THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN INTEGRATION OF DISPLACEMENT-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES (SUIDAC) PROGRAMME

Cities Learning Together: Creating the Conditions for the Successful Integration of Displaced People into their Host Community

Key Messages from a Panel Discussion
12th World Urban Forum
7 November 2024, Cairo, Egypt

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

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Contents

Summary

This report covers highlights of the learning event "[Cities Learning Together: Creating the Conditions for the Successful Integration of Displaced People into their Host Community](#)," held at the 12th World Urban Forum (WUF) in Cairo, Egypt on 7 November 2024.

Cities Alliance, the European Union Directorate-General for International Partnerships (EU-DG INTPA), and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) co-hosted the event to formally launch the [Sustainable Urban Integration of Displacement-Affected Communities (SUIDAC)](#) programme, implemented by Cities Alliance with funding from the EU.

The event explored how cities can manage migration as climate change and conflict drive displacement, and how proactive urban planning and investment can foster social cohesion, with a focus on SUIDAC.

Mayors from two SUIDAC partner cities – Hon. Sanya Wilson of Koboko, Uganda and Hon. Ahmed Shafi Mealin, of Jigijga, Ethiopia – joined Vittorio Capici of the European Commission (EC), Charles Obila of IGAD, and Tsigereda Tafesse Mulugeta (Cities Alliance) to discuss how cities are integrating displaced populations.

The panel highlighted several key messages on the importance of:
- Including local authorities when managing human mobility from the project design phase;
- Promoting and encouraging cooperation and learning between cities; and
- Addressing migration and displacement in an integrated way, rather than as standalone issues.

The session generated considerable interest in replication, and its energy will feed into the first SUIDAC peer-learning event planned for February 2025.

Session: [Cities Learning Together: Creating the Conditions for the Successful Integration of Displaced People into their Host Community](#)
Date: 7 November 2024
Time: 11:00am to 12:30pm
Location: The Egypt International Exhibition Centre, Room C

Convened by UN-Habitat every two years, WUF is a high-level, open and inclusive platform for addressing the challenges of sustainable urbanisation. With the theme It All Starts at Home: Local Actions for Sustainable Cities and Communities, WUF12 focused on localising the Sustainable Development Goals, shedding light on the local actions and initiatives required to curb the current global challenges affecting the daily life of people, including unaffordable housing, rising living costs, climate change, the lack of basic services, and ongoing conflicts.

Introduction

Cities, many of them among the world's most vulnerable, are on the front lines of managing the migration and displacement of large populations driven by crises such as climate change, conflict, and economic instability.

This shift to viewing migration through an urban lens requires an approach that considers the broader impacts of human mobility on the city – making the city the primary focus of programming as it looks for ways to meet the needs of all residents, including displacement-affected communities. This requires a dual focus that differs from interventions in camps and settlements: Engaging local and national authorities from the outset to ensure ownership, and directly targeting programme activities to displacement-affected communities so that they are not excluded.

Since 2019, Cities Alliance and the European Union Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF-Africa) have partnered to implement programming with such an approach.

1. [The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF): Inclusive Urban Development and Mobility Action](#) (2019–2023) piloted new approaches to integrating refugees and created a regional network for cities in the Horn of Africa to share knowledge and experiences.
2. The Sustainable Integration of Displacement Affected Communities (SUIDAC) initiative, launched in 2024, expands and builds on the CRRF Action and its achievements.

The CRRF Inclusive Urban Development and Mobility Action Achievements

Koboko Municipality, Uganda co-implemented a US$ 3.8 million grant with the Italian NGO ACAV. With direct funding from the EU, the municipality built schools, hospitals, and mental health centres that led to tangible improvements in the lives of refugees and the host community. It institutionalised municipal development forums and urban plans inclusive of displaced communities. The success transformed Koboko into a model of urban development, achieving in three years what would typically take decades.

A regional network and dialogue was established among seven secondary cities: Assosa and Jigjiga (Ethiopia), Lodwar (Kenya), Borama and Gabiley (Somalia), and Arua and Koboko (Uganda). It facilitated knowledge exchange and joint problem-solving among mayors and stakeholders, including representatives of local and regional government, refugees, and host communities. It also enabled collaboration among a range of stakeholders and partners, including Cities Alliance, the EU, IGAD, and UCLG Africa.

