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Europe!

PRACTICE  
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## Opportunities to scale up and deliver Democratic Transitions more widely

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### 4.1. Real opportunities shown by UIA cities

The experience gained in UIA projects confirms the advantages of collaborative governance, which is in line with the literature and experience of other programmes. Collaborative governance increased people's awareness and acceptance of measures, and they often developed a sense of ownership, which helped to ensure a project's long-term sustainability. The projects also felt that active participation enabled the development of new and better solutions, and they saw encouraging follow up and spin-off activities that they hadn't planned. Monitoring these interrelationships between participation and impacts has however been lacking to date. This makes it more difficult to draw clear conclusions which could help to refine urban governance and make it even more effective and long-lasting.

Action by individuals, businesses, and other private stakeholders is crucial to achieving cities' climate targets. There is a lot to gain by empowering these stakeholder-actors as equal partners in co-creating the city. Carefully designed collaborative governance, which ensures that decisions are taken more democratically, is a key pillar that can make Just Transitions truly inclusive. Such governance needs, however, to go beyond invitations to collaborate in conventional formats such as consultations, meetings, or workshops, which often only representatives of some of the social groups attend. Inclusiveness can only be achieved if this is in focus when designing the co-creation approach and if the forms of participation are designed taking into account the abilities, needs, and motivations of different social groups and individuals.

The UIA projects have delivered encouraging and inspirational examples of collaborative and inclusive governance approaches and tools – developed through practice not theory. Even if the activities have not explicitly focussed on Just Transitions and often focus on relatively small or narrowly focused actions, they show the way forward as well as the challenges to overcome. This type of action can pave the way for the needed broader engagement and co-creation effort. Scaling up is possible, as experience from Vilawatt (Viladecans), IGNITION (Greater Manchester), and others show. It has been enabled by embedding the practice into the city's regular processes and procedures and making it the standard. The challenge ahead is to further develop these approaches into a model that becomes the prevailing governance approach in cities, and at a larger scale and across other policy areas. This would require a change in mindsets, and not least:

- Politicians would need to agree to share power more and trust people to take informed decisions.
- People need to engage actively, voice their needs, inform themselves and understand the consequences of their wants and take responsible decisions.
- Local authorities organising co-creation approaches need to adapt their standard working practices and include the public properly through, in particular, new forms of engagement for historically underrepresented social groups.

Collaborative and inclusive governance does not happen by itself. It needs:

- special engagement skills to reach out to and empower all groups and build trust
- substantial capacity for facilitation
- to be nurtured over a long period of time.

Tackling climate change implies changes of individual and collective behaviour. This implies the curtailing of some personal interests. However, a better understanding of the complexity and impacts of chosen solutions, could help people to take better decisions, not merely based on their gut feeling or (perceived) personal interests, but with a view to tackling climate challenges. Knowledge and understanding can be a way out of the dilemma

between catering to all possible interests and tackling the overarching challenge of climate change. It offers a hope of convincing people to change their behaviour and forego some 'personal interest'. To see how UIA cities have done this in practice, refer to Chapter 5 of this report.

## 4.2. Stepping stones towards Democratic Transitions for all

### What can cities do?

A wide variety of different tools and methods are available to cities seeking to establish collaborative governance to ensure that Just Transitions happen in a democratic and 'just' way for all social groups. They come in multiple forms, such as the inspiring case studies in chapter 5 demonstrate. To establish Just Transitions governance a city should choose the approach that best fits its specific context. It is important to keep in mind that an approach may be effective in one context but may not work at all in another city. Success is less dependent on the approach than on how they are designed and applied.

