

# CityVoices

INTERVIEW  
Yokohama Mayor  
Fumiko Hayashi  
p.6

SPECIAL FEATURE  
UN-Habitat  
Public Space and the  
New Urban Agenda  
p.10

BEST PRACTICES  
Baguio  
Banjarbaru  
Kuala Lumpur  
Think City–Penang  
p. 13

MEMBER IN FOCUS  
Bandung  
p.27



## PUBLIC SPACE AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

Editorial  
STEPHANI WIDORINI

Graphic Design  
EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Cover Illustration by  
SUYEON LEE

# CityVoices

**CONTACT US**

Stephani Widorini  
CityNet Secretariat  
Seoul Global Center 10F  
38 Jongno, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea  
T. +82-2-723-0635  
E. [media@citynet-ap.org](mailto:media@citynet-ap.org)  
[www.citynet-ap.org](http://www.citynet-ap.org)

# Contents

---

<b>Welcome Message</b>	4	Welcome Message From The Secretary General	Vijay Jagannathan
------------------------	---	--	-------------------

---

<b>Interview</b>	6	Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Yokohama's Public Space Development	
------------------	---	--	--

---

<b>Special feature</b>	10	Public Space and the New Urban Agenda	Cecilia Andersson
------------------------	----	---------------------------------------	-------------------

---

<b>Best practices</b>	13	Malcolm Square: Baguio City's Multi-purpose Public Space	Engr. Evelyn B. Cayat
	17	Kemuning River Normalization	Kanafie, S.IP, MM
	19	Perdana Botanical Garden	Syazwani Binti Azeman
	22	Open Space at Armenian Street: Greening Penang's UNESCO World Heritage Zone	Think City

---

<b>Member in Focus</b>	27	Aksiku.bdg: High School Engagement in the Making of the City	Dewi Shinta Putri
------------------------	----	--	-------------------

---

<b>Spring/Summer Highlights</b>	33	Knowledge Platforms for Cities and City-to-City Cooperation	
	34	Memorandum of Agreement for the SDG Knowledge Platform Signed	
	35	Best Practice Exchanges between Korean Cities and European Cities	
	36	Transportation Strategy Workshop for Asian Cities	

---

# Welcome Message From The Secretary General



CityNet Secretary General Vijay Jagannathan speaks at the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Committee in Makati, Philippines.

How relevant is public space for a city?

Public space might still be considered by some cities as a mere aesthetic element of the urbanscape and is not yet considered as a priority, however, it means much more than that. Public space is a necessity for urbanites, which creates social, economic and environmental values, and is a key ingredient to improve liveability. In addition, urbanisation is growing in an unprecedented level and this has triggered a massive pressure to the city government on providing or maintaining public spaces.

As UN-Habitat mentioned in one of the articles featured in this edition, *public space takes many spatial forms, including parks, the streets, sidewalks and footpaths that connect, playgrounds of recreation, marketplaces, but also edge space between buildings or roadsides which are often important spaces for the urban poor and in many contexts beaches are also public spaces.*

With the New Urban Agenda adopted at the most anticipated bi-decennial conference, Habitat III, otherwise known as the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development last year in Quito, a set of principles was adopted to guide the global urban development. One of the highlights is the commitment to public spaces which is a crucial component to determine a successful sustainable development.

The message at Habitat III that implies how public space matters is appropriately reflected in the New Urban Agenda, particularly point 37:

*We commit ourselves to promoting safe, inclusive, accessible, green and quality public spaces, including streets, sidewalks and cycling lanes, squares, waterfront areas, gardens and parks, that are multifunctional areas for social interaction and inclusion, human health and well-being, economic exchange, and cultural expression and dialogue among a wide diversity of people and cultures, and that are designed and managed to ensure human development and build peaceful, inclusive and participatory societies, as well as to promote living together, connectivity and social inclusion.*

Reflecting on the above points, we invited our member cities and partners to showcase their good practices in their commitment to providing public spaces; an interview with the Mayor of Yokohama Fumiko Hayashi, in which she shared Yokohama City's collaboration with the private sector in maintaining and using public spaces, Baguio City, Banjarbaru, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, and Bandung.

I truly hope that this edition will motivate us to promote great quality public spaces for urban dwellers.

# Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Yokohama's Public Space Development

□ The Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi shares Japan's second largest city's tacit knowledge and advanced experience in providing and developing public spaces. Coupled with a good design, one of the most recent innovations is their collaboration with the private sector in maintaining and using public spaces.



Sidewalk Cafés on Nihon Odori Street  
Photo: Nihon Odori Activation Committee

**Based on Yokohama City's experience, what makes a great public space?**

The good design of urban spaces such as roads, railway stations and open spaces is an important factor in developing a convenient and comfortable city.

In order to improve the quality of these spaces, we think it is essential to make them more attractive and unique. This must be done while keeping the balance between rational values, such as functionality and economy, and human values such as beauty, enjoyment and richness.

Since the 1960s, the City of Yokohama has developed an attractive townscape that features the uniqueness of Yokohama through urban design. This townscape has been our fundamental asset that supports the city's current vitality and dynamism.

**Yokohama has gradually improved and made constructive innovations to the public space development, what is the indicator to measure whether a certain public space has served its purposes?**

We have not set a clear numeric target for this, but we think that some indicators indirectly tell us the quality of public spaces. The first one is the annual consciousness survey of our citizens. According to the 2016 survey, almost 80% of citizens feel a strong sense of civic pride in Yokohama.

The second one is the number of tourist arrivals. It is important to be aware of what visitors come looking for. Townscapes and public spaces in Yokohama are often used in TV dramas, movies and commercial films, and this contributes a lot to the increase of tourist arrivals every year.

**Which state is now Yokohama in and how will it improve the provision of public spaces for the betterment of the residents?**

Yokohama went through a period of post war restoration, high economic growth and is now approaching a period of maturity. An urgent theme for us is now to plan how we develop public spaces in the future. The aging population is also a factor we need to consider.

Recently, we have been putting efforts into collaborating with the private sector in the maintenance and use of public spaces, which were originally developed, maintained and used mainly by the public sector (city government). We hope that more citizens,

private companies and other groups can take initiatives in management activities and land use at various public spaces in the city.

**Will you share one of your city's best practices in public space development?**

Nihon Odori Street was the first western-style street developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This street was redeveloped before the 2002 FIFA World Cup, which held its final match in Yokohama. The new design harmonizes with the historic buildings alongside the street, and benefits the scenery of the port by giving it an unobstructed view.

Moreover, Zou-no-hana (which means "elephant's trunk") Park, which is located at the end of Nihon Odori Street, was redeveloped for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Yokohama Port in 2009. Both Nihon Odori Street and Zou-no-hana Park are part of the unique and attractive public space at the waterfront area of Yokohama.

**Will you describe briefly the policy framework along with key elements of sustainable design that the City uses?**

As I mentioned earlier, we think it is important that private companies and citizens' groups take more initiative to maintain and improve the quality of public spaces. One good example in Yokohama is the sidewalk cafés on Nihon Odori Street. They are managed by the Nihon Odori Activation Committee, a citizens' group composed of corporate members alongside the street.

