

#UCLGmeets

# RETREAT & CAMPUS

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# AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2018 UCLG RETREAT & CAMPUS

The fourth edition of the UCLG Retreat has been the largest gathering of these sessions to date. The Retreat is held as a means to shape priorities and exchange information among the different parts of the network, and has grown into an important moment to enhance dialogue and mould the strategy for the constituency as a whole.

As per the evaluation survey, 96% of the attendees agreed with the statement that “the UCLG retreat was a useful professional experience”. The efforts made to strengthen partnerships, generate synergies and exchange knowledge were described as useful, and participants informed of the development of joint plans for future activities. Participation at the decision-making level and the active participation of all organizations provided a unique opportunity to confirm and shape action for UCLG and its partners.



**The UCLG Retreat was a useful professional experience.**



## Where we stand on strategic priorities

The Retreat contributed to ratifying the strategic priorities of the constituency, and to develop a strategy towards making them a reality. Throughout the event, sessions were held focusing on capacity building, learning and prioritizing the discourse on **localization** and **decentralization** with regard to the global agendas. The focus around the **2030 Agenda** was proven to be very important and placed the constituency of local and regional governments at the heart of the international agenda.

The discussions on multi-level governance took a central seat during the events. The struggle to make the voices of local and regional governments heard in the national and global spheres was heavily discussed throughout the Retreat. Collaboration between local and regional governments and different actors was identified as key for the different regions of UCLG in order to contribute to achieving the SDGs.



Increasing the partnerships between the constituency of local and regional governments and supranational institutions, as well as other actors and constituencies is also necessary in order to achieve the SDGs. The discussion towards creating a different model of governance was also prolific and resonated throughout various round tables in the Retreat, with the focus being on creating trust between and working towards solidarity between the different spheres of government.





## Policy priorities and Waves of Action: Fighting for resilience, opportunities for all and the Right to the City

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**The Right to the City, resilience and opportunities for all** were confirmed as priority policies for the constituency. Special emphasis was given to transparency and the inputs of the citizens – especially of those who are most vulnerable – since their contributions are vital when designing cities for all and for implementing the Right to the City. The right to housing and how to address the commodification of housing, gentrification and the state of the real-estate market were also key issues of the discussion regarding the Right to the City and how to ensure the rights of citizens.

Members and partners of the constituency agreed that financing played a fundamental role in achieving more sustainable and inclusive cities. Planning for resilience, access to decent housing and decent public services can only be ensured through better access to funding and more autonomy for local and regional governments.



**Members and partners of the constituency agreed that financing played a fundamental role in achieving more sustainable and inclusive cities.**



## From exchange to strategy development: The Global Taskforce and partnerships with sister organizations, instrumental for success

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF) also held a special session during the Retreat, which focused on how the GTF could contribute towards achieving the global agendas, and how to shape and guarantee the Habitat III legacy. The consolidation of the GTF and its partnerships could contribute towards building a more structural relationship between different spheres of government. Advancing the debate on multi-level governance was highlighted as indispensable to create the enabling environment that will lead us to the achievement of the local and global goals.

The development of relations with regional integration mechanisms such as the European Union, ASEAN, the African Union and others were considered significant to advance the cause of the local and regional governments internationally. Global advocacy

alone will not be sufficient to put urbanization at the core of the agenda and to achieve the level of attention needed by local governments – big and small – to get this phenomenon right. Furthermore, the advantage of ensuring the commitment of our broad constituency to the implementation of the SDGs was set out by both local government representatives and partners. The challenges and opportunities of the climate agenda in relation to the localization of SDGs were also addressed. The development of the research agenda coming out of the IPCC summit in Edmonton, Canada, and active participation in the Talanoa Dialogues will be vital to reinforce these connections and enhance our advocacy internationally.



# HIGHLIGHT DEVELOPING THE LOCAL4ACTION HUB

Although implementation will clearly be carried out by the UCLG members on the ground, the network can contribute through the establishment of pilot projects and the development of tools to be used at local and territorial level. One of those is the Local4Action Hub.

Local and regional leaders need sound evidence and timely advice, as well as new approaches, to guide such actions. With this objective, UCLG is defining the Local4Action Hub, an initiative that aims to turn the 2030 Agenda into local actions, taking advantage of the network and its experience of exchange and cooperation.



WORK PROGRAMME  
SYNERGIES

COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS,  
FORA AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

WHO

WHAT

The Local4Action Hub will act as an accelerator for knowledge sharing and providing visibility to the integrated efforts of the UCLG strategy, as well as for facilitating and consolidating the global network of UCLG members and partners in synergies with other key international organizations that are working closely on advancing the implementation of the SDGs at both the local and territorial levels.

