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LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENTS' REPORT
TO THE 2018 HLPF
2nd REPORT

TOWARDS THE LOCALIZATION OF THE SDGs



Facilitated by:



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LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENTS'
REPORT TO THE 2018 HLPF

TOWARDS THE LOCALIZATION OF THE SDGs



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ABBREVIATIONS

A

AAAA – Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing for Development
AAM – Albanian Association of Municipalities
ABELO – *Association Burundaise des Elus Locaux* (Burundi Association of Local Elected Officials)
ACHM – *Asociación chilena de municipalidades* (Chilean Association of Municipalities)
ACHR – Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ACOR – *Asociația Comunalor din România* (Association of Communes in Romania)
ACVN – Association of Cities of Vietnam
ADEKSI – *Asosiasi DPRD Kota Seluruh Indonesia* (Indonesian Municipal Councils Association)
ADKASI – *Asosiasi DPRD Kabupaten Seluruh Indonesia* (Association of Regency Governments of Indonesia)
ADS – *Association des départements du Sénégal* (Association of the Departments of Senegal)
AER – Assembly of European Regions
AfD – *Agence française de développement* (French Development Agency)
AGAAI – *Asociación Guatemalteca de Alcaldes y Autoridades Indígenas* (Guatemalan Association of Mayors and Indigenous Authorities)
AICCRE – *Associazione Italiana per il Consiglio dei Comuni e delle Regioni d'Europa* (Italian Association of the CEMR-CCRE)
AIMF – *Association internationale des Maires francophones* (International Association of French-speaking Mayors)
ALAL – Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania
ALGA – Association of Local Governments of Australia
ALGAJ – Association of Local Government Authorities of Jamaica
AME – *Asociación de Municipalidades Ecuatorianas* (Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities)
AMCA – *Association des Maires de Centrafrique* (Association of Mayors of the Central African Republic)
AMM – *Association des Municipalités du Mali* (Association of Municipalities of Mali)
AMN – *Association des Municipalités du Niger* (Association of Municipalities of Niger)
AMPE – *Asociación de Municipalidades del Perú* (Association of Municipalities of Peru)
AMS – *Association des Maires du Sénégal* (Association of Mayors of Senegal)

ANAMM – *Associação Nacional dos Municípios de Moçambique* (National Association of Municipalities of Mozambique)
ANCB – *Association Nationale des Communes du Bénin* (National Association of Municipalities of Benin)
ANCI – *Associazione Nazionale dei Comuni Italiani* (National Association of Italian Municipalities)
ANGR – *Asamblea Nacional de Gobiernos Regionales* (National Assembly of Regional Governments, Peru)
ANMC – *Association nationale des maires comoriens* (National Association of Comorian Mayors)
ANMCV – *Associação Nacional dos Municípios Caboverdianos* (National Association of the Capeverdean Municipalities)
APEKSI – *Asosiasi Pemerintah Kota Seluruh Indonesia* (Association of Indonesian Municipalities)
APKASI – *Asosiasi Pemerintah Kabupaten Seluruh Indonesia* (Association of District Governments of Indonesia)
APLA – Association of Palestinian Local Authorities
APPSI – *Asosiasi Pemerintah Provinsi Seluruh Indonesia* (Association of Provincial Governments of Indonesia)

B

BTVL – *Bureau Technique des Villes Libanaises* (Lebanese Cities Technical Office)

C

C40 – C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
CAHF – Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa
CALM – *Congresul Autorităților Locale din Moldova* (Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova)
CBD – Convention of Biological Diversity
CEMR-CCRE – Council of European Municipalities and Regions - *Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe*
CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States
CLGF – Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CNM – *Confederação Nacional de Municípios* (Brazilian National Association of Municipalities)
CONAGO – *Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores* (National Conference of Governors, Mexico)
CONAMM – Conferencia Nacional de Municipios de México (Mexican National Conference of Municipalities)
CONGOPE – *Consortio de Gobiernos Autónomos Provinciales del Ecuador* (Association of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador)

CONPES – *Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social* (National Council on Economic and Social Policy, Colombia)
COSLA – Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
CRPM – Conférence des Régions Périphériques Maritimes (Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions)
CSOs – Civil society organizations
CUF – *Cités Unies France* (French United Cities)
CVUC – *Communes et Villes Unies du Cameroun* (United Councils and Cities of Cameroon)

D

DLT – *Deutscher Landkreistag* (German County Association)
DRR – Disaster Risk Reduction
DST – *Deutscher Städtetag* (German Association of Cities)
DStGB – *Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund* (German Association of Towns and Municipalities)

E

ECA – Economic Commission for Africa
ECLAC – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCAP – United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA – Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

F

FAMSI – *Fondo Andaluz de Municipios para la Solidaridad Internacional* (Andalusian Municipal Fund for International Solidarity)
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization
FCM – Federation of Canadian Municipalities
FCM – *Federación Colombiana de Municipios* (Colombian Federation of Municipalities)
FEDOMU – *Federación Dominicana de Municipios* (Dominican Federation of Municipalities)
FEMP – *Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias* (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces)
FENAMM – *Federación Nacional de Municipios de México* (National Federation of Municipalities of Mexico)
FLACMA – *Federación Latinoamericana de Ciudades, Municipios y Asociaciones de Gobiernos Locales* (Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Local Government Associations)
FMDV – *Fonds mondial de développement des villes* (Global Fund for Cities Development)
FSLGA – Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities

G

GDP – Gross Domestic Product
GHG – Greenhouse gases
GLCN – Global Lead City Network
GTF – Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments

H

HDI – Human Development Index
HLFP – High-Level Political Forum

I

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
ICMA – International City/County Management Association
IGES – Institute for Global Environment Strategies
IIED – International Institute for Environment and Development
ILO – International Labour Organization
INAFED – *Instituto Nacional para el Federalismo y el Desarrollo Municipal* (National Institute for Federalism and Municipal Development, Mexico)
ISWA – International Solid Waste Association
IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature

K

KEDE – Central Union of Municipalities of Greece
KiLGA – Kiribati Local Government Association
KL – *Kommunernes Landsforening* (Local Government Association of Denmark)
KS – *Kommunesektorens organisasjon* (Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities)

L

LALRG – Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments
LCP – League of Cities of the Philippines
LDC – Least Developed Countries
LGAs – Local government associations
LGNZ – Local Government New Zealand
LRGs – Local and Regional Governments
LSE – London School of Economics

M

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

N

NAMRB – National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria
NBSAPs – National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations
Nrg4SD – Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development

NUA – New Urban Agenda
NUP – National Urban Policy

O

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPACI – *Organización Paraguaya de Cooperación Intermunicipal* (Paraguayan Intermunicipal Cooperation Organization)
ORU-Fogar – *Organisation des Régions Unies-Forum Global des Associations Régionales* (Organization of United Regions – Global Forum of Regional Associations)

R

REFELA – *Réseau des Femmes Elues Locales d'Afrique* (Network for Locally Elected Women of Africa)
RGRE – *Rat der Gemeinden und Regionen Europas* (German Association of CEMR)

S

SALAR – Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
SALGA – South African Local Government Association
SDI – Slum/Shack Dwellers International
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
SKL – *Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting* (Municipalities and County Councils of Sweden)
SMO – Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic
SNG – Sub-national Government
SOS – Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia
SUMP – Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

U

UAE – United Arab Emirates
UAEL – *Union des associations d'élus locaux* (Union of Associations of Local Elected Representatives, Senegal)
UCCI – *Unión de Ciudades Capitales Iberoamericanas* (Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities)
UCLGA – United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
UCLG ASPAC – United Cities and Local Governments of Asia Pacific
UCLG Eurasia – United Cities and Local Governments of Eurasia
UCLG-MEWA – United Cities and Local Governments of Middle East and West Asia
UCT – *Union des Communes du Togo* (Union of Municipalities of Togo)
UITP – International Association of Public Transport
UMT – Union of Municipalities of Turkey
UNCCD – United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNCDF – United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDESA – United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNECE – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGL – *Unión Nacional de Gobiernos Locales* (National Union of Local Governments, Costa Rica)
UN-Habitat – United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNISDR – United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNPAN – United Nations Public Administration Network
UOM – Union of Municipalities of Montenegro
UVCW – *Union des villes et des communes de Wallonie* (Union of Walloon cities and municipalities)

V

VNG – *Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten* (Association of Dutch Municipalities)
VNR – Voluntary National Review
VVSG – *Vereniging van Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten* (Association of Flemish Cities and Towns)

W

WHO – World Health Organization

Z

ZELS – Association of the Units of Local Self-Government of the Republic of Macedonia
ZMO – *Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska* (Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia)

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

This Statement was adopted by the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments at the Local and Regional Authorities Forum, held within the framework of the High-Level Political Forum, in New York at the UN Headquarters, on 16 July 2018. The Statement is also available online at the following link: www.global-taskforce.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/gtfstatement_HLPPF_2018.pdf.

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 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 the 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.

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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.

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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 fulfill 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents evidence of the involvement of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) in the 'localization' of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It complements the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and 'Main Messages' submitted by 103 countries to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2016, 2017 and 2018. It delivers first-hand information from LRGs in 61 different countries. It is the second in an annual series coinciding with national reports to the HLPF and provides an update on the active engagement of LRGs in the dissemination and implementation of the SDGs at the local level.

The report is facilitated by United Cities and Local Governments within the framework of the Global Observatory on Decentralization and Local Democracy (GOLD) and on behalf of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, a consultation mechanism of the constituency that gathers over 25 networks. The report counts with special contributions from many cities and associations around the world.

In the majority of countries that reported to the HLPF in 2016, 2017 and 2018, LRGs have key competencies in policy areas relating to the achievement of all SDGs, and particularly SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17. This report pays special attention to SDG 11 and its interlinkages with other goals, which has special relevance for the LRG constituency. The report also demonstrates the role of local initiatives in mainstreaming the objective to 'leave no one behind'.



GOOD PRACTICES

LRGs are putting the 'Right to the City' approach and participation at the heart of their localization strategies

Many LRGs are choosing to mainstream rights-based approaches in their territorial development strategies to accelerate SDG implementation (e.g. Gwangju, Venice and Vienna). Furthermore, they are supporting the 'Right to the City' principles acknowledged in Habitat III (e.g. Mexico City/State).

They are proactive in building multi-stakeholder alliances to back the right to housing (e.g. the 'Cities for adequate housing' initiative led by Barcelona and more than ten other cities). Moreover, they are addressing the needs of specific vulnerable groups (e.g. Sanctuary Cities in and Refuge-Cities to welcoming refugees and asylum seekers). These are a means of strengthening social cohesion and solidarity but also of guaranteeing the protection of human rights and the commons.

Participatory instruments through planning and budgeting are another way in which LRGs are creating 'virtuous circles' of engagement between citizens and local institutions in different countries in all regions. Participatory and rights-based approaches are developing a new framework for the 'co-creation' of cities and territories based on the stronger involvement of local actors.

LRGs' collaborative work with Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) in Africa, and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) are examples of successful initiatives to gather local knowledge and disaggregated data at the level of informal settlement and to plan timely, inclusive and group-sensitive policies and identify local opportunities and threats (e.g. disaster risks).

LRGs play a key role in developing integrated urban and territorial plans to localize all the SDGs

In many countries, LRGs are building their capacities and engaging in a long-term vision to integrate the SDGs into their strategic local frameworks (e.g. local plans for the 2030 Agenda) as well as their daily activities (e.g. in Durban, Mannheim, New York, Quito and Seoul).

Many LRGs in developed and developing countries have been proactive in sharing, learning and developing more holistic and comprehensive participatory plans at the urban and territorial level (e.g. 'strategic planning', city development strategies, etc.). These use cross-cutting policies to respond simultaneously to all the SDGs, and particularly SDG 11. Integrated urban and territorial plans promote place-based approaches to development, and they foster multilevel and multi-sectoral systems of governance, while at the same time promoting alignment with the SDGs.

LRGs are leading innovative actions to achieve Goals and Targets that are instrumental to the 'transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies'

The report gives examples of how local leaders are developing alternative policies to make cities and territories more sustainable and resilient. LRGs with an enabling institutional framework play a key role in integrating social housing and neighbourhood improvement at the heart of city policies. This also calls for increasing efforts to avoid forced evictions and support co-production of public-private community-driven housing.

In the face of increasing water stress, many cities are developing renewed water management strategies taking into account integrated approaches inspired by SDGs (e.g. Brisbane and Cape Town), whilst others are innovating to overcome sanitation challenges (e.g. Rajkot in India). Some cities and regions are implementing integrated multimodal and sustainable transport systems. These facilitate access, integrate and regulate formal and informal transport modalities (e.g. Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans in Brazil), and reduce congestion, GHG emissions and air pollution. LRGs make culture – including cultural heritage protection – one of the pillars of their sustainable strategies that support diversity and inclusion (e.g. Regensburg, Pekalongan, Gabrovo and Timbuktu).

Following assessment by the UNISDR, cities are progressively applying the Sendai Framework targets into their policies and strategies. There are many examples of how they are improving waste collection and final disposal (4R – reduce, reuse, recycle and recover). In the Global South, collaborations are developing with informal workers in waste collection and recycling (e.g. Belo Horizonte, Dhaka, Manila and Qalyubeya Governorate).

Elsewhere LRGs are leading actions towards more efficient and renewable energy use, often as part of climate change mitigation and adaptation plans; and they are committed to reducing their carbon footprint from transport, buildings and services (Baden-Württemberg, Boston, Tokyo and Vancouver). At a global scale, more than 9,000 cities and local governments are participating in the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to take action on mitigation, adaptation, as well as access to sustainable energy.

Despite these positive efforts, the report emphasizes that the scope of these local initiatives remains limited to a small group of frontrunner cities and regions. A cleared and bolder support system will be needed to bring this good practices up to scale. Globally, LRGs need more policy guidance, powers and resources, particularly in low-income and middle-low income countries.

LESSONS LEARNED

LRGs' participation both in the VNR process and the national institutional mechanisms for coordination and follow-up need to be scaled up

Less than half of the VNR consultations and over one third of the follow-up mechanisms in 99 countries involve local governments. The integration of the local and regional perspective in reporting and follow-up remains a major challenge. Although many national governments acknowledge the role of sub-national governments, their national plans and VNRs do not always reflect a clear strategy for their inclusion. Coordination between all levels of government is critical to ensuring LRGs' participation in both processes. National governments and UN institutions need to further develop spaces for multilevel dialogue and joint action. These must ensure the participation and engagement of local and regional leaders, both in the reporting process (VNRs), and the national, regional and global follow-up of institutional mechanisms, with adapted agendas and policy support.

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LRGs' mobilization and involvement at global scale is progressing but it is still not sufficient to support the localization process

Significant efforts have been made by LRGs and their networks worldwide to raise awareness and find innovative ways of mobilizing and fostering real ownership for the localization of the SDGs. Cities and territories of all sizes are enhancing actions to align their policies with the global goals and rethinking their local action plans in line with the SDGs. LRGs are driving the localization process in many countries and being proactive in building multilevel and multi-stakeholder partnerships to catalyse implementation. Frontrunner cities have taken a further step by presenting their Voluntary Local Reviews to self-assess the progress they have made in the localization of the SDGs. Yet, many LRGs and Local and Regional Government Associations (LGAs) are still not acquainted with the SDGs or consider them to be yet another external internationally imposed 'burden'. More efforts are needed to empower LRGs and to develop local-based approaches combined with national enabling policies to support the localization process and enhance the active involvement and innovation of local leaders in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

.....

Scale-up the localization of the SDGs as an integral part of national strategies:

Effective localization strategies require empowered LRGs to foster integrated urban and regional plans that are well-coordinated with national strategies. The 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda offer a real opportunity to strengthen the role of LRGs as key drivers of urban and regional planning. National Urban Policies (NUPs) can contribute to a more collaborative framework to develop cross-sectoral and coherent approaches to support and accompany local urban policies. However, improved multilevel and multi-stakeholder collaboration should be facilitated to scale up sub-national innovative solutions integrated into national strategies.

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Strengthen institutional and fiscal frameworks to empower LRGs:

Rethinking the sub-national financial architecture, and municipal finance in particular, will be critical to achieving the SDGs. The majority of LRGs that contributed to this report have underlined the need for financial support and fiscal decentralization to achieve SDG localization. National governments made a commitment to promoting a more integrated framework for LRG planning and financing in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (paragraph 34). They should provide to LRGs the necessary capacities, enabling regulatory frameworks and institutional incentives to act autonomously to ensure their tasks and responsibilities. At global scale, international institutions should catalyse investments in sustainable local long-term financial projects adapted to local needs.

.....

'Make the Shift' to a rights-based approach at the center of local agendas:

The outcome document of Habitat III stresses the importance of linking the implementation of the SDGs with a rights-based approach. This is instrumental to deliver on the core promise to leave no one behind. Such policies address the global challenges of the right to housing and the 'Right to the City' paying particular attention to the diversity of needs. Proactive involvement of LRGs is imperative to fully implement the right to adequate housing. Greater linkages between SDG implementation and right to the city-based approach should be enhanced by LRGs.

.....

Support initiatives to disaggregate data for monitoring localization processes:

A bottom-up monitoring process is essential to delivering the objective to 'leave no one behind'. Monitoring of SDG localization must use disaggregated and place-based data and collect information on the ground to reflect local realities. A participatory approach to fostering co-production of data at the local level should be enhanced, and collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations and NGOs be supported.

.....

Promote international cooperation in partnership with LRGs for localization:

The LRGs and their LGAs are deeply involved in international development cooperation. Peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge, city-to-city dialogue and decentralized cooperation are powerful vehicles for strengthening LRGs' capacities to localize the SDGs. Greater efforts are needed to upscale these practices. National governments should create enabling policy environments for decentralized cooperation and support LRGs' involvement in development cooperation plans.

.....

Rally local and regional governments to strengthen international coalition for the implementation of SDGs:

Local and Regional Government Associations at national, regional and global levels have shown significant commitment to put the SDGs at the heart of their strategies and support the implementation, monitoring and innovating to Localize the 2030 Agenda. An international alliance to foster these efforts worldwide, such as the UN Local 2030 Network and the Localizing the SDGs Platform, will be instrumental for the success the Localization of the SDGs.

01

INTRODUCTION

The second report, ‘Towards the Localization of the SDGs’, represents the unique view of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) worldwide and their role in, and contribution to, achieving the main global development agendas. It underlines the involvement of LRGs in national and regional processes and summarizes the key local and regional trends observed in the implementation of the SDGs, and particularly those that are being assessed this year in the four-year cycle framework.

The ‘transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies’, reviewed by the HLPF in 2018, is particularly pertinent to this constituency. It includes SDG 11, to ‘make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’, and thus introduces a comprehensive territorial approach to sustainable development. SDG 11 focuses not just on cities, but rather takes a novel place-based approach with specific attention given to urban, rural-urban, and regional linkages. The majority of the SDGs in fact highlight the importance of engaging cities, local communities and territories more widely.¹

Indeed, the 2030 Agenda emphasizes the need for an **inclusive and localized** approach to the SDGs stating, ‘governments and public institutions will also work closely on implementation with regional and local authorities, sub-regional institutions, inter-national institutions, academia, philanthropic organisations, volunteer groups and others.’²

Localization is described as ‘the process of defining, implementing and monitoring strategies at the local level for achieving global, national, and sub-national sustainable development goals and targets.’ Specifically, it includes the ‘process of taking into account sub-national contexts in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, from the setting of goals and targets, to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress.’³

The second HLPF report develops the first report’s analysis by mapping the involvement of the LRGs and their contribution to the localization of the SDGs.⁴

Localization relates both to how local and regional governments can support the achievement of the SDGs through action from the bottom up and to how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy



¹ The engagement of urban stakeholders is necessary to achieving up to 65% of the SDG targets, see Cities Alliance (2015), *Sustainable Development Goals and Habitat III: Opportunities for a Successful New Urban Agenda*.

² United Nations, General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*, A/RES/70/1 (21 October 2015), paragraphs 34 and 45.

³ UN Development Group (2014), *Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda* (outcome of the global UN dialogue process realized from June 2014 to October 2014); GTF, UNDP, UN-Habitat (2016), *Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Sub-national Level*.

⁴ UCLG – GTF (2017), *National and Sub-national Governments on the way towards the Localization of the SDGs*.

The report follows the guidelines proposed by the UN for the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) by countries. Section 2 presents the methodology used for this report. Section 3 analyses LRGs' ownership and involvement in the SDG process. Section 4 presents a sample of policies and innovations implemented by cities and territories to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs reviewed this year. In the last two sections, the report synthesizes the main considerations of the LRGs about means of implementation (Section 5) and lastly draws conclusions and proposes next steps (Section 6).

Table 1.1 shows the structure and data of LRGs within the 47 countries reporting in 2018 and complements the table presented in the GTF-UCLG report to the HLPF in 2017, which showed data from 400,000 LRGs. Decentralized LRGs are simultaneously policy-makers, implementers and investors. They are facilitators and catalysts of sustainable development, linking global, national, regional and local levels and involving citizens and communities as drivers of bottom-up change in their territories. However, it is important to understand the diversity of LRGs in each region.

In the majority of developed and in some developing countries, the role of LRGs highlights the instrumental nature of local self-government in improving governance and development. Conversely, in some regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa or West Asia, incomplete decentralization processes and difficulty adapting transferred competences — often without resources or accompanying measures — can undermine the role of LRGs in localization. This is observed particularly in countries with weak local systems, no local elected authorities, or a 'mix' of local executives appointed by national governments and local councils elected with very limited powers (e.g. Sudan). Lastly, there are countries where elections only take place at the village level (Lao PRD), or have been delayed for a long time (Guinea), or are expected to take place for the first time in the coming year (Egypt, Togo).

“Localizing” is the process of taking into account sub-national contexts in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, from the setting of goals and targets, to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress

TABLE 1.1.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS IN THE 47 COUNTRIES REPORTING TO THE HLPF IN 2018

	TYPE OF STATE	REGIONAL-STATE LEVEL	INTERMEDIATE LEVEL	MUNICIPAL LEVEL	TOTAL LRGS		TYPE OF STATE	REGIONAL-STATE LEVEL	INTERMEDIATE LEVEL	MUNICIPAL LEVEL	TOTAL LRGS
AFRICA (11)						LATIN AMERICA (6)					
Benin	U			77	77	Colombia	U	32		1102	1134
Cabo Verde	U			22	22	Dominican Republic ^h	U	32		162	194
Egypt ^a	U			366	366	Ecuador	U	24		221	245
Guinea	U			342	342	Mexico	F	32		2464	2496
Mali	U	8	49	704	761	Paraguay	U	18		254	272
Namibia	U	14		57	71	Uruguay	U	19		112	131
Niger	U	8		265	273	MEWA (6)					
Republic of Congo	U	12		92	104	Bahrain ⁱ	U			4	4
Senegal	U		45	557	602	Lebanon	U			1029	1029
Sudan ^b	F	18		186	204	Qatar ^j	U				
Togo ^c	U	5		116	121	Saudi Arabia ^k	U			178	178
ASIA-PACIFIC (7)						NORTH AMERICA (3)					
Australia	F	8		571	579	State of Palestine	U			483	483
Bhutan	U	20		234	254	United Arab Emirates	F				
Kiribati	U			26	26	TOTAL					
Lao PDR ^d	U			-	-			475	1237	48935	50647
Singapore ^f	U			-	-						
Sri Lanka ^g	U	9		335	344						
Viet Nam	U	63	713	11162	11938						
EURASIA (1)											
Armenia	U			804	804						
EUROPE (14)											
Albania	U			61	61						
Andorra	U			7	7						
Greece	U	13		325	338						
Hungary	U	19		3201	3220						
Ireland	U			126	126						
Latvia	U			119	119						
Lithuania	U			60	60						
Malta	U			68	68						
Poland	U	16	380	2479	2875						
Romania	U	42		3181	3223						
Slovakia	U	8		2930	2938						
Spain	M	17	50	8124	8191						
Switzerland	F	26		2324	2350						

^a Local councils' elections are going to take place in 2019 for the first time in 10 years.

^b Local assemblies and executive bodies are appointed by the central authorities

^c Local elections will be held in 2018.

^d In Bhutan and Vietnam Local assemblies are elected by executive bodies who are appointed.

^e Provincial governors, mayors and district chiefs are appointed, while the village heads are directly elected.

^f There are no local governments, but 5 community development councils.

^g Based on the legislation local governments are elected. However due to internal problems, since 2015, local executives are appointed by central governments. Local elections are planned for 2018

^h Each governorate has its own municipality council, with separate elections for them. The most recent municipal election was held in 2014.

ⁱ The Central Municipal Council is elected. The Council is formed of 29 members representing constituencies spreading over 230 regions in the State of Qatar. The last elections were held in May 2015.

^j In 2005, local elections in 178 municipalities were held for half of the seats in the municipal council. The last local elections were held in 284 local councils, the first-ever elections open to female voters and candidates.

Sources: information obtained from local government associations, particularly from CEMR database for European countries; OECD, UCLG (2016) Subnational Governments around the World; CLGF Country profiles [available online at: <http://www.clgf.org.uk/resource-centre/clgf-publications/country-profiles/>]; OECD (2018) *Subnational Government in OECD Countries*; UNPAN, Public Administration Country Profile [available online at: http://www.unpan.org/country_profiles/]; European Committee of Regions, Division of Powers section [available online at <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/default.aspx>]; National Statistical Offices and National Government and Local Government's Portals from different countries; local press and online media.

02

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

This second report to the HLPF is based on information from the main global and regional networks, as well as national associations of cities, municipalities and regions in more than 61 countries. Data is mainly from different sources: a survey of the localization of the SDGs circulated among LRGs from March to April 2018; the contributions of several LRG network members of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF);⁵ as well as expert research groups.

Information for some countries has been collected in conjunction with the analysis of the 47 'Main messages' and the 29 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) published by the HLPF up to June 22. Partners (ACHR, CAHF, IIED, ISWA, UITP); UN agencies (UNISDR); and experts participated in Section 3 and 4 (specific goals analysis).

The survey of LRGs was designed according to the structure recommended by the Office of the UN Secretary-General for the Voluntary National Reviews to enhance cross-context comparability. The results show a striking level of mobilization by LRGs, with responses from diverse authorities within the governance tier, and several spontaneous contributions by municipalities, provinces and/or regions. Box 2.1 gives more insights into the survey and its techniques.⁶

The report complements the 47 'Main messages' and the 29 VNRs published up to June 22, 2018



BOX 2.1.

UCLG'S SURVEY: LESSONS LEARNED AND GUIDELINES

101 LRGs and their associations from 61 different countries responded to the survey. Twenty-eight of these are reporting to the 2018 HLPF. In Europe, a total of 47 answers were collected by CEMR/Platforma.

The surveys proved to be an interesting experiment on methodologies apt to engage local and regional governments in the monitoring process. It comprised of seven open-ended questions on the process of localization, addressing the national context for SDG implementation, LRGs' involvement in the VNRs, and follow-up mechanisms. It also asked LRGs about initiatives that support the localization of the SDGs.

We can draw a few general conclusions. Respondents were inclined to build on initiatives created at or led by the local and regional level, as well as on local strategic alignment with the SDGs.

Several respondents were also found to be comfortable with the concepts of multilevel, territorial reform and local financing at the core of the survey's analysis.

⁵ For more information on the GTF, see *Global networks* in Section 3.4.

⁶ From a total of 101 answers received, 54 were sent by LGAs from all the regions, while the remaining 47 were sent by cities and regions, except two answers: one from a CSO (Djibouti) and one from an SDG coordination unit (Union of Arab Emirates). Moreover, in Europe, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR-CCRE), the European Section of UCLG and Platforma developed a survey with the same methodological premises and techniques as UCLG's, which was then distributed to all CEMR and Platforma members. In the region, a total of 47 responses were received, which were kindly shared with UCLG for the sake of the analysis conducted in this report.

03

THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SDG LOCALIZATION

The involvement of LRGs in the localization process is progressing in all regions. Each, however, takes different forms. The following sub-sections analyse the participation of LRGs in VNR processes (Section 3.1); synthesize their actions to mobilize LRGs (Section 3.2); identify the institutional framework, analysing the relationships between all levels of government and stakeholders (Section 3.3); and make an initial attempt for the global mapping of LRGs' mobilization (Section 3.4).

3.1 PARTICIPATION OF LRGs IN THE PREPARATION OF THE VNRs

Countries often mention the importance of involving sub-national authorities or national parliaments, as well as civil society and other stakeholders, in their VNRs. But they are not always explicit about the terms of this involvement.

In collaboration with the GTF, UCLG has reviewed the information provided by LRGs since 2016. In 2018, in 23 out of the 43 countries which submitted information to UCLG (53%) LRGs affirm to have participated in the reporting process and the preparation of the VNRs. Only 28 countries out of 65 stated the same among respondents in

2016 and 2017 combined. Ultimately, in the whole 2016-2018 period under review, LRGs in 45% of the reporting countries affirm to have participated in the preparation of their countries' VNRs. This information is shown in Table 3.1.

This information suggests that there has been progress since the reviewing process began in 2016, but LRG involvement is still limited. Figure 3.1 gives a global overview and distribution by region of the consultation of LRGs in the 103 countries that presented their VNRs between 2016 and 2018.

TABLE 3.1.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATION OF THE VNRs⁷

	2016		2017		2018		TOTAL (Repeated countries excluded)	
Total countries	22		43		47		99*	
Consulted	11	50%	17	40%	23	53%	45	45%
Weak consultation	4	18%	10	23%	4	9%	17	17%
Not consulted	7	32%	15	35%	10	23%	30	30%
No Local Governments⁸			1		6		7	7%
No information⁹					4		4**	

⁷ Explanation of the categories: 1) Consulted: LRGs through their representative LGAs or a representative delegation of elected officers were invited to participate in the consultation (conferences, surveys, meetings); 2) Weak consultation: only isolated representatives and neither LGAs nor a representative delegation participated in meetings, or LGAs were invited to a presentation of the VNR (once finalized); 3) Not consulted: no invitation or involvement in the consultation process was issued, even if LGAs were informed.

⁸ Countries with no local self-governments: Monaco (2017), Bahrain, Lao PDR, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Sudan.

⁹ No information (until 22 June 2018): Bahamas, Hungary, Namibia, Republic of Congo.

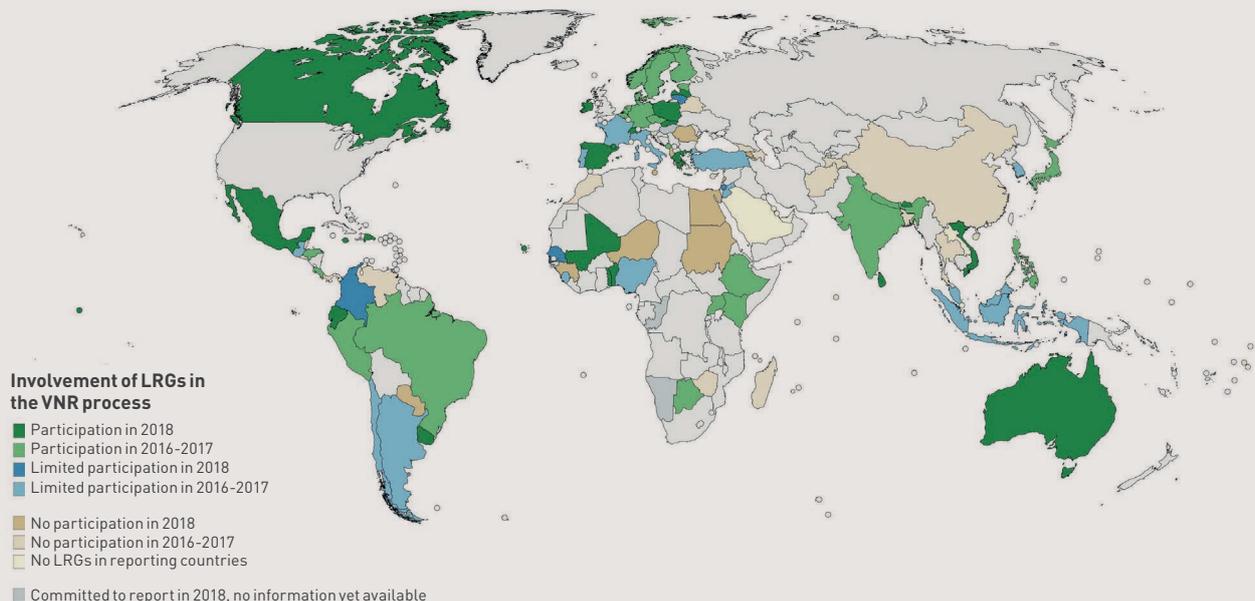
Sources: Surveys answered by LRGs and VNRs.

* In total, 112 countries reported between 2016 and 2018 (22 in 2016, 43 in 2017 and 47 in 2018). The final total (99 countries) records all countries once even though some have reported twice (9), or three times (1).

** Countries with no information (4) are not accounted in the total.

FIGURE 3.1.

MAP OF LRG PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESSES FOR THE VNRs



Even when they are recognized as important actors, LRGs and examples of their actions are only given limited reference in the majority of VNRs. Only a few countries dedicate specific space to the voice of LRGs (Spain); or assess their situation (Benin, Uruguay); or extensively quote LRG sources and examples (Australia, Ecuador, Greece and Latvia).

As in previous years, the modalities of LRGs' involvement in the VNR process are diverse: direct participative consultation; contribution to different multi-stakeholder meetings; national or regional dialogues; submission of experiences; or online consultations (e.g. Andorra, Benin, Ecuador, Ireland, Jamaica, Mali, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Togo, Uruguay). In other cases, engagement has been through bilateral contact or high-level taskforce groups in charge of VNR preparation (Bhutan, Dominican Republic, Kiribati, Latvia, Slovakia); a direct note to the government (Australia, Canada); occasional dialogue with a specific ministry (Cabo Verde, Vietnam); participation in other institutional spaces (Greece, Poland); or a mix of all modalities (Spain). Finally, in Mexico, information on LRGs was collected through a specialized technical committee.

Based on the assessment of the VNRs submitted between 2016 and 2018, LRGs are most involved in the VNR consultation process in Europe (in 62% of European countries that reported), followed by Asia-Pacific (53%), Latin America (47%) and Africa (44%). In some federal countries (e.g. Ethiopia, India, and Nigeria), participation is, de facto, limited to the regional level, with weaker involvement of local levels. LRGs in the Middle East and West Asia (MEWA) and Eurasia (CIS countries) are either scarcely involved or not participating at all (with the exception of Belarus at the regional level). Lastly, in North America, LRGs in Canada and, to a lesser extent, Jamaica have also been consulted.

In **AFRICA**, the LGAs of Benin and Togo are the 'frontrunners' most actively involved in bringing the vision at local levels to the reporting process. Cabo Verde also reported some level of consultation. Local authorities in Mali were invited to national and regional workshops, but the AMM (*Association des Municipalités du Mali*) was not a part of the drafting committee.¹⁰ In Senegal, local governments among other stakeholders were invited to a preparatory meeting in January 2018 and to a final meeting in June

2018.¹¹ In Niger while the LGA was informed, it was not actively involved.¹² In Egypt and Guinea, local administrative levels are not involved in the reporting process (and have limited autonomy).¹³ Information was not received from Namibia, Republic of Congo and Sudan.¹⁴

In the **ASIA-PACIFIC REGION**, Australian LGAs, cities and regions contributed to the report, collected experiences and sent case studies.¹⁵ In Bhutan, the VNR mentions that, among other stakeholders, local governments were at least consulted. In Kiribati, KiLGA has been involved in the planning stages of the VNR from the outset. In Vietnam, ACVN is planning to work with the Ministry of Planning and Investment to contribute to the VNR process. In Sri Lanka, several multi-stakeholder consultations were held at national and regional levels and a public call published on the ministry website inviting volunteers to report. In Singapore and Lao PDR there is no local elected government.¹⁶

In **EUROPE**, LRGs in Spain, Ireland, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Switzerland were involved or at least consulted. In Greece, the national government reports that the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE) and the Association of Greek Regions (ENPE) were consulted. This information, however, was not confirmed by KEDE.¹⁷ In Lithuania, municipal experts from the association of local authorities (ALAL) participated in the process (but not confirmed in the survey). The involvement of LRGs is still very limited or non-existent in Albania, Malta and Romania. Data on Hungary are still missing.¹⁸ In 2016-2017, LRGs were particularly active in Northern countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Norway and Sweden), and in countries from Western and Central Europe (Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland). Since July 2017, the participation of LRGs in the reporting process also improved in France and Italy (see LRG involvement in institutional coordination mechanisms in Section 3.3. below).