In order to continue and expand this kind of activities, we need to improve the framework to accept more proposals for the use of public space by companies and citizens.

**Based on your experience, could you elaborate on how the public spaces in Yokohama's urban areas get financed?**

Bus shelter advertisement is one good example. The Yokohama City Transportation Bureau installed advertisement panels on its existing bus shelters in collaboration with an advertisement agency. The Transportation Bureau covered the installment costs, but it helped to reduce our tax expenditure by the revenue from advertisement.

Furthermore, we created a framework to screen advertisements to improve their quality. Hence, the advertisement itself has become one of the elements that contribute to our beautiful townscape.

**Are there any challenges you would like to underline?**

For over half a century, the City of Yokohama has taken the initiative to create high quality public space through urban design. This includes cutting-edge pedestrian space development and town planning featuring the uniqueness of Yokohama's history.

Adopting the current trends, we would like to continue finding new themes and projects, which will be fundamental assets for the unique and vital urban development of Yokohama.



Bus Shelter Advertisement

Nihon Odori Street  
Photo by: Hideo MORI



Mayor Fumiko Hayashi and the members of Nihon Odori Activation Committee  
Photo: Nihon Odori Activation Committee



Zou-no-hana Park  
Photo by: Hideo MORI

# Public Space and the New Urban Agenda

■ The character of a city is defined by its streets and public spaces. From squares and boulevards to neighbourhood gardens and children playgrounds, public space frames city image. The connective matrix of streets and public spaces forms the skeleton of the city upon which all else rests.

## PUBLIC SPACE LED URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Public space takes many spatial forms, including parks, the streets, sidewalks and footpaths that connect, playgrounds of recreation, marketplaces, but also edge space between buildings or roadsides which are often important spaces for the urban poor and in many contexts beaches are also public spaces. This does not mean that all public spaces are “open spaces” – a library, a school or other public facilities are also public spaces.

Public space forms the setting for a panoply of activities - the ceremonial festivities of the multi-cultural city, trade of the commercial city, the movement of goods and people, provision of infrastructure, or the setting for community life and livelihoods of the urban poor – e.g. street vendors or waste-pickers.

A city can tackle inequality through the provision of inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces. Ensuring adequate density is important in supporting social capital formation. Local authorities sometimes ignore the use of public space by the poor, although public space is ‘the poor man’s living room’ and important for recreation, social, cultural and economic development of vulnerable groups.<sup>1</sup> Public space as a common good is the key enabler for the fulfilment of human rights, empowering women and providing opportunities for youth.

Public spaces are a vital ingredient of successful cities. They help build a sense of community, civic identity and culture. Public spaces facilitate social capital, economic development and community revitalisation. The liveliness and continuous use of public space as a public good leads to urban environments that are

well maintained, healthy and safe, making the city an attractive place in which to live and work. It is important for local governments to invest in public space because:

- Public space = quality of life
- Public space supports the economy
- Public space contributes to a sense of civic cohesion and citizenship
- Public space fosters social and cultural interaction
- Public space enhances safety
- Public space improves health and well-being
- Public space increases mobility
- Public space improves the environment

Public space can lead urban development by ensuring that building will only be permitted if public space has been organized prior to development. The link between public space and urban development needs to be understood in each context and legal framework in order to prevent the creation of unmanaged and/or public space deficiencies common to many cities. Particularly in recent decades, many cities have put public space at the core of urban development, for example Bogota in Colombia.

Ensuring city-wide distribution of public spaces is a way for governments to reduce inequalities and reallocate benefits. The benefit of preparing a city-

1. Key Messages, Future of Places Conference II, Buenos Aires 2014 - <http://futureofplaces.com/2014/12/key-messages-from-buenos-aires-conference-2014/>

wide strategy/policy is the protection and creation of a network of high-quality public spaces. City-wide policies and strategies should ensure planning, design and management of public spaces at different scales. Without a clear strategy/policy, it is difficult for local governments to prioritise, spend and plan resources and to show how much public space is valued, and to mitigate the negative impacts of site specific interventions (e.g. gentrification).

## THE OPPORTUNITY: THE GLOBAL SDG AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

A great milestone is the adoption of the 2016-2030 Sustainable Development Goals and specifically Goal 11 ‘Build cities and human settlements that are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’ and target 7 “by 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities”.

The adoption of SDG 11.7 and the elaboration of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) provide significant recognition of the importance of public space to sustainable development and whilst it is a critical first step, on its own it will have little impact without an appropriate follow up mechanism. This will require that cities invest in public space and in the spirit of the new urban agenda cities and local governments should take a trans-disciplinary approach by working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and organizations, including civil society (taking into consideration indigenous people, women’s and grass roots women’s organizations),

## BUILDING ON THE INTERLINKED PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA:

**A.** Public space lends itself well to participatory, gender and age-responsive approaches, providing equal access and making sure to leave no one behind. Adequately planned and designed public space raise issues regarding the right of people to freedom of artistic expression, political assembly and civic empowerment, to enjoy, engage and exchange with each.

**B.** Public space creation, protection, management and enjoyment are ideal opportunities for the involvement of all citizens and provide the space for participation of urban stakeholders from different classes of the society to advance sustainable and inclusive urban economies. Investments in streets and public space infrastructure improve urban productivity, livelihoods and allows better access to markets, jobs and public services, especially in developing countries where over half of the urban workforce is informal.

**C.** Public space is critical for environmental sustainability. Adequately planned and designed public spaces play a critical role in mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate change. Green open spaces can minimise carbon emissions by absorbing carbon from the atmosphere. Green spaces can act as sustainable drainage system, solar temperature moderator, source of cooling corridors, wind shelter and wildlife habitat.

academia and the private sector to ensure inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces for all.

The enabling components of the New Urban Agenda are mutually reinforcing and vital in ensuring prosperous cities. Rules and legislation protect access to public spaces, urban planning and design provides adequate quantity and good quality public space and urban finance and economy share values, promotes income, investment, wealth creation and provides employment and decent job opportunities for all.

When planning focuses on providing an adequate public space structure in terms of supply and connectivity, it is possible to move forward with infrastructure, land subdivision and development in a much more efficient and sustainable way. Streets and public spaces need to be planned first with a view of supporting adequate urban density and connectivity.

Finally, promoting socially inclusive, integrated, connected, accessible, gender-responsive, environmentally sustainable and safe public spaces is key in achieving the New Urban Agenda. Good quality public space provides connectivity and access, protection from crime, shelter from climate, seclusion from traffic and the opportunity to rest, work and meet. Through its multifunctional and multi-disciplinary nature, public space offers a holistic view of the city, such as social inclusion, gender equality, the benefits of nature and green spaces, governance, health, safety, education, climate change, efficient mobility and supports the local urban economy.

