

**WORLD
URBAN
FORUM**

ELEVENTH SESSION

KATOWICE, POLAND | 26-30 JUNE 2022



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

LOCAL ACTION FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

WUF 11



SDG  **Cities**
Global Initiative

LOCALIZING
THE **SDGs**



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Introduction



A Challenging Global Context and the Importance of Localization

The climate emergency, the massive disruption emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the growing inequalities, the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and across the world have underscored the urgency of securing sustainable urban futures. In this critical context, the Eleventh Edition of World Urban Forum (WUF11) held in Katowice (Poland) in 2022, provided a global platform to discuss ways of *transforming our cities for a better urban future*.

Topics discussed were varied, including an assessment of the challenges experienced in and by cities, as well as the enabling frameworks needed to support them to fulfill their key development mandates. The contribution of local and regional governments to sustainable development strongly emerged from the debates, as well as their role as caregivers through the provision of public services, particularly when crisis strike. In this way, it was acknowledged that rooting global development agendas - such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda - at the local level is essential to accelerate the local implementation of the SDGs in the Decade of Action.

Localizing the SDGs is the process of transforming the SDGs into reality at the local level, in line with national frameworks and with communities' priorities. Localization is central nowadays.

Recently, UN-Habitat as well as the entire UN-system has intensified its efforts to advance localization efforts globally. For instance, the president of the General Assembly created the **Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization**; the **UN Secretary-General report on Our Common Agenda** recognized the role of local and regional governments as key actors to deliver on sustainable development, establishing the **Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments**; and revamping the **Local 2030 Coalition**, the UN-wide initiative on localizing the SDGs, was recently launched.

Moreover, building on the renewed commitments of this year, 2023 will be decisive in the review and advancement of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs.



"The promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind depends on actions at the local level. It depends on actions in and by cities."

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, at the WUF11 Opening Ceremony

Within the context of WUF11, UN-Habitat has hence dedicated special attention to the issue of SDG localization by organizing the **SDG Localization Track**. Its aim was to provide a shared roadmap of events to review and discuss progress and solutions towards the local implementation of the SDGs.

The SDG Localization Track was composed of **13 events**, including high-level and partner-led technical sessions. A total of **149 speakers from 42 countries** contributed to these discussions. Among speakers, **50 per cent were representatives from local and regional governments**, including mayors and governors. In addition, discussion benefitted from perspectives of panellists from the UN system and international organizations (**29 per cent**), civil society (**13 per cent**) and national governments (**9 per cent**). The **48 per cent of the SDG Localization Track were female speakers**.

Topics discussed in the SDG Localization Track were varied, including assessments of the challenges experienced in and by cities and local authorities, as well as the enabling frameworks needed to support them to fulfil their key development mandates. The contribution of local and regional governments to sustainable development was strongly reaffirmed in the debates.

The crises of our time are pushing already marginalized populations further into poverty. Informal settlements continue to expand, women predominately carry the burden of caring services which are not recognized, youth and minorities are being further disenfranchised. All these challenges should be approached not only by the national government, but also through local and regional governments which can better grasp the specificities of their local communities. Their role as caregivers through the provision of public services is critical, particularly when crisis strike. Looking forward, many panellists shed light on the need to plan inclusively, revamp multilevel governance mechanisms, renew participatory processes, expand the reach of financing tools, and promote accurate data and monitoring mechanisms.

The 2030 Agenda and the NUA were widely recognized as the universal frameworks to leave no one and no place behind. Although these agendas were mainly mandated towards national governments, local and regional governments around the world are committed to their achievement and play a central role in advancing their implementation. Such efforts are largely driven by a recognition that cities represent key pathways to development in an increasingly urbanized world.

Box 1 – SGD Localization Sessions

- World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments - <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1r/k1rjfx2n73>
- Roundtable of Local and Regional Governments: Reimagine cities for a better future for all - <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1m/k1m84t9xc7>
- Localizing the SDGs: Transformative partnerships to accelerate achievement of the Global Goals at local level - <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k18/k18kuwqtiw>
- Sustainable Cities SDG Sensemaking Tool workshop, Finland case
- SDG Cities Partners Breakfast
- Harnessing the potential of Voluntary Local Reviews for transformative change at the local level
- Leave No One and No Place Behind: Addressing Inequalities Within and Between Cities Through SDG Localization
- Financing the SDGs in Cities: UNCDF/UN-Habitat Fused Offering for Cities
- SDG Cities: Women-led businesses supporting Women-led cities
- Mobilizing and Equipping Multi-Faith Organizations to be Key Implementation Partners for SDG11 Through UN-Habitat's Flagship Programme SDG Citiesç
- Voluntary Local and Subnational Reviews: catalyzing global alliances for the localization of the SDGs
- Flagship 5: SDG Cities: Accelerating the Localization of the SDGs for a Sustainable Urban Future
- SDG Cities: Effective Local Institutions Track: Training on Diagnostic Tools

Local and Regional Governments Participation

Local and regional governments are part and parcel of the transformation our world urgently requires. The presence of mayors and other locally elected representatives in global forums is paramount. Their contribution, also with all local and regional governments representatives, is particularly relevant in the World Urban Forum process, as the main international gathering for exchanging experiences on sustainable urbanization.

The active participation of local and regional governments and their associations during WUF11 represented a step forward for a stronger and more inclusive multilateralism. WUF11 saw notable involvement of local and regional governments representatives. **1,645 local and regional government representatives attended WUF 11, of which 105 were mayors from 33 countries.**

Local governments associations at national, regional, and global levels played a key role in mobilizing the local governments constituency and in unifying their voice. This showcases the high commitment towards their contribution towards a transformative urban future in line with the NUA and the SDGs.

City and local leaders are best placed to represent their communities' needs and expectations in policy making forums. Similarly, the NUA recognizes the local and regional governments constituency's contribution to the review of the implementation of the Agenda, specifically through the mechanisms of the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, convened by the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments.

Their key role of local and regional governments was also celebrated during the Opening Ceremony of WUF 11, including the participation of the Mayor of Kitchener and UCLG President, on behalf of the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments and the local and regional governments constituency.

"During these striving times we have been collaborating closer than ever amongst each other and among spheres of government to ensure that the collective learning we created to face the pandemic will help us preventing future disasters and face new challenges together".

