LOCAL AND REGIONAL ACTION

at the Heart of the High-level Political Forum 2018

New York, 9–18 July 2018

GLOBAL TASKFORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

UN@HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Local and Regional Governments' **FORUM**

1
OUR QUEST TOWARDS THE LOCALIZATION OF THE GLOBAL AGENDAS

Localizing is implementing the development agendas in cities and territories to enable the achievement of the global goals through local priorities and actions. It is a bottom-up, rather than a top-down, process that aims to build global agendas based on the realities and aspirations of the communities, and one that needs to build on a political process based on harnessing local opportunities, priorities and ideas. Local democracy and local leadership are vital tools to drive forward agendas rooted in the cultural, social, environmental and economic realities of each city and territory while feeding a global vision of a shared humanity. **Local and regional governments around the world are championing the localization movement**, driving new forms of urbanism and working towards establishing urban-rural linkages. It is an ambitious objective that cannot be

accomplished by any sphere of government alone and that necessitates the complicity of the communities in fully inclusive processes.

The 2018 High-level Political Forum, for the first time, hosted a Local and Regional Governments' Forum (LRGF), in which over 300 local and regional government delegates took the main conversations in the United Nations by storm during two full days. **Local leaders called for new partnerships and to foster the co-creation of our communities based on the needs and hopes of the inhabitants** and neighbors.

The High-level Political Forum, the United Nations' platform for the review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda, has seen the presence of local and regional governments before, and local regional government organizations

gathered in the Global Taskforce have ensured regular follow up of this Forum.

Two reports on the role played by local and regional governments in the implementation of the SDGs, as well as their involvement in the Voluntary National Reports and the national strategies to achieve the 2030 Agenda, have been produced and presented in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

The strong presence and dedicated space in the 2018 HLPF is seen by the constituency of local and regional governments as a milestone that vindicates our rightful place at the global decision-making table, and a natural step after the adoption of SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda. In the era of urbanization, local and regional governments can no longer be an afterthought in the implementation of the global agendas.

The Local and Regional Governments' Forum and the Local 2030 Special Event were the opportunity to present the key priorities of the constituency during the 2018 HLPF – the right to housing, localization of financing, gender equality

in local decision making, multilevel governance, the focus on intermediary cities, the need to develop territorial cohesion and accountable institutions were all presented as instrumental areas of action that need to be addressed locally to solve global problems.

Mayors, Councilors and Presidents of regions from all over the world, big and small, stressed that global agendas require the involvement of all stakeholders. Local and regional leaders expressed their commitment to work with all levels of government and communities to catalyze the full potential of local action.

This collective strength, however, is still far from enough. The main outcome document of the High-level Political Forum, its Ministerial Declaration, only takes timid acknowledgments towards the role that local governments can play in the accomplishment of the agendas on the ground, **but lacks the full acknowledgement of the importance of the vision, the know-how, and the shared experiences of local and regional governments.**

2
OUR PLACE AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

Our constituency is a critical partner for transformation that, in partnership with national governments and civil society, can inspire society to achieve the global goals. It can further innovate in public service provision and align it to the various global development and sustainability agendas as a single, universal agenda. **The ambitious global goals for 2030, accelerated by the New Urban Agenda as well as the targets of the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development**, will need to be underpinned by local action and to serve local needs.

The enhanced presence of local and regional governments at the 2018 HLPF, exemplified by the Local and Regional Governments' Forum, opens up a space for the presentation of cities and territories' capacity to act.

Throughout the two days, local and regional governments and their networks brought to the table both the need to raise awareness of the SDGs among communities, as well as their efforts to do so. **They reinstated their commitment to the achievement of all universal development agendas, and in particular, to own the New Urban Agenda as an accelerator for the achievement of the global goals**.

The LRGF needs, however, to evolve into a space for dialogue among local and regional governments and member states that can allow for innovation and joint problem solving: a space that showcases how synergies among stakeholders can accelerate the achievement of the Agenda. It is our hope that the Forum will consolidate into a structural space, such as the one that is currently provided to the private sector.

IMPORTANT TAKE-AWAY

The Opening was held by President of the UN General Assembly **Miroslav Lajčak**, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations **Amina Mohammed**, Executive Director of UN-Habitat **Maimunah Mohd Sharif**, Vice-President of ECOSOC Ambassador **Inga Rhonda King**, Secretary General of UCLG **Emilia Saiz**, President of UCLG representing the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments **Parks Tau**, and Under-Secretary-General of UNDESA **Liu Zhemin**.

The Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations Amina Mohamed highlighted how local and regional governments are essential to reframe how we interact with the global agenda, and that local governance is where synergies between the different global agendas, national strategies and local plans happen.

The President of UCLG and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Mpho Parks Tau argued that, to keep providing essential services to citizens and to fully deliver on the SDGs, local and regional governments need to access resources. Rethinking local and regional governments' access to finance is a necessity to do so, and enabling frameworks to further the capacity of local and regional governments to deliver, which can only be done through a reform of the financing system, is a prerequisite.

Representatives of national governments acknowledged local and regional governments as the "point of convergence" of the global goals, and that they needed to be funded accordingly in order for the 2030 Agenda to succeed.