The key objectives of the initiative were confirmed during the Retreat, as follows:

1

**Strengthening strategic thinking  
to support local action**

2

**Catalyzing innovation**

3

**Enhancing cooperation and solidarity**

4

**Generating and facilitating knowledge  
exchange**

5

**Visualizing the actions for localization  
developed by the UCLG network and rallying  
actors around SDG 11, “Make cities inclusive,  
safe, resilient and sustainable”**



**It is in this context that I have personally committed myself to set up platforms aimed at catalyzing solutions to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. The Local4Action Hub is a platform of solutions which should enable the promotion of synergies between UCLG and other international organizations working closely on advancing the implementation of the SDGs at local and territorial level.**

**Parks Tau**  
President of UCLG



Participants agreed on the key elements of a proposal for the development of the Local4Action Hub, which will be the focus of the strategic partnership to be developed with the Swedish Development Agency, SIDA.

# HIGHLIGHT AN ALL-UCLG GENDER STRATEGY

UCLG is an organization that promotes gender equality throughout the world, especially when it comes to political participation and the role of women in the decision-making process. We have even taken bold steps in our institution such as promoting our Committee on Gender Equality to a Standing Committee and created the UCLG Global Women's Caucus, but are we doing everything we can?

The UCLG 2018 Retreat provided the opportunity to spur the debate on what can be done right now to achieve gender equality within an organization as large and diverse as UCLG. Equality expert **Anja Nordlund** from the Nordic Consulting Group explained the process of developing an institutional gender strategy.

GENDER  
EQUALITY

URBA

RESILIENCE

INTERME





Nordlund ended on a call to action: gender equality is not just about doing what seems right. Achieving gender equality in an organization is not only about being “fair”, but a matter of being daring enough to see that a more equal organization can be more productive.

Based on Anja Nordlund’s recommendations, an all-UCLG Gender Strategy will be developed based on a self-assessment study and a proposal of specific actions to undertake in the different parts of the organization. The strategy will include guidelines on gender-sensitive activities and policies.

A multidisciplinary taskforce will be set up at the World Secretariat to kick-off the work, in close consultation with the UCLG Standing Committee on Gender Equality.



The HLPF is the UN’s poster child for stakeholder engagement and, for the first time, local and regional governments will have a space of their own with the convening of the First Local and Regional Authorities Forum on July 16th.

**Birgitte Bryld**  
Senior Economic  
Affairs Officer, UNDESA



What we need to do is begin with ourselves, at home. I believe all UCLG sections should have parity between men and women. I don’t know if this can be done in 2018, but it would send a powerful message if it could.

**Fatimetou  
Abdel Malick**  
Mayor of  
Tevragh-Zeina



# BUILDING COHESION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT WORK PLANS AND THE PRIORITIES OF THE CONSTITUENCY

UCLG aims to foster, identify and highlight the successful efforts made by its members towards inclusive, fair, diverse and creative societies that will be sustainable and provide adequate livelihoods that can answer to the expectations of the communities they serve. These practices should inform the definition of the global agendas and contribute to their achievement. During the Retreat, members and partners were able to share their experiences on how to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework as locally-based work plans for shared universal objectives.

Showing the links between the local daily action and the global goals, as well as the impact of the global agendas in territories, is and will continue to be an important cornerstone of UCLG’s work, contributing to enhancing implementation.

Shaping the narrative around localization was a key part of the debate. **Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi**, Secretary General of UCLG Africa, emphasized that “localization” needed to be well-defined before the UN and national institutions, a sentiment which was shared throughout the panel.



**The debate on localization is about starting a conversation and showing that we are implementers of the SDGs and we can contribute from the level of local and regional governments.**

**Elena Pierce**  
Federation  
of Canadian  
Municipalities





**From a learning perspective, we are building a “country” of SDG champions who can actively energize cities.**

**Thomas Honeck**  
 Berlin’s Senate  
 Department for  
 Environment,  
 Transport and Climate  
 Protection



The development of innovative tools to share existing knowledge was the focus of the debate of the panel on learning. **Puven Akkiah**, Technical Chair of the UCLG Committee on Urban Strategic Planning, argued that the sustainability agendas were important instruments in order to develop sustainable cities. **Rasikh Sagitov**, Secretary General of UCLG Eurasia, stressed that the exchange of knowledge between continents was instrumental to fully deploy the learning potential of the network with UCLG Sections at the core of this exchange.



Rasikh Sagitov, Secretary General, UCLG Eurasia



**Learning is the most important need of UCLG ASPAC members.**

**Bernadia Irawati  
 Tjandradewi**  
 Secretary General of  
 UCLG-ASPAC



Puven Akkiah, Senior Manager, eThekweni Municipality

Over the next half century, a new global urban system will be set into motion. This will be one of the biggest transformations in human history. Urban areas ranging from small villages to growing intermediary cities and megacities will increasingly be of interest internationally, often due to the challenges they face.

The global advocacy of the constituency facilitated by UCLG aims to highlight the potential of cities to create jobs, promote sustainable production and consumption patterns, reduce carbon emissions, increase social inclusion, and promote culture, peace and good governance. Furthermore, ensuring that urbanization is not seen as a matter which affects just metropolises or large cities, or as just an economic sector, will be key in our global action.

