

# Collaborative Governance facilitating Learning for Sustainability in Cities

## A case study of Bristol, Kitakyushu and Tongyeong

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#### ABSTRACT

Quality learning can be transformative by providing empowerment, leadership and wise investments in individual and collective lives as well as revamp the local economies of cities to become inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It can also contribute to transitioning cities towards achieving the remaining sustainable development goals. Effecting the transformation of cities into Learning Cities however requires changes/improvement in the related governance structure.

Using interviews of key informants (reporting format) and secondary data, the paper uses comparative case study methodology to examine how collaborative governance facilitates quality learning for sustainability in Bristol in the UK, Kitakyushu City in Japan, and Tongyeong in the Republic of South Korea.

The paper focuses on how the cities' learning-related governance mechanisms and institutional structures help support sustainability learning initiatives premised on cooperative learning relationships such as participation, multi-stakeholder partnerships and coordination. Recognising the existence of similarities and differences in scope and depth of the learning initiatives and the need for further improvements, there was general support of the governance structures and mechanisms for quality learning in these cities.

It is recommended that 1) in an effort to implement the Learning Cities concept using the Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities, recognition be given to the already existing institutions and structures, content and processes sustainability learning initiatives of cities, and 2) collaborative governance of the Learning Cities concept at both local and international levels be streamlined by synchronizing the UN initiatives/programmes that are linked to it for efficiency and effectiveness.

