



SymbioCity THEMATIC MODULES

***SymbioCity* THEMATIC MODULES**

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INTRODUCTION

SymbioCity THEMATIC MODULES

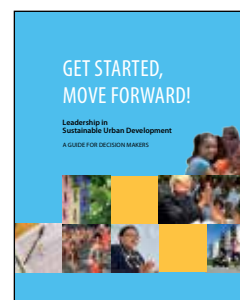
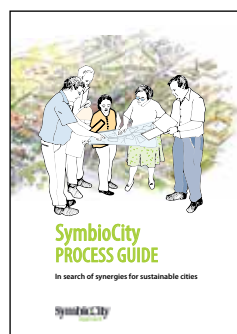
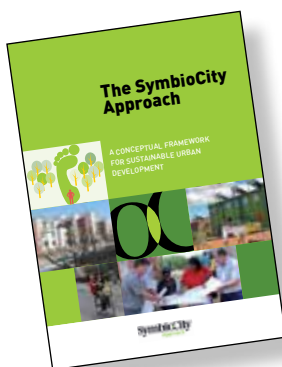
The *SymbioCity Approach* offers the following **handbooks** to guide the facilitation of integrated and sustainable urban development

- > The *SymbioCity Approach* – A Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Urban Development
- > The *SymbioCity* Process Guide – In search for Synergies for Sustainable Cities
- > Get Started, Move Forward – Leadership in Sustainable Urban Development
- > Developing Sustainable Cities in Sweden

The following four thematic **modules** aim to enhance the capacity of project managers, facilitators and target groups implementing the *SymbioCity Approach*

- > Gender Equality in Urban Development
- > Urban Poverty Reduction
- > Participation and Communication in Urban Development
- > Urban Local Economic Development

These modules provide guidance on how to integrate these themes in *SymbioCity Approach* projects and capacity development processes. Each module covers why the theme is important, key issues and objectives, the *SymbioCity Approach* to the theme, and additional reference materials.



GENDER EQUALITY IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT



WHY IS GENDER EQUALITY IMPORTANT IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT?

One can argue for gender equality from a value-based and a pragmatic standpoint. A Human Rights perspective holds that women and men, and girls and boys¹ have equal rights as human beings. A pragmatic perspective argues that gender equality improves organisational performance, and offers examples to prove this. Both arguments support gender mainstreaming, and those who do not see gender equality as an aim in itself may accept the pragmatic argument.

The human rights argument is supported by international and national legislation, while the pragmatic argument is supported by the increasing involvement of women in technical fields (e.g. waste management, water and sanitation, environment, etc.).

Pragmatic reasons for gender equality in urban planning include

- > Women and men have different needs, experience and interests, and good urban planning needs to consider and involve both
- > Gender equality increases the legitimacy of and support for municipal institutions and services, improves the quality of services, decreases citizens' complaints, increases willingness to pay for services and decreases corruption
- > The financial costs to society of gender inequality are high, e.g. unequal access to education reduces skills availability and economic development. Research shows that improved gender equality contributes to economic growth² through female entrepreneurship increased labour productivity and capital investment. Studies confirm that gender equality has a broad and positive effect on economic growth and social development³. However, evidence that economic growth contributes to gender equality is not as convincing⁴.

Human rights arguments include

- > The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1947) Article 2, states that »Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.«
- > Most countries have ratified the 1979 Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as the CEDAW Optional Protocol, which enables individuals to take a country to the UN International Court of Justice. Signatories cannot bypass or circumvent the Convention with weaker national gender legislation.
- > Some regional conventions reiterate or detail gender rights, and various UN Security

¹ Some people claim to be a third gender (e.g. in Tunisia the youth have proclaimed themselves to be a third gender) or third inter-sex (e.g. groups in India and Turkey). Knowledge of and sensitivity to such views is important in gender training and communication.

² IDS working paper 417

³ Evidence for action, Gender equality and Economic growth, Chatham House 2010

⁴ Gender Equality and Economic Growth: Is there a Win-Win? IDS Working paper 417

- Council Resolutions support gender equality, e.g. Resolutions 1325 and 1820.
- > Various political (though not legally binding) agreements have been signed by a vast majority of states, e.g. the Cairo and Beijing Action Platforms.
- > Many countries have Gender Equality legislation and/or include equal gender rights in legislation in other areas, e.g. inheritance, land, property, employment, health, etc.).

Lack of awareness of basic Human Rights, and laws and cultural norms that violate the Rule of Law are common, and impede women's access to their rights, especially for those in disadvantaged groups and communities.

THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GENDER EQUALITY MODULE

The purpose of this theme in the *SymbioCity* planning process is to strengthen local government's contribution to social well-being by improving public services and ensuring equal access to services for all citizens. Objectives of the Gender Equality theme are

- > Politicians understand and apply a gender equality perspective
- > Politicians actively promote gender equality in urban planning
- > Officials understand gender equality, and apply it in planning and daily work
- > Facilitators, trainers and managers facilitate gender mainstreaming.