Most significantly, the network and dialogue provided a unique platform for refugees and policy makers to engage as equals, ensuring genuine inclusion of voices that are often marginalised in formal political and administrative processes.

About SUIDAC

SUIDAC aims to improve the lives of displacement-affected communities (DACs) and work with municipalities to become more resilient. It also seeks to demonstrate how working with cities can potentially provide a viable alternative to policies of refugee camps.

The Sustainable Urban Integration of Displacement-Affected Communities programme (2024–2028) aims to foster the sustainable integration of displaced populations and their host communities in secondary cities across Sub-Saharan Africa.

The initiative enhances municipalities' capacity to effectively address the needs of displacement-affected communities (DACs) amid increasing urban challenges caused by forced displacement and migration. At the same time, the host cities and key local stakeholders become more resilient and better prepared for the impacts of human mobility.

The programme's activities focus on the governance, citizenship, environment, economic realities, and services that lie at the nexus between forced displacement and urban development. They include locally driven projects designed to benefit both displaced communities and host cities, as well as local and regional dialogues to promote social cohesion and conflict prevention.

The EUR 30 million programme is funded by European Union and implemented by Cities Alliance through direct implementation and grants.

The partner cities are:

- Assosa and Jigjiga (Ethiopia)
- Atbara (Sudan)
- Borama and Gabiley (Somalia)
- Kananga and Tshikapa (DRC)
- Koboko and Arua (Uganda)

They represent a range of urban contexts, from smaller municipalities to regional hubs. Each one faces unique challenges related to displacement and migration.

SUIDAC emphasises community inclusion from the outset, promoting sustainable urban integration for displaced populations. The programme's success relies on fostering collaboration among local governments, community organisations, and regional partners.

Key features of SUIDAC include:

- A six-month design phase led by mayors and local communities to create actionable urban plans.
- A Technical Implementing Partner (TIP) working with each municipality to provide expertise and mitigate risks.
- Direct grants to municipalities, requiring 20 per cent co-financing (in-kind or cash).

Progress in 2024

The cities are completing a six-month design and analytical phase to produce feasibility studies. This process aims to ensure that the implementation phase is designed by communities, who will choose which activities each municipality will implement.

The TIPs were selected following a competitive call for proposals in July 2024. They are:
- Arua and Koboko: ACAV
- Assosa: International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Atbara: International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Borama: Somaliland Association for Youth Salvation (SAYS)
- Gabiley: Taakulo
- Jigjiga: Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA)
- Kananga and Tshikapa: AVSI

The Local Perspective

Mayor Wilson Sanya of Koboko and Mayor Ahmed Shafi Mealin of Jigjiga, both key members of the regional network and dialogue, provided a municipal perspective on integrating migrants, refugees, and displaced people. Both mayors called for increased direct funding, local discretion, and global recognition of the potential in local solutions to address migration and displacement challenges.

Koboko's successful experience with the CRRF Action exemplify how empowering local governments can transform refugee management and urban development.

"This partnership with Cities Alliance and the European Union has changed things. Give us the money, we'll think for ourselves. And that's the whole instance of SUIDAC. It's possible." – Mayor Sanya

Empowering Local Governments to Lead

Mayor Sanya highlighted the SUIDAC programme as a groundbreaking initiative for managing urban refugees. He emphasised the importance of empowering local governments and mayors to design and implement solutions for refugee integration tailored to their communities.

Mayors play a critical role in managing urban migration and refugee integration, as municipalities are the primary recipients of refugees in hosting countries, Mayor Sanya said. Refugees today, especially young people, prefer urban areas where opportunities and networks are more accessible. This makes municipalities, and mayors in particular, central to addressing their needs.

Local governments understand their communities better and can develop tailored solutions to address issues such as overcrowded schools, strained healthcare, and inadequate infrastructure. Mayor Sanya advocated for funding to go directly to cities, allowing mayors to work with community-based organisations (CBOs) and refugees to determine priorities and ensure sustainability.

By enabling mayors to lead, initiatives like SUIDAC are more likely to succeed, as they empower local governments to design and implement solutions that are community-driven and locally owned. Mayor Sanya underscores the need for oversight roles, but calls for greater trust and autonomy for municipalities in managing funds and projects.