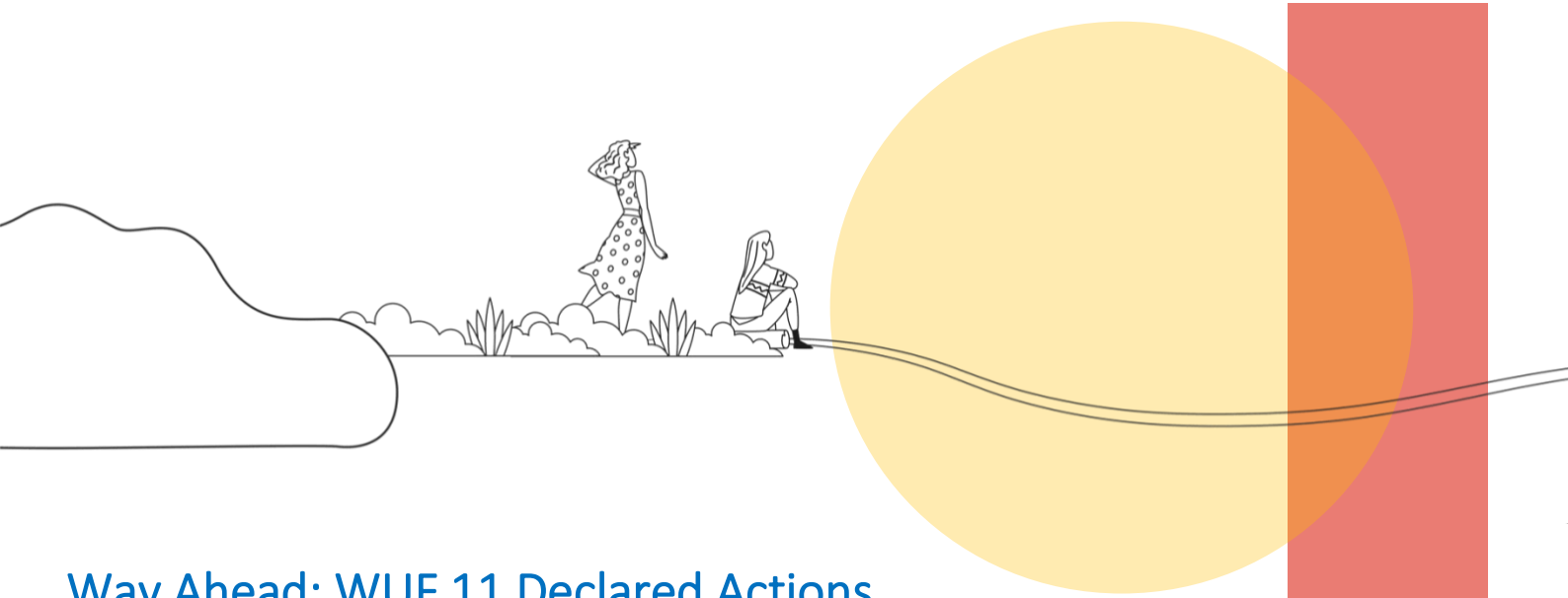
Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor of Kitchener and UCLG President.



(UCLG, 2022)

Several reflections emerged from discussions held. How we plan, build, and manage our cities and urban areas will decide the trajectory of people and planet. This is reinforced by future projections of global urban population, expected to grow to 68 per cent by 2050. Recent disruptive episodes have proved that local authorities are at the forefront of crisis responses, working to maintain effective and equitable public services in their territories. Even beyond the immediate response, local leadership is at the center of driving short and long-term recovery from shocks.

Moreover, WUF11 had a central focus on conflict and recovery. In six of the most disruptive conflicts currently waging in the world today, major cities have been active battlegrounds¹. The peace process and the recovery from the current conflict passes by the reconstruction of urban settlements, in which the leadership of the local and regional governments is paramount. Our present context evidenced that complex emergencies deserve integrated solutions, and no single actor or level of government can act alone. It is therefore critical that transformation is driven by enhanced multilevel and multistakeholder frameworks.



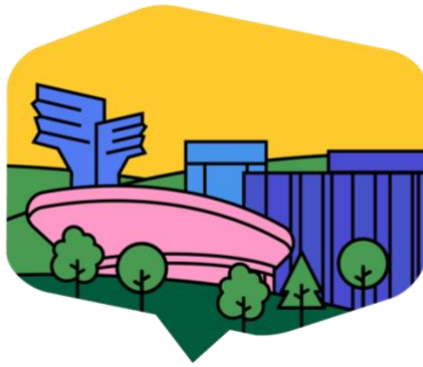
Way Ahead: WUF 11 Declared Actions

Accelerating action toward the global commitments entails the participation of local governments representatives into discussions. The Katowice Declared Actions, a compilation of voluntary actions and commitments for the next two years and beyond emerged from WUF11, includes several commitments directly and indirectly linked with local and regional governments' mandates:

1. Reinforce the presence of local and regional governments in decision making forums affecting that affect the interest of their residents.
2. Promote the recognition of local and regional governments as empowering actors safeguarding their local communities and ensuring that no one is left behind.
3. Need to support local governments so they can drive urban recovery through people-centered bottom-up participatory approaches, complementary to nationally led reconstruction efforts.
4. Recognize municipalization in the provision of basic services and the promotion of decent work for all. Their role in the implementation of global sustainable urban development agendas, including the preparation of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) of progress towards the SDGs.
5. Acknowledge the UN taskforce on the future of cities and the President of the General Assembly's Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization as mechanisms to enhance the structural dialogue on local and regional governments within the UN system and opening the path to the creation of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Local and Regional Governments.

UN-Habitat will work to promote and support the implementation of these commitments in the next two years and beyond. World Urban Forum 12, to be convened in Cairo (Egypt), would be an important platform for discussing local governance and SDG localization as well as sharing of innovations, bottlenecks and strengthening cooperation and networking on these topics.

Universal challenges can only be achieved with a more inclusive and robust multilateralism in which local communities have a say and local and regional governments are fully recognized as transformative actors. World Urban Forum must be recognized as the place to drive forward the discussion on a new social contract and inclusive multilateralism.



BOX 2. UN-Habitat’s work on local and regional governments and offer on SDG localization

UN-Habitat is the focal point in the UN system to work with local and regional governments. The institutional engagement is linked with the agency’s work on SDG localization. UN-Habitat is directly leading or supporting the main UN high-level processes linked to local governments and SDG localization including: (1) Leading on the “local action” dimension of the Decade of Action; (2) Local 2030 Coalition; (3) UN Task Force on the Future of Cities; (3) UN Secretary General’s Advisory Group of Local and Regional Authorities.

SDG Localization is one of the three UN-Habitat’s priorities, along with climate change and housing. To advance this, UN-Habitat has designed a comprehensive SDG localization approach that connects all components of the policy cycle. Data and indicators through the **Global Urban Monitoring Framework**; evaluation, monitoring and reporting through **Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)**; and city development strategies based on the SDGs through the **SDG Cities Cycle**.

SDG Cities recognizes exceptional efforts and achievement of cities through SDG Cities Certification, aiming to accelerate SDG performance and create role models for other localities to strengthen their efforts on working towards the development agendas.



