create inspiring and safe places for the inhabitants of this informal settlement. The Street Upgrading Project is part of a larger

program called Korogocho Slum Upgrading Program (KSUP). To address the issues of poor access roads, bad drainage, inadequate streetlights, and poor water and sewage systems, the KSUP planning process aimed to use integrated participatory planning steps as a resilient slum upgrading approach.

The project helped promote local economic activity, increase the number of jobs, and improve the perception of safety. The redesigned streets provided a greater number of public meeting places and improved connectivity to the larger urban fabric.





◀ Children at Europe Square in Batumi using Bicycle Repair Station, Nino Chkhaidze

WHEN CYCLISTS TURNED AN IDEA INTO INFRASTRUCTURE IN BATUMI

For years, Batumi's cycling enthusiasts had dreamed of installing bike parking across the city. In the spring of 2020, the club Love to Ride Batumi formed an initiative group to make it happen. That same year, the city announced the Your Idea to Batumi participatory budgeting competition - and their project idea, Batumi - a Cycling City, won citizens' votes.

The group relied on research by an international organization that had previously mapped potential bike parking zones across Batumi. By the summer of 2023, 70 bike racks and 5 bicycle repair tool stations had been installed in 12 public locations.

This story stands as a positive example of how a citizen-led initiative, supported by the municipality, can turn a simple idea into tangible urban infrastructure - proof that civic energy and municipal cooperation can reshape a city, one pedal at a time.

Source: <https://idea.batumi.ge/archive/2020/20105>; <https://www.facebook.com/LovetoRideBatumi/photos/pb.100058614804432-.2207520000/369854621328475/?type=3>

1. LEAD

CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU

You and your neighbours know best your needs, concerns, and challenges. **Leadership starts with you.** Take the first step and help turn ideas into real change. Leading does not always mean doing everything yourself. It means **mobilizing your community**, encouraging participation, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and finding how you can influence planning and policy decision-making within the legal framework. By stepping forward, you can:

- Inspire others to get involved
- Represent your community's priorities in discussions with authorities and partners
- Show that residents can shape their own future
- Build trust and ownership that makes projects more sustainable
- Improving your local environment by creating new spaces, improving existing ones and other solutions from clean-up initiatives to tree planting campaigns

Real change begins when civic actors and communities lead with responsibility, transparency, and inclusivity.

HOW TO LEAD:

- ✓ **Bring people together:** organize a meeting in a school, library, or community centre
- ✓ **Identify problems:** use surveys, maps, or walk and talks through the neighbourhood
- ✓ **Collect ideas:** ask people about their priorities and potential solutions
- ✓ **Test the approach:** start with a small pilot action (e.g., clean a park, repair a playground)
- ✓ **Show results:** share success with your municipality to inspire bigger action
- ✓ **Identify and popularize champions:** incentivise those who deliver results, making them popular and visible to encourage others to follow (e.g., custodians and protectors of trees or cultural heritage sites)

For successful leadership and achieving change, remember to:

- ✓ Bring professionals on board whenever you can (e.g., a friendly architect, planner or engineer can help translate your priorities into reality)
- ✓ Be smart and confident
- ✓ Be honest
- ✓ Be open and transparent

2. COOPERATE

WITH ALL YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

The sustainable development of your city or neighbourhood can only be achieved through collaboration between all key stakeholders: this includes businesses, government, and local communities.

To guide urban development effectively, it is essential to identify and engage both those who influence the urban area and those who are affected by it. Working together with all stakeholders makes plans and projects stronger, more coherent, more inclusive, and easier to implement. This is why cooperation across different actors is a cornerstone of locally led inclusive planning.

HOW TO COOPERATE:

- **Stay informed and participate:** Attend public consultations, community meetings, and municipal hearings—check announcements online, on notice boards, or through local networks
- **Contribute knowledge and evidence:** Share community data, surveys, and feedback collected from residents to ensure local perspectives are included in decision-making
- **Promote joint initiatives:** Suggest working groups on specific themes such as transport, youth, environment, or housing,

bringing together where possible government, businesses, and civic actors

- **Formalize collaboration:** Where appropriate use simple agreements, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to clarify roles, responsibilities, and commitments between collaborators
- **Ensure shared accountability:** Monitor your progress together, review what you have achieved, and report results back to the community to build trust and improve transparency

BATUMI'S FIRST BICYCLE POLICY AUDIT

In 2021, during the participatory development of Batumi's Cycling Master Plan, a wide range of stakeholders came together - city officials, civil society, and active mobility advocates. For the first time, the Bicycle Policy Audit (BYPAD) tool was applied in Georgia.

The audit evaluated the city's entire cycling ecosystem: its bicycle network and infrastructure, accessibility, the municipal bike-sharing system BatumVelo, parking facilities, and how cycling fits into the broader public transport system. It also revealed weaknesses in both municipal and private sector management capacities.

Policy audits like this provide civic actors with a clear compass - a way to understand where they stand, assess the status quo, and plan forward-looking actions. In 2022, Batumi's City Council formally adopted the Cycling Plan - not an endpoint, but a milestone achievement on the road toward a more cycle-friendly city.

Source: <https://droa.ge/?p=130949>; <https://www.facebook.com/LovetoRideBatumi/photo/100058614804432-2207520000/338936554420282/?type=3>

3. INFLUENCE

BRING ABOUT CHANGE

For a solution to contribute to sustainable urban development, it must be able to shape



Cleaning Activity of Kumisi village. Akhali Kumisi, Facebook



Biodiversity of Kumisi Lake. Badri Vadachkoria

CITIZENS OF KUMISI LAKE SAVE AN ECOSYSTEM

For years, residents around Lake Kumisi in Gardabani Municipality have struggled with poor road infrastructure and limited access to clean water. Yet their main concern has always been preserving the lake's fragile biodiversity.

Due to long-term disruption of its water inflow, the lake's ecosystem faced severe decline, threatening both flora and fauna. In response, the local civic group New Kumisi mobilized community and external support to clean the water channels and restore the lake's ecological balance.

The group has since been advocating to keep national and local environmental institutions informed and accountable - particularly regarding illegal fishing and poaching. Their persistence showcases how grassroots environmental action can rescue a natural habitat and build civic resilience in the process.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/AkhaliKumisi>; <https://greenalt.org/blogs/kumisis-tbis-gamockhadebuli-mkvllobis-qronika/2207520000/338936554420282/?type=3>

decisions, guide interventions and ensure that community needs are addressed. Even if you are not leading a solution, you can play an important role in influencing its design and impact by combining your knowledge and communication. You can act as change makers by contributing ideas, providing evidence, representing community voices, and helping decision-makers understand local priorities. Through influence, initiatives become more relevant, inclusive, and effective, supporting long-term positive change in urban areas.

HOW TO INFLUENCE:

- **Follow projects:** inquire about the activities of donors and companies, and track what the municipality is planning in your area
- **Speak up:** attend public hearings, write comments, or send letters to decision-makers
- **Collect opinions:** use petitions, surveys, or community consultations to show broad support
- **Propose alternatives:** prepare short notes or recommendations with better solutions
- **Raise awareness:** use local media, social networks, or community events to amplify your message
- **Build your evidence base:** use and extend your grounded knowledge to leverage better solutions, and base your recommendations on evidence and community input
- **Build relationships:** with decision-makers and other stakeholders
- **Communicate:** be clear and respectful to strengthen credibility
- **Be persistent:** follow up to ensure your input is considered
- **Connect with other civic groups:** you are stronger together
- **Use simple tools:** community forums, working groups, advisory committees
- **Represent the wider community:** not just your organization, and report back to the community to build trust



*Walk through analysis for
Walkability Concept in
Batumi's Old Neighborhood,
Love to Ride Batumi*

SCENARIOS

The SymbioCity method (introduced in Chapter 4) and tools (introduced in Chapter 5) can be adapted and applied to virtually any urban challenge that you face. Here we provide three typical applications ('scenarios') to demonstrate how you can identify and create integrated solutions. But remember, SymbioCity is designed to meet your needs and you can tailor your approach accordingly.

A reminder: Integrated solutions range from the development of a city or neighbourhood vision, improvements to the management of tourism or better documented knowledge on cultural heritage structures – to the provision of new or rejuvenated public open space, the provision of community and youth dedicated activity spaces, improvements to cycling and pedestrian facilities, flood management structures or the restoration and preservation of abandoned and neglected cultural heritage sites and monuments. Integrated solutions can be high or low

in technology and cost, and long or short term in design and implementation.

The three scenarios that follow are:

- 1 Development of a city/neighbourhood vision
- 2 New and improved public open space
- 3 Promoting walkability and cycling (a 'tactical solution')

Steps for successful planning and development



SCENARIO 1

A CITY/ NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION

A city/neighbourhood vision helps build a collaborative approach between stakeholders, provides a broader and better understanding of your city/neighbourhood, articulates your needs and aspirations, and confirms your priorities. It will help you see the bigger picture and the relationships between different aspects of your city/neighbourhood (i.e., stray animals that erode riverbanks and increase the risk of flooding), and provide a springboard for developing appropriate integrated solutions (i.e., better management of stray animals, tree planting that stabilises and protects riverbanks, opens up new recreational possibilities, and supports the cooling of the urban environment).

Visions can cover a whole city or specific neighbourhoods. Visions provide a foundation for you to influence the development of your city/neighbourhood and a platform for collaboration.

PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY:

- Unplanned and poorly managed cities in Georgia are facing multiple problems: fragmented development, poorly adapted urban environments to the impacts of climate change and the risk of disaster, the loss and underutilization of green and recreational space, the abandonment and neglect of cultural heritage sites, poor and unsafe urban mobility options that disadvantage cyclists and pedestrians.
- Most Georgian cities are not covered by urban plans at present and lack a broader Vision. Even where there is an existing urban plan in your city, you may consider it ineffective in reflecting your needs and addressing your problems. In either case a well-crafted Vision gives you the foundation for influencing the development or revision of an urban plan, and other government interventions (i.e., the provision or new and improved infrastructure and services).
- Visions are not just dreams you have for the future of your city/neighbourhood, but a way to think about how you can meet your aspirations. You can use the Vision as a springboard to identify, prioritise and develop specific projects (see Scenarios 2 and 3)



SymbioCity training event in Kuala Lumpur

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 1

ORGANISE THE PROCESS

- Agree on how you are going to develop your vision (Tool: Workplan)
- It is important to identify all the stakeholders that will contribute to building the Vision (Tool: Stakeholder Analysis/Mapping)
- Agree on how you will communicate with your stakeholders to gather their inputs, share progress and use the vision to influence the development of your city/ neighbourhood (Tool: Communication Plan)

STEP 2

ASSESS THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Decide what information ('data') you need relevant to understanding your city, neighbourhood or priority issue and how you will collect it (Tool: Data Mapping)
- **Use a range of tools** to ensure your

information comes from different stakeholders (see page 67)

- Analyse the data collected (Tool: SWOT/C Analysis)
- Define key issues based on analysed data and the SWOT/C
- Analyse what sustainability means in your neighbourhood (Tool: Local Definition of Sustainability)

STEP 3

SET A VISION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

- Work collaboratively to build your vision and what more specifically you want to achieve (your goals and objectives) (Tools: Want / Don't Want, Your Vision)

STEP 4

DEVELOP INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

- Look into different scenarios for the future
- You could decide that your Vision is sufficient to influence the development

of your city, but identifying priority solutions to achieve this will enhance its effectiveness

- You can identify different alternatives for achieving your vision and objectives (this might be permanent or temporary solutions, physical and non-physical solutions, low and high-cost solutions, immediate and/or longer-term): ensure your selected option(s) are realistic and affordable (Tools: Solutions Matrix, Integrated Solutions)
- Design your solutions

STEP 5

ANALYSE THE BENEFITS AND IMPACTS OF YOUR SOLUTIONS

- Screen your solution(s) to identify the sustainability benefits and impacts, make sure they are meeting your Vision and are feasible (Tools: Solution Stress Test, Impact Radar)

STEP 6

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Formulate an action plan and financing solutions (Tools: Action Plan, Financing Solutions)
- Make sure you share your plan, communicating clearly with your stakeholders, and influence the policy and planning of your city/neighbourhood

GET INSPIRED, GET INVOLVED

- ✓ In Tskaltubo a multi-sector Local Action Group conducted a baseline study and developed a strategy that later served as the foundation for a local socio-economic development plan
- ✓ In Rustavi civic actors used a Citizen Assembly, to develop a shared vision and to influence the orientation of a strategy for Rustavi's floodplain forest
- ✓ In Dusheti a rehabilitation plan for the historical district was developed through high stakeholder participation, ensuring that the needs and insights of the local community, experts, and authorities were integrated into the planning process. This collaborative approach aimed to preserve the district's cultural heritage while promoting sustainable development.
- ✓ With strong stakeholder involvement, a master plan for bicycle mobility has been adopted in Batumi, which included the developing a network of bike paths and creating all the necessary infrastructure.
- ✓ In Istanbul, Turkey (EMBARQ) a transport association supported the development of a neighbourhood strategy focused on the need to enhance walkability, reduce congestion and reduce pollution. The strategy has resulted in a new pedestrian network that has improved walking conditions, promoted and enhanced neighbourhood public spaces, and upgraded public transport and cycling

OTHER APPLICATIONS

The method for building a Vision can be equally applied to the development of strategies that address specific pressing issues – the risk of flooding, poor air quality or the need to better manage tourism for example.



Vera Park, Tbilisi, Georgia,
(SALAR International)

SCENARIO 2

NEW AND IMPROVED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Place-based physical improvements such as the provision of new or rejuvenated public space illustrates how SymbioCity can support you moving your ideas from design to the implementation of integrated solutions.

Through a collaborative approach you can identify and assess alternative approaches, assess the benefits and impacts of your proposal and develop public open space solutions that are realistic and feasible.

PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY:

- Public open space (green and recreational areas) is a critical asset in Georgian cities and has significant economic, environmental and social benefits: its provision is a bellwether of the quality of urban life (of 'livability'). Well-designed and well-managed public open space can support economic growth, local enterprise, and tourism. It strengthens social inclusion by providing safe, inclusive environments for recreation, culture, and community life. It can underpin resilience by reducing climate and disaster risks through nature-based cooling, stormwater management, and biodiversity enhancement.
- But in many Georgian cities valuable public open space remains underdeveloped or underutilized, or the possibility of adding to the stock of public open space is being lost through urban sprawl. There is a pressing need to develop and improve these spaces in a way that reflects community needs and priorities.
- It is important that all public open spaces are designed and developed for and with all users and especially with those groups that are too often excluded – women and girls, kids and the elderly, and people with disabilities – because spaces are inaccessible, unsafe and inadequately designed and managed.

HOW TO DO IT

Where you start in the SymbioCity process will depend on how well advanced you are in solution development. If you are just starting out, moving through the steps will help you get the most out of the development process. If you have well advanced plans you might want to use earlier steps and tools to reflect on whether your approach is comprehensive and whether it needs to be improved (e.g., you have missed out on significant stakeholders or your assessment step could be improved).

STEP 1

ORGANISE THE PROCESS

- Agree how you are going to develop your design and implementation process (Tool: Workplan)
- Identify the stakeholders that will contribute to building the solution (Tool: Stakeholder Analysis/Mapping)
- Agree how you will communicate with your stakeholders to gather their inputs, share progress and use the vision to influence the development of your public open space (Tool: Communication Plan)

STEP 2

ANALYSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Decide what information ('data') you need to understand the public open space and how you will collect it (Tools: Walk and Talk, Public Space Analysis)
- Make sure you consider the needs of all users (especially women, girls and people with disabilities) and use a range of tools to collect it (Tools: Child Impact Assessment, Neighbourhood Safety Survey)

STEP 3

SET A VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Work collaboratively to build your vision for the solution and what you want to achieve (your goals and objectives) (Tools: Your Vision, Drawing Workshop)

STEP 4

DEVELOP YOUR INTEGRATED SOLUTION

- Consider different alternatives for achieving your public open space vision and objectives (this might be permanent or temporary solutions, physical and non-physical solutions, low and high-cost solutions, immediate and/or longer-term): ensure your selected option(s) are realistic and affordable
- Design your public open space solution making sure your stakeholders are involved and that your design process includes site-based participation – where possible you can involve built environment professionals to develop your solution including the development of drawings and 3 dimensional models (Tools: Placemaking Design, Through Her Eyes, 3D Modelling)

STEP 5

ASSESS BENEFITS AND IMPACTS

- Screen your solution to identify the benefits and impacts, make sure it is meeting your objectives and is feasible (Tools: Solutions Stress Test, Impact Radar)

STEP 6

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Develop an implementation plan identifying what needs to be done and who will need to do it – you will need to provide detailed consideration on construction aspects of your public open space (Tools: Implementation and Maintenance Strategy)
- Build your solution budget (which includes both capital expenditure and the cost of operating and maintaining the public open space) and financing plan (Tool: Local Financing)
- Make sure you share your plan, communicating clearly with your stakeholders, and influence the policy and planning of your city/neighbourhood

GET INSPIRED

- ▶ In Poti, a successful initiative was carried out by a CSO involving the renovation of a library, funded through crowdfunding and supported by close cooperation with the private sector
- ▶ The I AM KARACHI (Pakistan) civic campaign demonstrates inspiring cultural rejuvenation and creativity by engaging people in dialogue and encouraging social interaction in public spaces. The movement that started in 2011 has also renovated sport facilities benefiting 5,000 young people in underserved neighbourhoods and engaging 200 local artists and designers. Civic actors and the private sector demonstrated how they could lead the transformation of public open space by mobilizing funding and resources and organizing public support.

Source: World Bank. 2020. The Hidden Wealth of Cities: Creating, Financing, and Managing Public Spaces

- ▶ In New York, Street Lab NYC, a non-profit organization, supports locally led community public space solutions (including parks, plazas, and other public areas) using physical design.

Source: C40. 2024. Design Guidance for Green and Thriving Public Spaces

- ▶ In Sao Paulo, Brazil residents and leaders of the grassroots movements participated to transform a derelict piece of land to a rain garden and pocket forest collecting water runoff which was flooding areas elsewhere. Social media was used to invite and motivate other volunteers of all ages to plant pocket forests in small plots of land resulted in private funding contributions to maintain and protect the new pocket park.

Source: CARDIM Arquitetura Paisagística <https://oppla>.



Photos from Rome, C40

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- ▶ The San Lorenzo neighbourhood hosts Rome's first urban micro-forest (Parco dei Caduti) – a small natural reserve of Mediterranean scrub, resilient to heat and drought, capable of attracting biodiversity, absorbing water and releasing humidity – demonstrating how a small patch of nature can serve ecological and social functions to foster more sustainable living. University and secondary school students were involved in the co-design. This project stems from a collaboration between Sapienza University, the Municipality of Rome and local stakeholders.