AN ARTICLE BY  
Cecilia Andersson  
Public Space Programme Urban Planning and Design Branch  
UN-Habitat

#### KEY DRIVERS FOR ACTION: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

During the Habitat 3 process, the below key drivers for action on public space supporting the implementation of the New Urban Agenda include:

1. At regional and city level, city-wide strategies need to focus not only on places and spaces but on the form, function and connectivity of the city as a whole.
2. Local governments should be able to design the network of public space as part of their development plans.
3. At neighbourhood level, urban design should work with communities to foster social inclusion, gender equality, celebrate multiculturalism and biodiversity, and enable urban livelihoods, thus creating rich, vibrant spaces in the urban commons.
4. Laws and regulations need to be reviewed, to establish enabling systems to create, revitalise, manage, and maintain public space, including participatory processes to define their use and manage access to public spaces.
5. Land value sharing and land readjustment tools should be widely adopted and promoted for local governments to capture private values generated by better public spaces and sustain investment in public space.
6. Investing in public space needs to be harnessed as a driver for economic and social development, as well as for gender equality, taking into consideration urban-rural linkages.
7. As cities expand, the necessary land for streets and public spaces as well as public infrastructure networks must be secured. Urban projects need to ensure adequate public space in planned city extensions, planned city infill and participatory slum upgrading projects. Instruments to enable the creation of public space from private owned land are of critical importance.
8. Need to establish targets and indicators for measuring the distribution, quantity, quality, accessibility, inclusion and safety of public space.

## Malcolm Square: Baguio City's Multi-purpose Public Space

- Baguio City is committed to provide an accessible, green and good quality open space for its residents. The City Government of Baguio restored Malcolm Square to its grandeur as a favourite venue for various activities. The restoration project aimed at creating a multi-purpose public space.



Malcolm Square serves as a people-friendly breathing room within a commercial and economic zone.



Malcolm Square, popularly known as People’s Park, is considered as a public space where people are engaged in all kinds of public and private activities in the City of Baguio.

Located at kilometre 0, Malcolm Square is the point of reference in measuring distance from Baguio City to other places. The park was named after American Justice George Malcolm who was one of those who spearheaded the creation of the Summer Capital’s charter.<sup>1</sup>

Malcolm Square serves as a people-friendly breathing room within a commercial and economic zone, which allows multiple types of public and private activities. The Square is intended for social interaction, economic exchange, cultural expression and dialogue for human development and connectivity – a multi-use destination. Malcolm Square was declared as a freedom park where residents may use to voice their concerns.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Malcolm Square, which is a part of the design of Daniel Burnham – an American architect who designed Baguio more than a century ago – is located at the heart of the City right at the foot of Session Road. Surrounding the Square are structures which are considered to be an important part of Baguio’s history, and the popular Baguio City Public Market is located just across the Square.

As part of the efforts to provide an open public space, Baguio restored the Square into its original condition as a plaza. The city government proposed to remove the structure within the Square as well as the fence that enclosed the area for security purposes and for freedom of space. The city government considered that the structure surrounding the Square is a heritage zone. They designed in a way that reflects green architecture with multipurpose functionality to improve the ways of

1. On 1 September 1909 Baguio was declared as a chartered city and the “Summer Capital of the Philippines”.



Malcolm Square is widely known as People’s Park.



The Square is designed in a wedge shape with a gradual slope and a stepped surface

living environmentally and allow the buildings around it to flourish.

It is a favourite venue of important events for both political, cultural as well as the entertainment activities. It has become the most sought after venue to organise various events and it also serves as an ideal meeting place which is open and easily accessible to the public. It greatly contributes to the enrichment and increased awareness of cultural heritage and traditions.

#### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

In order to meet the citizens’ needs for better comfort, convenience and services, Malcolm Square had to undergo a major rehabilitation. The project consisted of the construction of a new stage, improvement of the landscape, lightings and drainage system which included a rainwater catchment retention cistern for flood control.

The Square is designed in a wedge shape with a gradual slope and a stepped surface that is dedicated to hosting speaker-led events and serving as a stage for other events.

The design features a performance space with portable stage system and an audience area which has an ideal capacity for art installations and exhibitions without losing the sitting area. This design allows the Square to be used for variety of purposes such as cultural presentations, theatrical performances, concerts, fairs and art exhibitions.

The main square is defined by random striped dark grey and white monolithic tiles with striped grass and paving, new timber clad benches and a pedestrian street on its sides.

#### RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The Mayor’s Office issued Administrative Order (AO) 196 series of 2016 Rules and Regulations Governing the Operation and Maintenance of Malcolm Square - as they found it necessary that the City Government of Baguio has to institutionalize the rules and regulations governing the operation and maintenance of Malcolm Square, its facilities and resources.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

The City Government of Baguio allocated PHP 9,000,000.00 for the renovation and rehabilitation of Malcolm Square or People’s Park from its General Fund. The Mayor of Baguio Mauricio Domogan inaugurated the newly renovated Malcolm Square in December 2016.

#### AN ARTICLE BY

Engr. Evelyn B. Cayat  
City Planning and Development Coordinator  
City Government of Baguio

## ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER (AO) 196 SERIES OF 2016

### SECTION 1. REGULATION AND CONTROL:

Admission to the park as a protected landscape is free of charge to the public through harmonious interaction of man and land while providing opportunities for the public enjoyment through recreation and tourism within the normal lifestyle and economic activity.

All activities or facilities carried out in the park will be subjected to control, regulation and licensing and permitting through the City Environment and Parks Management Office. The City Government, however, also reserves the right to disallow any activity.

Payment for the use of the area/ environmental maintenance fee and permitting are required and mandatory based on City Ordinance No. 18-16 and other issuances before activities shall be conducted in the Park.

### SECTION 2. ACTIVITIES ALLOWED AND DISALLOWED:

#### – Activities Allowed:

Social programs, musical concerts, television shows or TV and film promotion, field demonstration, sports tournament, skills olympics or competitions, political rallies and similar activities that are consistent with the intended use of the park.

#### – Activities Disallowed/Prohibited:

(i)Smoking in the park; (ii)drinking liquor or alcoholic beverages; (iii)bonfire or undue burning; (iv) sleep out; (v) walking and or displaying of medium to big sized dogs and similar pets, pasturing and turning loose of pets and other domesticated animals; (vi) destroying or mutilating, picking or cutting of flowers and plants or uprooting of plants; (vii) work out or practice driving of two or four-wheeled rides or vehicles, roller skating, skateboarding and similar rides; (viii) unnecessary nailing, bolting, posting of signage in any part of the park; (ix) urinating, littering, spitting and spitting of momma; (x) gambling of any kind to include bingo socials; (xi) unauthorized flyer and poster distribution, religious open preaching; (xii) personal services like massage, nail spa, henna tattooing; (xiii) fortune telling using

cards or any devices or tools; (xiv) begging, carolling by individuals or groups, soliciting contribution or donation; (xv) marketing or promotion of products, product sampling; (xvi) peddling of services and goods of any kind to include shoe shine, cut flower or ornamental plants (to include along the sidewalks fronting Magsaysay Avenue and Session Road and walls of the stair landing of overpass); (xvii) parking of vehicles, private, government or public utility vehicles inside the Malcolm Square or along Perfecto Street; (xviii) destroying, disfiguring, defacing or vandalizing any monument, implements, amenities, devices, displays, signs or any property installed thereat by the government and or the use thereof for purposes of hanging any form of advertisements; (xix) leaving unmanaged solid waste materials after the event and/or untended solid waste materials in designated pick up points for organized event; (xx)mixing of concrete and/or stocking of concrete materials along the side streets, (xxi) trade fairs (except sponsored by the City Government of Baguio through Sangguniang Panlungsod action).