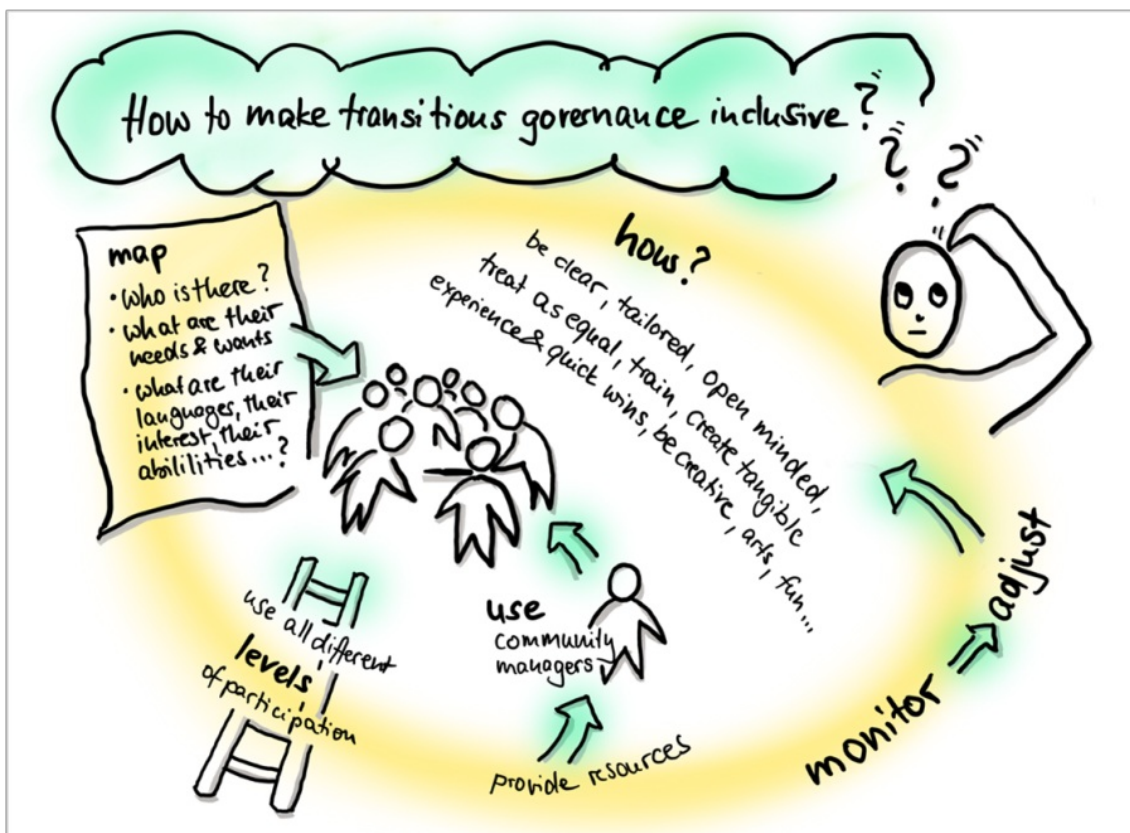


Figure 4: How to make transitions governance inclusive?

Beyond the specifics of each city, there are some universal lessons and success factors that the UIA cities' experience point to (figure 4). We have formulated these as recommendations:

- Start by **comprehensively mapping the different social groups**. Explore their interests, needs, and motivations.
- Assign **community liaison managers** and use them to access the different social groups. Ideally, the community managers represent some of the groups, speak their language, know their culture.
- Use **existing neighbourhood initiatives and associations** to get closer to people. However, the mere involvement of citizen associations does not fully ensure inclusiveness for individual citizens.
- Go to where **people live**, it is not enough to invite them to the city hall, because they might not go there. Learn more about their needs and wants.
- To encourage people to become engaged, create some **personal relevance and allow them the time and space to pursue the things that interest them** - and make it fun, even if the topic hooks do not relate directly to the target topic or action. Use other topics as a vehicle and starting point for engagement. Give encouragement and support where needed to build trust.
- Use **all levels of participatory governance** – inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower – as these can build on each other. Blend them as appropriate for the specific situation.
- **Tailor engagement and co-creation activities** to the different social groups. There is no one-size-fit-all solution.
- **Be clear to people** from the outset about what they can expect from their participation. Set clear and measurable goals. Unfulfilled expectations can undermine engagement drastically.

- Find appropriate ways to **inform and train individuals and educate them** to understand the complexity of the consequences of their decisions so that the decisions they do make are informed ones.
  - Provide people with **tangible experience and quick wins** to maintain engagement.
  - **Test** co-creation with a small-scale action at first, then discuss the lessons, **adjust and scale up**.
  - Ensure **open minds and flexibility** to allow the process to evolve. Co-creation is an ongoing learning process. City officers need to develop new skills to be able to effectively run inclusive co-creation activities.
  - Provide **sufficient resources to the process, community liaison managers and process facilitators**. The process needs time, patience, and creativity to find the right formula. Only with sufficient resources over the long-term will it be possible to build up trust and a culture of co-creation that will ensure that the co-creation process will last and pay off.
  - Start to **institutionalise** the collaborative governance process to ensure it runs long-term and extend it to other sectors or areas. Connect the project to a broader vision and embed it in the existing municipal structure.
  - **Monitor the impact** of participation on achieving targets: tackling climate change, equity, changes in individual behaviours, and levels of public engagement. This will help to refine policies and make collaborative governance more effective.
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## What can National and EU institutions do?

- Provide **comprehensive capacity building** resources to enable cities to design and organise collaborative and inclusive governance.
  - Increase the **supply and capacity of facilitators for co-creation and co-decision** activities with a view to scaling up and rolling out this type of governance across countries.
  - Provide cities the **opportunity to experiment** with the new governance approaches and learn from experience – including resources, supporting regulations, multi-level collaboration. Enable peer-learning between cities.
  - Publicise and introduce an award for ‘Just Transition good practice governance’ by cities.
  - **Request inclusive and collaborative engagement** with the public when cities ask for funding. Support them with achieving this and allow sufficient resources for this task.
  - Conduct **further research** on lessons learned in cities, on the impacts on behaviour change, on ensuring long-term participation, and on better and inclusive decision-making.
  - Showcase the **multitude of European and national urban initiatives** by governmental and non-governmental organisations that contribute or can contribute to Just and Democratic Urban Transitions. Provide information on policy experience and opportunities in an easily exploitable format for cities. Liaise with all relevant directorates, ministries, departments, and organisations to consolidate policy knowledge in this area.
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