"SUIDAC is going to be successful because by design, it is giving me, the mayor of Koboko, the discretion to sit with my local communities, to sit with the Ugandan-founded CBOs and refugee-founded CBOs, and then see how we can come up with what we think are the issues that should be addressed to reduce the people-student ratio, the doctor-patient ratio, the toilet-people ratio, the books-people ratio … We know it better than anyone." – Mayor Sanya

Mayor Shafi highlighted the municipality's proactive approach to managing international projects funded by institutions such as the World Bank and European Union. He also emphasised the importance of local leadership, with mayors taking a central role in planning, implementing, and sustaining long-term solutions tailored to their communities.

Mayor Shafi agreed with Mayor Sanya that municipalities are best positioned to identify problems and design effective solutions for both refugees and host communities because they are closest to the people. Regional and national governments should support cities by empowering local administrations with resources and decision-making authority to create sustainable, community-focused frameworks that address challenges and improve outcomes.

The Koboko Model

A key element of SUIDAC is direct funding to municipalities, an approach that was successfully piloted in Koboko through the CRRF Action. Koboko Municipality along with Technical Implementing Partner ACAV received €3.8 million from the EU.

Mayor Sanya discussed why direct funding is so important and how it helped his city transform. Local governments were given the autonomy to design and implement projects, fostering sustainability, and community ownership.

The Koboko Model demonstrated how local solutions can address global challenges effectively. Refugees are seen as part of the community, not outsiders. Mayor Sanya, himself a former refugee, exemplified the success of integration. He noted communities often have personal and cultural ties across borders that can facilitate the process, such as marriage as a tool for integration.

Koboko created a Community Information Management System to manage refugee data and plan resources. Partnerships with Cities Alliance, the EU, ACAV, and local organisations have strengthened capacity and delivered impactful projects. Areas such as health, livelihood, and education significantly improved. Refugee children now have access to desks, uniforms, and improved school facilities, reducing pressure on the education system.

Through implementation of the pilot programme, Koboko faced challenges. The main ones were:

- **Policy Gaps**: Uganda's refugee policies focus on rural settlements, leaving urban refugees unsupported.
- **Increased Refugee Influx**: Koboko continues to receive refugees from conflict areas like South Sudan and, more recently, Khartoum.
- **Strained Resources**: Education, healthcare, and livelihoods face pressure due to the growing refugee population.
- **Lack of Decentralisation:** Policies and funding often bypass local governments, undermining their ability to address challenges directly.

The mayor noted that the biggest challenge was Uganda's policy that only recognises refugees in designated settlements, which are typically rural, and in Kampala. Refugees in secondary cities are not supported, even though many are living in urban areas.

The key message is that mayors and local governments should lead refugee integration efforts. Direct funding to local governments ensures sustainability and relevance. In Koboko, refugees are integrated as community members, creating a harmonious environment despite policy and resource challenges.

Meeting Jigjiga's Challenges

Jigjiga, located in eastern Ethiopia, is a major city near the borders of Somalia and Djibouti. It is the capital of the Somali Regional State, which hosts the largest refugee population in Ethiopia.

Mayor Shafi said the city's strategic location along key corridors, such as the Berbera-Red Sea and Addis Ababa-Djibouti routes, makes it a hub for migration and mobility. People are drawn to Jigjiga for three main reasons:

- **Strategic Location:** It is a gateway for migrants traveling between Africa and the Middle East.
- **Instability and Climate Change:** Conflicts in Somalia and Somaliland, as well as climate-related challenges, push refugees to Jigjiga.
- **Better Living Conditions:** Compared to neighboring regions, Jigjiga offers superior schools, healthcare, and services.

The rapid population growth, driven by both refugees and host communities, has strained the city's resources and infrastructure and created new challenges. Today, 80 per cent of the population does not have access to clean water. The schools are overcrowded; the

average class size is 195 students, with young children traveling long distances to access education.

"Seven-year-old students are traveling more than four km to get to school, the city is facing a critical situation." – Ahmed Shafi, Mayor of Jigjiga

Healthcare is deficient. The city has a population of 700,000–800,000, but only two general hospitals that are serving far beyond capacity. Housing and employment has also become tense, and rising competition for housing and jobs has led to social tensions between host communities and refugees.