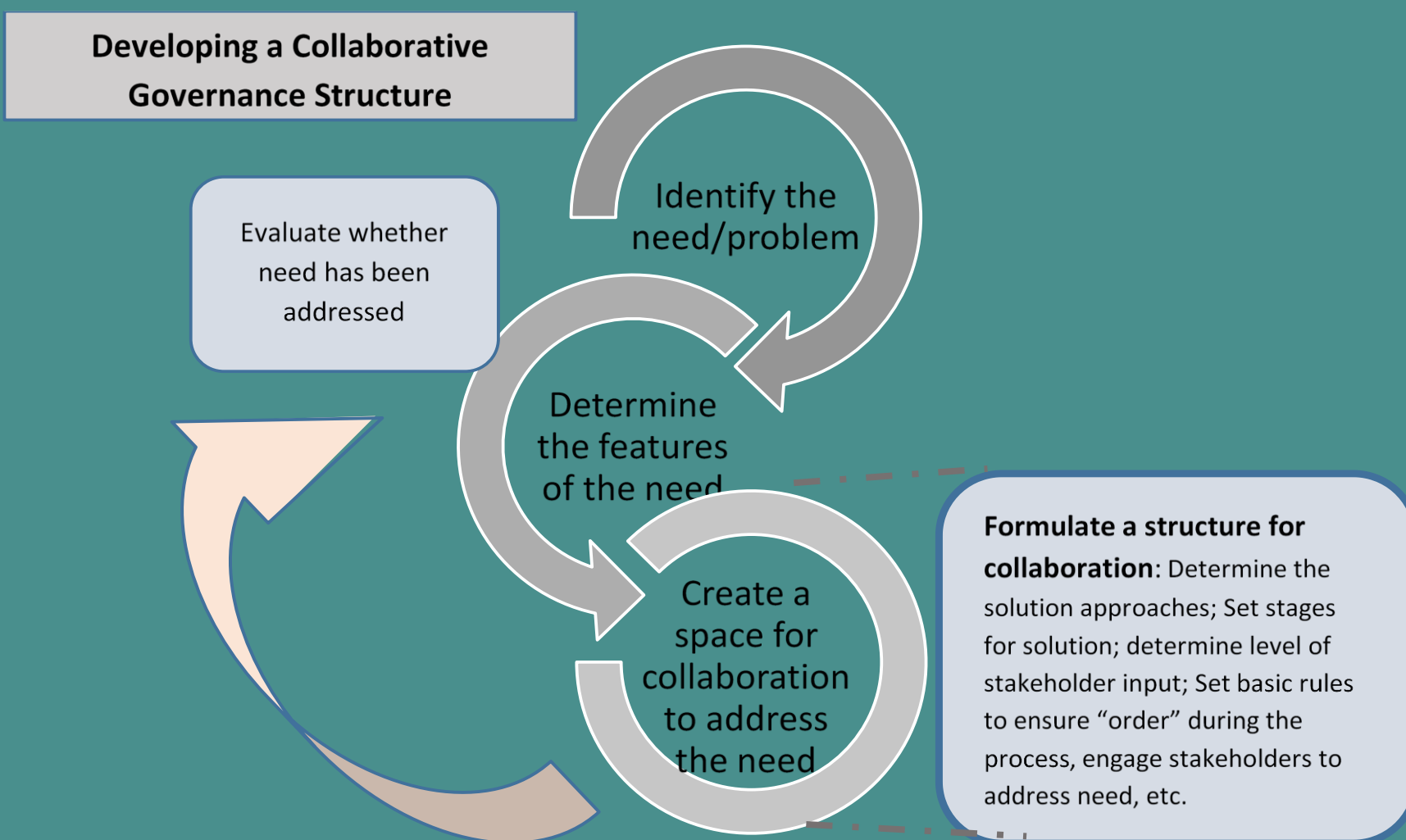
#### Introduction

- ▶ The rapid transformation in the pattern of human settlement over the past several decades has created an exponential rise in the number of megacities. On the one hand a high proportion of the world's production is consumed, waste is generated and energy is used excessively and on the other hand, critical human development is bound to occur.
- ▶ Many cities around the world are thus concerned with and looking for trajectories that can address these growing challenges placed on them. For example, number of cities are including the use of quality education/learning to raise citizen awareness and engaging stakeholders in participatory decision making about their cities' futures.
- ▶ The importance of achieving sustainable cities that are inclusive, safe and resilient has been enshrined in the 2030 Development Agenda under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 11. While education and lifelong learning are the focus of SDG number 4.
- ▶ Both the work at the level of cities and through education however cut across desired achievements for many of the SDGs whether on health, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, decent work, responsible consumption and production, or climate action.
- ▶ The nature of education/learning that cities adopt will therefore be crucial in determining their pathway towards being inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

#### Objective & Methodology

- ▶ The **objective** of the paper is to examine the nature of learning initiatives premised on cooperative learning relationships such as participation, multi-stakeholder partnerships and coordination in three cities and how the cities' policy and governance mechanisms as well as institutional structures that support the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of these learning initiatives.
- ▶ **Methodology** involves a comparative case study approach using three different cities (i.e. cases): Bristol in the UK, Kitakyushu in Japan, and Tongyeong in the Republic of Korea to examine factors of governance that can support or improve the functioning and effectiveness of "learning cities" in the context of the learning initiatives.
- ▶ The three case studies were prepared using a common reporting format containing questions developed by the authors and completed by key informants in the target cities. Secondary qualitative data was also collected from each city to further round-out the case studies.
- ▶ Key aspects examined include details of the learning initiatives, their relevance for sustainability learning in the city and the governance and management of these learning initiatives.

Figure 1: Developing a Governance Structure and Creating a Space for Collaboration



#### CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

From the cases we see that collaborative governance can support a cooperative learning process for sustainability at the local level. Aspects defining effective learning processes to achieve this include the following:

1. Citizen participation and multi-stakeholder engagement can create a collective ownership of solutions to the problems or the outputs/outcomes of the engagements;
2. Decision-making that provides opportunity for all voices to be heard and for all contrary opinions to be explored helps to strengthen the holistic nature of outcomes taken and the realisation of collective benefits; and
3. Coordination mechanisms can help to facilitate the identification and strengthening of synergies and weakening of barriers to cooperation.