The High-level Political Forum further offered a unique opportunity within the framework of

> *"The time has now come to define new partnerships, new relations and to foster the co-creation of our communities based on the needs and hopes of the inhabitants, of our neighbours".*
> Parks Tau, *President of UCLG*

> *"We need the driving force and creative energy of local and regional governments, and this Forum is the beginning of a new partnership between the UN and local and regional governments, which will be key in reframing how the World implements the Agenda".*
> Amina J. Mohammed, *Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations*

the 2030 Agenda for a closed-doors exchange between local and regional governments and the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations.

LOCALIZING FINANCE:
A PREREQUISITE TO ACHIEVE THE SDGs

It is estimated that approximately 65% of the targets of the SDGs depend on basic service provision, which is why the local and regional government delegation called to enhance localization of finance and an enabling framework that will strengthen the ability to deliver public services. **Municipal finance does not happen in a vacuum. It is important to re-think subnational financing systems at the national level** if we want to reconcile financing with sustainability and attractiveness with inclusiveness.

The panel that addressed local and regional governments' access to finance, titled "Re-thinking the subnational financing systems to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda", had **David Jackson**, Director of Local Development Finance of the UN Capital Development Fund, as moderator; and

Secretary for External Relations of the Basque Country (Spain) **Maria Angeles Elorza**, Mayor of Strasbourg (France) **Roland Ries**, Mayor of Quito (Ecuador) **Mauricio Rodas**, and Mayor of Karesi (Turkey) **Yucel Yilmaz** as speakers, with the Deputy Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs of South Africa **Andries Nel**, as respondent.

Panelists agreed on the increasing acceptance of the correlation between local investment and development. Yet, **too little funding currently reaches the local level**. The international agreements and macro financial policies currently in place fail to address the need to ensure adequate local financing for cities and territories. Mayors and local government practitioners underlined that local finance is not static: revenue streams transcend international

boundaries. Therefore, the dialogue we need is a truly global one. There is no "one size fits all solution" to financing local governments, but there are some basic principles that should guide our quest to shape sustainable urbanization. In pursuit of SDG 16.7, many local governments are already implementing inclusive and participatory decision-making mechanisms. Subnational investment and budgeting need to be part of a political process that takes into account all stakeholders.

Reforms promoting a place-based or a territorial approach to sustainable urban and territorial development are instrumental to better align national strategies with subnational development priorities. The focus should be put on a truly enabling environment for local and regional governments to mobilize a broader range of finance options. This should be done in partnership with national governments, the private sector, civil society and the communities.

Panelists agreed on the increasing acceptance of the correlation between local investment and development

We need to build on the diversity and flexibility of local governments to create new instruments able to finance local sustainable infrastructure and services.

"Available resources for local and regional governments are limited and do not meet their necessities. We try to do our best for the SDGs, and we need financing mechanisms to achieve them, including those private actors that are willing to work in partnerships that benefit all of us".
Yücel Yilmaz, *Mayor of Turkey*

"Finance is an essential tool for local governments in the delivery of the SDGs. We need resources regardless of the political will of national governments: we need a clear set of rules for accessing finances".
Mauricio Rodas, *Mayor of Quito*

SDG 11 AND ITS INTERLINKAGES
WITH THE OTHER SDGS UNDER IN-DEPTH REVIEW

The first panel of the of the Local and Regional Governments' Forum, on the interlinkages between SDG 11 and the other SDGs under review was moderated by President of Habitat International Coalition **Lorena Zárate**, with Mayor of Barcelona (Spain) **Ada Colau**, Mayor of Montevideo (Uruguay) **Daniel Martinez**, Mayor of Berlin (Germany) **Michael Muller**, and Mayor of Montreal (Canada) **Valerie Plante** as speakers, as well as **Fatimetou Abdel Malick**, Governor of Nouakchott and former Mayor of Tevragh- Zeina and **Leilani Farha**, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing as respondents.

Throughout the panel, mayors highlighted the transversality of SDG 11 and its crosscutting nature as the main reason why SDG 11 ought to be linked to the rest of the global goals, by addressing the transversality of Goal 11. Mayors and elected officials argued for the need to ensure an integrated approach to development, **and addressed the important role of local action in achieving the agenda**, and of cities as the spaces in which the transformation towards resilient societies will be seen.

Participants highlighted SDG 11 as indispensable in order to co-construct the cities that we need for the future but, above all, they underscored that Goal 11 is the cornerstone of many other SDGs that are critical to achieve sustainable and resilient societies.

The dialogues made it clear that the role of cities in achieving the global goals necessarily goes beyond SDG 11. Local

elected officials reminded that the ultimate objective is to find answers to the world's challenges that affect communities everywhere and to leave no-one and no place behind. Local and regional governments need to integrate the 2030 Agenda in their local priorities and strategies as a whole, taking into account the linkages between, and the full involvement of, all stakeholders.

Goal 11 is the cornerstone of many other SDGs that are critical to achieve sustainable and resilient societies

"Local issues have an increasingly global dimension. As cities, we have an important role to play to achieve the SDGs and the national and global levels should give a greater consideration to our views. The only way in which we will achieve a more sustainable future for all is if we all get to work".

Amina J. Mohammed,
Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

"SDG 11 is cross-cutting. It addresses challenges that can only be fulfilled placing cities at the forefront, and by tackling inequalities at all angles. To address SDG 11, we need to tackle all goals, which is why the role of networks and partnerships is key".

Daniel Martínez, *Mayor of Montevideo*

"The housing urgency affects the resilience and sustainability of cities. This is why we launch the call of #CitiesforHousing and we need to work together to achieve these concrete actions".