Jigjiga faces significant pressures from its growing population, but through initiatives such as SUIDAC, the city plans to improve its infrastructure, foster refugee integration, and build institutional capacity to create a better quality of life for all residents.

The municipality will develop a comprehensive strategy to integrate refugees and ease tensions with host communities. It will also seek to enhance the capacity of the municipal administration to manage issues related to refugees and infrastructure gaps, as well as promoting employment opportunities for both host and refugee populations to reduce social tensions.

A Platform for Collaboration

The Regional Dialogue which emerged during the CRRF pilot and will continue with SUIDAC provides a vital platform for collaboration, enabling cities to share experiences and learn from one another. This model fosters collective growth and innovation, particularly in addressing challenges related to urban management and refugee integration.

In Uganda, Mayor Sanya uses every opportunity to promote the success of the Koboko Model and the SUIDAC initiative. These successes have inspired other cities, such as Arua City in the West Nile region, to adopt similar approaches. Through collaboration and training, cities in the region work together to build capacity and share best practices.

Mayor Sanya said that Koboko is willing to share its experience with other cities facing similar challenges, and having a forum to do so is important. "They are coming to Koboko. We want to teach them," he said. "They want to learn from us. How do we generate data? How do we build our capacity to have data?"

Asked how Jigjiga cooperates with other cities, Mayor Shafi said that cities along corridors like Borama, Gabiley, and Jigjiga share common cultural, socioeconomic, and traditional backgrounds, with predominantly Somali populations. This shared identity fosters strong potential for collaboration among these cities. By sharing experiences, strategies, and

resources, these cities can effectively address challenges related to refugee management and urban development.

"We integrate the whole power, the whole resource, we can solve the problem, but alone we can do nothing." Mayor Shafi

Cities Can Handle Direct Funding

Asked if cities were prepared to handle direct funding from donors to implement projects, the mayors agreed cities have the structure and capacity for it. Mayor Sanya expressed frustration with the view that there is no capacity in local governments.

"This first project that we implemented, the proposal was done locally. It's 100 per cent local. We didn't use a consultant. And this thinking that there is no capacity in local governments needs to stop," he said.

He noted that Koboko Municipality has a project proposal writing team, which was sent to the Uganda Management Institute for courses in how to write proposals. The team wrote a successful proposal that resulted in Koboko receiving EUR 20,000 from the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG). Koboko worked with VNG International in 2018 to survey the number of self-settled refugees in the city, which was estimated at 26 per cent of the population. Koboko took the data and developed proposals that it presented to NGOs and embassies.

Jigjiga also relies on local knowledge, said Mayor Shafi. "We have local universities in the city. We have local colleges in the city. We have not any problem with the institutional gap for planning, implementation and managing the whole projects we are using from international funders," he noted.

Mayor Shafi said that Jigjiga is getting better and better at implementing projects. In addition to the SUIDAC initiative, the city is implementing an urban sanitation project funded by the World Bank. He noted that in Ethiopia, many World Bank projects are decentralised to the municipalities, who handle almost all of the utilisation, the budgeting, and the planning. The city would like to boost community participation in the design and implementation of the projects, which is a key feature of SUIDAC.

Tsigereda Tafesse, In-Country Coordinator for Cities Alliance in Somalia and Ethiopia, stressed that cities are managing the proposal writing process amid their everyday responsibilities, which include catering to displacement-affected communities, refugees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). For example, mayors can provide land in a high-priced value area of the municipality so that refugees can start businesses. Where the cities need extra support is in coping with the influx of people coming to cities, because they are arriving faster than the city can respond, Ms. Tafesse said.

The Donor/Partner Perspective

International organisations and partners can support cities in various ways, such as by promoting collaboration to address urban displacement and trusting municipalities with resources and decision-making power. On a broader level, a global urban strategy with local governments at the centre is needed to facilitate localised responses to displacement.

The EU's Urban-Focused Approach to Displacement

Vittorio Capici, International Aid and Development Officer at the EC DG-INTPA, emphasised the importance of collaboration in addressing urban displacement and urbanisation in secondary cities.

The European Commission is the largest donor in Sub-Saharan Africa, managing a €10 billion fund (2021–2027) across priority areas including governance, sustainable growth, migration, and human development.