#### On recommendations,

- ▶ Some of the governance and stakeholder participation components of the *Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities* linked well with the cities' learning initiatives. This suggests cities already have reasonable levels of capacity (learning institutions and structures, content and processes) in place which needs to be better integrated with the effort to implement the Learning City concept.
- ▶ Bristol's model of a learning city emulates the Learning Cities concept while significant aspects of environmentalism culture of Tongyeong and Kitakyushu are closely linked to the UNU-IAS' RCE on ESD concept, with UNESCO serving as the lead agency for the implementation of the GAP on ESD. With the call of the UNESCO UIL's Mexico City Statement on Sustainable Learning Cities for synchronization of UN initiatives, ensuring coordination and collaboration on the subject both at the city level and in the UN system (international level) for the programmes' efficiency and effectiveness is critical.

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Table 1 Characteristics of the learning initiatives			
	Bristol	Kitakyushu	Tongyeong
<b>Name of the learning initiative</b>	Passport for Employability.	Kitakyushu ESD Council (Palette for Future).	Learning and Sharing for Sustainable Future.
<b>Responsible agency for the learning initiative</b>	Bristol Learning City Partnership.	Kitakyushu ESD Council.	Tongyeong Education Foundation for Sustainable Development.
<b>Objectives of the learning initiative</b>	To have an ambitious vision for Bristol as a Learning City, where: 1) all individuals and communities are proud to learn throughout their lives; 2) every organisation has a committed, skilled and diverse workforce; and 3) the City's success is shared by all.	To strengthen awareness, capacity and network of citizens, communities and various organisations to make Kitakyushu "World Capital of Sustainable Development".	To deliver the vision of coexistence through learning and sharing for a sustainable future. Promoting ESD via education ground called 'Sejahtera Forest /Sejahtera Centre for RCEs in Asia Pacific.
<b>Activities under this learning initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating the benefits of learning as a way to transform lives</li> <li>• Championing learning for all ages and all communities</li> <li>• Commissioning activity to increase participation and achievement</li> <li>• Connecting planning, decision making and resources</li> <li>• Learning in Education – Raising the attainment of all students through formal learning in Bristol schools, colleges and universities</li> <li>• Learning for Work - Supporting citizens into work and ensuring the local workforce is skilled &amp; diverse</li> <li>• Learning in Communities – Encouraging a culture in communities where learning is valued by everyone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote various learning and monitoring tools/methods to understand and strengthen citizens' awareness of SD and ESD</li> <li>• Promotion of neighbourhood ESD projects using the community centres</li> <li>• Promotion of environmental field activities and events to build a sustainable community</li> <li>• Kitakyushu Manabito ESD Station programme to promote ESD in formal education to strengthen collaboration between schools and local communities</li> <li>• Organise Mirai Palette and ESD Café outreach activities beyond the RCE community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A network of formal, informal and nonformal education institutions joined together to promote ESD in diverse education initiatives in schools, NGOs, etc.</li> <li>• School ESD field trip programmes</li> <li>• Youth ESD programmes,</li> <li>• Lifelong learning programmes</li> <li>• Training for trainers</li> <li>• Partnership network management ESD projects</li> <li>• International ESD partnership promotion and joint projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Target participants of the learning initiative &amp; Number of people engaged in the learning initiative</b>	All citizens of all ages, organisations across the public, private and not for profit sector in Bristol Over 200 people from 70 organisations.	All citizens in Kitakyushu of all ages, organisations and work type; other RCEs or entities in Japan and abroad. About 75 organisations.	People of all ages from kindergarten to adults, from Tongyeong. Also domestic and international participants. Approx. 35,000 people as of 2015.
<b>Expected/Perceived outputs/outcomes of the learning initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater awareness about the value of learning.</li> <li>• Increased participation in learning for all ages.</li> <li>• Improved achievement and life chances for everyone</li> <li>• Learning City Evaluation Group aims to evaluate the attitudes, experiences and impacts of learning on individuals, organisations and the city.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness on ESD and SD among participants</li> <li>• Increased partnership for taking collaborative action towards SD</li> <li>• Increased network and sharing experiences</li> <li>• Increase in international cooperation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7,035 programme participants (2015),</li> <li>• 25 RCEs in Asia Pacific networked through Sejahtera Network,</li> <li>• Growing awareness of ESD and SD in the region.</li> </ul>
<b>Description of the existing city to city partnership/collaboration (within/without the country) with regard to the learning initiative or quality learning in general.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bristol is an active member of PASCAL, showcased the Learning City at the International Conference in Glasgow, 2016 and liaises with its neighbours in Scotland, Wales and Ireland</li> <li>• Bristol is also attending and presenting at the UNESCO Learning City event in China in Nov. 2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration and exchange of activities with national/ international RCEs</li> <li>• Collaboration with 1) RCE Tongyeong, Korea (exchange of high school students, teachers, and RCE member; internship for Kitakyushu University students in Tongyeong); 2) Inje County, Korea (exchange of high school students/teachers).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCE Tongyeong networks with 25 RCE cities in Asia Pacific region</li> <li>• Also networks with GAP on ESD key partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding source and funding amount for the learning initiative</b>	Bristol is administered through the local authority with significant resources from the 75 partner organisations actively involved through the governance structure. Also, the Mayor has also provided significant funding for a city-wide business and education hub.	The Kitakyushu City allocates about 147,000 USD annually for the City's ESD activities. Funding is also secured through donation from the private sector and in-kind contribution of group members and other participants.	Tongyeong Municipal Government, 1.5 million USD annually including management of Sejahtera Centre and its education programmes.