### SECTION 3. VIOLATION OF THE PROHIBITED ACTS

### SECTION 4. IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The personnel of the Baguio City Police Office POSD, CEPMO and other concerned offices shall ensure the enforcement and implementation of the stated rules and regulations. The CEPMO shall assign guards on 24 hours basis to assist in the enforcement and implementation of the same rules and regulations.

### SECTION 5. REPEALING CLAUSE

### SECTION 6. EFFECTIVITY

# Kemuning River Normalization

❖ The Banjarbaru City Government in Indonesia launched a river normalization project aimed at creating a liveable public space along the Kemuning riverside which was prone to flooding.

The 7200-meter long Kemuning River divides Banjarbaru City into two parts. It was not well-maintained and neglected by the surrounding community. Informal settlements and houses were built along the riverbank and they have expanded which left the Kemuning River increasingly polluted and prone to flooding.

Kemuning River was gradually used as a large dump site that collects household waste from used goods such as wooden cabinets, bicycle, clothing, and bedding, to animal carcass, human waste and other liquid waste. This led to a polluted and dirty environment plagued with health issues. The river border then started to disappear partly due to the distress caused by the growing informal settlement. During the rainy season, the river rose and often burst its banks causing severe flooding in the surrounding area, as the capacity was insufficient to contain the huge volumes of pouring rainfall. This resulted in catastrophic damage to the neighbourhood, property and infrastructure.

The Banjarbaru City Government concluded the need for the Kemuning river bank normalization project to restore its ecological function as the urban drainage system and a scenic tourist attraction which could also be a vehicle to educate the community on the importance of having clean drains. The normalization process started with dredging the river, building the Kemuning siring or waterfront, revitalizing the homes of residents living along the river, creating a communal sanitary arrangement, and improving the river bridge design. This normalization project would only succeed with the cooperation between the city government and the residents in the surrounding area.

In 2009 the Banjarbaru's Public Works Department used the municipal budget to begin carrying out the Kemuning River normalization project. The first step was to rehabilitate the bridge by installing a self-anchored suspension bridge in the village of North Loktabat, where the river passes through. The project

then proceeded with the development and regular maintenance of irrigation networks, swamps, and other water system in 2010. To improve sanitation, the Department of Public Works built several amenities such as PUBLIC or communal wastewater treatment plant to prevent residents from discharging wastewater directly to the Kemuning River.

In 2011 the Banjarbaru City Government enthusiastically welcomed an offer to develop Settlements Development Strategy and Urban Infrastructure (SPPIP) as a reference to manage and re-arrange the urban settlements and infrastructure.

After successfully relocating residents living at the Kemuning river bank, the city government then built 1,844 meter stretch of pathways on both sides of the river by 2012 funded by the ministry. Next, in 2013 the city government continued to expand the riverside as wide as five meters for road construction and open green space using a grant funding that was received between 2010-2016. At that time a group of environmentalists such as the Love River, LPM (Society Empowerment Institution), the Go Green Movement and the Clean led by city's department of environment were actively involved in the efforts of the Kemuning River normalization project, which continued to be implemented until 2016 with the re-establishment of the road on the river side.

The Kemuning River normalization process wasn't without challenges, one of which was due to the informal settlers living along the river who refused to relocate since they owned the certificate of occupancy and land use rights. According to the Government Regulation No. 38 in 2011 article 17 on maintaining river function, if there are buildings along the river which are built on the state-owned land, their status is maintained as status quo and has to be regulated to restore the riverside function.

The second challenge was the lack of public awareness of the aesthetic values and cleanliness of the



Kemuning River after the normalization project.

river. Another significant challenge was the city's limited financial resources, which means limiting government's initiative to provide compensation to residents who owned the certificate of occupancy and land use rights. They overcame this issue by using a gentle persuasive approach to educate residents about the importance of restoring the river function and how they could work together for public interest.

Local residents around Kemuning River have felt the benefits of the normalization project; all sorts of debris were removed from the river which not only did it help reduce flood risk for the past two years but

also provided a free recreational area for the community. The most important points of this program is that it has changed the public mindset about the Kemuning River function as an important part of their lives to take care of, nurtured and preserved.

AN ARTICLE BY:  
 Kanafie, S.IP, MM  
 Banjarbaru City Government  
 Phone: +6281351060809/ +6285251417809  
 Email: fhie.bedjo@gmail.com  
 Image source: Department of Public Works of Banjarbaru



Before the normalization, the river border started to disappear partly due to the distress caused by the growing informal settlement.



Best practices

## Perdana Botanical Garden

- The Perdana Botanical Gardens is Kuala Lumpur's first large-scale public park. Formerly known as Taman Tasik Perdana or Lake Gardens, it has always been a part of the city's green lung and has a history of over a decade. Originally created as part of a recreational park but planted with collections of tropical plants, the garden has been rehabilitated and turned into a Botanical Garden.



Green scenery of the garden

Perdana Botanical Garden



Hibiscus Garden

Perdana Botanical Garden is a 53 hectare garden situated in the Heritage Park of Kuala Lumpur in the middle of the city centre adjacent to National Museum, Kuala Lumpur Bird Park and Butterfly Park, and just a walking distance from Kuala Lumpur Central railway station. The garden is open daily to public from 7 am to 7 pm without entrance fees and is managed by the Landscape and Recreation Department of Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

In 1888, A.R. Venning, the State Treasurer of Selangor proposed a Botanic Garden to the British Resident, Frank Swettenhem. Upon approval, an area of 70 hectares along Sungai Bras-Bras was cleared and took 10 years to transform the area into a public park known as the Lake Garden. In 1975, the Second Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak renamed the park as Perdana Lake Garden.

Subsequently, on 28 June 2011, the park was given a status as Perdana Botanical Garden by the Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak. It was an initiative to enhance the importance of the garden as the biodiversity centre in the middle of the city.

Being one of the Kuala Lumpur best attractions, Perdana Botanical Garden functions as Kuala Lumpur's green lung and has become a well-known recreational park for the city dwellers. Since 2011, many infrastructures have been developed and upgraded to enable the Botanical Garden embarking on plant conservation, botanical research and educational programme. More people have become more aware with the existence of Botanical Garden together with the function to conserve plants and to educate people in term of botanical knowledge.

Not only does the garden have botanical

collections but it also houses features that give visitors the ambiance of being in a tropical rainforest, despite its location in the middle of a bustling metropolis. Together with the infrastructure upgrade, it has attracted more people to visit the garden.

#### EX-SITU CONSERVATION

In making the Perdana Botanical Garden into renowned botanical garden, DBKL has undertaken some initiatives with other agencies such as Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) and University Putra Malaysia (UPM) in the development of the Herbarium, Visitor's Interpretive Centre and research facilities in the garden.

The areas within the garden are planted with many local and some exotic species as an effort to diversify the plant collection and also for ex-situ conservation. One of the efforts to become the most beneficial garden in the heart of the city is by conducting the plant inventory and conserving more plant species to provide the references for educational and research institutions.