Ada Colau, *Mayor of Barcelona*

INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL PLANNING
TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

Building effective linkages between different spheres of government in order to successfully achieve the global goals is a critical issue. The New Urban Agenda provides indispensable guidelines and principles for action that need to be embraced by all spheres of governments.

The achievement of the SDGs is a shared responsibility that will entail the transformation of the current structure of governance

Local officials and partners **issued a call to include all stakeholders –and, in particular, local and regional governments- to address development and planning with an integrated approach**.

The panel on Integrated Territorial Planning to Achieve the SDGs was moderated by **Robin Ogilvy**, OECD Special Representative to the UN; panelists included Mayor of Madrid (Spain) **Manuela Carmena**, Mayor of Mannheim (Germany) **Peter Kurz**, and Mayor of Antananarivo (Madagascar) **Lalao Ravalomananana**. The Minister for the Environment of the Lombardy Region in Italy **Raffaele Cattaneo**; Chair of the UITP Sustainable Development Comission **Projjal Dutta**, and the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe **Gudrun Mosler-Tornstrom**, as respondents in the session.

The achievement of the SDGs is a shared responsibility **that will entail the transformation of the current structure of governance into one that takes into account all stakeholders, at all stages of the implementation process of the agendas**.

Bringing everyone to the decision-making table, including civil society, and going beyond the inclusion of governments was seen as an essential prerequisite for the transformation of the governance model.

"The UN is aware, and nations need to be aware, that the success or failure of the global goals will take place at the local level. We need to give voice to all stakeholders, and approach development holistically in order for them to succeed".

Peter Kurz, Mayor of Mannheim

How long has it been since we adopted the 2030 Agenda and how much have we accomplished? Local governments need to have their own platforms to quantify and analyze how the SDGs are being achieved".

Manuela Carmena, Mayor of Madrid

"Achieving the SDGs is a shared responsibility. Local, regional, national, European and global. Implementation cannot happen if it does not happen locally".

Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE MONITORING OF THE AGENDAS

The involvement of subnational governments in the monitoring and reporting processes of the global agendas was addressed in two separate panels during the LRGF. The second panel addressed the **Engagement of Local and Regional Authorities in the Preparation of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)**, and was moderated by **William Cobbett**, Director of Cities Alliance. The panelists were **Johnny Araya**, Mayor of San José (Costa Rica); **Marcelino Chumpi**, President of the region of Morona Santiago, in Ecuador; **Carlos Martinez**, Mayor of Soria (Spain); and **Mohamed Sefiani**, Mayor of Chefchaouen (Morocco), as well as representatives from national governments: **Yoka Brandt**, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, **Juan Alvaro Garcia**, Director of the Planning and Budget Office in Uruguay, and **Francisco Montalban**, Ambassador for the 2030 Agenda in Spain, as respondents.

> *"The SDGs are implemented in cities, but not only in metropolises. Over 50% of urban dwellers live in intermediary cities, and we are convinced of the potential of these cities as partners for the achievement of the global goals"* .
> Mohamed Sefiani, *Mayor of Chefchaouen*

> *"There is no better ally to the United Nations than local governments, when it comes to the localization of the SDGs... but, for that to happen, we need to talk as equals. We are, after all, governments in our own right".*
> Carlos Martínez, *Mayor of Soria*

Moderated by **Abdoulaye Mar Dieye**, Assistant Secretary General of UNDP, Panel 5 addressed local and subnational monitoring. Counsellor of Foreign Action of the Catalan Government (Spain) **Ernest Maragall**, Mayor of Kitakyushu (Japan) **Kenji Kitahashi**, Mayor of Kitchener (Canada) **Berry Vrbanovic**, and Mayor of Utrecht (The Netherlands) **Jan van Zanen** were speakers; and **Liliane Lucchesi**, Councilor for International Affairs of the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté Region in France, and **Adolfo Salcedo**, Deputy Secretary for Urban Habitat and Public Space in Ecuador, were respondents.

"Monitoring progress in cities by cities will allow all stakeholders to start conversations based on concrete results and data to shift policies or harness potential to achieve a more sustainable future".

Jan Van Zanen, *Mayor of Utrecht*

"We need to give life to the SDGs, and local and regional governments are pivotal to achieve the transformation we seek. We need acknowledgement and effective partnerships with national governments and the UN system".

Liliane Lucchesi, *Councillor for International Affairs, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region*

"The monitoring of the localization process requires disaggregated and place-based data. Without it, ensuring that 'no one is left behind' will become very difficult".

Berry Vrbanovic, *Mayor of Kitchener*

SYNERGIES AND COHERENT IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTIPLE AGREEMENTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Local leaders argued not only on the need to implement the agreements at the local level, but of the need to address them in conjunction to each other: identifying the local priorities is essential, they argued, to fully implement the agreements on the ground and leapfrog the transition towards sustainable societies.

The final panel of the Local and Regional Governments' Forum, moderated by Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction **Mami Mizutori**, addressed the coherent implementation of multiple agreements at the local level. Speakers from local and regional governments were **Celestine Ketcha Courtès**, Mayor of Bangangté, Cameroon; and **Agnès Langevine**, Vice-President of Occitanie, France. **Eugenie Birch**, President of the UN General Assembly of Partners; **Amy Fraenkel**, Director of Mainstreaming, Cooperation and Outreach, of the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity; **Nezha el Ouafi**, Secretary of State to the Minister of Energy of Morocco; and **Adam Vaughn**, Parliamentary Secretary of Canada, were the respondents of the panel.