KEY GENDER EQUALITY ISSUES

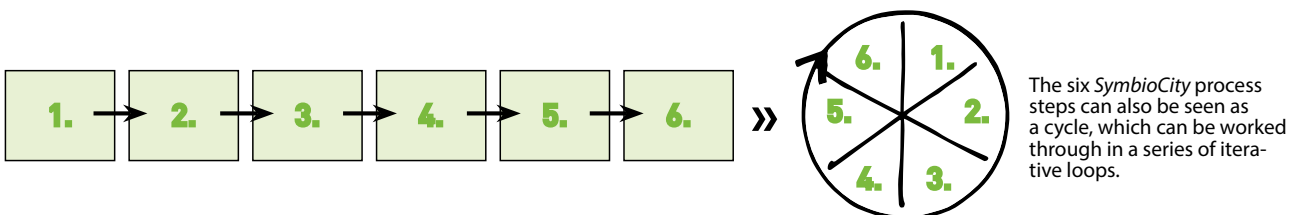
Gender issues in urban development include unequal resource allocations in planning, unequal or discriminatory service delivery, and city planning based on men's perceptions and use of infrastructure and services. Mainstreaming gender ensures that planning and services are equitable, evenly distributed, and of equal quality for men and women.

Challenges that need to be addressed include

- > a lack of knowledge and awareness of gender inequalities and stereotypes, and how these affect urban planning, and that men and women have different experiences, and tend to use the city in different ways
- > a lack of will to mainstream gender, and negative assumptions about gender equality
- > a lack of means and methods to address gender inequality, and the belief that achieving gender equality will be too expensive and time-consuming
- > poor urban populations are very heterogeneous, and gender mainstreaming requires addressing diverse groups of men and women, as gender cuts across other groups (e.g. defined by ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, etc.)
- > gender can be forgotten when other concerns compete for attention.

Key areas to address in urban development in relation to gender equality include

- > access to public services. e.g. transport, water and sanitation and healthcare
- > land tenure
- > livelihoods, and employment and self-employment constraints
- > urban planning, housing and business development.



THE *SymbioCity* Approach TO GENDER EQUALITY IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The following gender questions should be addressed in a *SymbioCity* project.

STEP 1: DEFINE AND ORGANISE THE PROCESS

- > How can you ensure that both men and women are included in the cross-functional team? Is your recruitment base gender equal? Are women and men educated in the required fields? Are women promoted to the same extent as men, e.g. to management positions? Are women and men approached equally, and in an equally motivating way?
- > How can you ensure that Steering and Reference Groups are gender balanced? Are those who select members gender aware, or do they need gender training?
- > Analyse the roles of men and women citizens and plan stakeholder participation activities at times that allow both men and women to attend.

STEP 2: DIAGNOSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

- > How can you ensure that the needs, challenges and ideas of men and women are heard and included in the diagnosis? Ensure gender equality in work and focus groups (Some discussions can have men and women in separate groups)
- > How can you ensure that resource persons are both women and men?
- > How can you ensure the analysis considers who has historically taken decisions and how this has affected the outcomes? (e.g. Were the needs of women and men considered in transport planning?)
- > How can you ensure that the environmental impact analysis takes into account that women, men and children are not necessarily affected by environment in the same way? (e.g. pregnant women, children and the elderly are more at risk, and women often care for sick family members).
- > When analysing a 'problem tree', consider who is involved. Who are the main polluters? Who are the main drivers of decisions that are unsustainable?
- > When identifying causes
 - disaggregate statistics according to sex, age, ethnicity, etc.
 - What are the general norms in relation to gender? What are men and women expected to do/not to do and how does this affect causes of problems?
 - Consider who controls, has access to and benefits from municipal planning and resources, e.g. male or female civil servants, politicians, enterprise owners, etc.? (Resources include funds, time, land/property, education, etc.).

STEP 3: SPECIFY OBJECTIVES

- > How can you ensure that group work takes men's and women's needs and views equally into account (equal representation and equal participation)?
- > Ensure that all % and # indicators related to people are disaggregated (e.g. # of female and # of male participants, % women and % men using public transport)
- > Build the words women and men into objectives and targets wherever possible, to remind people that we are more than just 'people'.
- > How can you motivate working groups to analyse their proposals from a gender perspective? (Consider training, what questions to ask, group composition, etc.)

STEP 4: DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

- > How can you ensure that alternative solutions include a gender sensitive analysis? Consider questions such as - Who will benefit directly, e.g. financially? Who are the users? Who may be negatively affected?
- > Consider mitigation measures to address inequalities, e.g. in cases of resettlement or economic displacement, who is more likely to receive compensation?

- > What multi-disciplinary perspectives have been considered (socio-economic and gender)?

STEP 5: ANALYSE IMPACTS

- > How have women been involved in the assessment?
- > Does the assessment include differentiated potential impacts on men and women, youth and elderly, different ethnic groups, etc.?
- > What conflicts exist between social and economic objectives?

STEP 6: IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

- > How will women and men participate equally in implementation and follow-up activities?