In **LATIN AMERICA**, LGAs of Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Uruguay reported their involvement in the consultation process in 2018. Conversely, LGAs in Colombia, which previously reported some level of involvement, said this year they had not been sufficiently consulted. Meanwhile, in Mexico, both the governors and the municipalities

¹⁰ A national workshop to present the draft of the VNR was held in mid-May.

¹¹ This is based on the *VNR of Senegal* (2018). NGOs and CSOs organized regional workshops and presented their conclusions to the Technical Committee in charge preparing the VNR.

¹² Based on the *VNR of Niger* (2018), the review was prepared by a Technical committee which consulted the "concerned administrations".

¹³ In the *Main messages of Guinea*, the country reports the organization of a workshop with all stakeholders. It also mentions its commitment to conduct a VNR process every year, which should include workshops for consultation and validation of each report.

¹⁴ The *VNR of Sudan* refers to a multi-stakeholder national consultation and workshops, but no specific mention is made of LRGs.

¹⁵ The *VNR of Australia* (2018) reports that the national government has engaged with state, territory and local governments on the SDGs through existing committees for the preparation of the VNR, coordinated by an interdepartmental group of senior officials, co-chaired by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

¹⁶ The *VNR of Lao PDR* (2018) mentions that public officials from 18 provinces participate in a first stakeholder consultation in late 2017 and in second round in April 2018. The *Main messages of Singapore* mention 'government agencies and stakeholders' (businesses, youth, civil society).

¹⁷ See *VNR of Greece* (2018).

¹⁸ According to the *Main messages of Hungary* mentions a 'multi-stakeholder platform', but not the LRGs.

took part in the National Council for the 2030 Agenda, but municipalities seem to have been less active in the VNR process. National electoral processes take place in both these countries this year. The LGA of Paraguay — OPACI — emphasized they had never been contacted.¹⁹ LGAs of Brazil and Costa Rica continue to reaffirm their strong involvement in the process.

In the **NORTH AMERICAN REGION**, the Federal Government of Canada has engaged local governments, the private sector and civil society in the preparations for meetings and documents. In the past, these stakeholders have been included as part of the Canadian delegation to the UN Forums. In Jamaica, regional consultation, including of local governments, took place for the preparation of the Long and Medium-Term Development Strategy (Vision 2030 Jamaica).

In **MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA**, some LGAs have been informed about reporting processes (e.g. Lebanon), but none has been invited to contribute. In Lebanon, the private sector and civil society — including representatives from local governments — were consulted by the National Reporting Committee.²⁰ The Association of Local Governments of Palestine (APLA) said they intended to contact their government to request participation. As mentioned above, in other countries in the region reporting this year (Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates), there is either limited local government autonomy or no local elected authorities.

LRGs' participation in the five regional forums organized this year by the UN regional commissions (UNECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ESCWA and ECA) to prepare for the HLPF is still limited. In general, a very small number of LRG representatives are given accreditation, but usually with restricted access, e.g. LRGs in Latin America can only go to side events. These are government forums, thus LRGs must be allowed to participate and appropriate access granted so that they can address other partners in the main forums.

The involvement of LRGs in reporting depends largely on the openness of the consultation process led by national governments and international institutions. It is important to underline, however, that in some countries lack of participation is also the result of either diminished capacity of LGAs (Guinea, Republic of Congo), or lack

LRGs' participation in the five regional forums organized this year by the UN regional commissions (UNECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ESCWA, and ECA) to prepare for the HLPF is still limited

of political understanding by local leaders. In other cases, there are no organized LGAs or, as mentioned above, sub-national administrative levels appointed by the national or regional government, who do not deem it necessary to engage subordinate levels in the consultation process.

A leap forward is necessary to involve LRGs in the reporting process. Strong joint efforts by both national governments and international institutions, as well as by LRG networks and organizations, will be essential. The GTF and UCLG in particular are developing an initiative to catalyse the mobilization of LGAs and local elected leaders in the reporting process through training and advice.

3.2 LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' ACTION TO LOCALIZE THE SDGs

As has been noted in the previous subsection, the involvement of LRGs and their associations in the national consultation process, and/or in the drafting of the VNRs, is progressing but limited. At the same time, **an increasing number of cities, regions, national associations and networks of LRGs worldwide are strongly promoting and supporting the localization of the global agendas.** Awareness efforts by LRGs to disseminate the SDGs through campaigns, events and regular communication channels are growing in almost all regions. There are more and more references to the SDGs and global agendas in social media by LRGs, as well as in bulletins, websites and other platforms.²¹ Greater attention is also being given to the global agendas in national conferences and congresses of LRG

¹⁹ According to the VNR, the report was developed by the Committee on SDG Paraguay 2030, with contributions from central government officers and institutions, CSO and private sector. The report mentions a more participative process for the definition of the National Development Strategy in 2014 that included 'a consultation process with more than 2,000 participants from national and SNGs, civil society, academia and private sector in more than 10 districts'.

²⁰ The Main messages of Lebanon (2018) mention three workshops organized at national level and regional consultation. Civil society consultations included representatives from local authorities, but not their national associations. A parliamentary committee on the SDGs was subsequently established.

²¹ For example, the website <http://localizingthesdgs.org/> developed by UNDP, UN Habitat and the GTF has been accessed in the past 2 years by 23,900 users from 192 countries and 2,794 cities.

associations (e.g. during local government days in African countries such as Burundi, Cameroon, Mali, Togo). Moreover, many cities, regions and their associations are moving beyond awareness-raising activities to taking action to develop knowledge exchange initiatives or integrate the SDGs in their local plans and projects. Table 3.2. presents a short overview of the type of actions that national associations and regional and global networks have been promoting around the world.

Many cities are taking the lead in implementing the SDGs and the other global agendas, even before their national governments have done so. **Under the leadership of visionary mayors and local leaders, cities are willing to be proactive in implementing innovative actions to 'localize' the SDGs without waiting for instructions from higher levels of government. They are committing to achieving the SDGs using either an integrated approach or by selecting the more relevant goals and targets.** For example, New York City announced in May 2018 that it would become the first city in the world to report directly to the HLPF in what it calls a Voluntary Local Review (see Box 3.1.). Others have expressed a similar intent.²² Section 3.4 presents different examples of the strategies cities are adopting.

Globally, the involvement of LRGs in localization is progressing in all regions. Section 3.4 highlights this by illustrating region-by-region actions. However, each region is evolving at a different pace: LRGs in Europe and North America are moving fastest, followed by Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America, whilst efforts in Eurasia (CIS countries) and the Middle East and West Asia are still nominal.

Some LGAs stand out for their particular intention and actions to train and incentivize their members, as well as for their interaction with national governments and other stakeholders. Among the countries that are reporting this year, this is the case in Australia, Benin, Canada, Dominican Republic, Latvia, Spain and Togo. In last year's LRG report to the HLPF, the more active LGAs were from Northern and Western Europe. However, this year those in Brazil and Costa Rica in Latin America have been added to the list, as well as LGAs in Indonesia and local governments in South Africa, and other platforms that gather cities (Japan), or NGOs and local governments (Republic of Korea).

In many countries, mobilization of LRGs has been fostered through strategic alliances with civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector and academia (e.g. nine out of 15 LGAs in Europe; Brazil with the movement ODS *Nós Podemos*), and international institutions (UNDP, UN Habitat, ILO, etc.). Cities are bringing together a multiplicity of stakeholders to address interlinked and cross-cutting issues, as well as pilot innovative solutions that could later be scaled up both nationally and internationally (see Section 4). Many cities are engaging their citizens through public campaigns, travelling expositions, activities in schools, libraries and cultural actions.

Global and regional networks of LRGs are also making remarkable efforts to put 'localization' at the centre of the LRGs' agendas, developing campaigns and expanding initiatives (see Section 3.4). Despite these efforts, outreach is still limited. A study of the Asia region provides a valuable insight for other regions. In general, the 'frontrunner' cities, as well as the LGAs that are involved, are a minority group.²³ As mentioned above, several national associations remain poorly informed about the global agendas and their relevance at the local level. This is even truer in medium-sized and small municipalities.

As shown by the survey responses of LGAs, including from among the most active from Europe, Africa and other regions, many LRGs perceive the SDGs to be an 'internationally imposed agenda'. Members consider 'the SDGs are known but not applicable to [their] daily work'; that there is 'limited support to change practices according to the SDG framework'; and that it is 'difficult to cooperate with other sectors of society and other tiers of government' on this.²⁴

As underlined in our 2017 HLPF Report, if LRGs perceive the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to be yet another external 'burden' without adequate support, they will be discouraged from being proactive. The GTF document states that, **'most of the SDGs are a part of the daily responsibilities and activities of local and regional governments'**.²⁵ But one of the key conditions for stronger LRG involvement will be acknowledging that policies to empower them and a collaborative multilevel governance approach must be integral parts of a national implementation framework. These fundamental elements will be analysed in the following section.

²² For example, three cities in Japan are also planning to present local SDG reports: Toyama city, Kitakyushu city and Shimokawa town.

²³ IGES Policy Report (April 2018), *Early view of ASEAN's 'Frontrunner cities' on the Sustainable Development Goals and Local Data Management*, Japan, p.9. Survey answered by 30 respondents from national and local governments in first quarter 2018. From this study, awareness on the SDGs appears to be higher in Cambodia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines, and lower in Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam.

²⁴ For European countries, as mentioned above, CEMR/Platforma collected answers based on a specific survey. Similar considerations are quoted in IGES for ASEAN countries (2018), p.9. *'Many city officials are unsure if SDGs will be directly useful in their daily work. Similar to the national officials, they are taken aback by "so many" goals and targets, and they think that the SDGs are "abstract" and purely "aspirational". They are unsure of the real benefits of explicitly reframing all local actions in reference to the SDGs.'*

²⁵ UCLG (2016), *The Sustainable Development Goals, What local governments need to know*. The document is available at: <https://www.uclg.org/fr/media/news/sustainable-development-goals-what-local-governments-need-know>.



BOX 3.1.

NEW YORK GLOBAL VISION – URBAN ACTION: A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE GLOBAL GOALS

Source: Verbatim from NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs

'In April 2015, Mayor de Blasio committed New York City to OneNYC, a ground-breaking strategic plan that took stock of the significant challenges New York City faced as a global city. OneNYC charted a path forward to achieving goals such as lifting 800,000 New Yorkers out of poverty, expanding access to nutritious and affordable food, and ensuring that those on the front lines of climate change — often the most vulnerable New Yorkers — are protected against its risks.

Recognizing the extraordinary overlap between the thinking about City's future and the ways in which the international community thinks about global challenges, the NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs established Global Vision — Urban Action. Through this programme, we mapped OneNYC to the

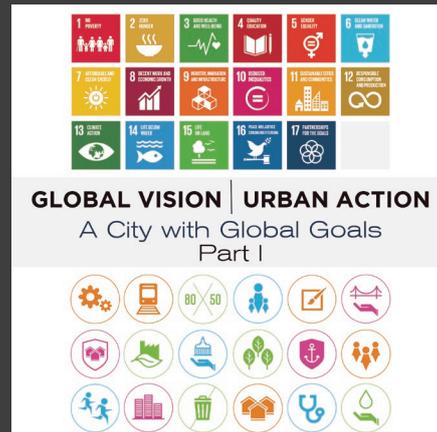
SDGs to identify the links between the city local strategy and the Global Goals. Since then, our office has held a series of events to bring policy practitioners together to discuss these links. We have organized a range of opportunities to explore how our work fits with the SDGs, including mental health, pay equity, and decent work and economic growth.

The Global Vision | Urban Action program also brings the UN diplomatic community out of the headquarters in Turtle Bay and into our communities across the five boroughs to see first-hand how NYC is implementing the Global Goals locally. Activities have included a visit to the largest recycling facility in the United States in Brooklyn and a tour around the local waterways on a sludge vessel to understand how NYC manages our wastewater. We also work to bring the voices of our NYC colleagues to the UN to inform discussions about achieving the SDGs.

In July 2018, NYC will become the first city to report directly to the UN on our progress toward achieving the SDGs in what we call a Voluntary Local Review, modelled after the Voluntary National Reviews. Using the common language of the SDGs, we will share its successes and also identify areas where we can learn from other stakeholders who are searching for solutions to the world's most critical issues.

Youth engagement is key to achieving the SDGs. Our NYC Junior Ambassadors programme connects the work of the United Nations to NYC 7th graders in schools across NYC to build global citizens. The programme offers unique tools to educators, who integrate the UN and its work on the SDGs into their teaching to help students learn about global issues and make an impact in their own neighbourhoods. Since 2015, we have reached over 1,000 students and educators in more than 50 classrooms who are learning about topics ranging from climate change and gender equity to the refugee crisis and thinking critically about how to make a difference locally. We are creating an ecosystem that involves our students going home and talking to their families, friends and neighbours about why the UN and this work matters.

With cities growing faster than at any point in history, some of the most challenging issues of our time are most acutely experienced in urban areas. By the same token, solutions to some of humanity's toughest problems will be found in cities — from addressing poverty and income inequality, to tackling climate change. Policy practitioners and colleagues throughout NYC are making progress locally on a number of challenges — all of which have a global resonance. Cities can make a huge impact by sharing examples with the global community on what is working and showcasing our lived experience.'



ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS ASSOCIATIONS TO SUPPORT SDG LOCALIZATION

COUNTRY	REPORTING INSTITUTIONS	DECLARATIONS, FORA, NATIONAL CONFERENCE	PUBLICATIONS (NEWSLETTERS, BROCHURES)	CAMPAIGNING	TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE-SHARING PROGRAMMES	PROMOTE LOCAL PLANS' ALIGNMENT WITH SDGs	SPECIAL INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS	INVOLVEMENT IN VNR
AFRICA								
Benin	ANCB	●	●	●	●	●	●	Participation (2018)
Burundi	ABELO	●	●		●	●		To be presented
Cabo Verde	ANMCV		●	●		●		Participation (2018)
Cameroon	CVUC	●	●			●		To be presented in 2019
Central African Rep.	AMCA	●						To be presented
Comoros	ANMC				●			To be presented
Mali	AMM	●	●			●	●	Participation (2018)
Mozambique	ANAMM		●		●			To be presented
Niger	AMN	●	●	●		●		No participation (2018)
Senegal	UAEL, AMS, ADS		●					Weak participation (2018)
South Africa	SALGA	●	●	●	●	●	●	To be presented in 2019
Togo	UCT		●	●	●	●	●	Participation (2018)
Regional Level	UCLG Africa	●	●	●	●		●	Participation in UNECA Regional Forum
	REFELA			●	●			
ASIA-PACIFIC								
Australia	ALGA		●					Participation (2018)
Indonesia	APEKSI		●			●	●	Weak participation (2017)
Kiribati	KiLGA		●	●	●			Participation (2018)
New Zealand	LGNZ	●	●		●	●	●	To be presented
Philippines	LCP	●	●		●	●		Participation (2016)
Sri Lanka	FSLGA		●		●	●	●	Participation (2018)
Vietnam	ACVN	●	●		●	●		Participation (2018)
Regional Level	UCLG ASPAC	●	●	●	●	●	●	Participation in UNESCAP Regional Forum
EURASIA								
Regional Level	UCLG EURASIA	●	●					
EUROPE								
Albania	AAM	●				●		No participation (2018)
Belgium	VVSG	●	●	●	●	●	●	Participation (2017)
Bulgaria	NAMRB		●					To be presented
Czech Republic	SMO		●	●	●			Participation (2017)
Germany	DST, DLT, DStGB	●	●	●	●	●	●	Participation (2016)
Greece	KEDE		●					No participation (2018)
Italy	ANCI, Toscana, AICCRE		●	●	●			Weak participation (2017)
Latvia	LALRG		●					Participation (2018)
Lithuania	ALAL				●			Weak participation (2018)
Macedonia	ZELS							To be presented
Moldova	CALM	●	●		●			To be presented
Montenegro	UOM	●	●			●		To be presented
The Netherlands	VNG	●	●	●	●	●	●	Participation (2017)
Norway	KS	●	●	●	●			Participation (2016)

TABLE 3.2.

COUNTRY	REPORTING INSTITUTIONS	DECLARATIONS, FORA, NATIONAL CONFERENCE	PUBLICATIONS (NEWSLETTERS, BROCHURES)	CAMPAIGNING	TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE-SHARING PROGRAMMES	PROMOTE LOCAL PLANS' ALIGNMENT WITH SDGs	SPECIAL INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS	INVOLVEMENT IN VNR
EUROPE								
Romania	ACOR		●	●	●			No participation (2018)
Slovenia	SOS						●	No participation (2017)
Slovakia	ZMOS				●	●		Participation (2018)
Spain	FEMP	●	●	●	●	●		Participation (2018)
Sweden	SALAR	●	●	●	●	●		Participation (2017)
United Kingdom	COSLA (Scotland)	●	●	●	●			To be presented in 2019
Regional Level	CEMR/PLATFORMA	●	●	●	●		●	Participation in UNECE Regional Forum
	ICLEI/European Sustainable Cities Platform	●	●	●	●	●	●	
LATIN AMERICA								
Brazil	CNM	●	●	●	●	●	●	Participation (2017)
Chile	ACHM	●	●		●			Weak participation (2017)
Colombia	FCM	●	●		●	●	●	Weak participation (2018)
Costa Rica	UNGL	●	●	●	●	●		Participation (2017)
Dominican Rep.	FEDOMU	●	●		●	●		Participation (2018)
Ecuador	AME	●	●	●	●			Participation (2018)
Guatemala	AGAAI	●			●			Weak participation (2017)
Mexico	FENAMM				●			Participation (2018)
Paraguay	OPACI					●		No participation (2018)
Peru	AMPE		●		●	●		Participation (2017)
Regional Level	AL-LAS	●	●	●	●	●		
	FLACMA	●	●	●	●			
	Mercociudades	●	●	●	●	●		Participation in UNECLAC Regional Forum
MEWA								
Lebanon	AAM	●	●		●	●		No participation (2018)
State of Palestine	APLA		●					Weak participation (2018)
Turkey	UMT	●	●		●	●		Weak participation (2016)
Regional Level	UCLG MEWA	●	●	●				Participation in UNESCWA Regional Forum
NORAM								
Canada	FCM		●		●	●		Participation (2018)
Jamaica	ALGAJ		●				●	Participation (2018)
GLOBAL TASKFORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS (GTF)								
	AIMF	●	●	●	●		●	
	C40	●	●	●	●		●	
	CLGF	●	●	●		●	●	
	ICLEI	●	●	●	●	●	●	
	Nrg4SD	●	●	●	●		●	
	UCCI	●	●	●	●	●	●	
	UCLG	●	●	●	●		●	

Sources: Surveys answered by LRGs and UCLG research. Additional contributions, not included in this table, were received from cities and regions from Djibouti, France, Morocco, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Seychelles and Uruguay.

3.3

LRGs AND THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE SDGs

In the majority of countries, national development plans or national sustainable development strategies already provide a national implementation framework for the 2030 Agenda.²⁶ Although UN Member States will implement the SDGs, national policies and frameworks should undergo a 'localization' process to make sense of and operationalize the SDGs in cities and territories, where sub-national governments are the key drivers. In other words, the role of LRGs is critical to supporting the 'policy-implementation' loop.²⁷

Indeed, **achieving the SDGs means strengthening collaboration and developing joint efforts within governments 'to a level that has not been seen before'**.²⁸ This is to ensure not only that an integrated approach is delivered but also that 'policy coherence'

is guaranteed, as stated in SDG 17.14. Responding to people's needs and demands means connecting LRGs with national policies and strategies through an integrated multilevel governance (MLG) approach, or 'whole-of-government' and 'whole society' approach. This necessitates a thoroughgoing change of political culture, participation and cooperation between national, regional and local levels throughout the administration, as well as between public and civil society actors, private sector, workers' organizations, and academia, among others.

The majority of countries (53 out of a sample of 99) have either created or assigned responsibilities to cross-sectoral entities, e.g. inter-ministerial committees or National Councils for Sustainable Development. Many of these are new structures, e.g. national commissions or high-level councils for the implementation of the SDGs (35 countries) to facilitate coordination and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. In 36 countries, SDG implementation is chaired, coordinated and led by Heads of State or Heads of Government.²⁹ This would imply that the SDGs are high on national policy agendas and have political priority.³⁰ However, some countries are still deciding on which mechanisms to use.

TABLE 3.3.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP MECHANISMS

	PARTICIPATION (including at consultative level)	LIMITED PARTICIPATION ³¹	NOT PARTICIPATING	NO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ³²	TOTAL	NO INFORMATION ³³
TOTAL COUNTRIES	39	12	41	7	99	4
Africa	6	1	11		18	2
Asia Pacific	7	1	9	2	19	
Europe	17	4	8	1	30	1
Eurasia (CIS countries)	1		3		4	
Latin America	6	5	6		17	
Middle East and West Asia	1		4	4	9	
North America	1	1			2	1

Sources: Surveys answered by LRGs and VNRs of 2016–2017. The total (99) includes the countries that reported between 2016 and 2018 (112). However, it only records a country once even though it has reported twice (the case with nine countries), or three times (one country). Countries with no information were removed (four countries).

Coordination remains a critical challenge. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to collaboration between tiers of governments. The structure of the state (federal or unitary), decentralization reforms, political and economic considerations, and organizational factors relating to the context of a particular country may create specific opportunities for, or barriers to, vertical and horizontal cooperation.

An analysis of the national coordination and follow-up mechanisms for the SDGs shows LRG engagement is still limited in almost all regions. In the majority, however, the national level recognizes that LRGs must play a critical role in implementation.

As shown in Table 3.3, LRG involvement in national coordination mechanisms and follow-up is in the main effective in 39% of the countries that reported between 2016 and 2018. LRGs are most involved in Europe (57% of countries reported), followed by Asia Pacific (37%), Latin America (35%), and Africa (33%). In federal countries Belgium, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and Sudan, LRG engagement is restricted to the state or regional level. Meanwhile in Australia, Brazil, Mexico and Germany, local governments are also involved in national mechanisms and the situation is similar in quasi-federal countries such as South Africa and Spain. In Eurasia, only in Belarus are local governments (but also regional authorities) participating; and in MEWA they are only participating in Turkey.

Different modalities of participation

The involvement of LRGs can take different forms but for the purposes of this analysis, three have been identified. The first modality is LRGs' involvement in a new consultative council that advises central government (e.g. in Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Mexico). This first modality also includes engagement in technical committees under inter-ministerial coordination (e.g. Benin, Colombia), and LGAs having a seat in national decision-making mechanisms, which does in some instances happen. For example, in Spain the representatives of municipalities and regions, e.g. FEMP and some *Comunidades Autónomas*, while involved as observers at first, have recently (as the report was being developed) become full members of the country's High-Level Commission; in the Netherlands, they are invited to the inter-ministerial SDG focal point group. In some cases, the representation of LGAs is limited

to sectoral commissions — e.g. Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Sustainable Urban Development ('IMA-STadt') in Germany, or the Committee on the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) for SALGA in South Africa.

LGA participation is also observed through pre-existing mechanisms such as a Council for Sustainable Development (e.g. Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Moldova, Montenegro and Switzerland); Greece's Economic and Social Committee, or Poland's Joint Central Government and Local Government Committee. In 24 countries, these mechanisms are framed as multi-stakeholder forums (e.g. Ireland, Ivory Coast, Mali, Slovakia and Togo), some of which are considered 'non-governmental'.

Beyond the multi-stakeholder mechanisms, a third modality includes the specific coordination and follow-up of the SDGs through regular ad-hoc meetings between LGAs and the government (e.g. in Canada³⁴ and Denmark).

These categories may evolve. In fact, in the past few months there have been positive developments in France and Indonesia. In France, a representation of LGAs was invited to the High-Level Steering Committee for the SDGs that was established in April 2018 and charged with creating a roadmap for the Localization of the SDGs. In Indonesia, a presidential decree in July 2017 incorporated the LGAs in the SDGs National Coordination Team and requested regional and local action plans to be aligned with national plans and the SDGs. Furthermore, all LGAs (APEKSI, APPSI, APKASI, ADEKSI, ADKASI and ADPSI) were invited to the launching of the *Home Minister Decree on Localising the SDGs*. On the other hand, the VNR of Paraguay states that LRGs should be involved in the working groups to support the coordination of the SDGs. The LGA — OPACI — reports, however, that it was not informed.³⁵

Weak or no participation

Even when there is weak or no participation, indirect or sporadic consultation of sub-national levels can take place. Coordination is usually ensured by either an inter-ministerial or inter-agency mechanism (e.g. Bhutan, China, Egypt, Romania, Senegal, Sri Lanka³⁷ and Sudan), or a single ministry, with limited or no involvement of other stakeholders (e.g. Cyprus, Niger and Vietnam). In Eurasian countries new mechanisms were created

²⁴ The analysis of VNRs (and the UCLG surveys) in 99 countries that were reporting between 2016 and 2018 shows that, globally, in developing countries the SDGs were aligned with national development plans while in developed countries the SDGs are mainstreamed in the national sustainable development strategies.

²⁷ UNDESA (2018), *Working Together: Integration, Institutions and the SDGs, World Public Sector Report 2018*.

²⁸ UNDESA (2018), p.29.

²⁹ UNDESA (2018), p. viii-ix. Based on the data and analysis proposed by UNDESA (2018), p. ix, updated with the new information collected for this report. See also: UNDP (2017), *Institutional and Coordination Mechanisms, Guidance Note on Facilitating Integration and Coherence for SDG Implementation*.

³⁰ OECD (2016), *Coordination and implementation of the SDGs: The Role of the Centre of Government*. <http://oecdinsights.org/2016/04/05/coordination-and-implementation-of-the-sdgs-the-role-of-the-centres-of-government>.

³¹ 'Limited participation' refers to countries where LRGs are occasionally consulted, either directly (Slovenia); or through a technical committee (China); or in federal countries, through state or provincial government (Argentina). In some cases, LGAs participate through NGO platforms (Italy, although the previous government committed to involve them directly).

³² Countries with no local self-governments: Monaco (2017), Bahrain, Lao PDR, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates.

³³ No information received: Bahamas, Hungary, Namibia, Republic of Congo.

³⁴ FCM has a strategic partnership with Global Affairs Canada agency where the two parties could consider making the SDGs a more formal part of the semi-annual meetings.

³⁵ See *VNR of Paraguay* (2018), p. 35.

³⁶ According to the *VNR of Sri Lanka* (2018) three representatives of Provincial Councils were appointed by the President to be part of the national Sustainable Development Council (12 members).

— National Councils for Sustainable Development — headed by the Prime Minister or the Deputy (Armenia, Azerbaijan) or by an SDGs coordinator linked to the President's office (Belarus, Kyrgyzstan), as well as Advisory Councils (Tajikistan).³⁷

Interactions between LRGs and the Ministerial Committees on the SDGs can be indirect and mediated by a Special Liaison Office (SLO) (e.g. Kenya), or by SDG representatives at national and regional levels (e.g. Nigeria), or by the ministry or department of local governments (e.g. Ghana, Jamaica). In some countries, there are multi-stakeholder mechanisms with no clear representation of LRGs (e.g. Chile, Lebanon, Lithuania). Figure 3.2. below sums up the various degrees of LRG involvement in dialogue and participation, in the framework of multilevel mechanisms for coordination and SDG follow-up.

More efforts are still needed

The effectiveness of the mechanisms mentioned above is still incipient in a majority of countries in terms of fostering an administrative culture that promotes both horizontal (cross-sectoral) and vertical (between different levels of government) collaboration.

In fact, the 'whole-of-government' or MLG approach is often more sensitive on effective collaboration between ministries and national agencies (a more horizontal approach), whereas the vertical relations between administrations are not integrated in a systematic way.³⁸ Localization (referred to as 'territorialization' in some countries) is often fragmented. The complexity of multiple layers of LRGs (state, province and district) can further complicate the commitments already made. Some state or provincial governments are likely to show only limited interest in embracing the 2030 Agenda given their current resources.

At the same time, a striking number of countries are adopting top-down approaches. **Many countries assume in their VNR that national plans will 'trickle down' to sub-national levels;** and this is consistently the approach in non-decentralized countries such as Lao PDR. In such cases, every sectoral department and agency at central and sub-national level (from provincial to district level) has been instructed to integrate SDGs into their Socio-Economic Development Plans.³⁹

Even when national plans or strategies acknowledge the role of LRGs, as is the case in West and Central African countries

(Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Senegal), the proposed strategies for SDG implementation are not necessarily supported by concrete measures to empower local governments, or they remain vague on the strategy of 'territorialization'.⁴⁰

The involvement of sub-national levels requires both strong dialogue and long-term integrated strategies. In Latin America, the experience of Colombia is particularly illustrative in this regard. A recent national report (March 2018) pointed out that, in spite of the efforts of national governments, in a sample of 63 development plans of departments and their capital cities, only 15 had reached a high level of integration of the SDGs. The remaining 48 development plans had either a 'partial' (24) or a 'general reference' (24) to the SDGs. Even if this appears to be a positive trend, other sources point out that less than 3% of municipalities have integrated the SDGs in their plans. Sources agree, however, that a large majority of local and departmental governments still need to translate their commitments into action agendas, enhance stakeholders' involvement and mobilize more resources. Local governments argue, however, that the national government approach has been unilateral and has not taken into consideration the needs of peripheral areas and small municipalities.⁴¹

As discussed in the next section, in countries where the process of localization is gaining momentum, this is the result of the confluence of bottom-up initiatives and national policies. National initiatives are necessary to encourage local involvement. National governments need to develop enabling institutional frameworks, with adequate incentives (e.g. in Benin and Nigeria, where national funds incentivize local engagements; or in Belgium, where local political leaders from 20 pilot municipalities receive clear support to develop innovative experiences). However, at the local level, political will and leadership are needed, and this must be supported by strong local coalitions and stakeholder mobilization. Creating these conditions at sub-national level is one of the major challenges of the SDGs and an essential condition for their achievement.

LRGs' involvement is also crucial to monitor and follow up on the progress of the SDGs at sub-national levels. Most of the indicators adopted by the international community pose a challenge in terms of being disaggregated and collected at the

³⁷ Other countries created inter-ministerial working groups, bringing together experts from different ministries (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan). The Russian Federation has no comprehensive national Sustainable Development Strategy or National SDG Plan at this stage.

³⁸ See also UNDESA (2018).

³⁹ See VNR of Lao PDR (2018). Moreover, Sri Lanka reports a similar approach.

⁴⁰ For more information on Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Senegal, see AIMF (December 2017) *Plaidoyer des Autorités Locales en Faveur de la Localisation des ODD, Rapport Pays*. In the case of Senegal, see also Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et du Plan, République du Sénégal, *Objectifs de Développement Durable – ODD, Etat d'avancement de la mise en œuvre, Rapport provisoire, August 2017*.

⁴¹ See CONPES 3918 (March 2018), *Estrategia para la implementación de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible en Colombia*. See also DNP (October 2017), *Inclusión de los ODS en los planes de desarrollo territoriales, 2016–2019*, Bogotá; CCONG (June 2017), *Segundo Monitoreo Ciudadano*, Bogotá.

⁴² CEMR, in collaboration with the French Government, has since 2016 developed a monitoring tool: The Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC). In Germany, the associations of LRGs, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Territorial Research and other partners, created a model of assessment whose indicators stem directly from the requirements, targets and indicators of the SDGs. The National Confederation of Municipalities (CNM) of Brazil has developed its own measurement and reporting tool – a *Mandala* of SDGs at the municipal level. Some cities have developed their own set of indicators, e.g. Utrecht (the Netherlands).

⁴³ See Presidency of Nigeria (2015), *Nigeria's Road to the SDGs – Country Transition Strategy*, p. 9.

⁴⁴ See UNDESA (2018).

sub-national level. Few countries have made real progress in involving LRGs in improving the availability of reliable disaggregated data. Several local governments and their associations and organizations have started to develop different systems of indicators, (e.g. Germany, Brazil) and in Europe by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions — CEMR.⁴² Other international institutions are developing different initiatives (e.g. UN-Habitat). Some of these, however, take an approach that does not help LRGs join the formal reporting process at the global level. To realize the promise of ‘leaving no one behind’, the development of indicators and follow-up mechanisms that are both disaggregated and adapted to the sub-national level is urgently needed, allowing the monitoring of progress in territories and communities. This issue will be further analysed in Section 5.

From the perspective of LRGs, **localizing means adopting a local-based approach to mobilize endogenous capacities and enhance the potentialities of territories and local stakeholders in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.** As an inclusive process, it should go from the design of objectives and targets to the means of implementation, using disaggregated indicators to measure and monitor progress. A real multilevel approach should catalyse dialogue and respect the principle of subsidiarity.

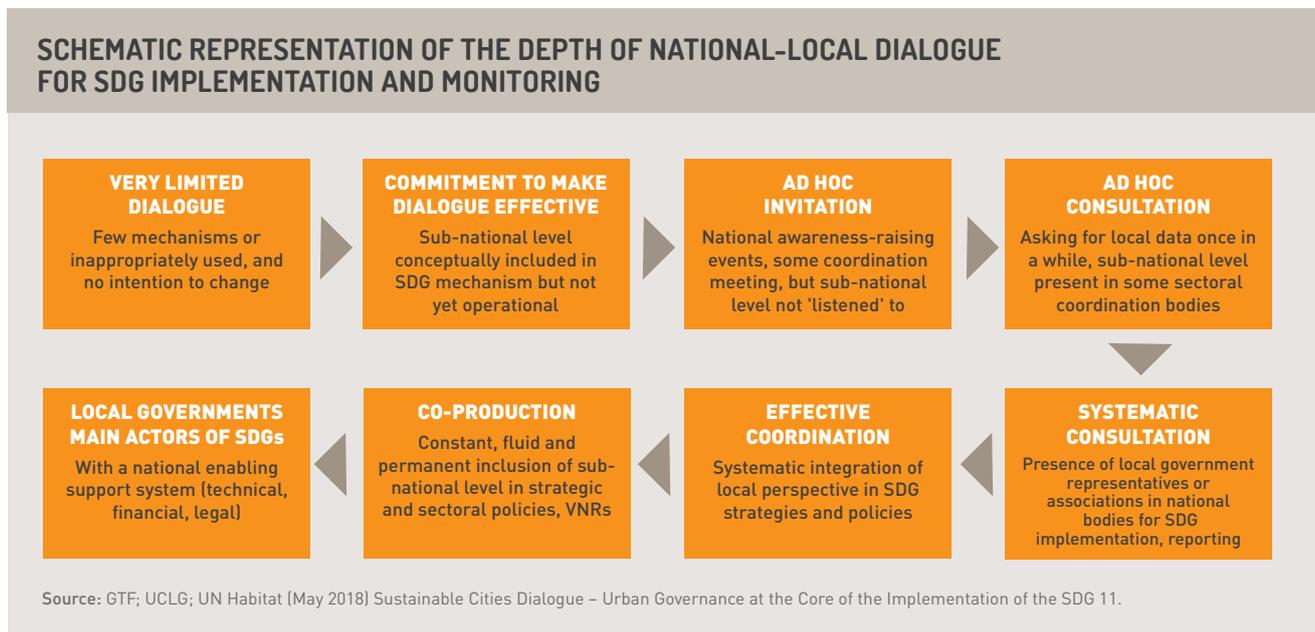
As recognized by the Nigerian Government

in its SDGs strategy, local governments are ‘pivotal to the achievement of the SDGs because they are the only tier of government that can feasibly understand, (...) and react to the millions of activities that will collectively add up to the SDGs’.⁴³

The SDGs create an opportunity to develop a ‘new governance culture’, requiring the progressive transformation of institutional frameworks. However, the UCLG — GTF Report to the 2017 HLPF shows that while national governments are increasingly recognizing the role of LRGs, **this does not necessarily lead to the creation of multilevel spaces for dialogue and joint action.** UNDESA reaches similar conclusions.⁴⁴

Even if localization is making progress and innovative initiatives are identified in many countries, these local actions still face the challenge of scale. Going beyond the local or regional level is crucial to effectively connecting and integrating SDG actions across levels of government and embedding them within a national development strategy. Enhanced collaboration between all levels of government and with local stakeholders could help establish and strengthen these linkages. However, such a paradigmatic change in governance culture would need to be given more priority as part of an institutional transformation driven by the process of implementing the SDGs, as well as during the follow-up and reporting process. A dedicated section on the involvement of LRGs in the VNRs could give greater focus to these issues.

FIGURE 3.2.





LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' ACTION TOWARDS THE LOCALIZATION OF SDGs IN SPAIN

In the 1st Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030, covering the period 2017-2020, the 17 SDGs and 100 selected targets are linked to 93 of the commitments of the Basque Government's Programme, 80 planning instruments, 19 legislative initiatives and 50 indicators.⁴⁶ The Regional Government of Valencia created a multi-stakeholder partnership at regional level (including CSOs, academia, NGOs and the private sector), and developed an inter-departmental mechanism to promote a 'whole-of-government' SDG approach, shared with their municipalities.⁴⁷ The Barcelona Provincial Council aligned its Action Plan (2016-2019) with the SDGs, including its international strategy, and developed a communication campaign ('*Sí, m'hi comprometo!*'). In addition, it developed a training programme for its employees and 311 municipalities and enabled economic and technical support to municipalities to localize the SDGs.⁴⁸ The province of Córdoba is adapting its budget to the 'localization plan for the 2030 Agenda'. It launched multi-stakeholder dialogues and outreach actions, in collaboration with the Andalusian Municipal Fund for International Solidarity (FAMSI). The FAMSI, as well as other municipal funds that cover the municipalities and NGOs of their regions (Extremadura, Mallorca), are also developing several initiatives (forums, campaigns, cooperation, etc.).⁴⁹ Other municipalities involved include Alcalá de Henares, La Granja de San Idelfonso, Granollers, Málaga, Móstoles, Sant Cugat del Vallès, Soria, Terrassa and Torrejón del Rey.

Thanks to a strong advocacy effort by the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), a representation of LRGs was invited to participate in the High-Level Group for the 2030 Agenda in charge of the VNR preparation (created in October 2017). The LRGs initially had observer status, but recently the government recognized them as permanent members of the High-Level Group. The new national government nominated a High-Level Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda, linked to the President of Government, to complement the inter-ministerial committee on the SDGs under the responsibility of Foreign Affairs, created in October 2017. FEMP's efforts also meant that Spain's VNR — the Spanish Action Plan for the 2030 Agenda — now integrates two key proposals made by LRGs. These are: 1) open and transparent governments and 2) international development cooperation, including decentralized cooperation. It also makes the New Urban Agenda a strategic lever to achieve the SDGs. Additionally, the report includes two chapters on the LRGs: one on their specific commitment to the 2030 Agenda, including several pages for each regional government; and another on a national policy for territorial cohesion. Lastly, on 29 May 2018, the FEMP adopted its Strategy to Implement the 2030 Agenda.

BOX 3.2.

3.4 MAPPING LRG ACTIONS BY REGION

As mentioned above, the involvement of LRGs in the implementation of the SDGs is growing in all regions, but using different ways and means. Based on LRG sources, this section considers many of these initiatives. Section 4 will then provide an in-depth analysis of concrete policies and experiences at sub-national levels.

EUROPE

In Europe, mobilization has been more active in Northern and Western countries and, to a lesser extent, in East and South-East Europe.

Among the countries that are providing reports this year, Spain's LRGs have been particularly active. Many LRGs and their associations — particularly the Federation of Spanish Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) — have taken the lead with innovative initiatives to support a bottom-up approach. Regional governments such as the Basque Country, Catalonia and Valencia were among the first in Europe to launch their own SDG strategies. Cities and municipalities, such as Madrid and the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, are integrating the SDGs into their current development plans (2015-2019 and 2015-2020 respectively). Madrid launched a public consultation on its plan 'Madrid 2030: a city for all peoples and generations'.⁴⁵ At the intermediary level, different provincial governments are trying to localize the 2030 Agenda, e.g. Barcelona, Cádiz, Castelló and Córdoba (see Box 3.2).

In **Albania**, local governments are integrated into the National SDG Committee and Parliament has acknowledged their role in SDG implementation. The LGA — AAM — has been involved in the UN SDG-MAPS mission to accelerate SDG implementation. In **Greece**, local and regional governments associations participate in the national body that ensures dialogue and a consultative role — the Economic and Social Council-. Athens and Thessaloniki, or medium-sized municipalities such as Trikala, Halandri, as well as the small island of Tilos, have developed initiatives in different domains (social and health relief, refugees, resilience, waste, renewable energies). Regions have thus far implemented 30,000 projects promoting regional development and local economies, creating new jobs, supporting social solidarity structures, improving the environment and upgrading

education, health, tourism and culture. In **Ireland**, local authorities are represented in the SDG Stakeholder Forum that contributes to the National Implementation Plan 2018-2020. In **Latvia**, both the associations of regional and local governments — LALRG and LPS — have promoted SDG multi-stakeholder dialogues during 2017 between local and national governments and civil society. The LALRG organized two grant competitions for development education in Latvian local governments, and five winning projects were awarded financial support: as the country's VNR claims, 'all local governments in Latvia have adopted sustainable development strategies'. In **Lithuania**, experts from the association of local authorities — ALAL — participated in the preparation of the VNR. Following the VNR, LRGs are gradually integrating sustainable development approaches in their policies (planning, mobility, waste management, energy, risk prevention, etc). Nevertheless, in its response to the survey, ALAL notes that the involvement of local authorities is limited. LRGs in **Poland** participate in the Task Force for the Coherence of the Strategy for Responsible Development to contribute to the reporting process and the monitoring of the strategy. The Joint Central Government and Local Government Committee facilitates the joint follow-up of the implementation of Polish priorities for the SDGs at sub-national level. Sixteen Polish cities are active in EU programmes seeking to combine the economic, social and environmental dimensions of improving the functioning and quality of urban life (URBACT III), and another 34 cities participate in pilot programmes related to revitalization of urban areas and sustainable mobility. The association of municipalities of **Romania** — ACR — reported that it participated in several conferences organized by the government at regional levels and will launch a sensitization campaign directed at members this year. Its municipalities (151) are involved in the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, as are many others in Europe. Different cities are engaged in the 'smart cities' initiative launched by central government (Bucharest, Oradea and Sibiu). In **Slovakia**, the association of towns and communities — ZMOS — approved the prioritization of SDGs in March 2018, but little action has been taken until now. In **Switzerland**, 16 regional governments (cantons) and 234 municipalities are being involved in sustainability processes. Many cantons and communes have defined their

own strategies for sustainable development. Municipalities co-operate among themselves and are represented in cantonal and federal decision making. The federal government will intensify the dialogue with the cantons and communes through the Swiss Association of Towns and the Swiss Association of Municipalities, and support them in implementing the 2030 Agenda, for example through platforms for exchange and networks. The involvement of LRGs in **Malta** is limited. No specific answers were received from **Hungary**.

While national governments are not presenting a VNR this year, many LRGs have provided encouraging inputs on the progress made in the localization process, in particular **Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands** and **Sweden** (see Box 3.3.). For the purposes of this report, positive reviews were received from **France**,⁵⁰ **Italy**,⁵¹ **Austria, Czech Republic** and **Slovakia** to a lesser extent. Progress is also underway in the Baltic countries and at an initial stage in Eastern and South-eastern Europe (with the exception of **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, and Montenegro**).

At the European level, many networks are implementing initiatives to support the localization process. As already mentioned, European LRG networks such as CEMR — the European section of UCLG⁵² —, Platforma,⁵³ Eurocities, and NALAS⁵⁴ in South-East Europe, ICLEI through the European Sustainable Cities Platform (launched in 2016, with the support of Aalborg, in Denmark, the Basque Country and ICLEI Europe to follow up on the commitments of the 8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns), and CRPM⁵⁵ are advocating for the SDGs and organizing conferences and events. Through Eurocities, many city members are developing mechanisms for exchanging experiences on the SDGs (Utrecht, Ghent, Stuttgart, Malmo and Bonn). The regional network, as well as the majority of LGAs, cities and regions in Northern and Western European countries, now refer to the SDGs to guide their cooperation with partners in the Global South.

The 2030 Agenda, together with the New Urban Agenda and the Urban Agenda of the EU (the Pact of Amsterdam, adopted in 2016), are becoming the policy frameworks for EU debates. LRGs are represented at the High-Level Multi-Stakeholder Platform, chaired by the Vice-President of the European Commission, to deliver the SDGs at the EU level.

⁴⁵ More information is available on the web portal of the City of Madrid.

⁴⁶ See Basque Country (2018), *La Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030*, available through: <http://www.euskadi.eus/pdf/agenda-euskadi-basque-country-2030.pdf>.

⁴⁷ See Generalitat Valenciana (2017), *La Agenda 2030 – Hoja de ruta para ciudades y pueblos de la Comunitat Valenciana*; and Generalitat de Catalunya (2017) *The 2030 Agenda: Transform Catalonia improve the World*, available online.

⁴⁸ See Diputació de Barcelona (2018), *Plan Estratégico de relaciones Internacionales 2017-2020*. See also, <https://www.diba.cat/ods> and <https://seuelectronica.diba.cat/tramits-ens/concertacio/categ2018/default.asp>. The most active municipalities in the province are Sant Cugat del Vallès, Sant Feliu de Llobregat, Manresa, Granollers, Terrassa, Vilanova i la Geltrú, Sabadell, Gavà, Badalona, Igualada, Vic, Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Esplugues de Llobregat, Mataró, Sant Boi de Llobregat, Vilafranca del Penedès and l'Hospitalet de Llobregat.

⁴⁹ For more information, see also: <http://www.andaluciasolidaria.org>.

⁵⁰ Some regions are integrating the SDGs into their Regional Sustainable Development Plans (SRADET) which are mandatory documents. Some cities e.g. the city of Besançon, transformed their Report on Sustainable Development (mandatory for cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants) into an SDG Report. See Ville de Besançon (2017), *Rapport annuel Développement Durable 2017 – Les 17 Objectifs de développement durable*. Région Normandie (2017), *Rapport de Développement Durable 2017*; Région Bourgogne Franche Comté, *Rapport 2016-2017*.

⁵¹ The LGAs – AICCARE and ANCI – have increased the number of events to mobilize local governments and some regions are developing strategies to integrate the SDGs. See Tuscany Region (2018), *Gli SDGs e le politiche e le buone pratiche di sviluppo sostenibile in Toscana* [draft version] and Agenda di Sviluppo, *localizzazione e azione tra sponda nord e sponda sud del Mediterraneo*, which highlights the actions in more than 30 municipalities in the region.

⁵² CEMR meeting in Soria (Spain), January 2018, Think Europe, *Compromise 2030*. The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is the oldest and broadest European LGA, encompassing LRGs from 42 European countries and, through them, representing all territorial levels – local, intermediate and regional.

⁵³ CRPM-PLATFORMA seminar on Integrated Territorial Partnerships and the SDGs in June 2017 in Brussels, Eurocities Social Affairs Forum on Delivering the SDGs: cities working together with citizens in March 2018 in Utrecht.

⁵⁴ NALAS Regional conference on social inclusion and (re)integration through 2030 Agenda and SDGs, in April 2018 in Brno. NALAS is a network comprising 14 associations of local authorities in South-East Europe.

⁵⁵ The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CRPM) gathers 160 Regions from 25 States of the EU and beyond.



BOX 3.3.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES IN DIFFERENT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (not reporting in 2018)

In **Belgium**, a number of cities have committed to the localization process, and it continues to expand (for example in Ghent, the province of Antwerp, and in municipalities such as Evergem, Edegem, Harelbeke, etc.). This is the result of continued support to local governments from the Walloon, Brussels and Flemish LGAs — respectively UVCW, Brulocalis, and VVSG.⁵⁶ VVSG partnered with the regional government to support localization projects in 20 pilot municipalities and develop a strong advocacy and awareness campaign: 66 municipalities have signed the SDG engagement declaration. They are working on a software system that enables municipalities to link the indicators of their policy plans to the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda is remarkably widespread in Flanders through multi-stakeholder platforms (e.g. De Shift).

In **Denmark**, both the regional and local government associations — DR, KL — and the Danish Government agreed on the need to establish partnerships across society to achieve the SDGs.⁵⁷ Many municipalities are now transitioning from the Agenda 21 to the SDGs framework. KL, in particular, presented a guide to support municipalities in this process. In 2017 the Municipality of Copenhagen, amongst others, decided to develop an SDG action plan.

Since 2017, in **Germany**, 73 local governments have signed the charter on 'The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Building Sustainability at the Local Level'.⁵⁸ Moreover, 11 *Länder* (out of 16) have either revised their sustainable development strategies (e.g. Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Pfalz) or developed a new strategy (e.g. Nordrhein-Westfalen and the Global Sustainable Municipality in NRW project involving 15 municipalities in this region). Many cities, such as Mannheim, Munster or Hannover, have managed to involve the 'whole local administration' in the implementation process. The associations of LRGs — DST, DLT, DStGB and RGRE — with the support of different partners (BBSR and BSt), have developed a set of 'SDG indicators for municipalities'.

In **the Netherlands** the 'Municipalities4GlobalGoals Campaign' now numbers 60 municipalities and is coordinated by the LGA VNG. This has fostered the inclusion of the SDGs in various local political agreements (2018-2022) following the local elections in March 2018, in overarching municipal strategies, in local budgeting or even in adapting the municipal organization along the 17 goals (e.g. Utrecht, Oss and Rheden, which were laureates of the Campaign in 2017 and 2018). Together with sub-national governments (provinces and water boards), VNG drafted a chapter for the annual SDG report for the Dutch Parliament.⁵⁹

In **Sweden**, the LGA – SALAR – reported that 'approximately 50% of the members is currently using the SDGs as tools in their work with sustainable development (to varying extents)'. The association launched a communication project together with the Swedish UN association to spread awareness about the SDGs.

Platforma, a pan-European coalition of 30 LRGs supported by the European Union, are developing training actions and organizing pilot exercises of multi-stakeholder dialogues on development, implemented at a national scale and enriched with a European perspective in Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands and Spain. A comparative analysis to highlight the lessons learnt, challenges and opportunities will be published in October 2018.

⁵⁶ Awareness-raising campaigns (e.g. VVSG 'local heroes' on the SDGs, the SDG Voices programme in partnership with CSOs) have boosted pooling and exchange of good practice and supported local plans. Taking advantage of the local elections of October 2018, VVSG developed a number of recommendations, including 'discussing the SDGs to convince party members and the citizenship about the importance of the 2030 Agenda'.

⁵⁷ Both regions and municipalities are already working to promote a circular economy and sustainable procurement. KL has presented a guide for municipalities on the SDGs and established a framework for monitoring municipalities' contribution to the SDGs, including the development of indicators.

⁵⁸ For more information, see also: www.rgre.de.

⁵⁹ For more information, see *The National Report on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: Autonomous chapter Local governments* drafted by VNG, IPO and UvW. The 12 provinces use the SDGs to develop a joint vision on sustainable agriculture. The water authorities strive to be energy neutral in 2025. The new Green Deal Sustainable GWW from 2017 agreed that by 2030, 50% less use will be made of primary raw materials and by 2020 the CO₂ emissions will be reduced by 20% compared to 1990.

⁶⁰ Federation of Canadian Municipalities has received significant funding from the federal government to support capacity-building initiatives by municipal governments that are indirectly supporting SDGs.

⁶¹ According to the mapping of the Centre for Immigration Studies, there are more than 170 sanctuary counties and cities as well as seven states have decoupled from the national government's policies and are hosting refugees escaping the wars in Central America.

⁶² For more information on the U.S. Cities SDG Index, see: <http://unsdsn.org/resources/publications/us-cities-sdg-index>.

NORTH AMERICAN REGION

In the absence of a federal framework for SDGs in the United States and in Canada, LRGs and their associations in both countries implicitly support many of the SDGs. Canada is nonetheless in the process of developing a new framework.

In **Canada**, the LGA — FCM — has met with members of the VNR team to discuss inputs from the local perspective. FCM has fostered awareness and exchange among members and advocated in many forums for the importance of LRGs in achieving a multi-stakeholder approach. FCM has been influential in the development of Canada's National Housing Strategy, which highlights the SDGs and a human rights-based approach. The partnership between FCM and the Government of Canada has over the past few years helped mobilize long-term funding for sustainable infrastructures, as well as identify people living in poverty to whom resources and services can be targeted. Many Canadian cities are strongly involved in the localization of the global agendas (Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver). In its international municipal programmes, FCM addresses the SDGs through the delivery of capacity building programmes focused on governance, economic growth, infrastructure and the environment and define a set of indicators to ensure the alignment of the programmes with the SDGs.⁶⁰

In the **United States**, different LGAs and networks – such as the National League of Cities; the National Association of Counties; the Conference of Mayors (ICMA); and regional governing bodies such as the Council of Governments, Regional Councils, and Regional Planning Commissions — are active in the promotion of the global agendas.

Informal networks such as 'We Are Still In' and U.S. Climate Mayors have emerged in response to the withdrawal of the U.S. Federal Government from the Paris Agreement. Over 330 mayors pledged to uphold the Paris Agreement under the auspices of the Mayors' National Climate Action Agenda, and approximately 147 cities and counties committed to reduce GHG emissions through the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. The concept of 'sanctuary cities' has even been rediscovered⁶¹ with respect to migration and the challenges that come with



'UN Day in the Park- Experience 2030' in Kingston, Jamaica (photo by FAO/Jamaica)

it. To address climate challenges and reduce GHG emissions, states have also created cap-and-trade systems, such as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative put forward by ten states in the U.S., and the Western Climate Initiative, which brings together American states and Canadian provinces. The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) released the first-ever U.S. Cities SDG Index in August 2017. The Index ranks the 100 most populous U.S. cities using Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), based on their performance on the SDGs.⁶²

Finally, in **Jamaica**, with the support of the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, five municipalities (out of 14) have completed their Local Sustainable Development Planning, which are aligned with the national development priorities and the SDGs; and an additional two jurisdictions are at different stages of preparation. Some local authorities have received funding to support implementation of various actions identified in their plans (e.g. integration of migrants, emerging and sustainable cities initiative, and risk prevention). Dialogue between national and local governments is improving, but funding is still a central problem.

LATIN AMERICA

The mobilization of LRGs in other regions is much more fragmented. In Latin America, the more active LRGs are in Brazil, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. In other countries, associations still have limited involvement. In parallel, many big cities in the region (Buenos Aires, Belo Horizonte, Bogotá, La Paz, Medellín, Mexico City, Montevideo, Quito, Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro, Rosario and San José), as well as some intermediary or medium-sized cities (e.g. Canelones in Uruguay, Cuenca in Ecuador, Barcarena in Brazil), have started to link their development strategies with the SDGs.

Among the countries due to report in 2018, Colombia looked to be one of the most promising for the localization of the SDGs. As mentioned above (see Section 3.3) in the VNR presented in 2016, the national government reported a strong effort to align the SDGs with local and departmental development plans. More recently, the Federation of Colombian Municipalities — as well as cities such as Medellín — reported that the visions and expectations of LRGs, particularly those from the peripheral areas, had not received enough attention. A national document published in March 2018 set out a new strategy to support the implementation of the SDGs in Colombia as part of the peace process, with a specific objective to ‘territorialize’ (localize) the SDGs.⁶³ The new government that will be elected in June 2018 should ratify the strategy.⁶⁴

In Dominican Republic, the LGA — FEDOMU — formally adopted a statement to support the SDGs in their Congress (November 2017). They participate, support training actions on the SDGs, and actively contribute to the National High-Level Committee on the SDGs in charge of the reporting process. They are also involved in the development of different sectoral initiatives (e.g. a Roadmap for SDG 2 including a water and waste management programme developed in collaboration with FAO; and the preparation of the Action Plan for the New Urban Agenda) and in several programmes for waste management and upgrading of poor neighbourhoods. In its VNR, the government reports that a strategic agreement is in discussion with local governments.

In Ecuador, cities such as Quito, Cuenca, Durán, Ibarra, Francisco de Orellanas and Ambato (out of 221 municipalities) are leading the way. At the provincial level, the *Territorios ODS Ecuador* initiative aims to localize the SDGs

in five provinces: Azuay, Galápagos, Manabí, Napo and Santo Domingo de los Tsachilas.⁶⁵ Quito launched a consultative process to integrate the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda into its Metropolitan Development and Land Use Plan (PMDOT) and its Disaster Risk Prevention Plan (*Quito Listo*). This exercise is supported by different outreach and training initiatives.⁶⁶ The LGAs — AME and CONGOPE — participated and organized several events and training sessions for municipalities and provinces and were involved in the national consultation process for the VNR. CONGOPE developed a Plan for Equality between Territories and Poverty Reduction which is being implemented in the province of Cañar (2017-2022).⁶⁷ Specific programmes, such as the Sustainable Intermediary Cities Programme, have been established in order to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, through the creation of urban labs, knowledge management, and improved civil society participation.

In Mexico, as part of the national strategy, 29 federated states (out of 32) have created ‘Committees for monitoring and implementation of the SDGs’ (OSI), a multi-stakeholder mechanism which includes municipalities and has been in charge of the alignment of the SDGs with Regional Development Plans. About 300 municipalities have also acted to establish similar mechanisms locally. Mexico City, for example, created its committee in July 2017. The committee fostered effective coordination between all government areas, identified 55 social programmes and aligned important parts of the city’s budget to the SDGs. It also developed a public platform for monitoring and evaluation,⁶⁸ fostering transparency and accountability. The state of Hidalgo is also an example of alignment between regional plans and the SDGs. The National Council for the 2030 Agenda Strategy includes, with consultative status, both federated states — through the Conference of Governors (CONAGO) — and municipalities — via a federal institution, INAFED. INAFED launched a programme to strengthen the capacities of local governments to support localization but with limited participation (seven states and 53 municipalities registered in May 2018). The federal government also issued a set of guidelines to support SDG integration in local and state development plans.⁶⁹

With respect to the last countries to report this year, in Paraguay the participation of local governments is weak. Nevertheless, one of the key cross-cutting objectives of the National

⁶³ CONPES 3918 (2018).

⁶⁴ Beyond Bogotá and Medellín, who have a more integrated approach (including for the New Urban Agenda) and promote consultative processes, different cities are implementing initiatives in different sectors related to the SDGs: energy and public transport (Bucaramanga, San Geronimo, Cartago), waste management and CO2 emissions (Bucaramanga, Cartagena, Medellín, Cali, Villavicencio and Bogotá D.C.), and land ecosystems (Barranquilla, Ibagué). However, involvement is still limited and efforts are needed to train local officers. Federation of Colombia Municipalities is developing several projects to improve local governance.

⁶⁵ See also, <http://www.grupofaro.org/content/ods-territorio-ecuador>.

⁶⁶ More than 1,000 technical staff working for the secretariats and municipal companies, as well as more than 400 citizen leaders participate in the training programmes.

⁶⁷ According to the *Main messages of Ecuador* (2018), CONGOPE is supporting the provincial development plans for equity and poverty reduction in several provinces such as Cañar, Carchi and Imbabura.

⁶⁸ This platform shows progress on the implementation of the SDGs in four dimensions: society, economy, environment and partnerships. For more information, see: www.monitoreo.cdmx.gob.mx/consulta/indicadoresODS.

⁶⁹ See *VNR of Mexico* (2018). Initially, municipalities were represented in the National Council through CONAMM, but the 2018 report does not mention the association this time around. As regards local development plans, it is reported that 84% of municipal plans are not being implemented. It is worth mentioning that the City Prosperity Indicators (CPI) developed by UN Habitat to monitor the New Urban Agenda have been collected in 137 municipalities in the country and in 17 districts of Mexico City. See also, *Alcaldes de México*, consulted on June 19, 2018 available at: <https://www.alcaldesdemexico.com/notas-principales/retos-de-los-municipios-para-cumplir-con-la-agenda-2030-de-la-onu>.

⁷⁰ See *VNR of Paraguay* (2018).

⁷¹ São Paulo, Barcarena, São José do Rio Preto, Paracatu, São Bernardo do Campo, Alto Paraíso, 8 municipalities from the State of Minas Gerais, 54 municipalities from the State of Paraná, a regional Project in the State of Pernambuco and in State of Piauí. See <http://ods.cnm.org.br/> and https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/the_mandala_tool.pdf.

⁷² The main programmes in Rio de Janeiro include: ‘*Nave do Conhecimento*’, implementation of electronic medical records, social territories, popular restaurants, PIC (an early childhood programme), public lightning, metropolitan integration, slum upgrading programmes, and workshops for employment.

⁷³ Osa, Esparza, Guácimo, Barva, Tilarán, Cartago, Atenas, Alajuela, Aserri, Desamparados, Pococi and Mora.

⁷⁴ The Federal Government in Argentina is signing agreements with different states (provinces) to support the 2030 Agenda (14 agreements) and making efforts to support LRGs through guidelines and training programmes in different regions. A network of municipal councils for the SDGs was launched in 2017. Among regional governments, the province of Santa Fé has made progress in including the SDGs in its development plan, and supporting a similar action within their municipalities. However, beyond Buenos Aires and a limited number of municipalities, involvement is still limited.

⁷⁵ In Peru, the LGAs - AMPE and ANGR - have contributed training to support the elaboration of Regional and Local Development Participative Plans. Honduras has established pilot programmes for municipal level 2030 Agenda projects.

⁷⁶ With the support of the national government and UNDP, municipalities are involved in programmes for food security, health (78 municipalities), flood and risk prevention (120), waste management (23) and local economic development. See United Nations in Bolivia (2018), *ODS para Vivir Bien*.

⁷⁷ FLACMA organized a regional forum on the SDGs in Dominican Republic in March 2016, a Forum on the localization of the SDGs and a *Declaración de Viña del Mar* (January 2018), and a training session in Belem (Brazil) in April 2018, jointly with UNDP and CONGOPE.

⁷⁸ Mercociudades organized a training session in Puerto Mont (Chile) in October 2017 and in November 2017 in Cordoba (Argentina).

⁷⁹ AL-LAS regularly conduct webinars on the international actions of LRGs, as well as holding a face to face event on localization in October 2017 in Quito (Ecuador).

⁸⁰ All the networks participated in the first regional training workshop on the localization of SDGs organized in June 2017 in Bolivia by UCLG and UNDP and later in September in México. A training session was also organized by the regional network of local governments in Central America - CAMCAYCA - in Costa Rica in May 2018. Two specific forums looking at the role of intermediary cities in localizing the SDGs; and for Amazonian local governments (SDG 15) were also organized by UCLG and the networks, the first in Cuenca (Ecuador) in March 2018, and the second in Riberalta (Bolivia) in April 2018.

⁸¹ The State of Victoria has introduced a bill to Parliament which if passed could make it the first Australian state to implement legally binding renewable energy targets, in a bid to reduce electricity bills as well as emissions. Entitled 'Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Bill 2017', it will implement the Victoria Renewable Energy Targets (VRET) to achieve 25% renewable energy by 2020 and 40% by 2025. The State of South Australia is undertaking efforts to support next generation [Nextgen] renewable energy projects.

Development Plan 2030 is 'participatory local development' and regional and urban planning, which assumes the strengthening of municipalities. The VNR mentions several training sessions and the constitution of 244 Local Development Councils and 17 Regional Development Councils as 'consultative mechanisms' that, in principle, should facilitate national-local government coordination.⁷⁰ In **Uruguay**, within the framework of the preparation of the VNR, the national government is leading an effort in awareness rising, training to support the alignment of the SDGs in local plans and workshops to foster dialogue between local governments and civil society in all departments. The objective is to develop a roadmap for the localization of the SDGs at local levels (with progress achieved in 9 departments). Local governments have made progress in the preparation of local adaptation plans for climate change and risk prevention, as well as in the updating of tools for urban and regional planning. As highlighted previously, cities such as Canelones are planning to use the SDGs as a framework, while Montevideo is linking different sectoral projects with the SDGs.

Although **Brazil** is not reporting this year, the efforts of LRGs call for special attention. One of the Brazilian LGAs — CNM — established a comprehensive strategy to support the localization of the SDGs. With the support of UNDP, the project 'Localizing Brazil' is based on advocacy, awareness raising (campaign, bulletins, social media) and training. CNM has developed different tools and guidelines for localization, as well as a system of indicators at the local level aligned with the SDGs ('Mandala', 28 indicators). The association, as well as the representatives of governors of states, participate in the National Commission for Sustainable Development Goals and in different mechanisms to coordinate specific goals (e.g. health). The CNM accorded the SDGs a prominent place at its annual Congress and lead municipal dialogues on the localization of the SDGs in 16 states. There are SDG committees and projects to support localization in more than 60 cities and regions.⁷¹ Cities such as Rio de Janeiro have made significant efforts to integrate the SDGs into their plans (2017), involving the 'whole city government' in dialogue with CSOs and the private sector (through public hearings, workshops and online consultations).⁷²

In **Costa Rica**, the LGA — UNGL — participates actively in the High-Level Commission for

the SDGs (at consultative level) and adopted an Action Plan at its Congress (2017) which includes awareness-raising, support for the alignment of local plans and capacities, monitoring, reporting and local alliances. In 2018, it is leading a project to support the localization of the SDGs in 12 municipalities.⁷³

In other countries, the involvement of LRGs is less advanced. In **Argentina**, the process is progressing partly due to the support it receives from the federal government, particularly at regional level.⁷⁴ Similarly, in both **Peru** and **Honduras** the LGAs and the national government are making efforts to promote localization in local plans.⁷⁵ In **Bolivia**, a joint project on the localization of the SDGs with the Association of Municipalities of Bolivia and UNDP was launched in October 2017 to assist Tarija, El Alto, Sucre, Trinidad and La Paz.⁷⁶

At the regional level, regional networks — the Federation of Latin American Cities, Municipalities and Associations (FLACMA),⁷⁷ Mercociudades,⁷⁸ and AL-LAS⁷⁹ — adopted action plans, created working groups on the SDGs and organized several forums and training events.⁸⁰

ASIA-PACIFIC

In Asia, many cities are already making progress in designing policies and plans, and in implementing projects to enhance urban and territorial sustainability.

Among the countries that report this year, a shining example is Australia, where the associations of local governments — ALGA, Western Australia Local Government Association, Council of Capital City Lord Mayors — several cities and the eight state/regions worked with the federal government to contribute to the reporting process, collecting experiences at the local level. Some States such as Victoria are delivering an integrated response to the SDGs through the Plan Melbourne 2017-2050.⁸¹ At the local level, councils have adopted different strategies. The Perth Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council and Melbourne City Council are leading the way through the incorporation of the SDGs into their planning processes, whilst Brisbane City Council has put sustainability at the core of its planning, with a focus on biodiversity. Fremantle has adopted the One Planet Fremantle Strategy, while cities such as Illawarra are leading a group of 'healthy cities' in the region. A growing number

of local councils and statutory authorities are measuring their progress against the SDGs. Local authorities are using pledges, action plans and grant programs, alongside public information, training and networking opportunities to mobilize climate change and sustainability action in their communities and to build resilience and adaptation capacity. Seventy local councils across Australia, representing over 8 million people, have joined the Climate Council's Cities Power Partnership, which encourages, motivates and accelerates local initiatives in emissions reduction and clean energy.⁸²

On the small island of **Kiribati**, KILGA, the national LGA, has been particularly active in awareness-raising (through bulletins, radio and forums for councillors), training (for women councillors on SDG5) and involvement in the reporting process. In **Bhutan**, an awareness-raising initiative for local governments was carried out in 2016 and integration of the SDGs in the 'Sector and Local Governments Key Results Areas' is being implemented. The 12th Five Year Plan has prioritized 'Liveability, Safety and Sustainability of Human Settlements Improved' as one of its National Key Result Areas (NKRAs), and a Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) Plan on human settlements. Within the strategy defined by the central government, one of the objectives is to achieve a 'just, harmonious and sustainable society through enhanced

decentralization'. In **Sri Lanka** there is a great deal of promotion of the SDGs, with talk shows on radio and television. The association of local governments — FSLGA — initiated training sessions on the SDGs in two provinces. Following the approval of the National Policy and Strategy for Sustainable Development (NPSSD) by the Parliament, all levels of government will be required to prepare their Sustainable Development Strategy and submit regular progress reports.⁸³ The focus in **Vietnam** is essentially at both provincial and urban district level. In January 2018, the LGA of Vietnam — ACVN — hosted a workshop on the SDGs related to local economic development in the Mekong Delta Region, with more meetings due to take place in 2018. In **Lao PDR**, every central and sub-national level sector department and agency (from provincial to district level) has been instructed to integrate SDGs into their Socio-Economic Development Plans.

LGAs from other countries not reporting this year also responded to the survey. Among them, the more active included Indonesia, Japan and Republic of Korea. In **Indonesia**, according to a survey undertaken by the national project for the localization of the SDGs — LOCALISE (see Box 3.4.) — 95% of provincial governments have conducted consultations to launch Regional Action Plans before 4 July 2018, as set out by a presidential decree of August 2017.⁸⁴ Forty percent of local governments

BOX 3.4.



'LOCALISE' THE SDGs IN INDONESIA

Leadership, Ownership and Capacities for Agenda 2030 Local Implementation and Stakeholders Empowerment is a joint project that was launched by UCLG ASPAC and the Association of Indonesian Municipalities (APEKSI) in the first quarter of 2018. It receives support from the EU.

Building on the Presidential Decree 59 of 2017, its objective is to support the local implementation of SDGs by strengthening the capacities of local governments and their associations to plan, implement and monitor SDGs at the local level.

The project involves 30 local governments (16 provinces and 14 cities) and five LGAs (APEKSI, APKASI, APPSI, ADEKSI and ADKASI). It collaborates regularly with the National Development Planning Agency and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

THE ROAD MAP FOR LOCALIZING SDGs



have a dedicated division dealing with the SDGs and several districts and municipalities have already made commitments to implement the SDGs.⁸⁵ However, only three provincial governments have taken concrete initiatives: Riau (see the HLPF report 2017), Lampung and DKI Jakarta, which is preparing a roadmap for the localization of the SDGs.

In **Japan**, 34 cities and towns are involved in the implementation of the SDGs with the support of the national government through a number of programmes (e.g. 'Future city' and 'Eco-model city').⁸⁶ Three cities (Toyama, Kitakyushu and Shimokawa) are launching Voluntary Local Reviews for the HLPF 2018. Many others are promoting initiatives through outreach campaigns aimed at local stakeholders that emphasize the importance of the SDGs for local development (e.g. Shiga and Nagano as well Sapporo, Otsu and Omihamichan). In the **Philippines**, the League of Cities monitors progress on the achievement of various global commitments such as the SDGs. A system of scorecards (Local Target) is being used to document baseline data for governance and whether development plans are aligned with the SDGs. Some cities are signing specific conventions with the Department of Interior and Local Governments (DILG) to implement SDG-FACES projects (e.g. Mandaluyong City in Metro Manila). In **New Zealand**, local government has independently taken the lead on a number of SDGs, focusing on different targets (e.g. Hutt City Council, Wellington Regional Council and Rotorua Lakes Councils).

In other countries, a range of conferences and workshops have taken place in the last few months: in different districts of **Bangladesh**, with the support of international cooperation and national government;⁸⁷ and in **Pakistan**, with the local councils' association of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab Provinces and the participation of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In the HLPF 2017 report, other LRG initiatives have already been highlighted in countries such as **China, India, Nepal, Thailand** and **Republic of Korea**. In **Republic of Korea**, 100 out of 243 LRGs created Local Councils for Sustainable Development (LCSDs), including local government and civil society representatives with a strong environmental focus. A number of local governments such as Seoul (which adopted the SD Vision 2030), Gwangju, Jeonju, Cheongju, Suwon, and the Bupyeong District (Incheon) have voluntarily established implementation strategies for sustainable development at the local level.

At the regional level, UCLG ASPAC is

organizing forums, publications and training actions to disseminate the global agendas.⁸⁸ It published two roadmaps, one for LRGs and the other for LGAs, on the Localization of the SDGs (in different languages); and carried out a regional assessment of 28 countries in the region to explore whether the legal and institutional environment of LRGs is conducive to the localization of the 2030 Agenda.⁸⁹ UNESCAP, the Seoul Metropolitan Government and CityNet promote and support knowledge-sharing and city-to-city cooperation for sustainable urban development through the Urban SDG Online Portal.⁹⁰ UCLG ASPAC is also supporting greater LRG involvement in the regional mechanism (ASEAN) through the ASEAN Mayors Forum. UNESCAP and the Asian Development Bank are implementing several projects for the localization of SDGs in the region.

AFRICA

In Africa, the LGAs of Benin, Togo and South Africa are 'frontrunners'. Benin and Togo were encouraged by their national governments' commitment to report almost yearly to the HLPF. In Benin, the LGA — ANCB — set out a roadmap to support the localization of SDGs.