WORLD ASSEMBLY

World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments

Organizers: GTF, UN-Habitat

Master of Ceremony: **Emilia Saiz**, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Secretary-General; Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF)

Opening

Maimunah Mohd. Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor of Kitchener, Canada and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Governing President

Jan Van Zanen, Mayor of The Hague, The Netherlands, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Copresident

Claudia López, Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia

First Panel

Mohamed Mezghani, International Association of Public Transport (UITP) Secretary-General

Ernest Maragall, Vice-president of International Relations and Cooperation, Barcelona Metropolitan Area

Adriana Allen, President, Habitat International Coalition

Xolani Sotashe, Councillor of Johannesburg, Chairperson of the Human settlements Working Group, South African Local Government Association (SALGA)

Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, Governor of Kisumu, Kenya

Second Panel

Paul Currie, Associate Director, Urban Systems, Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) Africa

Carola Gunnarsson, Mayor of Sala, Sweden and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Vice President for Europe

Noraini Roslan, Mayor of Klang, Malaysia

Khadija Ahmadi, Former mayor of Nili, Afghanistan

Evgenia Lodvigova, Vice Mayor of Kazan, Russia

Naoko Yamamoto, WHO Assistant Director-General/Healthier Population

Kevin Nelson, Urban Governance Lead, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Florah Noliqwa Maboab-Boltman, Deputy President, South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA)

Genie Birch, President, General Assembly of Partners (GAP)

Mercè Conesa, Director, Institut Català del Sòl (INCASOL)

Samuel Pyne, Mayor of Kumasi, Ghana

Andrei Gheorghiu, Vice Mayor of Ramnicu Valcea, Rumania

Peter Kurz, Mayor of Mannheim, Germany

Closing

Shipra Narang Suri, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

Chris Williams, Director, UN-Habitat New York

Daria Cibrario, Policy Officer in charge of the Local and Regional Government workers and Multinational Enterprises, Population Services International (PSI)

Carlos Maya, Mayor of Pereira, Colombia

Hyungjong John, Ambassador, Daejeon Metropolitan City, South Korea

Ana Cristina Wanzeler, Chief of Staff of the Municipal Secretariat for International Affairs, São Paulo

Alexandre Apsan Frediani, Principal researcher, Human Settlements research group, International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED)



(UCLG, 2022)

Main Outcomes:

- Emboldened **urbanization as one of the key characteristics of this century** thereby placing cities at the core of the debate.
- **Reiterated that SDG localization** is the way to move forward and the need for the inclusion of all spheres of government and actors to create collaborative partnerships towards sustainable development.
- **Reinforced care as a central theme and the importance of local and regional governments as caring actors** who must have the capacities to deliver local services, and care for all its people, especially focusing on the most vulnerable: women, youth, elderly, LGBTQ+ community, migrants, and refugees.
- Highlighted the **lack of political will and commitment to achieving the goals** of global agendas and the continuation of practices that regresses the progress made in the recent years. Emphasized that **not all local and regional governments have the same capacities**, hence all actors and levels of government need to be engaged to ensure none are left behind.
- Concluded that the short-term actions we make now will shape our future, **our action is paramount, and we must all work for these goals to be accomplished.**



Building on the renewed commitments of this year, including the outcomes of this World Assembly, 2023 will be decisive in the review and advancement of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs.
Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director



Description of the session:

In the increasingly turbulent global context we are living in, the role of local and regional governments is step by step being acknowledged as crucial to tackle the current challenges down and advocate for a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future for all. In this way, the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments has revolved around two main topics.

The first one focused on the **implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA)**, as the forum builds upon the momentum of the *High-Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the review of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda* held in April 2022. During the panel, a wide range of stakeholders have highlighted and agreed on the essential role of local and regional governments in such implementation, positioning themselves as subjects rather than objects.

Related to this last concept, local and regional governments were widely acknowledged as **caring actors**. Care and inclusion were two concepts in the forefront of the debate, local and regional governments expressed the need to enhance their capacities urgently and effectively to fulfill their mandates.

It was remarked that **the successful implementation of the NUA requires multilevel and multistakeholder governance approaches**. There is no level of government that can act alone, it is paramount to promote cooperation among the different levels and walk together to achieve the common global goals.

The second debate focused on the role of local and regional governments during **conflicts**, where cities were recognized as key actors for peacebuilding. In times of conflict people must be positioned at the center, due to their proximity to local communities, there is no better actor than local governments to do so.

All in all, it was agreed that **localization is one of the phenomena of this century**, and that we must work all together to achieve local and regional governments recognition as powerful actors. Multiple crisis also provides us with the opportunity to make changes, and the World Assembly was one milestone event to change the course of things and implement all the actions committed to secure the future of humankind.



(UCLG, 2022)

ROUNDTABLE

Roundtable of Local and Regional Governments: Reimagine cities for a better future for all

Organizers: GTF, UN-Habitat

Master of Ceremony: **Emilia Saiz**, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Secretary-General, Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF)

Opening

Rafael Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat

Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor of Kitchener, Canada and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Governing President

First Panel

Moderator: **Shipra Narang Suri**, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

Ángela de la Cruz Mera, Deputy Director, Urban Policies, Ministry of Transport, Mobility, and Urban Agenda, Spain

Florah Noliqwa Maboa-Boltman, Deputy President, South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA)

Bekbolot Arzibayev, Vice Mayor of Osh, Kyrgyzstan

Marylin M. Pintor, Undersecretary Vice Minister, Department of Human Settlement and Urban Development, Philippines

Rasmus Reinvang, Vice Mayor for Urban Development, Oslo, Norway

David Jackson, Director, Local Development Finance, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Second Panel

Moderator: **Lucy Slack**, Secretary General of Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)

Fahad Al-Jubeir, Mayor of Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia

Carola Gunnarsson, Mayor of Sala, Sweden; United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Vice President and President of Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

Elisenda Alamaný, Metropolitan Councillor, Barcelona, Spain

Carlos Maya, Mayor of Pereira, Colombia

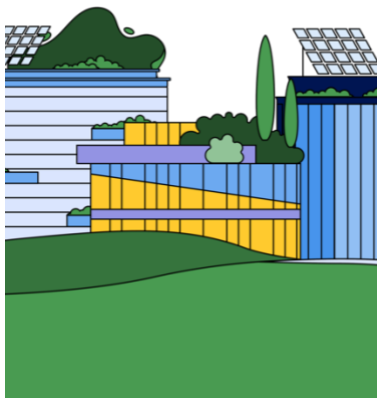
Ignacio de la Puerta, Director of Territorial Planning and Urban Agenda, Basque Regional Government, Spain

Aydin Kerimov, Special Representative of the President for Shusha City, Azerbaijan

Raouf Mazou, Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

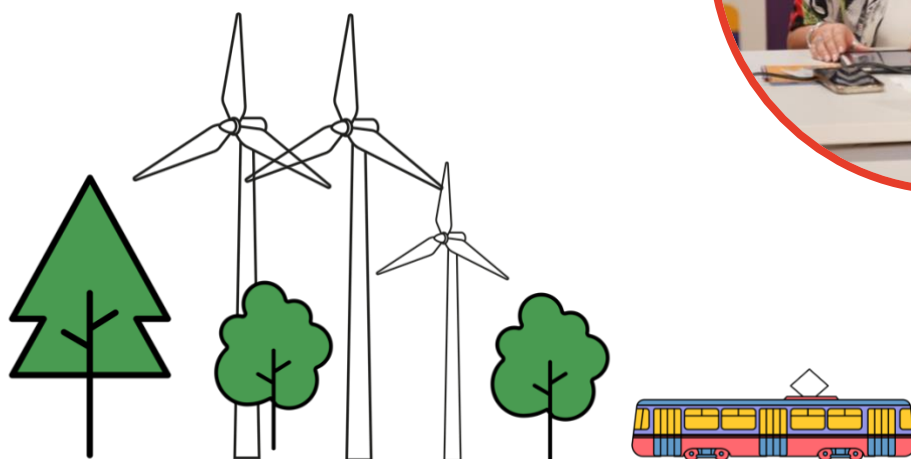
Main outcomes:

- Demonstrated the vital role local and regional governments have not only as **implementors of development agendas but also in safeguarding their local communities**
- Highlighted the importance of local and regional governments to have a **permanent and ongoing voice in the international fora**, being active subjects and change enablers



- Emphasized the need to **strengthen local finance**, and to achieve better technical guidance and policy support
- Discussed how national governments should perceive local and regional governments as **vehicles to achieve global goals**, and regard decentralized cooperation as a win-win process.
- Brought forward the consideration that not all the cities, and neighborhoods within cities are equal, which means that there is a need to **create targeted policies** and make sure that no one and no place is being left behind
- Encouraged a shift towards greater **multilevel and multistakeholder governance**

We need strong cities and strong local services delivery if we want to achieve the global development agendas
Emilia Saiz, Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments



Description of the session:

The role of local and regional governments in moving towards a sustainable future is paramount. In this way, the Roundtable of Local and Regional Governments came together with a wide range of actors to discuss the future of our cities and the role that local and regional governments must have in their transformation. The session showcased the immense and vital responsibility placed on local and regional governments to ensure the well-being of their local communities by providing education, health care services, waste management. Furthermore, participants recounted how the pandemic unveiled the dire consequences of local and regional governments not being equipped with the means to fulfill this role.

The session was divided in two panels. The first one focused on **how to empower cities**, stressing the importance of multilevel and multistakeholder governance, local finance, and human rights; identifying the gaps local and regional governments encounter and questioning which is the way forward to enable them to deliver their mandate. The roundtable also stressed the importance of the New Urban Agenda as a strategic plan, and the ways national governments should decentralize funding.

The second panel had a specific focus on **how to create caring cities**, in which the essential role of local services provision was strengthened. In this panel, the goal of gender inclusivity and its implementation was stressed, while highlighting how multiple inequalities intersect and bolster one another. It was discussed how it is important to create heterogenous policies as not all cities and local communities within a city are equal. All these inequalities must be considered when formulating policies, so as to leave no one and no place behind.

All in all, the session was an important event to strengthen the importance of local and regional governments and position them as **key actors on the achievement of the global development agendas**.

SPECIAL SESSION

Localizing the SDGs: Transformative partnerships to accelerate achievement of the Global Goals at local level

Organizers: UN-Habitat

(UCLG, 2022)



Master of Ceremony: **Shipra Narang Suri**, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

Keynote Speech

Anna-Leena Seppälä, Chief, Department of the Build Environment, Ministry of Environment, Finland

Emilia Saiz, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Secretary-General, Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF)

First Panel

Mónica Eva Copa, Mayor of El Alto, Bolivia

Ernesto Orlando Mejia Mazara, Vice-Minister of Housing and Building Policy and Planning, Dominican Republic

Knut Hjorth-Johansen, Chief Adviser and Coordinator of European Policy Affairs, Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Governments, Norway

Johary Anuar, Mayor of Subang Jaya, Malaysia

Patricia Menezes, Focal Point for Agenda 2030, City of Barcarena, Brazil and Co-founder of “Rede ODS Brasil”

Second Panel

Edlam Abera Yemeru, Director a.i., Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Geraldine Lendor-Gabriel, Mayor of Castries, Saint Lucia

Pablo Ciccarelli, Head of Unit, Sustainable Transport and Urban Development, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), European Commission

Christian Hübel, Head of the Department for Democracy and Strategy, Mannheim, Germany

Esther Muiruri, Founder of the Gold Ribbon Initiative, Kenya

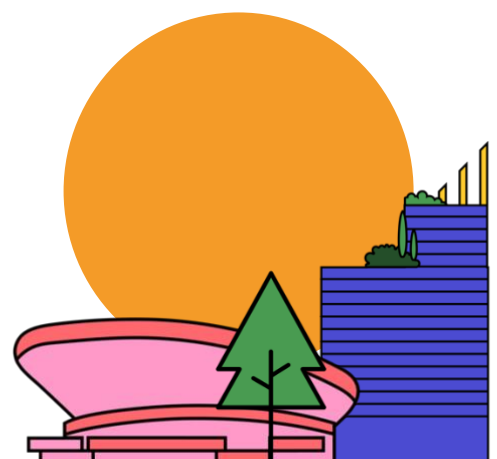
Global Initiatives

Rafael Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat

Marco Ricci, Plenipotentiary Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy

Main outcomes:

- Jointly created momentum within UN Agencies, Local and Regional Governments and international stakeholders and **fostered collaboration and partnerships** amongst these actors to localize the SDGs.
- Co-created further political will and commitment to localizing the **SDGs as a tool for global resilience and inclusivity transformations** starting from cities and localities.
- Utilized **collaborative learning on the key challenges and opportunities** experienced in strategies to localize the SDGs. Discusses and share potential solutions to data availability and management deficiencies, adequate and innovative financing, and true multilevel governance incorporation in local level development strategies.
- Further **emboldened a whole of society approach** to developing and implementing Agenda 2030.
- Provided a platform for Local and Regional and international organization representatives to illustrate their **transformative ideas and actions plans towards the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and the New Urban Agenda.**



Description of the session:

The 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remain the global framework of reference for sustainable development and to address the world's most pressing challenges. On the process of implementing the SDGs, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of localizing them. In this way, the session reflected not only the increasingly centrality of SDG localization, but also the enhanced commitment of UN-Habitat in supporting partners all over the world in accelerating this process.

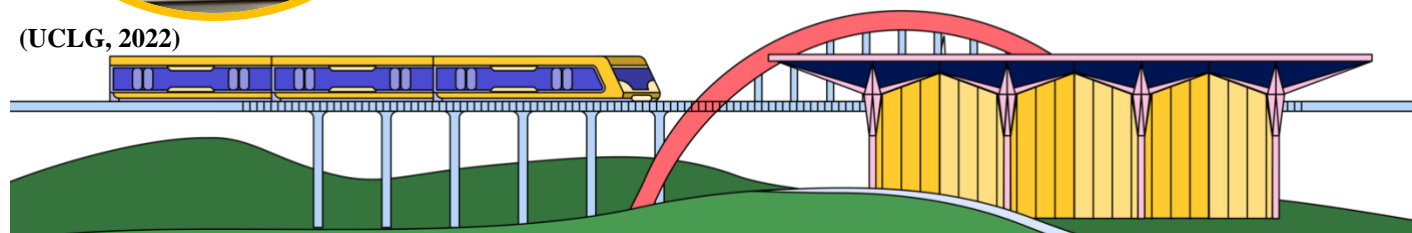
During the session it was reinforced that **“co-creation” is crucial for the achievement of the SDGs**. The panelists emphasized the need to involve every sphere of governance and every actor, advocating for **multilevel and multistakeholder governance**, thereby creating a whole-of-society approach where communities are not only involved in the discussions but also in the policy-making processes, listening to all the voices and making sure that no one is left behind. It was agreed that an inclusive decision-making process is key to fulfill the development agendas.