Source: C40. 2024. Design Guidance for Green and Thriving Public Spaces



Safe Road to School – Tactical Urbanism project in Batumi, Georgia, GIZ Georgia. Mobility4Cities

SCENARIO 3

PROMOTING WALKABILITY AND CYCLING (A ‘TACTICAL SOLUTION’)

Thinking small and shorter-term can unleash powerful changes and longer-term impacts. Tactical solutions (‘tactical urbanism’) are an approach to delivering small-scale neighbourhood-based locally led physical interventions using short-term, low-cost implementation methods that provide:

- Rapid improvements to road safety at busy crossroads or local schools, the creation of a small (‘pocket’) recreation area, or simply the provision of moveable seating and planters in areas regularly used by the public
- Often temporary solutions – for example, making a road pedestrian and cycling only for a day a week or seasonally (summer streets) – that can be used to demonstrate positive change and as a precursor to

more permanent changes taken up and championed by local government

- Always creative, inspirational and are ideally suited to civic actor leadership: they provide the opportunity to learn and improve, and to demonstrate that longer-term and more permanent solutions are possible

This scenario uses improvement to walking and cycling to describe the application of SymbioCity method and use of a variety of tools. You may be able to implement your tactical solution where land ownership and rights allow - and you must always clarify whether you have the right to do so – but you can always design tactical solutions as a way of influencing and convincing others that relatively low-cost and easy-to-implement solutions are possible.



Safe Road to School – Tactical Urbanism project in Batumi, Georgia, GIZ Georgia (Mobility4Cities)

HOW TO DO IT

Tactical solutions are fleet of foot and driven by an implementation mind set. Where you start in the SymbioCity process will depend on how well advanced your solution development is. If you are just starting out, moving through the steps will help you get the most out of the development process. If you have a well-advanced plan, you can use earlier steps and tools to reflect on whether your approach is comprehensive and whether it needs to be improved (e.g., you may have missed out on significant stakeholders or your assessment step could be improved).

STEP 1

ORGANISE THE PROCESS

- Agree on a plan to deliver your tactical solution (Tool: Workplan)
- Identify the stakeholders who the tactical solution will benefit and who can help implementation (Tool: Stakeholder Analysis/ Mapping)
- Agree how you will communicate with your stakeholders to gather their inputs and design the tactical solution

STEP 2

ANALYSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Identify a specific opportunity site and make sure you understand the root causes of the

PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY:

- In many cities there is an overreliance on private car use and the safety and facilities for pedestrians (sidewalks and crossings) and cyclists (such as cycle lanes and bike racks) is often poor. The safety of streets for all users is compromised, but especially so for the most vulnerable: for children, the elderly and people with disabilities.
- Making cities more walking- and cycling friendly offers multiple benefits: it encourages 'active mobility' which is good for health, it can improve air quality at high pollution hot-spots and improve road safety, it supports more and better interaction between citizens, it improves the overall quality of streets and results in economic benefits to local businesses.
- Small-scale, low-cost, rapidly implemented improvements can make a big impact. This can range from straightforward improvement to a crossing point in front of a school to enhance the safety of children or a make-shift bike parking facility, to the occasional use of existing road and parking space for temporary community uses (a farmers market, basketball court or open dance floor and theatre space).

problem that needs to be addressed (Tool: Walk and Talk, Explore Your Neighbourhood)

STEP 3

SET A VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Work collaboratively to agree on ways to address the problem and what you want to achieve (your goals and objectives) (Tools: Want / Don't Want, Drawing Workshop)

STEP 4

DEVELOP YOUR INTEGRATED SOLUTION

- Consider different design options that can be carried out quickly and cheaply (Tools: Solutions Matrix, Integrated Solutions)
- Design your tactical solution (Tools: Placemaking Design)

STEP 5**ASSESS THE BENEFITS AND IMPACTS OF YOUR SOLUTIONS**

- Screen your tactical solution(s) to identify the sustainability benefits and impacts, make sure they are meeting your Vision and are feasible – this will confirm whether you are able to implement your tactical solution or whether you need to use your design to influence landowners and decision-makers feasible (Tools: Solution Stress Test, Impact Radar)

STEP 6**PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- Develop an implementation plan identifying what needs to be done, what you will need and who will need to do it (Tools: Implementation and Maintenance Strategy, Local Financing)
- Make sure you share your plan, communicating clearly with your stakeholders, and influence the policy and planning of your city/neighbourhood
- Where implemented make sure you observe and document the impact of your tactical solution (e.g., better safety, more walking and cycling, an improved business environment) so you can use this evidence to influence more permanent change (Tool: Evaluation and Monitoring: Communicating Achievements)

OTHER APPLICATIONS

Tactical solutions also refer to other types of non-physical activities that can be quickly organised and delivered – from neighbourhood clean-up activities and campaigns for improvements to air quality or to save trees from removal to citizen-led walking festivals and letters of petition.





GET INSPIRED

SAFE WAY TO SCHOOL – WHEN STREETS BECOME CLASSROOMS IN MOTION

In 2022, Batumi's Public School No. 14 became the heart of a bold experiment – to prove that streets can be more than just corridors for cars and that they can be safe, social, and educational spaces for children.

Located on a busy section of Inasaridze Street, the school faced daily traffic congestion that made every walk to class a small act of courage. With support from Batumi City Hall, Mobility4Cities (GIZ), and the Black Sea Eco Academy, the school community decided to act. Parents, teachers, students, and local volunteers came together to redesign the street - not on paper, but with paint, planters, and creativity.

The Tactical Urbanism Pilot turned the area around the school into a colorful, people-first zone. Children helped paint vibrant patterns on the pavement, temporary barriers slowed cars, and safe crossings made every step more confident. For one week, walking and cycling replaced car dropoffs, and the difference was striking: walking to school increased, cycling doubled, parents' feeling of safety rose dramatically rating the new design 10 out of 10

For the children, it wasn't just about safety - it was about joy and belonging. As one student, Ananno Makharadze, said: Painting the street in front of the school was my favorite part. It felt like the school became ours - a beautiful, colorful place to walk, cycle, and play.

The project showed that even temporary changes can leave lasting lessons. When children are given safe routes and space to move freely, they grow more independent, focused, and confident. When cities invest in safe mobility for the youngest citizens, they invest in their own future.

Batumi's School No. 14 is now a living example that sustainable urban mobility begins with children – and every safe walk to school is a small step toward a better city.



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04

THE SYMBIOCITY METHOD

The SymbioCity method **consists of six steps: a proven practical project management approach specially adapted to support community-led sustainable**, inclusive, and resilient urban development. Each step builds on the previous one, ensuring that decisions are evidence-based, participatory, and responsive to community needs.

Whilst these steps have been designed as a logical cycle to improve urban development, **the steps can be used more intensively or in a lighter manner in response to your needs** and where you are in identifying, developing and implementing solutions in your city. The scenarios (see pages 31-41) will help you understand how the method can be adapted and applied for different purposes.

The SymbioCity approach and steps, like all successful urban development processes requires clarity about:

- ✓ Who needs to be involved and how you will **organise the process**: an inclusive and transparent process builds legitimacy, strengthens ownership, and leads to better results (**Step 1**)
- ✓ Where you are now by **analysing the trends**, challenges and opportunities presented by your priority issues, your city and neighbourhood (**Step 2**)
- ✓ Where you want to go by **setting a vision**, goals and objectives (**Step 3**)
- ✓ How to get there by **developing different scenarios** and integrated solutions (**Step 4**)
- ✓ Understanding the **benefits and impacts**

of your solution(s) so you can improve and optimise the benefits and minimise negative impacts (**Step 5**)

- ✓ Moving from **your plan/proposal to implementation** of your solution(s) and evaluating its impact (**Step 6**)

Whilst the steps imply a logical sequence, you can in practice go back and forth between steps, rethinking earlier conclusions and actions (e.g. your public open space design inadequately addresses the needs of people with disabilities, and you want to bring in new user groups to inform the process and solution design). Always keep the final implementation step in view, from the start. To succeed, you need to **lead, cooperate, and influence** – applying the SymbioCity approach in a conscious and consistent way.

Steps for successful planning and development





STEP 1

ORGANISE THE PROCESS

It is important for you to consider the entire process before you start to optimise the effectiveness of the SymbioCity process. For **inclusive planning, the way the process is structured is critical for ensuring ownership and buy-in from all stakeholders**. A well-organized process saves time and resources, enhances clarity and transparency, and keeps everyone aligned toward the same goals.

Consider the following initial questions in organizing the process:

- ✓ What is the purpose of your approach? – What issues will be addressed, and what kind of solution(s) will be planned and implemented?
- ✓ Who will lead and manage the process?
- ✓ Who should be involved in the process?
- ✓ How will this purpose be achieved, and by when? – Develop a work plan.
- ✓ Who will implement the project?

WHO WILL LEAD THE PROCESS?

You will need to agree on who will lead the process and how you organise this. This might require a leading and planning team for more ambitious processes, and setting out the rules and procedures for how the relationships between different stakeholders are managed. You should also determine the duration for which the team will be formed – whether it is needed until your solution is identified and is developed, throughout its implementation, or for an extended period: could your leadership structure be permanent, or is it more suited to a shorter-term scenario? Dependent on your needs (your scenario) the team may comprise:

- **Influential and trusted local leaders:**
The SymbioCity process requires strong cooperation among civic actors to ensure a unified voice. This can take different forms, such as a Coordination Council, a Civic Committee or Platform, or a Civic Lab on

Local Development. Whatever the structure, it should always include local leaders who are both influential and trusted by the community.

- **Professionals from different fields:**
Urban planners, economists, environmental experts, and other specialists should be invited to contribute to discussions and problem-solving wherever possible. Their expertise is essential for developing integrated, realistic, and well-informed solutions.
- **Stakeholder groups:** Representatives from the community, civil society, academia, the private sector, and local government should be engaged to ensure a collaborative approach. These groups are not homogenous – and their roles and contributions will vary depending on the type of stakeholder. The composition of stakeholder groups may also evolve over time as actions progress. Consider different ways of engaging these groups since not all stakeholders may feel comfortable sharing their views in larger or mixed settings.

WHEN SETTING RULES AND PROCEDURES, ASK YOURSELF:

- ✓ How will decisions be made?
- ✓ What communication strategy will be used?
- ✓ How will information about the process be disseminated?
- ✓ How and when will additional groups and stakeholders be involved, and in what form?
- ✓ At what stage will professionals be invited to contribute?
- ✓ Do you have sufficient resources (financial, human, and technical) to effectively lead the process?

WHICH STAKEHOLDERS NEED TO BE INVOLVED?

Urban development is influenced by many stakeholders, including government representatives at different levels (with authority over your area and solution) and civic actors—both inside and outside of formal institutions. With their involvement, it is possible to plan for and with people, and be more confident that the process will meet the needs of all.

Stakeholder mapping helps identify who these stakeholders are: these may include businesses, individuals, academia, NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), the media, political or religious groups, local government representatives, and other government departments. It will include the citizens in your city.

Mapping the interests and influence of different stakeholders in relation to your process will help you define the role they should have in the process. It helps plan **how and when** various community members who have influence and credibility ('change agents') and other stakeholders should be involved. The community is not a homogenous group, so planning should ensure active participation from a diversity of people of different genders, ages, physical abilities, income levels, and education backgrounds.

Stakeholder mapping should be carried out at the start of the process and can be added continuously as more stakeholders are identified. When mapping the broader range of stakeholders, ask yourself:

- ✓ Who else influences, or is influenced by, urban development in the town?
- ✓ Who creates change?
- ✓ Who is affected by the changes proposed?

Effective leadership is built by identifying institutions and individuals responsible for specific activities and capable of legitimately representing their constituencies. Conducting stakeholder mapping and analysis is essential for achieving this and creating a strong, inclusive planning process.

HOW SHOULD YOU ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS?

Much will depend on your scenario and the diversity of stakeholders, but four principles of engagement should be applied.

- **Engage early:** Involve stakeholders from the start to ensure you find common ground as your solution(s) develop
- **Use a variety of engagement methods:** Ranging from working group meetings, public meetings, exhibitions, workshops, street stalls, coffee mornings, one-on-one discussions, focus groups, and site visits

TIP *Finding venues for public meetings can be challenging. Make sure you locate possible community centres or, depending on the anticipated size of your meeting, alternative venues such as a friendly local (out-of-opening-hours) cafe or church hall. In warmer months consider meeting outside*

- **Walk the area:** Nothing is more effective in sparking interest and creativity than getting on the ground and walking and talking - interacting with stakeholders, everyone living in a neighbourhood and listening to different views
- **Communicate openly and responsively:** Share information, listen to feedback, and respond to questions. Learn from professionals wherever you can, ask government agencies about their vision, and bring issues into broader discussions

GET INSPIRED

INCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS FROM LAGODEKHI AND CHOKHATAURI: COMMUNITY SUCCESS STORIES

Inclusive solutions from Lagodekhi and Chokhatauri: community success stories Good urban planning and management is shaped by responding to the needs and aspirations of everyone. This demands listening to the voices and looking through the eyes of those who are all too often unheard and unseen: women and girls, people with disabilities, children, and those in poverty. Cities work best, and are most successful, when their built environment (e.g., public buildings, streets, recreational spaces, tourism facilities) and access to the services (e.g., health, education, social services) are inclusive. Inclusive Design can help all people experience their cities in a fair and equal way by creating safe and accessible environments and services for everybody.

In 2022, a disability rights activist from Lagodekhi — himself a wheelchair user — took a bold step to transform his community. Having long advocated on his own for the rights of persons with disabilities, in collaboration with the Regional Development Center, he launched an advocacy campaign within the framework of the Cooperation for Local Development to bring the community together around shared challenges and to find collective, sustainable solutions.

Inspired by this spirit of cooperation, the activist united residents who had long faced the challenges of an unadapted environment. Wheelchair users were unable to enter the City Hall building, and there were no designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities — daily obstacles that limited their participation and independence. Through the project, people with and without disabilities joined forces to advocate for change. Their collective effort paid



Community leader in Lagodekhi municipality highlights the importance of adapted infrastructure, Guram Gogoladz, Facebook

off: Lagodekhi City Hall now has an accessible entrance, dedicated parking spaces for persons with disabilities have been provided, and new municipal transport purchased by the City Hall is fully accessible.

In Chokhatauri a group of women - many of them mothers of children with disabilities - decided to reimagine their daily care work as a source of empowerment and independence. Supported by international partners, these women took part in a unique initiative designed to help them identify their own priorities and opportunities.

Women were trained to lead focus group discussions – inviting other mothers from nearby settlements to share experiences, challenges, and dreams – and forging a shared vision to turn home-based skills and care work into small-scale businesses that could bring both income and dignity. Inspired, Chokhatauri municipality allocated 30,000 GEL in 2025 to support women-led microbusinesses and start-ups.

Listening, learning, and acting together can turn individual stories into systemic change. A small step – empowering women to voice their needs and ideas – can evolve into a local policy that strengthens the entire community.

► **FOR MORE INCLUSIVE INSPIRATION:**
Safe Way to School in Batumi –
When Streets Become Classrooms in Motion
(see page 41)

HOW SHOULD YOU COMMUNICATE WITH STAKEHOLDERS?

Communication and information sharing are essential for **building trust**, keeping stakeholders informed, involving them in the process, and motivating participation.

Communication planning means creating a simple strategy that considers all possible channels. While social media can be useful, sometimes traditional methods – like community notice boards – are more effective. You can use a **variety of engagement methods** to communicate. But think back to your stakeholder map: different stakeholders may require different methods and purposes of communication.



Mobility Assessment Event, Regional Development Center

To plan communication effectively, ask yourself:

- ✓ **Who needs to be communicated with?**
Use your stakeholder map as a guide.
- ✓ **What is the purpose of communication with each stakeholder?**
- ✓ **What are the best ways to communicate?**
Consider both civic actors and government entities. Who should be contacted, and which channels should be used? How will messages be distributed?
- ✓ **How can two-way communication be ensured?** Remember, communication is about both talking and listening.
- ✓ **When should communication activities take place?** Plan timing carefully for maximum participation.
- ✓ **Who is responsible for each communication task?** Assign clear roles to ensure accountability.

HOW SHOULD THE PROCESS BE PLANNED?

Regardless of your scenario, planning the process will allow you to see the bigger picture on how you can achieve your ambitions – whether this is a vision and action plan for your neighbourhood, planting of trees along your street or developing a letter of petition to the municipality. A straightforward workplan is a road map for how to achieve results with strong local ownership, and in-line with the time and finance you have. As the project evolves, you can revisit the workplan, to track progress and revise the steps to follow.

TIP

Invite a communication specialist to be part of the planning team. The media is always an important external stakeholder.

Walk through Evaluation for Cleaning Campaign in Telavi, Georgia, Regional Development Center



Maps help communities to understand and visualize, Green Alternative



STEP 2

ANALYSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

Before proposing priorities and solutions, it is essential to understand the context in which they will take place. A **situation analysis** is a valuable opportunity to:

- Understand the current opportunities, challenges, and their underlying causes – how did your city, neighbourhood, priority issue get to where it is today?
- Build a shared knowledge base among all participants
- Engage stakeholders, including local businesses, NGOs, academia, community members, CBOs, local government representatives, and other public agencies
- Open broader discussions and include diverse perspectives from different groups
- Make decisions and set priorities based on evidence and information gathered

Analysis should always be holistic, although its scale may vary depending on purpose:

- **City-wide vision:** requires a broad, comprehensive analysis
- **Neighbourhood project:** may have a narrower focus, and benefit from specific 'on-the-ground' observation and analysis
- **Sector-specific projects** (e.g., water management): analyse the sector and areas such as land use, waste management, and housing

- **Specific or thematic actions** (e.g., air quality, vandalism, stray animals): focus on targeted issues with concrete, actionable measures

Participation of residents, experts, and other stakeholders helps identify the most important issues in the local context. Rather than trying to cover everything, focus on the priority urban sustainability issues for detailed discussion and always prioritise getting 'on-the-ground', observing and understanding the reality of your issue and locality.

COLLECTING, COLLATING, AND UNDERSTANDING DATA

Fact-finding is key to understanding local urban challenges and opportunities and preparing for the identification and development of your solutions. Data refers to the range of information that you can gather and there are a wide range of methods for collecting it.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE COLLECTING DATA

- What data is needed, and how will it be used? Be selective and only collect the data you need
- What data is already available, and how reliable is it?
- What additional data needs to be collected, and what methods are best (considering time, human resources and budget)?
- Are there stakeholders or experts who know of less obvious or unpublished data sources?