In partnership with the national government, the LGA also organized ten regional workshops for the alignment of national and local plans. The ANCB contributes to the consultation process of the VNRs as a member of the two committees (steering and technical committees) created by the national government to coordinate and monitor the SDGs, as well as creating a 'coordination committee between local and national government'. It has launched benchmarking between municipalities to measure progress and facilitate knowledge exchange on good practices (through a group of 37 out of 77 municipalities) and supported the constitution of committees for the follow-up of the goals at municipal level. The third generation local development plans (PDC) developed in 2017 have largely taken into account the SDGs and their annual investment plans (PAI), including the programmed actions and related implementation costs. The VNR shows a detailed assessment of the progress of different SDGs at municipal levels.⁹¹ In **Cabo Verde**, a project to support localization of SDGs and the development of municipal strategic sustainable development plans (in 9 municipalities) was launched with the support of UNDP.⁹² In **Mali**, decentralization is one of the priorities of the post-crisis process. The LGA — AMM — is active in many national committees,

⁸² See also: <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/vision/sustainable-sydney-2030>.

⁸³ The Western Province of Sri Lanka has already started aligning government priorities with the SDGs, as well as specific projects for mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda.

⁸⁴ In addition to Local Action Plan, Indonesian Government through Ministry of Home Affairs launched The Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 7 Year 2018 concerning the Preparation and Implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessment (KLHS) in the preparation of the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD).

⁸⁵ Among the districts: Pangkajene Islands District (Pangkep) in South Sulawesi Province, Bojonegoro District in East Java Province, Kubu Raya District in West Kalimantan Province, Gunung Kidul District in Yogyakarta Province, and East Lampung District in Lampung Province. Source, UCLG ASPAC and LOCALISE report.

⁸⁶ The SDG Promotion Headquarters that coordinate the 2030 Agenda plans to create a project "SDGs Models of Local Governments" through which the entire central government will provide extensive support to selected local governments in their SDGs implementation, then expand to other local governments based on lessons learnt. For more information on the 'Future city' programme, see <http://future-city.jp/en/about>.

⁸⁷ The Upazila Governance Project (UZGP) and Union Parishad Governance Project (UPGP), within the Local Government Division (LGD), organized awareness-raising workshops on SDG localization in seven districts in 2017.

⁸⁸ Training sessions on the SDGs were organized in Jakarta (Indonesia) in July 2017.

⁸⁹ For more information, see also: <https://uclg-aspac.org/en/publication/other-publications>.

⁹⁰ See <http://www.urbansdgplatform.org/index.msc>.

⁹¹ See each country's VNR. However, the diagnostic developed jointly by the AIMF and ANCB stressed the need to strengthen the operations of the Departmental and Local Committees for follow up of the SDGs, and the need to revise sectoral national policies to improve coordination. See also: AIMF (October 2017), *Etude sur la localisation des ODD en vue d'appuyer le processus de plaidoyer des autorités locales au Bénin*. The document is available, in French, on the Localizing the SDGs platform at this address: <http://localizingthesdgs.org/library/view/462>.

⁹² Cabo Verde, Main messages to the 2018 HLPF and answers to the UCLG Survey.

particularly in the CREDD (Strategic Framework for the Economic and Sustainable Development Recovery). In December 2017, the association adopted a declaration on SDGs and the global agendas during its Congress — the National Day of Municipalities — and is starting to map good practice with support from partners. LRGs are represented in the National Steering Committee for the SDGs (the country is currently moving towards 'regionalization').

In **Niger**, the association is organizing a session on the SDGs during its next Congress in July 2018. However, even though the national government is encouraging initiatives for the alignment of regional and local development plans with the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES), local governments' involvement is still weak, and the urban master plans are out-dated. In **Senegal**, the SDGs are integrated into the National Emergent Plan. The national government committed to enhance decentralization (3rd stage, *Acte 3*), fostering equal development between regions and urban areas. The implementation of the strategy will require further efforts to strengthen local governments' ability to deliver on poverty reduction, urban and territorial planning and management, as well as social services provision. There are new ongoing mechanisms for integrated urban and regional development plans in several regions in Senegal (e.g. Area Dakar-Thiès-Mbour), as well as new levers of economic development (e.g. Casamance) and new urban plans (e.g. Dakar horizon 2035).⁹³

Since 2016 in **Togo**, the LGA — UCT — has adopted a plan to support the implementation of the SDGs; developed guidelines for the alignment of municipal local plans with the SDGs; and launched an initiative to support five pilot projects in municipalities. Its last Congress (November 2017) focused on the SDGs. It has also carried out training for local officers. The national government acknowledge that local governments are instrumental for the implementation of the National Development Plan — aligned with the SDGs — and is committed to carrying out local elections for the first time this year. In **Guinea**, **Egypt**,⁹⁴ and **Sudan**, the involvement of local administration is either weak or non-existent. This underlines the need to strengthen 'the decentralized government systems to support state-led development' and the involvement of the Council of States on the 2030 Agenda.

Other countries not reporting to the HLPF this year have recorded different actions. In **South**

Africa, SALGA is supporting a national strategy to align local plans with the National Development Plan 2030 and the SDGs. In other countries, as reported in 2017, LRGs are mobilized at regional level (states, counties) in **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, **Nigeria**, and at local level in **Botswana**,⁹⁵ **Ghana**, **Sierra Leone**,⁹⁶ and **Uganda**. In **Ghana** and **Uganda**, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) is supporting pilot projects to localize the SDGs. In **Algeria**, a new cooperation project between the Ministry of the Interior and local governments, the EU and the UNDP entitled 'Strengthening local actors/common development models (CapDEL)' was officially launched in 2017. UNDP is also supporting the localization of the SDGs in several other countries (e.g. Angola). In Burundi, municipalities will initiate the alignment between national and local plans to support localization.

To strengthen regional dynamics, UCLG Africa is disseminating the SDGs through regional meetings and assessing local governments' institutional environment in Africa and its impact on the SDGs.⁹⁷ The African Academy of Local Authorities, created by UCLG Africa, is developing a training programme on the SDGs for all African regions.⁹⁸ The regional network is also developing strong regional and international advocacy to integrate African LRGs into regional development agendas, and to encourage ratification by national governments of the 'African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization', adopted by the African Union in 2014.⁹⁹ The locally elected women's network of UCLG Africa — REFELA — organized a workshop on local women leaders and the SDGs (May 2016).

In West Africa, the International Association of French Speaking Mayors — AIMF — organized several national workshops at the end of 2017, gathering together LRG representatives to present reports on the localization of the SDGs in **Benin**, **Burkina Faso**, **Cameroon**, **Côte d'Ivoire**, **Guinea** and **Senegal**. The conclusions presented in these papers is globally very critical of the localization process in all countries.¹⁰⁰

EURASIA

In **Eurasia**, the Government of Armenia identified localization of the SDGs as the third stage of the national strategy to nationalize the 2030 Agenda and is working to involve cities in supporting local environmental action plans and evaluating their environmental

⁹³ In Senegal, the International Organization of French Speaking Countries (OIF) is supporting a project on local development and SDGs in the regions of Thies, Kaffrine and Louga.

⁹⁴ In Egypt, the Governorate of Gena agreed to pilot the localization of the SDGs as part of the framework for a strategic plan for the Governorate. It will propose a methodology for how the SDGs can be streamlined in plans at the local level. It will also provide insights at the central level into how to implement the SDGs at different levels of government.

⁹⁵ Since April 2017, four pilot projects have been deployed and should be rolled out to the rest of the country. Local governments are formally represented at the National Steering Committee for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

⁹⁶ In Sierra Leone, the MoFED and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development have engaged the 19 local councils in Sierra Leone to integrate the SDGs into their district and municipal development plans.

⁹⁷ For more information, access UCLGA Knowledge Hub at: <https://www.uclga.org/the-knowledge-hub>.

⁹⁸ ALGA organized training sessions on the SDGs in Swakopmund (Namibia), May 2017; Johannesburg (South Africa), June 2017; Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), 29 May - 1 June 2017, in partnership with CIFAL; and Durban (South Africa) in September 2017 and March 2018. Other actions were developed with regard to local finance, climate change and urban planning.

⁹⁹ The 'African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development' is available online at: <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-charter-values-and-principles-decentralisation-local-governance-and-local>.

¹⁰⁰ See also AIMF (October 2017), *Plaidoyer des Autorités Locales... Rapport Pays*.

conditions (Yerevan, Hrazdan, Alaverdi and Gyumri). Twenty-three cities in **Armenia** joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. Erevan and Echmiadzin are developing green programmes, while Goris is creating a smart city project. A number of **Russian** regional capital cities are part of the International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities (IAG), which implements programmes and projects related to the SDGs. However, there are no LGAs in many Eurasian countries (such as **Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan**). As reported in 2017, in **Belarus** the national government and the UN organized a 'national tour' — UN70 Belarus Express for the Sustainable Development Goals — to popularize the global agenda. As part of this, the Executive Committee Chairman of each region signed a Declaration of Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. The National Council for Sustainable Development includes representatives from regional government bodies. In **Azerbaijan**, as reported last year, the government committed to establishing the necessary mechanisms to ensure 'vertical and horizontal coordination' and to integrating the 2030 Agenda in local plans and budget allocations. However, **the involvement of LRGs is still very limited in Eurasian countries.**

MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA

There is still a long way to go in terms of localization process in Arab countries, where national governments do not appear to be mainstreaming SDGs into local governance policies. In the **State of Palestine** and **Lebanon**, the Prime Minister's Offices spearheaded the nationalization of the SDGs. The process was launched and initial consultations took place at the national level. To a much lesser extent, consultations have also taken place at the regional and local level, sometimes at the instigation of NGOs (for example in Lebanon). The ministries (Planning, Local Government and Administrative/Political Reform) taking part in the effort to implement the SDGs did not provide any information to local authorities, who are seldom included in the dialogue.

The Palestinian LGA — APLA — expressed its willingness to have a dialogue with the national government in order to contribute to the process. The capacity of local authorities to deliver on many of their responsibilities (potable

water, roads, mobility, waste management among others) is hindered by Israeli zoning policies and other obstacles (e.g. discriminatory planning regime), and by a lack of funding. As a result, several issues such as housing shortages, overcrowded and limited public open spaces and poor sanitary conditions, have had a much more acute impact. Within the framework of the National Policy Agenda 2017-2020, the national government is committed to enhance the ability of local authorities to provide equality and equity in access to public services and strengthen accountability and transparency. It developed a work plan that integrates different local government initiatives through awareness-raising and advocacy and the inclusion of the SDGs in local 'Strategic Development and Investment Plans'.¹⁰¹

A critical issue for many Lebanese and Jordanian municipalities is providing support to, and integrating, some 1.8 million Syrian refugees. Jordan has a Higher National Committee for Sustainable Development, and a Coordination Committee which involves working groups where local council representatives participate. However, there is no clear methodology on how to incorporate and act on their feedback.

In Iraq, multi-stakeholder workshops have recently been held, gathering together ministries and regional government representatives to discuss the 2030 Agenda. However, there is no institutionalized mechanism to monitor effective implementation.

In Turkey, ad hoc committees have been established to support the integration of the SDGs into the preparation process for the 11th National Development Plan, with the participation of local authorities and a wide range of stakeholders. One of the committees focused on 'local authorities and service quality'. The Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT), as well as regional LGAs (e.g. Union of Marmara Municipalities), support LRGs by organizing conferences, publications, capacity building and training programmes about the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. Some municipalities are beginning to establish working groups to link their programmes to the SDGs.¹⁰²

At a regional level, UCLG MEWA held two mapping workshops on the SDGs (Nevşehir and Urla, İzmir) and translated the reference documents into both Arabic and Turkish.¹⁰³ They organized several campaigns in partnership with municipalities, city councils, NGOs and universities in the context of the UN International Days.

¹⁰¹ State of Palestine (2018), *Palestinian National Voluntary Review*. In the State of Palestine, APLA supports small projects on waste and water management. The cities of Ramallah and Jericho focus on clean environment and climate change to develop solar energy sources. In Lebanon, the Technical Office of Lebanese Local Government supports projects related to local development, urban service management and sustainable environmental policies.

¹⁰² These cities are Karesi City Council, Yalova City, Sferihisar Municipality, Adana City Council, Esenler Municipality. Moreover, the following municipalities committed to include the SDGs in their agendas: Beylikdüzü Municipality (Istanbul), Eyyubiye Municipality (Santiurfa), Tuşba Municipality (Van), Yunus Emre Municipality (Manisa), Urla Municipality (İzmir), Kestel Municipality (Bursa).

¹⁰³ The documents are available online at the UCLG MEWA Library: <http://uclg-mewa.org/en>.

GLOBAL NETWORKS

At the global level, the main LRG networks deploy myriad initiatives within the framework of GTF.

The GTF is a coordination and consultation mechanism, created in 2013, which brings together the major international and regional networks of local governments (24) — UCLG, ICLEI, C40, AIMF, Arab Towns Organizations, CLGF, nrg4SD, ORU Fogar, FMDV, Platforma, UCCI, AL-LAS, AER, as well as UCLG sections and members — CEMR, Cités Unies France, CORDIAL (including Mercociudades, FLACMA, AL-LAS and UCCI), Metropolis, UCLG Africa, UCLG Eurasia, UCLG ASPAC, UCLG NORAM, and UCLG MEWA.

Each of the networks — and the GTF collectively — is committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda, as well as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction. Most of the networks develop capacity-building activities, cooperation, research, knowledge exchange, networking and advocacy.

The activities of the networks are complementary. **UCLG**,¹⁰⁴ in close collaboration with its regional sections, contributed to the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development organized by UN Regional Commissions. In partnership with UNDP and UN Habitat, it developed learning actions and best practice throughout the different regions (the alignment of local plans with the SDGs and support LGAs to contribute to the VNRs). In parallel, through the Global Observatory on Decentralization and Local Democracy (GOLD) and the World Observatory on Sub-National Governments Finance and Investment (in partnership with OECD, AFD and UNCDF), UCLG contributes to the monitoring and reporting processes of LRGs at the global level.

ICLEI activities in relation to SDGs include, but are not limited to, promoting 100% renewable energies (SDG 7); supporting urban transitions from industrial legacy to sustainable economies (SDG 9); and developing mobility-friendly development strategies and monitoring their implementation (SDG 11). ICLEI also contributes to the transition to a green economy by leading networks of sustainable public procurement (SDG 12); connecting climate action to urban development; and engaging LRGs in making Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) fit for the Paris Agreement

(SDG 13), connecting front-line cities and islands with the ocean agenda (SDG 14) and leading the implementation of biodiversity targets at city and other subnational level (SDG 15).¹⁰⁵ With a focus on financing issues, the **Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV)** is also coordinating the Secretariat of the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance and engaged in Localizing Climate Finance among other issues.¹⁰⁶

Other networks focus on big cities. The **C40 Cities** connects the world's greatest cities, encouraging them to be bold in their climate action, leading the way towards a healthier and more sustainable future. Mayors of the C40 cities are committed to delivering on the most ambitious goals of the Paris Agreement at the local level, and influencing local, national and global policies and markets in order to put the world on a +1.5°C pathway by 2020. C40's City Diplomacy Programme helps convene the collective and individual voice of cities in global discussions relating to climate change and sustainable urban development. Through its Adaptation Diplomacy Project, C40 and partners are opening new channels for discussing faster implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda in cities in the Global South.¹⁰⁷ **Metropolis**, the association of metropolitan areas and metropolises, is involved in learning and training activities, as well as pilot projects around metropolitan governance. In particular, their Policy Transfer Platform (PTP) is aligning all the urban experiences to SDG's. **Metropolis Women** has promoted a specific project aligned with the implementation of SDG 5, which focuses on mapping security in public spaces. The **Metropolis Observatory** works on the promotion of governance with a metropolitan perspective, developing a system of metropolitan indicators which are linked to the SDGs.¹⁰⁸

Some networks organize themselves according to a shared language. For example, the **International Association of French-Speaking Mayors (AIMF)** actively contributes to the achievement of the SDGs through decentralized cooperation to improve access to water and sanitation, health and education. It also helps strengthen urban infrastructure to improve resilience and support adaptations to climate change. In October 2017, it launched an advocacy group dedicated to localizing the SDGs.¹⁰⁹ The **Commonwealth**

¹⁰⁴ Created in 2004, UCLG is the world organization of LRGs and their associations, bringing together over 240,000 towns, cities, regions and metropolises, and over 175 associations of LRGs in 140 countries around the world. UCLG is organized into seven regional sections, one metropolitan section and one forum of regions. See: www.uclg.org.

¹⁰⁵ ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability - engages with more than 1,500 cities and regions in 100 countries. Its Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision 2018-2024 defines Low-Emission, Nature-based, Circular, Equitable and People-Centred, Resilient Development as ICLEI's five pathways to sustainability. It supports island communities at the front line of climate challenges, addresses land-based ocean pollution (SDG 14), and contributes to the implementation of global biodiversity targets at the city and regional level (SDG 15). See <http://www.iclei.org>.

¹⁰⁶ Created in 2010, the network involves 50 cities and regions and collaborates closely with UCLG. See: <http://www.fmdv.net>.

¹⁰⁷ C40 encompasses 96 cities, representing 700+ million citizens and one quarter of the global economy. See <https://www.c40.org>.

¹⁰⁸ Created in 1987, Metropolis gather 137 big cities and metropolitan areas from all over the world. See www.metropolis.org.

¹⁰⁹ See <http://www.aimf.asso.fr/>. Founded in 1979 as a network of French-speaking 'Francophone' cities, the AIMF brings together 294 cities in 51 countries representing more than 130 million inhabitants. As already mentioned, it conducted a series of studies on SDG localization strategies in six countries of West and Central Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Senegal). The association develops decentralized cooperation with partner cities. Over the past five years, €11.5 million has been mobilized for water sanitation and waste (SDGs 6 and 12) to improve the living conditions of more than 3 million inhabitants in 22 partner cities.

Local Government Forum (CLGF) focuses on strengthening the capacities of LGAs, building strong relationships between local and central government, and facilitating knowledge exchange between local governments on related SDG priorities (local democracy, gender, sustainable cities, local economic development, local finance etc.), as well as promoting pilot initiatives to localize the SDGs (e.g. Ghana, Jamaica, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago, Malawi).¹¹⁰ The **Union of Capital Cities of Ibero-America (UCCI)**, through the Programme of Integrated Cooperation between Cities, fosters political dialogue and the exchange of experiences; develops training activities on localization of SDGs and the New Urban Agenda; and promotes economic development and local governance in Hispanic and Portuguese speaking countries of Latin America and Africa. It collaborates with and supports networks of Latin American local governments through CORDIAL and with UCCLA and Euro-Latin American networks.¹¹¹ **Arab Towns Organization (ATO)** works with Arab-speaking local governments.¹¹²

Finally, other organizations work specifically with regional governments. The **Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development — nrg4SD** — promotes a territorial approach to supporting the 2030 Agenda, assisting regional governments' efforts especially through the exchange of experiences and peer-reviews. It has also created a reference centre of knowledge and information on regions.¹¹³ **ORU Fogar** has collaborated with nrg4SD in the development of a report 'Localizing the SDGs: regions paving the way', based on a survey which gathered information from 47 regions, in collaboration with the University of Strathclyde and with the support of UNDP Art and CPMR.¹¹⁴ The **Assembly of European Regions (AER)** and UCLG Regions are also active members of the GTF.¹¹⁵

Other networks of the GTF active at the regional level, as mentioned above in the brief of each region, are **AL-LAS**, **CEMR**, **Cités Unies France**, **FLACMA**, **Mercociudades**, **PLATFORMA**, **UCLG Africa**, **UCLG Asia-Pacific**, **UCLG Eurasia** and **UCLG North America**.

¹¹⁰ Founded in 1995, CLGF has 200 members from most of the 53 countries of the Commonwealth. As an associated organization officially recognized by Commonwealth Heads of Government, CLGF works with national and local governments to support the development of democratic values and good local governance. Its most recent biennial conference focused on the resource and capacity demands of localization and its members; ministries of local government, LGAs and individual councils adopted a 'Statement on Localizing the SDGs in the Commonwealth' (Valetta, Malta November 2017). See: <http://www.clgf.org.uk>.

¹¹¹ Founded in 1982, UCCI includes 29 big cities of Latin America and the Caribbean, Andorra, Portugal and Spain. See UCCI 2030, *Ciudades comprometidas con un modelo de desarrollo humano, justo y sostenible – Haciendo locales los ODS*. It capitalizes on the experience of cities such as Madrid to support exchange of know-how and good practice through the creation of joint platforms (local governments, academia, civil society, private sector and city networks), together with organizations such as UNDP. For more information, see: <http://ciudadesiberoamericanas.org>.

¹¹² For more information, see: <http://www.arabtowns.org>.

¹¹³ NRG4SD was established in 2002 and exclusively represents regions, supporting their international engagement in three main fields: sustainable development, biodiversity and climate change. See: <http://www.nrg4sd.org>.

¹¹⁴ See also: <http://www.regionsunies-fogar.org>.

¹¹⁵ See also: <https://aer.eu>.

Section 3 findings in a nutshell

The progress is remarkable but still limited. Our analysis has highlighted 'frontrunner' cities and associations from different regions; and some countries stand out in terms of their growing movement of sub-national governments localizing the SDGs.

The awareness and pedagogic efforts developed by national governments, international institutions and local government networks are significant. However, stronger initiatives and more policy guidance is still needed to generate significant mobilization and foster real ownership of the localization of the SDGs.

New national institutional mechanisms are emerging or being strengthened to facilitate reporting, coordination and ensure follow-up. These trends need to increase to ensure broader involvement at all institutional levels in the voluntary reporting process, as well as in coordination and follow-up mechanisms. In many countries, LRG involvement is still minimal or non-existent.

The localization process is essential to the implementation of the SDGs on the ground in cities and territories where people and communities live. To close the 'policy-implementation loop', national governments and international institutions should consider further developing tailored multilevel spaces for dialogue and policy support to ensure local and regional leaders' participation and engagement. The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) could, as some countries already do, systematically include a specific section on the progress of the SDGs at the sub-national level, thus monitoring the institutional framework and deployment of LRG action.

A locally-based approach, combined with national enabling policies to support the localization of the SDGs, will catalyse the active involvement and innovation of local leaders and enhance the potential of territories and local stakeholders in the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. Improved multilevel governance mechanism founded on the principle of subsidiarity could facilitate scaling up of sub-national innovative solutions into national strategies.

Monitoring of the localization process requires disaggregated and place-based data. Extreme poverty is local and inequalities between countries, as well as between territories and within cities, are growing. Without localized data it will be particularly difficult to 'leave no one behind'. LRGs are launching some initiatives to this end, but more support and coordination is essential to disaggregate and localize data.

LRGs and their networks are making progress and have a very strong interest in collaborating further with national governments and the UN to support these initiatives.

04

THE TRANSFORMATION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT SOCIETIES



INTRODUCTION

The SDGs — and the New Urban Agenda — are tackling many of the major challenges that Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) face in the cities and territories they manage. These include a growing number of slum dwellers and inadequate housing; uncontrolled urban sprawl (with implications for urban-rural linkages and carbon emissions); and inadequate basic services and transport systems (which exacerbate pollution and associated environmental risks, making cities and territories more vulnerable to disasters). LRGs also play a critical role in water and energy management, and thus have a significant impact on patterns of consumption and production and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity.

These dimensions are interdependent, as underlined by the SDGs. With adequate support and collaboration at every level of government, LRGs can develop more

integrated and holistic responses at the territorial level, with broader involvement of local stakeholders.

The following section analyses the contribution of LRGs to the majority of the SDG Goals and Targets, whose progress is being assessed this year by the HLPF. Special consideration is afforded SDG 11, given the particular relevance of its targets for LRGs. The report summarizes the main trends and challenges of each target for cities and territories. It illustrates different actions LRGs are implementing in cities and regions of varying sizes (both large and small) and with different characteristics (from high, middle and low-income countries) to innovate and create more sustainable solutions for sustainable development; and proposes some potential policy responses for both local leaders as well as national and international institutions and partners.



Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 11

Housing and Basic Services

SDG 11.1

Over **100 million people** are homeless and **881 million people** live in informal settlements and slums.

Public Transport

SDG 11.2

Daily trips via **public transport** currently only account for about **16% of daily urban movement**.

Urban Planning

SDG 11.3

From 2000 to 2015, the expansion of urban land outpaced the growth of urban populations.

Cultural Heritage

SDG 11.4

130 examples are indexed on the basis of 17 SDGs, and 9 thematic commitments of Culture 21 Actions.

Environmental Impact

SDG 11.6

Up to **two billion people** do not have access to solid waste collection.

91% of the urban population still breathed air that did not meet the WHO's Air Quality Guidelines value for particulate matter (PM 2.5).

Urban Resilience

SDG 11.5

From 1990 to 2013, **almost 90% of mortality attributed to internationally reported disasters occurred in low and middle-income countries.**

An UNISDR study surveyed 169 LRGs in different regions of the world, highlighting the gap between power and responsibility.

Green and Public Spaces

SDG 11.7

Public spaces provide a tangible opportunity for inclusive governance and are potential levers of change in our cities.



11.1 ADEQUATE, SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND BASIC SERVICES, AND UPGRADE SLUMS¹

SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda represent a significant step forward in the promotion of equal rights and opportunities in cities and other human settlements. This is 'with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, without discrimination [...]'.²

The outcome assessment of Habitat III highlighted the severe urban inequalities that result from a market-led response to housing challenges. Today, over 100 million people are homeless and 881 million people live in slums. Meanwhile, worldwide real-estate and housing markets have turned into speculative assets that fuel a spiral of social inequalities and exclusion.

Despite a decrease in the proportion of the urban population living in slums (from 39% in 2000 to 30% in 2014), the absolute number of residents residing in precarious and unhealthy conditions continues to grow (African countries risk tripling their slum population by 2050).³ Urban residents in both developed and developing countries face growing problems accessing adequate and affordable housing and suffer displacements and evictions at unprecedented rates.⁴

The multiple roles of housing and services in meeting the SDGs
LRGs face the unique challenge of accommodating 4.2 billion urban inhabitants over the next decade and planning the social, economic and spatial integration of more than 2.5 billion new urban dwellers by 2050.⁵ Pressure is particularly acute in cities in Asia and Africa, where 90% of urban population growth is expected to occur.

In 2016, housing accounted for 70% of urban land use, attracting a large share of financial investments and defining where and how people live, work and play. This has major implications in terms of spatial segregations, patterns and socio-economic inequalities (Goal 10) within and between cities.

Although not a panacea, **access to land rights and the right to housing and basic services are generally the first line of defence and resilience-building against extreme poverty in risk-exposed areas, creating a strong fabric and solidarity between cities.**

Moreover, access to adequate housing is at the core of the promise to 'leave no one behind' and the effective implementation of the 'Right to the City' in development policies. This is a firm commitment of LRGs, within the framework of the Bogota Commitments adopted in Quito in 2016.⁶

Building on the lessons of the MDGs' life cycle, Indicator 11.1 — as with all the SDGs — is now universal, relevant for both developing and developed countries. It also recognizes that access to adequate housing depends on a set of interrelated conditions including availability of services, affordability, habitability, accessibility and cultural adequacy.

Moreover, the SDG framework and its targets are also interdependent. For example, progress towards Target 11.1 influences and is influenced by poverty alleviation (SDG 1), access to basic services such as waste collection (SDG 11.6), to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), and to electricity (SDG 7). In turn, these have an impact on the overall health of the population.

Furthermore, patterns of residency have a major influence on planning for responsible consumption and production of goods and services (Goal 12). Housing strategies — whether institutional reforms of the right to housing (SDG 16), entitlement or upgrading — must also consider gender mainstreaming (SDG 5). In summary, housing policies cannot be addressed sectorally but as part of urban and city policies as a whole.

The challenges of housing in local governance, territorial and urban planning and localizing financing

In the past decade, many national governments have enshrined the right to housing in their national legislation, others have agreed it is a government's responsibility and, in some cases, courts have adopted inclusive interpretations. Key to this is acknowledgement of the different contexts in which people find themselves and the progressive realization of this right at the national level, but also the inherent diversity of governance arrangements,

¹ We want to acknowledge David Satterthwaite (IIED, UK), as well as the Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa (South Africa), the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (Malaysia), Joao Whitaker (Brazil) and Eduardo Rojas (Chile), for their contribution to this section.

² See Paragraph 13 a; p5 of the New Urban Agenda (2017) A/RES/71/256.

³ AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2016.

⁴ *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context*, United Nations General Assembly, A/HRC/34/51, p. 2. Between 1998 and 2008, forced evictions affected at least 18.6 million people. The number of people to have been displaced due to disasters or conflicts has also increased exponentially in the last decade.

⁵ *Key Facts, World Urbanization Prospects*, The 2018 Revision United Nations (2018).

⁶ See UCLG (2016) *The Bogotá Commitment*, the document is available online at this address: https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/bogota_commitment.pdf.

⁷ OECD and UCLG (2016) *Subnational Governments around the World – Structure and Finance*.

⁸ Par 34 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and par. 15 (c), indent (iv) of the New Urban Agenda (2017) A/RES/71/256.

political competences and human and financial resources.

One of the main challenges is the governance of policies and programmes to support adequate housing. Although often designated an LRG responsibility, in a sample of 60 countries, housing and utilities represented only 8.8% of total LRG expenditure.⁷

Globally, the trend is for centralized and sectoral decision-making processes in the regulation of housing and property markets and subsidized programmes. Competences and powers appear to overlap or compete, hindering the autonomy of LRGs to promote, protect and be accountable for adequate housing.

Moreover, as was recognized in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,⁸ decentralization of housing responsibilities is rarely matched by technical and financial support. In fact, it is often delegated to the regional rather than the municipal level. A first step to planning, financing and building partnerships towards the 'localization' of the SDGs is acknowledging the importance of local leadership. While there are innovative projects involving local government in housing strategies, for example in Bangladesh and India, these do not adequately take account of local governments constraints to plan and deliver basic services.

A further challenge is the move from sectoral and top-down financing to more efficient investment and management across all levels of government that reflect the true picture of housing needs. At Habitat III, it was estimated that USD 929 billion was needed to improve the housing conditions of nearly one billion people living in slums or inadequate housing. This figure does not account for the 100 million homeless and 72 million displaced people settled in urban areas.

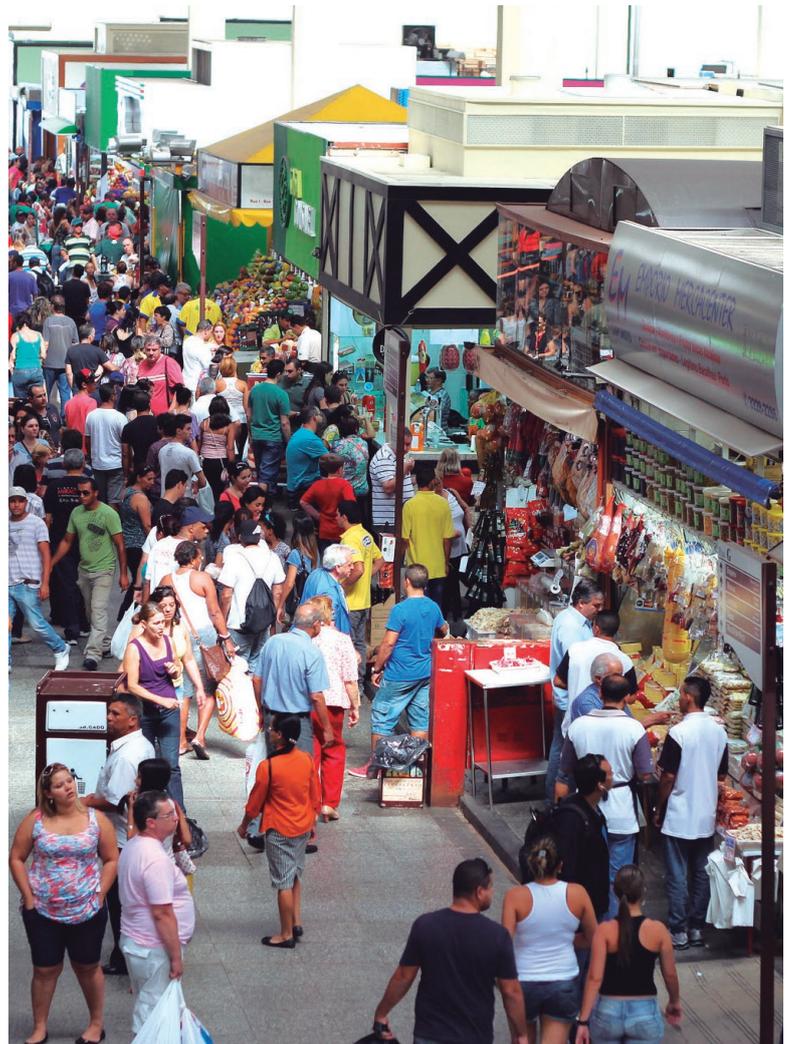
Unprecedented large-scale investments are being made by national governments with a strong sectoral orientation and often a focus on economic development and job creation. But this sectoral investment framework has been limited to the upgrading of targeted areas or the construction of new residential areas. In many cases it has little regard for human rights, provision of basic services, mobility and density, the financial capacity of local actors to maintain housing stock, social cohesion and the value of real-estate over time. Moreover, the commodification of housing has prioritized regeneration

projects in high-value city areas, resulting in the eviction of urban poor households.

At the household level, the challenge of affordability is two-fold. First, for both urban tenants and home owners it is an income issue, since for low-income households housing is the second most important expenditure after food. Second, the amount spent on decent housing is also about location and access to public services.

Although some efforts have been made, the reality is that most of the population

A first step to planning, financing and building partnerships towards the 'localization' of the SDGs is acknowledging the importance of local leadership





resort to incremental and informal housing, which places a greater strain on sustainable development financing strategies. Moreover, new expansions convert rural areas into urban land. The generated land added-value is critical for financing the extension of infrastructure for basic services and minimizing the environmental footprint of urban growth. Much still can and must be done to adapt strategies to communities' resources and realities.

Though not comparable, housing shortages and speculative practices are also a problem in European countries. In 2016, 11 countries⁹ registered an alarming 6% annual growth rate in national house price indices, which is likely to mask considerable variations in regional house price levels between capitals, their peripheries, intermediate cities and small towns. In this regard, affordability is also measured in terms of being able to afford the mortgage.

Prohibitively high prices globally translate into more socio-economic segregation and

gentrification. **LRGs in cities such as Barcelona (Spain), Amsterdam (Holland), New York (United States) and Montevideo (Uruguay) among others, are taking a stand against gentrification** (see Box 4.1.).

The other major issue is how to plan effectively for inclusive and resilient societies. Available data indicate that Africa, Latin America and Asia have made progress in improving the living conditions of urban households. But their approach to housing and service delivery has often been piecemeal, undermining any attempt to address accessibility to job, infrastructure and services more holistically at the urban level.

This, together with urban sprawl, is costly for LRGs and urban dwellers, who abandon new neighbourhoods in large numbers due to difficulties accessing employment and the affordability of even partial services on land that was formerly sub-divided and not part of the city's formal infrastructure and services. This has been the case for example in Angola, Brazil, China, Ethiopia and Mexico.

The existence of planning instruments such as Master Plans does not guarantee the achievement of local public goals. LRGs face numerous barriers when using conventional urban management and planning tools, as they lack control over the various critical dimensions in policy-making (see Target 11.3), financial strategies and data availability. On the one hand, for example, about 13% of African capitals have private land registered or mapped by LRGs that often don't have adequate records of their municipal assets;¹¹ whilst on the other, cities in high-income countries still know very little about the number of housing vacancies in their territory. In Europe, the average vacancy rate is around 18% including both vacant dwelling and second homes.¹² In Canada, the recent census shows that since 2001, the number of empty units has tripled and doubled in **Toronto** and **Vancouver** respectively. This is strongly correlated with short-term rental solutions for mass tourism, speculative investments and/or unused second homes.

Having the technical capacity to ensure quality construction of housing is also a challenge. While many national developers do not have the resources to meet quantitative needs, international partnerships often result in costly imports of materials, more speculation over bankable projects and less



BOX 4.1.

'MAKE THE SHIFT' AND THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF A RIGHTS-BASED HOUSING STRATEGY

UCLG, along with UN Office of the United Nation High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), has joined the new multi-stakeholder international movement, 'Make the Shift', led by the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing and the City of Barcelona. This campaign recognizes that global challenges to the right to housing require a comprehensive human rights-based approach.

Several UN Special Rapporteurs on Adequate Housing have stressed that 'the effective implementation of the right to adequate housing cannot be achieved without the proactive involvement of local and sub-national governments.' The latest report, adopted in March 2018, provides various examples of how LRGs, in partnership with other stakeholders, are progressively implementing each of the ten principles for a rights-based housing strategy listed below:

1. Based in law and legal standards
2. Prioritize those most in need and ensure equality
3. Comprehensive and whole-of-government
4. Rights-based participation
5. Accountable budgeting and tax justice
6. Human rights-based goals and timelines
7. Accountability and monitoring
8. Ensuring access to justice
9. Clarify the obligation of private actors and regulate financial housing and real-estate markets
10. Implement international cooperation and assistance.¹⁰

community involvement. Furthermore, the regulation of building codes often only takes into account standardized solutions that are not well adapted to local environmental and cultural contexts and may induce negative impacts in the long term, such as the loss of traditional know-how.