POSSIBLE METHODS AND TOOLS TO USE INCLUDE

- the **SALAR Checklist for Gender Impact Analysis for Political Decision Making** shows the consequences for men and women of gender equality or inequality in representation, distribution of power and resources, and service delivery
- **Gender disaggregated statistics**
- **SALAR Assessment Template for Gender Equality Work in Organisations**
- **Gender Budgeting**
- **Local-to-Local Dialogue** (e.g. in Kenya, elected officials meet face-to-face with people in the communities they represent, and engage in a decision-making process without setting the agenda themselves.)
- **Gender analysis of municipal service delivery** (i.e. where are gender inequalities substantial?) using the **3R/4R method**, or **SALAR Checklist for Gender Analysis**
- **The Sociotop Guide** – Planning Public Open Space with sociotop maps - see www.Jamstallt.nu/samhallsplanering for examples
- Gender considerations in Housing/Waste Management/Market Rehabilitation/Urban Disaster Assessment/Gender-Based Violence.



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URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESS POVERTY?

The way cities are planned, developed and function has a fundamental impact on the quality of life and productivity of their inhabitants. Properly planned and managed cities and towns are places where people meet, work and access public services, and enjoy health, safety, comfort and quality of life.

Insufficient and ineffective urban systems and functions both cause and reinforce poverty, while urban improvements can directly reduce poverty by improving access to services, resources, markets and employment. The *SymbioCity Approach* addresses urban poverty by

- > empowering the urban poor by involving them in planning, designing and implementing urban improvements
- > ensuring that the vulnerabilities, needs and capabilities of the urban poor are factored into the design of policies, plans and projects
- > setting inclusive objectives for urban development
- > designing solutions that respond to the varied needs of different groups
- > minimising and managing social risks to project implementation and for vulnerable groups.

THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION MODULE

The purpose of this module is to enhance a city or town's capacity to contribute to poverty reduction through urban development by

- > better understanding of income and non-income aspects of urban poverty
- > highlighting the links between urban improvements and poverty reduction, and the potential of urban development to reduce poverty
- > improving access for the urban poor to services, land, housing, employment, etc.
- > identifying pro-poor solutions to urban challenges and maximizing the positive impacts of urban projects for the poor
- > finding ways to minimize potential negative impacts of urban projects on the poor, such as relocation, loss of income, etc.
- > contributing to social inclusion
- > engaging citizens, and especially the poor, in the *SymbioCity* process of identifying needs, developing solutions and implementing projects.

KEY URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION ISSUES

Urban poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, with both income and non-income dimensions. Poverty is defined by a lack of access to essential goods, services, assets and opportunities. Common features of urban poverty include

- > **Reliance on a cash economy** – The poor in cities face a high cost of living, including the cost of housing, transport and food, which makes them more vulnerable to fluctuations in income.
- > **Insecurity of tenure** – In informal settlements, insufficient space, low-quality housing and unsanitary conditions increase health problems. The lack of secure tenure makes the urban poor vulnerable to eviction or the destruction of their dwellings, and they are often excluded from political and planning processes.
- > **Poor access to basic services** – Access to water, sanitation, waste services, transport, education and health facilities is often insufficient, of poor quality, and relatively expensive.
- > **Poor health and exposure to environmental hazards and risks** – The poor are often located in areas exposed to environmental pollution and natural hazards such as landslides, earthquakes and floods. Due to higher densities, poor urban communities are more vulnerable to communicable diseases.
- > **Social fragmentation** – The social security of the urban poor may be affected by a lack of community and inter-household protection mechanisms, which increases their vulnerability to sudden external shocks.
- > **Higher risk of crime and violence** – This is partially due to low social cohesion in some poor urban communities.
- > **Lower mobility** – Being less mobile, the poor have less access to the opportunities available in a city, including for education and employment.
- > **Informality** – Excluded from many parts of the formal system, the poor rely on informal services (e.g. informal transport, waste collection and housing). The informal sector is an important source of employment for the poor, but is characterised by poor labour conditions and exploitation.

Urban areas are characterised by high and rising levels of inequality, and many poor people are excluded from participation in social and economic activities. Segregation between social groups is an increasing challenge for cities, and is caused both by actual (physical) and perceived (psychological) barriers. The urban poor suffer social and institutional exclusion and disempowerment due to the following

- > **Illegitimacy of residence and work** – Many urban poor live in informal settlements and engage in casual and informal sector work, outside the reach of policy and regulatory frameworks regarding service provision, housing, land, labour rights, and social security systems. Many experience institutional and social exclusion in two key areas of life – work and residence.
- > **Poor channels of information** – The urban poor lack sufficient access to information on essential matters, e.g. jobs, and their legal right to services.
- > **Exclusion as citizens** – The urban poor are not granted the rights and responsibilities that go with being citizens. They are often assumed to be passive consumers rather than active participants with something to contribute. Simply asking the poor to express their needs and demands is insufficient to empower them. They must also participate and assume the responsibilities that go with being citizens.
- > **Negative contact with authorities** – Government policies can have an important positive impact on poverty alleviation, but the poor often experience the state negatively, as a complex bureaucracy that attempts to regulate their activities without understanding their needs. Due to the illegitimacy of their residence and work, the urban poor are vulnerable to corruption, e.g. having to bribe police and other public

officials to be allowed to continue their income-generating activities, or to maintain illegal connections to services.

