



The Solutions Lab

Scaling for Sustainable Infrastructure

Second Meeting Mexico City (February 2020)

Background

Sustainable infrastructure is globally recognized as key to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Over the last years, more and more strategies, policies and tools have been developed to unleash this potential. Yet, public and private sector still struggle to put in place infrastructures that meet the four principles of sustainability: economic and financial, environmental, social, and institutional.

About the Lab

Against this backdrop, the Global Solutions Initiative (GSI) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH have launched The Solutions Lab: Scaling for Sustainable Infrastructure. The Solutions Lab brings together leaders and change agents from the worlds of policymaking, business, development practice, academia and civil society, who share a passion for sustainable infrastructure and a strong commitment to transformative and actionable solutions.

Rationale and Objective

The Solutions Lab aims to analyze what currently prevents broad uptake of existing sustainable infrastructure solutions, to identify tools and approaches that work, and to design context-sensitive strategies for their scaling by addressing two key challenges:

1. How can we systematically integrate sustainability throughout the entire project cycle?
2. How can we make the "business case" for sustainable infrastructure?

The Lab Work Streams

To address the two challenges outlined above, the Lab community established a series of work streams, each of which sheds light on different barriers and opportunities for sustainable infrastructure development. Ultimately, the goal is to develop a joint narrative and to integrate all outcomes into effective and scalable solutions for main-

streaming sustainability along the infrastructure project cycle.

THINK 20 (T20) Policy Briefs.

Several participants have joined forces to create policy briefs, which will be submitted to relevant T20 task forces under Saudi Arabia's 2020 G20 presidency. Topics include upstream planning considerations, the promotion of an enabling environment for sustainable infrastructure development and the nexus between infrastructure, biodiversity and circular economy.

Upstream Policy Considerations.

This work stream focuses on both high-level guidelines and concrete modelling tools for integrated upstream planning approaches to sustainable infrastructure development, which cut across different sectors, stakeholders and geographic areas. To identify barriers to implementation at scale, proposed solutions are studied and tested by means of several case studies at the national, regional or metropolitan levels (i.e. Ghana, Paris).

Ensuring Sustainability at Project and Pipeline Levels.

It is critical to consistently integrate sustainability considerations at the project level. Therefore, this work stream zeroes in on the establishment of concrete indicators and processes, the integration of tools, and the optimization of monitoring mechanisms to ensure that institutions such as national infrastructure funds mainstream sustainability across their portfolios. The Lab is also addressing the nexus between infrastructure and gender at the project and pipeline levels as well as general social and environmental risk management mechanisms.

Innovation Space.

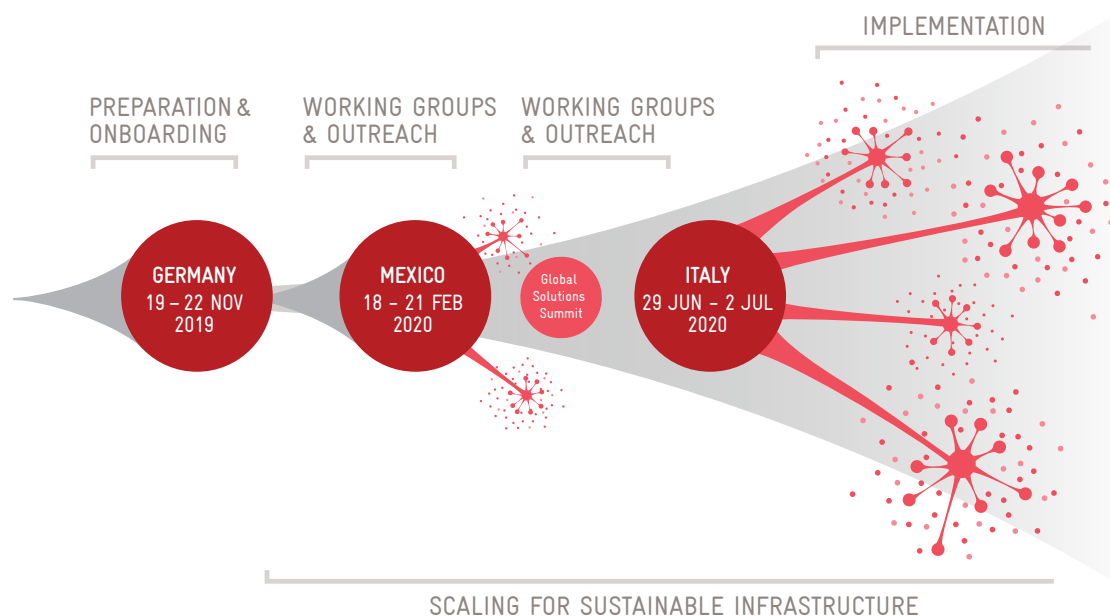
The innovation space is designed to take up and integrate new ideas throughout the entire Lab journey. Suggestions include the use of AI and social media to analyze civil society perceptions on infrastructure projects and to support local stakeholder engagement.

Implementing Partners



The Lab Process

The Solutions Lab is an 8-months journey that entails 3 face-to-face meetings as well as a virtual co-creation dialogue process, sounding boards and outreach events along the way. The 2nd Lab meeting in Mexico City is organized with kind support of the Inter-American Development Bank.



Sounding Boards & Outreach Events

What? Sounding Boards serve to test and discuss interim results while Outreach Events are designed to communicate the final Lab results. Both formats seek to anchor impulses from within the Lab amongst the broader infrastructure community and, ultimately, to support the scaling of sustainable solutions across regions.

Who? Infrastructure developers, tool providers, academia, policy-makers and financiers.

When?

- Oaxaca, Mexico, 24 February 2020
- Washington DC, U.S., April 2020
- Berlin, Germany, Global Solutions Summit, 18/19 April 2020
- Milan, Italy, July 2020

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