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Putting People First: Building Sustainable Cities with Communities

Summary

This interactive course from LEAD captures the learning and experience of three outstanding LEAD Fellows. Together they have over 30 years experience of working in sustainable cities around the world. What makes this course special is that each of the LEAD instructors works with different communities in a different context. One of their key messages is that seemingly different communities can have very similar needs and values.

The topic Sustainable Cities sits on the intersection of energy, water, transport, construction, food and waste. However the one challenge often overlooked is how to create a sense of community in overcrowded and poverty stricken urban areas. This course will focus on this issue, drawing on the expertise of three LEAD Fellows who have practical experience of addressing peoples' need for quality of life? in the favelas of Rio, the townships of Port Elizabeth and the inner city of Calgary through stakeholder engagement and community action.

By bringing together these three change makers from different sectors and countries with a multicultural audience we hope to create a powerful and memorable learning experience for all. Each LEAD Fellow has a slightly different approach to sustainable communities, and all are passionate about the interests and needs of local people. In particular they recognise the deep need of people and communities, wherever they live, to have a shared sense of identity, history and place. Their work is in tune with the latest thinking in the areas of new economics, equality and sustainability.

Introduction

Over half of the world's population lives in towns or cities. It is predicted that this will increase to 5 billion by the year 2030.

There are many initiatives that address the sustainable city challenges of how to meet the basic needs of those living in cities, including energy, water, transport, construction, food and waste. However the one challenge often overlooked is how to create a sense of community in overcrowded and poverty stricken urban areas. This course will focus on this issue, drawing on the expertise of three LEAD Fellows who have practical experience of addressing peoples' need for quality of life? in the favelas of Rio, the townships of Port Elizabeth and the inner city of Calgary through stakeholder engagement and community action.

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Objective

This course has a number of formal and informal learning aims and objectives:

1. To compare and contrast approaches to building sustainable urban communities in developed and developing countries. What are the similarities and what are the differences?
2. To explore the relationship between people and place. Can people living in informal settlements on the outskirts of cities be more resilient and happier than people living in cities with highly developed infrastructures and services?
3. To show how a number of proven tools and approaches can be used to engage urban communities in collaborative planning processes that are key to more sustainable cities

By the end of the course participants will have learned how to use a number of practical stakeholder engagement and participatory decision-making tools and approaches. These methods will include tried and tested tools to identify and engage different stakeholders and build the kind of trust and consensus that is needed to work jointly towards sustainable solutions. Participants will also learn how to use more innovative methods such as video and drama that LEAD Fellows have used successfully in developing countries to get to the heart of the issues.

In addition to the formal learning objectives the course has been designed to encourage participants to share their personal learning objectives. Moreover, one of our indicators of success will be if participants discover new individual and shared learning objectives as they engage with each other and with the instructors during the course.

Programme

LEAD is global network of cross-cultural, cross-sectoral sustainability practitioners who are committed to inspiring change for a more sustainable world. This course will be designed and led by an experienced team of four outstanding LEAD Fellows and staff from Brazil, South Africa, Canada, and the UK. Three members of the team work directly in urban development and sustainable communities in the north and the south. The fourth instructor is a learning and leadership specialist who has worked in stakeholder engagement in the UK water and energy sectors, and has led training courses on leadership and sustainability in Africa, Asia, North and South America and Europe. Together, they have over 30 years experience of delivering highly participative courses for culturally diverse groups.

In order to make the most of the 2.5 hour time slot, the course will be designed to maximise learning opportunities. Before the course, if appropriate, LEAD will provide an online forum where participants will be able to post their profiles, get to know each other, list their expectations, and exchange ideas about sustainable cities and urban community development. Having an online forum will enable the instructors to make better use of the limited time available. At the start of the face to face course, the LEAD instructors will share their experience of how to plan and develop sustainable communities. At the same time, they will facilitate opportunities for participants to discover additional learning points through discussions with each other. The core content of the course will be three case studies about urban communities in three very different countries and contexts: the favelas of Rio, Brazil, the townships of Port Elizabeth, South Africa and the inner city of Calgary, Canada.

The course will have three stages. In part one (30 minutes), we will give an overview of the course and we will invite participants to share their expectations and experience of sustainable cities and urban communities. This process will be important to help the instructors understand the learning needs of the participants. In part two (90 minutes), participants will divide into 3 groups. Each group will examine one case study. We will use a number of creative and participative methods to explore the challenges and opportunities in each case study. We will also share one or two practical stakeholder engagement tools and give participants a challenge based on the case study and the techniques that we have shared. In part three (30 minutes) we will facilitate a conversation between each group and encourage participants to identify the similarities and the differences between the case studies.