Our efforts will need to include enhanced partnerships with both civil society and the private sector. Maturing our relationship with the multilateral system through the creation of structural advocacy mechanisms and rethinking the financing of sustainable urbanization remain the key priorities of the advocacy agenda.



**The localization of the SDGs is the leitmotiv of the Member States, particularly in relation to our partners, and the role of local and regional governments is crucial in political terms.**

**Eric Beaume**

Deputy Head of the  
Development and  
Cooperation Unit of  
the EU Commission



The inputs from the leaders of the different UCLG sections emphasized the need for capacity building and the training of members, as well as to strengthen collaboration within the network and the sections. Further collaboration between the constituency and local and regional governments would prove to be essential in order to develop a joint strategy to make the SDGs land.

The meeting wrapped up with the reminder that UCLG provides both the framework and the tools for local governments to initiate a discussion with national governments which can help **transition from a model of mere collaboration and competences to a model of solidarity between cities and regions.**



**We need to think about synergies in a different manner; stop commenting on work plans only and start discussing positions and making proposals.**

**Emilia Saiz**  
Secretary General  
of UCLG



The prolific discussions led to outcomes that would strengthen the strategy of the constituency:

1

The **Waves of Action** were confirmed as a useful instrument to visualize the complementarity of the actions at different levels and to enhance the strategic value of said actions.

2

The **Local4Action Hub** one-stop portal should support the documentation and access to experiences as well as fostering collaborations between different Committees and Communities of Practice.

3

**Permanent Working Groups** such as that of Capacity and Institution Building should fulfil a transversal role and ensure connections between the different themes through the actions of Local Government Associations.

# HIGHLIGHT THE UCLG AWARDS

Connecting knowledge and ideas to cities and territories is key to UCLG's learning strategy. The UCLG Awards are part of this learning agenda: they are collaborative initiatives of members that aim to highlight and draw public attention to the achievements of local and regional governments in a range of fields that include peace, culture and urban innovation.

These Awards provide the opportunity to emulate and stimulate exchanges of best practices among the UCLG network and lead to the creation, collection and development of case studies and platforms that foster innovation and learning. They help local and regional governments achieve international acknowledgement and play the role of catalysts to find new ways and means to meet the social, economic, and environmental and governance challenges that local and regional authorities face. They further make available knowledge and expertise on local initiatives.





The UCLG Awards are a means to share the knowledge and practices generated by cities. As such, the outcomes of the session included linking the policy debates at the Policy Councils with the award-winning practices of cities, as well as holding special sessions to showcase the experiences of the winning cities, to be organized during trainings and statutory meetings. Finally, also in the vein of sharing knowledge, a sharing mechanism among the secretariats of the Awards should be explored.



**Looking at the awards together is very inspiring because they all offer the organization an incredible wealth of knowledge, practices and stories.**

**Renske Steenbergen**  
Project Manager,  
VNG International



# LOCALIZING THE GLOBAL AGENDAS IS ALSO ABOUT BUILDING ON STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

The aim of our advocacy work is not to parachute the Global Goals into local contexts, but rather to create an enabling environment for local governments to implement the SDGs. In this regard, the UCLG network has made great efforts to build and consolidate alliances and partnerships with different stakeholders during the Retreat, particularly with constituencies with goals similar to ours, such as Cities Alliance.



**The numbers speak for themselves: of the 470 million people living in cities in Africa, 250 million do so in informal settlements. By the year 2050, an estimated 1.13 billion people will be living in African cities and 600 million of those will still be living in slums.**

**William Cobbett**  
Director  
of Cities Alliance



**William Cobbett**, Director of Cities Alliance, explained the genesis of the organization as well as the key elements of Cities Alliance, such as its involvement with the Global South and the way in which it managed to bring non-western regions to the table.

**Susana Henderson**, Partnership Office of Cities Alliance, introduced the “Know Your City” campaign and the difficulties which come with introducing urban planning in areas where information on development is scarce. The main idea behind the campaign is that **human beings should be able to own their cities**, which means having a say in how to plan and in how to interact with the cities.

The “**Know Your City**” campaign has enabled cities to start the conversation on access to data, in particular through partnerships between local governments and organizations such as Slum Dwellers International. Obtaining data on slum dwellers and presenting it in an accessible way facilitates proactivity amongst local governments in efforts towards disaster risk reduction and security prevention, where they would otherwise respond to a crisis only after its occurrence.

Making the African “Know Your City” initiative global through strengthened partnerships between Slum Dwellers International and UCLG was one of the main outcomes of the discussion, as was developing a work plan with a global approach supporting the #MaketheShift campaign and the Wave of Action on Housing.





The more that the information on localization can reach the UN level, the more that it will be understood and the more they will be able to implement at the local level.