Presently, there are about 6500 trees collections that consist of 274 tree species. Although only at an infant stage, around 2000 herbarium specimens have been cured, which was collected within the garden as well as from other fields.

In Perdana Botanical Garden, there are several thematic gardens which include Hibiscus Garden, Orchid Garden, Heliconia Garden, Sunken Garden, Oasis Garden, and Herb and Spice Garden. Within these gardens, there are about 10 hibiscus species, 230 orchid species, 50 heliconia species, and 105 species of herbs and spices.

Other gardens include an Arboretum, Forest

Tree and Lesser Fruit Trees Collections, Laman Perdana and Bamboo Playhouse. The garden features a diverse collection of indigenous as well as exotic trees. In the Arboretum, there are about 200 species of tropical timber trees. The Lesser Fruit Trees Garden contains about 80 species of fruit trees which previously were commonly found in the rural areas. These trees were planted as part of the DBKL's efforts in conserving biodiversity which might be significant to the future plant research.

Exploring the Perdana Botanical Gardens, visitors will be amazed by the variety of flora - colourful flowering ornamental plants, palms, and some rare indigenous trees, among others. There are also many unique exotic trees such as Rain tree (*Samanea saman*), Bottle tree (*Moringa drouhardii*), the Sausage tree (*Kigelia africana*), the Cannonball tree (*Couroupita guianensis*) and the Baobab tree (*Adansonia digitata*) planted along the pedestrian trails providing nice shade to the garden users.

In addition, there are many matured trees, for instance Brazil Nut (*Bertholletia excelsa*), Mahogany (*Swietenia mahogani*), Khaya senegalensis (*Meliaceae*), *Fagraea fragrans* (*Gentianaceae*), *Swietenia mahogany* (*Meliaceae*) and *Michelia* spp. (*Magnoliaceae*) landscaping the garden. All these trees became an almost continuous canopy layer for the garden.

#### CHALLENGES

DBKL's initiative to enhance the importance of the garden as the biodiversity centre has successfully attracted more visitors, however, the process is not without challenges. The issues facing the Perdana Botanical project include preserving the existing heritage trees, harnessing the diverse plant collection with proper facilities and infrastructure for research and educational purposes, and documenting and labelling plant inventory. DBKL also underlines the need to collaborate with other related institutions for experience and knowledge sharing.

AN ARTICLE BY  
Syazwani Binti Azeman  
Research Officer  
Perdana Botanical Garden

PHOTOGRAPHY:  
Zakaria Mat



Visitors can rest and relax while enjoying the view of Perdana Botanical Garden.

# Open Space at Armenian Street: Greening Penang's UNESCO World Heritage Zone

Think City's high note in 2016 was the opening of the open space at Armenian Street - a labour of love four years in the making. Since then, the park and the surrounding public facilities that were also upgraded, have played host to many families and individuals looking for some respite. However, the project almost never came to be. What were the challenges faced and how did Think City and its partners turn the project into a shining example of urban regeneration?



The site before the upgrading efforts



The small open space at the junction of Armenian Street and Acheh Street was originally an unkempt pocket park where an informal flea market had made its base. These stalls, splayed haphazardly throughout the space, had been trading every evening for many years. Greenery was sparse except for the mature trees providing shade for the park, and the adjoining hard court sorely needed an upgrade.

In 2012, the upgrading initiative was set in motion under the "Greening George Town" project. Given the potential impact the project would have on its surroundings and the users of the site - the traders, the community who would frequent the flea market and others -, engaging the different stakeholders from the start was crucial.

However, the initial plans that were developed fell short of representing the needs of the stakeholders and did not optimise the opportunities to promote interaction among users within the space. So work came to a temporary standstill.

The formalisation of Think City's partnership with Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) - a Trust focused on the physical, social, cultural and economic revitalisation of communities in the developing world - opened up new possibilities for the upgrading project. With the insights from AKTC which identified many opportunities for improvement in the original design, the team led by Hamdan Majeed, the Executive Director of Think City Sdn Bhd, made the bold, albeit tough, move to scrap the existing proposal and make way for a design that would reflect greater community input and stronger connections with its surroundings.

## A MULTIPURPOSE COMMUNITY HUB

Located in the heart of the heritage enclave and flanked by sites of historical and cultural value, the open space at Armenian Street needed to align itself with the needs of the community and its surroundings, and to ensure it would be able to sustain itself for many years to come. Transforming the existing barren plot into a multi-purpose community hub effectively demonstrated the positive multiplier effects the project had.

"Projects such as the Armenian Street pocket park tend to have a positive impact that goes well beyond conservation by promoting good governance, the growth of civil society, a rise in income and economic opportunities, as well as better stewardship of the environment," said AKTC planning consultant, Francesco Siravo, who was actively involved in the project.

## CHALLENGES

One would assume that introducing more green space and enhancing facilities would be welcomed with open arms, but in the case of the open space at Armenian Street, it was quite the opposite. Convincing different stakeholders from the local authority to the resident communities was an uphill battle. Sceptics questioned each and every aspect of the proposals, and numerous engagement sessions with various interest groups were held to ensure, where possible, that the final designs met their needs, and concerns were addressed.

In addition, another key challenge was to address the issues of the then users and occupants of the space - namely the "Thieves" Flea Market traders. In order



Artist impression of the initial proposed designs for the park which was eventually replaced with the current design

for the project to be implemented, it was important to relocate the traders, who had crowded out families and children, as the area was perceived to be unsafe.

The relocation was met with strong objections that delayed the project by three months as countless negotiations and dialogue sessions were held. It was initially suggested that the traders (numbering more than 100) be relocated to Pesara Claimant, another lane just a stone's throw away from the Armenian Street site. The traders were reluctant to move, some voicing concerns that they would be trading right outside a police station, and many of them did not have permits.

With help from the Penang Island City Council (MBPP), the traders were finally relocated to the new site where they were allowed to trade in the evenings.

However, it was not all smooth sailing as the traders organised protests to oppose the Armenian Park project while demanding to be allowed to go back to the old site to trade. After numerous discussions and negotiations, both parties were able to come to an amicable agreement.

#### CONTINUOUS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Once settled, hoardings were finally erected and the first phase of the project commenced in July 2015. This involved transforming the hard court into a multipurpose space with a basketball court and incorporating a green space with public seating and accessible pathways.

Community engagement was conducted throughout the project to keep a constant dialogue with



Proposed plans for the site were exhibited at the George Town World Heritage Incorporated for public input and feedback.

stakeholders. Hoardings displayed project plans and a pop-up park was created to offer people a sneak preview of what was to come. A balance of one-to-one sessions and group discussions were held to share information and progress on the park.

"The keyword was 'balance'. Yes, there were many people who were excited about the park coming up, but there were many who felt as though we were taking away the livelihood of the traders. In actual fact, the site was originally a park, but as time went by a single group of people monopolised it, which eventually led to the flea market. We wanted to return it to its original purpose," said Program Manager Daniel Lim who was part of the project team.

Today the park is frequently used as an events space, particularly for arts and cultural events such as the George Town Heritage Day Celebrations and George Town Festival. The basketball court is also used regularly for sports and cultural events.

