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A seven-day capacity-building initiative by ICLEI South Asia equips local governments in Kandy and Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka, with tools for sustainable urban resilience.

E-Newsletter - January & February 2025

 Dear Readers,

The year 2025 is a special one for ICLEI South Asia.

In April this year, we embark on celebrating our two decades of unwavering commitment to advancing sustainability and urban resilience in the region. Such milestones remind us of our crucial role in staying committed to our mission and vision. They inspire us to move forward with vigor as we enter our third decade of work.

In 2024, our work stayed focused on supporting local and regional governments in South Asia – working with cities in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Malaysia across projects related to climate resilience, sustainable tourism, clean transportation, and disaster preparedness, among others.

Along with the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities (FSLGA), our team embarked on conducting capacity-building sessions for local government officials in the cities of Kandy and Nuwara Eliya in Sri Lanka. Here, we are assisting these cities to prepare their Climate Adaptation Plans under the CDKN: Accelerating Inclusive Action programme.

In the Maldives' capital city of Male, an orientation and scoping meeting with representatives from local and national governments was held in association with UNESCAP. Here, we helped to identify the SDGs and related targets that can be reported in the city's Voluntary Local Review. As the next step, a consultation workshop has been planned with all key stakeholders to identify Male's major challenges and determine the targets for reporting on selected SDGs.

Understanding the need for putting in inclusive and collaborative efforts to enhance disaster preparedness and long-term resilience, our team drove a stakeholder consultation meeting in Andhra Pradesh's Kakinada city, that was held under the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) banner. The event discussed the key findings from the Climate-Resilient City Action Plan (CRCAP) that the city has developed with technical assistance from ICLEI South Asia and support from C40. The team also assessed how disaster resilience can be evaluated using the UN's Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities.

Our work in sustainable tourism gave us an opportunity to work in Dalhousie, Himachal Pradesh. We organised a stakeholder sensitisation workshop with the Directorate of Transport, Shimla, and the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department, where we discussed expanding electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in hotels to reduce emissions and promote eco-friendly travel.

We also led discussions on decarbonising transport at a forum held ahead of the sixth Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Manila. This is part of the Asia LEDS Partnership, SLOCAT Partnership, and Global Climate Action Partnership. At the forum, several policymakers and experts discussed issues ranging from electric vehicles and clean public transit to climate financing.

My team and I have walked into February 2025 with unabashed enthusiasm to continue doing what we do best – strengthen our support to local governments for sustainability. As we embark on our third decade later this year, we look forward to connecting, collaborating, and co-creating on ICLEI South Asia's journey with you.

Warm regards,

Emani Kumar
Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI and Executive Director, ICLEI South Asia

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Driving Change: Strategies for Decarbonizing Transport in the Asia-Pacific at the 16th Regional EST Forum

The 16th Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum was held at the ADB Headquarters in Manila, the Philippines, from 10-12 December 2024. The Asia LEDS Partnership, SLOCAT Partnership, and Global Climate Action Partnership (GCAP) organised a Pre-Event on 9 December 2024. The pre-event's theme was "Enabling a 1.5°C Future: Strategies for Sustainable and Resilient Transport Systems," which brought together policymakers and professionals to address CO₂ emissions associated with transportation in the Asia-Pacific region. The adoption of electric vehicles, expanding clean public transit, and climate financing were the main topics of discussion. The meeting gave participants a forum to exchange tactics and best practices and work together to decarbonise the area's transportation infrastructure.



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Malé City Council Initiates Voluntary Local Review with Support from ICLEI South Asia and UNESCAP

Malé City Council is preparing its first Voluntary Local Review (VLR) with technical support from ICLEI South Asia and UNESCAP to monitor progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local level. To integrate the VLR with Malé's Strategic Action Plan and the UN's 5Ps framework, national and local officials met from 18-19 December 2024. Following the selection of the nine SDGs, a stakeholder workshop is scheduled to validate the indicators and data.