**Kerry Constabile**

Executive Office of the  
UN Secretary-General



A renewed partnership with Public Services International, the global union of public employees, will be developed with the focus on gathering data on local public sector employment. The collaboration with World Enabled will center on improving accessibility in cities around the world and promoting inclusion. Finally, the panel considered that expanding the partnership with Cities Alliance should be explored, especially through exporting the work on Enabling Environments for Decentralization from Africa to Asia and, following that, to the Middle East and West Asia Section.



Cities in Africa have anywhere from 30% to 70% populations living in poverty. It is not so much a “slum challenge” as the need to rethink the entire system in order to design a system which takes into account the urban poor.

**Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi**

Secretary General  
of UCLG Africa



The SDGs are dependent on alliances and partnerships created by cities and local governments.

**Beth Chitekwe-Biti**

Deputy Director  
of Slum Dwellers  
International



# THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE IN ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**Trust between different levels of governments and with citizens is crucial. To achieve anything, we must invest in the managerial capacity of local governments.**

**Greg Munro**

Secretary General of  
the Commonwealth  
Local Government  
Forum (CLGF)



The Global Taskforce members and partners gathered in the framework of the UCLG Retreat and Campus, in a special session focusing on enhancing the Global Taskforce and their current special partnerships towards the implementation of the SDGs. Throughout these sessions the issues of localization and multi-level governance were addressed, since both are mandatory in order to achieve the SDGs.

The idea that decision-making should be shared between actors at different levels and not completely monopolized by national governments is key to achieving the SDGs: local and regional governments are the front line of the citizens and thus are the sphere of government that knows its citizens' realities and necessities first-hand.

Despite the challenges that multi-level governance faces, there were plenty of proposals and calls to action throughout the sessions. It is necessary to bring national governments around to the idea of developing a system of multi-level governance since, in a world without borders, all issues become local issues; a vision that needs to be translated to national spheres of government.

**Berry Vrbanovic**, Mayor of Kitchener, argued for a deeper complicity between different levels of government, and even gave us a glowing example on how a policy developed with a multi-level approach works with the welcoming of migrants in Canada, a case which proves multi-level governance is key to developing policies that improve the lives of citizens.

Fields of work to be enhanced were developing research on the impact of New Information Technologies and how they could affect local governance. Developing specific research and policy development on metropolitan governance were also identified as necessities in order to expand and continue advocating towards promoting a global dialogue on multilevel governance.



**We developed a common plan where the national government was responsible for integration, the provincial government for education, and local government supported these new Canadians to arrive in the communities.**

**Berry Vrbanovic**  
Mayor of  
Kitchener and  
Treasurer of UCLG



# PICKING OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Prior to the conversations which discussed the priorities of the constituency, President Parks Tau highlighted the role that UCLG has played in changing the global conversation about urbanization and recalled the strong role that the localization of the global agendas plays in our strategy.



**You can count on UCLG as a core contributor in the localization process, in the monitoring and follow-up of the agendas, and in the battle for sustainable development more broadly. You can count on UCLG to gather the inputs of the whole constituency, to take on the SDGs as our own, and to play our part in their achievement.**

**Parks Tau**  
President of UCLG



Participants reiterated that UCLG should pursue its aim to be an advocacy platform with regard to the main global agendas of sustainable development. The recently created **UCLG Policy Councils were acknowledged as the places to share initiatives** and hold in-depth discussions about policies and their consequences at global and local levels. **The practical implementation of the Right to the City, the development of resilience, and materializing opportunities for all were confirmed as priority policies for the constituency** and thus were central themes of the discussion.

Building resilient cities often means guaranteeing that the more vulnerable parts of their populations are as equipped to absorb possible shocks as the rest. In this sense, throughout the panel, attendees mentioned the need to listen to the citizens (especially those that require special attention such as women and youth) and not only technicians and policymakers in order to evaluate and understand problematic resilience.



**The new line of thinking needs to be: What model of urban development do we need for tomorrow? How can we facilitate controlled urban growth?**

**Roland Ries**

Mayor of Strasbourg  
and Co-President  
of UCLG



**We cannot talk about SDGs without talking about mayors. We cannot talk about the NUA without talking about mayors. We cannot talk about change without talking about mayors. And we cannot talk about Davos being successful without them having a Chamber of Mayors.**

**Célestine Ketcha Courtès**

Mayor of Bangnangté  
and President of REFELA

**Célestine Ketcha Courtès**, Mayor of Bangnangté and President of REFELA argued for the role of mayors in achieving the global goals, as well as for the part they play when it comes to designing cities with opportunities for all, and praised UCLG as an organization which sets an example in terms of inclusivity.



A key focus on materializing opportunities for all is accessibility, and how cities are able to provide opportunities to all groups and plan for all citizens. The discussions around accessibility centred on the argument that cities ought to have the “opportunities for all” idea at their core.