"It is essential that the national levels have plans to work and integrate the global development agendas in their daily work. As presented in the report that we have presented today, it is in territories that synergies between the agendas can be facilitated".

Célestine Ketcha Courtès, Mayor of Bangangté

"We are experimenting to change the paradigm of implementing public policies to achieve environmental efficiency and vertical declination to reach the territories".

Nezha el Ouafi, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Energy, Morocco

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, PARTNERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The LRGF came to a close with the remarks of members of the Global Taskforce **Sergio Arredondo**, Secretary General of FLACMA; **Mehmet Duman**, Secretary General of UCLG MEWA; **Nelson Fernandez**, Executive Secretary of Mercociudades; **Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi**, Secretary General of UCLG ASPAC; **Greg Munro**, Secretary General of CLGF; **Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General of UCLG; **Parks Tau**, President of UCLG; **Gino Van Begin**, Secretary General of ICLEI; **Octavi de la Varga**, Secretary General of Metropolis; and **Natalia Vera**, Secretary General of nrg4SD.

"Local governance is the point of convergence for SDG implementation. Therefore, strong local governments are the best way to achieve the 2030 Agenda. This is the call of SDG 17 and the lesson learned from SDG11".

Greg Munro, *Secretary General of CLGF*

"On the issue of reporting, there is still a lot of work to do. At HLPF 2019 we need to speed up the process and, as the GTF, we need to do our homework for the following year".

Gino Van Begin, *Secretary General of ICLEI*

"We need to work on multilevel governance, multistakeholder engagement and adequate monitoring frameworks. We heard from the UN that they acknowledge us and that they need us. We are here, we are willing to dialogue effectively, and we are ready for action".

Natalia Vera, *Secretary General of nrg4SD*

"Our 100-year-old movement came to learn; but is now here to lead. Not in competition with national governments, but together with them".

Emilia Saiz, *Secretary General of UCLG*

GENDER EQUALITY, BEYOND SDG 5

Participants of the panel on gender equality (from left to right): Manuela Carmena, Célestine Ketcha Courtès, Valérie Plante, Diane Quarless, Mami Mizutori, Katharina Latif, Jayathma Wickramanayake and Emma Nohren

Mayors from all over the world stated that true representation calls for more than sheer numbers, but for ensuring that women's perspectives, which have been left out of the global conversation far too often, are included and taken into account in the conversations and, more importantly, when it comes to implementing policies.

The current model of governance is proving to be insufficient to achieve the global agendas, and in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda, a new, inclusive model of governance must be born in which not only all spheres of government are represented, but which also acknowledges women and their experiences as essential, and leaves behind the current male-centric perspective.

Gender equality calls for using a gendered lens in our approach to development in order to ensure that women's particular needs in urban areas are understood and addressed. Women and girls experience cities in different ways to men and boys and, whereas the city has been a place of liberation for women in comparison to their rural counterparts, it has also been the scene of gender violence and female exploitation. Women still face discrimination in access to income, earning opportunities, education, housing, the rule of law and participation in local governance.

Gender equality, thus, is intrinsically linked with equality of opportunities, urban living conditions and sustainable development. These linkages cut across the social, economic, environmental and governance dimensions of sustainable development. Initiatives that engage women as active participants in urban development have proven to boost both sustainable livelihoods and national economies.

As major employers and service providers, local governments can have a significant impact on women's lives by using fair employment practices and ensuring non-discriminatory service provision to citizens. Local governments are on the frontline of tackling violence and harmful practices against women in both the public and private spheres.

Local policing and urban planning, particularly the creation and maintenance of public spaces, are essential tools in tackling violence against women. Local governments have an important role to play in identifying

Local governments should fully mainstream a gender perspective into local legislation, urban planning and policymaking in order to tackle the multiple barriers to women's empowerment

women and girls affected by violence and providing them with the appropriate support and services to escape it and rebuild their lives. Women are significantly underrepresented in leadership positions at all levels of government in most countries. Local governments must take action to improve female representation in elected, administrative and appointed offices at the highest levels in our own institutions, which can be achieved through a combination of anti-discrimination and positive action measures.

Local and regional governments have a duty to ensure women's equal access to land and economic and natural resources. Local authorities can establish mechanisms to make it easier for women to obtain basic legal documents such as birth certificates, provide legal aid services that support women in exercising their rights, and guarantee women's participation in land governance institutions and policy-making processes. Local governments should fully mainstream a gender perspective into local legislation, urban planning and policy-making in order to tackle the multiple barriers to women's empowerment.

SDG 5 and the New Urban Agenda represent an unprecedented opportunity to harness the mutually reinforcing goals of women's empowerment and sustainable urban development over the coming decades.

RAISING AWARENESS AND CAPACITY BUILDING TO FACE THE GLOBAL CRISES

Planning for resilience and disaster prevention calls for the inclusion of local perspectives since local governments are the front line to their citizens. Disaster risk governance is a difficult task for local government, as state services often retain control of this area, from strategies devised in advance through to post-disaster management and the reconstruction period. Local governments can improve risk governance by working within national platforms and including the integrated perspective of SDGs.

Local governments need to be given the capacities to act, in particular:

— By adopting and implementing local disaster risk reduction strategies and plans aimed at preventing or minimizing the creation of risk, reducing existing risk, and strengthening economic, social and environmental resilience.