Cities, Local, and Regional governments are already localising these goals, they are at the frontlines, providing services and care and dealing with the most vulnerable of their populations. Whether they call it “localising SDGs” or not they are advancing the SDGs all the time. The localizing SDGs movement gives amplification, traction, and multilevel support to this process.

Shipra Narang Suri, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

(UCLG, 2022)



Keeping this in mind, the session discussion was built on the idea that **the role of the national government becomes stronger in delivering SDG localization via the multidimensional support to the local and regional governments**. It was also reiterated the importance of addressing the lack of funding and the closure of data gaps, considering that these challenges need to be overcome as they put a burden on local and regional governments to successfully achieve the SDGs.

In line with placing the local level at the center, the session also highlighted the work of UN-Habitat on the **“SDG Cities Certification”**, which aims to award cities for their exceptional efforts towards the implementation of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. Depending on where they stand in the achievement of the goals, there are four different levels of certification: silver, gold, platinum and diamond. This system allows for a fair measurement and recognition of efforts by cities to accelerate SDG performance and creates role models for other localities to model their efforts on.

All in all, this event reiterated the vital importance of SDG Localization, of empowering local and regional governments and work towards a multilevel and multistakeholder governance, while highlighting the current challenges and gaps that must be overcome to successfully achieve the global goals and safeguard the future of the humankind.

Networking Event

MAKING SENSE OF THE SDGs IN CITIES: Sustainable Cities SDG Sensemaking Tool workshop, Finland case

Organizers: Finland Ministry of Environment, Kuntaliitto, City of Espoo, City of Helsinki, UN-Habitat

Participants

Shipra Narang Suri, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

Virve Hokkanen, Program Manager, Sustainable City Programme, Ministry of the Environment, Finland

Mia Malin, Senior Advisor, Sustainability, Helsinki, Finland

Sanna-Mari Huikuri, Development Manager, Sustainability, Tampere, Finland

Ville Taajamaa, Project Manager, VLR protocol & SDG work, Espoo, Finland

Main Outcomes

- The participants expressed appreciation of the interactive nature of the session and found the SDG sensemaking tool very useful
- Created a space to make connections and advance with their work after WUF11

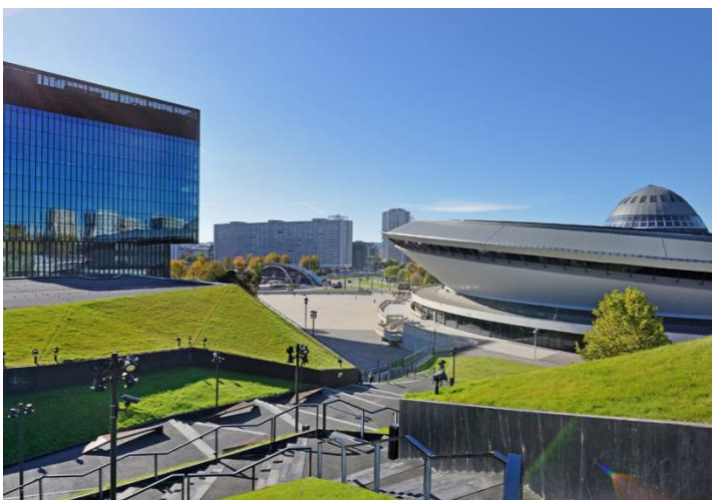


Description

Finland national government, city authorities and their national association have been at the forefront of SDG localization practices in Europe and worldwide. Specifically, Finland has been a pioneer of the global movement of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and a champion of the VLR integration within the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process. What is more, Finland and UN-Habitat joined forces through a strategic partnership on SDG localization to harness the potential and expertise of the Finnish experience and make it available to partners throughout the globe.

This event presented the innovative SDG Sensemaking Tool (SST). The SST process analyses the SDGs in relation to any given phenomena or project within or outside a city. The tool has a global vision and aims to be replicated in other geographies.

All in all, this session served as the opportunity to present the Finland work towards sustainable development, demonstrating their knowledge on how to pursue a multilevel and multistakeholder governance as well as presenting the SST.



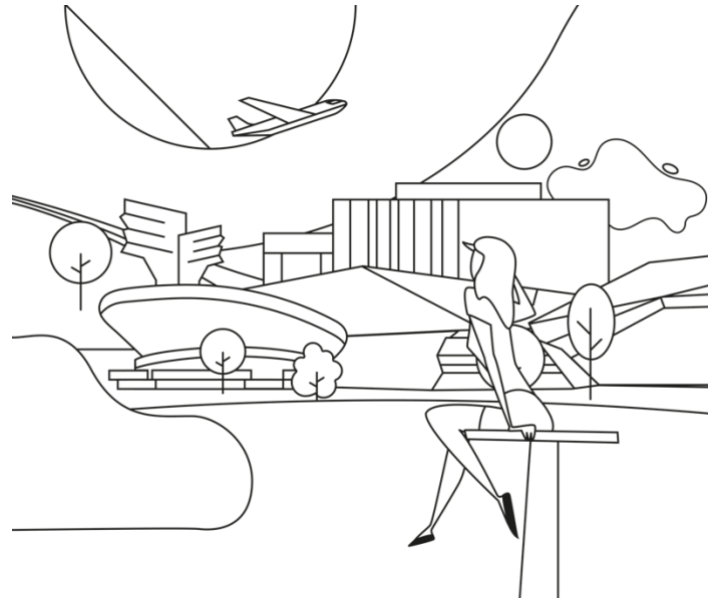
Organizers: UN-Habitat

Participants

- Maimunah Mohd Shariff**, Executive Director, UN-Habitat
- Dyfed Aubrey**, Inter-regional Adviser, UN-Habitat
- David Jackson**, Director, Local Development Finance, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- Fatma Mahmoud**, Mayor of Ennour, Tunisia
- Khaled Abdelhalim**, Executive Director, Local Development Observatory, Ministry of Local Development, Egypt
- Samuel Pyne**, Mayor of Kumasi, Ghana
- Ana Oregi**, Deputy mayor of Vitoria -Gasteiz, Spain
- Helder Silva**, Mayor of Mafra, Portugal
- Ramesh Pd. Singh**, Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, Nepal
- Oliver Weigel**, Director, Federal Ministry for Urban Development
- Salim Korkmaz**, General coordinator, United Cities and Local Governments – Middle-East and West Africa (UCLG-MEWA)
- Sayli Mankikar**, Lead, Climate Centre for Cities, India
- Mohamad Farazi Bin Johari**, State Financial Officer, Penang State Financial Department, Malaysia
- Khalid Safir**, Wali, Director general of local governments, Ministry of Interior, Morocco

Main Outcomes

- Emphasized the importance to **achieve the global endorsement of SDG Cities Certification** at the UN General Assembly
- Reaffirmed the **commitment of UNCDF to SDG Cities initiative** and the willingness to deepen the partnership with UN-Habitat
- Highlighted how SDG Cities Initiative could facilitate cities to achieve **SDGs through digital tools in diagnosing capacities, financing, and creating cities communities**
- Concluded the importance in **localizing global and national development priorities** alongside addressing local priorities.



