ACHIEVING CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN CITIES

10 recommendations for local governments to support enabling environments for circular businesses

Circular economy is a growing area of interest for achieving sustainability across multiple sectors, and it is clear that, in Africa, the private sector is leading the transition to a circular economy. It is imperative for local governments to support these efforts and foster enabling and innovative environments for circular businesses to thrive. These recommendations, developed through the ACE Africa project, provide guidance for doing so. By following these recommendations, local governments can improve demand for circular goods and services, contributing to inclusive, efficient and regenerative cities.

01 Develop enabling legislation, policy and regulation to establish the circular economy priorities in the jurisdiction, restrict and incentivise specific actions that contribute to circularity, attract finance, support inclusion and encourage strategic partnerships.

02 Leverage the potential of urban planning to support resource exchange between industries, reduce transport distances, and specify appropriate infrastructure implementation.

03 Invest in open data and knowledge sharing to identify specific needs and opportunities, and improve collective decision making.

04 Establish multi-stakeholder platforms and promote cross-sector engagement to incorporate diverse perspectives, mobilize collective action, include vulnerable voices, and enable new collaborations.

05 Allocate existing financial resources and attract new investment to support small businesses, encourage development of circular business models and help de-risk small businesses.

06 Create physical spaces for experimentation and innovation to try new models and practices, and allow entrepreneurs to ground-test their concepts, building the evidence base for CE.

07 Partner with business incubators and accelerators to guide emerging entrepreneurs and small businesses in circular principles and in identifying and building a market.

08 Acknowledge and invest in the informal sector to understand their needs, improve their negotiating positions, align business and government efforts, and support occupational health and safety.

09 Upskill officials in circular economy principles to draw linkages across departmental mandates, implement CE in government institutions, effectively design CE projects, and guide others on how to align with local government CE priorities.

10 Build public awareness about circular economy to make clear how businesses and residents can contribute and demonstrate the value of circular economy to their livelihoods and well-being.

*These recommendations have been developed based on insights from a programme of business incubation and acceleration and the Building Capacity for Circular Economy Innovation learning exchanges, hosted through the ACE Africa project.

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