At the end of course we will use interactive wall charts to collect feedback and learning points from the participants about the process and content of the course, as well as the work of the instructors.

Method

LEAD's blended approach to learning is based on 20 years of experience of working with cross cultural cross sectoral learners. LEAD's methodology is learner centred, participatory, experiential, dynamic and fun! We use a wide range of learning activities including e-learning, case studies, simulations, participatory inquiry, cafe conversations, story-telling, different kinds of visual media, team challenges, and peer-to-peer learning.

The course content will balance knowledge input, knowledge sharing, and skills development. The skilled instructors will pay close attention to the participants' needs, and are accustomed to being flexible and can adapt the schedule where possible. Our aim is to give participants responsibility for their own learning and above all, opportunities to learn from each other. We encourage learners to give their full attention to seeing, thinking and listening to each other. We do this by creating clearly defined spaces in the programme for high energy activities and also quieter moments for individual and group reflection.

LEAD takes a systematic approach to training design, delivery and evaluation. We are accustomed to responding quickly and imaginatively to emerging learner needs and concerns during delivery. Each LEAD training programme follows a clear learning journey with measurable learning outcomes and our detailed training plans always include structured time for group and individual reflection and forward planning. Working this way helps to create a dynamic, respectful and engaging learning environment and increases the likelihood of participants taking away and applying what they have learned back in their working environment.

Impact

First, the course will have a number of immediate and measurable impacts upon the participants. Participants will leave the course with a more holistic view of local and global challenges and opportunities in the area of sustainable urban development. They will have acquired a number of essential and innovative tools and techniques for strengthening collaborative decision-making and making communities more resilient. They will have had an opportunity to learn about sustainable urban development from a group of international practitioners and from each other.

Second, the course will have impacts on the institutions, organisations, and communities where the participants live and work. It is anticipated that the participants will be inspired by the course and initiate new projects or return to their existing projects with a renewed sense of purpose and vigour. Participants will be able to cascade the tools and techniques from the course.

Third, a further highly desirable and likely impact of the course will be the creation of an informal global network of people working in the area of sustainable cities. The availability of an online forum (supported by LEAD) will make it easier for participants to network going forward and to create a global knowledge community.

Instructors

Instructor 1 Leonardo Martins Dias (Central Unica das Favelas (CUFA))

Leonardo has over eighteen years' experience of managing multilateral, multicultural and multinational projects in Africa, Europe and Latin America. He has a particular interest in social equality development and systems resilience. His project, Extension of Sustainability to Telefónica/O2's supply chain, was awarded by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index as a world best practice.

One of Leonardo's passions developing sustainability is to implement social projects in urban peripheries (deprived areas), a strong leverage point to get to sustainable cities. Peripheries are a leverage point to touch and maximize social projects' impacts. At this moment one third of the world's population is migrating - the highest rate in human history - and the big majority of them are going to live in peripheries, generating a natural source of opportunities. Leonardo has a life experience working with slums (deprived areas) during childhood by accompanying his parents, still working in this field during all life, and has five years experience in Brazilian rural development.

Recently Leonardo designed and implemented projects in Brazilian slums through training, culture and sports. He is developing social projects in Brazilian Football World Cup and Olympic Games frameworks as well. Some concrete examples of his achievements related to social inclusion in slums are: Employment generation, entrepreneurship opportunities, access to University, empowerment and inspiration of new leaders for sustainable decision-making, self esteem enhancement, change of old paradigms approaching distant social classes, etc.

Instructor 2 Dr A.H. de Wit (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University)

Anton is an associate of the UK based Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and lecturer in the Department of Geo-sciences at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He is responsible for the under and post-graduate environmental studies and environmental management programmes in this department as well as the supervision of relevant student research. His personal research interests mainly revolve around the issues of social impact assessment, social sustainability and sustainable cities. Anton is furthermore involved in environmental advocacy having developed a series of popular lectures on climate change, which are presented to diverse audiences on an ongoing basis.

Anton's university education includes a Bachelor's Degree in Education, an Honours Degree in Geography and two Masters Degrees, one in Geography and the other in Environmental Management, from the University of the Free State (Bloemfontein, South Africa). He also holds a Doctorate in Geography from the University of Port Elizabeth (Port Elizabeth, South Africa). Other education and training includes a variety of courses in environmental management, sustainable development and environmental auditing.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) opened on 1 January 2005, the result of the merging of the PE Technikon the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE) and the Port Elizabeth campus of Vista University (Vista PE). This union of three very different institutions came about as a result of government's countrywide restructuring of higher education ? intended to deliver a more equitable and efficient system to meet the needs of South Africa in the 21st century.