— By promoting the revision of existing building codes and standards for rehabilitation and reconstruction as well as the development of new practices at national and/or local level; with the aim of making them more applicable in the local context.

— By restricting and regulating building in at-risk urban areas.

— By organizing sessions to brief and train staff in charge of the local disaster risk reduction strategy.

— By implementing a local coalition of elected representatives that includes public and private partners to collaborate and exchange information on disaster risk.

— By offering financial incentives to ensure the poor do not to move to vulnerable areas and, with state help, providing accessible land allocated exclusively to these groups.

Further, planning for disaster risk reduction needs to take into account that poverty and disasters hit women and the poor especially, and that young women are even more affected. Gendered approaches to poverty and resilience are becoming indispensable when planning for disaster risk reduction.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN ACHIEVING THE CLIMATE AGENDA

The 2030 Agenda was drafted with climate action in mind, but a realization is coming fast: the current approach to climate action is not enough. Climate needs to permeate every point of how we plan our cities and territories. **Implementing the Climate Agenda is no longer just an issue of taking climate action, but of achieving a full ecological transition** that goes beyond climate mitigation: rethinking our relationship with the environment, including our patterns of production and consumption, and even urban mobility becomes a priority if we are to successfully achieve the climate goals.

To achieve this transition, panelists argued for climate to be addressed from the bottom-up. The urgency of climate change has driven cities around the world to commit to neutralize carbon emissions by 2050, and signatories of the Climate Statement of Chicago agreed to reduce carbon emissions

as much as (and even further than) those countries that signed the Paris Agreement. Local leaders are championing climate action, and can act as drivers that push national governments to scale-up their climate action.

Panelists stressed the need for local and regional governments to access financing to fulfill their potential as drivers of change. This financing is essential to bring down the structural barriers that prevent climate from being considered with a whole-of-governments approach, rather than as a top-down issue. Mayors highlighted their commitments to implement holistic climate strategies that take into account energy efficiency, waste management and mobility, as well as the initiatives that were already taking place in many cities around the world. The will to go beyond the mitigation of the impacts of climate change, and the full commitment to the transformation towards a more sustainable planet was present throughout the session.

Panelists called to link the climate discussions with the other global agendas, and particularly with the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement. These linkages, as well as the participation of all stakeholders, are the only ways in which Climate which local and regional governments will be able to own the Climate Agenda and implement the solutions that their communities need.

The alignment with the spirit of the Talanoa Dialogues, which have breathed new life into the climate dialogues and displayed how all levels of government are willing to collaborate and link climate commitments and public policies, was among the calls in the panels. Moving forward with dialogues

between all spheres of government around climate is essential to link and accelerate the coordination and the cooperation to achieve global agendas, and to allow local and regional governments to own the Climate Agenda and push this ecological transition forward, particularly wherever local governments have the least resources.

> *"Energy is not just about technology. Financing is of the utmost importance. Cities need to continue developing policies to eradicate energetic poverty".*
>
> Jan Van Zanen, *Mayor of Utrecht*

> *"If cities are the one to best implement national strategies, the spirit of Talanoa must be brought forward as a great multi-level governance tool to accelerate coordination and cooperation".*
>
> Ashok Sridharan, *Mayor of Bonn, Germany, President of ICLEI*

HIGHLIGHT

The Local 2030 Special Event: Part and parcel of the local and regional governments' strategic partnerships to promote SDG implementation

If the Local and Regional Governments' Forum brought to the table how and why local and regional governments were ready to lead in the implementation of the global agendas, the Local 2030 Special Event served as a full platform for stakeholder engagement.

The platform itself was key for stakeholders to share their views and engage on **the key areas of Local 2030:**

01

Convening for commitment: Local2030 **facilitates participation by local governments and other local actors in relevant UN fora** to ensure that their perspectives promote issues related to SDG localization.

02

The **scaling and mobilization of local-level finance** to support local SDG implementation efforts. Local2030 supports efforts to improve direct SDG-related financing to local governments and qualified stakeholders and works to strengthen local governments' capacities to raise their own revenues.

03

Evidence for change: an accelerated local SDG implementation is dependent on the availability of timely, reliable data on the barriers and opportunities that local governments and stakeholders that operate at the local level currently face. Local 2030 works to support the **inclusion of local government reporting data, cities**, citizen-led and slum-dweller data, and data from businesses in formal SDG reporting processes.

04

Catalysts for Coordinated and Enhanced Action via the **Local 2030 Hubs**. These hubs promote, support, and accelerate local SDG implementation and facilitate innovative collaboration between diverse actors to pool their knowledge, expertise, financial and other resources to support local progress on the SDGs.

The event furthered the conversation on how local and regional governments could access finance, on how to plan for resilience and disaster risk prevention, the challenges of climate change and of gender equality, and further addressed the role that timely and disaggregated data can play in achieving the global goals.

The Local 2030 Event served as a platform for stakeholder engagement, and furthered the conversations on local and regional governments' access to finance, on planning for resilience and the challenges of climate change, and on how to achieve gender equality, as well as the role of data in achieving the global goals

3

RIGHT TO HOUSING: KEY TO ACHIEVE SDG 11 #CITIESFORHOUSING AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

RIGHT TO HOUSING: KEY TO ACHIEVE SDG 11

The effects of capital financialization, speculation and the commodification of housing are creating an unstable and prohibitive housing market which drives away people from their homes. The numbers are dizzying: according to estimates, over 800 million people will live in slums by 2050, and over 100 million people will be homeless if the current trends continue. Beyond this phenomenon, the commodification of basic housing is also affecting the price of rent and making it increasingly difficult to access decent housing in cities throughout the world and expelling citizens from their homes and their cities.