- **Geographic isolation** – There is a trade-off for the urban poor between the cost of housing and long distances from city centres. Communities on the cheaper outskirts of cities are remote from job opportunities and urban services.

THE SymbioCity Approach TO URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION

The *SymbioCity Approach* to developing inclusive projects that reduce poverty includes the following measures.

STEP 1: DEFINE AND ORGANISE AN INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Ensure that the perspectives of urban poor groups are included in the project, e.g. by involving local community groups (NGOs/CBOs)
- Identify groups that are affected by, or affect the project, and ensure **representation of the poor** in planning and development
- Define the **role of the urban poor** in the project structure
- Develop a strategy for **transparent two-way communication** during the project.

STEP 2: DIAGNOSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

The purpose of the diagnosis is to develop an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the urban poor, and to identify how the project can address these. The involvement of the urban poor themselves in this process is essential. A participatory poverty analysis should include the following key questions

- What is the nature and magnitude of urban poverty (income and non-income)?
- What is the geography of urban poverty in the city?
- What is the quality of and extent of access to services, employment, mobility, education, markets, etc.?
- What social, environmental and economic problems affect the urban poor?
- What coping mechanisms have they adopted?
- What is the role of the informal sector?
- In what ways are the poor able to influence public policy and decisions?
- What are the social assets and social capital of the poor?
- What is their situation in terms of safety, violence, crime, cultural conflict, etc.?

The diagnosis should identify key stakeholders, organisations and initiatives relevant to urban poverty reduction at local and national levels, and assess the legal and institutional challenges facing the poor, including corruption.

STEP 3: SPECIFY OBJECTIVES, INDICATORS AND TARGETS

The **needs and priorities** of the urban poor should be identified via consultation and participatory poverty analysis, to **develop inclusive objectives** and indicators for poverty reduction.

STEP 4: DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

Developing inclusive solutions requires actions on many levels, e.g. city, community, household and individual levels. When developing alternative proposals, consider

- different ways of structuring plans and projects to eliminate bottlenecks and ensure that projects benefit the poor
- the affordability, accessibility and acceptability of project benefits
- various ways to engage the urban poor in the urban development process.

STEP 5: ANALYSE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

For each potential solution, analyse the expected positive and negative impacts on the urban poor

- > Consider impacts on livelihood, income, housing, mobility, social inclusion and vulnerability, and access to services, markets, employment, health and social services in both formal and informal sectors
- > Revise the design of plans and projects to maximize benefits and minimize negative impacts for the poor.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Implementation strategies should consider the role of the urban poor in implementing proposed improvement projects. Consider the community not just as a beneficiary, but also as an active partner and participant.

- > **Maintain engagement during implementation of projects and plans** – Plan communication with target communities, and ensure transparency and openness during project implementation. Involve local communities in project implementation, and in operation and maintenance.
- > **Strengthen the urban governance framework and capacity of institutions** to address the needs of the poor effectively.
- > Consider options for **Community Driven Development**, where local government facilitates processes driven by communities themselves, which complement local government initiatives. .



FURTHER READING AND REFERENCES

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PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT



WHY ARE PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION IMPORTANT?

Urban development is about people and their lives. People grow up, live, work, consume, access services and interact in cities and towns. They should therefore be involved in shaping the development of their urban environment, and the participation of diverse stakeholders contributes to good urban planning, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Participation also contributes to conflict prevention and management. Urban development often includes radical changes, and resistance to change is a natural reaction. It is thus important that urban decision-makers are open and honest, listen to concerns, and explain decisions. They should involve citizens and relevant organisations in understanding the need to transform the city, and in diagnosing problems, developing plans and implementing projects.

Participation is closely linked to internal and external communication. Effective communication will counter misunderstandings and rumours, prevent conflicts, share information, and provide important input to discussions, analyses and plans. Communication and information sharing are essential for transparent and accountable governance.

KEY COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION ISSUES

The *SymbioCity Approach* emphasises participation and communication as essential means to realise

- > **Human rights** – People have the right to be consulted on decisions that affect their lives, and to be informed about the basis for decisions.
- > **Democracy** – Transparency and clear communication are essential if people are to hold their representatives and leaders accountable for their decisions. Participation closes the gap between citizens and government institutions.
- > **Effectiveness and responsiveness** – When citizens and other stakeholders are actively engaged in urban development, plans and projects will be better and more responsive to their real needs.

It is often problematic to define ‘**the community**’ as a stakeholder in urban environments with significantly diverse cultural, social and economic groups. For example, there may be wealthy, middle-class, and poor households in the same neighbourhood, and/or people who belong to different ethnic or religious communities.

Be prepared for **the complexity** of issues and conflicts of interests. In most cities, there is social segregation between high and low income neighbourhoods, and a divergence of class interests. If the definition of 'community' is too broad, divergence may be greater than convergence of interests. If it is too narrow, this may even serve to divide and weaken the disadvantaged.

Practical constraints to participation are often more prevalent in cities than in rural areas. For example, work and travel patterns may require people to be away from home for most of the day, with a risk that commuters are not involved.