Accessibility, however, can be related to a myriad of aspects. Offering opportunities to all and building more inclusive cities cannot become a reality unless citizens are provided with living wages and universal public services.



**Developing policies in favour of education, culture and peace are key for coexistence and social cohesion. Without funding and these policies, speeches become meaningless.**

**Carlos Martínez**  
Mayor of Soria and  
Vice-President of UCLG



**If you are already designing for all persons, it means that you are already designing for resilience. Bring everyone to the table. This is where innovation starts.**



**Federico Bautista Poitier**  
Communications  
Coordinator, World  
Enabled



**We have data now showing that privatization does not always mean better and more efficient public services.**

**Rosa Pavanelli**  
Secretary General  
of Public Services  
International (PSI)



**Ivan Arciénega**, Mayor of Sucre and UCLG Vice-President introduced the themes of space, and the challenges that arise when cities –particularly in Latin America- try to access basic public services. The theme of cooperation between cities was also one running throughout his statement since, he argued, only through cooperation could different cities make their voices heard.



**The issue of water is problematic in many Latin American countries. Small, medium and large cities need to make their voices heard and develop the concept of co-responsibility.**

**Ivan Arciénega**  
Mayor of Sucre and  
Vice-President of UCLG



**The Right to the City is more than a human right. We need to think about it as a new social contract.**



**Steven Weir**  
Vice-President of  
Global Program  
Development,  
Habitat for Humanity  
International

A special emphasis was given to transparency and acknowledging the inputs of citizens when implementing the Right to the City. The right to housing and how to address the commodification of housing, gentrification and the state of the real-estate market were also key issues of the discussion regarding the Right to the City and how to ensure the rights of citizens.

The firm relationship between the right to housing and the Right to the City was addressed by **Steven Weir**, Vice-President of Programmes at Global of Habitat for Humanity International, who argued that the Right to the City goes beyond the definition of a human right, and that the issue of decent housing is integral in the discussions on the Right to the City.



**The Right to the City also means the right to work and the right of migrants, and our ability to anticipate. It doesn't mean the obligation to the city. There is a real job to be done between metropolises, medium and rural cities.**

**Patrick Braouezec**

President of Plaine Commune metropolitan area, Co-President of the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights



**Patrick Braouezec**, in line with this thought, argued that the Right to the City meant not only the right to access, but also the right to participate in the city, as a means to prevent exclusion. He further gave a firm declaration of intent when it comes to defending what the Right to the City entails.

**Ada Colau**, Mayor of Barcelona and UCLG Co-President, argued that defending the Right to the City meant, ultimately, defending the right to decent living conditions. She was also keen to identify the main challenges that cities face when defending the Right to the City. In spite of cities' best efforts; global phenomena such as real estate speculation often make affordable housing inaccessible for those who need it the most.

Members and partners of the constituency agreed that financing and multi-level governance played a fundamental role in achieving more sustainable and inclusive cities. Planning for resilience, access to decent housing and decent public services can only be ensured through better access to funding and more autonomy for local and regional governments.



**Cities need to organize and co-operate with each other in order to find strategies to face the threat of gentrification. Our cities, without their people, are dead.**

**Ada Colau**

Mayor of Barcelona and Co-President of UCLG





# THE GLOBAL TASKFORCE AND ITS PARTNERS CONTRIBUTING TO THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE GLOBAL AGENDAS

The **Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF)** also held a special session during the Retreat, which focused on how the GTF could contribute towards achieving the global agendas, and how to follow the Habitat III legacy. The consolidation of the GTF and its partnerships and how it could contribute towards improving the relationship between different spheres of government was discussed in depth.

The balance of power dynamics between local, regional and national spheres of governments was also at the heart of the debate. Tackling the indifference, and even occasional contempt, of national governments towards cities and region has become a pressing



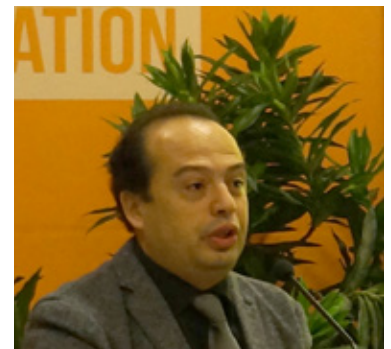
**Regions are implicated in the climate, development and SDG agendas, but less so in the New Urban Agenda.**

**Carles Llorens**  
Secretary General of  
ORU-FOGAR



**There are a lot of things we can do and the world is also advancing a lot; we should not give up our commitment. We need to focus on the long term.**

**Yunus Arikian**  
Head of Advocacy,  
ICLEI



issue, as has the need for an **integrated approach to territorial government**, especially when trying to achieve the global agendas. As stated in the New Urban Agenda, the involvement of regions is also necessary in order for the localization of the SDGs to be achieved.