Discussions around housing, and even negotiations between local governments and states, have taken place before. The platform that the UN offers, however, elevates the debates on housing and makes sure not only that housing is addressed with the urgency

it requires, but also that local and regional governments are key stakeholders.

This is why, for the first time, cities from all over the world gathered together with the "Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration", to achieve the right to housing, as a cornerstone of the Right to the City, as a means stop their citizens from suffering the worst effects of the housing bubble. As such, it was a key part of the LRG delegation, both before and during the Local and Regional Governments' Forum.

Based on five key axes, the Declaration strives to tackle the common challenges that cities from all over the world face. These cities have agreed, within this manifesto, on clear strategies to achieve five key points:

01

More powers to better regulate the housing market

02

More funds to improve public housing stock

03

More tools to co-produce public-private community driven housing alternatives

04

Urban planning that combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods

05

Municipal cooperation in residential strategies

The Cities for Housing Declaration highlights how local and regional governments can add to the conversations around the challenges of housing and, more importantly, what solutions they can bring to the table and how cities are already working to tackle the commodification of housing, as well as what sort of resources are needed to accomplish them. Local development needs to be framed in the context of the Right to the City in order to develop cities for all, and signatories of the Declaration expressed their willingness work together to do so.

The cities of Amsterdam, Asunción, Barcelona, Bangangté, Beitunia, Berlin, Blantyre, Bologna, Buenos Aires, Durban, Eyyübiye, Jakarta, Lisbon, London, Mannheim, Mexico City, Montreal, Montevideo, New Taipei, New York, Paris, Rennes, Rio Grande, San Antonio de Areco, Seoul, Taipei, Terrassa, Vienna, and Zaragoza have adopted this declaration since it was first presented in July, as well as the metropolitan entities of **Plaine Commune** (Paris), **Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona** (Barcelona) and **Greater Manchester**.

Involving Local and Regional Governments in the Monitoring of the Agendas: The contribution of the Global Taskforce to the HLPF

The **2nd "Towards the Localization of the SDGs"** report, which strives to complement the information presented by the Voluntary National Reviews was presented for the second year in a row.

It provides extensive analysis of the VNRs and an in-depth assessment of the implementation of the SDGs in member states from the perspective of local governments, together with a **survey gathering first-hand information directly from local governments** and their associations, exploring what they have been able to do to contribute to localization.

The report allows mapping of the participation of local and regional governments in the Voluntary National Reviews that member states present before the UN, as well as the implementation process over the last three

years, in 99 countries. The participation of local and regional governments in the preparation of the VNRs has increased throughout the past three years (from 43% combined in the previous years to 53% in 2018).

The 2018 report identifies an **improvement in the way LRGs have been acknowledged and included in this year's VNRs**. In 2018, LRGs were involved in the preparation of the Voluntary National Reviews in 53% (23/43) of the reporting countries (up from 43% in 2016-2017 combined). Since 2016, **39% of the LRGs surveyed in the process have acknowledged their participation in national institutional coordination mechanisms**.

This trend has been particularly notable in Europe (57% of surveyed LRGs) and several other regions, such as Asia-Pacific (37%), Latin America (35%) and Africa (33%). There

is still a long road ahead, however, to make local and regional governments really aware, participative and lead the localization process. In the Report, the GTF advances a **set of recommendations to increase the centrality of LRGs in the reporting and implementing process, while voicing their needs and advocating for their unity in this global conversation**: awareness-raising, stronger implication in the VNRs, constructive self-assessment on local implementation policies, and better peer-to-peer knowledge and practice exchanges.

There is still a long way to go if the goal is to allow local and regional governments to grow into a more central role in the process: raising awareness among local and regional governments, implicating them in the VNRs or in exchanging practices are key issues moving forward.

HIGHLIGHT

Accessing Data is Essential

Disaggregated data by age, and gender, as well as indicators that can correctly address how to plan with everyone in mind are essential for achieving the global goals. Cities and states have been planned, up to this day, with their most vulnerable populations as an afterthought. Slowly, but surely, cities have started to include women, the young and the urban poor within their plans.

The indicators in SDG 11 are closely related to each other. Planning for access to public spaces effectively means planning for inclusivity, for streets and green spaces that are accessible to all, and that means not just an increased quality of life for urban dwellers but also a way to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to build cities that are more resilient.

Localized data is essential for the autonomy of local and regional governments. Only through the generation of creative new alliances will we be able to gather and use data that enables us to inform our policies and tackle the global challenges. Accessing data and enhancing local governments' transparency is also fundamental in order to ensure citizen participation and as a means to hold both leaders and institutions accountable. Timely and localized data will prove to be key to ensure full ownership of the global goals among local communities.

HIGHLIGHT

On Our Way towards Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Cities: SDG 11 under review

Among the SDGs under in-depth review, SDG 11 stands out as the first dedicated urban goal. As an eminently urban SDG, sustainability and preparing cities that are able to sustain disasters were key parts of the contributions that representatives from cities from all over the world brought to the table, in order to make Goal 11 a reality on the ground.

Any and all strategies to fully achieve Goal 11 need to understand that the right to housing is indispensable, and that it cannot be delegated from a government responsibility. The issue of housing is global, and ensuring it means prioritizing those that are most in need (namely, homeless people, and those who live in informal settlements) as well ensuring that cities have the means they need to enforce the Right to the City.