There are different levels of participation, depending on the purpose and step in the process, e.g.

- > **Dissemination of information** in the initial stages, to establish contact and increase awareness
- > **Consultation** when proposals are presented and stakeholders submit comments
- > **Participation** when alternatives are considered and active inputs are expected
- > **Mobilisation** when stakeholders are encouraged to participate, e.g. in implementation, and operation and maintenance.

Inclusive participation, active citizenship and stakeholder involvement enable citizens to become '**makers and shapers**' rather than '**users and choosers**' of interventions designed by others. There are many mechanisms and **methods for participation**, and what works in one context might be ineffective in another. Possible methods include reference or focus groups, town meetings, surveys and questionnaires, advisory groups, citizens' proposals, website-based input, exhibitions with feedback mechanisms, etc.

Communication is more than just making information available - it should actively engage and inform people, so that they can ask questions, contribute and give feedback. The aim is to develop healthy **two-way communication**.

There are various means and processes for communicating. The needs of the project, the situation and the desired outcome should determine which are used for particular purposes. Communication can be **verbal** or **nonverbal**, **written** or **visual**, or some combination of these, depending on the context.

There are many potential **barriers to good communication**, which you should be aware of when engaging with *SymbioCity* stakeholders. Some are interpersonal and others are contextual. Interpersonal barriers include

- > **Fixed perceptions and thinking** – a different standpoint or view on a matter; fixed views and ideas; only hearing what you agree with; only hearing or focusing on what you disagree with
- > **Negative feeling and attitudes** – *Prejudice* – »I know them/what they are going to say«; *Antipathy or fear* – »I don't like these people and/or what they are saying«; *Doubt or distrust* – »I don't know if I can believe them«; *Arrogance* – »I know best, so why should I listen«; *Lack of confidence* – »I don't know what to say, or how to say it
- > **Unhelpful intentions and expectations** – *A lack of interest or commitment* – »This is just a waste of time«; *A contrary or conflicting intention or agenda* – »Whatever they say, I intend to get my way«; *Lack of confidence* – »I'll never understand this stuff!«

When aware of these personal and interpersonal barriers to communication, we can guard against them in ourselves, and recognise and address them in others. An **open and honest** dialogue creates opportunities to clear up misunderstandings, and build relationships and understanding that support a common and positive urban future.

Objective contextual barriers can also distort or diminish communication, including limited ability to communicate in a particular language, cultural differences, different educational levels, power differences, illiteracy, and lack of understanding of a specialized, technical or unfamiliar subject.

It is important to define the **purpose** of participation and communication. Are you looking for understanding and knowledge, or ownership and action? The purpose will determine how you proceed and the method needed in each situation.

Don't assume that people understand or **share the same view** of sustainability. For politicians, officials, citizens and other stakeholders to participate in sustainable urban development, they first need to be aware of why it is necessary and what it entails. Then they need to be involved in two-way communication regarding plans and projects, so they can give input and feedback, and actively participate.

The overall issues of sustainable urban development are global, complex and long-term, but the connections to local ways of living need to be understood. It is crucial to raise awareness of global issues and local programmes and projects, and their intended benefits. **Communicate to educate and involve** the public and specific stakeholders, not as a public relations exercise.

Good two-way communication is the key to building **relationships and cooperation** in learning, planning and working together. The objectives of communication vary in specific situations, e.g. to promote awareness and understanding, gain agreement and support, or plan and organise action.

Communication is not only about talking to impart information or a particular message, but also listening in order to understand different stakeholders' views and needs. **The media** are particularly important for communication and raising awareness.

Planning processes can generate a large volume and variety of **documentation**, which needs to be managed and accessible, including records of meetings and workshops, proposals, plans and reports, presentations, maps, photos, illustrations, videos, reference documents and correspondence. This material (both digital and hard copy) needs to be organised so it is easy to find, access and distribute.

Knowledge management is about how to select, prioritise, order, analyse, summarise and communicate information for different purposes and audiences. Knowledge management based on ICT enables access to information resources and sharing of learning. It is important to distinguish between data, information, knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

The purpose of this theme is to enhance city capacity to manage effective participation and communication in urban development by

- > improving understanding of the links between participation and communication, and sustainable urban development
- > introducing adaptable approaches to participation and communication that serve different purposes
- > developing capacity to apply a strategic approach to participation and communication
- > promoting multi-stakeholder involvement and participation in all *SymbioCity* processes.

THE *SymbioCity* Approach TO PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

The following approaches to participation and communication can be used to develop inclusive *SymbioCity* plans and projects.

Develop a **strategic and proactive approach** to communication and participation, by asking

- > Whom do we need to communicate with and why?
- > What will be the best means of communicating internally and externally?
- > How can we enable two-way communication?
- > What are the intended outcomes of our overall communication strategy?
- > Who will be responsible for communication and participation?
- > How will we monitor, evaluate and improve communication processes and outcomes?
- > How can we ensure quality documentation and knowledge management?