“How can we be more effective in governing ourselves?” This question lingered throughout the conversations on governance, and the unanimous sentiment from the panel was that efficient self-governance could only be achieved if local and regional governments are provided with **the necessary financial assistance to allow for self-sustainability.**

Whilst the climate agenda in the wake of the US drop-out seems dire, it also poses opportunities to rethink the role of local and regional governments in achieving the Climate Goals. The two main events on the Climate horizon during 2018 are the Global Climate Action Summit, held in San Francisco from 12 to 15 September 2018, and the Cities IPCC Conference in Edmonton, Canada, taking place from 5-7 March. Each one has a different goal and focus: the former focuses on mobilization, whilst the latter is centred on the relationship between local elected officials and scientists; as such, they need to be approached differently.

**Emmanuelle Pinault**, Head of City Diplomacy of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, spoke highly of the recent One Planet Summit in Paris, which saw a prominent participation from mayors, and mentioned the opportunities that the California Summit in 2018 would offer which could, she argued, raise awareness on the issue of climate change for the population and civil society, with the possibility of even witnessing a climate march.



**Wouter Boesman**, Policy Director of Platforma, argued that the objective of the organization was to increase understanding among local governments and to facilitate the exchange of opinions. With regards to the Global Taskforce, Boesman argued that Platforma brought a direct and close partnership with European institutions.



**How do we make the outcomes of the conference work for practitioners and policymakers, and how can it improve the lives of city dwellers?**

**Julie Greenwalt**  
Cities Alliance



**There need to be more initiatives in order to connect the dots between local and regional governments and their funding.**

**Carlos de Freitas**  
Director of Programmes, FMDV





**Our statement calls for three things: not forgetting the legacy that we have, enhancing our own commitments, and taking into account our list of priorities as a constituency.**

**Emilia Saiz**  
Secretary General of UCLG

The panel agreed on **the importance of ensuring the participation of the constituency in the Habitat III follow-up process** and claiming the acknowledged place of the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments in the Quito Outcome document. An important element of this participation is to provide inputs to the Quadrennial Report, which is due to be presented in 2018.

The Talanoa Dialogues are viewed as a major global push to bring more stakeholder engagement on board towards achieving the 1.5-degree target set in the 2015 Paris Agreement. Following up on them is essential for our constituency, as they are key instruments that can influence the COP 24 process.

Ensuring that the constituency is able to influence important international policy making fora beyond the United Nations (especially ones such as the G20, G7 and Davos) and **enhancing joint policy development within the Global Taskforce**, in particular around localization experiences, were also significant outcomes of the conversations.



# WHERE DO WE NEED TO BE? TOWARDS THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

The High-Level Political Forum is the global platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the follow-up to the Rio+20 Outcome. It provides an opportunity for the constituency to make its voice heard, and to engage in side events that could help boost the visibility of local and regional governments. Speakers of the round table expressed their views on the possibilities that this event could offer for local and regional governments.





**We are not NGOs, we are local elected officials and as such we must show ourselves.**

**Fatimetou Abdel Malick**  
Mayor of  
Tevragh-Zeina



**We always say the agendas are universal and we cannot deal with them in separate ways. We should build a joint narrative as the Global Taskforce, and include the lessons learnt from all of these agendas.**

**Emilia Saiz**  
Secretary General of  
UCLG



**Rodrigo Messias**, Policy Officer at the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD) argued that the High-Level Political Forum was particularly significant since it allowed for an official framework to provide updates on the current state of the New Urban Agenda, as well as follow-up to the implementation of the agenda. The Forum, he argued, also posed an opportunity to submit the agenda for localizing the SDGs, since it had also proven to be the platform where the agenda had taken off.

## CONCLUSIONS

The participation of the constituency of local and regional governments in the HLPF will include a number of initiatives, and will actively participate in the organization of the Local Authorities Forum. Said initiatives will include:

1

Develop a joint position paper to present the local governments' perspectives at the Forum

2

Active participation in the Local 2030 Hub, in particular in the Capacity Building Component

3

Explore possibilities to address the data gap and indicator follow up of the indicators of the 2030 Agenda

4

Showcase the Training of Trainers around SDGs and localization initiatives

# RESHAPING LOCAL FINANCE: KEY TO ACHIEVING THE SDGS

The issue of local and regional governments' access to funding had been addressed throughout the retreat. The special session on reshaping local finance, however, helped frame local finance in regard to fulfilling the global goals. Implementing the global agenda cannot be done without decentralization and the institutional and financial capacities of local and regional governments.

**David Jackson**, Director of Local Development Finance at the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), reminded the floor of the limited capacities of local and regional governments to reach the UN system and the shortcomings of the global agendas, which have not been designed around cities, in spite of UCLG's efforts. He argued for municipal finance as the key which would unlock many of the global challenges, and that grants, local development funds and an overall greater autonomy of municipal finances could be solutions to the challenges that local governments face.