Representatives from cities from all over the world brought forward their pioneering initiatives in order to fully achieve Goal 11. New York City brought forward its first Voluntary Local Review (VLR), modelled after the **Voluntary National Reviews** (VNR), in partnership with relevant agencies from the city, as a means to showcase the commitment of a local of government towards the achievement of the global goals, to provide detailed information on real-time examples of how New York addressed the SDGs, and further committed to submit a VLR each year.

Accessing housing, as a cornerstone for the Right to the City, was addressed in the session, in which **Leilani Farha**, UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Housing, addressed the need to approach housing with a rights-based perspective. Representatives from local, regional, and national governments laid out their urgencies in regard to housing, but also how they were working to ensure they met the targets of Goal 11 in their territories.
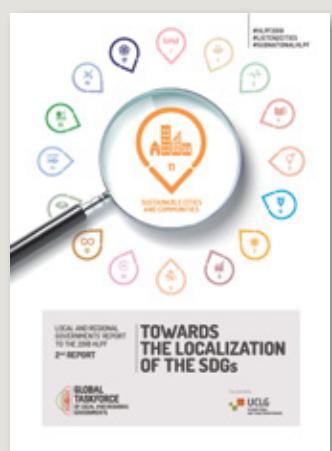
The issue of housing is global, and ensuring it means prioritizing those that are most in need

Representatives of the various networks laid out their commitment to engage with youth in the achievement of the SDGs, and highlighted the need to raise awareness not just of SDG 11 but of all the global goals among communities using the shared language of the SDGs, which would further contribute to help ownership of the global goals.

Access to safe public spaces, the challenges that come with a global ageing population, how to manage migration and how this phenomenon will affect the growth of cities were among the topics in the review of SDG 11, and participants all agreed on the need to develop joint solutions among all stakeholders, and to tackle the global goals in a holistic manner in order to fully achieve SDG 11 and the whole 2030 Agenda.

Designing cities to empower women and girls, with a gender-based approach that could effectively make them more secure for populations that are more at risk were among the measures discussed during the review of Goal 11, in which participants from all countries agreed that, in order to design cities for all and attaining the indicators of Goal 11, local involvement is mandatory in every stage of the process, including in the gathering of localized, disaggregated data at the local level.

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TAKING STOCK OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

The Ministerial Declaration adopted by the member states on 18 July reaffirms the commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda throughout the world, and acknowledged the need to include all stakeholders in the process.

In spite of its positive aspirations, the declaration falls short in identifying concrete ways in which stakeholders can be further engaged. Further, the references to the role of local and regional governments do not reflect the critical role to be played by local leadership.

The Ministerial Declaration, adopted by member states, does include calls to strengthen regulatory frameworks and to develop long-term integrated urban planning strategies. It represents a step forward, albeit a smaller one if we take into consideration that we are coming off of the

adoption of a stand-alone urban goal in 2015, and the New Urban Agenda in 2016.

The shifting trends in urbanization, its reality and its challenges -all eminently urban- are recognized as the key challenges for the future. Issues such as forced migration, the challenges of ensuring adequate housing for all, or how to plan for resilience, are also identified as key topics but the large role to be played by local and regional governments is not acknowledged nor are the regulatory frameworks needed to fully address them.

The 2030 Agenda is the most ambitious of all of the global development agendas until now, and it can only be accomplished if we have a greater scope in mind, by taking into account all relevant stakeholders throughout all stages of the process. The catalyzing role to be played by local and regional governments in awareness-raising, mobilizing local action

and putting in place public policies needs to be further taken into account.

The 2030 Agenda can only be achieved if it is linked with the other sustainability agendas, and the Ministerial Declaration, while acknowledging the existence of documents such as the New Urban Agenda, fails to acknowledge it as a true accelerator for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

OUR COMMITMENTS WITH THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS

Our work leading to the New Urban Agenda saw the transformative potential of local governments being acknowledged, and our constituency being considered an ally for the implementation of the Global Development Agendas. It is time for us to enact a new partnership with all stakeholders for development, based on a common understanding of our shared humanity.

The local and regional government networks gathered within the Global Taskforce further commended the power of cities and local governments at the HLPF, and called to pursue the localization of the SDGs, and to fully develop and secure spaces of dialogue between the local and regional spheres of government and member states, UN Agencies and all stakeholders in order to successfully achieve the 2030 Agenda.
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The catalyzing role to be played by local and regional governments in awareness-raising, mobilizing local action and putting in place public policies needs to be further taken into account

STATEMENT OF THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS CONSTITUENCY GATHERED IN THE GLOBAL TASKFORCE

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments is a coordination and consultation mechanism that brings together the major international networks of local governments to undertake joint advocacy work relating to global policy processes. It was set up in 2013 to bring the perspectives of local and regional governments to the SDGs, climate change agenda and New Urban Agenda in particular.

The Global Taskforce convenes elected local and regional leaders from around the world in the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, whose role in the follow-up of the New Urban Agenda is recognized in the Quito Outcome Document.

The very existence of the Global Taskforce represents a landmark achievement for the international municipal movement. Local and regional governments are the only UN non-state stakeholder to have a mechanism such as the Global Taskforce to develop and coordinate inputs into all policy processes. In this way, the Global Taskforce serves to amplify the voice of the local and regional government constituency on the global stage.