When developing a participation strategy, ask

- > Whom do we need to involve in the *SymbioCity* process, and why? (individuals, groups and organisations) What can they contribute?
- > Who represents poorer communities and vulnerable groups? How can we get them on board?
- > What will be the most suitable methods for participation in the different process steps, and for different stakeholders?
- > What are the intended outcomes of our overall participation strategy?
- > Who will be responsible for what?
- > How will we monitor and evaluate participation of different stakeholders?

When **organising a *SymbioCity* process**, first define the categories of stakeholders, and then the selection criteria for identifying who will be directly involved in working groups, and who will be consulted or included in each step.

Identify and **involve change agents** who can lead and inspire others and act as change catalysts and facilitators. Network and get to know influential people in education, business, political groups, civil society, religious organisations, media, etc.

Understand the needs of different stakeholders in order to communicate effectively with them. Consider their prior knowledge, level of education, information needs, and whether they are skeptical and hostile or open and supportive. Always be open and clear about 'the rules of the game' and what stakeholders can and cannot influence.

Communicate by using **practical examples** that awaken understanding and engage people's feelings. It is not enough to talk about a plan or goals as abstract ideals. Share success stories, good practices, and facts and figures in a graphic way to gain attention and real interest.

Use a wide **range of media** and forms of communication to inform and involve different stakeholders, e.g. workshops and seminars, site visits, interactive presentations, exhibitions and posters, articles and advertisements, documentary films, case studies and websites.

Participate in forums and discussions, and **make presentations** about the *SymbioCity* process and urban development issues whenever possible. Prepare and tailor-make presentations according to the purpose and target group. Presentations are made for a variety of reasons, but all aim to convey a message, and some intend to initiate dialogue or action.

Limit the use of PowerPoint presentations. People often prefer more visual and imaginative presentations using pictures, diagrams and illustrations, which make any presentation more interesting and easier to grasp. The reading of PowerPoint presentations consisting of lists of points is boring and ineffective. Rather use slides that illustrate problems and solutions graphically, with as few key words and phrases as captions.

For each of the six steps in the *SymbioCity Approach* process, consider how best to use communication and participation to ensure balanced inclusion of different stakeholders, and to improve the quality of the outcomes. Use the most effective, efficient and practical participation methods, considering cost, time and relevance, including the following.

STEP 1: ORGANISE THE PROCESS

- > Develop strategies for communication and participation
- > Identify key stakeholders to involve directly or indirectly, and in what ways.

STEP 2: DIAGNOSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

- > Analyse the needs of different stakeholders by involving them directly
- > Be open about the purpose and scope of work when communicating
- > Use a wide range of media to describe and disseminate information about the urban environment and various aspects of the diagnosis.

STEP 3: SPECIFY OBJECTIVES, INDICATORS AND TARGETS

- > Involve key stakeholders in defining objectives and indicators
- > Develop indicators that people see as relevant, and which are useful for communication and mobilisation.

STEP 4: DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

- > Prepare convincing and graphic presentations of proposals using different media and methods, and consider the interests and concerns of different target groups.

STEP 5: ANALYSE IMPACTS

- > Include affected groups in defining possible negative and positive impacts of proposed alternatives and interventions
- > Document and describe the impacts of different proposals systematically, and communicate them to decision-makers and other stakeholders.

STEP 6: DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- > Develop communication and participation strategies for the implementation phase
- > Actively involve key stakeholders in defining the strategy. .

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URBAN LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The purpose of this module is to outline an approach to Local Economic Development (LED) that promotes holistic, integrated, equitable and sustainable urban development that delivers an improved quality of life for all citizens, especially the urban poor. The module focuses on the role of local government in enabling LED in urban contexts, while recognizing the importance of LED in rural localities, and urban-rural linkages.

WHY IS LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPORTANT?

The pace of urbanization and the contribution of cities to national economies have increased rapidly in recent decades. As a result, urban planning and management has become more complex, and the local level of government more significant. Pressures for decentralization also increase, as city governments demand more powers and functions in order to respond to urban challenges.

Whilst cities offer opportunities for economies of scale in both service delivery and economic activity, they also create massive environmental footprints, and challenges for the urban poor.

Sustainable local economic development is a key goal for city managers, as cities need to meet the immediate and future social and economic needs of expanding populations. This includes planning and management of water and sanitation, energy, transport, communication and waste management systems; trade infrastructure such as ports; social services such as health, education and social welfare; and support services to attract, retain and grow business and employment.

City managers need to understand that all the functions of local government affect either positively or negatively on the local economy. The more effective, efficient and inclusive a city is, the greater its potential for economic development and job creation.

Role of local government in LED

Local economic development ensures prosperous cities with districts and companies that provide sustainable jobs, and economic services and opportunities to citizens. Effective LED also attracts investment and enhances the resilience of a city to external shocks. The role of city managers in enabling LED is to

- > plan and manage the local government administration, budgeting and planning processes that promote social and economic development and prioritise the needs of the poor
- > facilitate integrated urban spatial, land-use and service planning processes to improve urban efficiencies and sustainability

- > leverage external resources through partnerships with the private, public (other levels of government and parastatals) and civil society sectors, and national and global institutions that finance development
- > facilitate broad stakeholder participation, engagement and buy-in in the design, implementation and monitoring of LED initiatives
- > adopt a sustainable approach to LED and urban management
- > provide an enabling environment for business investment and growth through visionary leadership, policy and planning certainty, and good infrastructure and service delivery.