SELECTING THE BEST METHODS FOR KNOWLEDGE AND DATA COLLECTION

<p>MAPPING INFO NEEDS</p>	<p>COLLECT SECONDARY DATA</p>	<p>COLLECT PRIMARY DATA</p>
<p>Create a simple overview of what information you need, what is available, and how you can collect it</p>	<p>Identify potential sources of secondary data (e.g. studies and reports on your issue)</p>	<p>Collect qualitative and quantitative data through the tools below and the design of simple questionnaire surveys</p>
<p>SWOT/C ANALYSIS</p>	<p>WALK AND TALK / FIELD OBSERVATION</p>	<p>PHOTO SURVEY</p>
<p>Make a simple SWOT/C involving different stakeholders - it is possible to quickly summarise the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for your city or in relation to the issue you are addressing</p>	<p>Get an overview of an area or to assess a specific issue and understand different perspectives - the walk should include informed community members and if possible, people with technical skills relevant to your priorities</p> <p>Spending time on site is important. Reality is often different from maps and reports. Use field visits frequently to understand how a place is being used and by whom</p>	<p>A picture says a thousand words and a photo survey creates a good basis for dialogue with your community on what they like and don't like, and what areas they see for improvement – you could ask local youth groups to contribute by taking photos</p>
<p>FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS</p>	<p>COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS</p>	<p>PARTICIPATORY MAPPING</p>
<p>Conversations where a group of people are asked about opinions in relation to a specific topic can be used to generate detailed knowledge about a target groups needs and priorities, or to get input to the design of a solution</p>	<p>There are many ways of involving stakeholders and communities in discussing challenges and opportunities – at markets, via street stalls or a mobile 'give us your thoughts' board</p>	<p>OpenStreetMap emphasise local knowledge, is driven by a community of users, and is free to use for any purpose – it can be used to maintain data on a wide range of infrastructure and services</p> <p>Geographical Information System (GIS) is a software for capturing, manging and sharing geographically referenced data and understanding your challenges – and free versions such as QGIS can provide a good way of visualising your data</p>

FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING URBAN AREAS

If your scenario involves the development of a city or neighbourhood solution, you can adopt a broader framework to understand the current situation, challenges and trends of sustainability issues and the relationships between them (Chapter 2):

SOCIO-CULTURAL

(e.g., demographics, social cohesion, cultural practices, community dynamics, gender equality and safety)

Population size & growth	Poverty	Education levels	Culture & Traditions	Gender Equality	Health	Urban Safety
Life Quality	Justice	Rights	Social Inclusion	Migration	Immigration	Urban-rural Linkages

ENVIRONMENTAL

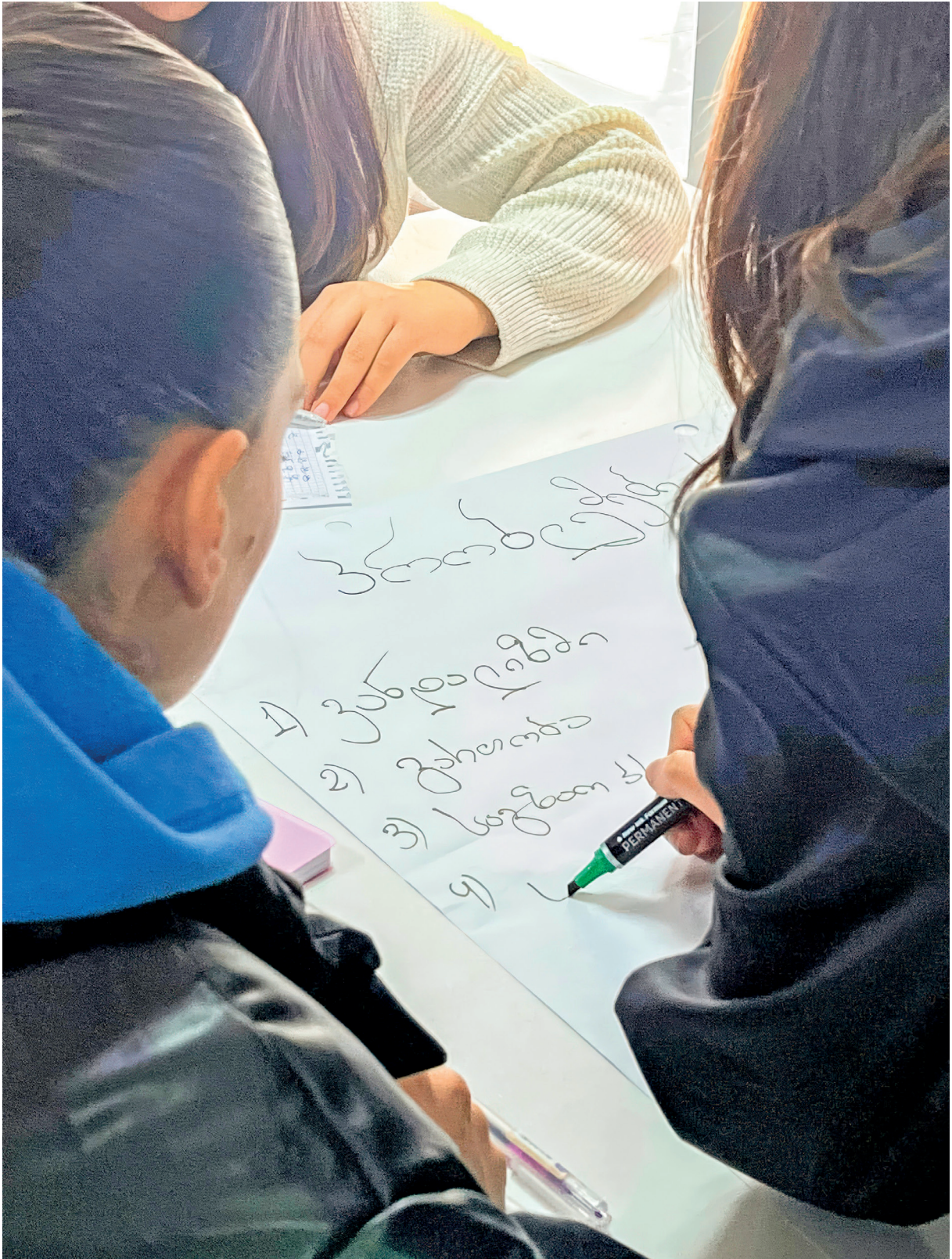
(e.g., green spaces, air and water quality, biodiversity, and climate resilience)

Water Resources	Air	Soil	Urban Greenery & Forests	Mountains	Natural Hazards & Risks	Emissions
Contamination & Pollution	Climate Change					

ECONOMIC

(e.g., employment, income, local businesses, and economic opportunities)

Key aspects/drivers of urban economy	Local Economic Development	Consumption & Production	Economic Growth	Employment	Informality
Tourism	Sources of Revenue	Livelihoods	Local Government Budget & Expenditures		



NOW USE YOUR DATA TO PLAN

Whatever the scale of your scenario you can now use the data collected to:

- Understand the existing situation
- Identify key sustainability issues
- Develop a shared vision for the way forward
- Determine your priorities based on evidence
- Ensure your proposed solution(s) address real, evidence-based needs

ANALYSIS WORKFLOW












- Information, data, and knowledge gathering (surveys, interviews, workshops, maps)
- Analysis and discussion (of challenges, opportunities, trends, causes, sector links)
- Concluding your key local urban sustainability issues
- Disseminating the results to stakeholders

KEY REMINDERS FOR CIVIC ACTORS

- Engage with all stakeholders to ensure their views and priorities are heard, selecting the most appropriate methods to achieve this (How should you engage stakeholders?)
- Use **disaggregated data** (i.e., gender, age, income, etc.) to make informed decisions rather than relying on generic assumptions
- **Communicate findings** back to stakeholders to maintain transparency, trust, and ownership

Urban (system) issues

Water Supply	Water Use	Rainwater Harvesting	Sanitation & Sewerage
Wastewater Treatment	Flood Protection	Drainage	Mobility Needs
Cycling & Walking	Public Transport	Private Transport	Parking
Freight	Waste Generation	Reduce Reuse Recycle	Waste Collection
Waste Disposal	Hazardous Waste	Types of Housing	Affordable Housing
Housing Market	Availability of Public Space	Safety	Placemaking
Recreational Opportunities	Parks	Public Facilities	Urban Greening
Urban Agriculture	Urban Design	Green Area Ratio	Landmarks
Heritage	Street Lighting	Commercial Services	Industrial Areas
Education & Health Facilities	Sports Facilities	Cultural Facilities	Energy Production
Energy Distribution	Energy Use	Internet Access	Mobile Use
Online Services	Visions & Strategies	Policy & Plans	Roles & Mandates
Urban Management	Urban Planning	Laws & Bylaws	Accountability & Transparency
Public Participation	Urban Form	Land Use Patterns	Growth Patterns
Urban Rural Linkages	Regional Connections	Topography	Urban Density

	Water		Land use
	Mobility		Energy
	Waste		Information and Communications Technology
	Housing		Urban policy, plans and management
	Public Space		Spatial Dimensions
	Urban Form and Architecture		



STEP 3

SET A VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Setting **vision, goals, and objectives** is your way of agreeing with stakeholders on a desired future for your community, whether that is addressing a specific challenge or a broader suite of problems and at the scale you are addressing (from city to neighbourhood).

Clear and well-formulated goals and objectives will help guide your planning and solution development in an inclusive and effective way. It is an approach that can be applied to all scenarios, with smaller-scale solutions simplifying the levels of planning.

LEVELS OF PLANNING

- **Vision:** Is an imagined desired future – where do you see your city, neighbourhood or issue in the future (in 20, 10 or 5 years)?
- **Goals:** Are the main ways you intend of moving toward the vision in the medium term
- **Objectives:** Are short-term concrete, measurable actions that put your goals into action and help you achieve your vision

DEVELOPING A SHARED VISION

From your data collection and analysis, you now have new insights into the community sustainability challenges and opportunities and can use this as the basis for a discussion on the future direction for your city or neighbourhood.

A **vision statement** captures the big picture of the future you want to create. Remember:

- A vision is more than a dream - it is a guiding statement and direction for long-term development that is realistic and achievable

- It provides an aspiration and motivates stakeholders, communities, and leaders to work toward it
- It should be rooted in the priorities identified during your stakeholder engagement and analysis phases

By actively involving your community and stakeholders in shaping the vision, you ensure it reflects local needs, values, and aspirations. This shared vision becomes the foundation for setting goals and objectives that guide your solutions, while providing clear, agreed-upon ideas for decision-makers.

SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives provide an actionable structure for your vision. It records how your vision will be achieved.

- **Goals** should be **clear, strategic, and inclusive**, and for city/neighbourhood visions and action plans covering areas important to different groups (e.g., housing, mobility, green space, youth opportunities)
- **Objectives** should be **concrete, measurable, and time-bound**, enabling progress to be monitored and evaluated

Each objective should include:

- ✓ **An indicator:** How will you know if this objective has been achieved? Your indicators are forged from how sustainability is interpreted from a local perspective
- ✓ **A target:** By when should this objective be achieved, and to what extent?
- ✓ **A baseline:** What is the current situation, so that progress can be measured?

Write objectives in a way that:

- ✓ Allows for multiple solutions to emerge
- ✓ Reflects the needs of different community groups (e.g., women, men, youth, marginalized voices)
- ✓ Builds consensus and ownership across stakeholders



STEP 4

DEVELOP INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

Integrated solutions are achieved through a combination of measures and contributions from multiple stakeholders. This broader, more holistic, approach is more likely to provide a more innovative approach, a bigger impact and make it possible to leverage resources more effectively through collective action.

Remember the key ingredients of a truly integrated solution:

- **Think beyond single measures:** Strong solutions often combine several complementary measures that reinforce each other
- **Adopt an integrated approach to solution development:** Look for solutions that connect across different needs, and perspectives, while also considering short-, medium-, and long-term horizons
- **Foster cooperation:** Bring together stakeholders from different sectors and levels so they can contribute their expertise and play active roles in the process
- **Be inclusive:** Design solutions that meet the needs of diverse groups and ensure end users and those that stand to benefit are directly involved in shaping them
- **Explore alternatives:** Consider different ways of reaching project goals. Comparing options helps identify the most effective and appropriate approach
- **Weigh pros and cons:** Use assessment tools

to evaluate whether options are realistic, feasible, sustainable, and appropriate

- **Stay realistic:** Ambitious plans are valuable, but only if they can be implemented and sustained

INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

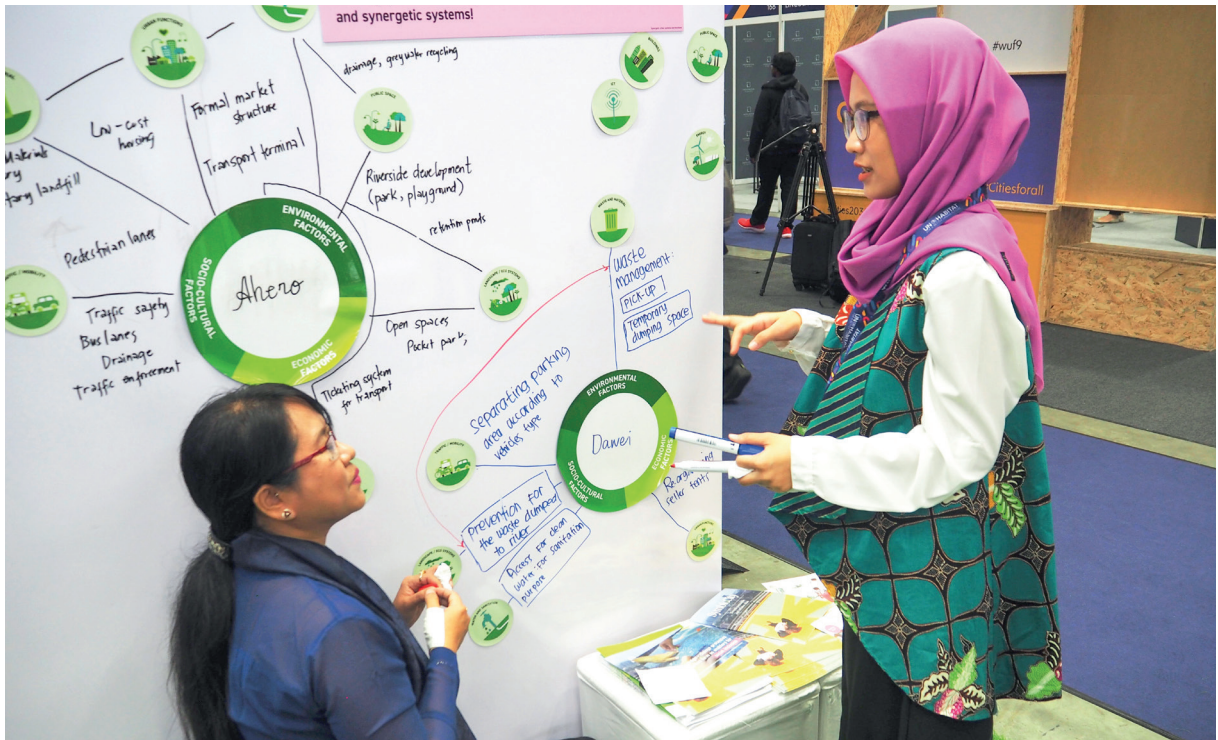
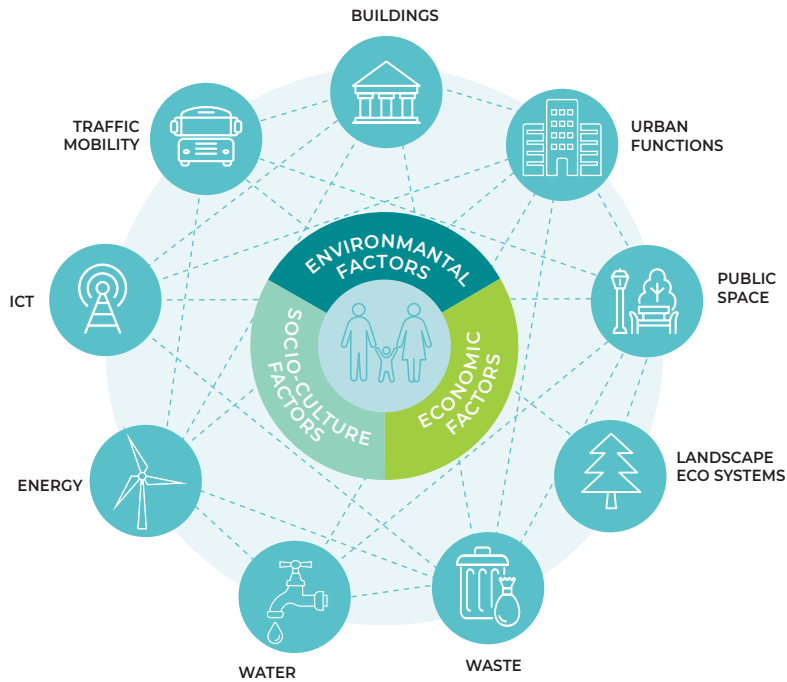
PROVIDE MORE FOR LESS

An integrated solution is your response to the priority challenges in your city that promote sustainable development.

As the scenarios suggest – this could be the formulation of a vision and action plan for your city or neighbourhood, the development of a new public open space or an improvement to an existing one, the implementation of a new pedestrian crossing to improve road safety or the planting of trees. It can be a physical (structural) solution or non-physical (support for the homeless, clean-up campaigns, walking and cycling tours to bring citizens together).

Wherever possible, solutions should be ‘integrated’ – combining a suitable number of measures, addressing interrelated challenges and optimising the impact and the tangible improvements in your city. Integrated solutions are often more cost-effective and sustainable – yielding more from less!

Integrated solutions provide more for less



World Urban Forum 2018, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

Instead of quickly settling on a single choice, take time to explore possible alternatives, weighing up how effectively different options meet your objectives and indicators. There are almost always options beyond large-scale, costly, long-term interventions. Considering alternatives early in the planning process helps you identify solutions that may be more practical, affordable, and achievable in the short term – while still contributing to long-term sustainable urban development.

This does not mean that step-by-step or lower-cost solutions are always better. Every option should be evaluated by comparing its costs and benefits over the short, medium, and long term. For example, you might weigh the immediate impact of small, low-cost improvements against more expensive, long-term interventions that could ultimately provide greater sustainability.

DESIGN TOGETHER

Involve local citizens, leaders, neighbours, experts, and other stakeholders in co-creating solutions. Joint design workshops or **placemaking exercises** are effective ways to combine knowledge, build ownership, and ensure that solutions reflect the needs and ideas of the community. In this way, solutions are more likely to be sustainable in the longer-term.

CONSIDER INCREMENTAL APPROACHES

An incremental approach focuses on smaller, immediate steps that gradually build toward a larger solution and impact over time. The advantages include:

- **Reduced risk:** Smaller steps mean fewer chances for big mistakes
- **Lower initial costs:** Easier to start with available resources
- **Visible progress:** Stakeholders can see

CONSIDER YOUR BUDGET

Start thinking about money early – it is critical for implementation and being realistic about how much your solution will cost, and the potential sources of funding, will give you an initial understanding of whether it is feasible.

results quickly, which builds motivation and trust

- **Flexibility:** Each step can be evaluated and adjusted as needed to avoid negative impacts

This approach allows the community to celebrate small wins along the way while moving steadily toward longer-term goals.

KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- **Identify funding opportunities:** Explore potential sources of support from local government, donors, businesses, or community contributions
- **Break solutions into components:** Consider whether there are quick relatively low-cost components that could be actioned immediately, and components that would take longer to implement and are higher in cost - link each component to a cost and a possible funding source
- **Consider the possibility of ‘unexpected’ expenditure:** Your solution may take longer to implement and maintain than anticipated and building a contingency into your budget is sensible
- **Be transparent:** Share budget information with stakeholders to build trust, encourage accountability, and allow everyone to take part in decision-making

Early discussions about costs make planning more realistic, inclusive, and sustainable.



STEP 5

ASSESS BENEFITS AND IMPACTS

Assessing benefits and impacts is an important part of the solution design process. When considering different solutions, it is essential to assess both the **positive and negative social, environmental, and economic impacts** of each option. By doing this **continuously throughout the process**, you can identify potential risks early on and adjust the solution design accordingly.

Ask whether your solution:

- ✓ Reaches the goal and objectives
- ✓ Is inclusive and works for different groups of people
- ✓ Delivers the maximum positive benefits
- ✓ Has the least possible negative impacts
- ✓ Addresses the root problems identified in the analysis, not just the symptoms
- ✓ Is feasible and realistic in terms of risks, implementation, budget, political will, and other resources required

TEST YOUR PROPOSED SOLUTION

Once you have a working version of the proposed solution, carefully analyse and test it before moving forward. Ask yourself and your stakeholders:

- What are the likely consequences of implementing this solution?
- Do all stakeholders benefit in some way?
- How acceptable is the chosen path to the different groups involved (and make sure you have carefully considered the



► Youth-led Problem Analysis in Telavi municipality, Regional Development Center

perspective and needs of vulnerable groups)?

- Which options are the most effective?
- Could adjustments in solution design improve sustainability?
- Are the interests of actors with different needs and perspectives fairly considered?
- Do you have clear and convincing reasons for choosing this solution, even if it is not perfect?
- Could this solution create new tensions or conflicts between groups with competing interests?
- What social, economic, and environmental benefits will it bring?
- How well does the solution respond to the community's diverse needs and opportunities?

The answers to these questions should come directly from stakeholders themselves. Their feedback strengthens the solution, makes it more inclusive, and ensures alignment with community priorities.



Cooperation Declaration Signature Ceremony amongst Civic Actors, Media and Local Authorities in Telavi, Regional Development Center

ENSURE AN INCLUSIVE DESIGN PROCESS

As civic actors, it is important to invite stakeholders and target groups to discuss the expected impacts of the proposed solution. Their input ensures that solutions are fair, practical, and relevant.

When checking whether your solution works for everyone, consider five key questions:

- Is it affordable? Can people afford to access the benefits of the solution? What is affordable may vary between groups and even within the same group
- Is it accessible? Are the results of your solution accessible in the places where people live, work, or gather? Is it physically accessible to different user groups, including those with disabilities?
- Is it available? Are the solution results available in the right quantity and quality, and at the time people need them? Remember that different groups may use or need services at different times
- Is it acceptable? Is the solution socially acceptable to the target groups? If not, people may reject or avoid them. Safety and

security are especially important factors for women, youth, and other vulnerable groups

- Is it feasible? Is there sufficient funding and time to implement and sustain the solution, and is it practically feasible (i.e., there is land available of the solution, the necessary permits and backing will be achievable) (Tool: Solution Stress Test)

MANAGE RISKS AND MINIMISE NEGATIVE IMPACTS

As solution design moves to implementation (step 6), some solutions may need a more detailed risk assessment to identify risks, their likelihood and their impact, and ways to mitigate these risks.

ALWAYS REMEMBER

Women and men, people of different ages, abilities, incomes, and education levels often have different needs. Taking these differences into account will make your solution more inclusive, fair, and sustainable.



STEP 6

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

It is now time to **turn your solution into action**. With a strong implementation approach (an action plan for implementing), your solution is more likely to succeed and deliver real, tangible change for the community.

Many solutions fail not because the ideas are bad, but because there was no clear approach for implementation. This is why you should consider implementation **from the very beginning** in identifying and designing your solution.

It is critical that your implementation approach clearly identifies who will do the implementing, and this may require more than one actor to do so. Your implementation approach needs to be clear on who does what and when.

TOP TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

As you move to implementation, remember the three guiding principles for locally led sustainable development: **lead, cooperate, and influence**. These are key for civic actors like you achieving meaningful change and ensuring successful solution delivery.

Implementation requires **careful planning and coordination**. It may be helpful to revisit Step 1 (Organise the Process) and adapt your **organizational set-up**, stakeholder involvement, and communication strategy for this phase. Your workplan can now be expanded into a detailed **implementation plan** to keep activities on track. Your plan must include not only how your solution will be delivered but even more importantly in the case of physical solutions how it will be sustained through operation and maintenance.

TOP TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION:

- ✓ Keep your partnership approach strong
- ✓ Write short, simple progress reports
- ✓ Share progress openly with stakeholders
- ✓ Continuously review, evaluate and adjust your approach (this includes budgets, indicators, schedules, resources)
- ✓ Treat mistakes as learning opportunities
- ✓ Meet regularly as an implementation team
- ✓ Clarify roles, responsibilities, and accountability
- ✓ Address communication challenges and conflicts early
- ✓ Stay focused on results
- ✓ Keep reminding stakeholders of the shared vision

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

An implementation plan brings together all your hard work to date: it should be concise, clear, easy to understand and convincing. It serves as the roadmap during implementation. In many cases, there may already be agreed formats to follow or you can adapt a generic template to your needs. You do not have to wait until Step 6 to develop your plan and it will be more efficient if you develop it continuously throughout the process.

Wherever possible your implementation plan should consider and complement initiatives by others – the municipality, other government agencies and international development partners.

Make sure the implementation plan is shared with your stakeholders for agreement and where necessary revision. By engaging stakeholders from the start you should already have built a sense of ownership making this process straightforward. Remember **influential champions** can help build support and move decisions forward.

FUNDRAISING AND IDENTIFYING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

It is now time to do the hard work in raising finance to implement your solution. Your approach to financing will likely require both fundraising – which will demonstrate support for your solution – and identifying more traditional funding opportunities.

Most solutions will need funding for:

- Project preparation
- Implementation
- Operations and maintenance (for physical solutions)

Consider potential funding sources early in the design stage. Funding may come from:

- Community donations and crowdfunding – the transparency of crowdfunding may attract donations as you work towards hitting a fundraising target

ALWAYS CHECK

Timelines and procedures for accessing funds, as they vary widely by source.

- Private sector contributions – improvements to the built environment can attract contributions from local businesses
- Philanthropic giving – from funds and individuals
- Revenue generating uses – some solutions may include opportunities to raise some revenue (i.e., membership fees, entry fees, concessions in public open spaces)
- Donor funding – from international development actors with compatible activities and programmes
- Municipal budgets – some financing may come from your municipality



Neighbours in Telavi municipality discuss tactical solutions for waste management, Regional Development Centre

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Maintaining open dialogue with stakeholders and community members is **essential during implementation**. Update your stakeholder map and communication plan to reflect the needs of this phase.

Consider preparing a simplified **popular version** of the solution report – written in clear, simple language and supported with visuals or as an eye-catching poster or a locally produced video for social media channels – so it is accessible and engaging for residents.

Remember: a lack of communication can lead to **mistrust, resistance, and even turn public opinion against the project**.

COMMUNICATING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS

For most solutions your municipality will be a significant stakeholder and positively engaging and communicating throughout the solution development process is important. Depending on your solution other public organisations will also be important stakeholders. Remember, public authorities may be significant in determining the implementation of your solution.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To stay on track and deliver quality results, build **monitoring and evaluation (M&E)** into your solution.

- ✓ Monitoring ensures activities are implemented as planned
- ✓ It supports decision-making and continuous learning
- ✓ It demonstrates accountability for resources used and results achieved

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Many solutions lose impact after implementation because operations and maintenance (or 'O&M') are not properly planned and financed. Most critically an effective O&M plan sets out clearly the responsibilities for who does what and when, and how the O&M will be financed. Remember: results are only sustainable if there is a clear management plan.

Your plan will need to clarify:

- ✓ Who owns the solution (whether this is a public open space, public toilet or trees)?
- ✓ Who will be responsible for O&M (a community-based organisation, the municipality, another public agency or the private sector, or a blend of these)? As covered in Chapter 2 the management of cities involves many actors and correctly identifying who is responsible is a vital first step
- ✓ Has the arrangement been agreed, and does it need legal ratification?
- ✓ How will the O&M be financed, and is this sustainable in the longer-term?
- ✓ Are there sufficient skills and person-power available to carry out O&M tasks?

If your solution is under citizen ownership, joint procedures for its ongoing care and management should be developed. If the responsibility lies with the municipality, it is essential to engage the relevant authorities and communicate to the community the importance of holding the local government accountable for maintaining results.

TIP

Communication with local stakeholders is a continuous process. It does not end once the solution is implemented.

GETTING YOUR O&M ARRANGEMENTS RIGHT

When your solution involves construction of a physical asset, your approach to O&M should take care of legal matters such as legal status, ownership, and liabilities. You need to establish what the legal status is, or will be, and whether it is under public or private ownership (see Fact Checking tool page 102).

If your asset is or will be under private ownership, there are three practical options:

- The asset belongs to the registered condominium, community organisation or cooperative and new asset(s) are included in the balance sheet of the organisation/union and the maintenance costs must be reflected in the budget/ list of expenditure of that organisation
- The asset is in shared ownership and an official agreement is concluded between the owners and includes specific provisions on the use, maintenance, financing, income sharing and transfer/liquidation of the asset

- The asset belongs to an individual and agreements are signed between the civic actors that will show intent from the owner on the development and operation of the asset and regulate its use, maintenance, and cost coverage

If your Fact Checking verifies the asset (including land) is under central or local government ownership any operation needs prior official concept approval by the respective public body (the city hall or the Agency for State Property Management).

After construction of the asset, it is transferred to the relevant public body and the Act of Transfer must be concluded between the sides. Once transferred the public body is responsible for its maintenance and operation.

The Act of Transfer may establish conditions for its use (e.g., free of user charges for infants and/or persons with disabilities).



DISSEMINATING RESULTS

Once you have gone through the process and achieved tangible results, it is essential to share your experience. Disseminating results supports both the sustainability of your work and the empowerment and education of the wider community.

Sharing your results:

- **Strengthens** the relationships and partnerships built during the process
- **Encourages** new allies and partners to join your efforts
- **Expands** your cooperation network and builds momentum for future initiatives
- **Promotes** learning and adaptation, allowing others to replicate or improve upon your methods
- **Inspires** other civic actors to get involved in their cities and communities by showcasing innovative, inclusive, and sustainable solutions – creating meaningful and lasting urban change
- **Popularizes** champions of inclusive urban development and planning

HOW TO DISSEMINATE YOUR RESULTS

You can use a variety of methods and communication channels to share what you have achieved. **Consider:**

- **Using social media** – Share updates, photos, and key insights on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn
- **Engaging local media** – Write articles or give interviews to local newspapers, radio, or TV

◀ *Zubalashvili street evaluation within GIZ project Connect Georgia, Love to Ride Batumi*

- **Using existing networks and forums** – Present your work through civic platforms, professional associations, or community forums
- **Collaborating with international partners** – Join webinars, conferences, or exhibitions to showcase your experience to a wider audience
- **Organizing walking lectures or study visits** – Invite students, local officials, or community groups to observe results firsthand
- **Reaching out to universities and schools** – Present case studies to inspire students and integrate lessons into academic programs
- **Finding local champions and ambassadors** – Identify respected community leaders during your SymbioCity journey who can help promote and sustain your success story
- **Contributing to national or regional platforms** – Share your experience through Georgian urban development networks and forums

A FINAL THOUGHT

The SymbioCity process will enrich you with new insights and knowledge, expand your networks, and help you connect with like-minded individuals: it provides an excellent instrument for disseminating new ideas and knowledge

Therefore, spread this approach and expand your circle of allies – doing so will strengthen your capacity to influence policy and effect meaningful change.

05

USEFUL TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

There are a wide range of tools that will help you apply the SymbioCity approach. An overview of tools is shown in the table below, with a **sample of the most used tools** presented in a format that provides a brief overview and guiding notes to what, why, who, when and the materials need. You can access the most useful SymbioCity tools through the SymbioCity webpage. Links to additional practical resource material are also provided where you can access ideas, applications and templates.

You can **select and adapt the tools** that are most useful to your SymbioCity journey. Although the tools listed are grouped by step, some tools can be used at different steps and according to your needs. The table indicates 'thumbs up' where tools are useful in the scenarios and where you can find the tool.

STEP 1

ORGANISE THE PROCESS



SymbioCity steps	Available Tools	Scenario			Where to find
		1	2	3	
STEP 1 Organise the process	Workplan	✓	✓	✓	This Toolkit
	Kick-Start Dialogue	✓	✓	✓	This Toolkit
	Stakeholder Analysis (Mapping)	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Mind Mapping	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Communication Plan	✓	✓	✓	SymbioCity Planning Our Towns



STEP 2

ANALYSE THE CURRENT SITUATION



SymbioCity steps	Available Tools	Scenario			Where to find
		1	2	3	
STEP 2 Analyse the current situation	SWOT/C Analysis	✓	✓	✓	This Toolkit
	Data Mapping	✓	✓		The SymbioCity Approach
	Walk and Talk	✓	✓	✓	This Toolkit
	Explore Your Neighbourhood (Photo Survey)	✓	✓	✓	Planning Our Towns - A Toolkit for Inclusive Urban Development in Kenya
	You Map (OpenStreetMap)	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	You (E)Vote	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Mobility Mapping and Visioning	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Problem Tree	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Neighbourhood Safety Survey  	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Public Space Analysis		✓		This Toolkit
	Mapping Urban Flows and Relations				SymbioCity Tools and Methods
	Harvest Mapping (Mapping Local Resources)				SymbioCity Tools and Methods
	Heritage Mapping		✓		Implementing Agenda 2030 - Through SymbioCity
Climate Lens (Mapping Risk) 				This Toolkit	

◀ *Walk through analysis for Walkability Concept in Batumi's Old Neighborhood, Love to Ride Batumi*

STEP 3

SET A VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES




SymbioCity steps	Available Tools	Scenario			Where to find
		1	2	3	
STEP 3 Set a vision, goals and objectives	Want / Don't Want (Grid) Analysis	✓			This Toolkit
	Fact Checking	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Your Vision	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Dream Wall				SymbioCity Tools & Methods
	Drawing Workshop		✓	✓	SymbioCity Tools & Methods
	Local Definition of Sustainability	✓	✓		SymbioCity Tools & Methods. Planning Our Towns – A Toolkit for Inclusive Urban Development in Kenya

STEP 4

DEVELOP INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS




SymbioCity steps	Available Tools	Scenario			Where to find
		1	2	3	
STEP 4 Develop integrated solutions	Solutions Matrix	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Placemaking Design		✓		This Toolkit – See SymbioCity Placemaking Guide
	Integrated Solutions	✓	✓		SymbioCity Tools & Methods
	What Helps / Doesn't Help?	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Scenario Planning and Trends Analysis	✓	✓		SymbioCity Tools & Methods
	Through Her Eyes	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Solution Stress Test 			✓	This Toolkit

STEP 5

ASSESS BENEFITS AND IMPACTS



SymbioCity steps	Available Tools	Scenario			Where to find
		1	2	3	
STEP 5 Assess benefits and impacts	Impact Radar ('Sustainability Rose')	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Impact Checklist		✓		This Toolkit
	Child Impact Assessment 	✓	✓		This Toolkit

STEP 6

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION



SymbioCity steps	Available Tools	Scenario			Where to find
		1	2	3	
STEP 6 Plan for implementation	Decision Tree	✓			This Toolkit
	Action Plan	✓			SymbioCity Tools and Methods
	Writing Solution Proposals	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Local Financing	✓	✓		This Toolkit
	Implementation & Maintenance Strategy		✓	✓	SymbioCity Tools and Methods – SymbioCity Approach
	Evaluation and Monitoring: Communicating Achievement		✓	✓	SymbioCity Tools and Methods – SymbioCity Approach

► *Bicycle parking installed for Batumi 18th Public School, Love to Ride Batumi*

WORKPLAN



WHAT?

A workplan can be done simply by adapting and using a template that lists tasks, responsibilities, timelines, what will be delivered, notes, and status. Keep it brief and revise and update it as you proceed. It will help you keep your work on track and monitor how you are doing.



WHY?

Good organisation involves clarifying roles and responsibilities, planning, scheduling and managing your activities. This saves time, fosters transparency and predictability, and enables people to cooperate and achieve their objectives.



WHO?

The development of a workplan will depend on your circumstances and who has initiated your activities. Workplan development will be led by a leading and planning team where it has been established.



WHEN?

A workplan is best developed at the start of your SymbioCity process and updated as you proceed.



MATERIALS?

The workplan is best developed on a computer to allow regular review and updating. Where this is not possible you can create it on a large piece of paper and use post-it notes to record and update the information as your initiative proceeds.

OVERVIEW

A workplan specifies activities, who is responsible, what you are seeking to achieve and the time frames and/or deadlines for your activities.

METHOD

- 1 **Develop a simple workplan framework** that allows you to record what you need to do, who is responsible, your timescale and whether there is something that will be produced (i.e., a draft petition, a list of stakeholders, a note of your meetings). Do provide a space for you to add notes and comments. A simple status column allows you to track what has been achieved, activities underway and pending.
- 2 **Make an initial workplan** by filling out the framework.
- 3 **Continually review the workplan** as your initiative proceeds, updating it as necessary.

GUIDING NOTES

A simple format can be adopted as illustrated on the right, preferably in an Excel file.



EXAMPLE OF A WORKPLAN

BIKE-TO-SCHOOL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN | GOAL: ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO CYCLE SAFELY TO SCHOOL

Task	What do we need to do?	Who will do it?	When will it happen?	What will be delivered?	Notes	Status
1	Survey students' travel habits	School civic club & volunteers	Week 1	Simple report	Google forms Face-to-face meeting Focus group	● ● ●
2	Identify safe bike routes	Civic actor + city transport dept./LLP/LTD	Week 2	Map of safe routes	Use OpenStreet Map	●
3	Design campaign materials	Graphic volunteer or partner NGO	Week 3	Posters, social posts	Keep messages fun & visual	●
4	Organize Bike to School Day	School students, civic club, local cycling NGO & parents	Week 4	Public face-to-face event	Coordinate with police for safety	●
5	Collect Feedback	School students, civic club, local cycling NGO & parents	Week 5	Feedback report for M&E	Use for next campaign	●

● = completed ● = pending/in progress ● = not yet completed/planned

Youth-led Problem Analysis, Telavi, Georgia, Regional Development Center



STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

(MAPPING)



WHAT?

Stakeholder Analysis is a tool to understand the role of government, civil society, and other actors who are involved in urban development processes.



WHY?

It is important to develop an understanding of who can both contribute to and be impacted by a solution, which is critical for guiding the prioritization of locally driven issues and ensuring your solution remains relevant.



WHO?

Mainly applicable to those involved in or familiar with the SymbioCity matter to be assessed. Do include both women and men.