Finally, he recommended a coalition of practice built around the practices of a group of around 10 local governments to demonstrate how different types of financial arrangements can be made, to enable municipal finance to move forward. UCLG could play the role of convenor and facilitator in this group, in order to transform the development agenda.



**Municipal finance is the key to unlocking the global challenges. Not only climate change, but also housing and many others.**

**David Jackson**  
Director of Local  
Development Finance,  
UNCDF



**Jean-François Habeau**, Executive Director of FMDV, argued for the role of private investment and how local and regional authorities could capture a percentage of it. The dissonance between the investors' and the cities' needs to be bridged in order for the cities to properly benefit from private investors.

# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

After the discussions took place, the strategic priorities of the network with regards to local finance were laid out. Overall, contributions such as the development of a network of local officials responsible for local finance or the need to links the discussion on local finance with innovative financing were seen favourably, and were to be incorporated into UCLG's strategy on local finance for sustainability, with the role of FMDV following a similar status to the other UCLG committees and consultation mechanisms.

President Parks Tau gave his support to initiate, work with and consolidate our coalition and to start at a manageable level with measures such as a community of practitioners. He also added that, since climate funding is the result of national policy frameworks, starting a conversation with national governments in order to rethink finance legislation is also one of the main priorities.



**We need to facilitate a shared working space within the economy where all levels and sectors are working together to achieve mutual goals.**

**Nelson Fernández**  
Director of  
International  
Relations and  
Cooperation,  
Montevideo



## The key components of the UCLG strategy on local finance for sustainability

**01.**

**Mapping:** Carrying out a mapping exercise of the different mechanisms available and interesting initiatives taking place within the network.

**02.**

**Advocacy:** Developing a campaign on the need to rethink local finance and local economic models, with the aim to involve all GTF partners and international actors, in particular UNCDF. Furthermore, UCLG would continue its advocacy

efforts within the context of the Financing for Development process, ensuring the voice of local and regional governments.

**03.**

**A Worldwide Coalition:** The creation of a global platform building on the practices of a strong coalition of local governments, as proposed by UNCDF, expanding to partners and UCLG members in all regions. This initiative would respond to the proposal made by GTF partners to create a multi-stakeholder dialogue.

**04.**

**Developing further partnerships:** Engaging with significant actors active in financing urban development.

# CONCLUSIONS

## THE UCLG RETREAT AS A MEANS TO CREATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND IMPROVE ON EXISTING ONES

The 4th annual UCLG Retreat and Campus has served to underline the priorities and lines of action of the constituency for the year to come. One of the most important outcomes of the Retreat was the development of new partnerships with other constituencies (such as Public Service International and World Enabled), which help expand the work of the constituency and broaden the ways in which we can learn from one another.

Expanding and enhancing our current partnerships with institutions such as Cities Alliance, where the partnership can benefit from having a decidedly urban focus, was also a key outcome of the meetings. The need to enhance our partnerships with academia and the scientific community (in upcoming events such as the IPCC Conference in Edmonton) is also essential to gather support between constituencies which have been, up until now, detached from our goals.

The Retreat has further confirmed the policy priorities of the different parts of the World Organization and has identified new opportunities for building synergies. Developing instruments that enable us to not only visualize but also add value to the actions of our networks will be instrumental during this mandate.

The continuation and enhanced contributions to the Waves of Action, as well as shaping the UCLG Local4ActionHub, will be key components of this work. The discussions in the 2018 Retreat focused on membership action, with the Secretariats of the different parts of the networks as catalysts. Enhanced involvement of the membership, in particular at political level, needs to be the focus of efforts towards a strong Congress and Summit in 2019.

The Retreat also provided the broader constituency of local and regional governments gathered around the Global Taskforce with an opportunity to deepen strategic discussions. Described by one of the participants as the “Davos of local and regional government networks”, the meetings with partners within the framework of the annual Retreat is becoming an important reference to take the pulse on the discussions of local and urban actions internationally, with the enhanced participation of all stakeholders.

The annual Retreat is widely perceived as a unique opportunity for networking. Over 10 parallel meetings, including a UCLG Presidency meeting took place on the sidelines of the main gathering, aiming to advance work in different areas, from training to research and joint advocacy.







## THE FUTURE OF THE RETREAT: WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER?

The Retreat was seen as a success by the vast majority of attendees. While the focus on partnerships and increased partner's attendance was highly appreciated, the smaller settings and working sessions allowing for in-depth discussions organized in previous editions were also indicated as an added value to be regained.

Specific attention on the Waves of Action and explicit planning would be welcome as part and parcel of upcoming editions.

Under this section, we would like to share with you the key events for UCLG this year. It is not a comprehensive events calendar, but highlights events related to the **UCLG Waves of Action**.

The Wave of Action on Housing defends the idea of housing as a right, and not as a commodity. The original content, the "Make the Shift" campaign, aims to mobilize a large range of actors at worldwide level to push forward a shift in the way housing is perceived and propose concrete measures from local to global level. Their key international moment to develop our advocacy work will be the High-Level Political Forum on **SDG 11** in July this year.

