

USING DATA TO BUILDING CLIMATE-RESILIENT CITIES

Microsoft and the ODI selected six organisations and collaborations that are working to collect, share and/or use data on climate resilience and sustainability challenges – to receive support and guidance in the recent Climate Resilience Peer Learning Network. The other five organisations from across the globe included the Women Income Network (WIN), Data Kind, Gender, and Environment Data Alliance (GEDA), PlanAdapt and The International Centre of Expertise in Montreal on Artificial Intelligence (CEIMIA).

The peer learning network provided climate-focused organisations with the opportunity to learn from data experts and from each other to more effectively address the challenges they face through a better understanding of relevant data topics.

The South African Cities Network (SACN) participated in the programme from February to May 2023 and its has been beneficial and timely as the organisation is finalising the development of its data strategy. The working sessions were informative and contextualised how an organisation can improve its data operations and how data can be used to create value for the public good. Some of the ODI tools the SACN learned and have used for the data strategy development include; Data Maturity, Data Ecosystem Mapping and Sustainable Data Access Workbook.

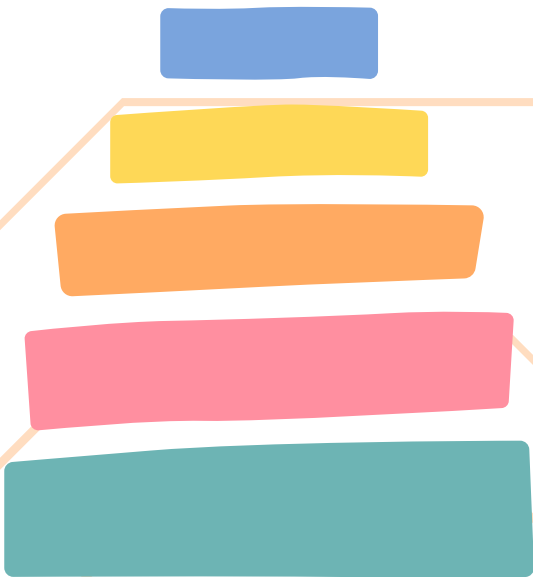
Data Maturity

The Data Maturity framework for the not-for-profit sector by Data Orchard for instance, helped the organisation to assess their progress or maturity in a holistic approach which looked at the data uses, data, analysis, leadership, culture, tools, and skills. These 7 key themes were useful in assessing where the organisation needed to improve. This model gauged each theme from being “unaware” to “mastering”. Going forward using the model, we have identified the areas that we are doing well as well as the ones that we still need to master.



Data Ecosystem Mapping

Another useful tool was the Data Ecosystem Mapping, this tool helped us reflect on the data stakeholders we currently have and the ones we will have in future including the ways in which we interact with them. This ecosystem mapping tool was also helpful for us as an organisation to identify areas of priority within the urban data ecosystem – how we optimise our resources and those of our stakeholders.



Sustainable Data Access Workbook

The SACN’s data strategy will also reflect on how value created from data can be utilised as a cornerstone of the organisation for its sustainability while continuing to provide data insights for public good. The ODI introduced us to a tool called the Sustainable Data Access Workbook – this workbook is a practical set of activities for organisations to undertake to make more informed decisions about their current and future revenue models. This workbook will be critical as the organisation seeks sustainable revenues to continue stewarding urban data for South African cities and other stakeholders.

Future Involvement

The South African Cities Network will continue to actively engage with the ODI team and the data tools they introduced to the organisation during the peer learning network as it refines and matures its data strategy. The SACN will continue to improve its urban data offering to its participating cities, partners and the ecosystem and now considers the ODI and Microsoft as lifelong partners to walk the journey with them. The SACN will continue to actively participate and collaborate with data ecosystems both locally and internationally for continuous learning and sharing of knowledge.



Wider Network Support

Taking these experiences from the ODI-Microsoft peer learning network tools and lessons learnt from other participating organisations, the SACN will continue to build its capacity and that of cities in the following areas:

- Developing a systemic approach that aligns the various reporting systems and frameworks that cities use;
- Improving the urban data ecosystem, and data collection methods applicable to South African cities;
- Improving the usability of the SCODA portal and accessibility of data for knowledge sharing among cities;
- Advancing and advocating for best data practices and increasing data sharing among cities.

Through SCODA and other data interventions, the SACN will continue to support cities and enable them to monitor their transition towards sustainability holistically and effectively, in relation to other cities and their own stated priorities.