The EU's Global Gateway strategy combines private and public funding to invest in priority areas with African partners. Migration is increasingly integrated into this strategy, promoting localised approaches like the SUIDAC programme, which focuses on urban integration of displaced communities.

Secondary cities in Sub-Saharan Africa face many challenges, including low prioritisation in government planning, dependency on external investments, rapid, unplanned urban growth, environmental and resource management issues. However, they also present opportunities, particularly by leveraging the skills and contributions of displaced populations and migrants.

Vittorio Capici noted that displacement crises, such as the one in South Sudan, have pushed the EU to think about displacement in terms of cities. "The South Sudanese have been clear. They didn't want to set up new camps. They wanted us to work and support them in cities," he said.

The EU Trust Fund has supported projects in Koboko, Uganda, and Assosa, Ethiopia, which improved education and services for displaced communities; created inclusive development forums involving refugees, host communities, and local organizations; and integrated refugee needs into local development plans, leveraging Uganda's progressive refugee policies.

Based on the success of the pilot projects, EU funding increased from EUR 8 to EUR 30 million, launching SUIDAC with Cities Alliance in June 2024. The project has expanded beyond Ethiopia and Uganda to include cities in the DRC, Somalia, and Sudan. It focuses

on capacity building for local authorities, community protection, livelihoods, and urban planning.

The programme fosters regional networks and dialogue among cities, facilitated by organisations like Cities Alliance. It also seeks to replicate successful models globally.

"SUIDAC aims to sustainably integrate displaced communities by strengthening local governance, improving urban planning, and fostering policy dialogue. The European Commission hopes to inspire additional donors and partners to invest in similar transformative programmes." Vittorio Capici, EU

How Partners Can Support Cities

There is an urgent need to move from global knowledge and discussions to actionable local solutions that empower cities to handle the challenges association with rapid urbanisation, migration, and displacement effectively, said Tsigerede Tafesse of Cities Alliance.

"There is no shortage of knowledge and understanding of what needs to be done. What needs to be done now is the action, translating all these good statements, the studies, the findings, the reports into practice." – Tsigereda Tafesse

Refugees and migrants often settle in secondary cities, where governance systems and infrastructure are fragile and underfunded. Mayors face competing priorities and a lack of resources to address these challenges effectively.

Ms. Tafesse suggested international organisations and partners can support cities with:

- **Problem Recognition:** Assisting municipalities in understanding migration's impact through reliable data, perception surveys, and peer exchanges among cities.
- **Proactive Spatial Planning:** Helping cities plan long-term for land use, housing, and infrastructure to accommodate new arrivals.
- **Social and Economic Integration:** Encouraging inclusive policies, shared services, and participatory decision-making to integrate displaced communities sustainably.
- **Skills and Employment:** Facilitating job training, matching, and financial access for migrants, viewing them as assets rather than burdens.
- **Institutional Strengthening:** Establishing systems and frameworks to ensure continuity of services and integration policies beyond individual leadership.

Municipalities require direct funding and capacity-building support to sustain their efforts in managing migration and urban development. Investments in policies, legal frameworks, and operational procedures ensure lasting impact.

It is crucial to trust municipalities with resources and decision-making power, because they are best positioned to implement solutions tailored to local needs while integrating migrants as productive community members.

Influencing Policy to Reflect the Urbanisation of Displacement

When asked how international organisations such as UNHCR can support cities with refugee management, Mayor Sanya suggested beginning at the policy level to change the existing narrative that refugees are rural, which forms the basis for UNHCR's mandate.

" We need to have a conversation with our national government, our relevant ministers, to discuss the policies. Once the policies are mainstreamed in such a way that they're inclusive in nature, taking cities and municipalities in the forefront, it becomes easier to support and also lobby donors to be able to work."

Localising Global Agendas

Florence Lozet of Cities Alliance suggested that implementing partners can play a role in translating the objectives of the global agendas, such as the Global Compact on Refugees, to the local level. For instance, cities may build schools, but improved access to education may not systematically be reflected in reporting. Grants can include specifics on how to inform mayors of their progress and link what is happening on the ground in cities with UNHCR and other global agendas.