The Wave of Action on Migration is developing advocacy work around the concept that **public policies to manage migration cannot be achieved without the involvement and commitment of local and regional governments**, since they guarantee social cohesion and economic development in their territories. The key international moment will be the Global Compact on Migration later this year.

You will find hereafter a brief guide of the key events that UCLG will organize or participate in during the year, and which will be milestones in the development of our joint Waves of Action.



# 2018 ROADMAP FOR UCLG NETWORK AND PARTNERS

## UCLG EXECUTIVE BUREAU

23-26 May 2018,  
Strasbourg (France)

The first session of the UCLG Executive Bureau for this year, this meeting will be held in the headquarters of the European Parliament, a highly symbolic place. Aside from the strictly statutory sessions traditionally organized during these gatherings, a High-Level Dialogue will be organized in partnership with UNACLA, focusing on “Linking the Global Goals with the New Urban Agenda Implementation”. The UCLG Policy Councils will also meet and host special dialogues between Ministers and Local Governments. Members and partners of UCLG are warmly invited to join.

*For more information, please write to [UCLGExBu@uclg.org](mailto:UCLGExBu@uclg.org)*

## UN HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

6-18 July 2018  
New York (USA)

Convened under the auspices of ECOSOC, the 2018 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) will take place on 9-18 July and will include a three-day forum ministerial meeting on 16-18. The Global Taskforce, in collaboration with UNDESA and UN-Habitat, will organize a **Local and Regional Authorities Forum on 16 July**. This event will provide an unprecedented opportunity to call for the inclusion of the perspective of our constituency in the global assessment process discussed in the framework of the HLPF.

*For more information, please write to [policy@uclg.org](mailto:policy@uclg.org)*



## CEMR CONFERENCE ON EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

**11-13 June 2018**

**Bilbao (Spain)**

Organized by CEMR, the City of Bilbao and the Association of Basque Municipalities (EUDEL), the CEMR Conference on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will take place from 11-13 June 2018. The conversations in the CEMR conference will centre on issues from citizen participation and the equality of men and women, to the integration of migrants and the topic of equality, diversity and inclusion in the global agendas.



## AFRICITIES SUMMIT 2018

**20-24 November 2018**

**Marrakech (Morocco)**

Organized by UCLG-Africa, this year's edition of the Africities Summit will be held in Morocco from 4-6 of December, with the central theme being "The transition to sustainable cities and territories: the role of African local authorities". The event will address the issue of the future of cities, territories and local communities in Africa, with the situation of Africa in globalization and urbanization as starting points, and aims to highlight the dimension of urbanization in Africa and emphasize the role and strategy of African local governments in this transition.

## 1ST WORLD FORUM ON INTERMEDIARY CITIES

**5-7 July 2018**

**Chefchaouen (Morocco)**

The UCLG Forum on Intermediary Cities is a consultation and policy development process that culminates in an event every two years, with the goal of producing policy guidance and fostering visibility for the issues of intermediary cities. The Forum process is led by the City of Chefchaouen and supported by a core structure of pilot Intermediary Cities:

- Odienné in the Ivory Coast for Africa
- Nevsehir in Turkey for Middle East & West Asia
- Terrassa in Spain for Europe
- Cuenca in Ecuador for Latin America



## GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

**10-11 December 2018**

**Marrakech (Morocco)**

The Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, is a significant opportunity to improve the governance to address the challenges associated with contemporary migration and to strengthen the contributions of migrant people to sustainable development. The Global Compact represents the final step of a process that started in 2017, following the adoption of the commitments of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and which resulted in the Mechelen Declaration.



# DID YOU KNOW...?

The corridors of the annual Retreat are almost as important as the main session. Here are some of the outcomes of these discussions. We are certain that there were many more!

**01.**

Discussions were held to ensure the focus on migration and culture in the 2018 edition of Africityies.

**02.**

The next phase of the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration project in collaboration with ICMPD was further defined.

**03.**

UCLG Learning will team up with AL-LAS to develop online training and more.

**04.**

Our Train of Trainers will reach UCLG Eurasia, including a culture component.

**05.**

The 2018 agenda of the Local Economy Development Committee was further defined through meetings of the committee's focal points.

**06.**

The 2018 work plan of the Forum of Regions was developed.

**07.**

The practical arrangements and planning of the 2018 Executive Bureau in Strasbourg were defined.

**08.**

The #KnowYourCity programme will jump continents. Actions in Latin America were discussed.

**09.**

The contents for the 2018 Local 2030 Hub started to shape up with the commitment of the GTF partners.

**10.**

Initial discussions were held on how to develop greater links between Sections, Committees and the general work plan.

**11.**

Module 3 of our Localization Training Tool on the involvement of Local Government Associations was discussed.



Supported by:  European Commission