Uncoordinated plans and sectoral policies in settlement upgrading, transportation and local economic development have led to incomplete regeneration, isolated neighbourhoods, massive speculation (often correlated with tourism opportunities), and eviction of long-term tenants in favour of large-scale developments.

Finally, the International Scientific Conference on Cities and Climate Change in Edmonton in March 2018 pointed to the urgent need to rethink housing and informality. Informal settlements are often located in areas where high risk of disease, accidental fire, natural hazards and pollution concentrate. This is a particular challenge for LRGs, which often do not provide the most appropriate response. However, some progress has been made.

How are housing and basic services policies changing?

Innovative local approaches to housing policy are shifting away from individual entitlements implemented by central government entities, towards coordinated area-focused policies through multilevel governance (MLG) that include the private sector and empower communities in planning and financing mechanisms. This evolution is strongly correlated with the improvement of local democracy and with political, administrative and financial decentralization more generally.

As highlighted in the follow-up to the UN ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, LRGs are more efficient than other administrative levels at coordinating a territorial and partnership-led response to sustainable development and its objectives. Their policies need to be included in an enhanced coordinated financing strategy that incorporates other tiers of government and international donors with access to a more diverse source of development finance.

In terms of improving institutional and regulatory frameworks, **many LRGs with legal and fiscal powers are stipulating that developers ensure a minimum proportion**

of new affordable housing units for social purposes. This mechanism, sometimes enforceable through national legislation, has been implemented in many cities such as **London** (United Kingdom) where the figure is 25%. In **Plaine Commune** (France), the local government is more ambitious than the national legislation and requires 40% of total housing stock to serve social purposes.

Furthermore, cities such as **Vancouver** (Canada), **Paris** (France) and **São Paulo** (Brazil) among many others, took enforceable measures against unoccupied dwellings. **Vancouver**, in particular, is currently implementing a new tax on empty homes (1% of the asset value) to discourage this practice. According to the latest census, about 4.6% of the houses stood 'empty or underutilised for more than 180 days in 2017' in the city.¹³

With regards to planning, several improvements should be mentioned. In China, where ambitious housing and housing finance programmes are underway, municipal governments have a key role in implementing affordable housing policies that are consistent with central government guidelines. Local governments also manage land inventories and set housing regulations. The 2020 target is 35% of the urban population in subsidized or rental housing, compared with 7% in 2010.

Latin America also shows considerable progress in devolving responsibility for the implementation of housing programmes to local governments, even in highly centralized countries such as Chile. Programmes that best demonstrate overall neighbourhood improvement were highlighted in the run-up to the New Urban Agenda. For example, *Favela Bairro* in **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil) or *Mejoramiento Integral de Barrios* in **Medellin** (Colombia) are entirely designed and financed by municipalities. They bring improvements to wide sections of the community, as well as urban services essential for households to achieve a good standard of living in the city.

Arguably the most profound change in planning housing policies has been the implementation of a rights-based approach. **National and local governments are also shifting perspective away from the view that 'illegal' settlements can be reclaimed and bulldozed, understanding that a large part of the city's population, workforce and local economic activity is located in informal settlements,** albeit in risk-prone areas such as river banks (see below 11.5).

⁹ According to the Eurostats Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure Scoreboard, these are Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the UK.

¹⁰ Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living. A/HRC/37/53

¹¹ Denninger K (2018) *For billions without formal land rights, the tech revolution offers new grounds for hope*. Retrieved from World Bank Blog Development Talk.

¹² FEANTSA and Fondation Abbé Pierre, *An Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe 2015*.

¹³ This data was released in the press, based on the report of the Council of Vancouver. Last consulted on 25 May 2018: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/08/vancouver-declares-5-of-homes-empty-and-liable-for-new-tax>.



In practice, there are hundreds of cities of all sizes where LRGs work with grassroots organizations and federations in informal settlements. The first step is to improve participatory processes and social cohesion. As a result, the city benefits from timely data and stronger community organizations that attract social capital to their neighbourhoods. Practices such as participatory mapping conducted by the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation have led to in situ upgrade plans being developed by the Local Board of **Epworth**. Similarly, the Kenyan Homeless People's Federation established a more participatory process (Target 11.3) in upgrading schemes in *Mukuru* and *Huruma* with the local government of **Nairobi**.

Given the challenge to integrate households into the formal market, the second step is to support community-led initiatives such as savings groups. Members of Slum/Shack Dwellers International and the Asian

Coalition for Housing Rights currently work with LRGs, their associations and networks in over 30 countries. Interestingly, the majority of savers and savings group managers are women, whose active participation ensures that their priorities and concerns are integrated into key incremental investments such as sanitation or planning safe public spaces.

Transform the Settlements of the Urban Poor in **Uganda** (TSUPU) is an example of another initiative where five secondary cities are supported by an MLG framework that includes both the national government and LRGs. This was then extended to the country's 14 main secondary cities, ensuring the urban poor participate in planning and decision-making processes. In **Kenya**, the Akiba Mashinani Trust supports the savings schemes and housing programmes of the Kenyan Federation of Slum Dwellers (*Muongano wa Wanavijiji*). Both these institutions provide a platform for community networks in the cities in which they operate to work with local government to map slums, identify vacant land and negotiate housing projects (both in-situ and relocated).

Lastly, there is much room for improvement in municipal asset management. Cities in **Uruguay** have vast experience creating links and solidarity within their territories. For decades, national and local governments have financed and encouraged housing production through the well-known Housing Cooperatives for Mutual Assistance, in order to mediate the issue of land and prevent commodification and speculative valorization of social housing production. Similarly, the experience of Community Land Trusts in **Brussels** or **New York** has been instrumental in prioritizing use value over exchange value and looking at housing as a human right rather than a commodity.

In **Barcelona**, the **Provincial Council of Barcelona**, has designed the Housing Debt Mediation Service¹⁴ with the aim of protecting people at risk of losing their home through personalized legal advice in restructuring their debt. Moreover, the City Council signed an agreement with the Sareb, the company in charge of management of assets that resulted from the restructuring of the banking system, in order to reclaim the temporary return of 255 vacant units for urgent housing needs. A similar example can be found in Ireland, where the National Asset Management Agency identified 6,575 vacant



BOX 4.2.

CITIES FOR ADEQUATE HOUSING - LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR THE 'RIGHT TO HOUSING' AND THE 'RIGHT TO THE CITY'

The 2018 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations to follow up on SDG Goal 11 took place in the 50th anniversary year of the publication of *Le Droit à la Ville* (Henri Lefebvre, 1968) and two years after the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III (Quito, 2016).

Signatory cities together with Leilani Farha, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations on Adequate Housing took part.

The HLPF addressed the growing issues that threaten the equity and sustainability of our urban model. These included real-estate speculation, the *financialization* of housing, *touristification* of historic neighbourhoods, socio-spatial segregation of the outskirts, forced evictions without offering alternative solutions, housing precariousness, homelessness, urban sprawl and informal urban enlargements without the requisite facilities or infrastructure.

During the Forum of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs), cities called for action to 'put the right to housing and the right to the city at the centre', based on the following five principles:

1. More powers to better regulate the real estate market.
2. More funds to improve public housing stock.
3. More tools to co-produce public-private community-driven alternative housing.
4. An urban planning that combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods.
5. A municipalist cooperation in residential strategies.

units owned by the banks and was able to work with local authorities to allocate 2,526 of them for social housing purposes.

Local actions addressing local and global agendas

Almost every aspect of housing needs the strong engagement of local governments (usually ward, district and municipal level) who are closest to the population, more accountable to them and able to collaborate with them to generate local resources for local solutions

The SDGs commit to ensuring access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and to upgrade slums. In addition, the commitments and goals within the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework and the New Urban Agenda include many issues relevant to housing. But too little attention is paid to how these ambitious goals and commitments will be addressed, by whom, and with what funds.

We can see the benefits in many countries of transferring or sharing responsibilities for the implementation of housing programmes to local governments, especially where there is adequate financing and technical support from the central or regional government(s). City governments that have developed strong partnerships with grassroots organizations and federations for upgrading, new house construction and access to urban services, have all achieved convincing results.

The way forward

The Right to Housing needs to be at the centre of the urban agenda. Housing should no longer be regarded as a sectoral issue. Urban housing policies must be seen in a comprehensive way and conceived as city policies. LRGs must be placed at the heart of their implementation.

As such, housing policies and programmes need to shift away from sector-centred programmes financing individual entitlements and implemented by central government entities, towards area-focused policies implemented by local governments that seek to finance integrated programmes designed to improve the living conditions of the entire urban population.

The public sector needs to increase investments in housing policies. However, housing policies need to draw on resources



Roofs in the Raval district, Barcelona, Spain (photo by Andrea Ciambra)

from individuals/households and community organizations (including their savings and their capacities to contribute to upgrading) and private sector enterprises (e.g. for building materials, small loans and rental housing) as well as ward and municipal level government and higher levels of government. Co-production of public-private-community-driven housing should be encouraged.¹⁵

Strong commitment to 'slum' upgrading is essential, recognizing how much this can help meet many of the SDGs, as well as how much 'slum' residents and their organizations can contribute. Addressing all identified constraints on housing provision or upgrading is key, e.g. increase the supply and reduce the cost of serviced land for housing; expand high-quality public transport integrated into expanding serviced lots with good access to employment and services; change inappropriate land use and building regulations and mobilize what financial support there is to support this.

To facilitate 'co-creation' is necessary to increase the options for enabling new ways of owner or user organization, such as cooperative user-units that will co-create neighbourhoods, especially in central areas with increased density and limited land available.

Finally, all urban governments need to consider how to build resilience to the changes that climate change will or may bring. Much of this is achieved by informal settlement upgrading and land-use management. It is also important that housing, and all the sectors that influence housing, incorporate measures to contribute to low-carbon cities.

¹⁴ The SIDH is a joint initiative of the Housing Agency of Catalonia, in collaboration with municipalities, county councils and lawyer guilds. More information online at: <https://www.diba.cat/es/web/benestar/sidh>.

¹⁵ Drawn from *Cities against Gentrification; Manifesto for the Right to Housing and the Right to the City*, New York, 16th July 2018.



11.2 A SAFE, AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SYSTEM FOR ALL¹⁶

Cities play a critical role in several aspects of effective and sustainable mobility. These range from the provision of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all to improving and guaranteeing road safety.

Lack of access to transportation, especially in peripheral urban areas in developed countries and marginalized neighbourhoods in developing countries, frequently aggravates economic and social isolation and segregation. However, with sufficient support cities can promote inclusive and integrated urban planning and transport policies and transform their transport systems. Public transport is central to these policies, enhancing access for all and giving particular attention to the rights of women, youth, people with disabilities, older persons and other vulnerable groups.

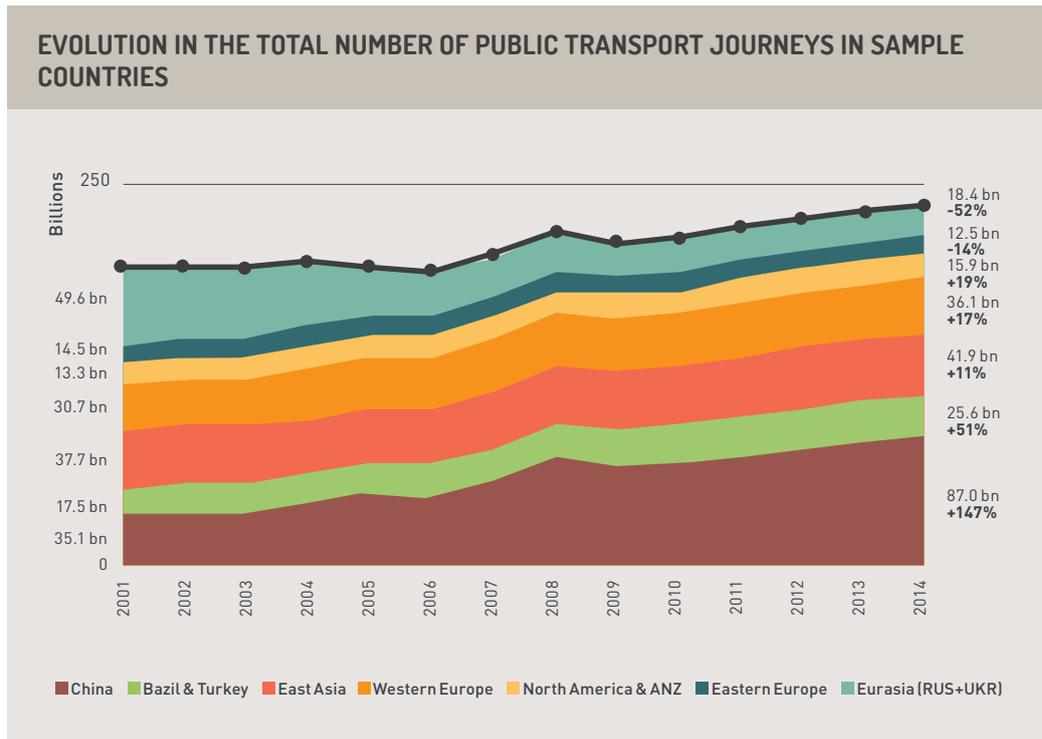
Efficient mobility systems reduce congestion, accidents, noise, pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions,¹⁷ at the same time facilitating access to education, jobs, markets and a range of other essential services to ensure 'no one is left behind'. Accordingly, seven SDGs are linked to sustainable mobility, either explicitly through transport-related targets, or via cross-cutting dimensions of sustainable transport in urban and territorial policies.¹⁸

Trends in expanding public transport and SDG 11.2

The 2017 Global Mobility Report¹⁹ finds that SDG 11.2 is still far from being met. From 2001 to 2014, a combination of higher transit use and a rapid growth in urban populations led to a 20% rise in demand for public transport.²⁰

Currently, daily trips via public transport account for approximately 16% of daily urban movement, walking and cycling approximately 37%, and private motorized transportation 47% — about three times that of public transport. **By 2030, the target date for the SDGs, it is estimated that the number of daily public**

FIGURE 4.1.



¹⁶ We want to acknowledge the Union of International Public Transports [UITP] for their contribution to this section.

¹⁷ See for reference: <https://www.itdp.org/a-global-high-shift-scenario/>.

¹⁸ Global progress in reducing GHG emissions (SDG 13), for example, can also be achieved via SDG 11.2. A high shift scenario to public transport, walking and cycling would eliminate about 1.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) annually - a 40% reduction of urban passenger transport emissions.

¹⁹ The report is produced by the Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) initiative, a worldwide consortium of over 50 leading organizations in the transport sector. It assesses progress on sustainable mobility around the world. The document is available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/28542/120500.pdf?sequence=5>.

²⁰ 38 countries were scrutinized.

transport trips could increase by 50%, reflecting both the projected growth in urban population and an increase in the number of trips made daily by each urban resident.²¹

This increase would primarily be in developing economies, where approximately 90% of global population growth will occur in the coming decades. Cities in developing countries are in fact already struggling to meet increasing demand for public transport, with insufficient investment to finance this growing need.

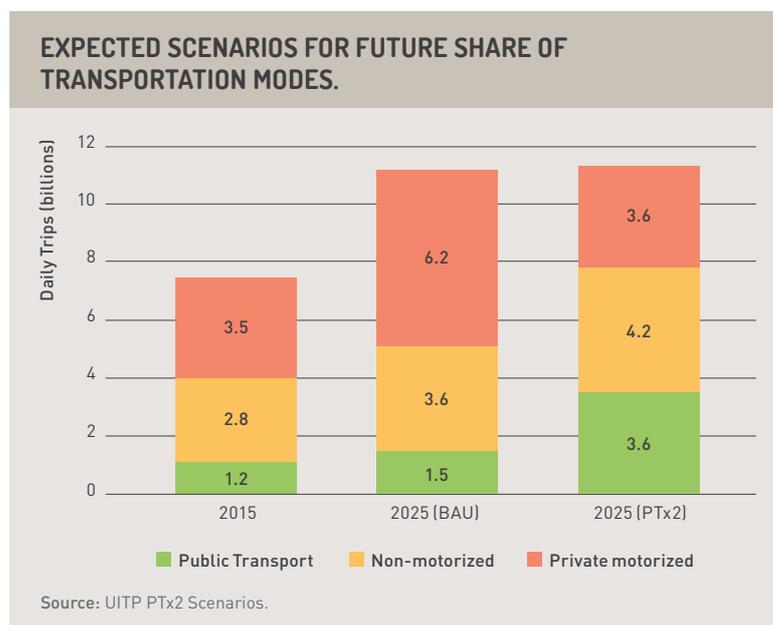
Figure 4.2 shows that a business-as-usual scenario consistent with 20th century trends would imply a change in urban transport patterns and a significant shift from walking and cycling to private motorized vehicles. Public transport would see only a small increase of its market share, while the number of trips on private motorized vehicles would grow by almost 80%, making SDG 11.2 unattainable.

Alternatively, doubling the share of public transport usage worldwide, and keeping walking and cycling stable, would make it possible to decouple urban mobility growth from growth in its societal and environmental costs — the UITP PTx2 scenario.²²

The modal split resulting from the PTx2 scenario would be more balanced, with urban trips being shared almost evenly between public transport, walking and cycling, and private motorized vehicles. The premise is not to reduce the number of trips made by private vehicles but rather to keep those at current levels (about 3.5 billion trips per day) and to ensure all extra mobility would be provided by sustainable modes of transport. In doing so, this would allow us to meet the continuously increasing demand for urban transport while decreasing per capita urban transport emissions by 25% (on a global average).

For these scenarios to be viable, decision-making will need to consider the inherent heterogeneity of transport and mobility in different contexts. Consistency between LRGs' competences, powers, regulation and licensing, and the inevitably diverse methods of funding of such services, will be essential for SDG 11.2 and several other targets of the 2030 Agenda, the National Urban Agenda, and the Paris Climate Agreement to be met. Funding methods include user tariffs, subsidies or co-funding via national, regional or local government or cross-subsidies.²³

FIGURE 4.2.



As an example, the rapid growth of cities in Africa has created a highly fragmented public transport system with generally weak public infrastructure. Most commuters have still to walk long distances to access public transport and often on unsafe, inadequate roads. Those commuters who can pay for public transport rely heavily on buses, midi/minibuses, taxis and motorcycles, and other means of informal transportation. Rail commuting services are generally only available in a few major African cities.

Informal and formal transit are in constant competition, often leading to massive congestion and serious safety and pollution issues. Informal transportation has also had a huge impact on urban transit in the regions of Latin America and Asia. Furthermore, in Africa, up to 80% of public transport users rely on informal transport while SDG 11.2 refers only to formal provision, highlighting the urgency of calibrating global agendas with the actual demands and resources of LRGs on the ground.

Policy responses to expanding public transport

The UN Secretary General's High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport has recommended progress in three key areas to guarantee sustainable, accessible and inclusive transport. These are policy development and implementation, financing,

²¹ Based on research by UITP, available at this address: <http://www.uitp.org/MCD>.

²² See online at this address: <http://www.uitp.org/strategy-public-transport>.

²³ Even in regions with an established tradition of public transport services, local governments are confronted with structural difficulties to fund municipal transport companies adequately. In certain contexts, sub-national governments contract private, public or mixed companies to manage services delivery. In other contexts, even though local governments maintain control of public transport services (e.g. in Eurasia), central or regional governments have nonetheless been able to impose limits or control regulation by establishing maximum fares or regulating the issuing of licences for different types of passenger transportation.

²⁴ In Latin America, the formal transport sector is often managed by a small number of large operators (public, private, and/or a combination of both). The rest of the sector is occupied by numerous small private operators and frequently overlaps with informal provision. In most cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, small, informal modes of public transport (by minibus, scooter, tricycle and shared taxis) are central to transport services. In Latin America, in the general population up to 30% of journeys are made on informal transport, and a much higher proportion in low-income groups.



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²⁵ UN SG's High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport, *Mobilizing Sustainable Transport for Development*, 2016.

²⁶ According to the City Survey developed by the LSE's Going Green initiative, 63% of all policy tools used for urban mobility are implemented by city governments.

²⁷ Curitiba was the first city to develop a Bus Rapid Transit system in 1974. Curitiba's BRT system model has already been replicated in more than 150 cities worldwide. 80% of travellers use the BRT system and it carries around 2 million passengers per day.

²⁸ Over the last decade, about 30% fewer vehicles have accessed London's (United Kingdom) city centre, and 20% fewer in Lyon (France).

²⁹ Jakarta (Indonesia), for instance, has been organizing 'car-free' days to promote environmental awareness since 2014; São Paulo (Brazil) and Paris (France) conducted similar initiatives.

³⁰ In London, since the implementation of the Congestion Charging Scheme, vehicle delays have reduced by 26% inside the charging zone and the bus fleet and ridership have increased significantly. The scheme has developed a net revenue of GBP 120 million, which by law has to be spent on transport improvements in London for the ten years after implementation.

³¹ Helsinki (Canada) aims to make it unnecessary to own a private car by 2025. Over the past two years, residents have been able to use an app to plan and pay for all modes of public and private transport within the city – be it train, taxi, bike, carshare or bikeshare.

³² Through its Restructuring Plan for Public Transport in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, the city opted for the establishment of an integrated urban transport network. This combines buses, underground trains and an inter-neighbourhood system with direct, circular and peripheral lines.

³³ UN SDG's High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport, p. 21. The first 'bicycle highway', for example, was launched in 2012 and allows commuters to link the central district with the periphery by bike. The city's ambitious policy links transportation strategies with the promotion of renewable energy to become neutral in terms of CO₂ emissions through a series of innovations and a climate plan. The city already reduced its emissions by 21% between 2005 and 2011 (C40 Cities, *Copenhagen: CPH climate plan 2025*).

and technological innovation.²⁵ **Local governments have tremendous potential to contribute to this, given how many transport-sector policy instruments are within their jurisdiction.**²⁶ These include road safety, cycle and walking paths, density promotion, bus rapid transit schemes,²⁷ traffic-free zones,²⁸ 'car-free days',²⁹ congestion-pricing schemes,³⁰ and shared-mobility platforms to reduce reliance on private transport and address urban pollution,³¹ alongside 'nationwide' measures such as fuel taxes and enhanced rail infrastructure.

In many cases, Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) have provided local authorities with a clear framework for implementation of sustainable urban transport systems. Brazil has made urban mobility plans a legal obligation for 3,300 cities and a precondition for receiving transport infrastructure financing; and the Ministry of Cities has provided technical and financial assistance to many cities developing their own urban mobility plans.³² Copenhagen's 'long-term vision', for example, 'is that at least one third of all driven traffic in the city should be made by bicycle, at least one third by public transport, and no more than one third by car'.³³ In Dubai, the Roads and Transport

Authority is aiming for 20% of total trips to be by public transport by 2020 and 30% by 2030 – thus doubling the share of 15% in 2015. In terms of national efforts to pursue this goal, Malaysia, for example, has set a nationwide goal to achieve a public transport target of 40% of all trips in urban areas by 2030.³⁴

On the other hand, public transport operation and capital investment costs have also grown significantly in the last decade due to increased demand, higher quality expectations from customers, and the growing cost of production (chiefly labour and energy). LRGs usually fund most of the gap between commercial revenue and operating costs.

In developed economies, this represents on average of about 50% of public transport operating costs.³⁵ There is no ideal specific ratio of financial support to fare revenue, but successful approaches combine the development of a proper revenue strategy, the earmarking of local charges for public transport and partnerships with private investors.³⁶ In addition, new technologies may need new financing models. For instance, considering the high entry barrier to electric bus systems, new business and financing models are needed to help cities and operators to invest in these cost-effective



BOX 4.3.

DIGITAL TOOLS TO BRIDGE THE FORMAL-INFORMAL DIVIDE: 'WHEREISMYTRANSPORT'

WhereIsMyTransport is an open digital platform that provides information on formally and informally run transport services in emerging cities.

Launched in August 2016, it supports 20 cities in ten countries across Africa and the Middle East in providing better information about mobility. Participating cities include **Cape Town** and **Durban** in South Africa, **Beirut** in Lebanon and **Accra** in Ghana.

It centralizes all forms of mobility data in a platform that anyone can build on to provide transport information (e.g. feed digital signage at stops), develop software products (e.g. mobility apps for transport users), or analyse metrics to improve transport provision (e.g. as a tool for city transport planners).

It works with transport operators, cities and governments to deliver innovations that make mobility services easier for citizens to use and can integrate data from even the most rudimentary operators.

In 2017, it mapped the entire informal transport sector of Cape Town using specially developed tools, Cape Town thus becoming the world's first city to delineate formal and informal transport and make data openly available.

low-emission alternatives.³⁷ This includes models such as joint procurement between transit agencies to bring down the upfront costs, and also leasing models separating the battery from the bus.

Finally, technological improvement and developments in transport and mobility have affected policy through sustainable and low/zero-emission vehicles and systems, geo-localized services, usage flow and itinerary tracking, or travel and road behaviour sensorization. Innovation has increased accessibility, affordability, service rationalization, and safety (of both users and other citizens). Global cooperation frameworks among cities have also helped significantly in this regard. ICLEI's Eco-Mobility Alliance and Cities for Mobility and UITP's Expert Working Groups are good examples of these trends. Sustainable mobility has been an area in which metropolitan cities are most likely to exchange best practices and expertise with each other.³⁸

Ultimately, lack of availability of data and indicator inadequacy remain among the biggest barriers to achieving SDG 11.2. Currently there is no data at the international level and few national statistical agencies are collecting information on the 'official' SDG indicator, i.e. 'the proportion of the population that has convenient access to public transport'.³⁹ Proxy indicators, easily aggregated and regularly reported by public transport authorities and operators at the local level (e.g. passenger journeys, mode share, vehicle-km of public transport vehicles, length of public transport lines or the number of public transport stops per area) would be more useful to measure SDG 11.2 implementation, especially for cities with low data collection capability.⁴⁰

The way forward

SDG 11.2 and sustainable mobility and transport are not attainable unless more integrated approaches, urban policies and public transport systems, enhanced governance frameworks, short and long-term planning, capacity-building, and engagement of all stakeholders are systematically put in place. Decentralized framework, coordination between transport and territorial planning institutions, clear and accountable contractual relationship between local governments and service provider, mixed and localized financing instruments are critical levers.

Urban policies and public transport systems must be developed in an integrated way in order to achieve maximum impact. Such integration needs to happen on two levels. At the policy level, joint policy design is essential to deliver a consistent urban mobility system, with urban planning and transport decision-making integrated so as to build more compact cities and favour mixed land use, as a way to increase accessibility.

On a practical level, improved coordination among different transport modes will create more appealing, efficient and user-friendly transit systems, and positively spill over in terms of shaping better user behaviour, and favouring sustainable, collective and public transit over polluting or inefficient private options. All this can only happen under a comprehensive and well-defined urban mobility strategy — inevitably supported by visionary leadership, technical awareness and the strong backing of political will across all levels of governance and institutional design.

Existing urban public transport services, moreover, need sufficient funding just to maintain current service levels and quality: large-scale investments will be required in the future to upgrade and modernize existing infrastructure and fund new projects, notably in fast-growing cities.⁴¹ In many places around the world, public spending has shrunk, threatening public transport funding: to help ensure dependable and sufficient funding for public transport, new funding avenues also need to be explored. These include congestion and road pricing, parking and similar charges as part of a diversified toolbox, complemented by innovative sources, e.g. land-value capture programmes, green bonds and transit-oriented development (TOD) grants, fuel/carbon taxes and other climate-compatible financial instruments.

Service and technology innovation is key to offering customers a top-quality mobility option and an enhanced journey experience that can help to reduce accidents, improve access and the environment. Ultimately, the capacity of the sector needs to grow if it wants to respond to the ever-growing needs of urban citizens.

Addressing the data gap is also essential and UITP is launching a reporting tool this year for the public transport sector to track operational performance data on SDG 11.2 to support national reporting and policy development.

³⁴ SPAD – The Land Transport Commission of Malaysia, 2013: National Land Public Transport Master Plan.

³⁵ See also: <http://www.uitp.org/sites/default/files/Financing%20public%20transport.pdf>.

³⁶ The rail-plus-property development business model has been successfully implemented in Hong Kong as a means of internalizing the added external economic benefits along the railway corridor for subsidizing railway construction and operations. This has substantially relieved the burden on government and released more public funds for other social welfare uses.

³⁷ See also: <https://about.bnef.com/blog/electric-buses-cities-driving-towards-cleaner-air-lower-co2/>.

³⁸ Case study references of Guangzhou and Shanghai (China), Jakarta (Indonesia), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), and Shiraz (Iran) and workshop presentations are available online: <http://www.metropolis.org/agenda/urban-transportation-policy-training>. More information on Metropolis' International Training Institute (ITI) is available online at: <http://seoulmiti.org/>. In May 2017, UITP's Global Public Transport Summit attracted 2,500 participants from 84 countries to exchange best practice with international experts on public transport up-scaling for SDG 11.2 implementation. <https://uitpsummit.org/summit2017-edition/>.

³⁹ The UN Statistical Commission has proposed that for SDG 11.2, access to public transport is considered convenient when an officially recognized stop is accessible within a distance of 500m from a reference point such as a home, school, workplace, market, etc. However, the capacity to report such an indicator at the local level is currently very limited and cannot easily be aggregated up to the national level. See also: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-11-02-01.pdf>.

⁴⁰ UITP was identified by the UN Statistical Commission to address the data gap and has embarked on a project to develop a global reporting tool directly from public transport authorities and operators, useful for local, national and international reporting as well as other international reporting frameworks (e.g. the Global Tracking Framework of the SuM4All initiative).

⁴¹ Currently, global capital investment in public and private transport is between USD\$1.4 trillion and \$2.1 trillion annually (see also: https://www.wri.org/sites/default/files/The_Trillion_Dollar_Question_II_Tracking_Investment_Needs_in_Transport_0.pdf), but promoting a more sustainable low-carbon pathway for urban transport will depend on how future capital is invested. According to these estimates, if cities were to be built around public transport, it would reduce urban infrastructure capital by more than USD\$3 trillion over the next 15 years (see also: <https://newclimateeconomy.report/>).



SDG 11
Sustainable Cities
and Communities

11.3 INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE URBANI- ZATION – PARTICIPATORY, INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN ALL COUNTRIES⁴²

“People are not just inactive recipients of goods and services. Instead, they serve as real contributors in the creation of improved, humanized cities.”

Mpho Parks Tau,
The Voice of Mayors, Metropolis 2014

Traditionally, city planning has focused on confining urban sprawl and regulating land use through the application of norms and regulations.⁴³ Today, the world needs to accommodate one million new urban dwellers per week, urban sprawl has become far more common, informality the dominant form of access to employment and housing in many regions, and commodification of urban goods and services is gaining ground. Thus, planning should concentrate mainly on guiding urban development, integration and infrastructure provision. Regulation remains important, but new forms of planning are essential to adapt to the new global context and address concerns such as climate change, social and economic inclusion, spatial justice, gender and resilience.

Innovating in planning means being proactive rather than regulatory. National governments must play a key role in creating the appropriate institutional environment (legal and regulatory frameworks), supported by adequate National Urban

Policies (NUPs). LRGs must be the promoters and key actors of these planning innovations, facilitating participatory approaches, with the possibility to experiment and innovate as ‘labs’ of new practices to support sustainability and inclusiveness.

Global North countries, and more recently Eastern European countries, have evolved over the years towards more decentralized, participatory and ‘market-friendly’ forms of planning, operating through multilevel, multi-sectoral and more networked systems of governance, linking planning and action through development strategies. In many global South countries such reforms have been slow and for different reasons planning remains relatively centralized, top-down, bureaucratic, open to political opportunism and patrimonialism, and hampered by lack of capacity and resources. However, there are some global South countries which have made important planning innovations.

The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda offer a real opportunity to reform and strengthen the planning role of LRGs and their linkages to various levels and networks of governance, including citizen participation. The basic principles adopted by the UN Governing Council of UN Habitat in 2015⁴⁴ define guiding principles for urban and territorial planning within this global framework.

Decentralization, or giving cities the power to act

Clearly, the capacity of cities to plan in a participatory and inclusive way is strongly determined by the effectiveness of decentralization already in place in a country. In both North and South America as well as in European countries, decentralization of governance and planning has strongly enabled LRGs to develop flexible and strategic forms, and innovative approaches to mainstream local priorities.

In Eastern Europe, following the fall of authoritarian governments, certain powers were devolved to sub-national governments but in many cases, local self-governance remains limited. The region’s intermediary cities face big challenges, the phenomenon of ‘shrinking cities’ accounting for the persistence of top-down master planning, weak implementation at the LRG level and little control over market-driven urban development.

⁴² We want to acknowledge the contribution of Professor Vanessa Watson, School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, University of Cape Town, South Africa, as well as the inputs provided by Prof. Tom Coppens, Faculty of Design Sciences, University of Antwerp (Belgium), Puvendra Akkiah (City of Durban, South Africa) UCLG Committee on Urban Strategic Planning, Regina Rau (former planner city of Porto Alegre, Brazil).

⁴³ In the 2018 flagship publication, *Leading change – Delivering the New Urban Agenda through Urban and Territorial Planning*, UN Habitat defines planning as ‘a decision-making process aimed at realizing economic, social, cultural, and environmental goals through the development of spatial visions, strategies and plans and the application of sets of policy principles, tools, institutional and participatory mechanisms and regulatory procedures’ (<https://unhabitat.org/books/leading-change-delivering-the-new-urban-agenda-through-urban-and-territorial-planning/>). This definition fully reflects the one developed in the UCLG Policy paper on urban strategic planning – *Local Leaders preparing for the future of cities* published in 2006 (<https://issuu.com/uclgcu/docs/urbanstrategic>).

⁴⁴ See UN Habitat (2015), *The International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning*: <https://unhabitat.org/books/international-guidelines-on-urban-and-territorial-planning/>.

⁴⁵ See Berrisford S and P McAuslan (2018), *Reforming Urban Laws in Africa: a practical guide*. African Centre for Cities, UN Habitat, Cities Alliance and Urban Landmark.

⁴⁶ MIT Center for Civic Media, available online at this address: <https://civic.mit.edu>.

⁴⁷ Frost & Sullivan, ‘Strategic Opportunity Analysis of the Global Smart City Market’.

⁴⁸ Goveia, ‘City Changer Labs and Digital Civics’.

In Africa, planning systems remain highly centralized with urban planning laws mainly inherited from colonial times and primarily under the control of a central government department. Some governments have committed to decentralize these laws. But new laws have often been written and not approved, or the necessary changes have not been made to urban governance and land management legislation.⁴⁵ Similarly in Asia, countries are in slow transition between older systems of top-down service delivery and newer decentralized systems for development policy and planning. A lack of clarity on devolved competences leads to weak planning capacities.

For effective planning, LRGs need clear definition of responsibilities, adequate human and financial resources as well as capacities and powers to enforce local decisions. Worldwide, those cities with the power to act have institutionalized forms of citizen and community participation. Communities in particular have the potential to provide local knowledge and information to improve the management of basic services to reach populations and neighbourhoods left furthest behind.

An important stimulus to positive reforms and cultural change in planning comes in the form of strategic planning. This is part of the overall objective of promoting integrated development by combining urban policies with economic development and management strategies. In many larger metropolitan areas, strategic plans have become important tools to achieve a longer-term framework for managing their development. The preparatory process engages many actors, promotes dialogue, and places key issues on the agenda of decision-makers, which can contribute to the strengthening of city governance. It offers an opportunity to plan collaboratively through a participatory approach that includes local stakeholders and civil society.

Participation and inclusive approaches to planning

Broad-based consultations and citizen participation in local planning are key conditions for ownership and further implementation of agreed strategies. Worldwide, the trend is to increase stakeholder participation in local governance processes. Instruments of participatory

democracy can create 'virtuous circles' of engagement between citizens and institutions through different mechanisms and channels (e.g. neighbourhood committees and assemblies, open town council meetings, councils for the elderly and youth, referenda, e-democracy, participatory budgets and planning, among others). The participation of citizens through digital instruments is a more recent development, and the concepts of 'Civic Media',⁴⁶ 'Smart Citizen',⁴⁷ and 'Digital Civics'⁴⁸ are already gaining ground.