WHEN?

Use this tool to identify stakeholders when you start your work but you can update it continuously as new stakeholders are identified.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ A1 sheet
- ✓ Different coloured post-it notes
- ✓ Pen/pencil

OVERVIEW

Sustainable urban development requires the cooperation of all stakeholders, including citizens. Stakeholder analysis is the process of identifying and analysing the stakeholders that are likely to affect or be affected by your SymbioCity focus (positively or negatively) so they are engaged appropriately and effectively. This can include academia, private sectors, communities, and development agencies.

Stakeholder Analysis can be done quickly by listing and then rating the influence, motivation, capacity, and impact of key individuals and organizations on a high-medium-low scale to understand their potential role in your initiative.

METHOD

- 1 **Brainstorm with your team** a list of individuals, groups or organisations who may have a stake in your SymbioCity focus.
- 2 **Write them down on post-it notes** assigning a colour code to different groups, e.g. government – blue, community – green, and business – red.
- 3 **Discuss within the group** how you will engage different stakeholders in different stages of your work. It can be useful to consider the importance of your stakeholders in terms of their influence, motivation, capacity and impact and recording this in a simple matrix.

EXAMPLE OF MAPPING

STAKEHOLDER	INFLUENCE	MOTIVATION	CAPACITY	IMPACT	NOTES
Professional association (urban planners / architects)					Strong local commitment and legitimacy among residents. Need support in technical expertise and resources.
Civic actors (local initiative group)					Strong local commitment and legitimacy among residents. Need support in technical expertise and resources.
Local politicians (City Council / Mayor's Office)					Key decision-makers - their endorsement is needed for project approval and funding. Motivation depends on public visibility and timing with political agenda
Civil society organizations (NGOs, advocacy groups)					Can help with communication, mobilization, and advocacy; may link project to broader sustainability goals

GUIDING NOTES

Ideally you start with creating a database in an Excel file which will provide an organised system to track essential contact information and occupations, which is necessary for effective communication and for segmenting

stakeholders based on their roles and access to the solution. If you don't have access to a computer and software just record the information on paper and update it as needed. **Sample of the excel file:**

Organization	Name	Position	Phone	E-mail	Web

MIND MAPPING



WHAT?

Mind mapping can be used prior to a dialogue amongst the civic actors to visualize ideas, concerns, and connections, and is often done in a workshop format.



WHY?

Mind mapping is essential because it is a foundational tool for organizing and structuring initial ideas, ensuring those ideas are fully developed and ready to be translated into structured, tangible outcomes during later dialogue and decision-making stages.



WHO?

Mind mapping can be initiated by a facilitator, civic leader, or NGO representative, who wants to help a group quickly organize ideas and build a shared understanding. It involves a mixed group of participants.



WHEN?

Mind mapping is most useful at the start of a project or dialogue, when civic groups need to share ideas, understand different perspectives, and see how issues connect in the bigger picture, making it easier to find common ground and set priorities.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Large piece of paper or a whiteboard
- ✓ Post-it notes
- ✓ Coloured marker pens
- ✓ Optional digital tools (projector)
- ✓ Wall space for displaying ideas, and a timer to guide the session

OVERVIEW

Mind mapping is a quick, visual method used to capture and organize ideas, concerns, and connections at the early stage of a project or dialogue, helping civic actors build a shared understanding of the issues and prepare for more structured discussions.

METHOD

- 1 **Bring together** relevant civic actors
- 2 **Collect ideas** on sticky notes or a flipchart
- 3 **Group related ideas** to show connections
- 4 **Highlight shared priorities** based on the clusters

GUIDING NOTES

Mind Mapping can be organized through individual sketches, group brainstorming on a board, sticky-note clustering, digital tools, or facilitated mapping, depending on the time available and the focus of your initiative. **Mind Mapping may take 2-2.5 hours depending on group size and scope of the discussion area.**

▼ Women discussion around local gender issues, Telavi municipality, Regional Development Center



KICK-START DIALOGUE



WHAT?

This tool uses facilitated, structured dialogue to enable a group to reach a collective decision and build consensus on difficult local matters.



WHY?

The tool ensures that collective decisions are representative and locally driven by requiring civic actors to bring their unique, real-world experiences and community concerns - their fundamental voices - to the discussion table, validating their participation and enriching the final consensus.



WHO?

Kick-Start Dialogue can be initiated by everyone whose interest is to promote local initiatives and support decision-making processes. It should involve a mixed group of participants.



WHEN?

After mind mapping, constructive dialogue begins, marking the next logical step to take the mapped ideas, structure them into serious discussions, and pave the road toward decision-making.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Flipcharts or whiteboards
- ✓ Post-it notes
- ✓ Markers, pens, notepads
- ✓ Optionally a projector, arranged to support open, inclusive discussion

OVERVIEW

Kick-Start Dialogue is a facilitated, structured discussion that brings civic actors together to turn mapped ideas into collective decisions, build consensus, and set priorities for local action.



Co-creators of Neighborhood – Transport Assessment event in Telavi, Georgia, Regional Development Center

METHOD

1 Before session

7 Steps to plan half-day meeting

- ✓ **Define objective** (team, 30–60 min) Clarify the main outcome – e.g. agree on top priorities, develop action ideas, or decide on next steps
- ✓ **Select participants and invite** (team, 1 week before)
Mix of residents, local business, school representative, disability representative, municipality representative (if possible), and youth
- ✓ **Book venue and logistics** (team, 1 week before)
Find an accessible room.
Prepare flipcharts, sticky notes, pens, projector (optional), name tags, snacks, and water
- ✓ **Prepare materials** (team, 2–3 days before)
Print mind-map summary, prepare participant sheets and facilitator materials
- ✓ **Assign roles** (team, before the event)
Appoint facilitator, note-taker, timekeeper, and outreach/welcome person
- ✓ **Design session agenda & tools**
Use the sample agenda below and adapt timing to your group size
- ✓ **Pre-reads and reminders** (1–2 days before)
Send the one-page mind-map summary and a short reminder message

2 In the session

10 steps for Facilitators (2 to 3-hour session)

- Welcome and objectives (outreach / welcome)
- Icebreaker and introductions
- Recap of mind-map and context
- Framing and ground rules
- Small-group discussion (co-facilitator)
- Plenary harvest (facilitator and note-taker)
- Clarification and synthesis
- Prioritization
- Decision and action planning
- Wrap-up and next steps

3 After session

5 steps for everyone!

- ✓ **Summarize results (Day 1–2)**
Write a short recap: key decisions, priorities, and who does what
- ✓ **Share with participants (Day 2–3)**
Send the summary and action table to everyone (email, WhatsApp, or post)
- ✓ **Follow up (Week 2)**
Check in with those responsible for each task – ask what's started or needed
- ✓ **Monitor progress (Week 4–6)**
Hold a short check-in meeting or online update. Note what's done and what's stuck
- ✓ **Reflect and plan next step (Month 3)**
Review what worked, lessons learned, and agree on next community action or dialogue

SWOT/C ANALYSES



WHAT?

This is a straightforward assessment tool that helps you identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats/Constraints (SWOT/C).



WHY?

SWOT/C provides a great way of quickly and effectively identifying and categorising factors relevant to your issue. It is a useful tool for encouraging participation and recording the views of different stakeholders in a simple flipchart. You can then use the results to identify those areas where more detailed analysis and understanding of issues is needed.



WHO?

Mainly applicable to those involved in or well familiar with the matter to be assessed. It should include men and women and ideally all sections of the community (i.e., the elderly and people with disabilities).



WHEN?

SWOT/C is relevant at the beginning of any initiative – whether assessing an organization, a project, or a community issue – as it provides the initial clarity needed to make informed decisions and set a clear strategy for tackling your priorities.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Flipchart or large sheet with SWOT/C grid marked in four squares
- ✓ Pens/post-it notes to fill in each box accordingly

OVERVIEW

SWOT/C is an assessment tool that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats/Constraints. The tool can be used to assess a specific geographic area, such as your neighbourhood, or an issue that affects you. Or it could take a more holistic approach and address the overall development of your city.

METHOD

- 1 Define the situation being assessed and explain the SWOT/C format to the participants.
- 2 Gather participants with good insights on the issue to be assessed, preferably with different perspectives and backgrounds. The number of participants is to be adapted to the scope of the assessment.
- 3 Fill in the grid individually or in groups. Start with Strengths and Weaknesses and thereafter continue with Opportunities and Threats/Constraints.
- 4 Discuss the findings and create a common SWOT/C grid with issues deemed most important and prioritise them if needed.

GUIDING NOTES

Ideally you develop the SWOT/C with participants from different perspectives, giving you a more rounded understanding of problems and opportunities. Depending on your scenario you could do this in a workshop setting or over a coffee with your collaborators. **You can use the result of the SWOT/C to inform a Vision Workshop** to set the ideal future, and finally by conducting a Co-design Workshop to create practical solutions that are anchored by the SWOT/C's findings.

PROBLEM TREE



WHAT?

A framework tool to help you identify and prioritise the root causes on problems, the effects and break down problems into manageable chunks.



WHY?

It provides an understanding of multiple causes and effects, how they are related and their negative consequences.



WHO?

You can develop a Problem Tree as an individual or as a group exercise (with mixed gender, age and abilities), or a combination of the two.



WHEN?

It is most useful early in the analysis phase to provide clarity on critical problems.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ A1 sheet with a grid for recording causes and effects
- ✓ Pens and post-it notes to fill in each box accordingly

OVERVIEW

Problem Tree analysis helps to find solutions by mapping out the anatomy of the causes and effects of a particular problem. This enables you to identify possible solutions that can address causes (root) rather than symptoms (trunk and branches).

METHOD

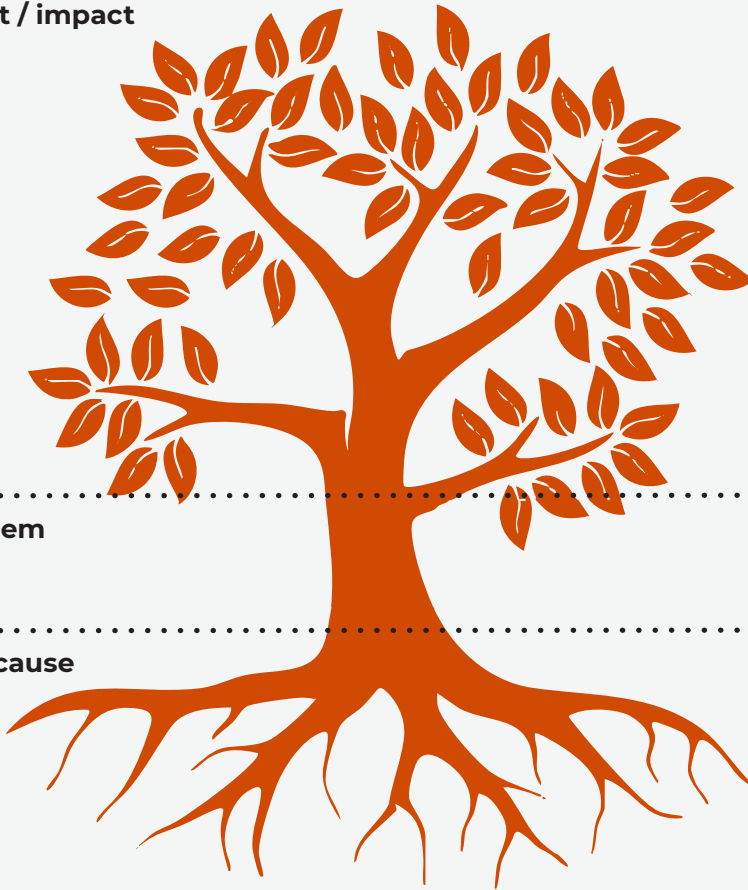
- 1 Identify a **critical problem(s)** individually or within a discussion group that needs to be solved.
- 2 Identify the **possible root causes** for this problem(s).
- 3 Identify the **effects and impacts** of the problem(s).
- 4 Identify **possible solutions** that address both cause and effect.

GUIDING NOTES

- The economic, environmental and socio-cultural dimensions of the **problem need to be considered**.
- **Identifying which causes and impacts** are getting better, and which are getting worse is essential.
- Both long-term solutions and short-term solutions should be considered.

The Problem Tree

.....
The effect / impact



.....
The problem

.....
The root cause

WALK AND TALK



WHAT?

A Walk and Talk lets you analyse an area through different perspectives by walking in the area and evaluating it based on what you see. The walk is done together with citizens and other urban stakeholders. All participants are experts on the environment from their own perspective.



WHY?

Walk and Talk gets people out of the meeting room and into the neighbourhood, allowing you to share personal stories and discover issues where they happen. This tool is simple, friendly and an incredibly effective way to deepen community bonds and truly understand local realities.



WHO?

It can be done as an individual, but ideally as a group exercise. Make sure your group includes women, and ideally children, elderly and people with disabilities.



WHEN?

It is mostly applicable before developing a proposal because it allows one to better understand the on-ground realities.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Map of the area
- ✓ Notebook
- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Pens

OVERVIEW

Walk and Talk is a short, structured, participatory diagnostic tool where a small group follows a pre-set route, making stops to record, taking photos and discussing on-the-ground observations about an area's strengths and weaknesses from a specific perspective, e.g., safety, mobility.

It helps you analyse an area by walking and evaluating it based on all your sensory experiences. It helps to experience a place from different perspectives and form a deeper understanding of the ground realities.

Walk and Talk can be done at any point but might be most revealing after reviewing official data when there is a need to verify physical and social realities on the ground and identify discrepancies. Often, the nuances of social and physical interactions are missing from formal reports, ensuring that solution identification is grounded in the actual, lived experience of the community.

GUIDING NOTES

The walk

- The Walk and Talk leader guides the group to the stops
- Make sure everyone understands the questions
- Reflect on the place with all your senses
- Write down some notes for yourself to remember

The discussion

- The Walk and Talk leader leads the discussion
- Talk about each stop you made
- Every person gets to present their experience
- Someone takes notes on the conversation
- Try to summarize before the final presentation

METHOD

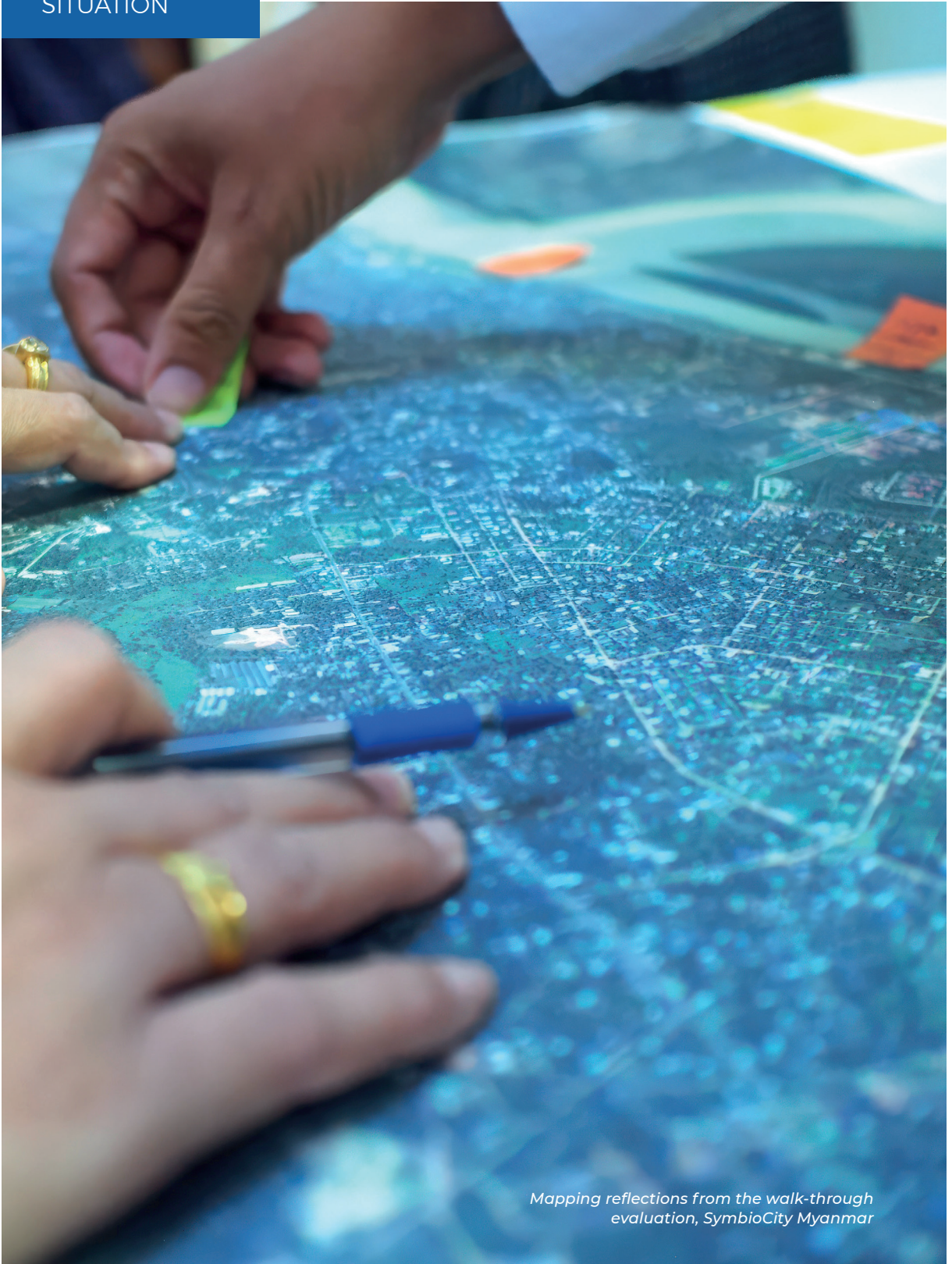
- 1 **Plan the route** in advance marking out on a map – you can plan stopping points and pose questions for participants to consider. You can adapt the checklist according to your focus and needs
- 2 The **number of participants** can vary, but generally, it should not be more than 10 people and the walk should be limited to about an hour. Participants need to be comfortable with being able to talk about their experiences
- 3 **Assign a process leader** in charge of leading the group
- 4 **Stay approximately 10 minutes** per stop
- 5 At the different stops, the participants should **analyse the place** using their skills and senses to answer the preformulated questions
- 6 **Write in silence and individually**
- 7 **Collect the responses**
- 8 **Jointly discuss the results**, and how different members experience the place or issue differently



CHECKLIST EXAMPLE

Walk Through Analysis outdoor activity for Walkability Concept in Batumi, Love to Ride Batumi

Checkpoint	Angle of Assessment	Question/Task to Tick Off	Status
Built Environment	Infrastructure	Is the sidewalk condition safe and accessible (no large cracks, ramps present)	Yay OR Nay
Mobility	Accessibility	Are street signs and lighting functional and adequate, pedestrian, people with disabilities, cycling-friendly?	
Social Interaction	Community Life	Where do people naturally gather, and what activities are they doing? Are there spaces for different age groups (children, seniors)?	
Environmental Health 1	Cleanliness & Greenery	Is there litter, overflowing bins, or illegal dumping evident?	
Environmental Health 2	Greenery	Is the quality and maintenance level of green spaces and trees normal?	