"[Cities Alliance] will help the cities to design their targets for SUIDAC, which will enable us to report on improvement in the targets of the Global Compact on Refugees." – Florence Lozet, Cities Alliance

Mr. Capici said the first time he met Mayor Sanya of Koboko, the mayor said that he hoped the municipality would be able to engage directly with donors. "This is the localization," he said. "And if we talk about global perspectives, regional approaches, and so on, projects like the one that Cities Alliance was able to put up help us to think with local lenses. And I think that this is really the beauty of a programme like this."

The Regional Perspective

Charles Obila, Migration Officer and Programme Coordinator for IGAD, discussed how the organisation is providing spaces for cities in one of the heaviest refugee-hosting regions in the world to engage on managing displacement at the regional level, including new approaches focused on integration rather than encampment. IGAD sits in the SUIDAC Steering Committee.

"Fostering direct engagement between cities, communities, and political leadership is essential to address the challenges of displacement effectively and ensure local integration and development." – Charles Obila, IGAD

IGAD: A Platform for Partnership

IGAD comprises eight member states: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda. This region hosts 20 per cent of the global displaced population, approximately 26 million people.

Most displaced individuals in the IGAD region are citizens of member states, with displacement often lasting decades. Traditional encampment policies have led to camps evolving into urban settlements with economic and social activities. Many displaced people move to cities, seeking better opportunities, creating urban areas as the most viable solution for integration.

Member states have commitments under the Nairobi Declaration and Global Refugee Framework in areas like protection, basic services, and self-reliance. However, there is often a disconnect between policy and practice, with many countries restricting refugees to camps or specific locations. Local leaders, like mayors, prioritise serving the entire population in their jurisdictions regardless of legal definitions, fostering inclusive approaches.

Cities are highlighted as the best platforms for inclusion and local integration, overcoming national policy restrictions. Mayors focus on total population needs within their territories, often innovating solutions despite limited support from national governments. There is still a gap in engagement. Cities face challenges in accessing direct funding and support, as assistance often flows through national governments, and the relationship between governments and cities is likened to a restrictive "father-son" dynamic, limiting cities' autonomy in seeking external help.

To address these issues, IGAD is providing spaces for cities to share experiences and advocate for inclusion in decision-making processes at national and regional levels. They are strengthening partnerships, such as with Cities Alliance, to amplify local voices and

align grassroots solutions with political commitments, and encouraging bottom-up approaches where community-driven solutions inform higher-level dialogues and frameworks.

"It's around transforming the entire model and putting refugees at the centre of solutions."
– Charles Obila, IGAD

A Shift in Approaches to Refugee Management

Mr. Obila noted that the Global Refugee Compact and the accompanying comprehensive response framework, the CRRF, have brought about a shift in managing displaced people, away from the classical definitions of durable solutions to innovative approaches that promote inclusion of people where they are hosted. Many displaced people have lived in host states for a long time, and they are unlikely to return to their home countries or be resettled to a third country.

The encampment model is also extremely costly. Uganda did a study on the cost of hosting refugees and found that it cost much more than they received in donor assistance for the refugees.

So then how do you transform that model? The easiest way is to provide opportunities for refugees to empower themselves so that they become the drivers of their own solution.

That can be accomplished by integrating refugees into the national education system so that they can obtain certificates and seek employment. In most cases, refugees are not just employment seekers; they create jobs. Mr. Obila provided the example of urban refugees in Nairobi, who own businesses and employ others.

He noted that other models for integrating refugees are being piloted, including one by the World Bank that makes financing conditional on integrating refugees into national systems, particularly education, the right to work, and employment.

The overarching goal is to create inclusive policies that recognise the contributions and needs of refugees, thus providing a framework for effective collaboration and sustainable urban development.

Reflections

It was clear from the session that SUIDAC's partners – the mayors, IGAD, the EU, and Cities Alliance – are aligned around the programme's core principle of involving communities and municipal authorities in the design phase so that they are able to be involved the whole project cycle.

SUIDAC's approach is resonating, and the session sparked significant interest in replication. IGAD expressed its support towards expanding the SUIDAC approach to additional cities. Furthermore, other cities showed interested in replicating the initiative.

Creating effective and inclusive solutions for urban displacement requires a transformative approach that empowers local communities and authorities while fostering collaboration across all levels of governance. Several key principles guide this effort to achieve meaningful, sustainable impact.