KEY LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The contexts in which local governments operate, particularly in developing countries, are often contested, conflictual and uncertain. This may make effective LED facilitation by city managers difficult, and approaches to LED need to be realistic and appropriate. In conflict-ridden contexts, it may only be possible to undertake single initiatives that build trust and hope, and address immediate needs.

In more peaceful contexts, it should be possible to implement comprehensive LED strategies and approaches. Over time, the following cross-cutting requirements should be put in place to strengthen the role of local government in LED.

1. An enabling legal, policy and financing environment

In many contexts, the roles, responsibilities and financing arrangements of local government are still developing, based on recent decentralisation policies. Local authorities have to comply with new legislation and policies and take on new responsibilities and functions, including delivery of new services. This makes the local government environment complex, challenging and at times conflict-ridden. Local authorities cannot change national legislation and policies that inhibit LED, and generally lack sufficient resources and financing from internal and national sources.

Unclear legislation and policies regarding local government and variable commitment to decentralisation also limit the powers, functions and finances local authorities require for LED. Where national governments are hesitant to relinquish control, the ability of local government to manage urban planning and service delivery is limited. In some instances, centralization is to retain political power, rather than to improve service delivery.

2. Good governance by capacitated local government

External and internal factors limiting the capacity of local government to promote LED include

- > a complex or incoherent legal and policy environment
- > inadequate government financing and weak revenue-raising capacity due to high poverty levels and low levels of formal economic activity
- > managerial and technical skills shortages and appointments based on political patronage rather than experience and qualifications
- > authoritarian or weak management styles inhibit staff creativity and innovation
- > corruption, wasteful expenditure and lack of accountability and consequences
- > a lack of visionary leadership
- > insufficient national and regional government laws, policies, political will and capacity to monitor and support local government.

3. Bulk infrastructure and service delivery capacity

Many cities lack the basic infrastructure required to support LED, e.g. there are massive bulk infrastructure and service delivery backlogs, due to rapid urbanization. Cities need to prioritise investment in infrastructure and services, as reliable and sufficient water, energy, sanitation, communication and transport services are essential to enable LED.

Many cities face the reality that their budgets are completely inadequate relative to demands. Many also face natural resource constraints, e.g. water and energy supply shortages. Innovative and sustainable resource solutions are required to address these challenges and ensure effective services that support and enable LED.

4. Integrated urban economic development planning

A major challenge for effective urban management is fragmented urban planning, due to a lack of coherent policy and an integrated planning framework. Planning is done in departmental silos and at different levels of government, without sufficient coordination and integration. Local government is often by-passed by other levels of government, resulting in uncoordinated development, duplication of effort and inefficient use of resources. Where local authorities are treated as the weakest level of government, they cannot co-ordinate government-wide planning and investm

5. Prosperous and networked local firms

Enabling LED requires an appreciation of the structural constraints and competitive gaps in the formal economy. The informal sector constitutes an important share of local economies, providing half to three quarters of all employment in developing countries. This sector has to compensate for jobs shed by the formal economy and for inadequate service delivery by local authorities, e.g. waste collection.

Challenges in the informal economy include unsafe working conditions and labour vulnerability, and a lack of income security, employment benefits and social protection. Local authorities mostly neglect the informal sector, and little data is available on its contribution to GDP, the characteristics of actors, and the productivity of small and medium enterprises. Data collection is an important first step to understand and address the vulnerabilities in the informal sector.

Many authorities even try to suppress informal activities, e.g. by evicting informal traders from urban spaces, which relocates rather than addresses the problem. It is essential to recognize the vital entrepreneurial and profitable role of the informal sector in creating employment and growing local economies. Removing bureaucratic constraints and facilitating formal and informal sector dialogue and cooperation can enhance economic development and provide incentives to grow and formalize the informal activities and enterprises.

6. Social Capital

Levels of trust amongst key stakeholders are often low due to

- > poor performance of governments, and raised expectations and failed promises
- > a lack of transparency and accountability in the public and private sectors
- > political and ethnic divisions, and gender and cultural discrimination
- > social ills such as drug trafficking and illegal economic activities.

In order for LED initiatives to succeed, inclusive and transparent stakeholder participation processes need to address these issues. The relationship between public and private sectors needs to be strengthened to create an enabling environment for LED, in which the private sector will invest and create jobs in a sustainable manner.

THE *SymbioCity* Approach TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The *SymbioCity Approach* promotes an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to LED, which takes into account the human, environmental, socio-cultural, economic, spatial, institutional, and systemic dimensions of sustainable LED. It offers a generic process, which should be adapted to specific country and local contexts.

Local governments can use the basic steps of this process to design and implement an LED strategy (Steps 2 to 6). Step 1 is a preparatory step that focuses on the developing a Process Plan that will guide Steps 2 to 6.