Description

The SDG Cities Breakfast brought together partners and collaborators of the Global flagship initiative, SDG Cities, in order to share experiences and aspirations of the initiative and discuss next steps. **The SDG Cities Global Flagship Initiative aims to support 1000 cities to accelerate the implementation of SDGs by 2030** by supporting them with digital tools and technical support hubs working in four interlinked tracks of urban data, inclusive strategic planning, strengthened local institutions and investment in SDG impact. It also recognizes exceptional efforts and achievement of cities through SDG Cities Certification.

The breakfast meeting reinforced the **interest of cities, national authorities and city networks to engage with the SDG Cities Global Initiative** and its importance in localizing global and national development priorities alongside addressing local priorities. It also reinforced the aspiration of all to have in place a globally recognized SDG Cities certification process

VOICES FROM CITIES

Harnessing the potential of Voluntary Local Reviews for transformative change at the

Organizers: UN-Habitat, UNESCWA, UNDESA

Participants

Master of Ceremony: **Shipra Narang Suri**, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

Opening

Sukaina Al-Nasrawi, Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)

Panel Discussion

Amson Sibanda, Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

Barbaros Büyüksağnak, Head of the Strategy department, Istanbul, Turkey

Nicholas Gharbi, Principal Advisor for International Relations, Madrid, Spain

Njoud Abdeljawad, Manager of International Relations and Technical Support Department, Greater Amman Municipality, Jordan

Daryna Mendela, Head of a Communication Programme, City Institute, Lviv, Ukraine

Sanna Mari Huikuri, Development Manager on Sustainability, Tampere, Finland

Main Outcomes

- Increased **peer-to-peer exchanges and collaboration**. Particularly, localities with a longer history in the localization movement committed to supporting those who are just beginning the VLR process through peer-to-peer learning.
- Efforts were made to **break down the perceived difficulties of joining the VLR process** through sharing methods and approaches of creating a VLR, among local actors so as to reduce barriers to enter the process thereby increasing the ease of reporting on the NUA.
- City representatives declared intention to **increase transparency and ownership of VLRs** and the connected wider goals.
- Promoted the increase of **multilevel and multistakeholder involvement in data collection** to create better nation and global policy coherence and alignment with local realities.
- **Collected perspectives and developed connections** between localities to take away lessons learned about the effects of different contexts on VLRs and the New Urban Agenda.
- Collaboratively planned for more concrete proposals on the ways in which the VLR process and the larger **NUA goals can be internalized into city development plans**.



Description

Central to the successful localization of global sustainability agendas is the monitoring, evaluation and reporting process of development policies and initiatives that cities undertake. **Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) have become the tool of choice for local and regional governments to keep track of the implementation of the SDGs in their territories.**

Four years into the VLR movement, **over 100 VLRs have been published by more than 100 local and regional authorities from more than 30 countries.** It is important to take stock of where the VLR movement stands and look forward into its future, specifically connecting VLRs to the wider and deeper SDG localization process.

In this way, this session brought together experts and practitioners with experience in the development of VLRs and cities development strategies. It highlighted the aspects of VLRs that have driven their adoption as the preferred tool for local reporting all over the globe, while also fostering the conversation across experts on **how to harness their potential to promote change at the local level.** Furthermore, the discussion focused on elaborating difficulties and barriers in the VLR process experienced by different localities that have largely varying contexts.

Leave No One and No Place Behind: Addressing Inequalities Within and Between Cities Through SDG Localization

Organizers: UN-Habitat

Participants

Moderator: **Shipra Narang Suri**, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

Keynote Speech

Katerina Bezgachina, Communications Chief, UN-Habitat

Panel

Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco

Takahiro Shiba, Managing Chief of Shizuoka City, Japan

Diana Rodriguez, Secretary of women, Bogotá, Colombia

Filipe Braga Farhat, Partnerships Liaison for the 2030 Agenda in Paraná, Brazil

Joseph Muturi, Chair, Slum Dwellers International (SDI) Board

Anelis Marichal, General director of the National Institute of Territorial Planning and Urbanism, Cuba

Gwendolyn S. Myers, Founder & Executive Director of Messengers of Peace, Liberia

Main Outcomes

- Developed the work towards inclusive governance that has at the core the principles of social and territorial justice
- Further demonstrated the centrality of harnessing the potential of youth, giving women care facilities and mainstreaming gender justice or housing justice to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Provided further evidence and built on the need for disaggregated data to drill down any group specificities and create truly inclusive policies.
- Brought to the forefront of the discourse the key role of multilevel **and multistakeholder governance** to achieve a sustainable, inclusive, and better future for all.



Description

In recent years we have been witnessing an escalation of inequalities all around the world. **The extraordinary growth and improvements in well-being have failed to close the deep divides within and across countries.**

This session aimed to gather representatives hailing from different backgrounds and perspectives to advance the conversation on how to promote all-encompassing local action to reduce inequalities and to voice the needs of the frequently times silenced ones. Urban poverty and inequality remain one of the most intractable challenges confronting cities, without concerted actions at all levels and by different actors they could become endemic challenges facing the cities.

Therefore, the discussion revolved around the topic of inequality **and how to make sure we leave no one and no place behind.** Women, youth, intermediate cities, slum dwellers, have been at the center of the debate. The session hosted speakers that did not only represent these perspectives but **showed the way to move forward.** From all the discussions, it was agreed that **people must be at the core of any process**, acknowledging the specificities of each of them and giving them not only the means but the power to be at the forefront of the transformation. The actions that we take today will shape the future of our cities and of humankind.

Financing the SDGs in Cities: UNCDF/UN-Habitat Fused Offering for Cities



Organizers: UNCDF, UN-Habitat

Participants

Dyfed Aubrey, Inter-regional Adviser, UN-Habitat

David Jackson, Director of Local Development Finance, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Alawi Ahmadi, Project Resource Mobilization Coordinator, Tanga Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority, Tanzania

Samuel Pyne, Mayor of Kumasi, Ghana

Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco

Lars Gronvald, Team Lead for Urban Development, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), Unit F4, European Commission

Jenifer Bukokhe Wakhungu, Deputy Director of Local Transformative Finance, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Saila Farzana, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration, Bangladesh

Abdoul Aziz Paye, Mayor of Gueule Tapée – Fass – Colobane, Senegal

Assumpta Tibamwenda, Technical Advisor, Ministry of Local Government, Uganda

Samina Anwar, Advisor, Invest in Urban Inclusion, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Sergio Marcondes, Founder and COO, Blend Group

Main Outcomes

- Emphasized that **five essential reforms are needed to trigger the required capital flows to make the financial ecosystem work**.
- Highlighted that the fused offering between **UNCDF and UN-Habitat is the missing link between the financing and the urbanization agenda**, and it operationalizes this agenda at the country, programmatic and city level.
- Stressed that **sustainable finance** is one of the most important and most challenging ingredients to achieve sustainable development.
- Concluded that the **SDG flagship initiative** will support over 1,000 Cities, generate their capital investment plans, and finance them.

Description

The connection between the New Urban Agenda and the financing agenda has not yet been solidified, however the fused offering between UNCDF and UN-Habitat aims to establish and reinforce this link.