A foundational principle is ensuring that projects are designed "by the people, for the people." This involves conducting thorough feasibility studies and integrating perception surveys to give local communities a central role in identifying and shaping interventions. By prioritising their voices, projects gain relevance, legitimacy, and stronger community ownership.

Another critical principle is placing local authorities in the driver's seat. Empowering municipalities with direct access to resources and decision-making authority enables them to develop tailored solutions that address the unique needs of their communities. Strengthening the capacity of these authorities also ensures they can respond more effectively to future challenges and build long-term resilience.

Programmes addressing urban displacement should strive to achieve dual objectives: Improving the lives of displacement-affected communities (DACs) and enhancing the capacity of local governance structures. By simultaneously addressing the immediate needs of affected populations and building stronger municipal institutions, these initiatives create sustainable pathways for social cohesion and integration.

Inclusivity must also remain at the forefront, even in governance contexts that may initially appear resistant to change. Creating safe spaces for dialogue, providing resources, and offering strategic guidance can open avenues for more inclusive policies and developmental actions. These efforts amplify the voices of local authorities and stakeholders, enabling them to advocate for equitable solutions while building trust within their communities.

Finally, empowering local organisations and communities through mechanisms like sub-granting enhances their ability to contribute to and sustain developmental efforts.

Regional actors and institutions, such as IGAD, can play a critical role in ensuring that lessons learned are shared widely, driving collective progress.

SUIDAC will continue to receive regional and global visibility. Mayor Sanya, a SUIDAC spokesperson, has been elected the 7th President of East African County and Local Government Association (EACLGA) making him the head of the local governments in Burundi, the DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda for two years. Combined with the participation in global events that is built into SUIDAC, Mayor Sanya's new role will help share the programme's achievements even more widely.

This energy will feed into SUIDAC's first peer-learning event, which is planned for February 2025.

Annex: Registered Participants

Government (Local, Regional, and National)
Kondwani Kachika, Director, Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority
Mfanufikile Dlamini, Matsapha Town Council, Eswatini
Stephen Bogere Mubinzi, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Uganda
Kirk Fixer Wilson Sanya, Mayor, Koboko Municipality, Uganda
Festo Tandeka, Town Clerk, Nansana Municipal Council, Uganda
Robert Nuwamanya, Town Clerk, Ministry of Local Government, Uganda
Ntombizodwa Kumalo, City of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
Moustafa Abdallah, Advisor, Inspection and Control Sector

Associations/Federations
Rita Biconne, Head of Department, European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA)
Joao Goncalves, Director of Innovation, Housing Europe
Didier Vancutsem, Vice President, International Federation of Landscape Architects
Europe
Nazlican Acki, Training and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union
Merve Agca, Director of Migration Policy Center Marmara Municipalities Union
Zekda Kerubo, Head of Programmes, World Green Building Council

NGOs
Semadi Manganye, Co-Founder and CEO Alexandra Water Warriors NPC
Gabriele Tardivo, Head of Programmes, AVSI
Jennifer Lyles, Global Consultant, Expanse of Hope
Bassey Bassey, CEO, HipCity Innovation Centre
Ela Serdaroglu, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Jeff Woods, Member, IFRC
Anne Marie Schryer-Roy, Regional Advocacy Coordinator, International Rescue Committee
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Jamin Kusuania, Sr Advocacy Manager, IRC
Irene Shiundu, Country Representative, IRC
Aimee Gauthier, Chief Knowledge Officer, Institute for Transportation and Development
Policy (ITDP)
Luiz Eloy, Chief Executive Officer, Fundação ODERJ
Agueda Regina Ramos Quintanilha, Chair of the Board of Directors, Fundação ODERJ
Natan Santos de Conceiao, Deputy Executive Secretary, Fundação ODERJ
Thais da Silva de Jesus Fernandes, Executive Secretary, Fundação ODERJ
Baravan Abduljabbar, Urban Planner, RECS International