STEP 1: PLAN AND ORGANISE THE LED STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The *SymbioCity Approach* to LED strategy development begins with a Process Plan which outlines the activities, methods and timeframes involved in each step, while more detailed planning happens at the beginning of each step. The process plan needs to be flexible and responsive stakeholder inputs and changing conditions.

The Process Plan Step includes stakeholder mapping to identify all relevant internal (e.g. local government departments) and external stakeholders (e.g. other levels of government, private sector and civil society, poor and marginalized groups, development financing institutions, donors, academia, etc.). Identify their levels of influence, interest in LED, and networks amongst them. Stakeholder mapping will inform the kinds and frequency of engagement with different stakeholders.

STEP 2: DIAGNOSE THE CURRENT SITUATION

Diagnosing the current socio-economic situation in a city develops understanding of the factors contributing to and inhibiting its sustainability and prosperity. Map and analyse the socio-economic context, identifying key characteristics, trends, opportunities, advantages and challenges.

Assess public and private sector performance in contributing to LED, with a focus on improving the situation of the poorest and most disadvantaged groups. Involve stakeholders in the diagnosis, to enhance its validity and credibility. Diagnostic mapping and analysis should be informed by primary and secondary data.

Primary data sources

- ➔ Key informant interviews, focus groups and questionnaire based surveys
- ➔ Sector-based workshops in the municipality and private sector (e.g. agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, construction)
- ➔ Stakeholder workshops to understand relationships and views, and to test the emerging analysis and recommendations.

➔ Secondary data sources

- ➔ Statistical data e.g. from national census, labour force and household surveys
- ➔ Economic data from public, private and research institutions
- ➔ Local government sector data and analysis
- ➔ integrated development and spatial development plans.



METHODS AND TOOLS FOR FACILITATING PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT INCLUDE

- Business and Investment Climate Assessment (BICA); Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E); COMPASS of Local Competitiveness; GENESIS; Participatory Appraisal of Competitive Advantage (PACA) and the Red Tape Reduction Tool (see <http://led.co.za/tool/business-and-investment-climate-assessment-bica-0>)
- SWOT Analysis, Round Tables, LED Café and Triple Helix.

STEP 3: SPECIFY OBJECTIVES, INDICATORS AND TARGETS

The socio-economic diagnosis provides a starting point for facilitating a shared long-term vision and set of objectives for LED, based on broad stakeholder participation. The objectives specify the desired quantitative and qualitative changes in the socio-economic environment in the short, medium and long-term. Steps for formulating objectives are

1. Define the vision for LED in the city or town
2. Identify key aspects of the local economy and its performance, based on the socio-economic analysis
3. Formulate main objectives
4. Formulate indicators and targets for the objectives (planned outcomes).

Set specific objectives for infrastructure and service delivery improvement, integrated planning processes, capacity and skills development, job creation, red tape reduction, and business support services.

STEP 4: DEVELOP AND EVALUATE ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

Now explore alternative ways to achieve the objectives, taking into account the complexity of the urban environment, and considering synergies between different urban systems (e.g. environmental, economic, socio-cultural, infrastructure, and institutional). Next, assess alternative solutions in terms of their likely outcomes, as a basis for deciding on actual projects.

Identify any preventative actions that may be required to mitigate negative environmental impacts of preferred alternatives. For example, to secure the future water supply of the city, alternative proposals could include non-potable water reclamation, desalination, small-scale water supply, a new long-distance pipeline, or a major local dam. These alternatives need to be evaluated in terms of their economic viability and likely negative environmental impacts.

STEP 5: DEVELOP AN LED STRATEGY

Once alternatives have been assessed, develop a consolidated LED strategy, which includes a shared vision, a set of objectives, development strategies and projects and an implementation plan. The LED vision and strategy should be an integrated part of the overall city or town development vision, strategy, and include synergies with spatial, infrastructure, transport and service provision plans.

An implementation plan includes the roles and responsibilities of various internal and external stakeholders, and a financing plan. The LED strategy should be realistic in terms of the institutional capacity of stakeholders, especially the local authority, and general and LED capacity development should be part of the strategy.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENT AND REVIEW THE STRATEGY

Implementing an LED strategy requires inspiring leaders, and holding stakeholders to account for their commitments and contributions, via agreed coordination and accountability mechanisms. The implementation process needs to be flexible and responsive to changing conditions. A critical aspect is effective resource mobilization, especially for local authorities with limited financial resources.

Ongoing steering and participation structures then need to regularly monitor and review of implementation processes to assess progress in achieving planned inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. .

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 **FOR YOUR NOTES**

SymbioCity THEMATIC MODULES

To complement the core handbooks and learning materials of the *SymbioCity Approach* four thematic modules have been elaborated which aim to enhance the capacity of project managers, facilitators and target groups implementing the *SymbioCity Approach*:

- › Gender Equality in Urban Development
- › Urban Poverty Reduction
- › Participation and Communication in Urban Development
- › Urban Local Economic Development

These modules provide guidance on how to integrate the themes in *SymbioCity Approach* projects and capacity development processes. Each module covers why the theme is important, key issues and objectives, the *SymbioCity Approach* to the theme, and additional reference materials.

