# FACT SHEET

## Resilience through adaptive governance: inclusive energy solutions for vulnerable communities

Strategic partnerships and robust stakeholder engagement enabled the creation of scalable models for equitable energy access across the city.

## CONTEXT

Cape Town's most vulnerable residents face persistent energy poverty, with frequent load shedding and prolonged outages disproportionately affecting low-income households.

While wealthier residents can often afford alternative energy solutions, those in backyard dwellings and informal settlements may endure outages lasting six months or more.

Recognising this inequity, the City of Cape Town (CoCT) set out to explore building an energy system that is resilient, inclusive, and equitable.

The Energy Resilient Community Hubs initiative, aligned with the CoCT's 2050 Energy Strategy, was launched to create publicly accessible spaces equipped with renewable energy to ensure all community members, especially the most vulnerable, have access to safe and reliable energy.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Strengthen the resilience of Cape Town's vulnerable residents by providing renewable energy access in public spaces. Additionally, this work sought to test whether this project could be a scalable, equitable model for energy access to be replicated across different and comparable contexts.

## INNOVATION

This project applied adaptive governance to the project activites which evolved in response to on-the-ground realities. The project vision shifted from the ideal of a fully-open, multi-purpose community energy hub to securing essential services at public facilities as a foundation to energy community hubs.

## STRATEGY & ACTIVITIES

The project brought together key stakeholders, including the CoCT's Sustainable Energy Markets Department, the Resilient Cities Network, facility managers, and community representatives. The EDP convened and sustained collaboration between ward councillors, local businesses, and community members which was critical for buy-in and successful implementation. The project focused on creating a foundation for future community energy hubs by developing a multi-criteria analysis (MCA) tool to assess potential future sites based on accessibility, social impact, and technical feasibility. Additionally, the project undertook a site selection and pre-feasibility study. Four municipal facilities were selected for in-depth technical and operational assessments.

## PARTNERS

- Resilient Cities Network
- City of Cape Town

## EXPECTED RESULTS

From tangible results emerge a pathway for building on this work:

- Four pre-feasibility studies provide clear implementation pathways for future hubs.
- The MCA tool that institutionalises a process for prioritising facilities based on impact potential.
- The project integrated technical feasibility with operational realities, and successfully secured funding for the first hub's establishment.
- Policy conversations have shifted and further investment attracted as a result of this work.

The results of this project demonstrate the power of adaptive, collaborative governance in building a resilient, equitable energy system for Cape Town.

## CONTACT

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