Thanks to its success in its first three years of work, the Global Taskforce enjoys a renewed mandate post-Habitat III to collaborate on recommendations in key policy areas and to facilitate follow-up on the implementation of the major global agendas at local level.

The Development Agendas adopted throughout 2015 and 2016, in particular the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement represent not only a unique landmark to achieve a shift of our societies and systems towards sustainability, but perhaps the last opportunity to preserve our planet and build new patterns of development.

Our commitment and political will towards the implementation process is what we describe as localization. Going beyond the simple adaptation of global goals to the local level, localization is about political will, co-creation with our communities and to find solutions at the local level for the global challenges and objectives.

The local and regional government networks gathered in the Global Taskforce

are convinced that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals depends on their full ownership by our communities, cities and regions. Local and regional governments around the world are also convinced that they have a key role to play in triggering that ownership, and an important responsibility in fostering implementation by integrating the various agendas on the ground and ensuring territorial cohesion.

Our commitment and political will towards the implementation process is what we describe as localization

OUR PLACE AT THE GLOBAL TABLE

The first edition of the Local and Regional Governments Forum within the framework of the HLPF 2018 represents a key milestone for our constituency, and should provide us with the opportunity to share our vision, experiences and commitments before national governments and the international community. As an organized constituency we consider this Forum and the Local2030 network as key contribution to our quest for a permanent seat at the global policy-making table.

LOCALIZATION IS ABOUT THE CO-CREATION OF CITIES AND TERRITORIES

Local and regional governments and their associations at the national, regional and international levels are championing the localization movement. To accelerate the implementation of the global goals, local and regional governments are carrying out a rights-based approach in their development strategies, building on the 'Right to the City' principles acknowledged in Habitat III that strongly foster the premise of leaving no-one behind. These approaches should provide a new frame for 'co-creating' our cities and territories and build new relationships with the communities.

To face the increasing challenges of rapid urbanization, visionary local and regional leaders are driving policy changes with their communities to facilitate access to affordable housing, basic services and sustainable mobility, as well as to safeguard heritage, develop culture, improve urban resilience, promote a more sustainable use of water and energy, integrated waste management, and participatory planning approaches that integrate risk prevention.

They are driving new forms of urbanism as well as urban-rural linkages and environmental sustainability, but they cannot accomplish this shift alone.

ACCELERATING THE LOCALIZATION OF THE 2030 GOALS: STRENGTHENING OWNERSHIP, LOCAL FINANCE AND BOTTOM-UP MONITORING

In spite of the significant efforts that cities, regions and their networks have made to raise awareness and foster real ownership for the localization of the SDGs, different subnational governments are at different stages throughout the localization process, and there is still work to be done to enhance the active involvement of local leaders in the process. It is our firm belief that only through integrated governance models that involve all spheres of government, scale up the local priorities aligned with the SDGs and foster the inclusion and participation of the communities we represent will we be able to achieve our joint ambitions.

Without fairer and clearer intergovernmental financial frameworks and regulatory reforms that adequately empower local governments, funding is failing to reach those spheres that need it most. One of the main challenges for localizing the goals remains addressing subnational governments' access to finance. This is where the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the New Urban Agenda can offer a tangible opportunity to strengthen the role of local and regional governments as key drivers of urban and regional planning, since they call for supporting subnational governments through innovative financial mechanisms which build up domestic resources.

Extreme poverty is localized and inequalities between countries, as well as between territories and within cities, are increasing. Without localized data, ensuring that no one is left behind will become increasingly difficult. Local and regional governments are launching initiatives to collect data on the ground, but stronger support and coordination with communities is essential to disaggregate and localize data and monitor the localization process.

THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT NETWORKS GATHERED IN THE GLOBAL TASKFORCE COMMIT TO:

— Strengthen awareness, policy commitment and ownership among LRGs and their communities as a shared responsibility.

— Develop further partnerships with civil society and other stakeholders to ensuring the achievement of the global goals.

— Support the proactive involvement of local and regional governments in the process of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

— Ensure the active participation of LRGs in the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development.

— Promote and support the development of tools for LRGs' self-assessment on the alignment of their development plans and strategies with the SDGs.

— Promote Voluntary Local Reviews at both city and regional levels that include the development of accountability mechanisms.

— Promote international cooperation and peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge for localization in partnerships with other stakeholders.

GTF MEMBERS AND PARTNERS CALL NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO:

— Foster the integration of specific references in the VNR to monitor the implementation of the SDGs at subnational levels in each country.

— Include specific follow-up processes to the VNRs in order to guarantee accountability mechanisms at all levels and further develop the HLPF.

— Enhance the presence and spaces for dialogue between LRGs and national governments within the context of the HLPF and beyond.

— Pay specific attention to local solutions and actions in the Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report.

— Promote the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as an accelerator of the SDGs.

— Rally LRGs to lead an international coalition for the implementation of SDG 11 within a broader localization strategy.

— Enhance the participation of local and regional governments and stakeholders in the renewed governance structure of the UN and of UN Habitat in particular building on the recommendations of Habitat III.

We would like to reiterate the commitment of our organized constituency towards the achievement of the global agendas and the wellbeing of our communities. The task is too large for any single level of government or any single stakeholder to fulfil alone.

As the closest level of government to our citizens we are committed to leave no one behind and call for national governments and the international community not to leave local governance and territorial cohesion behind

Who we are

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The place is here. The time is now. Leave your message

Listen2Cities

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OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENTS

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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