NMMU brings together the best traditions of technikon and university education, and draws on more than a century of quality higher education, in a new kind of university that offers a wide range of academic, professional and technological programmes at varying entrance and exit levels.

NMMU has approximately 25 000 students and approximately 2 500 staff members, based on seven campuses in the Nelson Mandela Metropole and George.

The first Chancellor of NMMU is Chief Justice Pius Langa, and Justice Ronnie Pilly the first Chairperson of Council. Dr Rof Stumpf was the first Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of NMMU, succeeded on 1 January 2008 by Prof Derrick Swartz.

Instructor 3 John Lewis, RPP, MCIP, M.E.Des. (Intelligent Futures)

John is the President and Founder of Intelligent Futures. John's approach brings together elements of community engagement, strategic planning, effective communication and capacity-building to make sustainability meaningful for the communities and organizations he works with. John has experience in development planning, policy planning and is a recognized leader in the field of sustainable community planning and citizen engagement.

For his innovative approaches to sustainability, John was identified as one of Calgary's 7Top 40 Under 40? in 2010 and was selected to an international group of emerging leaders invited to the ?Global Environmental Governance Forum? in Gion, Switzerland in 2009. He was also selected to join a team of planners from across Canada for a Canadian Institute of Planners initiative on climate change adaptation in Nunavut territory in the Canadian Arctic.

John is a Registered Professional Planner and a Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners, an adjunct professor in the Faculty of Environmental Design and has taught courses within the Urban Studies program and the Continuing Education Faculty at the University of Calgary, and has also taught professional development courses at the University of Alberta and Simon Fraser University. John is a Board member of LEAD Canada and is a member of LEAD International's training team.

Intelligent Futures is a Canadian-based consulting firm committed to creating lasting sustainability solutions that have strategic value within our client's culture and context. With a focus on engagement as the foundation of our work, we develop processes that build trust and understanding with the ultimate objective of creating ownership and action. Our experience bridges the practice areas of citizen engagement, communication, strategic planning, sustainability planning and urban planning.

Intelligent Futures has been involved in a variety of projects that move communities toward a more sustainable future. Project work includes community sustainability plans, official community plans and zoning bylaws, sustainability indicators reporting, strategic planning processes, climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, and citizen engagement and visioning initiatives.

Sustainability isn't just another revenue stream for us. It's what we're about and why we exist.

Instructor 4 Edward Kellow (LEAD International)

Edward has over ten years experience of managing learning and development programmes and activities in Africa, Asia Europe, and Latin America.

A qualified trainer and facilitator Edward specialises in designing and delivering creative and innovative workshops and conferences about leadership and sustainable development. Topics Edward has worked on recently include leadership and climate change, stakeholder and community engagement, partnership working, greener museums, youth climate change leadership and water. Edward speaks good French and Russian and has delivered training programmes in Francophone Africa and Russia.

Recently Edward has run a number of workshops for young climate leaders for the British Council in Asia, the UK and (soon) Latin America. He has a particular interest in climate change communication and using social media to promote leadership for sustainable development.

Prior to joining LEAD, Edward was Head of Training at The Environment Council, which pioneered multi-stakeholder dialogue in the UK. Edward studied French and Russian at St Andrews University and he is a graduate member of the CIPD.

Established by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1992, LEAD is the world's largest international non-profit organisation focused on inspiring leadership and change for a sustainable world. Our work is delivered through 12 Member Programmes around the world and is supported by LEAD International, our London-based secretariat. We identify and recruit outstanding leaders from government, business, NGOs and academia and, through a global-class training programme, equip them with the skills for sustainable decision-making and provide them with a global network of peers to help them address sustainability challenges. There are currently more than 2,400 LEAD Fellows in the network, working individually and collectively to ensure that the sustainability agenda permeates and influences critical decision-making across all sectors.

LEAD was established in the wake of the 1992 Rio Conference on Sustainable Development and in 2012 we will return to Rio to celebrate our 20th anniversary and launch our dynamic new model for life-long learning. LEAD's new approach blends online and face-to-face learning and employs a technology platform that will further expand and enrich the global LEAD Network, supporting dialogue between Fellows and also attracting input from organisations beyond the LEAD Network. These features will allow us to increase the reach of our leadership programmes, reduce the environmental and financial cost of our programmes and support the learning needs of future leaders. LEAD's new model will be launched in June 2012, a few days before the start of the Rio+20 Earth Summit.