International Development Agencies and Organisations

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Mia Loraine Simpao, GIZ
Amina Schild, Advisor, GIZ
Depika Sherchan, Housing, Land and Property Advisor, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Yemen
Pierre Fellavier, Senior Development Coordination Officer, UN
Belay Garoma, Officer, UN-Habitat
Dyfed Aubrey, Inter Regional Advisor, UN-Habitat
Facundo Sesin Hemadi, Consultant, UN-Habitat
Hareg Bekele, Officer, UN-Habitat
Nadine Walicki, Senior Policy Advisor, UNHCR
Nicole Hennessy, Consultant Solid Waste, UN-Habitat
Ryosuke Teaoka, Head of KRI, UN-Habitat
Abel Estifanos Eyob, Officer, UN-Habitat
Razan Elmrayed, Intern, UN-Habitat
Seki Hirano, Global Shelter Cluster Coordinator, UNHCR
Samantha Laroche, Programme Associate, USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
Isis Nunez Ferrera, World Food Programme (WFP)
Natalia Melendez Fuentes, Programme Policy Officer, WFP
Rubbina Karruna, Counsellor, UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office

Academia/Research

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Yasmeen Hamdi, Student, Ain Shams University
Yousef Akkila, Researcher, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University
Md Arifur Rahman, Student, Ain Shams University
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Manar Abdelfattah, Researcher, Faculty of Applied Arts, Bernha University
Amira Said Ahmed, Student, Faculty of Urban and Regional Planning, Cairo University
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Nada Elherawy, Student, Cairo University
Yosra Elsayed, Researcher, Cairo University
Maha Elsayed, Professor, Cairo University
Mohamed Ali, Assistant Professor, Cairo University

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Amira Saleh, Senior Lecturer, Helwan University
Marise Ibrahim, Student, Faculty of Fine Arts Architecture department, Helwan University
Dr. Rasha Mokhtar, Lecturer in the Hotel Management Department, Higher Institute for Qualitative Studies
Sarah Elariana, Professor, Housing and Building Research Institute
Romola Sanyal, London School of Economics
Sally Itani, Architect, London School of Economics
Dr. Yesmeen Khalifa, Researcher, Loughborough University
Nour Farouk, Student, Law School, Minya University
Maryam Abbakyari, Student, Montfort University
Patrick Lamson-Hall, Researcher/Scholar, New York University
Dina Algazzar, Nile University
Nour Mostafa, Student, Nile University
Rana Zaki, Assistant Professor, October University for Modern Sciences & Arts (MSA University)
Amira Osman, Professor, Tshwane University of Technology
ES, Professor, Université Senghor
Massimo Vittorio, Professor, University of Catania
Theresa Cordova, Head of Department, University of Illinois, Chicago
Colleen Van Loon, Researcher/PHD Student, Western University
Hamees Elshied, Researcher, Zagazig University
Mahmoud Hossam, Student, Zagazig University
Reham Tantawy, Urban Planning and Design TA

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Lydia Stazen, Executive Director, Institute of Global Homelessness
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Corina Demottaz, Interagency Service, Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service (JIPS)
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Franziska Laue, Board Member, TRIALOG

Private Sector

Berik Alimov, Chief Manager, Almaty Development Center, JSC
Zhanar Gabdullina, City Manager, Almaty Development Center, JSC
Mohamed Eltawbti, President, Almostchar International Trading
Mohamed Rakaby, Head of Department, Al-Nasr Petroleum Company
Manar Marzban, Die Stadt

Ahmed Shahin, Eladi Party
Aseel Tajuddin, Senior Communications Officer, Elsewedy Electric Foundation
Dr Mohammed Elsheikh, Medicine, Emonhotel
Natalia Perdomo Villegas, Hexagonal
Sama Rakha, Host Country
Ross Mc Donald, Impact Initiatives
Luk Peeters, Chief Technical Officer, ORG Urbanism & Architecture
Mohd Abdul Kudus, Head of Section, Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia
George Amin, Architect and Urban Designer, SIDARA
Hari Shrestha, CEO, Solution Hub Pvt Ltd
Ahmed Ahmed, STA
Greshom Banda, CEO, Sustainable Urban Land and Shelter Development Consultants
Nasr Rady, System One
Mahmoud Ahmed, System One
Santo Giovanni, Technical Manager, ThinkCity
Mohammed Sayed, Co-Founder, Consultant, Architect and Urban Planner, +Earth

Volunteers
Heba Hamdy Mohamed Kamal
Ebrahim Sawy, Student
Diaa Emad Mohamed Rashwan

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Greg Munro, Director
Florence Lozet, Urban Forces Displacements Lead
Tsigereda Mulugeta, In-Country Coordinator
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