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Sri Lanka's Step Towards Climate Resilience in Nuwara Eliya and Kandy

To address the climate challenges and build resilience in Kandy and Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka, ICLEI South Asia and The Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities (FSLGA) have teamed up to create Climate Adaptation Plans. During a seven-day visit from 20-26 January 2025, more than seventy local officials received training on vulnerability assessment, city profiling, prioritising climate action, and implementation techniques. This initiative is part of the third phase of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network's (CDKN) Accelerating Inclusive Action Programme. The outcomes of this collaborative effort will be integrated into municipal resilience planning and policy frameworks, paving the way for sustainable urban development in Sri Lanka.



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Stakeholder Consultation on Climate Resilience in Kakinada: A Collaborative Approach to Disaster-Resilient Development

ICLEI South Asia organised a key stakeholder consultation meeting in Kakinada as part of the 'CDKN: Accelerating Inclusive Action' Programme on 10 December 2024. The consultation discussed the Climate Resilience City Action Plan (CRCAP) prepared by the Kakinada Municipal Corporation (KMC) with technical assistance from ICLEI South Asia and C40 to combat climate extremes. The Kakinada Municipal Commissioner presided over the meeting, which included participants from various state and district departments and civil society. The seminar focused on improving disaster resilience using the UNDRR Disaster Resilience Scorecard, emphasising the significance of a collaborative, inclusive approach to long-term climate resilience in Kakinada.



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Workshop to Promote E-Mobility & Sustainable Tourism in Dalhousie-Chamba

Dalhousie-Chamba hosted a stakeholder sensitisation workshop focused on establishing the region as a hub for sustainable tourism on 17 December 2024. Organised with support from the Directorate of Transport, Shimla, the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department, and ICLEI South Asia, the workshop centred on developing electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in hotels. The initiative aims to promote eco-friendly travel, reduce emissions, and offer sustainable transport options for tourists. Participants discussed the Himachal Pradesh EV Policy, explored partnership models, and shared insights on the benefits of EV infrastructure. Hotel owners and local authorities expressed strong support for making Dalhousie a green tourism destination.



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BLOG

Resilience in Action: Implementing Locally-Led Adaptation in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, communities experiencing cyclones, floods, and droughts are demonstrating that locally-led adaptation (LLA) can bring about significant and transformative change. Initiatives such as drought-resistant crops and floating agriculture are safeguarding livelihoods and fostering a resilient future.



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उद्यमपुर में जलवायु परिवर्तन और बच्चों का पोषण

उद्यमपुर में जलवायु परिवर्तन का बच्चों के पोषण और खाद्य सुरक्षा पर गहरा असर पड़ रहा है। अचानक तेज बारिश, गर्मी, सूखा और बाढ़ जैसी घटनाएँ बच्चों के खानपान को प्रभावित कर रही हैं। स्थानीय आंगनवाड़ी सेवाएँ और सरकारी खाद्य सुरक्षा योजनाएँ, जैसे मिड-डे मील और टेक होम राशन, जलवायु संकट के कारण बाधित हो रही हैं।

प्रवासी परिवारों को खाद्य सुरक्षा योजनाओं का लाभ नहीं मिल पाता, और मौसम के कारण खेती की पैदावार भी कम हो रही है, जिससे खाद्य असुरक्षा बढ़ रही है। कुपोषण और एनीमिया की दरें उच्च हैं, खासकर महिलाओं और बच्चों में। सरकार ने खाद्य सुरक्षा कानून लागू किया है, लेकिन इन योजनाओं के कार्यान्वयन में कई चुनौतियाँ हैं, जैसे लाभार्थियों की पहचान और वितरण में रुकावट। इसके समाधान के लिए जलवायु-नवीनीकरण, मजबूत वितरण प्रणालियों और विशेष सरकारी हस्तक्षेप की आवश्यकता है।



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MORE FROM ICLEI ACROSS THE GLOBE

- ICLEI and World Water Council partner to strengthen water governance, security, and sustainability
- ICLEI hosts Gap Fund Step-Up International Event at WUF12 to empower transformative urban infrastructure in cities



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About ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network working with more than 2500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for zero emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development.

ICLEI firmly believes that sustainable cities are the foundation of a just and sustainable world. We create systemic change in urban areas through practical, integrated solutions and spark city-to-city and city-to-region connections. ICLEI brings a strong urban component to national and global sustainability policy and translates global policy into action. Through our collective efforts, ICLEI is building a sustainable urban world to shift the trajectory of global development.

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