Mapping reflections from the walk-through evaluation, SymbioCity Myanmar

YOU MAP (OPENSTREETMAP)



WHAT?

OpenStreetMap (OSM) is a free, open-source world map collaboratively built and edited by a global community.



WHY?

OpenStreetMap (OSM) is a valuable tool for civic actors because it is an accessible, ground-up data source that directly supports community-led action.



WHO?

OpenStreetMap (OSM) can be used by anyone and will be useful to initiative leaders and stakeholders.



WHEN?

OpenStreetMap (OSM) is most efficient and powerful for civic actors when tackling challenges characterized by local data deficiencies, information bias, or resource constraints.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Digital or printed map
- ✓ iPod or lightweighted laptop
- ✓ Magnifier
- ✓ Pen or pencil
- ✓ Notebook

OVERVIEW

OpenStreetMap (OSM) provides a powerful, highly detailed geographic information tool that allows new users to access and download all map data without license restrictions. It's especially valuable for civic actors as it enables you to add missing local details, verify information on the ground, and use the custom, up-to-date maps to power their own projects and analysis.

METHOD

- 1 Print OpenStreetMap (OSM) maps of the area
- 2 Walk the area (Walk and Talk) and mark missing features, correct errors, and add points of interest
- 3 Digitize the collected data
- 4 Alternatively, use high-resolution satellite imagery for Remote Mapping
- 5 Trace roads, buildings, and land use boundaries from a computer
- 6 Use this approach to quickly map large or hard-to-reach areas

GUIDING NOTES

You can verify the local reality, add critical local infrastructure, mark stray animal hotspots, carry out street lighting audits and customize maps according to your target audience, i.e., for cyclists, persons with disabilities.

YOU (E)VOTE



WHAT?

You can use your social media networks to organize online voting. This allows you to achieve two goals: prioritise key issues based on collective input, and simultaneously disseminate comprehensive information about your solution to a wide audience under a single, transparent, public-facing platform.



WHY?

Use a popular social media platform in Georgia (i.e., Facebook), to maximize the reach of your planned activities and create a visible, public-facing mechanism to prioritize community concerns, thereby establishing a transparent mandate that compels local authorities to acknowledge and act on the results.



WHO?

Online voting can be organized by civic leaders, NGOs, or community groups, municipality representatives or any initiative owner who can manage a social media platform and ensure the process remains transparent and accessible.



WHEN?

E-voting is most useful and efficient when you need to prioritise a manageable list of clear options from a large, geographically dispersed, or diverse population that has low availability for physical meetings.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Social media accounts
- ✓ High-resolution photos

OVERVIEW

Online voting is a simple digital tool that uses social media – especially Meta platforms – to gather public preferences, prioritize key issues, get feedback and share information widely in a transparent, and accessible way.

METHOD

- 1 Set up guiding questions or list of options to be voted on
- 2 Use a popular social media platform to create the poll
- 3 Share the poll widely with the target community, including relevant groups and networks
- 4 Monitor participation and ensure transparency by keeping results visible to all
- 5 Summarise and communicate the outcomes to stakeholders and local authorities

GUIDING NOTES

E-voting is most effective when conducted through the official social media accounts of politicians, mayors, or municipal authorities for public outreach.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY SURVEY



WHAT?

A survey to identify and evaluate security aspects in a specific urban area or neighbourhood.



WHY?

Create an understanding of risks or qualities in an urban space along with different stakeholder responsibilities.



WHO?

Working group together with stakeholders and the users or residents. Make sure you involve both women and men, and ideally children, the elderly and people with disabilities – all of whom experience safety in different ways.



WHEN?

It is used in a preliminary diagnosis of a study area.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Location with chairs and tables
- ✓ Map of targeted areas
- ✓ Two coloured pens/post-it notes of markings

OVERVIEW

A Neighbourhood Safety Survey is a **tool to identify and analyse the less secure places in a neighbourhood** and get all the responsible stakeholders to discuss how the area can be made more secure and pleasant. The aim is to encourage a mutual exchange of ideas and viewpoints and an opportunity to share information and discuss constructive ideas to make your neighbourhood safer. The discussion between residents and those responsible is as important as the physical changes that can result from the survey.

METHOD

- 1 Explain the scope of the survey and how to use the maps, with markings of one colour representing an unsafe place, and another representing a place of appreciation.
- 2 With the help of numbering and a separate list, **note more details** about the risks/ qualities, how many would agree/ disagree and whether perception differs based on gender and age.
- 3 Based on the most important findings on the maps, **everyone should be invited on a walking tour** to further develop why some parts of the neighbourhood are considered dangerous.

GUIDING NOTES

Potential questions to consider in the survey:

- What is the neighbourhood like as a whole?
- Where are the prettiest and ugliest places?
- Where is better care needed?
- Has anything been vandalised? Where?
- In what condition are the trees, bushes, and other greenery found in the neighbourhood?
- Is clearing or thinning out needed to improve the view?
- Where is more greenery needed to make the place more pleasant? What kind of plants?
- Is it easy to find your way in the neighbourhood? Are maps and signs needed? Are there any information boards?
- Is the lighting in the right place and is it working?
- Where is it ok for there to be darkness?
- What condition are paving, stairs and railings in? Does anything need to be done about them?
- Could the area cause problems for people with various disabilities (visual, hearing, physical, allergies, or orientation problems)?
- Are there enough – or too many – park benches and litter bins? What condition are they in?

PUBLIC SPACE ANALYSIS



WHAT?

A tool that supports analysis of the positive or negative issues in usually targeted public space.



WHY?

It is used to make participants analytically reflect on qualities and values in public spaces.



WHO?

Stakeholders with an interest and stake in the use, planning and management of public spaces. Ensure that all relevant users participate including women and men, different age groups and people with disabilities.



WHEN?

It is used in a preliminary diagnosis of a public space.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Map of the public space
- ✓ Questions printed to be studied
- ✓ Pens and paper

OVERVIEW

Public Space Analysis is carried out to diagnose and analyse the current situation in a specific location based on a set of qualitative questions. The analysis can be used as a first step to understand positive and negative qualities and values associated with a place that can be enhanced or combated in solutions.

METHOD

- 1 Provide participants with a map and a set of questions to be studied:

Space qualities

- Why is a place positive/negative?
- What are the qualities that make it so?
- Absent or invisible themes: Stories that cannot be seen.

The users

- For whom is it a good/bad place?
- Who are the beneficiaries of the space?
- Who does not benefit?
- Are there more women or more men who are present?
- Do they use space in different ways?
- What is the power relationship between users?
- Who dominates? Is it a space for children? For older adults?

Specific conditions that are positive/negative

Security

- Traffic protection?
- Climate protection?
- Protection against violence and crime?

Comfort

- Possibility and attractiveness to walk?
- Possibility of stopping?
- Possibility of sitting?
- Nice views?
- Noise levels?

- 2 Collect the recorded participant answers.
- 3 Review and discuss the participant responses, and what factors are responsible for making a place positive or negative for its users.

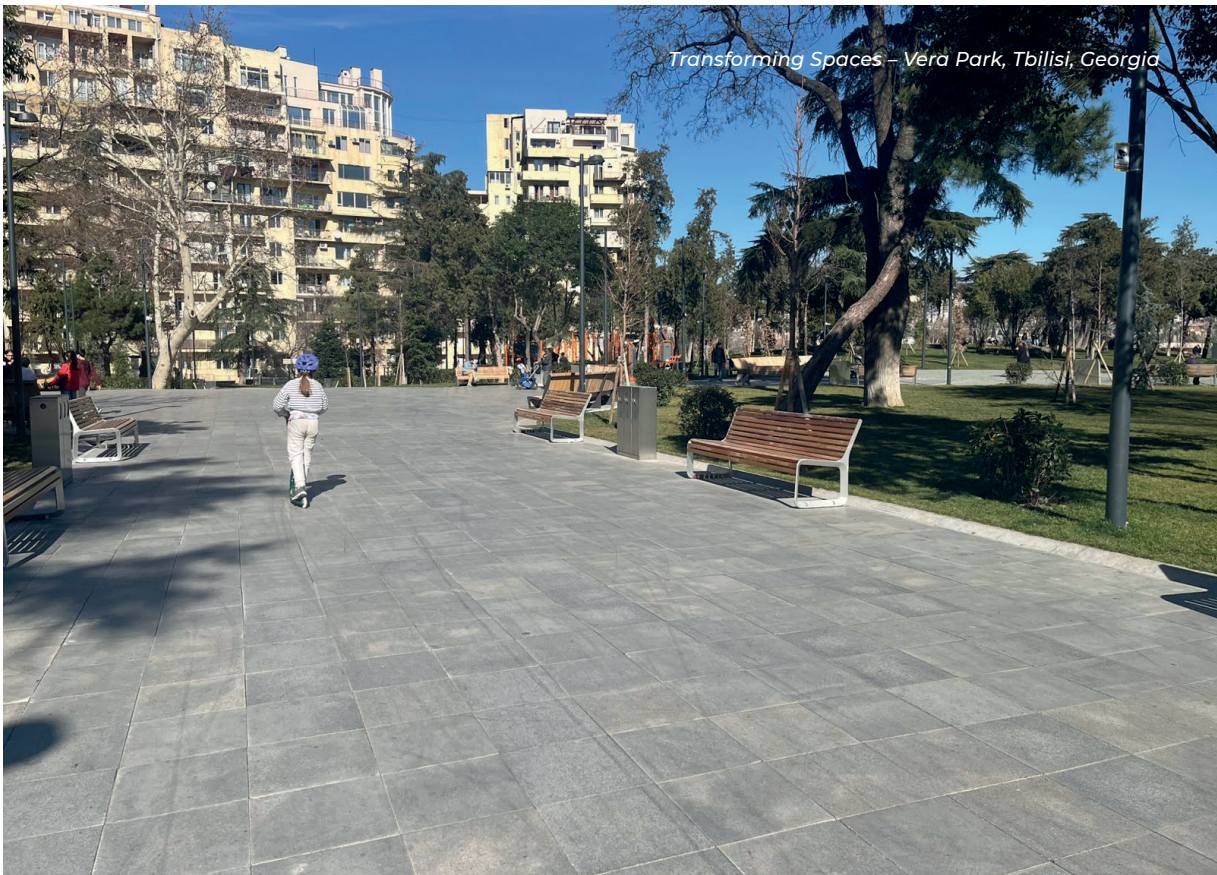
GUIDING NOTES

Ensure that there is equal participation with respect to gender, age, and physical and mental ability.

Analysing public space from a gender perspective

If we want to create a public space for all, start by analysing the space from a gender perspective to understand how it is used, who is using it, when and for what.

- Who is using the space? Who is not using the space? Who is in spaces nearby? Who passes through the space?
- Are there different target groups present during different times of the day (morning/ day/evening)?
- Who is active and uses all the functions of the space? Who is passive, just watching?
- How are the people living nearby using the space? What kind of activities are being done here? Is there a dimension of gender connected to the space?
- What gender is dominant?
- Is there a difference between gender and age in the way and when they use the space? If yes, in what way?
- Are there functions on or around the space which could make girls/ women feel more or less welcome?



MOBILITY MAPPING AND VISIONING



WHAT?

Mobility Mapping and Visioning is a collaborative public activity that brings together cyclists, persons with disabilities, and other community groups to actively contribute to shaping a city's mobility system, ensuring it is sustainable, inclusive, and accessible for everyone.



WHY?

To better understand the community's current transport habits and collect ideas for improving mobility in a more sustainable and inclusive way.



WHO?

Conducted by the working group with participation of inhabitants and stakeholders. Please ensure mixed-gender groups.



WHEN?

Mostly applicable to the initial planning stage before making a plan or designing a solution.



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Large maps of the city or neighbourhood
- ✓ Sticky notes or index cards
- ✓ Markers and pens in multiple colours
- ✓ Notepads for participants
- ✓ Tape or pins to attach notes to maps
- ✓ Camera or phone to document the activity

OVERVIEW

Mobility Mapping and Visioning is a **participatory tool that engages community members** – cyclists, persons with disabilities, and other stakeholders – to map current transport habits and collaboratively envision a more sustainable, inclusive, and accessible urban mobility system.

GUIDING NOTES

This tool can be conducted in a workshop setting, but it is most effective as an outdoor activity, where real-time observations and direct community feedback provide a clearer, more accurate understanding of mobility constraints in the city or village.



Workshop on Cycling Masterplan for Batumi.
Love to Ride Batumi



Sustainable cities begin with leaders who feel the streets, not oversee them, Mayor of Pitalito, SymbioCity Colombia



METHOD

- 1 **Preparation:**
Gather large maps of the area, markers, sticky notes, and other materials. Invite a diverse group of participants, ensuring mixed-gender representation
- 2 **Introduction:**
Explain the purpose of the activity and how participants will contribute
- 3 **Mapping Current Mobility:**
Ask participants to mark existing transport routes, obstacles, and accessibility issues on the map
- 4 **Identifying Needs and Ideas:**
Participants add suggestions for improvements, new routes, or facilities using sticky notes or markers
- 5 **Discussion:**
Facilitate a group discussion to explore patterns, priorities, and challenges
- 6 **Visioning:**
Collaboratively develop a shared vision for a more sustainable, inclusive, and accessible mobility system
- 7 **Documentation:**
Take photos of the maps, notes, and key discussion points. Summarize outcomes in a report for stakeholders
- 8 **Follow-Up:**
Share results with participants and relevant authorities to inform planning and decision-making

CLIMATE LENS (MAPPING RISKS)



WHAT?

Climate Lens is a community-based tool for identifying and visualizing how climate change affects local neighbourhoods.

Using free online maps, open data, and local observation, civic actors can map flood-prone streets, overheated areas, eroded slopes, polluted zones, or blocked drainage points – building an evidence base for advocacy and local action.



WHY?

No one knows a place better than its residents. Climate risks often show first at the community level – flooded basements, dying trees, heat-stressed parks, or unsafe roads.

When civic actors document and visualize these issues:

- You create proof for local authorities to act
- You raise awareness among neighbours
- You help guide practical adaptation (like tree planting, shading, drainage improvements, or green mobility)



WHO?

Climate Lens can be used by civic actors, community groups, residents, NGOs, and student volunteers – anyone interested in documenting and visualizing local climate risks to inform policy, planning, and community action.



WHEN?

Use the tool whenever climate impacts or local vulnerabilities appear, such as:

- During heavy rainfall or heatwaves (to map affected zones)
- When planning community campaigns or urban dialogues
- Before local budget or land-use discussions – to advocate based on evidence



MATERIALS?

- ✓ Smartphone or camera for photos and videos
- ✓ Notebook or digital device for notes
- ✓ GPS or phone location services
- ✓ Printed or online maps =(Google My Maps, OpenStreetMap)
- ✓ Markers or pins (for paper maps)
- ✓ Access to open data sources (e.g., rainfall, elevation, pollution)
- ✓ Optional: computer or tablet for combining data and creating digital maps
- ✓ Internet connection for sharing and advocacy platforms

OVERVIEW

Climate Lens (Mapping Risks) is a **community-based tool that enables residents and civic actors to observe, map, and visualize local climate impacts** – like flooding, heat, or erosion – using simple tools and open data to guide adaptation, raise awareness, and support evidence-based advocacy.

GUIDING NOTES

Involve diverse residents, document safely and accurately, cross-check with public data, and share your results to guide local action.

ANYONE INTERESTED IN DOCUMENTING CLIMATE RISKS CAN USE CLIMATE LENS

METHOD

You can create Climate Lens with no technical background, using simple, open-access tools:

Step	How to do it	Example tools
1 Observe & record	Walk or cycle around your neighbourhood. Take notes, photos, or short videos of climate-affected areas (flooding, erosion, poor shading, heat).	Phone camera, GPS, notebook
2 Mark on a map	Use online maps to drop pins or draw affected zones.	Google My Maps, OpenStreetMap, Maptionnaire
3 Add local knowledge	Discuss with residents: when do floods happen, which streets are hottest, what's changing?	Community meetings, WhatsApp, Facebook groups
4 Combine public data	Add data from open portals – elevation maps, rainfall, air pollution, or land use.	Geostat Maps, Copernicus Climate Data, Earth Engine Timelapse
5 Share and advocate	Present your map at city council meetings, post it on social media, or share with local media.	StoryMap, Canva, ArcGIS Online (free accounts)



Participatory GPS Mapping in Dawei, SymbioCity Myanmar

WANT / DON'T WANT ANALYSIS



WHAT?

If you want a quick and effective way to assess the Status-quo, you can use Want/Don't Want (Grid) Analysis - a tool that helps you to analyse Want, Don't want, Have and Don't Have.



WHY?

By mapping responses in the quadrant (Want, Don't Want, Have and Don't Have), the grid moves analysis beyond simple listing to provide some clarity and thinking on what can be done about it.



WHO?

All stakeholders should be involved. Make sure the views of women and girls, children and the elderly, and people with disabilities to ensure your assessment is inclusive.



WHEN?

The tool is a quick and friendly way for civic actors to grasp shared hopes and concerns. It's most useful for community workshops or public engagement events (like setting up a stand in a local square) where residents can quickly note what they want to keep (Assets), get rid of (Liabilities), achieve (Dreams), or avoid (Threats) in their neighbourhood or city. It can be used in either step 2 or steps 3 and 4 when you are identifying a vision and objectives and potential solutions.



MATERIALS NEED:

- ✓ Flipchart or large sheet with grid marked in four squares
- ✓ Marker pens/post-it notes to fill in each box accordingly

OVERVIEW

Want/Don't Want Analysis is a tool to share and agree on the perceptions and hopes for your city/ neighbourhood. It identifies existing assets that should be cherished, future assets that should be developed, and undesirable aspects that should be addressed in the present, or prevented in the future. The tool allows you to record both where you are at present and a desired future – a dream or vision – and initial thinking on the types of solution that you need to move from one to another.

It is a tool that can be used in combination with, or as a replacement for, SWOT/C analysis. It can be used as part of a facilitated session or placed in a publicly accessible location for citizen input.

METHOD

- 1 Initially, it is important to specify and **agree on the subject or theme** for analysing within a group
- 2 The grid consists of the four quadrants
- 3 Start with **individual reflections** based on the experiences or ideas for your city/ neighbourhood, and then fill out the Grid as a **group exercise**
- 4 **Develop a common vision**, discuss how to get rid of undesirable items, and consider ways to convert undesirable items to desirable ones

GUIDING NOTES

When reviewing items in the quadrants, the following steps are useful:

**YOUR
CURRENT
SITUATION**

HAVE

DON'T WANT

Problems, issues, constraints
Develop solutions to get rid of, overcome and minimize these

Remove: Identify ways to get rid of each undesirable aspect, and decide on practical steps to deal with the problems

Reduce: If a problem cannot be totally removed, consider what can be done to reduce its negative impacts

Convert: Consider ways to convert undesirable items into desirable ones

WANT

Assets, good things
Develop solutions to keep, use and enhance these

Cherish: Does the community appreciate and value its assets sufficiently? If not, how can this be enhanced?