Latin America has undoubtedly played a pioneering role in the development of participatory procedures in local planning.



BOX 4.4.

EXAMPLES OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE PLANNING INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

City Strategic Planning was initiated in **Barcelona** in the nineties, but later spread to many cities across the world. The City of **Johannesburg**, for example, sought to create a strategy to rethink the nature of local governance. The Joburg 2040: Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) is both an aspirational document that defines the type of society Johannesburg seeks to become by 2040, and a long-term planning instrument with a set of strategic choices to guide the city's development trajectory. It lays the foundation for multilevel, multi-scalar and integrated responses to the city's urban challenges.

The *Plan de ordenamiento territorial* (POT) was the planning law first developed in Colombia that later influenced laws in Ecuador and Bolivia. It emphasized and amplified the multidimensional and integrated nature of (spatial and socio-economic) planning, and contributed to the decentralization of functions, highlighting the fiscal opportunities associated with this process. That said, it has taken decades for the technical and political capacity of municipalities to match this.

Decentralization can have negative effects. Long-term choices can sometimes give way to short-term interests that are politically more profitable for local governments. This has been the case in many countries in Europe and North America where, for example, there has been a prolific development of shopping centres with little heed to environmental concerns.

Learning from different experiences from Latin America and South Africa, countries such as Mozambique have since reformed their planning laws, but municipalities still have problems implementing land-use management and regulation and, even more challenging, establishing a property tax system from scratch.



Brazil and Bolivia institutionalized participatory processes and Brazilian cities were responsible for well-known innovations such as participatory budgeting.⁴⁹ In spite of this, planning is still often technocratic and sectoral and fails to deal with structural inequalities⁵⁰ and citywide issues; and in some cities the property development sector plays an increasingly dominant role (for example during the Rio Olympic Games in 2016).

In Africa, highly centralized and top-down planning systems tend to be less consultative. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as Slum/Shack Dwellers International have played an important role in promoting community participation, particularly of informal economic actors. They have also demonstrated the benefits of fostering the leadership of women in co-producing information, as has been the case in Kenya, South Africa and Uganda (See Section 11.1).

⁴⁹ In 2018, there are more than 3,000 experiences of participatory budgeting listed in cities across 40 countries.

⁵⁰ In Mumbai, for example, those with class and caste privileges have benefited most from the opportunities offered by participatory democracy. Zerah MH (2009) *Participatory Governance in Urban Management and the Shifting Geometry of Power in Mumbai*.

⁵¹ <http://www.citiesalliance.org>. Cities Alliance is a global partnership of development agencies, governments, NGOs, LGAs, foundations, private sector and knowledge institutions. It provides direct operational support to urban governments and serves as an international platform for all partners to engage, learn and share knowledge, expertise and resources in support of a common vision and advocacy.

⁵² For more information, see the webpage of the International Observatory on Local Democracy: <https://oidp.net/en/>.

⁵³ See UN Habitat, *International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning – Towards a compendium of inspiring practices*. Available at: http://backend.aesop-planning.eu/uploads/gpean/un-habitat/ig_utp_towards-a-compendium-of-inspiring-practices.pdf.

⁵⁴ For more information, see <http://www.citiesalliance.org/Tunisia-CP-page>.

⁵⁵ See Cabannes Y (2018), *Highlights on some Asian and Russian Participatory Budgeting Pioneers*, DPU, IOPD, Kota Kita Foundation. Available at: <https://www.oidp.net/docs/repo/doc362.pdf>.

Other participatory planning experiences, such as City Development Strategies, have fostered the inclusion of vulnerable groups in defining urban strategies in **Ouagadougou** (Burkina Faso) and **Douala** (Cameroon). These have yielded interesting results in terms of consensus-building and funding opportunities for follow-up investments.⁵³ Participation in planning processes has also gained ground in the Maghreb countries. Morocco introduced such provisions in 2010, requiring cities to design strategic plans in a participatory way. In Tunisia, the National Federation of Tunisian Cities recently engaged in the development of participatory urban strategies in nine inland secondary cities, drawing on the experiences of the cities of **Sousse** and **Sfax**.⁵⁴

In Southern Asia (excluding India), there is little provision for participation by elected representatives or citizens in planning preparation. In East and South-eastern Asia, democratic traditions are weak and top-down planning dominates. However, new practices are emerging for example in Vietnam or in cities such as **Chengdu** (see Box 4.6.). In some countries federations of the urban poor — such as the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights — are the most likely route to participation.

Likewise, master planning in Eastern Europe is strongly driven by professional planners and often property development interests, with very limited citizen consultation. Most states have however introduced legislation which includes the provision for participation.

In upper middle-income countries, formal procedures for participation and stakeholder involvement have existed for some time, although these have been criticized for being 'tokenistic' rather than empowering. Organized interests through lobbying and advocacy (which may be profit-driven) can play an important role in planning decisions. A growing number of cities have adopted participatory budgeting, open consultations, transparency portals and city labs — a significant evolution towards increased citizen participation and, at times, co-creation of the urban future.

Also in Europe and mainly because of an increasing body of environmental legislation, citizens have more judicial instruments to contest spatial planning decisions, which in turn increases the accountability of the planning system.



BOX 4.5.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT FORUMS IN 14 INTERMEDIARY CITIES IN UGANDA

In the past ten years in Uganda, at the initiative of Cities Alliance,⁵¹ Municipal Development Forums have been set up in the country's 14 main medium-sized cities. The forums — bringing together public, private and local stakeholders to support the elaboration of city development strategies — are now a benchmark for participation in Uganda, and are being institutionalized as part of new regulations on national urban policy.

Increasing dissemination of participatory budgeting practices is also a clear sign of growing participation in local planning processes. According to the Observatory on Local Democracy (OIDP), more than 700 African municipalities currently rely on participatory budgeting.⁵²

Policy coordination between national and local level – a work in progress

Functions relevant to planning are usually spread across several departments and tiers of government, as well as private and civil society sectors, and urban and rural areas. Horizontal and vertical policy integration is vital to shaping the development of any territory, guiding action at the political level and providing strategic direction through a shared vision. However, this rarely happens.

In upper middle-income countries, planning coordination and integration generally work quite well. In urban areas, they are often placed under the authority of specialized departments or agencies (such as the urban planning agencies in France in many big cities) with political and executive powers. Integration also occurs through bottom-up collaboration between municipalities on strategic issues. Conversely, top-down attempts to create new metropolitan governments have frequently been politically and operationally cumbersome, with voluntary cooperation between municipalities in many cases proving more effective.

However, coordination between local, regional and national levels remains a difficult exercise everywhere despite the different modalities that have been promoted in recent decades (e.g. bi-lateral State-City – *Contrat de ville* or Metropolitan Planning Contracts in France). Inspired by these experiences, other countries have also developed contracting practices between different levels of government (Colombia). In Europe, **shared planning, comprehensive dialogue and joint financial responsibilities seem to be the keywords for the future of national-local cooperation across levels of government, as part of the definition of new national urban policies.**

In Eastern Europe, the transition from old to new state forms has confused roles and responsibilities, causing fragmentation and limiting the state's ability to control or coordinate with the private sector. In most countries, vertical coordination is further hampered by an intermediate level of regional institutions involved in planning (less common in those countries that are now EU member states) and horizontal coordination is poor.

Meanwhile, many Eastern and South-eastern Asian countries are in a slow transition from older systems of top-



BOX 4.6.

OBSERVATIONS AND EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE PARTICIPATORY EXPERIENCES

During the last three years in Vietnam, UN Habitat has worked to strengthen participatory processes to elaborate development strategies in five medium-sized cities, in support of the mission of the Association of Cities of Vietnam (ACVN).

In one Chinese mega-city, **Chengdu**, participatory budgeting is being practised every year in more than 2,600 villages and localities and 1,400 neighbourhoods. Since 2008, over 100,000 projects budgeted for by citizens have been implemented.⁵⁵

Participatory budgeting is only a small part of the local budget and has a limited impact on local planning. In the U.S., some organizations have started to talk instead about 'alternative budgeting'. This approach analyses budget priorities and raises questions from civil society, rather than promoting participation in all non-essential decisions. One of the arguments is that in the U.S., local budgets are highly racialized. This means expenditures on police and prisons are high, and on infrastructure and development they are low in poor areas with ethnic divides.

Barcelona City Council developed a digital infrastructure called *Decidim.barcelona* that allows different types of participatory processes to happen online. The Strategic Plan 2015 of the city and ten districts combined face-to-face and digital participation. More than 10,000 proposals were received and over 400 meetings took place around the city. The platform uses free software and has been adapted and implemented by more than 30 governments and organizations.

down service delivery and newer systems of decentralized development policy and planning. In countries such as Vietnam, planning and budgeting tend to fall under separate ministries, and there is little integration between plans (spatial, socio-economic and developmental).

In Africa, where most countries experience urban spatial fragmentation, the situation is more challenging. However, some countries such as South Africa are experiencing progress. Building on the Integrated Development Plan introduced in 2000, the country is currently developing a new Integrated Urban Development Framework (the 'IUDF Implementation Framework Plus') to achieve policy, plan and budget coordination at LRG levels and guide management of urban areas. The **Gauteng**



City Region, for example, bears witness to the important preconditions for spatial coordination set by the IUDF.

Other African countries have followed suit, for example the urban development programme of Burkina Faso. A pilot project to harmonize multiple urban planning schemes was launched in the medium-sized town of **Tenkodogo** with encouraging results, but the experience now needs to be streamlined and expanded. Similarly, in Zambia integration efforts need more resources and capacity than is currently available.

Brazil's creation of the Ministry of Cities and the National Council of Cities in 2003 stands out among efforts to improve coordination in many countries in Latin America. It was established to coordinate vertical and horizontal urban development and led to unprecedented investment in social housing units and slum upgrading programmes.

Overall, effective NUPs and institutional frameworks are critical to sustainable and integrated urban development and strong national and regional development planning (SDG 11.a).⁵⁶ 'A NUP does not replace local urban policies, but complements them to create the necessary condition for sustainable development'.⁵⁷ However, in a majority of countries, NUPs are still at a very early stage and improved collaboration across different levels of government and other stakeholders will be imperative to ensure these are feasible and to support their implementation at a later stage. Based on the LRG survey collected for this report, this is still far from being the case.

The way forward

Since planning is a product of the political, economic and social system within which it is embedded, there can be little chance of a quick 'technical' fix. Broader political and institutional reform is an essential precondition in those parts of the world where it is weak and ineffective. Strengthening of LRGs is a critical part of this and key to implementing the SDGs, and in particular the New Urban Agenda and SDG 11.3.

To facilitate participatory urban planning and promote integrated urban and territorial approaches, the urban and territorial planning legal framework and regulations need to be revised and updated. This includes support to CSOs and NGOs that are able to promote bottom-up and participatory planning in

contexts where decentralization and local democratization is partial and/or weak.

Moreover, a global initiative is recommended to improve local (in-country) ability to produce qualified professional planners and researchers. The LRG associations can be instrumental to facilitate access to leadership training and preparation in planning and financing in this matter.

Infrastructure and service planning must be aligned with land assembly and release to guide economic and spatial expansion, especially where there are pressures for growth.

Mechanisms to produce and maintain reliable sub-national data to inform and monitor planning need also to be developed.

Horizontal integration (joined-up planning and governance) should be promoted, which necessitates coordination of a range of municipal departments and involves stakeholders.

Where they do not already exist, national urban policies (NUPs) must be developed as an overall framework for multi-scalar and coordinated planning. Intergovernmental frameworks that adequately empower, fund and incentivize LRGs to implement integrated urban and territorial planning must be established.

11.4 CULTURE AND HERITAGE FOR MORE SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE AND OPEN CITIES AND SOCIETIES⁵⁸

SDG 11.4 addresses the need for greater efforts to protect the world's cultural and natural heritage. This is one of the most explicit references to cultural aspects in the 2030 Agenda, together with those found in SDGs 4.7, 8.3 and 8.9. Even if they are still relatively low-profile, the 2030 Agenda represents a significant step forward in the extent to which cultural aspects are considered and included in sustainable development agendas. By comparison, the MDGs adopted in 2000 made no precise references to cultural dimensions and only during implementation were these explored and addressed.

⁵⁶ OECD/UN Habitat define NUP as the coherent set of decisions from a government-led process of coordinating various actors for a common vision that will promote more productive and resilient urban development.

⁵⁷ According to the latest data from the NUP database, of the 150 countries developing urban policies at the national level, 73 are in the process of implementation, 23 have reached the monitoring and evaluation phase, 24 are in the feasibility phase, 18 in diagnosis, and 16 in formulation, illustrating a recent increase in interest in developing or renewing NUPs. (OECD, 2017).

⁵⁸ We want to acknowledge the UCLG Committee on Culture for their contribution to this section.

⁵⁹ Duxbury, N.; Hosagrahar, J.; and Pascual, J. (2016), *Why must culture be at the heart of sustainable development?*

⁶⁰ Martinell, A. (2014), *Cultural life, local life*, article, Barcelona: UCLG / Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments.

⁶¹ To consult the Agenda 21 for Culture (2004), the Policy Statement *Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development* (2010) and the 'Culture 21: Actions' toolkit (2015) see the UCLG Committee on Culture website: www.agenda21culture.net.

This progress is consistent with the growing recognition of the importance of cultural aspects, including heritage, in sustainable development as well as the specific implications these may have at the local level.⁵⁹ Cultural rights are often exercised at the local level.⁶⁰ Accordingly, local governments have a significant role in the design and implementation of cultural policies. Since the adoption of Agenda 21 for Culture in 2004, LRGs have advocated the strengthening of local cultural policies and participatory governance frameworks connected to sustainable development. The 3rd UCLG World Congress, held in Mexico City in 2010, adopted a Policy Statement entitled 'Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development'. There followed the espousal of the 'Culture 21: Actions' toolkit in 2015 which allowed cities across the world to share a common framework for the operationalization of culture in their approach to sustainable development, enabling them to innovate, evaluate and exchange their policies and programmes.⁶¹

In the coming years, improvement of indicators and data collection mechanisms — in particular relating to culture — will be essential. To this end, in 2017 and 2018 UNESCO convened two Expert Workshops on Measuring Culture in the SDGs. These focused not only on SDG 11.4 but also other aspects, with the aim of proposing national and local indicators and methodologies which adopt a broad thematic approach. Indeed, evidence collected by LGAs and networks in past years suggests that cultural aspects will play a pivotal role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, even where the connection between the cultural dimension and the SDGs is only implicit. In 2018, the UCLG Committee on Culture will present two specific outputs to highlight this commitment – the document 'Culture in the SDGs: A Guide for Local Action', and the Agenda 21 for Culture Good Practice Database (see Box 4.8.).

Cultural and heritage policies in support of integrated and inclusive cities and communities

Countless cities and territories have set up and promoted policies to safeguard and enhance heritage and other cultural areas. The brief overview of initiatives that follows illustrates this commitment.



BOX 4.7.

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN CULTURE AND THE SDGs

Several international civil society networks have actively campaigned for the acknowledgement that culture is a significant component of sustainable development, providing evidence of this in their own work. In the field of heritage, the work of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is notable. Through its research, capacity-building and advocacy efforts, ICOMOS has developed a range of tools and recommendations to contribute to the implementation of Target 11.4. Similarly, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has put forward tools and recommendations to help libraries implement the 2030 Agenda. ICOMOS, IFLA and UCLG were among members of 'The Future We Want Includes Culture' campaign, which advocated stronger inclusion of culture in the 2030 Agenda.

BOX 4.8.

ILLUSTRATING THE LINKS BETWEEN CULTURE AND THE SDGs

The UCLG report 'Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals: A Guide for Local Action' (2018) identifies connections between cultural aspects and all the SDGs. These are illustrated with examples from cities across the world. They emphasize the importance of decentralization, localization and participatory governance, and highlight participation in cultural life, cultural liberties, heritage and diversity as fundamental values in their own right as well as enabling factors for other areas of sustainable development.

The UCLG report draws on over 130 examples of culture and sustainable development collected by the UCLG Committee on Culture. These are accessible via the Agenda 21 for Culture Good Practice Database (<http://obs.agenda21culture.net>). Examples are indexed by the 17 SDGs, the nine thematic commitments of Culture 21 Actions, and a set of keywords.



Protecting tangible and intangible cultural heritage can become a driver of bottom-up policy coherence led by LRGs and involving increased participation of citizens and civil society. Several cities, such as **Regensburg** (Germany), have adopted World Heritage management plans⁶² and been successful in involving local citizens and integrating cultural heritage in policy areas such as urban planning, economic development and tourism. Others, including those mentioned here, have increased their efforts towards the integration of heritage protection in other areas of policy-making.

In the context of urbanization — which puts pressure on heritage assets — it is particularly important for cities to protect cultural heritage and position culture as a key element in the renovation of historic centres and inclusive urban planning. Cities such as **Cuenca** (Ecuador) have acknowledged and promoted cultural assets and rights, leading to effective policies of inclusive urban planning and regeneration. The cultural dimension of sustainable development is now acknowledged in the other policy areas that support it. Citizen involvement is particularly important to ensure that heritage also retains its contemporary relevance.

The cultural dimension can also be linked to poverty reduction (SDG 1) and decent employment (SDG 8) and be mainstreamed into a long-term vision of local sustainable development. The **Shire of Yarra Ranges** (Australia), for example, was able to reconcile urban attractiveness with inclusiveness. Local governments mobilized local social and economic stakeholders to shift tourism policies towards decent economic opportunities for local artists and creative businesses. Under local leadership, Yarra Ranges attracted funding from state and federal governments to improve cultural facilities, while at the same time protecting its cultural and natural heritage, implementing effective employability mechanisms and promoting a dynamic understanding of citizens' needs.

The example of **Pekalongan** (Indonesia), identifying itself as the 'City of Batik', is also a compelling story of how local governments can **foster women's social and economic empowerment through cultural policies.** In 2011, the city decided to invest in the economic potential of its cultural heritage, the Batik sector, where 60% of the workers are women. This strategic decision helped promote decent work, empower women and, through them, improve the wellbeing of their households. It also raised municipal finances, generating increased capacity for public authorities.

In UCLG's Bogotá Commitment (2016), LRGs acknowledged **culture as a vital element of citizenship and co-existence.** It recognized cultural diversity as a prerequisite for innovation, co-responsibility and the peaceful resolution of internal and external conflicts. Post-conflict cities, such as **Medellín** (Colombia), explored the connections between cultural heritage, social inclusion and cohesion goals. Several other local governments have implemented local cultural policies that have been instrumental for gender equality and the recognition of vulnerable groups and their cultural rights (e.g. Afro-Colombian indigenous communities or internally displaced people, among others).

Awareness-raising on diversity and inclusion, **the promotion of intercultural and intergenerational dialogue,** and the integration of cultural aspects in educational and lifelong learning strategies are fundamental to achieving this goal. Cities such as **Gabrovo** (Bulgaria) have adopted policies fostering knowledge transfer from local rural communities to urban areas, including the 'Welcome to the Village' project, which enabled children to learn from older persons living in rural areas. Likewise, the city of **Jeonju** (South Korea) has included the appreciation of traditional culture in education and lifelong-learning programmes, helping both children and adults understand the importance of traditional buildings, intangible heritage and other cultural dimensions of housing.

Local governments are determined to be laboratories for testing effective and appropriate cultural solutions to global problems, acknowledging their positive impact and sharing the lessons learned. In 2016, the city of **Timbuktu** (Mali) was the recipient of the second edition of the International Award UCLG — Mexico City — Culture 21, acknowledging its

⁶² For more information, please see: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/globalstrategy/>.

Local governments are determined to be laboratories for testing effective and appropriate cultural solutions



leading role and the contribution of its cultural dimension in the achievement of the SDGs. Timbuktu presented the outstanding, lasting results of its strategy of socio-economic and urban fabric reinvigoration in the city, much-needed after its occupation in 2012 and 2013. The initiative strengthened local cultural heritage, defended citizens' freedom to maintain their cultural practices, and promoted culture as a strategy for resilience and sustainable cohabitation.

Finally, **there is a clear link between cultural protection and the preservation of ecosystems on land and in water (SDGs 14 and 15)**. Traditional knowledge connected to the preservation of natural resources has been acknowledged by some local governments and deserves further attention. The Seed Swap Festival in **Seferihisar** (Turkey) and the **Ha Long** Ecomuseum (Vietnam), for example, are unique cultural experiences that promote land and water preservation. The former allows local producers to maintain traditional, low-cost agricultural practices, while also raising awareness about the need to preserve sustainable food production and consumption. The province of **Jeju** (South Korea) has committed to preserve the custom of *haenyeo* (women divers) as an eco-friendly sustainable fishing practice, rooted in traditional knowledge. Through preservation and promotion of such heritage, Jeju has also raised women's status in the community.

The way forward

The following proposals are drawn from city practices in alignment with the commitments of the Agenda 21 for Culture to reinforce the cultural dimension as the fourth pillar of local, national and international sustainable development strategies.

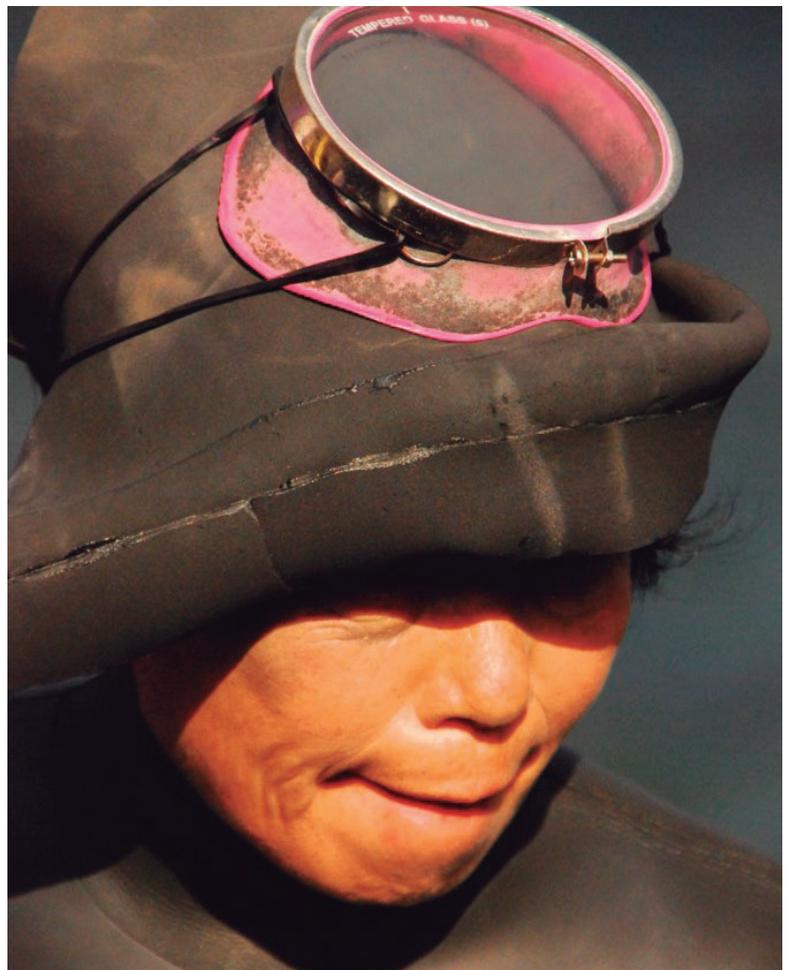
The priority is to develop capacity-building programmes targeting all relevant development actors (local governments, CSOs, private actors, development agencies, etc.). The exchange of good practice on culture and local sustainable development must be fostered by local governments and CSOs at national and international level. Participatory mechanisms in local cultural policies and programmes must be adopted, enabling the cultural rights of all citizens to be exercised, recognizing the important role of CSOs and ensuring transparent, accountable policy-making.

To better integrate culture in local sustainable policies, local governments

should promote appropriate cross-departmental collaboration to design, implement and evaluate policies and programmes where cultural aspects intersect with the economic, social, educational and environmental dimensions. At the same time, it is important to integrate a 'cultural impact assessment' mechanism which allows for the preliminary consideration of the potential cultural implications of measures adopted in different areas, such as urban regeneration, transportation and mobility, and economic development.

Important evidence must be collected on the explicit and implicit references made to cultural aspects (tangible and intangible heritage, creativity, diversity, etc.) in national, regional and local sustainable development strategies, designed in accordance with the SDGs.

Lastly, it is essential to establish appropriate data collection and research mechanisms which contribute to a better understanding of the synergies between cultural aspects and other areas of sustainable development.



Haenyeo woman diver in Jeju, Republic of Korea (photo by Austronesian Expeditions, flickr.com)



11.5 MAKING CITIES SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT: PROGRESS ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR) AND RESILIENCE- BUILDING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL⁶³

Urban disasters are escalating, with a rising human and economic cost.⁶⁴ It is estimated that disasters cause annual losses of USD 314 billion in the built environment alone.⁶⁵ **SDG 11.5** focuses on reducing the number of people killed or affected by urban disasters, and on substantially decreasing the direct economic costs relative to the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) caused by disasters. This includes those that are water-related, focusing particularly on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.

LRGs' role in addressing disaster risks has been increasingly acknowledged in international commitments, in particular in the Sendai Framework which clearly highlights their part in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies.⁶⁶ LRGs have

huge responsibilities to ensure resilience to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of their residents, as well as promote sustainable development in their territories. In practice, LRGs act in key areas such as urban planning (SDG 11.3), transport (SDG 11.2), energy efficiency (SDG 7.3), and strategies to prevent climate change and the greenhouse effect (SDG 15).

Resilience is the ability of a person, community or city to adapt to changing conditions and to withstand shocks while maintaining essential functions. It cannot be achieved without the involvement of public institutions — at all levels — and local stakeholders. Being the nearest level to local communities, LRGs also have significant responsibilities in reducing the social and economic impacts of disasters on vulnerable populations living in hazard-prone areas, by promoting social housing (SDG 11.1).

The Making Cities Resilient Campaign is coordinated by UNISDR. Alongside other initiatives developed by LRG networks (e.g. ICLEI, UCLG), partners (100 Resilient Cities) and UN agencies (UN Habitat resilience programme) (see Box 4.9.), it promotes disaster resilience-building in cities by raising awareness among LRGs and providing tools, technical assistance, city-to-city support networks, and learning opportunities.⁶⁷

The effort to strengthen local capacities

It is essential to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to address urban crises at the local level so that LRGs can increase their urban resilience and implement DRR strategies at every stage — i.e. in their mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. 'Area-based approaches', tailoring responses to the specific local contexts, is central.

In 2017, a UNISDR study of 151 local governments in different regions of the world highlighted the gap between power and responsibility. On average, 88% of local governments are 'fully or partially' responsible for undertaking risk analysis within their administrative boundaries, while only 28% of local governments report having the 'full' technical capacity to undertake DRR actions and 25% of local governments report 'not having' adequate and capable technical capacity to undertake risk analysis.⁶⁸



Floods in Bangkok (photo by Brigitte Leoni, UNISDR, flickr.com)



BOX 4.9.

CITIES' RESILIENCE INITIATIVES

Making Cities Resilient (MCR) Campaign:

Coordinated by UNISDR, the MCR Campaign supports sustainable urban development by promoting resilience activities and increasing local level understanding of disaster risk. Launched in 2010, the campaign's principal target groups are mayors and local government leaders of cities and towns of different sizes. A ten-point checklist of essentials for making cities resilient serves as a guide against which cities can measure their commitment to improving their resilience. Since 2015, the Campaign has entered a new phase with augmented focus to support the local implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction while the long-standing advocacy for disaster risk management and reduction also continues. The Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities⁶⁹ and other tools were developed for local governments to assess the progress of disaster resilience-building. The results of this assessment help prioritize actions towards risk-informed development. The campaign is supported by UN Habitat, other UN organizations, the World Bank, the European Union, The Asian Development Bank as well as LRG organizations (UCLG, ICLEI and CityNet).

Resilient Cities: Created by ICLEI in 2009, Resilient Cities held its 9th Congress in Bonn (Germany) in April 2018.⁷⁰ ICLEI defines resilience strategies as those that focus on at least three components: climate resilience/adaptation, other natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes) and human-induced disasters. In 2017, 155 LRGs reported their climate adaptation or integrated plans as either completed or in progress at the 'Carbon Climate Registry'.⁷¹ In addition, 217 cities use the CRAFT⁷² tool to report their climate hazards and risks in compliance with the Global Covenant of Mayors. Collectively, these reporting entities have announced more than 2,000 climate adaptation actions, 70% of which were funded by local resources.

Urban Resilience Programme (URP):

Launched in 2016, URP is based on work started in 2012 under the City Resilience Profiling Programme (CRPP). CRPP has been active in 20 countries and goes beyond conventional approaches to 'risk reduction',

encompassing the spatial, physical, functional and organizational dimensions of any human settlement. URP projects and activities are organized across three main 'pillars': 1) technical cooperation, 2) advocacy, and 3) knowledge. UN Habitat hosts the Urban Resilience Hub which pools the contribution of partner cities, academia, governments, international organizations and other resilience champions. The MCR Campaign is a partner of the Hub, as well as RESCCUE, Risk Nexus Initiative, Urban Resilience Institute, Post-Disaster Housing and the Global Alliance for Urban Crises – all of which connect the Hub with the main cities networks (UCLG, ICLEI and C40).

100 Resilient Cities (100RC): 100RC was created by the Rockefeller Foundation in 2013. 100RC supports the adoption and incorporation of resilience to include not just the shocks – earthquakes, fires, floods, etc. – but also the stresses that weaken the fabric of a city on a day-to-day or cyclical basis. Cities in the 100RC network are provided with the resources necessary to develop a roadmap to resilience using four main pathways: 1) establish a Chief Resilience Officer in the city government, 2) support the development of a Resilience Strategy, 3) access solutions, services, providers and partners from private, public and NGO sectors, and 4) join a global network of member cities to share learning and best practice.

Global Alliance for Urban Crises: This is a large platform bringing together over 65 institutions, encompassing humanitarian and development agencies, academic bodies, LRG networks and professionals; and arose as a result of consultations held for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in May 2016. It implements initiatives in four areas: 1) tailoring the humanitarian response to the urban context, 2) developing or working on rosters of experts, 3) building the evidence base of specific characteristics of protracted displacement in urban areas and cost-effective responses for the protection of vulnerable people and infrastructures, and 4) ensuring that urban resilience-building incorporates components on resilient response and recovery.⁷³

⁶³ This section was developed by UNISDR and UCLG.

⁶⁴ Malalgoda C, Amaratunga D, and Haigh R (2016), *Overcoming challenges faced by local governments in creating a resilient built environment in cities, Disaster Prevention and Management: An International Journal*, vol. 25, pp. 628-648.

⁶⁵ UNISDR (2017), *How To Make Cities More Resilient A Handbook For Local Government Leaders*.

⁶⁶ In its paragraph 48, p. 26.

⁶⁷ Johnson C and Blackburn S (2014), *Advocacy for urban resilience: UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient Campaign, Environment and Urbanization*, vol. 26, pp. 29-52.

⁶⁸ UNISDR, *Study on Local-Level Authority and Capacity for Resilience*, September 2017.

⁶⁹ See also: <https://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/home/toolkitblitem/?id=4>.

⁷⁰ See also: <https://resilientcities2018.iclei.org/>.

⁷¹ These 155 cities and regions constitute around 15% of all reporting entities at the Carbon Climate Registry. See also: www.carbonn.org.

⁷² See also: <http://www.c40.org/programmes/climate-risk-adaptation-framework-and-taxonomy>.

⁷³ See also: <http://urbancrises.org/>.



Similarly, the analysis of the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities (Scorecard) in 2018 reflects the progress made by local governments towards the Sendai Framework targets, as well as SDG 11.5 and 11.b.⁷⁴ Overall, as shown in Figure 4.3., 'resilient urban development' is the area showing most progress (1.56),⁷⁵ followed by 'risk identification' (1.52), 'enhancement of ecosystems' protective functions' (1.49) and 'disaster risk governance' (1.46).

For example, a growing number of cities have committed to take actions to implement effective DRR strategies. Some LRGs such as **Aqaba** (Jordan) or **Potenza** (Italy) have mainstreamed DRR into their local plans. Viewed as a model city for 'localizing DRR', Aqaba is currently using a risk-sensitive approach to identify the most exposed and vulnerable areas and update its Land Use Master Plan. Similarly, Potenza has developed a Territorial Coordination Plan, approved in 2013, to incorporate directives and recommendations on disaster risk mitigation and support local actors to develop and promote actions that lead to resilience.

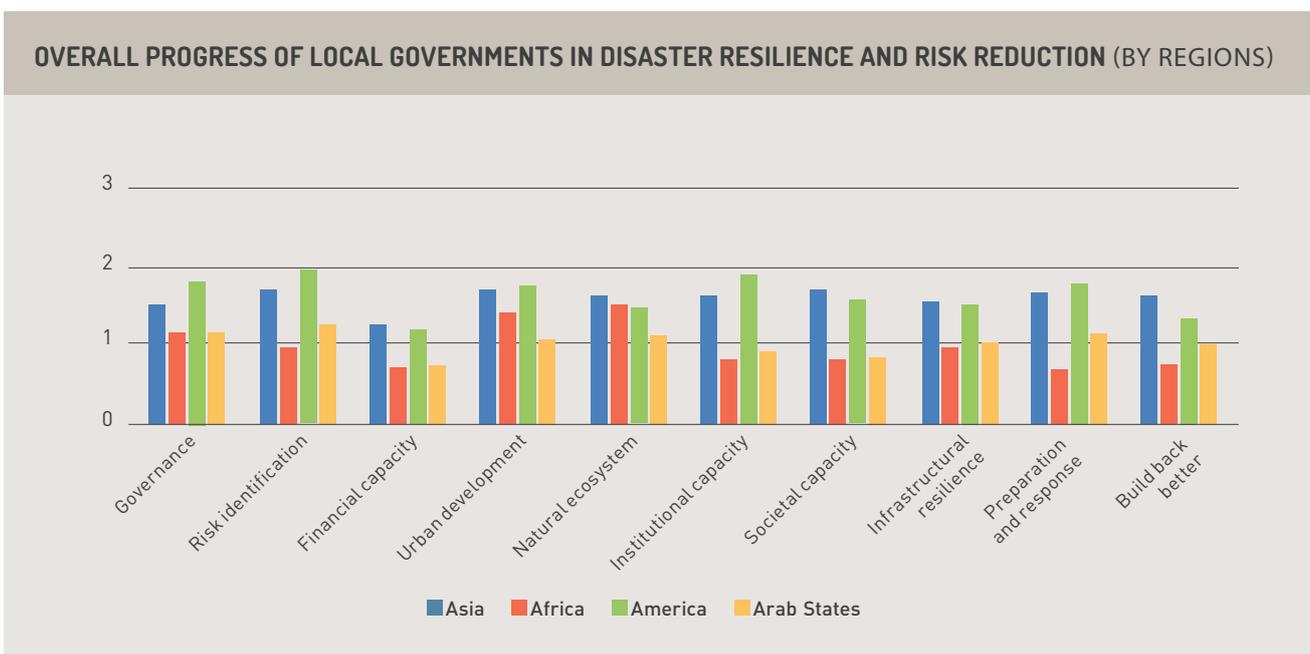
Conversely, the UNISDR study finds that 'financial capacity for resilience' (1.02) and securing a substantial budget for DRR are the areas that need most improvement.⁷⁶ LRGs have limited knowledge of how to attract resilience investment. Incentives to support resilience-building or use of insurance as a risk transfer mechanism are noticeably

rare in almost all cities. Only 39% of local governments have a financial plan that allows for DRR activities with a ring-fenced budget. Studies highlight a disproportionately high allocation of disaster-related funds going to relief and reconstruction, while those that are for mitigation and risk reduction are much lower by comparison.⁷⁷ Moreover, as the case of **Port-au-Prince** (Haiti) shows, failure to support fiscal capacities of secondary cities and build a resilient system of cities increases the pressure on the capital city and, over time, hampers its capacity to deal with emergency situations.⁷⁸

Greater urban resilience requires more efforts to build local institutional capacity. The Scorecard assessment reveals relatively low institutional capacity in the following areas: data-sharing among relevant institutions; availability of training courses covering risk reduction and resilience issues for all sectors; and access to skills and experience to reduce risks and respond to identified disaster scenarios. However, all regions are proactively seeking to enhance their knowledge and learn from other local governments facing similar challenges. For example, as part of its strategy to measure the city's resilience performance, **Lisbon Municipality** (Portugal) implemented a web dashboard with a GIS approach to centralize data in order to better monitor its resilience processes.

