IFC: A Solution Provider for Cities

Cities are drivers of growth. Unprecedented urbanization and disruptive technologies are presenting opportunities as well as the need to address the impact of climate change. Cities need to be livable and inclusive. They need to offer efficient services, including transport, housing, clean water, and sanitation. And they need to attract businesses, offer jobs, and provide an improved quality of life for citizens. Cities need financing and world class advisory services.

Why cities matter



Cities generate more than 80 percent of global GDP.



There are more than 1 billion cars on the road today, emitting over 4.6 billion tons of CO2 per year.



Inadequate urban infrastructure drives up business costs and harms quality of life.



By 2050, cities will be home to 68 percent of the emerging market population.

Cities consume two-thirds of the world's energy and generate 70 percent of global carbon emissions.

Our approach

Drawing on our global network, IFC mobilizes **commercial financing** for projects, connects cities with capital markets, and helps diversify their sources for financing. We leverage World Bank and private sector expertise and offer **project structuring and development support** for public-private partnerships (PPPs) as well as **community outreach and capacity building** to facilitate implementation of infrastructure projects.

The IFC difference

- IFC builds long-term partnerships through direct engagement with **subnational governments and their entities**, as well as **private sector solutions providers**.
- We bring to bear our extensive market reach and in-house technical expertise to help address urban infrastructure implementation and efficiency challenges.
- IFC is uniquely positioned to support cities in multiple areas including urban transport, water and waste management, health, education, street lighting, smart city development, energy efficiency, and climate resilience.
- Over the past five years, around 70% of IFC's subnational investments have been climate-tagged, supporting projects that contribute to climate-positive development.



About IFC

- Largest multilateral source of debt and equity financing for the private sector in developing countries and to emerging market cities
- AAA-rated by S&P and Moody's
- Loans, equity, quasi-equity, local currency and risk management products, capital markets access, and mobilization
- Advisory services to help develop priority projects, structure and tender PPPs, and improve financial management
- World-class social, environmental, and corporate governance standards and risk mitigation





Izmir, Türkiye

Over the past decade, IFC has developed a long-term partnership with the city of Izmir, helping it access more than \$400 million from IFC and other lenders to finance several municipal projects. This includes a tramway that connects remote areas to the city center, establishment of a smart traffic management system, upgrade of its seaport infrastructure, advice on an electric bus pilot project, improvement in its wastewater and solid waste management services, and creation of an open data management system. These projects have reduced average daily overall travel time for Izmir's citizens by 25 percent and improved access to water services for 240,000 residents.



Bogotá, Colombia

IFC supported the bankability and implementation of two key urban infrastructure projects—TransMicable and the extension of a bus rapid transit networks. First, we provided advice to improve knowledge about IFC's Environmental and Social (E&S) Standards and the value in aligning with best international E&S practices. Next, IFC mobilized \$140 million in private sector funds, ensuring key development impacts by enabling a dramatic reduction in daily commuting time—from three hours to 13 minutes—for nearly 670,000 residents.



Ekurhuleni, South Africa

IFC invested ZAR900 million (\$53 million) in a 2020 bond issuance by the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, to finance critical infrastructure improvements for this important manufacturing and logistics hub. The municipality, which contributes 8 percent of South Africa's GDP, is using the bond proceeds to upgrade and expand roads, electricity connections, and water and sanitation services to underserved areas, including informal settlements. Completed in record time—29 days from mandate to commitment—IFC's investment responded to a need, given the lack of longer tenor financing in South Africa following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Zagreb, Croatia

In 2023, IFC stepped in as an anchor investor in the first municipal utility sustainability-linked bond in central and southern Europe, with a subscription of EUR 72.5 million. IFC's investment in Zagrebački Holding will free up capital to allow the City of Zagreb to make critical investments in infrastructure that will improve resource efficiency and climate resilience, including waste management and renewable energy. These investments will help Zagreb implement its sustainability and decarbonization strategy.

IFC cities contacts

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