Conserve: Are valuable features in danger of being lost? What can the community do to preserve them?

Leverage: How can the community use its assets to the greatest advantage, to build a stronger community and enhance external support?

Share: Can assets be made more accessible or available to others in and outside of the community? How can they be used proactively to create a positive image of the community?

DON'T HAVE

Potential problems, threats and constraints
Develop solutions to avoid and minimize these

Prevent: Identify precautions to prevent threats from materialising.

Evaluate: Prevention may entail giving up something else of value. If this is the case, is it worth the sacrifice? Are there other ways to prevent a threat?

Invest: Estimate the amount of time, money, and effort needed to safeguard the community from a threat. Are these resources available?

Dreams and vision
Develop solutions to achieve these

Plan: What steps can be undertaken to meet this need?

Explore options: What alternatives are there to achieve an objective?

Sacrifice: Is there a need for trade-offs to attain this, i.e. giving up something to gain a greater benefit, e.g. commuting in private vehicles, to develop a clean, green, and people-friendly city and public transport system.

Evaluate: Do a cost-benefit analysis - How much time and effort will be needed to obtain this item? What potential benefits will the community gain? Is the cost worth the benefit? Will the community as a whole benefit, or only some residents?

**YOUR
DESIRED
FUTURE**

YOUR VISION



WHAT?

Your Vision is a short, inspiring description of the community's desired future - what people want their city or neighbourhood to become.



WHY?

It creates a shared sense of direction and motivation, helping everyone - civic actors, residents, and local authorities - align around common goals and values.



WHO?

Mainly applicable to the residents and stakeholders responsible for the planning and management of your city. Make sure both women and men are involved and there is a mix of ages and abilities.



WHEN?

Use it at the beginning of a project or planning process, after initial discussions or brainstorming, to define the long-term purpose before detailed planning starts.



MATERIAL NEEDED

- ✓ A map
- ✓ Tracing paper
- ✓ Pens/post-it notes

METHOD

- 1 **Prepare questions for participants in the visioning exercise.** Examples of questions may be: What would your community be like if you had the power to make it any way you wanted? Where would people live? How would they get to their schools and workplaces? On their days off, where would they go and what would they do?
- 2 **If you have a lot of participants you can divide into smaller groups,** to brainstorm what their ideal city/neighbourhood would look like in the future. Encourage everyone to be specific in their descriptions. You can select some categories to discuss, e.g., schools, health, crime, transportation. If you split into smaller groups make sure a group leader is appointed to ensure that the categories are discussed, and the time is kept.
- 3 **Where you have divided into groups, come back together.** Ask a member from each group to make a positive, one-sentence statement about how the community will be in the future. Make the statement in the present tense (i.e., there are lots of bike trails, you can walk at night in safety, public transport is fast and cheap).
- 4 **Write the statements on a piece of paper** so that you can see them all and it can be saved for revision later. Ask whether there are any other interesting ideas not yet shared.
- 5 **Group parts of the vision into some common themes** focusing on the areas with some consensus. Create a new sheet that contains strong support from either the entire class or a subgroup. The joint vision statement can be presented in a pictorial or graphic form. You can add photos and images, or it could be a list of ideas.



Through Her Eyes (Gender Impact Assessment) in Telavi municipality, Regional Development Center

OVERVIEW

A vision statement explains the desirable future of a city/neighbourhood in the future. Depending on your initiative this could be in 10-20 years, 5 years or less. A visioning process can generate a common goal, hope, and collective action. It offers a possibility for fundamental change, gives people a sense of control, and gives a group something to move toward.

It also generates creative thinking and passion. With this method, it is possible to understand how you perceive your neighbourhoods and how they want to see them in the future. It can be illustrated with a map or diagram, described with words or reports, on paper or on video. It provides you with the basis for influencing others.

GUIDING NOTES

In drafting your vision statement don't try to do this in a group, rather leave this to one or two people who are good with words to craft a draft vision statement after your discussion, and then share it with participants for feedback. Use the feedback to improve the draft, consider and agree on a next final version. You can further improve it as your initiative proceeds.

FACT CHECKING



WHAT?

Fact-checking tools are digital and open-data instruments that help verify and check government data, and explore maps, property records, and online content. Tool makes it possible to confirm or challenge information about public decisions, land use, budgets, or environmental issues.



WHY?

Transparency and accountability depend on verified facts. You need trustworthy evidence to support advocacy, expose irregularities, and inform communities. Fact-checking tools help you to ensure that the data used in reports, campaigns, or discussions is accurate, current, and credible.



WHO?

Most government portals are publicly accessible, and anyone can use this tool, especially journalists and other civic actors who track public spending.



WHEN?

They are most useful during three stages of civic work:

- **Research and monitoring** - when collecting information or investigating status of property or ownership
- **Public communication** - before sharing data or visuals online
- **Advocacy and reporting** - when presenting evidence to media or local government

OVERVIEW

Fact-checking tools are digital instruments that allow civic actors to verify government data, maps, property records, and online content, ensuring transparency, accuracy, and accountability in research, communication, and advocacy.

GUIDING NOTES

You can combine open-data portals, mapping tools, and verification methods:



Newly renovated Temka Park, Chemi Kalaki Mklavs

Purpose	Practical Tools	Example of Use in Georgia
Verify land, property, and ownership data	National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR), Property Portal: https://www.napr.gov.ge/ https://www.my.gov.ge/	Check ownership, land boundaries, or development permits
Explore maps and urban development	GeoPortal (Geostat Maps), OpenStreetMap, Search in web: https://maps.gov.ge/ https://gis.geostat.ge/	Compare real projects with official zoning or construction limits
Confirm authenticity of media and visuals	Google Reverse Image Search, TinEye, InVID Search in web: https://tineye.com/ https://www.invid-project.eu/ https://mythdetector.com/ka/	Verify if photos or videos of local events are real or manipulated
Monitor environmental quality and land-use	AirVisual, Strava Metro, Earth Engine Timelapse Search in web: https://air.gov.ge/ https://www.iqair.com/ https://earthengine.google.com/	Track air pollution, road use, or land-use changes
Archive and cross-check statements	Wayback Machine, Google Fact Check Explorer Search in web: https://web.archive.org/ https://toolbox.google.com/	Access deleted or edited government posts or statements

SOLUTIONS MATRIX



WHAT?

Solutions Matrix allows you to see more clearly the range of possible interventions for achieving your city/neighbourhood vision.



WHY?

The tool allows the identification and comparison of different scenarios and encourages identification of the spectrum of possible solutions.



WHO?

Mainly suitable to those involved in or well familiar with the focus of your initiative. Make sure you include both women and men.



WHEN?

The best time to use a Solutions Matrix is after problem analysis and vision setting steps (Want / Don't Want, Mind Mapping, Your Vision) to generate a range of potential solutions.



MATERIAL NEEDED

- ✓ Flipchart paper
- ✓ Colour pens
- ✓ Post-it notes

OVERVIEW

Solutions Matrix helps you define the scale and level of intervention needed for the sustainability of your city/neighbourhood. It helps visualise the identification of a range of solutions that are different in scale in terms of technology (low or high), delivery (community or government), cost (low or high) and the timeframe for (short-term, medium-term, or long-term solutions) implementation. This can serve as a basis for identifying and formulating alternative development solutions.

METHOD

- 1 **Select two polar positions** for the exercise, e.g.,
 - low-tech solution and high-tech solutions
 - small-scale solution and large-scale solutions
 - short-term solution and a long-term solution
 - local community solutions and government managed solutions
- 2 **Divide a sheet into sections or blocks to record the range of solutions**, e.g.,
 - Low, medium, high tech
 - Small, medium, large-scale
 - Short, medium, long-term
 - Community, partnership, government managed
- 3 In each section, **conceptualize potential solutions**
- 4 **Discuss the range of solutions identified** from the different perspectives

GUIDING NOTES

- Remember to identify and compare different types of solution such as management, legislation, financing, policy, planning, and education
- Consider the solutions from the perspective of different stakeholders
- Think about the role of your municipality, the private sector and academia to delivering solutions
- Consider how landowners and developers can contribute to the implementation of solutions

*Development of solutions matrix,
SymbioCity Myanmar*



PLACEMAKING DESIGN



WHAT?

Placemaking is a hands-on tool that empowers and engages the creativity of people in ways that traditional planning processes do not. It draws on the assets and skills of a community, rather than on relying solely on professional experts. When you create a space where the community is involved the place will have a new meaning for them.



WHY?

Solutions work best and are most sustainable when people have been involved in their design.



WHO?

Placemaking Design can be initiated by civic leaders, local NGOs, community groups, or built environment professionals (i.e., urban planners, architects, landscape architects) who want to actively engage residents in shaping and testing public spaces.



WHEN?

Once you have decided on the focus of your solution.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ Paper or flipcharts
- ✓ Markers and pens
- ✓ Post-it notes
- ✓ Basic model-building materials (cardboard, tape, scissors)
- ✓ Camera or phone for documentation

METHOD

- 1 Prepare the site or workshop space with basic materials
- 2 Introduce the focus area and explain the purpose of the activity
- 3 Encourage participants to sketch, model, or mark ideas for the space
- 4 Test temporary interventions (e.g., benches, play areas) on-site
- 5 Collect feedback from participants and refine the designs
- 6 Document outcomes through photos, notes, or sketches

GUIDING NOTES

Everyone is encouraged to develop their ideas by sketching, marking plans or building and adjusting models. Model building and simple sketches are effective ways of visualising solutions and providing a 'common language' for discussing solution designs.



Place-making design, SymbioCity Kenya



Place-making design, SymbioCity Kenya

WHAT HELPS / DOESN'T HELP?



WHAT?

This tool (also known as Drivers and Barriers) is a framework for identifying and helping and hindering factors.



WHY?

By identifying helping forces and strengthening them, and hindering forces and reducing them, you can better prepare for taking your solution in design and implementation.



WHO?

It is mainly applicable to those involved in or well familiar with the matter to be assessed, and should always include both women and men.



WHEN?

It is most useful at the initial planning and design stage.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ Flipchart or large sheet with grid marked in four squares
- ✓ Marker pens/post-it notes to fill in each box accordingly

OVERVIEW

What Helps / Doesn't Help analysis provides an overview of the helping and hindering forces or factors and can help to address resistance to change and mobilize people's motivation and commitment to act. Helping forces push things in a positive direction, while hindering forces and factors work against positive change forces, maintaining the status quo, or making things worse.

METHOD

- 1 Identify and **agree on the situation or solution to be assessed**
- 2 Within the group, **brainstorm all the helping forces** and factors, including subjective or emotional forces and factors
- 3 **Rate the strength** of each force on a 1 to 5 scale (1 = very weak, 2 = weak, 3 = average, 4 = strong, 5 = very strong)
- 4 **Discuss the result and identify key forces** that you want to strengthen or reduce along with identifying stakeholders for sharing tasks
- 5 **Review the result and develop action plans and timeline**
- 6 **Make a meeting note** for the summary report

GUIDING NOTES

Identify and define the situation to be considered, e.g. progress towards sustainability in your city/neighbourhood

Discuss the result and identify key forces that you want to strengthen or reduce. You can rank or just discuss the relative importance of each helping and hindering force, and the degree of influence you have or could have on each. Discuss which forces can be influenced and how

Review the result and note your conclusions and action plan, including who will do what and by when

Document the flipchart pages in a summary note. You could photograph your What Helps / What Doesn't Help analysis for sharing with others. Distribute the note as soon as possible to all group members and other key people who should be informed, or who are important to making progress

Hindering/helping forces for implementation

Hindering forces:

1. Land compensation
2. Land use conflicts
3. Weak stakeholders' participation
4. Budget limitations
5. Tax
6. Public objection
7. High rental costs
8. Lack of space
9. Land allocation for trade zone
10. Low number of tourists and opportunity for small scale businesses
11. Market

Helping forces:

1. Investments from both local and international
2. Budget allocation
3. Interest from hotel owners
4. Land ownership
5. Community participation
6. Technology
7. Support from local government
8. Laws and regulations
9. Raw material
10. Support from costumers

*A typical recording of hindering and helping forces.
Kalay, Myanmar*

THROUGH HER EYES

(GENDER IMPACT ANALYSIS)



WHAT?

Through Her Eyes is a participatory tool that assesses how urban spaces, transport systems, and public services affect women and men differently. It highlights gender-specific needs, barriers, and safety perceptions to ensure inclusive and equitable planning.



WHY?

Women often experience the city differently - from safety concerns and accessibility barriers to caregiving-related travel patterns. This tool helps you design solutions that respond to real, lived experiences and promote gender equality in urban development.



WHO?

Civic actors seeking to assess and improve gender inclusivity and safety in urban spaces and public services - especially women's groups who promote gender mainstreaming.



WHEN?

It is most effective during the planning and design of solutions - before key decisions are made - but can also be used for monitoring existing spaces or services to evaluate inclusivity and safety.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ Survey or focus group guides for collecting gender-specific input
- ✓ Pens and markers
- ✓ Maps or printed layouts of the area
- ✓ Camera or smartphone for photos/videos
- ✓ Optional: post-it notes for feedback and observations

OVERVIEW

Through Her Eyes is a participatory tool that examines how urban spaces, transport systems, and public services affect women and men differently, helping civic actors design more inclusive, safe, and equitable cities.

METHOD

- 1 Conduct focus groups, safety walks, or online storytelling sessions with women of diverse backgrounds
- 2 Map everyday routes and identify challenges (e.g., lighting, access, transport links)
- 3 Analyse gender-disaggregated data and feedback
- 4 Integrate findings into design and policy decisions, ensuring women's perspectives shape final outcomes

GUIDING NOTES

The tool can support improvements to gender-sensitive policy development, planning and service delivery, and will help you design solutions that reflect the needs of women. The results can support municipal authorities introducing new budget programs, ensuring that those who need support can access state resources.

SOLUTION STRESS TEST



WHAT?

The Solution Stress Test asks simple yet critical questions about your solution(s) to see whether it is feasible, realistic and appropriate, and allows you to compare the feasibility of different solution options.



WHY?

Stress testing a solution quickly identifies whether it is feasible or not. It is especially helpful in avoiding lots of effort in planning and designing solutions that are ultimately unrealistic.



WHO?

All informed stakeholders should be involved to provide a comprehensive reality check.



WHEN?

The tool is most relevant after initial solution options have been identified, but before final decisions or implementation.

OVERVIEW

Stress testing your solution(s) provides a straightforward and easy applied tool. Based on the analysis, you can confirm whether your solution is realistic and when comparing solution options you can prioritise the preferred solution based on feasibility. Your solution design can be revised to respond to potential weaknesses.

METHOD

- 1 Adapt the template to your needs to record the most significant criteria
- 2 Record the acceptability of the solution(s) against the criteria using appropriate symbols
- 3 Where risks and weaknesses are identified you can discuss whether this can be managed through the design of your solution, or whether alternative solutions should be considered

GUIDING NOTES

- Agreeing the criteria against which to stress test your solution is an important initial step. Points to consider include:
 - **Access to land:** Where land is required for the solution is it available and accessible?
 - **Permits:** Does the solution require permits, and are these easy to acquire?
 - **Mandate:** Can you implement the solution, or does it rely on the mandate of government agencies?
 - **Finance GEL:** Can funds for implementation be accessed?
 - **Operation and maintenance GEL:** Can funds for operations and maintenance be guaranteed?
 - **Time:** Can the solution be implemented in the available time?
 - **Capacity:** Is there sufficient capacity (people-power and expertise) to design, implement and manage the solution?
 - **Public acceptance:** Will the solution be publicly acceptable?

Solution	Land	Permits	Mandate	Finance	O&M	Time	Capacity	Acceptable
New pocket park								
Rejuvenated public space								

IMPACT RADAR ('SUSTAINABILITY ROSE')



WHAT?

The Impact Radar (also known as the Sustainability Rose) is a tool to assess the impact of your solution against locally defined sustainability indicators.



WHY?

The tool provides a way of visualising the impacts of a solution(s). Based on this, a decision can be made on which solution should be prioritised, and how the sustainability impacts could be improved.



WHO?

This can be used by an individual or, ideally, as part of a stakeholder group exercise.



WHEN?

The method is used once goals and sustainability indicators have been agreed on, and a preliminary solution(s) has been identified.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ A3 size Impact Radar diagram
- ✓ Colour pens

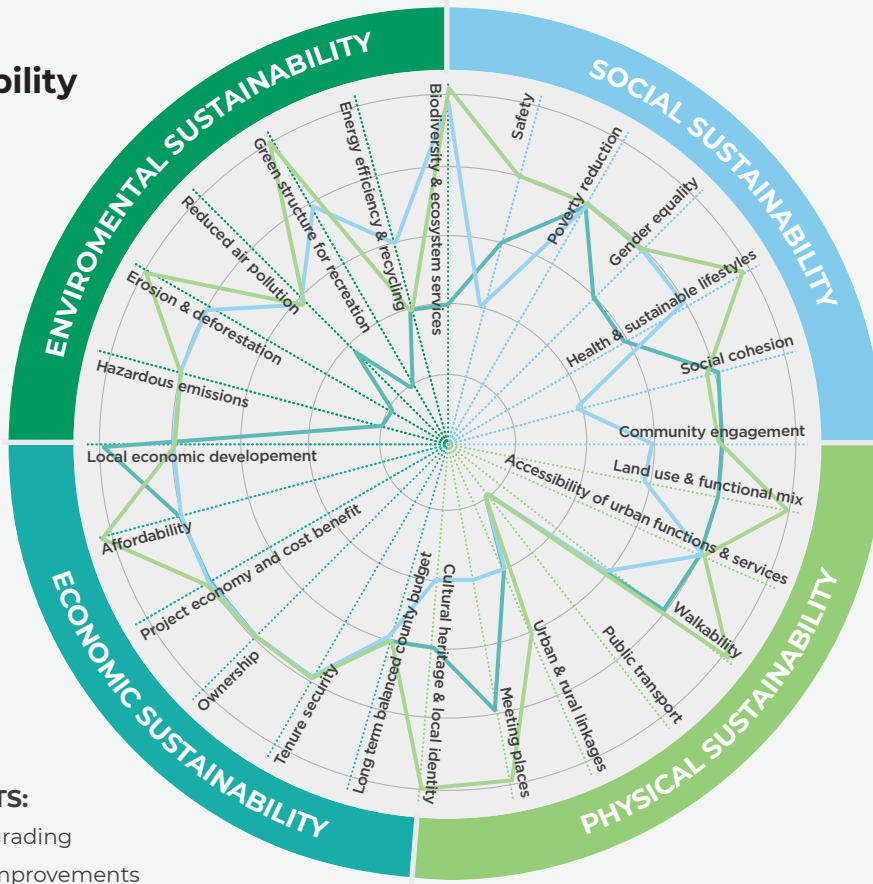
OVERVIEW

An Impact Radar is a method for assessing the sustainability impacts of a solution, and for comparing different solution options against each other. It helps to visualise in which ways different approaches contribute to sustainability goals.