#### STORIES IN THE DESIGN

All the materials used in the creation of the park had a story to tell. Among others, the surrounding perimeter fence was inspired by a nearby rattan weaving workshop and the 'Heaven and Earth' feature wall pays homage to the original Malay settlement at the site.

The combined use of tactile elements and braille maps for Universal Design access was the first of its kind to be introduced in Penang, following extensive consultation with the National Council for the Blind and the Penang Accessibility Action Group.

#### PHASE TWO

The project has now entered its second phase which encompasses:

1. improving the back lanes for greater accessibility
2. upgrading the existing community centre, and
3. restoring the adjacent Syed Alatas Mansion.

For the back lanes component, a custom porous floor slab was created together with a Master Builder from AKTC to comply with the requirements of the George Town Special Area Plan. The material allows for better rainwater absorption and breathability of the ground and surrounding buildings.

#### LOOKING FORWARD

Thanks to the strong collaboration between project partners namely Penang Island City Council (MBPP), George Town World Heritage Incorporated

(GTWHI) and AKTC together with Think City the project has been well-received by all stakeholders.

The project enabled Think City to introduce planning practices within the heritage zone that incorporate an area's characteristics and improved quality of life for residents.

"By making the best of what is already there and responding to the wishes and suggestions of the residents this can really preserve the quality of the context and introduce, gradually but surely, significant improvements in the daily lives of the residents," said Francesco of the AKTC.

Phase two of the project continues to be rolled out. At the same time, a management and maintenance plan is being drawn up with the MBPP to ensure regular maintenance and long-term sustainability of the project after its completion.

"Success for us is the continued use of this park, not just the delivery of the design. In 10 years from now, will people still be enjoying it? Will it have served its purpose in bringing people together? We're trying to ensure positive answers to these questions," said Daniel.

Think City is a community-focused urban rejuvenation organisation with a mandate to make Malaysian cities more sustainable and liveable for its citizens.

Established in 2009 by Khazanah Nasional Berhad – the investment arm of the Malaysian government – Think City's first port of call was the rejuvenation of the historic city of George Town, Penang.

Utilising a public grants program as the main vehicle and through strategic partnerships, Think City was able to meet its goal of reviving the city. This led to an expansion into other cities, namely Butterworth, Kuala Lumpur and most recently, Johor Bharu.

Today, Think City works closely with local governments and international agencies, and various communities, building effective partnerships, and enhancing capacity along the way. Through this, we hope to be able to deliver long-term holistic and sustainable solutions for generations of today and those to come.



One of the very few open green spaces within the heritage zone of George Town

## Aksiku.bdg: High Schools Engagement in the Making of the City

- The role of the youth can be crucial in implementing sustainable development, but it has often been forgotten by the Indonesian government both nationally and locally. This has triggered the launch of a digital platform called “Aksiku.bdg” by a group of young people in Bandung City supported by the city government where they engage high school students to help maintain sustainable neighbourhood.



AKTC and Think City collaborate on the Armenian Park Backlanes project.

In the last 10 years, Bandung has grown rapidly and become part of an extended and complex metropolitan area, which has given rise to diverse and complicated problems. The presence of densely populated kampung kota (‘urban villages’ or slums) poses a variety of issues. Protected areas, such as riparian zones (riverbanks), are used for building houses. Unfortunately, such unregulated land use can lead to an unhealthy and unsafe environment.

A riverbank is a green infrastructure component of urban areas and have an important function in the city’s drainage system, to support the natural urban ecosystem and provide recreation and many other functions, known as ecological services. The riverbank must be protected from destructive human behaviors that could damage the physical conditions of river edges, threaten water quality and obstruct water flow. Moreover, riparian issues are multi-sectoral – they include waste, garbage, green space and sanitation – and tend to be different at different locations, and so require localized solutions.

Green infrastructure in the form of public open space faces similar problems. Green open spaces are scarce because so many of them have been converted into buildings, roads, parking spaces and other functions, resulting in an increase of Bandung’s rainwater run-

off to 75%.<sup>1</sup> In addition to creating more green open spaces, it is also important to maximize river capabilities in controlling flooding. In light of the characteristics of the problems mentioned above, solving environmental problems by starting with the restoration of the riverbanks is a strategically important intervention.

Youth participation in urban planning has no precedent in Indonesia. A third of the population consists of youths (UNFPA, 2014). They use the public spaces available in urban settings more than anyone, yet they are voiceless. Their voice is absent in how such spaces are designed. This is particularly acute in lower income settlements. Citizen-based democracy is now being promoted in Indonesia – which means that progress has been made.

However, there is a big downside: we have forgotten the youth’s role as participating citizens in the decision-making process that shapes their lives. Indonesia has not yet embraced the paradigm of seeing youth as an indispensable resource. UNESCO (2013) states that in Indonesia there is no policy, no methodology to guide the participation of youth in urban planning. The absence of resources for city governments to innovate in this area is seen as the main reason. Furthermore, youths themselves, schools and other stakeholders do not have access to the information and knowledge required to

integrate young people into the urban planning process.

Under the umbrella of a NGO, Bandung Creative City Forum, Aksiku was launched as an activity that encourages participants (high school students) to collaborate with community stakeholders to develop tangible environmental solutions using the process of design thinking.<sup>2</sup> The high school student groups involved can provide help in preparing proposals, development assistance, or, in the long term, management of facilities. They are divided into groups, where each group consists of students from the same school. Some of the solutions that have been developed are: Palasari Waste Management System and Train Park in Palasari by 8 SMA (high school) students, Cidurian River Water Treatment and Purifier by 7 SMK (vocational school) students, Trash Management for Book Sellers in Palasari by 8 SMA students, and Environmental and Sports Park in Sukapura, Kiaracondong by 12 SMA students.

1. The Rainwater absorbed by the ground is only 25%.

2. The design thinking process will be further explained in the Methodology section.

### DATA MAPPING (OBSERVE)

The first step in Aksiku is to observe. In this phase, participants directly observe their environment to find existing problems. This phase is also called the 'gameplay' stage, after the observation method, which uses a gaming approach. A smartphone application supports the observation activities, which enables the participants to upload photos along with geotagged location that show a problem.

In addition to taking photos, students can also gather supporting data, for example by taking river samples or by interviewing local community members to find out more about their complaints and expectations.

A group of participants from SMA 8 Bandung observed the area of Jalan Batu Kencana in Turangga. This neighborhood is a slum located at the border of inactive railroad tracks and owned by PT. Kereta Api Indonesia-PT. KAI (Indonesia's major operator of public railways). They found problems related to waste, such as bad waste/garbage management, an overflowing garbage dump, and river pollution caused by household waste and solid waste. They also found potential areas to develop, such as a waste bank for inorganic trash, organic waste used as compost material, and empty land that could be used as green open space.



Participant uses the smartphone application in the field.



Water sampling for quality testing



Water sampling for quality testing



Different approaches of the Reframe phase

### DESIGN THINKING WORKSHOP PHASE

#### a. Reframe

The data from the gameplay stage are used in the Reframe phase, a workshop assisted by a facilitator. The facilitators involved are designers who are trained in the use of the design thinking method. The aim at this stage is to gain a better and more structured understanding of the problems observed in the field. This is necessary for generating the target solution.