Cities and local governments have been recognized as vehicles for sustainable development, yet their effectiveness depends on effective plans and projects being financed. Five elements of the financial ecosystem have been identified to enable cities and governments to accelerate the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. These include the **need for effective intergovernmental fiscal transfers, improved own source revenue mobilization, domestic capital market reform, city friendly investment funds, and a guarantee fund for cities**. These components are inter-related and create an ecosystem for sustainable financing, ensuring that external investment is balanced with strengthened local revenue and capital markets, and further reinforced with mechanisms to defray sovereign credit rating risk, which may otherwise stand as a barrier to authorizing sub-national financing. The fused offering for cities thus enables the upstream stages of data, planning, and investment pipeline identification to downstream processes of financing projects in developing economies, completing the SDG Cities offer to support a continuous process from SDG data to impact.



SDG Cities: Women-led businesses supporting Women-led cities

cities

Organizers: Blendgroup-Blendlab, UN-Habitat

Participants

Dyfed Aubrey, Inter-regional Adviser, UN-Habitat
Liane Freire, BLENDGroup - BLENDLab, Founder & Ceo

Angela Mwai, Chief, Human Rights and Social Inclusion, UN Habitat

Samina Anwar, Advisor, Invest in Urban Inclusion, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Ana Marina Castro, Latam & Brazil Co-Chair, Nexus Global

Laís Leão, Founder and Urbanist, inCities

Natalie Pierce, Head, Global Shapers Community

Claudia López, Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia

Fatma Sahin, Mayor of Gaziantep, Turkey

Main Outcomes

- Emphasized that **women's leadership is defined by collaboration** and that sharing credit is a trait of women leaders.
- Highlighted the **creation of a movement to bring women leaders together to deliver the SDGs in cities** as part of the SDG Cities Women-Led Cities Initiative.
- Concluded that a WUF 11 Declared Action will be submitted and will describe how this initiative will support implementation of impact projects, addressing demographic issues, and strengthening local institutions within a foundation of gender analysis and

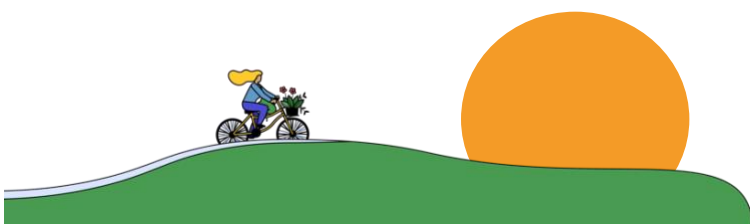


Description

SDG Cities includes six implementation windows, one of which is the Women-Led Cities initiative which facilitates women-led businesses and women-led cities to work together to champion women leadership and delivers local impact.

The Women-Led Cities initiative is a movement within the SDG Cities Initiative, where women-led businesses support women mayors to bring about local transformation. Through the SDG Cities building blocks of data, strategic planning, local institutional strengthening, and investment in impact, they accelerate making cities safer, with improved living conditions and improved business and entrepreneurship opportunities for women, and with increased opportunities for women to engage in local decision making. Through this powerful chain, women business leaders support women mayors, and women mayors support economic and representational roles for women.

Through the initiative women business and women local political leaders will now have a platform to share experience, identify and strengthen their unique transformative roles, and share and build mechanisms to overcome the



Mobilizing and Equipping Multi-Faith Organizations to be Key Implementation Partners for SDG11 Through UN-Habitat's

Organizers: World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), Religions for Peace, Duke University/Divinity School - Ormond Center, UN-Habitat

Participants

Dyfed Aubrey, Inter-regional Adviser, UN-Habitat
Chris Elisara, Co-director WEA Sustainability Center, World Evangelical Alliance
Klaus Christensen, Swiss Impact Investment Association
Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Main Outcomes

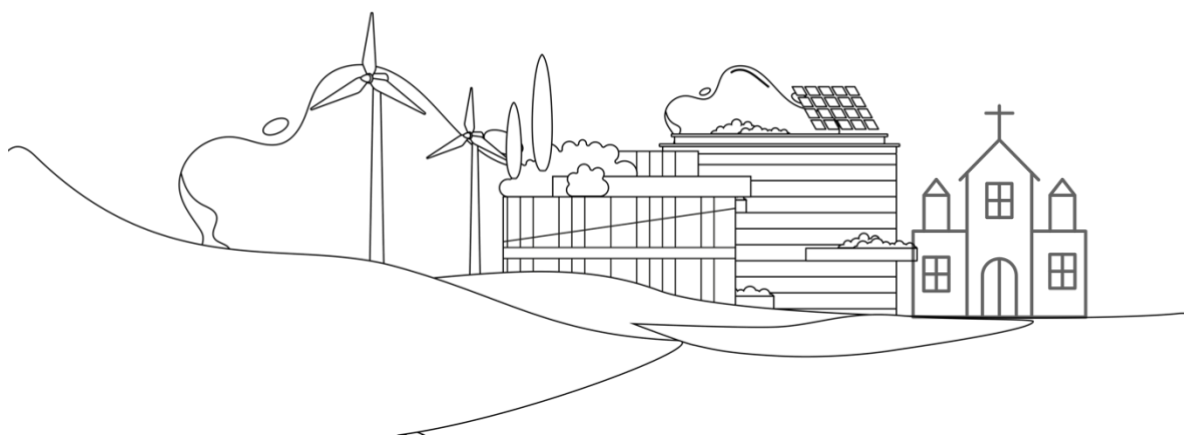
- Emphasized that through the **SDG Cities faith window**, faiths can contribute to the data streams, grassroots planning process, accountability and focused legacy outcomes, projects and project development, impact investment and blended finance.
- Affirmed that **faith engagement in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA)** is essential to the success of the NUA and achieving the SDGs.
- Concluded that interested partners will be onboarded and connected through an **online platform** where they can further co-create the Faith window of the SDG Cities Global Initiative.

Description

SDG Cities includes six implementation windows, one of which focusses on faith communities that work together to drive local transformation and channel funding and finance from global to local levels. **By including faith communities as an implementing window, SDG Cities is better able to achieve its objective, to realize the potential of cities to drive the achievement of the SDGs**, by working with cities, other levels of government, communities [including faith communities], business sector and development partners to connect the value chain of data; evidence-based policy; institutional capacities; and, impact, including through faith-based investment.

The event kickstarted the dialogue between Faith Based Organisations and SDG Cities on co-designing how FBOs can be successful SDG Cities implementation partners, particularly in the area of faith-based investment.

The session concluded that, in moving this initiative forward, as part of SDG Cities' strategy for developing its faith community implementation partners, interested partners will be onboarded and connected through an online platform where they can further co-create the Faith window of the SDG Cities Global Initiative.



Voluntary Local and Subnational Reviews: catalyzing global alliances for the localization of the SDGs

Organizers: UCLG, UN-Habitat



Participants

José Alvarez, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Policy Officer

Martino Miraglia, SDG Localization and Local Governments, UN-Habitat

Rahmatouca Sow, Special Adviser, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Africa

Closing

Claudia Garcia, Advocacy and Knowledge Management, UN-Habitat

Presentations and Debate

Nicole Osuji, Project Manager VNGi, The Netherlands

Knut Hjorth-Johansen, Coordinator European Policy Affairs, KS Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, Norway

Sabine Dress, Manager Foreign Affairs, Deutscher Städtetag, Germany

Main Outcomes

- Identified key opportunities for **strengthening the links between VNR and VSR/VLR** in an attempt to contribute to better coordination between national and local levels and hence, multi-level governance mechanisms and practices for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Advocated for **strengthening subnational governments' involvement** in SDG localization and reporting processes.
- Fostered better **connection between VLRs and VSRs to utilize synergies** in the methodologies, tools, and advocacy efforts.
- Provided a platform for **coordination and knowledge sharing between local governments networks and international institutions** to strengthen the involvement of subnational levels of government in global reporting efforts on the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs.