METHOD

- 1 Add your sustainability indicators to the spokes of the radar. Indicators must be specific and should be based on your vision, goal or objectives for your solution. Indicators should cover ecological, social, economic, and physical sustainability.
- 2 How sustainable are we now? For each of the indicators, the group should discuss and make a joint assessment of the current situation on a 1-5 scale, where 5 is very sustainable and 1 is highly unsustainable.
- 3 Grade the solution options: Score how different solutions will affect sustainability by placing them on the 1-5 scale. Use different colour pens for each option and remember to name them.
- 4 Final evaluation and prioritisation of solution: Discuss the results to find out which solutions are the most effective. Could changes in the design of your solution increase sustainability? Could a combination of different solutions achieve your sustainability goals?

Rose of Sustainability



GUIDING NOTES

Ecological sustainability could include:

- ✓ Biodiversity and ecosystem services
- ✓ Energy efficiency and recycling
- ✓ Green structure for recreation
- ✓ Reduced air pollution
- ✓ Erosion and deforestation

Social sustainability could include:

- ✓ Safety

- ✓ Poverty reduction
- ✓ Gender equality
- ✓ Health and sustainable lifestyles
- ✓ Social cohesion
- ✓ Community engagement

Physical sustainability could include:

- ✓ Land use and the mix of functions (i.e., homes, businesses, public facilities)
- ✓ Accessibility to urban functions and services
- ✓ Walkability
- ✓ Public transport

- ✓ Linkages between your city/neighbourhood and rural areas
- ✓ Meeting places
- ✓ Cultural heritage and local identity

Economic sustainability could include:

- ✓ Local economic development
- ✓ Affordability for users
- ✓ Cost-benefit of the solution
- ✓ Ownership
- ✓ Tenure security

CHILD IMPACT ASSESSMENT



WHAT?

Child Impact Assessment is a participatory tool that helps you evaluate how local decisions, spaces, or policies affect children's well-being, safety, mobility, and inclusion. It encourages looking at urban environments - streets, parks, schools, transport, or housing - from a child's perspective to ensure that development supports healthy, safe, and playful childhoods.



WHY?

Children are the most sensitive indicators of a city's quality of life. If children can move safely, play freely, breathe clean air, and feel included - the city works well for everyone.



WHO?

Anyone interested in assessing and improving how local decisions and spaces affect children's well-being and safety such as civic actors, community groups, parents, teachers, youth organizations, and local NGOs.



WHEN?

Use this tool before or during:

- Urban planning or redevelopment projects (e.g., new roads, public spaces)
- School or neighbourhood improvements
- Public budget hearings or advocacy campaigns related to youth and education
- Any community initiative that affects families, children, or mobility



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ Notebook or digital device for notes
- ✓ Camera or smartphone for photos/videos
- ✓ Pens and markers
- ✓ Maps or printed layouts of the area
- ✓ Optional: sticky notes for observations and feedback

OVERVIEW

Child Impact Assessment is a participatory tool that helps civic actors evaluate how local decisions, spaces, and policies affect children's safety, mobility, and well-being, enabling evidence-based advocacy for child-friendly urban environments. You can use this tool to:

- Highlight invisible barriers (unsafe crossings, lack of green space, inaccessible schools)
- Advocate for child-friendly design and policies
- Strengthen arguments for better mobility, air quality, and social infrastructure

METHOD

Civic actors can use the Child Impact Assessment independently and creatively, without needing specialists:

Observe: Walk around child-used areas and note safety, access, and comfort issues

Listen: Talk with children, parents, and teachers about what feels safe or missing

Document: Take photos or short videos of key risks and positive examples

Reflect: Ask if it is safe, inclusive, and healthy for every child

Share: Present findings visually or online to raise awareness and advocate for change



Citizen dialogue around Public Transportation Proposal, SymbioCity Colombia

GUIDING NOTES

It is especially important that civic actors share their findings and recommendations with municipal authorities, and advocate child-friendly improvements to ensure changes are made.

DECISION-TREE



WHAT?

A Decision Tree is a visual, flowchart-like tool that maps out possible choices and their potential outcomes, costs, and consequences in a branching structure. It supports transparent and logical decision-making.



WHY?

A Decision Tree brings structure and clarity to the more complex, high-stake decisions, reducing the risk of making irreversible mistakes. It helps you compare alternatives, understand trade-offs, and choose the most balanced and feasible option for your solution.



WHO?

The tool can be used by the leading group and include a mix of participant stakeholders.



WHEN?

The tool is most effective when moving from planning to initiating implementation.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ Large piece of paper (flipchart)
- ✓ Post-it notes
- ✓ Marker pens

OVERVIEW

The Decision Tree is a visual tool that helps civic actors map choices, outcomes, costs, and risks, enabling structured, transparent, and rational decision-making before implementation.

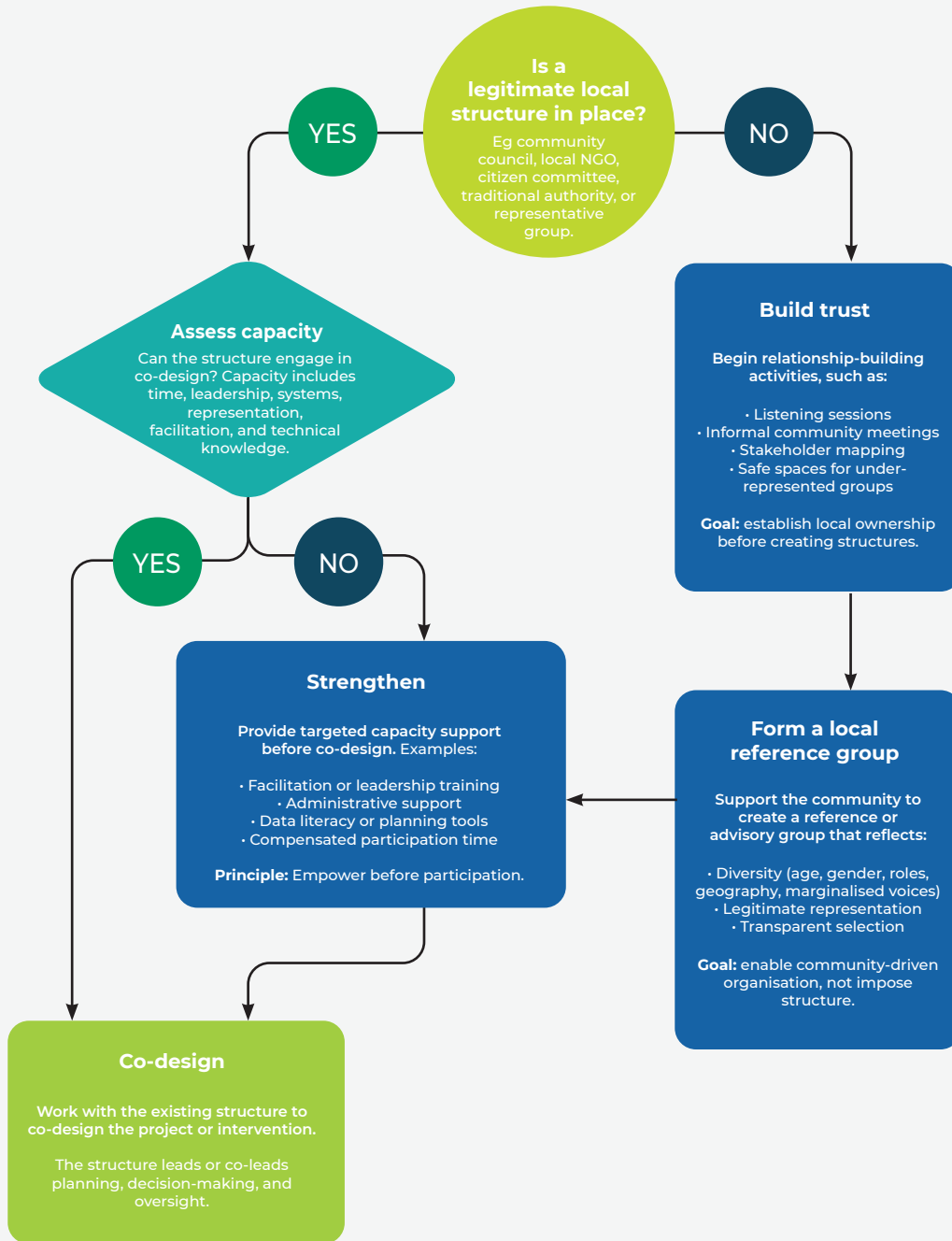
METHOD

- 1 Gather stakeholders to collaboratively identify key decisions
- 2 Map each decision and its possible outcomes as branches on the tree
- 3 Assign probabilities and costs to each outcome
- 4 Calculate and evaluate the expected value of each strategic path
- 5 Identify the option with the best balance of benefits and risks

GUIDING NOTES

The Decision Tree is an effective method for reviewing initial steps, reflecting on earlier choices, and refining decisions to arrive at a well-considered way forward.

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH LOCAL ACTORS



LOCAL FINANCING



WHAT?

Local Financing provides a straightforward screening of the potential sources of financing for your solution. This could be from a variety of sources such as public budgets, partnerships, grants, and community contributions - that support sustainable urban projects and civic initiatives. Most importantly it needs to provide a realistic overview of the likelihood of financing.



WHY?

Some level of financing will be necessary for all solutions, although the scale of financing required will differ markedly between solutions dependent on their scale and scope. By identifying the potential sources and options for financing you will be able to better consider the opportunities for financing from diversified sources and strengthening collaboration between government, citizens, and private actors.



WHO?

Civic actors planning a solution who need to identify realistic funding sources and ensure financial feasibility.



WHEN?

You should consider sources of potential financing throughout your SymbioCity process. This helps ensure that your solutions are realistic, feasible and sustainable.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ Financing options are best organised in a table, ideally using computer software (i.e., Word or Excel) but where unavailable as a paper hard copy.

OVERVIEW

Local Financing is a practical tool that will help you identify and assess potential funding sources - public budgets, partnerships, grants, community contributions, and to ensure that your solution(s) are realistic, feasible, and sustainable. You will need access to information on municipal budgets, grants, CSR programs, and donor opportunities.

METHOD

- 1 Use a straightforward framework to list the types of financing that are relevant to your city and solution, and investigate how realistic each financing type is.

GUIDING NOTES

Identifying and securing financing can be hard work and requires commitment and courage. Don't give up and don't be put off by negative responses.

Financing Type	How It Can Work in Georgia
Public Budgets and Internal Revenues	Municipal budgets or participatory budgeting can allocate funds to citizen-led green and mobility projects i.e. Your Idea to Mayor, GEC Funding. Village support program implemented by municipalities may also provide financial input
Public-Private Dialogue (PPD)	Partner with private businesses to co-finance specific projects. Identify companies that have Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Green Funding mechanisms in their corporate expenditure
Community Contributions and Local Donations	Municipal funding Matching schemes for registered condominiums or crowdfunding for community assets, shared public spaces and mobility initiatives
Foreign Aid, Grants and International Loans	Applications to donor agencies
Market-Based Revenues	Support social enterprises or cooperative markets that fund local infrastructure improvements, i.e. enterprise Georgia the Rural Development agency and GITA

WRITING SOLUTION PROPOSALS



WHAT?

A tool that supports the concise, clear and compelling documentation of your solution for sharing and presentation to others (especially to decision-makers and potential funders by highlighting the solution's unique value and potential impact).



WHY?

Writing a solution proposal is the single most critical step to transforming a community need into an actionable, financed reality.



WHO?

A leading person or team where this is part of your initiative.



WHEN?

Whilst the solution proposal is a final consolidated document it is most useful to build and refine the proposal as you move through the SymbioCity steps.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- ✓ The proposal is best developed on a computer so it can be built and edited as your initiative proceeds.

OVERVIEW

The solution proposal helps civic actors transform a community need into a clear, actionable, and fundable solution by outlining the problem, objectives, implementation plan, budget, and long-term impact. It moves your solution from an idea to a fully defined, cost and finance-ready package.

METHOD

- 1 Develop a sensible framework (or table of contents) for documenting your solution as early in the SymbioCity process as possible
- 2 Make sure you include proposal writing in your workplan, and that you assign the responsibility and timeline for doing so
- 3 Add to and edit your proposal as your SymbioCity initiative proceeds
- 4 Share the draft proposal as it develops to make sure it reflects the views of your stakeholders

GUIDING NOTES

The financing of your solution may require that you set out your proposal in a format required by potential financiers that you approach. Check first to see if a particular format is required and repackage your proposal accordingly.




Developing proposal and implementation plan, SymbioCity Myanmar

- 1 Your solution title and an inspiring pitch
- 2 What problem/challenge your solution addresses
- 3 What it will achieve (goal and objectives)
- 4 How it will be implemented (the tasks required and who will do it – your implementation plan)
- 5 How you will track results (monitoring and evaluation)
- 6 The budget for implementation and maintenance
- 7 The sustainability and long-term impact

AI GENERATED TOOLS

As Artificial Intelligence continues to develop at speed, there will be applications that will support you in your work. This is a sample of the AI tools available:

URBANISTAI


 An AI-driven platform that enables residents to visually modify urban environments in real-time, transforming them from passive commentators to active place-makers

Key Features: Interactive visualization of urban changes, real-time modifications, and community engagement tools

✓ **Use Case:** Ideal for participatory urban planning and community-driven design processes

▶ <https://urbanaai.fr/>

ARCHIVINCI AI URBAN DESIGN GENERATOR


 A tool that transforms architectural sketches into photorealistic urban designs, aiding in master planning and landscape visualization

Key Features: Generates realistic renders from sketches, supports zoning logic, and integrates environmental simulations

✓ **Use Case:** Suitable for architects and urban planners seeking to visualize design concepts quickly

▶ <https://www.archivinci.com/ai-urban-design>

URBANSIM

 An AI-driven platform for sustainable urban planning and development,


incorporating interactions between land use, transportation, economy, and environment

Key Features: Simulates urban growth patterns, assesses policy impacts, and supports long-term planning strategies

✓ **Use Case:** Useful for policymakers and urban planners focusing on sustainable development

▶ <https://www.urbansim.com/>

COMMUNITYVIZ


 Extensions to ArcGIS GIS software, providing analysis and visualization tools for urban planning, land-use planning, and transportation planning

Key Features: 3D visualization, scenario planning, and impact assessment

✓ **Use Case:** Beneficial for planners integrating GIS data into urban design processes

▶ <https://communityviz.com/>

IMAGINEART

 A generative AI creative suite developed by Vyro.ai, providing tools for creating digital images, video, music, and voice media

Key Features: High-fidelity image generation, full editing suite, and multi-modal creative tools

✓ **Use Case:** Useful for visualizing urban design concepts and creating engaging presentations

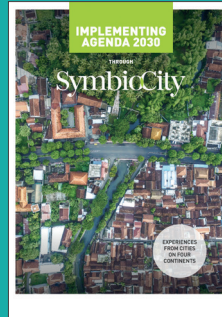
▶ <https://www.imagine.art/>



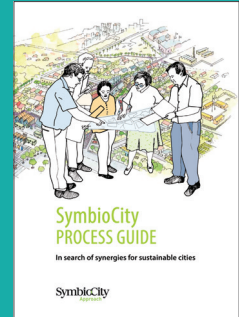
Rustaveli Avenue: Tbilisi's main artery, shaped by old and new structures

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

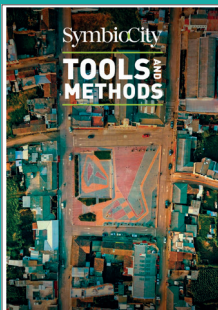
Check out the SymbioCity.org website for all links and further information about SymbioCity



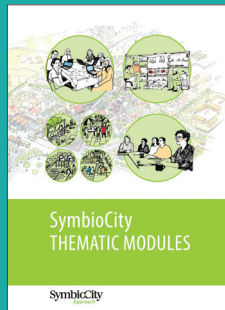
This summarises SALAR's support to cities in 20 countries to plan and develop more sustainable and inclusive urban areas and provides inspiration and tools to shape the cities of tomorrow



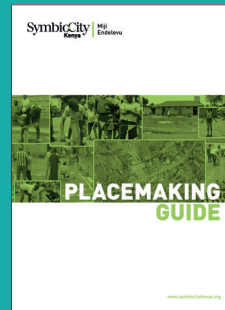
A guiding manual on the SymbioCity process which offers detailed guidelines, practical advice, methods and tools to carry out a SymbioCity project



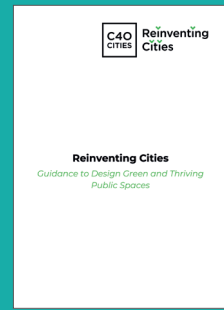
A practical compilation of the most commonly used SymbioCity methods and tools



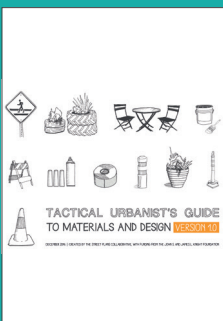
Guidance on various themes including gender, participation, urban poverty reduction and local economic development



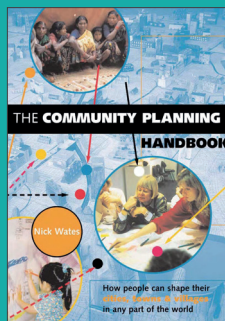
A placemaking guide for civic actors in how to create good and successful public spaces



An inspirational collection of cases on the design and implementation of green public open spaces – classic integrated solutions



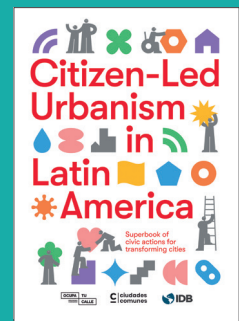
Everything you need to know and to implement your tactical solution, including very practical advice on the materials you may need, and some inspiring applications



An inspiring on-line collection of methods, tools, templates, scenarios and case studies of community-led initiatives



A collection of methods, tools and templates that support sustainable urban development from a girl's perspective



A fascinating and inspiring catalogue of practical and inspiring citizen-led action from across Latin America and the Caribbean

IMPROVE YOUR CITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

A TOOLKIT FOR INCLUSIVE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN GEORGIA

Georgia's cities are alive - and so are the people who can shape them. Yes, challenges exist: chaotic urban development, car-dominated streets, and gaps in public-oriented accessible free spaces. But every challenge is an opportunity to transform our streets, neighbourhoods, and cities into places where people thrive.

Sustainable urban development starts with you. Citizens, community groups, and local champions have the power to create real change, care for your surroundings, and build cities you are proud of.

The SymbioCity Toolkit is your guide. Packed with real examples, practical tips, and easy-to-use tools, it turns inspiration into action - right here in your Samezoblo.

This SymbioCity Toolkit is your journey from awareness to action!