#### b. Ideate

During the Ideate phase, the participants are encouraged to come up with as many ideas as possible without being limited by practical considerations. Ideas can be developed individually or in groups for solving different focal issues that have been identified previously. These ideas are then reprocessed and selected based on their level of urgency and interest, after which they can be combined to create an integrated solution.

The Ideate phase in the SMA 8 group generated many ideas, such as: setting up a collaboration with PT. KAI to build a park/garden, building a trash management system, and introducing garbage dump regulations.

#### c. Prototype

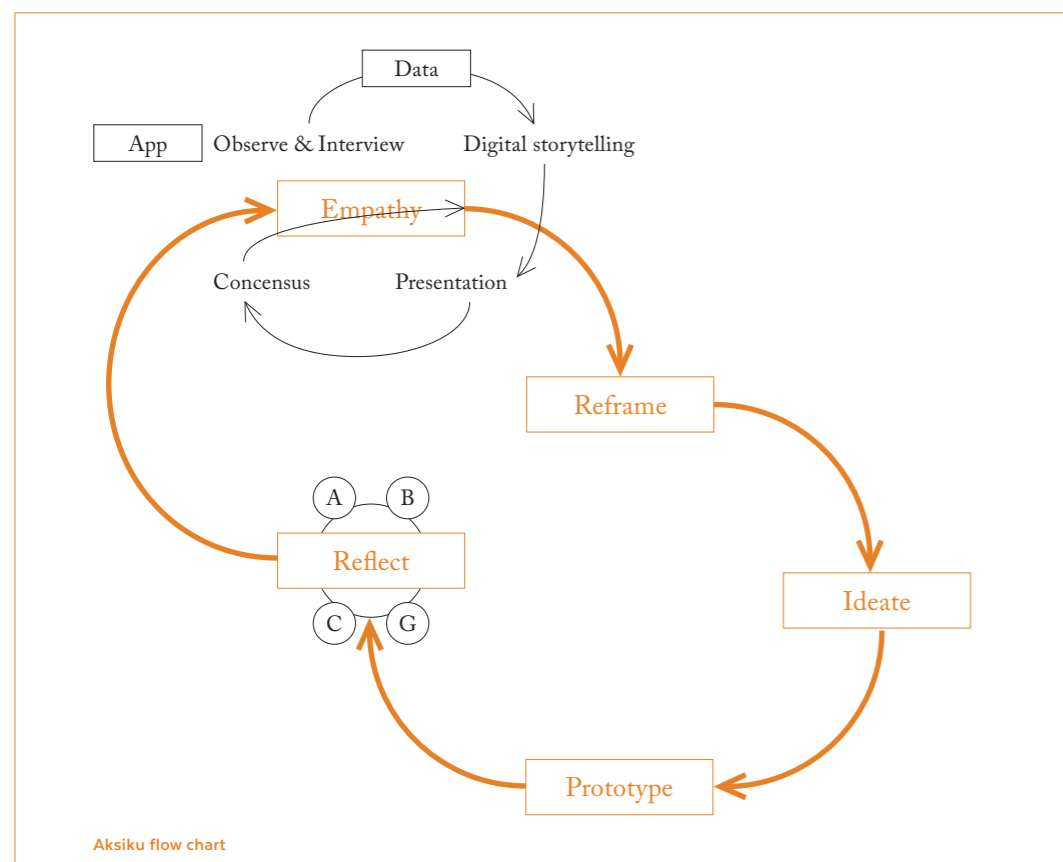
After obtaining a mutually-agreed solution, the participants create a prototype that identifies the ideas generated during the Ideate phase. A prototype can be made in any form or medium such as sketches, posters, or even mockups, as long as it can explain the ideas well.

The raw ideas from the Ideate phase were simulated and combined into an integrated solution for Jalan Batu Kencana. The participants proposed to build a train park on an empty plot of land. To ensure that the activities at the park are undisturbed by the stench from the waste dump, the dump will be relocated to a place further removed from the park. Through the waste sorting process, organic waste will be collected and turned into compost, which can be used in park management or hydroponics. Inorganic waste will be collected too and treated at the already existing waste bank. The participants also suggested to implement an incentive system in the form of coupons to encourage community members to separate their own household waste.

#### d. Reflect

During this phase, the participants present their ideas to relevant stakeholders: RT (neighborhood association), RW (community association), lurah (village chief), camat (district chief), and the Mayor of Bandung. This phase is conducted in order to get feedback from these stakeholders.

### METHODOLOGY





## IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation or execution stage is the last phase of the Aksiku process. After the presentation, a good cooperation between all the school parties (participants and their teachers), RW, kelurahan and kecamatan is necessary to implement the proposed project. A proposal will be created to be submitted to some of the development fund provider programs available in Bandung, such as a development and empowerment programs – PIPPK or PNPM - or even local Corporate Social Responsibility.

For the SMA 8 group, school participation in the management of the park will be done by information meetings about a healthy environment or how to plant hydroponics, how to build a vertical garden, and how to make compost out of organic waste. Interesting activities for communities to be held at the park were also proposed, such as trash gathering competitions for children.

## CONCLUSION

Aksiku encourages high school students to provide creative solutions for environmental problems in their neighborhood. It is a good tool for developing a relationship between youths and penta-helix collaboration. In practice there have been some setbacks, for example, in the implementation process of the SMA 12 solution, where the students were not fully involved in the preparation of the hydroponics. However, we are convinced that Aksiku will give fresh, enlightening and strategic solutions for the urban environment, as well as support the democratic system in Indonesia, where usually youth voices are not fully heard by the government and communities.

AN ARTICLE BY  
Dewi Shinta Putri  
Co-founder of Aksiku.bdg  
shinta\_sputri@yahoo.com



Different approaches of the Reframe phase



Participants present their ideas at Aksiku and DesignAction workshop.



Prototype mockups

# Spring/Summer Highlights

Several innovative activities have enriched CityNet's first half of 2017, starting with a session in the East Asia Summit High-Level Seminar on Sustainable Cities that highlighted how knowledge platforms could facilitate city-to-city cooperation. In this session, CityNet shared its recently established collaboration with UNESCAP and Seoul Metropolitan Government to leverage such platform to implement the SDGs, which has been formalized through a Memorandum of Agreement signed in Bangkok.

As the partnership with the Seoul Human Resource Development Center (SHRDC) continues, CityNet co-organised a training course on Bus Rapid Transit and Transfer System for Asian cities. This course resulted from the survey conducted last year during the Transportation Strategy Workshop which was also conducted together with SHRDC.

Moving beyond the Asia Pacific, CityNet recognized the importance of strengthening cooperation with cities outside the region by facilitating best practice exchanges between Korean Cities and European Cities as part of the World Cities Project supported by the European Parliament, together with Ramboll, a consulting engineering group with its headquarter in Denmark.

## Knowledge Platforms for Cities and City-to-City Cooperation



CityNet presents the session "Knowledge Platforms for Cities and City-to-City Cooperation" in the 8<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit High-level Seminar on Sustainable Cities organised by IGES.