Table 2 Governance and management of the learning initiatives			
	Bristol	Kitakyushu	Tongyeong
<b>Evidence of citizen participation for designing the plans or strategies.</b>	Involving citizens to demonstrate that learning is for all and encouraging more people to get involved. E.g. the Youth Mayors and Junior Chamber are involved in the Governance structure and over 130 Learning Ambassadors are championing learning in their communities. In the autumn, evaluators will assess, take ownership/drive change in learning.	A strong citizen participation in designing the city's ESD action plans. A series of consultation meetings to get the views of citizens of all ages and gender & different expertise. ESD Council organised six FGDs and café meetings with different groups to get their inputs to the plan. A draft plan was issued for public hearing before its finalisation.	Citizens groups participate as members of 1) Citizens' Education Committee, 2) School Education Committee, and 3) R&D Committee. The Steering Committee coordinates the overall plans and strategies.
<b>Decision-making processes related to plans and strategies of the learning initiatives</b>	Bristol Learning City (BLC) governance structure include: Partnership Board, chaired by the City Mayor, to oversee the vision, delivery of activity and plan strategically. Learning Challenge Groups – local partners delivering activity to tackle identified priorities through three themed groups: Citizens contribute & shape outcomes through the Challenge Groups and Evaluation Framework.	Provision of oversight of the activities is the responsibility of the Kitakyushu ESD Council Steering Committee which comprises representatives of different organisations, including the City of Kitakyushu and engages in planning, implementation and monitoring of the project activities. The activities are designed based on the Kitakyushu ESD Action Plan.	All projects and programmes under Tongyeong RCE are coordinated by RCE organization (Board-Steering Committee and stakeholders at committees of Citizens' Education Committee, School Education Committee, R&D Committee & Steering Committee and the Secretariat), in collaboration with city government.
<b>Coordination mechanisms to manage across the initiatives</b>	BLC Partnership includes a governance board of City leaders, which oversees strategies and projects being developed and delivered by the three Challenge Groups. These Groups enable partners with the necessary skills and experience to work together, to address challenges and priorities.	The Kitakyushu ESD Council is overall coordinator of RCE Kitakyushu. This comprises individual & organisations from various fields with a wide range of expertise such as citizen groups, private enterprises, academic, research, & government institutions.	Tongyeong Education Foundation for Sustainable Development is responsible for the overall coordination/management of RCE Tongyeong. Represented stakeholders including citizen groups, schools, government institutions and private sectors.