Lastly, LRGs are important partners for implementing initiatives to address the

FIGURE 4.3.



post-disaster effects. Some have developed specific tools that have been shared by LGAs and networks (see Box 4.9.). For example, the city of **Stepanavan** (Armenia) used the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool (LGSAT)⁷⁹ to create a City Resilience Taskforce for assessing the city's disaster resilience. The municipality was able to identify gaps in its management capacity and develop a detailed City Resilience Action Plan which was later mainstreamed into the citywide development plan.

Building a resilient local ecosystem of actors

Furthermore, LRGs need support from local actors to create communities resilient to disasters and better able to address emergency needs. The New Urban Agenda explicitly mentions the role of LRGs and other urban actors — public and private — in supporting at-risk communities and those prone to 'recurrent and protracted humanitarian crises'.⁸⁰ In this regard, the island of **Lanzarote** (Canary Islands), which is at risk from a variety of natural hazards such as storms and flooding, elaborated its 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy on the basis of an assessment of current vulnerabilities and challenges. More than 200 people and 33 different sectors were involved. The exercise enabled the municipality to develop eight Local Action Plans.

When it comes to engaging with private

sector businesses and employers for disaster resilience, the Scorecard assessment shows most cities rank low. However, some progress can be seen in strengthening the capacities of vulnerable groups and social networks, reflecting greater engagement on the part of local governments to 'leave no one behind'. Encouraging the proactive involvement of 'crisis-affected populations' has been one of the strategies that some cities — such as the District of Rimac in **Lima** (Peru) — have developed. The municipality has engaged in a participatory DRR building process to help people identify seismic risk factors in their districts. This community mapping allowed the municipality to increase its capacity in risk identification and get citizens involved in risk plans and programmes.

Lastly, prioritizing local municipal leadership in finding appropriate solutions to urban crises (in line with development plans) is an issue particular to SDG 11.b's implementation. This targets the substantial increase in the number of cities implementing integrated plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters. The Scorecard indicates that, on average, 85% of participating LRGs have plans that offer full or partial compliance with the Sendai Framework. However, only 12% of LRGs are implementing a fully integrated DRR plan in accordance with the Sendai Framework and all 'Ten Essentials'. In contrast, 15% of local governments do not have any plans in this regard (see Figure 4.4.).

⁷⁴ The analysis is based on the Scorecard assessments of 169 cities from Asia (51), Americas (48), Africa (50), and Arab States (20), completed in 2017-2018. The Scorecard is structured around the 'Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient' (MRC Campaign). The initiative was supported by the European Commission.

⁷⁵ 'Resilient urban development' is a part of the 'Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient' of the MRC Campaign. It refers to the 'built environment' according to building regulations and context-specific scenarios. This 'essential' includes land zoning and management, risk-aware planning, design and implementation of new buildings, neighbourhoods and infrastructure, and availability and application of building codes.

⁷⁶ Gaillard J.C. and Maceda E.A. (2009), Participatory three-dimensional mapping for disaster risk reduction, Community-based adaptation to climate change, vol. 60, pp. 109-118.

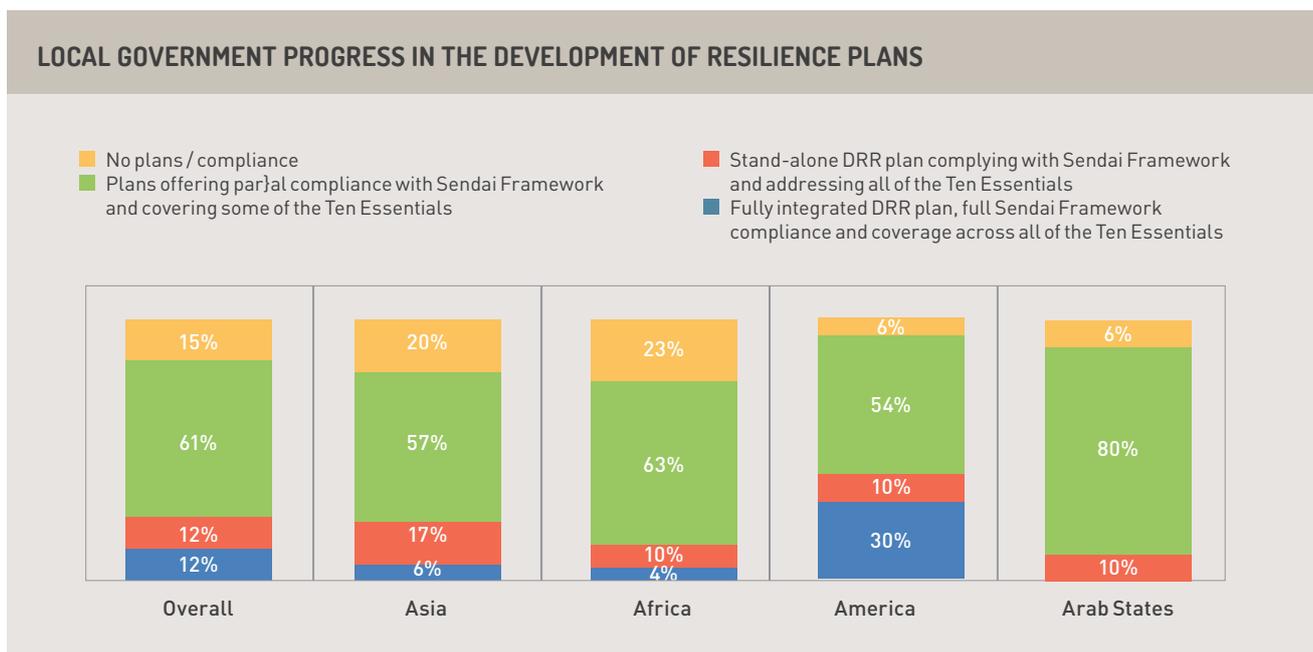
⁷⁷ Malalgoda C, Amaratunga D, and Haigh R, *overcoming challenges faced by local governments in creating a resilient built environment in cities*, *Disaster Prevention and Management: An International Journal*, vol. 25, pp. 628-648, 2016.

⁷⁸ UNDESA, UNCDF (2017), *Financing sustainable urban development in the Least Developed Countries*.

⁷⁹ LG-SAT is the predecessor version of the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities developed under the MRC Campaign.

⁸⁰ Global Alliance for Urban Crisis (2016), *Habitat III: the New Urban Agenda Key Messages*.

FIGURE 4.4.





The way forward

In order to achieve SDGs 11.5 and 11.b at the local level, the following actions can contribute to support LRGs in understanding disaster resilience and strengthening its governance, preparedness and financing, with the aim to prevent, reduce impact and 'build back better'. The Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) dimension should be integrated in local development plans, policies and budget, including fiscal incentives, with clear roles and responsibilities within the local government (e.g. monitoring, risk management, enforcement of city regulations, etc.). Local governments should conduct periodical participatory assessments to identify the most common disaster risks and the methods to reduce their impact, updating risk-mapping. It should also develop early warning systems in high-risk areas. Building codes and zoning regulations should be updated and better enforced to improve rehabilitation and reconstruction standards. The staff in charge of local DRR strategy need to regularly receive capacity-building training.

Local disaster risk governance must be strengthened through coalitions of local actors including public and private partners. Awareness-raising exercises are necessary to ensure a better citizen response to disasters, particularly from children in schools. Communities and related agencies should be more involved in risk assessments and identification of vulnerabilities. Lastly, they should be part of the drafting of the Intervention and Evacuation Plan, receive briefing sessions and participate in exercises to ensure better response to disasters.

More efforts are necessary to identify traditional and alternative funding for DRR. Different tiers of governments should set up coherent mechanisms at the local level as well as financial and tax incentives to encourage the private sector to invest in risk reduction. New investment opportunities include investing in green and blue infrastructure. Moreover, stakeholders should find innovative and responsible ways to increase viable insurance opportunities.

Lastly, all stakeholders, in particular LRGs should support the implementation of the 'Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient' checklist (MRC Campaign).

11.6 THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CITIES, AIR QUALITY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT⁸¹

Reducing the environmental impact of cities is inextricably linked with improving air quality and waste management. In 2014, 9 out of 10 people in urban areas were breathing air that did not meet the WHO safety standard for particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Less than half the waste generated is currently being collected and appropriately processed, and up to two billion people do not have access to solid waste collection.⁸² In view of these challenges, it is no surprise then that the 2030 Agenda contains four sub-goals that explicitly mention the management of air pollution and solid waste: SDG 3.9, SDG 11.6, SDG 12.4 and SDG 12.5.

These targets have profound trans-disciplinary ramifications that transcend individual goals. Improper waste management and increasing air pollution can have catastrophic health consequences (SDG 3). Man-made greenhouse gas emissions, from the housing sector and black carbon emissions — a major component of particulate air pollution — as well as poor waste management have a significant impact on climate action (SDG 13) and life on land (SDG 15). Poor waste management also compromises water sources (SDG 6) and contributes to ocean pollution (SDG 14). Local public policies based on reducing air pollution should encompass a border perspective, highlighting their interaction with other SDG dimensions. Providing sustainable and efficient urban services, such as housing (SDG 11.1), transportation (SDG 11.2), energy services (SDG 7.3), green and public spaces (11.7), as well as promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12) and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG 15) are some of the fields in which local and regional governments can address air pollution challenges in urban areas.

Paying special attention to air quality

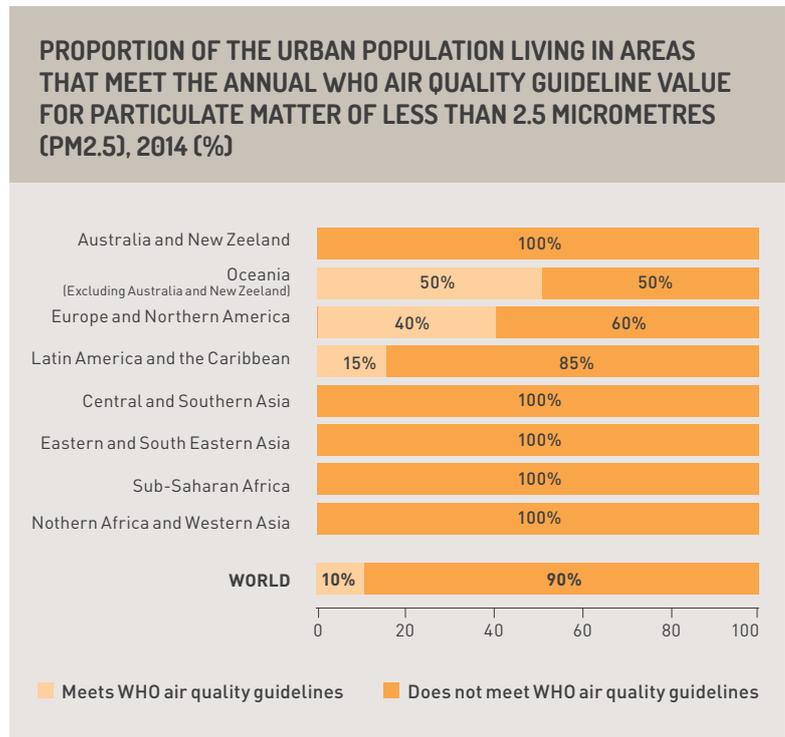
In 2016, the number of premature deaths worldwide caused by ambient (outdoor) air pollution in cities and rural territories was over 4.2 million, whilst 3.8 million deaths were attributed to poor and inefficient household energy-use practices such as solid fuels and kerosene for cooking. Sub-Saharan Africa, most of Asia and Oceania (excluding Australia/New Zealand), have the highest mortality rates from air pollution.

Alongside climate change mitigation, an increasing number of cities are committed to developing actions to reduce air contamination. One of the most visible commitments by cities on the world stage is The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy,⁸³ which has more than 7,600 cities and towns participating. The initiative has contributed to establishing standardized measurements to assess the impact of cities' actions regarding GHG emissions and air quality improvement in urban areas.

Metropolitan cities have already established tools for monitoring air pollution and some of them have adopted Action Plans for Air Quality. In general, these plans have a strong focus on transport pollution, including measures to tackle inefficient fossil fuel combustion from motor vehicles (e.g. avoiding polluting vehicles), a ban on diesel cars (**Oslo** - Norway), electric public transport, permanent or temporary traffic restriction policies, traffic-free zones, alternate day travel, 'car-free days', congestion pricing schemes, as well as alternative mobility modes (cycling networks) and use of new technologies to reduce traffic congestion (see SDG 11.2). It is worth mentioning cities such as **Athens** (Greece), **Beijing** (China), **Bogotá** (Colombia), **Jakarta** (Indonesia), **Manila** (the Philippines), **Madrid** (Spain), **Mexico City** (Mexico), **New Delhi** (India), **Paris** (France), **Rome** (Italy) and **São Paulo** (Brazil) among others.

To improve air quality, an integrated and multi-sectoral approach is needed to develop consistent public policies oriented towards the improvement of quality of life for all. Reducing urban pollution also requires adequate urban planning and upgrading infrastructures and services. Cities such as **Beijing**, for example, began to take targeted actions to control air pollution, relocating polluting industries from the urban core areas (more than 1,200 polluting plants had been removed by the end 2016). Others reduce the operations of more polluting industries during the peaks of pollution.

FIGURE 4.5.



At the same time, cities look to grow green spaces. **Edmonton** (Canada), for example, has developed the Urban Forest Management Plan to ensure a sustainable management of the city's urban forest, while reducing energy costs and improving air quality for its inhabitants. A comprehensive plan was also adopted in **Buzau municipality** (Romania), where the development of an inventory of GHG emissions has contributed to reducing and monitoring energy consumption of public buildings such as schools.

Some cities of the Global South are moving towards promoting the use of modern cooking fuels or renewable energy to reduce indoor and outdoor air pollution. Indeed, local governments can be very effective in supporting public awareness campaigns on the benefits of clean cooking, proper use and safety. The emergence of alternative, smaller, decentralized energy systems are creating new opportunities for local governments to address locally distributed energy services in partnership with communities and small enterprises. Rooftop solar can provide economic development opportunities for cities through the creation of local businesses and jobs. Since November 2014, the city of **Bengaluru** in the state of Karnataka (India) has been

⁸¹ We want to acknowledge the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) for their contribution to this section: Antonis Mavropoulos, President, and Aditi Ramola, Technical Director.

⁸² ISWA-UNEP (2015). *Global Waste Management Outlook, Summary of Decision-Makers*.

⁸³ See also: <http://impact.globalcovenantofmayors.org/>.



encouraging the growth of rooftop solar PV systems through the implementation of a net-metering policy.⁸⁴

Housing conditions also have an impact on health in terms of building siting and land use, choice of construction materials, design features, ventilation and energy. The housing sector is responsible for approximately 19% of GHG emissions and approximately one third of black carbon emissions. **Local governments have direct responsibilities in monitoring and enforcing building standards.** In Shenzhen (China), the municipal government has promulgated rules requiring specific green building standards for affordable housing projects in the city.

Current trends in waste production and management

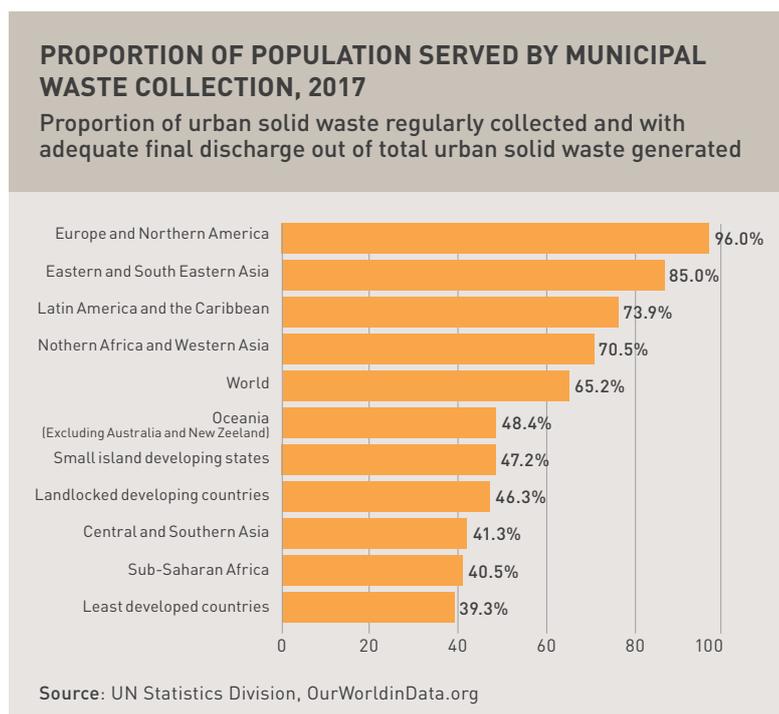
At the global level, developing and developed countries face very different challenges in waste management. In high-income countries, which account for half of all waste generated, close to 100% of waste is collected and between 95% and 100% is under controlled disposal.⁸⁵ In middle-income countries, significant progress has been made in the past few years, with around 64% of waste collection coverage in lower-

middle income countries and 82% in upper middle-income countries. Nearly two thirds is sent to landfill and the remainder to open dumps. Although low-income countries generate relatively little household waste, median collection coverage is still around 50%. In lower-income countries, waste disposal is often in the form of uncontrolled dumpsites with open burning. It is estimated that at least three billion people worldwide still lack access to controlled waste disposal facilities.⁸⁶ Figure 4.6. offers an analysis by region. There is also enormous variation in service provision across and within cities, especially between slum and non-slum areas.

In the Global South, some of the main challenges are: i) lack of availability of data pertaining to waste generation, processing, and disposal; (ii) open dumping and burning of waste; (iii) weak governance issues; iv) lack of sufficient funds to adequately address the waste problem, and an unwillingness or inability on the part of citizens to pay for waste management; and (v) formalizing the informal sector, thus providing informal sector workers with workplace safety, secure and adequate pay and a dignified livelihood. On the other hand, in high upper middle-income countries, where waste management is usually well-developed and where per capita consumption of resources is much higher, **a significant challenge for waste governance is to find ways to reduce unnecessary consumption and waste, and to implement the 3R (or 4R) — reduce, reuse, recycle (and recover) — paradigm with maximum efficiency.** In these countries, where a large amount of municipal solid waste is recyclable and the volume of materials subject to recycling is large, even a small improvement in the efficiency of the recycling process can pay major dividends, both economically and environmentally (see examples below).

In terms of the **governance of waste there are several facets, including the laying down of institutional, financial and planning frameworks, waste legislation and regulations, and implementation.**⁸⁷ While national governments typically play a central role in waste legislation and regulation, **the responsibilities for waste management are often assigned to sub-national governments.** Their role, however, can vary widely depending on the decentralization frameworks in each

FIGURE 4.6.



country. As a public service that requires the effective coordination and integration of several actors and stakeholders, and the seamless integration of local and national laws and policies, waste management raises several issues for MLG. The **UN International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services calls for the clarification of roles and responsibilities in the organization and delivery of basic services** and for partnerships between stakeholders, within a framework of decentralization.

The increasing complexity of waste management — related to urban expansion, rising waste generation, economies of scale, technological changes, etc. — has opened the way to different management models. Public management (either in-house, shared or via public utilities) could be combined with outsourcing different parts of services to the private sector. Furthermore, implementation of waste management often involves inter-municipal partnerships or different levels of government (municipalities, counties, regions). For example, in Brazil, sub-national government authorities are responsible for the implementation of waste management legislation, while in St. Lucia a national-level solid waste management authority has this role.

Rethinking waste management as a precondition for sustainable cities

SDG 11.6 refers to waste management since it addresses the environmental impact of cities. There have been numerous initiatives at the local level to adapt waste management technologies, processes and externalities to the requirements of sustainability and resilience. These have implications for the development of 'cradle-to-cradle' systems of waste management, as well as the linkage between sustainable waste treatment and the circular economy. **San Francisco** (United States), for example, has achieved selective waste sorting for 80% of its total waste production through its tax system, as well as financial incentives to lower waste production. One of the measures introduced by the city is a compulsory and well-established organic waste recycling system that produces compost for the region's farmers. In **Geneva** (Switzerland), where the concept of the circular economy has already been included in the *canton's* constitution, a collaborative platform was developed to allow enterprises to exchange methods

and resources on the circular economy.⁸⁸ Where waste services are sporadic or inaccessible there are several examples of initiatives at the local level involving citizens collaborating outside existing waste management structures. For example, in the Indian cities of **Delhi** and **Bengaluru**, entrepreneurs have founded collection services using mobile apps whereby they collect certain waste streams directly from households on demand and pay the citizens for the waste. In several low and middle-income countries, the informal sector plays a significant role in providing collection and recycling infrastructure for selective waste treatment, which can affect the urban geography of public service provision. As cities and municipalities develop their waste management plans, they should be aware of the impact of their policies on the informal sector and should strive to include them in their plans.

Inclusion through effective waste management and the challenge of informality

Waste management accessibility, affordability and quality significantly impact both city and territory inclusiveness. When waste services are provided informally — without sufficient guarantees in terms of health, environmental protection, governance and licensing — both socio-economic marginalization and segregation grow. **Many LRGs are promoting strong collaborations with informal workers and local actors, including grassroots associations and the private sector.** The quality and extent of service provision can also impact the social dimension of adequate public service delivery. In several cities around the world where municipalities struggle to provide adequate waste collection and management services, the informal sector plays a very important role in managing the waste of the city.⁸⁹ There are examples of partnerships between waste pickers and local governments in many cities in the Global South (**Dhaka** in Bangladesh, **Manila** in the Philippines, and different cities in Brazil, Peru, Mexico and South Africa) where, for example, formal solid waste collection systems collect recyclables separately and then provide these to waste pickers in sorting centres (see Box 4.10.). This system has developed further by waste pickers forming

⁸⁴ World Resources Report (September 2017), *Powering Cities in the Global South: How Energy Access for All Benefits the Economy and the Environment*, Washington, WRI.

⁸⁵ According to Eurostat, the EU recycled or composted 45% of its municipal waste in 2015, up from 25.3% in 2000. Eurostat, *Sustainable development the EU*, Monitoring Report 2017 edition.

⁸⁶ ISWA-UNEP (2015) chapter 3. Hoorweg, Daniel; Bhada-Tata, Perinaz. (2012). *What a Waste: A Global Review of Solid Waste Management*, Washington, DC, World Bank reported that the average collection in high-income countries is around 90%, in middle-income countries 75%, and in low-income countries 41%. UCLG, *GOLD III* (2014), *Basic Services for All in an Urbanizing World*.

⁸⁷ *The Strategic Planning Guide for Municipal Waste Management* has created a theoretical framework with six 'institutional functions' involved in a waste management system, namely the regulator, policy-maker, planner, client, operator and revenue collector. Wilson, D.C., A. Whiteman & A. Tormin (2001). *Strategic planning guide for municipal solid waste management*, World Bank. Washington, DC, U.S., www.worldbank.org/urban/solid_wm/erm/start_up.pdf.

⁸⁸ See also: <http://www.economiccirculaire.org/>. See also UCLG, *GOLD IV* (2016), *Co-Creating the Urban Future*.

⁸⁹ Scheinberg, A., Wilson, D.C., Rodic-Wiersma, L. (Eds.). 2010. *Solid Waste Management in the World's Cities: Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities 2010*. United Nations Human Settlements Program (UNHABITAT).



their own organizations (and in some nations national federations), for example the Recyclers Association of Bogotá, which means they can bid for contracts from local governments for solid waste collection, recycling, and managing waste collection from public places. Recognizing that workers in this sector tend to represent the most marginalized in society, there are several initiatives worldwide to incorporate them into the formal sector, providing them with facilities they would otherwise lack.

Preserving local competences: the challenge of adequately funding waste management

Waste management is a key element of LRGs' competences. Maintaining an efficient, affordable, accessible and sustainable service in this field comes at significant financial cost. Funding and preserving the service's inclusiveness and sustainability represents a significant challenge for many administrations. Whilst progress has been made in tariff collection and financing, subsidies from local, intermediate and national governments continue to be vital for a majority of LRGs, particularly in developing countries. In high-income countries, waste collection and management represent around 10% of local budgets (a larger part is financed from tariffs), whereas in middle-income countries they represent around 40%⁹² and in low-income countries 80%-90%. It should be noted, however, that some cities manage to balance the budget of their services.⁹³

Affordability is a significant constraint on municipal solid waste management services in lower-income countries. Short-term solutions must be financially sustainable, and aspirations must be tailored to what is affordable.

The way forward

The following policies and actions have been identified to support LRGs in reducing the environmental impact of cities. The first urgent step is to eliminate open dumping and burning of waste at the local level.

Effective waste governance depends on institutional frameworks being in place. Empowered LRGs with adequate institutional and technical capacities can ensure sustainable integrated waste management. Vertical and horizontal coordination between local, regional and central governments should be improved. To ensure enforcement, the roles of legislator and regulator (enforcer) should be separate from one another.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of LRGs and public providers it is necessary to support human and technical resources and implement modern management systems and technologies. Coordinated service provision in metropolitan areas and between neighbouring local governments can contribute to ensuring universal coverage.



BOX 4.10.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH WASTE PICKERS: THE EXPERIENCE OF BELO HORIZONTE (BRAZIL) AND QALYUBEYA (EGYPT)

Belo Horizonte (Brazil) implemented a social policy to improve the structure of informal employment and raise the standard of living of the urban poor, which at the same time led to the development of an Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) strategy. In the 1990s, local legislation was changed to promote the collection of recyclables by cooperatives of informal waste pickers. Seeing that a partnership would further improve their productivity and help meet both environmental and socio-economic goals, the city decided to further integrate the informal sector into municipal waste management. This helped achieve the four main objectives of the ISWM namely, to increase the recycling of waste and encourage social inclusion, job creation and income generation. Since the introduction of this policy, management of the waste sector has substantially improved. In 2008, around 95% of the urban population and 70% of the population in informal settlements (*favelas*) received a collection service. In 2013, around 600 waste pickers worked for these cooperatives, which had a total of 80 sorting warehouses.⁹⁰

In **Qalyubeya Governorate** (Egypt), local governments, in cooperation with international agencies and the private sector, have developed an integrated system of solid waste management to encourage citizen and corporate participation in reducing waste and improving the working conditions of waste pickers through formal contracts. Since 2012, approximately 80% of waste collection is now undertaken by waste pickers and collectors through formal contracts with the city council, which has led to better working conditions and increased employment opportunities for the urban poor.⁹¹

All stakeholders should be engaged in planning and monitoring access to, and quality of, services. The role played by small-scale and informal workers, particularly in informal settlements, is often critical and needs the support of LRGs and service providers to better coordinate service delivery and avoid gaps in provision.

An adequate business model and financing mechanisms can ensure long-term financial viability to guarantee universal coverage and sustainable management of municipal waste systems. However, in lower-income countries an increase in current levels of public financing remains essential.

There is an imperative to reduce the amount of waste generated by tackling the problem at source following the R principles reduce, reuse, recycle, redesign, and re-manufacture. The best way to manage waste is to include prevention actions upstream. When applying the concept of the circular economy to waste management, it is essential to close the material circle to ensure that recycling and energy recovery are compatible, since there are limits to recycling and at this point energy recovery needs to be considered.

Globally, there are no definitive figures on waste generation per capita and this must be addressed in light of the global goals and their requirements.⁹⁴

11.7 UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE GREEN AND PUBLIC SPACES⁹⁵

The cities' public spaces have assumed great relevance in the global agendas, in particular the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, as they are primarily areas for exchange, urban life, social inclusion and citizenry. The 23rd Governing Council of UN-Habitat adopted a specific initiative to address the issue of public space.⁹⁶ Many charters and toolkits designed and adopted

by LRGs encourage stakeholders to look beyond the target of allocating 30% of land to streets and sidewalks and 20% for open green spaces and public facilities. Despite this, several cities are still well below these targets.⁹⁷

In contrast to many other areas of urban policy, public spaces are entirely the responsibility of local governments, either officially or by default. They provide a unique and tangible opportunity for governance and are therefore potential levers of change in our cities. The interrelated issues of safety, inclusiveness and accessibility engage LRGs to drive development at the local level and promote the 'Right to the City', in particular for women and children, older people and persons with disabilities.⁹⁸

Trends in upgrading green and public spaces

There has been a worrying trend in the decline in the stock of public spaces in cities, both in developed and, more critically, developing countries. Land is being lost either for real-estate speculation or by privatizing public properties as a means of raising finance. Privatization of public space is also on the increase as many LRGs lack funds for operation and maintenance. A lack of adequate policies and regulations on urban parcelling has resulted in densification of the city without due environmental and social balance. The ever-growing complexity of contemporary cities, with segregation, unsafe dynamics and uneven distribution of public resources to name a few, has a direct impact on public spaces — spaces that are needed to cope with the current challenges cities are facing.

Public and green spaces play a fundamental role in strategies for gender equality (SDG 5), to facilitate mobility (SDG 11.2), for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change (SDG 13), as well as helping reduce the risks posed by natural hazards (SDG 11.5) and threats to public health (SDG 3). As examples show, the potential of green belts is increasingly being used in many city projects. Green areas are useful for introducing walking and cycling lanes, creating incentives to use other forms of urban mobility and promoting citizens' health and overall urban life quality.

⁹⁰ Philipp Rode and Graham Floater (2013), *Going Green. How Cities Are Leading the next Economy*.

⁹¹ See also: <http://policytransfer.metropolis.org/case-studies/integrated-community-based-solid-waste-management>.

⁹² See also: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/brief/solid-waste-management>.

⁹³ Hoornweg and Bhada-Tata (2012). See also: UCLG, *GOLD III* (2014).

⁹⁴ UNEP and ISWA (2015).

⁹⁵ We want to acknowledge Regina Rau, architect and urban planner, former director of planning of the city of Porto Alegre (Brazil), for her contribution to this section.

⁹⁶ *Resolution 23/4 on Sustainable Urban Development through Access to Public Spaces*, followed by the creation of a Global Programme on Public Space.

⁹⁷ Among the charters, the International Charters for Walking was adopted by members of UCLG at the Rabat World Congress in 2013; UCLG also contributed to the second edition of the Charter of Public Space dealing with the creation and management of these areas (2015). The Culture 21 Action Toolkit and the Global Public Space Toolkit also provide key policy insights.

⁹⁸ These examples are presented in the *UCLG Public Space Policy Framework* (2016).



Public spaces such as plazas, streets, parks and inner block areas are increasingly being appropriated by users, either by spontaneous community movements, or through local government incentives and recreational programmes. The success of such activities is testimony to the need for community life and a sense of belonging and identity which is somehow lost in the contemporary urban world, especially in big cities. Another interesting development is the use of public buildings, such as libraries, museums and city councils, to develop organized activities open to the public (see Section SDG 11.4).

Examples of alternative policies to public spaces

In recent years we have seen a remarkable rise in the number of cities, particularly in the Global South, that have managed to use public space as a key lever of change for urban development. Cities are using public spaces to make their environment safer and crime-free, to improve mobility and access to basic services, to stimulate economic activities, to preserve historical and cultural assets or to facilitate urban renewal and inclusiveness.

New modalities of planning are being developed to create and protect public spaces. For example, in the **Province of Santa Fé** (Argentina), the regional planning office uses 'Basic Plans' to support medium-sized cities with limited technical and/or regulatory instruments with urban development processes and ensure territorial equality through the adequate use of public space. The Basic Plan programme was implemented in the city of **Santa Fé**, capital of the province, and in five other cities to ensure a territorial balance.⁹⁹ Likewise, the Provincial Council of Barcelona has created Urban Green Strategic Plans¹⁰⁰ to

increase the surface area and the quality of green in the 311 municipalities it includes.

In cities that bear the scars of spatial and ethnic segregation, such as **Johannesburg** (South Africa), public spaces reconnect urban areas to recreational spaces and allow for freedom of movement. As a result of the spatial legacy of Apartheid, parks and public facilities were all concentrated in higher-income neighbourhoods, while townships remained dense areas with almost no open green spaces. The 'Corridors of Freedom' illustrate this new vision of making public space inclusive, particularly in poorer areas, and improving living conditions in former townships. While Apartheid policies created the green areas between townships for the purposes of segregation, the 'Corridors of Freedom' look to link them.

A critical dimension of SDG 11.7 is 'safe and inclusive public spaces'. All over the world women and girls are subject to sexual harassment and violence in many forms when using public spaces. **Public policies should promote, from the design phase, the reduction of gender inequalities.** **Vienna** (Austria) and **Delhi** (India) illustrate how studies and citizen participation can lead to identifying the need for gender-sensitive policies to reduce urban violence and inequalities in both sports and leisure opportunities of public spaces. An audit in the city of **Delhi** (2013) concluded that poor lighting, lack of well-maintained public toilets and no pavements on the streets make women and girls feel unsafe in public surroundings. By reducing the number of dark areas in public spaces, the city contributed to a reduction in crime and other unsafe situations for women. In **Vienna**, two parks in the fifth district were rearranged and redesigned in a participatory way, integrating proper lighting and clear and open common areas. The city now intends to improve parks in all 23 city districts following gender-specific guidelines, which demonstrates the transferability of such policies.

Public facilities are levers for equal access to culture and leisure space for all. In 1998 **Bogotá** (Colombia) introduced an initiative called *Biblored* Capital Network of Public Libraries, comprising three complementary levels of libraries: metropolitan, local and neighbourhood, all in different districts of the city. The network is a key part of the city's development strategy to create a new social fabric offering cultural, recreational and

In recent years, we have seen a remarkable rise in the number of cities, particularly in the Global South, that have managed to use public space as a key lever of change for urban development



educational places (including computers and access to the Internet) with free access for citizens.

To overcome the precarious nature of public spaces in slums and informal settlements, the city of **São Paulo** (Brazil) developed a strategy to improve public spaces in informal settlements. This redefined the nature of public areas and created a new concept of architecture and planning in such settlements in order to expand their social and cultural functions. The policy accommodated a wide range of activities and events accessible to all residents. The initiative has inspired the city of **Durban** (South Africa) to adapt its housing policy programmes to deliver not only residential units to the poor, but also meaningful public spaces to inspire the development of community life.

Finally, safe, accessible and green spaces play a fundamental role in strategies for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, and they also help to reduce the risks posed by natural hazards and threats to public health.¹⁰¹ This has been proven by resilience strategies in cities hit by earthquakes. In **Kathmandu** (Nepal), residents found safety in all 83 open spaces of the Kathmandu valley.

There is also a growing trend to use public spaces as sustainable drainage systems, solar temperature moderators, cooling corridors, wind shelters and wildlife habitats. The city of **Melbourne** (Australia), for example, coordinated its Urban Forestry Strategy (SDG 15) and Open Space Strategy to manage extreme hot weather. The objective is to cool the city's temperature by up to 4°C by 2040 and to reduce energy use and carbon emissions (SDG 7) as a result. It was also able to increase permeability of the streets, increase rainfall capture and improve the efficiency of municipal irrigation systems.¹⁰²

The way forward

The percentage of open public spaces in built-up areas needs to be preserved and increased. The average share of built-up areas dedicated to open space for public use must increase and public spaces should become accessible and safe for all. Robust regulation is needed to protect public spaces as part of urban policies. It is imperative to develop and enforce laws and regulations to preserve and protect public space and ensure that it is well managed.

Public space should be developed or re-evaluated as part of city-wide strategies. Public space development should be seen as a driver of sustainable, inclusive and equitable cities. It could also be a lever for local economic development opportunities for small and medium enterprises — e.g. public markets — to become active in the urban economy, and foster rural-urban linkages and shorter economic circuits. It must be registered as a municipal asset and investments must include funding for its operation and maintenance.

Partnerships need to be built with communities, civil society, entrepreneurs and academia. People need to be given the power to act and civil society can complement the actions of LRGs by taking ownership of public spaces and supporting their ongoing maintenance. Gender equality is a central dimension of public space. It is imperative to improve the safety and comfort of women and girls in public spaces and enable their participation in public life. Quality public spaces such as libraries and parks can supplement housing as study and recreational spaces for the urban poor, promoting social inclusion. Moreover, it is vital to ensure the mobility and inclusion of the elderly and those with physical disabilities so that they can participate. Lastly, contributing to the safety and physical activity of children and young people must be a priority.

Safe, accessible and green spaces play a fundamental role in strategies for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change

⁹⁹ These cities are Las Toscas, Sunchales, Santo Tomé, Casilda and Villa Cañas. See also: <https://desarrollourbanoyterritorial.duot.upc.edu/ca/content/plan-base-en-ciudades-intermedias>.

¹⁰⁰ See also: <https://verd-urbana.diba.cat>.

¹⁰¹ This issue was highlighted in the IIED and IIED America Latina paper prepared for the IPCC, March 2018.