CityNet presented the session "Knowledge Platforms for Cities and City-to-City Cooperation" in the 8<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit High-level Seminar on Sustainable Cities organised by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) on behalf of the Governments of Thailand, Japan, Cambodia, ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities in Chiang Rai, Thailand, on 8-9 February 2017.

The session emphasized the importance of successfully implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the key role of cities in localising the SDGs, as it has to be integrated in national and local development plan. As cities assume a greater role within global development paradigms, inter-city cooperation becomes more important.

One of the mediums to foster the inter-city cooperation is an online platform jointly developed

by CityNet, UNESCAP and Seoul Metropolitan Government, where cities can share their urban SDG implementation and learn from others by providing a database of urban policies and initiatives and linking urban stakeholders. Furthermore, it is planned to facilitate replication of successful projects through the city-to-city cooperation and to connect the Urban SDG Knowledge Sharing Platform with other, similar initiatives.

# Memorandum of Agreement for the SDG Knowledge Platform signed



Stefanos Fotiou; Chief of Environment and Development Division UNESCAP, Lee Hoi Seung; Director General of International Cooperation Bureau, Seoul Metropolitan Government / CityNet Assistant Secretary General, and Dr. Vallop Suwandee; Chief of Advisors to the Governor of Bangkok at the signing ceremony for the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) in Bangkok, Thailand during the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

To formalise the collaboration between CityNet, UNESCAP, and Seoul Metropolitan Government to develop the Urban SDG Knowledge Sharing Platform, the three institutions signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on 30 March 2017, in conjunction with the 2017 Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) held by UNESCAP in Bangkok.

Adnan Aliani; Director of Strategy Programme Management Division and Stefanos Fotiou; Chief of Environment and Development Division from UNESCAP, Lee Hoi Seung; Director General of International Cooperation Bureau, Seoul Metropolitan Government / CityNet Assistant Secretary General, and Dr. Vallop Suwandee; Chief of Advisors to the Governor of Bangkok representing Bangkok Metropolitan Administration as CityNet Vice President were present for the signing. They shared a common interest to maintain a strategic partnership within the framework of this Urban SDG Knowledge Platform.

As part of the APFSD, in addition to the MoA, CityNet also participated in the Pavilion on Partnership by showcasing the idea of the Platform to the urban stakeholders from the Asia Pacific region.

# Best Practice Exchanges between Korean Cities and European Cities

Four Korean cities - Seoul, Suwon, Busan, and Gwangju - are paired with four European cities - Eindhoven (Netherlands), the Scottish Cities Alliance (UK), Tampere (Finland) and Barcelona (Spain) - to promote better urban policy and improve the quality of life in participating cities. This is part of the World Cities Project supported by the European Parliament to promote long-term cooperation between the select cities that was initiated in 2014.

This project is currently on its second phase (2017-2018) which promotes the cooperation between cities in the European Union and the Republic of Korea, Australia, South Africa, Indonesia, and Vietnam. CityNet and Ramboll are implementing the project for the Republic of Korea.

Cooperation with the Republic of Korea requires the identification of pilot regions and cities, and the development of concrete actions for implementation. The focus area covers urban innovation (the smart city) and green technologies (energy efficiency, low carbon development), among others.

The Launch Meeting was held in Seoul on 14 March in the presence of Mr Kim Chang-beom, Ambassador for International Relations, Seoul Metropolitan Government, 20 European city delegates and senior officials of the Korean Government and local authorities. The EU was represented by Dr Michael Reiterer, the EU Ambassador-designate to the Republic of Korea and Dr Ronald Hall, Principal Advisor, EU Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, Brussels, in addition to other senior officials and EU experts.

EU Ambassador Reiterer stated that "The European Union and Korea recognise that the development of cities is a key factor in the promotion of sustainable development in the world. The European Union is therefore committed to engaging with partners around the globe, to expand opportunities for city-to-city cooperation developing capacities and fostering exchanges of urban solutions and mutual learning to jointly address the challenges of sustainable development in our partner countries overall. The majority of our



Four Korean cities are paired with four European cities as part of the World Cities project phase two to exchange best practices to promote urban policy in respective countries.

citizens live in cities, therefore we want to improve their life by improving the urban environment that impacts their life on daily basis."

The meeting was followed by three-day working meetings and site visits in the Korea's hosting cities, during which participating cities from both sides exchanged information and discuss relevant urban development issues. This will then be followed by six months of decentralized cooperation on specialized topics between cities and by a five-day working meeting organized by the EU, which will include site visits of nominated Korean city delegates with their EU counterparts in selected EU cities during the month of October/November 2017.

The concluding meeting will be held in Korea, with suggested prospects and take-aways for both Korea and EU in March 2018. Actions resulting from the project are designed to increase the 'triple-helix cooperation' between governments, research and business. The World Cities Project in Korea will promote sustainable city development while creating new opportunities for business and jobs.

# Transportation Strategy Workshop for Asian Cities



CityNet and SHRDC hold a workshop on the Transportation Strategy for Asian Cities on 9-15 April.

Following the success of last year's workshop on Transportation Strategy for Asian Cities, conducted in partnership with the Seoul Human Resource Development Center (SHRDC), CityNet organized a workshop underlining Bus Rapid Transit and Transfer System from 9-15 April 2017 in Seoul.

This is based on the survey at the first Transportation Strategy Workshop for Asian Cities in 2016, where participants conveyed that the most interesting topic delivered was the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Transfer System. This follow-up workshop offered a unique opportunity to practice knowledge transfer and to exchange best practices on BRT and transfer systems through connecting urban professionals to conduct study visit and group discussions.

The Asia Pacific is the world's fastest urbanizing region, and the population growth in Asian cities has been increasing rapidly. However the transportation

networks and infrastructures are still poor and fail to meet the needs of heavily growing populations, and many of Asian cities suffer from challenges in managing urban traffic volume and transportation policies. With the growing recognition of the role of Asian Cities and their need for sustainable and energy efficient transportation system, urban leaders are increasingly challenged to find proper solutions for the long-term.

The Transportation Strategy Workshop for Asian Cities was specifically designed for urban practitioners and decision makers from rapidly growing contexts; the workshop offers discussion with urban actors for sustainable policy making and an opportunity to strategize a new agenda for urban transportation. Participants also utilized SWOT and PDM, Program Development Management, and understand any current deficiencies in each city while coming up with enhancement strategies.

## CITYVOICES

CityNet magazine, CityVoices, is published twice annually. It is a collection of experiences and reflections on CityNet's partners and member cities projects, policies and programmes. Each issue focuses on a particular theme related to CityNet's mission to connect urban actors and deliver tangible solutions for cities across the Asia Pacific region. CityVoices is also available online in PDF format on the CityNet website.

For inquiries please contact the CityNet Secretariat at [media@citynet-ap.org](mailto:media@citynet-ap.org).

## CITYNET

CityNet is the largest association of urban stakeholders committed to sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region. Established in 1987 with the support of UNESCAP, UNDP and UN-Habitat, the Network of cities has grown to include more than 130 municipalities, NGOs, private companies and research centers. CityNet connects actors, exchanges knowledge and builds commitment to more sustainable and resilient cities.