Description

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, local and regional governments (LRGs)' involvement in monitoring and reporting on SDG implementation has expanded to all regions, as did the support of international institutions. **The participation of local and regional governments in these SDG reports has increased significantly in recent years.** In many countries, local governments have committed to "localizing" the SDGs. To help assess this progress, local governments are also developing voluntary reports. There are two types: Voluntary Local and Voluntary Subnational Reviews.

VSR and VLR experiences from previous years demonstrate that **reporting on local progress in implementing the SDGs is proving to be an essential tool to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda** among local governments, to help accelerate the localization of the SDGs, to improve public policymaking, and to advocate for a more supportive institutional environment and multi-level governance for local governments in the realization of global sustainable development commitments.

This session intended to **bring together representatives from Local and Regional governments, Local Government Associations and International Organizations** in the hopes that the exchanges will lead to coordination between them and concrete recommendations to contribute to the advocacy on the role of LGAs and LRGs for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

UN-HABITAT ARENA, FLAGSHIP 5

SDG Cities: Accelerating the Localization of the SDGs for a Sustainable Urban Future

Organizers: UN-Habitat

Participants

Dyfed Aubrey, Inter-regional Adviser, UN-Habitat
David Jackson, Director of Local Development Finance, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Ana Oregi, Deputy mayor of Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain

Norliza Hashem, Chief Executive, Urbanice Malaysia

Osei Assibey Antwi, Metropolitan Chief Executive of Kumasi, Ghana

Luis Carlos Velasquez, Governor, Caldas Department, Colombia

Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco

Bharathi Suppiah, Manager, Penang State Government, Malaysia

Main Outcomes

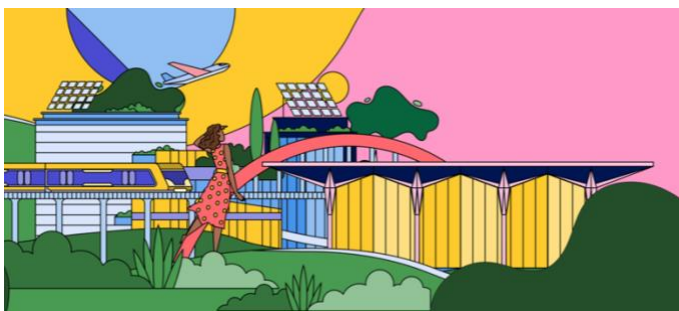
- Malaysia pledged to **integrate 155 Malaysian cities** into the SDG Cities Global Flagship Programme
- Emphasized the **environmental issues in cities** and highlighted cities' ambitions to conquer this issue
- The discussion highlighted how SDG Cities could facilitate the unique priorities of cities and regions to achieve SDGs



Description

The SDG Cities Flagship Programme aims to be a **catalyst to support cities to localize SDGs**. The programme has a systematic value chain approach starting from data collection, disaggregated at district and neighborhood level, to strategic and spatial plan preparation, to SDG projects identification, preparation and financing. In parallel the initiative strengthens local institutions in areas of inclusive, accountable governance, planning, revenue and service delivery as core local capacities needed to advance SDGs. SDG Cities incorporates a **certification system to recognize the exceptional efforts and achievement of cities**.

The event demonstrated that while cities and regions have unique priorities, SDG Cities provides an excellent systematic approach to help achieve these, whilst also sharing knowledge between cities with common priorities.



TRAINING EVENT

SDG Cities: Effective Local Institutions Track: Training on Diagnostic Tools

Organizers: Global Ceo Alliance, UN-Habitat

Participants

James Donovan, CEO and Chairman, Global CEO Alliance (GCEOA) and ADEC Innovations

Michelle Tan, Global Development Head of Global CEO Alliance (GCEOA)

Johanna Bautista, Global Development Officer of Global CEO Alliance (GCEOA)

Dyfed Aubrey, Inter-regional Adviser of UN-Habitat

Samuel Njuguna, National Officer, Urban Law and Governance, UN-Habitat

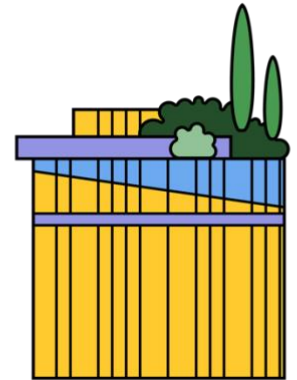
Yassine Moustanjidi, Consultant, UN-Habitat

Janene Tuniz, Associate Urban Mobility Officer, UN-Habitat F

Lennart Fleck, Municipal Finance and Local Economic Development Officer, UN-Habitat

Nao Takeuchi, Waste Management Expert, UN-Habitat

Dennis Mwaniki, Spatial Data Expert, UN-Habitat



Main outcomes

- Officially launched the pilot version of the **SDG Cities Digital Tools Platform**
- **Global Urban Monitoring Framework and Diagnostic Toolkit**, which aims to generate reliable baseline data, including real-time geospatial data of information and verification through a citizen-science capability, will be launched by the end of 2022
- **Capacity Building Tools Platform**, which is a self-learning repository to be connected to the Digital Tools

SDG Cities aims to support 1000 cities accelerate achieving the SDGs and does so through by supporting cities with digital tools and technical support hubs working in areas of data, strategic planning, institutional development and investment in impact.

The Global CEO Alliance (GCEOA) has been supporting the development of the SDG Cities Digital Toolkit since 2021. **The Digital Toolkit, now well advanced, will consist of a rapid spatial data collection and analysis tool, enabling communities and local authorities to self-generate a map-based analysis of the city in line with the Global Urban Monitoring Framework, thus provide a sound baseline for the development of City Development Strategies.** As well as this, the digital toolkit includes tools for the self-assessment of key capacities of local institutions as needed to drive sustainable development, i.e., planning, governance, own-source revenue, and basic services delivery (waste management, mobility and water utilities). The self-assessment autogenerates analysis based on responses by institutions to a comprehensive series of questions. The analysis is then fed through a search engine with directs the user to relevant online training resources, and groups local institutions from various cities with similar training needs into learning communities so that they can engage in group training and experience sharing.

GCEOA officially launched the pilot version of the SDG Cities Digital Tools Platform at the training event and a timeline was shared to outline the future capabilities for the platform and partnership. During the quick live demo, the participants were given a demonstration of the tools' capabilities and the opportunity to test the technology themselves and have been invited to share feedback.

This event marks the first of more outputs between the partnership between Global CEO Alliance and UN-Habitat. Upcoming updates are to be expected in the next months to come.

WORLD URBAN FORUM

ELEVENTH SESSION



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