¹⁰² See also Metropolis policy transfer platform: <https://policytransfer.metropolis.org/case-studies/4-c-cooler-melbourne>.



Ensure availability
and sustainable
management of water
and sanitation for all

SDG 6

Clean water and sanitation

844 million people around the world still lack basic access to water services, 2.3 billion people lack access to sanitation, and 892 million people continue to practice open defaecation.

“Safe and clean water and sanitation is a human right, essential to the attainment of decent living conditions and all other human rights”

UNGA Resolution A/RES/64/292

Overall, progress in achieving SDG 6 is difficult to assess accurately due to limited data, particularly at the sub-national level. The sharp increase in demand for water and sanitation linked to urban growth, compounded by the effects of climate change leading to urban warming, puts great pressure on LRGs. The 2018 UN Secretary General Report on progress towards the SDGs mentions that 844 million people lack even basic access to water services level of access to water services and 2.3 billion people still lack access to basic sanitation.¹⁰³ Without additional effort and partnerships, universal access to basic sanitation will not be achieved by 2030.¹⁰⁴

Safe and clean water and sanitation is a human right, essential to the attainment of decent living conditions and all other human rights.¹⁰⁵ At a global level, rural areas lag the furthest behind, particularly in Central Asia, Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Coverage in cities, including in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), is higher due to shared sanitation facilities such as pit latrines. Regions such as Latin America have made progress in the last two decades through slum and neighbourhood upgrading programmes. Still, most of the deficits are still concentrated in informal settlements, and urban sprawl (formal and informal) remains a key challenge to protecting water-related ecosystems.

In Asia and Sub-Saharan African there has been a decline in access to such services in urban areas, leaving the population exposed to waterborne diseases and vulnerable to hazards.¹⁰⁶ Given that almost 90% of urban population growth is happening in these regions, this challenge needs to be addressed urgently. Even where countries are on track to achieve the SDG 6 targets, there are disparities between and within regions and cities. The monitoring system does not include data on the extent of water and sanitation provision by city or district. Despite the limited data available globally, there is evidence of growing inadequacies in urban areas, especially in informal settlements.

There is an urgent need to achieve SDG 6 in an increasingly urbanized world, as a prerequisite to achieving SDG 11 and the 'Right to the City' as outlined in the New Urban Agenda. It has a strong and immediate impact on health (particularly children's health), access to education and

sustainable food policies. There is also a need to achieve a rights-based approach to sustainable urban development, with inclusive solutions building on efforts to achieve gender equality and reduce socio-economic and spatial inequalities.

The challenge of managing water and sanitation

Cities do not function in isolation. The availability of water, and access to it, depend on the natural resources, ecosystems, river basins and city systems they are embedded in. Thus, the governance of water and sanitation policies involves a wide range of actors at central, intermediate and local levels. Coordination across levels of government and sectoral agencies is required to design consistent development plans.¹⁰⁷

In many regions, LRGs are responsible for the provision of basic services, including potable water and sanitation, while central governments are responsible for regulation and bulk water supply. While responsibility is often assigned to local governments (at least officially), their delivery role has evolved in the last few decades. The range of management models varies considerably between countries. With some exceptions, in a majority of countries in Europe, Eurasia, Latin America and North America, as well as in OECD countries in the Asia-Pacific region, urban water and sanitation services are usually managed by public authorities through public utilities or special purpose authorities, generally owned by local or regional authorities.¹⁰⁸ In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, 35% of LRGs are in charge of water delivery.¹⁰⁹ In many sub-regions, the use of private operators through collaborations between the public and private sector has been promoted.

However, the promise of more Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in middle and low-income countries has not been fully realized,¹¹⁰ and new models are now being implemented to try to reduce the complexity of arrangements for LRGs and increase transparency and accountability to citizens. A recent study also highlights the need for further research on the re-emergence of 're-municipalization', which presents clear opportunities in terms of political leadership.¹¹¹

Sustainability in water and sanitation also implies the adoption of integrated

¹⁰³ See ECOSOC (2018), Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, Report to the Secretary General. E/2018/64.

¹⁰⁴ UN Water (2018) *SDG 6 Synthesis report on Water and Sanitation* (unedited version available).

¹⁰⁵ Resolution A/RES/64/292. United Nations General Assembly, July 2010.

¹⁰⁶ UN Water (2018) *SDG 6 Synthesis report on Water and Sanitation* (unedited version available).

¹⁰⁷ OECD (2015), Principles on water governance, <http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/OECD-Principles-on-Water-Governance-brochure.pdf>.

¹⁰⁸ UCLG, *GOLD III* (2014) provides a regional assessment of the local public provision of basic services. In Europe, public provision remains dominant, either direct, in partnership with other public authorities or through public undertakings (except in France and in England and Wales). The water market is highly fragmented. Tens of thousands of private operators provide water and sanitation to just a quarter of the European population. In Eurasia – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia – water supply and sanitation providers are owned by municipal and higher-tier governments. In Latin America, around a third of countries have direct municipal systems for water supply and sanitation, in the form of local public companies providing services in urban areas (i.e. over 2,000 in Mexico, 200 in Ecuador, 50 provincial level municipal service operators in Peru, and 14 municipally owned or cooperative operators in Bolivia). Regional governments also play an important role in providing water services in Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela. In other countries, national utilities dominate (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay).

¹⁰⁹ UCLG, *GOLD III* (2014). About a third of African countries (primarily Francophone) retain a single national water utility, and the remaining two thirds (primarily Anglophone) have undertaken some form of decentralization to local jurisdictions. Hundreds of utilities have been established by central governments to collect and distribute bulk water.

¹¹⁰ Philippe Marin (2009), *Public-Private Partnerships for Urban Water Utilities – A Review of Experiences in Developing Countries*, PPIAF/World Bank, Washington.

¹¹¹ A full list of 267 case studies of water re-municipalization is available in *Reclaiming Public Services: How cities and citizens are turning back privatisation* (2017), edited by Satoko Kishimoto and Olivier Petitjean available at www.tni.org/reclaiming-public-services.



urban management, including an inter-municipal or metropolitan approach, as well as a territorial perspective rather than a strictly sectoral approach. Failure to take immediate action to build a more collaborative and inclusive framework at the appropriate territorial level will lead to a deterioration in the environment that will be hard to reverse.¹¹²

The New Urban Agenda estimates that building sustainable cities and communities will require USD 7.5 trillion investment in water infrastructure by 2030 to meet existing deficiencies and cope with future demand. In the Asia-Pacific region alone, it is estimated that more than USD 800 billion will be necessary for the period 2016–2030 to respond to water and sanitation issues in the region.¹¹³ In this context, clearly the mobilization of increased financial resources is vital. But, as UN Water points out, the establishment of innovative institutional arrangements between all actors involved, and the strengthening of the technical and organizational capacities of LRGs or their facilities, should also be major priorities.¹¹⁴

How policies are changing

The challenge in implementing an effective rights-based approach is to balance cost-effectiveness with the inclusion of diversity. An increasing number of cities around the world view wastewater as a resource, including a financial one. The aim has been to find social and technical solutions based on long-term strategies to localize financing and develop domestic resources, including community-led funds. This has increased efficiency by reducing losses in municipal distribution to households,¹¹⁵ enforcing fiscal and tariff policies and leveraging wastewater reuse to plan the most efficient sewage systems.

Cities are also held directly accountable in the event of water stress. This has been the case in **Brisbane** (Australia), **Cape Town** (South Africa), **São Paulo** (Brazil), **Rome** (Italy) and **Jakarta** (Indonesia), among others. Moreover, Jakarta developed a Water Management Strategy for 2030, which included a project to reduce urban flooding and improve water storage capacity. This initiative led to the relocation of around 3,000 inhabitants away from the reservoir banks, transforming them into parks and public open spaces.

Many LRGs are struggling with ill-defined responsibilities and a lack of resources to improve inadequate infrastructures and insufficient technologies. In the context

of current trends in urban development, secondary cities in LDCs face these challenges the most.

An increasing number of cities are investing in water capture through green infrastructure, experimenting with permeable pathways, urban agriculture and improved forestry plans (SDG 15). China, for example, is investing in adapting urban infrastructure in 30 ‘sponge cities’, for example **Shanghai** and **Nanning**. The goal is that by 2020, 80% of China’s urban areas will absorb and reuse at least 70% of rainwater.

In 2015, the city of **Rajkot** (India) installed a Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System (DTS) in the Jilla Garden neighbourhoods in order to reduce the number of inhabitants not connected to existing sewage infrastructure (which stood at 40%). When not connected untreated sewage is discharged into neighbourhood streams, which flow into the Aji River, posing ecological harm both to the surrounding communities and biodiversity. Today, the system treats sewage from 236 households, saving 4,000 kWh of electricity (SDG 7) and reducing GHG emissions by 15 t CO₂e per year (SDG 11.6).¹¹⁶

With regards to inclusion of diverse needs, LRGs have a key role in enabling experimentation. **The co-production of context-specific solutions is at the heart of realizing a rights-based approach that encompasses all diverse needs** — density patterns, gender, people with disabilities, specific knowledge of indigenous people, among others — **and provides affordable solutions over time.**

Gender challenges are particularly important when it comes to access to clean and safe water and sanitation. Women and girls literally carry the burden of water scarcity, walking long distances (more than the 30-minute threshold of the SDG indicator) to reach collective facilities. Making these trips, they are exposed to the risk of physical violence and exhaustion due to the weight and the heat. Improving access to water and sanitation is often the tipping point for girls attending primary and secondary schools. Personal hygiene, particularly for women, is also a key issue, as is helping them access public spaces and employment while avoiding recurrent public shame and fear.

In many low and middle-income countries, where infrastructure for basic services takes a long time to reach poor neighbourhoods and informal settlements, many inhabitants depend on informal providers or community provision. The role of local governments

¹¹² In most Latin American countries, water resource management can involve river basin organisations, local and regional decentralized units of governments, as well as central and regional water agencies. See Akhmouch, A. (2012), *Water Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Multi-Level Approach*, OECD Regional Development Working Papers, 2012/04.

¹¹³ ADB (2017), *Meeting Asia’s Infrastructure Needs*. This estimate is based on 2015 prices and includes climate-adjusted policies.

¹¹⁴ World Water Council (2018), *Start with Water, putting water on local action agendas to support global change*.

¹¹⁵ According to UN Water, worldwide, municipal distribution networks account for 12% of withdrawals.

¹¹⁶ See also: http://www.iclei.org/fileadmin/PUBLICATIONS/Case_Stories/1._LEDS/ICLEIUrbanLEDS_case_story_Rajkot_2016.pdf.

¹¹⁷ These examples are presented in Evans Banana, Patrick Chikoti, Chisomo Harawa, Gordon McGranahan, Diana Mittin, Stella Stephen, Noah Schermbrucker, Farirai Shumba, and Anna Walnycki, *Sharing reflections on inclusive sanitation, Environment and Urbanization* Vol 27, Issue 1, pp. 19–34, (2015).

in regulating and overseeing these small providers is crucial because of potential consequences for human safety and the environment. Upgrading programmes in informal settlements is key to improving basic service provision and increased coverage for urban populations; and **local governments can support and collaborate with NGOs, communities and small providers to develop affordable alternatives in these areas**. In this context, LRGs in partnership with communities such as members of Shack/Slums Dwellers International, have in many cases been successful in reducing the gaps in provision and finding affordable, safe and sustainable solutions. Innovative sanitation projects have, for example, been tested in **Chinhoyi** (Zimbabwe), **Dar es Salaam** (Tanzania) and **Blantyre** (Malawi), demonstrating the significant potential of these collaborative approaches.¹¹⁷

Water also provides opportunity for more international collaboration among LRGs. The Oudin-Santini Law, adopted in 2005 in France, illustrates how decentralized cooperation can improve access to water and sanitation by allowing French LRGs to dedicate one percent of their water and sanitation budget to international development programmes in related fields.

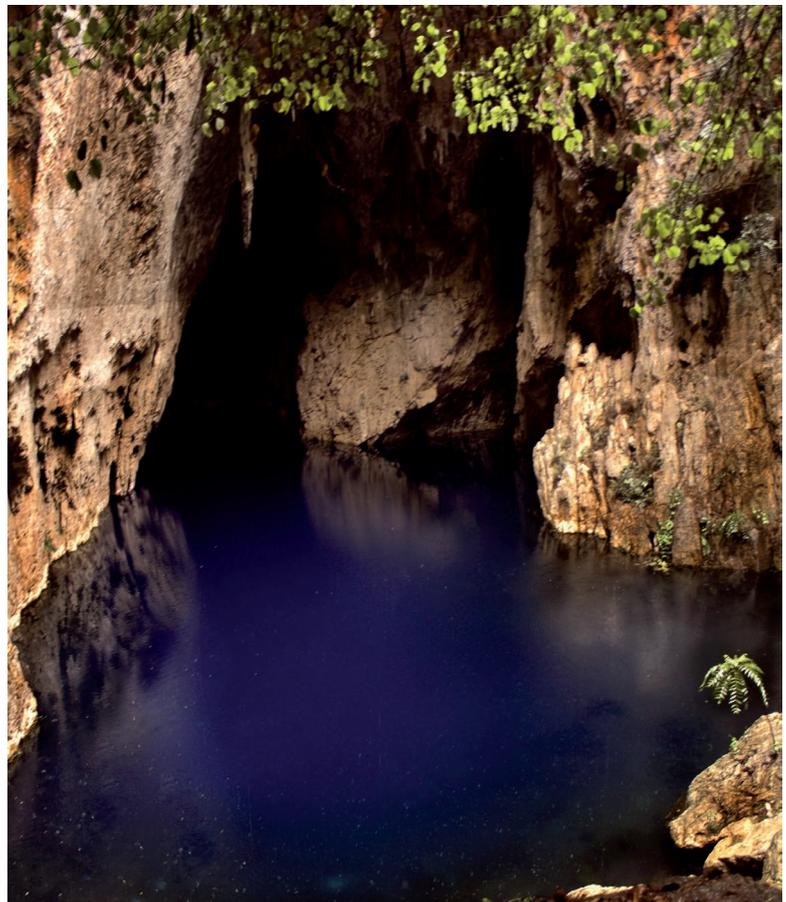
Political commitment of LRGs to water and sanitation

There has been some progress since LRGs approved the Istanbul Water Consensus in 2009 in the spirit of promoting sustainable development and the cultural, historic and traditional values of water. In 2015, the Daegu-Gyeongbuk Water Action for Sustainable Cities and Regions was adopted, calling on stakeholders to establish closer links between water management and urban planning design and development, as well as other relevant sectors of urban management. The most recent declaration made by LRGs and their associations and networks during the 2018 World Water Forum in Brasilia puts forward the following critical recommendations:

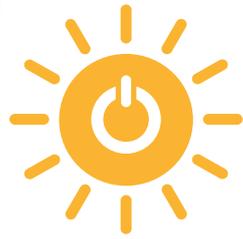
- Promote sensitive integrated water practices, taking into account basic human rights and services as well as gender approaches, putting sanitation and access to quality water at the top of the water agenda.
- Bring forward legislation that enables fair, efficient and sustainable use of water

resources and promotes integrated urban water practices and energy efficiency, making use of technology when possible.

- Strengthen water governance through cooperation between different institutional levels and the management capacities of LRGs to improve universal affordable access to water and sanitation.
- Strengthen and increase decentralized funding and innovative finance mechanisms for water and sanitation projects to address the existing deficits in provision and increased demand in urban areas.
- Promote urban water resilience through planning risk and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and protection of sensitive areas.
- Support mechanisms guaranteeing minimum access levels (social tariffs, cross-subsidies and safety nets) to make basic services affordable to all members of society.
- Improve the collection and improvement of local data on water service access and quality, to identify local needs and priorities and monitor service delivery.



Chinhoyi Caves, Zimbabwe (photo by Aristocrats-hat, flickr.com)



Ensure access to
affordable, reliable,
sustainable and modern
energy for all

SDG 7

Affordable and clean energy

Cities account for about 70% of global energy consumption and related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

3 billion people are still cooking with polluting fuel and stove combinations.

“Progress in every area of sustainable energy falls short of what is needed to achieve energy access for all and to meet targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency”

UN Secretary General Report 2017

Today, cities account for about 70% of global energy consumption and related GHG emissions.¹¹⁸ LRGs have a critical role to play in shifting the world to a more sustainable energy mix, capable of supporting human and economic development in the long term. Access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy is a cross-cutting issue that has implications for human development across a range of SDGs,¹¹⁹ including poverty eradication (SDG 1), health (SDG 3), gender (SDG 5) and decent job creation (SDG 8). Over the next two decades, the vast majority of urban growth is expected to be in developing countries and, in many places, demand for energy is already outpacing supply. Creating an enabling environment to support clean energy generation, improve energy access and enhance resource efficiency is crucial for both the long-term wellbeing of urban populations and for reducing global GHG emissions.

Ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services (SDG 7.1) and increase the share of renewables in the energy mix (SDG 7.2)

Many factors that influence energy access and affordability are outside the scope of LRGs' control, particularly when national authorities control energy generation and grid infrastructure. However, LRGs typically have greater influence on local policies related to electrification coverage, subsidy or incentive programmes that promote renewable energy systems and energy saving or efficiency regulations.

The overall reliability of energy is often dependent on redundancy within a given energy system or availability of the decentralized generation technologies that serve as primary or back-up sources of energy.¹²⁰ Cities and LRGs are helping to drive decentralized energy generation models. For example, in April 2016, **San Francisco** became the first major U.S. city to approve legislation requiring rooftop solar on new buildings. The legislation requires solar panels or solar water heaters to be installed on top of all residential and commercial buildings below ten storeys in height. The city mandate is a significant expansion of existing state law requiring all new buildings

to make 15% of their roof surface area 'solar-ready'. The legislation has been in effect since 1 January 2017 and will assist the city in its ambitious goal of meeting 100% of its electrical demand through renewable sources.¹²¹

Because **LRGs often do direct service provision for underserved populations**, they are in a unique position to identify synergies between clean or efficient energy programmes and inclusivity. For example, in **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), the city's environmental protection agency has provided solar thermal heaters to CSOs that provide shelter to homeless people. The programme also provides training in installation and maintenance to plumbers and local staff. This project aims to decrease the energy costs for organizations working with vulnerable groups, promote environmental education, and increase social inclusion through professional and technical training courses, while also promoting renewable energy and reducing GHG emissions.¹²²

Although there is a global shift towards more local energy systems, national and state governments continue to have an important role to play in financing, operating and regulating energy supply. First, national governments should create the wider political environment that allows the private sector (including both financiers and developers) to invest confidently in renewable energy projects. This requires regulatory certainty and transparent pricing models. Second, national governments can improve the project economics of renewable energy investments by putting in place a substantive and transparent set of fiscal incentives and targets. For example, national governments may offer higher feed-in tariffs for renewable technologies than for conventional energy systems. **Algeria, Brazil, Germany and Thailand**, among others, introduced feed-in tariffs for solar photovoltaic panels, which helped producers achieve economies of scale and technological learning. Today, rooftop solar PV is often economically attractive without subsidies.

Though demand for clean, renewable energy sources is increasing worldwide,¹²³ LRGs are playing a greater role in driving demand to the levels necessary to meet both energy needs and climate goals.

¹¹⁸ We want to acknowledge the joint contribution by C40 and the Coalition for Urban Transitions: Alfredo Redondo, Claire Markgraf, Sarah Colenbrander, Markus Berensson, and Emmanuelle Pinault. ICLEI also contributed to this section.

¹¹⁹ African Progress Report (2015) *Power, people, planet - Seizing Africa's energy and climate opportunities*.

¹²⁰ IEA, *Energy Access Outlook (2017) From Poverty to Prosperity*.

¹²¹ C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (2018). *C40 City Success Examples*. http://www.c40.org/case_studies.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ See also: International Energy Agency (2017). *Renewables 2017: Analysis and Forecasts to 2022 Executive Summary*. IEA Market Report Series. <<https://www.iea.org/Textbase/npsum/renew2017MRSsum.pdf>>.



SDG 7
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency (SDG 7.3)

National or state governments are typically responsible for introducing building codes. This can systematically enhance energy efficiency across a region, including smaller urban areas that might not have the capacity to design and enforce ambitious efficiency standards. Building codes in **China** and **India**, for example, are helping to reduce both the energy bills and carbon footprints of all new construction. Where the building stock is already largely established, as in Europe, national governments can play a key role in improving access to low-cost capital. This can incentivize households and firms to retrofit buildings to improve their efficiency.

National governments have an even more important role to play in introducing efficiency standards for vehicles, lighting and appliances, as these policies can be difficult to enforce at the city scale.

Where national governments have not introduced or enforced efficiency targets, LRGs can also influence energy efficiency through policy interventions. Green public procurement policies in buildings and transport are particularly important at the municipal scale, as this strategy can build local capacities to deliver more efficient options.

The adoption of efficient building codes and regulation of appliances often has the added benefit of reducing energy costs. Some municipal governments have made these types of regulation a key part of their energy strategies. For example, in 2012, **Seoul** (Republic of Korea) introduced One Less Nuclear Power Plant, a programme which aims to increase energy independence, renewable energy generation and energy efficiency. To date, **Seoul has saved energy equivalent to one nuclear power plant by requiring new buildings to generate up to 20% of their energy consumption;** the establishment of a civic fund for the expansion of solar power generation; 100% LED lighting deployment for public buildings by 2018, and low-interest loans for building retrofits available to tenants and contractors as well as dwellers.¹²⁴

Other cities have found the use of smart technologies key to monitoring and tracking their progress. **Cape Town** (South Africa) initiated energy efficiency improvements in municipal buildings in 2009, and has implemented a smart metering programme to verify the resulting electricity savings. By 2015, the city had installed about 500 smart meters within municipal facilities but still found it challenging to manually extract, analyse and monitor all the data from these meters for reporting purposes. In 2015, the city's internal departments collaborated to integrate all municipal information and electricity data systems to develop an automated energy management system, the 'SmartFacility' application. This interprets the facility's electricity consumption data in a friendly, accessible manner, illustrating the data on a dashboard for internal end users and the public.¹²⁵

Some cities have developed monitoring models that push local actors towards energy-



BOX 4.11.

CITIES MAKING PUBLIC COMMITMENTS ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY

Cities are also linking into global movements that promote both climate and energy considerations. For example, the **Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM)** is a climate-focused initiative with nearly 7,600 city and local government signatories. Each signatory to GCoM commits to taking action on mitigation, adaptation, and access to sustainable energy. Recognizing that cities around the world are at different stages of development and face different energy-related needs, actions that cities take may differ from region to region and require different metrics to measure progress. For example, some may focus on addressing lack of adequate energy access for low-income residents while others may choose to commit to improving per capita electrification, increasing the share of renewables in a local energy mix, advocating for energy reform at different levels of government and other actions that seek to ensure a more sustainable future.

100%RE Cities & Regions Network¹³³ brings together leading cities, towns and regions that are driving the transition towards 100% renewable energy in a global community of practice in order to facilitate peer learning and accelerate progress. The network is built on ICLEI's engagement with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA),¹³⁴ REN21 Network,¹³⁵ and Local Renewables Conference since 2007¹³⁶ and connects to the Global 100% Renewable Energy Campaign.¹³⁷ In addition to its pioneering 15+ cities and regions including **Vancouver** (Canada) and **Tshwane** (South Africa), the Network also supports national and regional initiatives, for example Japanese cities committing to 100%RE¹³⁸ or 150 U.S. Mayors endorsing 100% Clean Power.¹³⁹

smart behaviour change. For example, Singapore requires annual mandatory submission of building information and energy consumption data for commercial buildings. It uses this data to perform benchmarking exercises and shares the results with building owners so that they know how well their building is performing. In 2016 the city went further and introduced voluntary disclosure of building energy data for the first time. In late 2017, Singapore received ministerial approval to update the regulation to require mandatory public disclosure of building information and energy consumption data, citing successful examples of this in cities such as **Boston, Washington D.C., San Francisco** (U.S.) and **Tokyo** (Japan).¹²⁶

LRGs around the world are making public commitments to provide more sustainable, secure and affordable energy in their jurisdictions. For example, many *Länder* in Germany are making energy a top strategic priority. **Baden-Württemberg** has devised a strategy for climate protection and energy supply up to the year 2050, aiming for a 50% reduction in energy consumption, an 80% quota for renewable energy sources and a 90% reduction in emissions of GHGs.¹²⁷ In the **Netherlands**, water authorities are striving to be energy neutral by 2025, and a national network of 29 regions has been established to allow cooperation between local authorities, network operators and companies in regional energy strategies. **Vancouver** (Canada) was one of the first in the world to issue a detailed plan in 2014 to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2050 —

part of a wider city plan to cut GHG emissions by 80% by 2050. The plan includes three approaches: reduce energy use, increase the use of renewable energy and increase the supply of renewable energy across the city. It calls for electricity, thermal energy and transportation to be renewable by 2050 and has just adopted the intermediate goal of 55% renewable energy by 2030.¹²⁸

As part of the strategy to double the rate of efficiency improvements under Sustainable Energy For All, the Building Efficiency Accelerator (BEA)¹²⁹ supports public commitments at the city, regional and national levels. As of 2017, the BEA had reached out to more than 250 cities and regions such as **Santa Rosa** (Philippines), with support from city networks such as ICLEI and C40, together with 70 businesses, national governments and NGOs. It provides tools, expertise and technical capabilities to sub-national governments who commit to implementing and reporting on measures designed to improve efficiency.¹³⁰

Another example is the Global District Energy in Cities (DES) Initiative,¹³¹ launched in September 2014 as the implementing mechanism for the Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) Energy Efficiency Accelerator Platform. The DES Initiative is a multi-stakeholder partnership and pool of expertise that promotes the transfer of policy, finance and technical know-how, engaging with more than 45 champion cities,¹³² such as **Gothenburg** (Sweden), which utilizes energy from the Gota River for cooling and biogas for heating.

¹²⁴ See also: C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (2018). C40 City Success Examples. http://www.c40.org/case_studies.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ More information on regional energy policies and actions in Baden-Württemberg is available online at this address: <http://energiewende.baden-wuerttemberg.de/en/all-articles/basics/energy-transition-in-baden-wuerttemberg/>.

¹²⁸ See also: C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (2018). C40 City Success Examples. http://www.c40.org/case_studies.

¹²⁹ See also: <http://buildingefficiencyaccelerator.org/>.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ See also: <http://www.districtenergycities.org/>.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ See also: <http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=3339>.

¹³⁴ See also: <http://www.irena.org/>.

¹³⁵ See also: <http://www.ren21.net/>.

¹³⁶ See also: <http://www.local-renewables-conference.org/freiburg-and-basel-2018/home/>.

¹³⁷ See also: <http://www.go100re.net/>.

¹³⁸ See also: <http://www.iclei.org/details/article/japanese-cities-and-regionally-behind-100-percent-renewable-energy.html>.

¹³⁹ See also: <https://www.sierraclub.org/compass/2017/09/milestone-150-mayors-endorse-100-clean-energy>.



Construction site at night, Singapore (photo by Kai Morgener, flickr.com)



Ensure sustainable
consumption and
production patterns

SDG 12

Sustainable consumption and production

The many supply chains that connect cities mean that GHG emissions reductions in other parts of the country and around the world will reduce the GHG emissions of cities and vice versa.

“Achieving Goal 12 requires a strong national framework for sustainable consumption and production that is integrated into national and sectoral plans [...]”

UN SG Report 2018

Cities and territories are key to achieving sustainable patterns¹⁴⁰ of production and consumption. Given that in high-income consumer cities, GHG emissions are largely driven by consumption patterns, a growing number of LRGs are now taking action to promote sustainable public procurement and sustainable lifestyles among their residents.

Understanding the carbon footprint of consumption in cities and territories (SDG 12.2)¹⁴¹

Cities rely heavily on the supply of imported goods and services from outside their physical boundaries. The GHG emissions associated with these supply chains are significant, particularly for LRGs in Europe, North America and Oceania.

Using a consumption-based approach, it is possible to capture direct and life-cycle GHG emissions of goods and services (including those from raw materials, manufacturing, distribution, retail and disposal) and allocate GHG emissions to the final consumers of those goods and services, rather than to the original producers of the GHG emissions. Utilities, housing and capital (business investment in physical assets such as infrastructure, construction and machinery, transportation, food supply, and government services) contribute most to consumption-based GHG emissions, although with significant regional variation.

Given the complexity of global supply chains, the production of goods and services in a specific location is often driven by consumer demand elsewhere. Cities are centres of both production and consumption. Therefore, emissions of which local governments are directly responsible increase substantially when one takes into account the extent to which local consumption contributes to emissions. When switching to a consumption-based approach, some high-income, service economy cities in the Global North see an increase in emissions by as much as 400%. LRGs are therefore starting to include the consumption-based perspective when planning how to reduce their total climate impact.

When switching to a consumption-based approach, some high-income, service economy cities in the Global North see an increase in emissions by as much as 400%

Consumption-based emissions are driven by complex factors such as the carbon efficiency of global economic supply chains and consumer behaviour that is beyond the reach of any individual local government. However, LRGs, and particularly large cities, are focal points for the global consumer economy, and decisions taken in these locations have the potential to reverberate around the world. For example, most of the consumption-based GHG emissions of 79 cities analysed by the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group are traded: **almost two thirds of consumption-based GHG emissions (2.2 out of 3.5 gigatonnes of CO₂) are imported from regions outside the cities.** This highlights that consumption activities of residents in a local government area has a significant impact on the generation of GHG emissions beyond its boundaries. Through collaboration between LRGs, as well as through partnerships between LRGs, industry and civil society, LRGs can take action to increase the resource efficiency of production as well as the nature of consumption.

Taking action to reduce consumption-related GHG emissions

The first step in managing consumption emissions is to measure them. It is therefore crucial that LRGs map their consumption-related emissions. **Once an LRG has a firm understanding of the source of consumption-related emissions, it can take adequate actions through strategic measures such as sustainable public procurement, consumer information, standards, labels, taxes and subsidies.**

The many supply chains that connect cities mean that GHG emissions reductions in other parts of the country and around the world will reduce the GHG emissions of cities and vice versa. It is crucial therefore that the focus is on collaboration, knowledge-sharing and learning between cities, and between local and regional authorities and their national counterparts. LRG networks can facilitate these outcomes by identifying both city-to-city and territory-to-territory linkages,

¹⁴⁰ We want to acknowledge the joint contribution by C40 and the Coalition for Urban Transitions: Alfredo Redondo, Claire Markgraf, Sarah Colebrander, Markus Berensson, and Emmanuelle Pinault. ICLEI also contributed to this section.

¹⁴¹ See also: C40 (2018). *Consumption-based GHG emissions of C40 cities.*



in terms of the supply and consumption of goods and services. With this knowledge, local governments and other stakeholders can work together and coordinate efforts (e.g. further research, better policies, joined-up action for greater impact) to reduce consumption-related GHGs.

While LRGs may not have much direct influence over the carbon intensity of power used in the manufacturing process of an imported product, or whether that product is transported by train or truck, as end users and centres of innovation and change, **they do have many opportunities to transform residents' lifestyles into more sustainable ones to help reduce consumption-based GHG emissions.** This can be achieved through a combination of resource productivity strategies and consumer policies, targeting carbon-intensive consumption categories and life-cycle phases with the highest emissions, and supporting shifts in consumption to goods and services with lower emissions, including through public procurement.

Promoting sustainable procurement and lifestyles in cities (SDG 12.7 and 12.8)

Many LRGs are already implementing measures to reduce supply chain GHG emissions. To accelerate and scale such efforts, however, requires greater understanding of how LRGs can most effectively target transboundary GHG emissions. This will vary between authorities depending, amongst other factors, on their consumption-based GHG emissions profile, governance structure and ability to act.

In the Netherlands, the new Green Deal Sustainable GWW of 2017 gathers LRGs, national government and the private sector, and commits them to reusing building and demolition material by processing it into filler material in groundwork, road and waterways construction. The **Noord-Holland** province, for example, wants to make its real-estate, infrastructure and 700 km of provincial roads completely circular in terms of replacement and maintenance. It has agreed that by 2030, use of primary raw materials will be reduced by 50%, there will be clean bus transport by 2025 and by 2020 CO₂ emissions will be reduced by 20% compared to 1990.¹⁴²

Copenhagen (Denmark) is supporting circular economy approaches based on analysis highlighting that transition to a more efficient use of resources has economic benefits, while reducing the city's carbon footprint. Key considerations for the local government are better understanding how residents eat, what they buy, how they live and transport themselves. **Amsterdam** (the Netherlands) is also a pioneer of the circular economy and has tied other consumption-based policies to this concept. At the moment, the city is running 23 circular economy approaches and has updated its waste strategy and deepened its understanding of waste streams, whilst improving metropolitan collaboration on the circular economy in order to tackle material streams at a larger scale.

In **Madrid** (Spain), the local government has found that consumption-based emissions are useful when evaluating policies and action plans focused on, for example, responsible consumption, environmental taxation and the environmental footprint of products. Since 2017, the city has had an action plan on Sustainable Consumption, focusing on five strategic areas: food and drink; energy, transport and waste; an ethical approach to finance and insurance; tourism, recreation and culture; and other assorted goods and services. At the scale of medium-sized cities, the municipality of **Mollet del Vallès** (Spain) is another example of promoting responsible consumption and production of food for local canteens through the 'Diet for a Green Planet' and 'Agri-Urban'¹⁴³ initiatives. Both are developed within the framework of the URBACT programme of the European Union.

Oslo (Norway) is developing a new climate strategy in 2018 for reducing consumption. It will assess measures that can contribute to a reduction of Oslo's total carbon footprint. The city is also promoting a programme on life-cycle emissions in, for example, building materials and has initiated action to offer more vegetarian meals in canteens across the Norwegian capital.

Paris (France) is looking at upstream emissions from energy consumption and emissions associated with food, construction and transport outside Paris, including aviation. The goal is to reduce out-boundary emissions by 75% by 2050, compared to the baseline year of 2004. Furthermore, the city has developed a sustainable food plan

¹⁴² See also: <http://www.greendeals.nl/english/green-deal-approach/>.

¹⁴³ See also: <http://urbact.eu/diet-green-planet-0>, <http://urbact.eu/agri-urban>.

¹⁴⁴ See also: <http://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/10yfp-spp-principles.pdf>.

¹⁴⁵ See also: <http://web.unep.org/10yfp/programmes/sustainable-public-procurement>.

¹⁴⁶ See also: <http://iclei-europe.org/topics/sustainable-procurement>.

¹⁴⁷ See also: <http://gicn-on-sp.org/home/>.

¹⁴⁸ For more information, see the Dutch Public Procurement Expertise Centre as well as the Investment agenda 'Towards a sustainable Netherlands' IPO, VNG and the Association of Water Boards, published in March 2017.

¹⁴⁹ See also: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/17Fhd9yy1MlVfxUjzjfjDXK743-vCVaaEO/view>.

¹⁵⁰ See also: <http://talkofthecities.iclei.org/dunedin-new-zealand-has-divested-from-fossil-fuels-here-is-why-and-how/>.

¹⁵¹ See also: <http://www.iclei.org/details/article/berlin-becomes-7th-western-city-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels.html>.

¹⁵² See also: <http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/022-18/climate-action-mayor-comptroller-trustees-first-in-the-nation-goal-divest-from#/0>.

that aims to save 17,000 tCO₂/year by using public procurement to increase the share of sustainable food in the city's municipal canteens. A carbon menu application allows people to find out the emissions produced by their plate of food. **London** (United Kingdom) has also opted to focus its consumption-related policies on food, since so little of what Londoners consume is produced in the city, as well as set targets for reducing waste.

In **Stockholm** (Sweden), the city government is providing more vegetarian food in schools, together with disseminating information on consumption-based emissions to residents. Beyond the food sector, the city has also performed life-cycle analyses of construction materials and building processes to develop a better understanding of embodied energy within the built environment.

Portland, Oregon on the west coast of the U.S., has developed an analytical model using economic data on final demand from households, governments and businesses, to improve local governments' understanding of consumption-related emissions. Based on that deeper analysis, an effort to reduce the city's total carbon footprint is underway. Local climate action aims to promote low-carbon consumption choices: repair, reuse, rent, share durable goods, along with the mandatory deconstruction of older homes.

Advocating an end to fossil-fuel subsidies (SDG 12.c)

LRGs take action not just locally to achieve SDG12, but also collectively at the global level to achieve Target 12.c. Through the 'Urban 20 Joint Statement' supported by C40 and UCLG and published in April 2018, 20 Mayors from the G20 countries have called on their national leaders to end fossil-fuel subsidies by 2020.¹⁴⁹

Pioneering local governments have also been actively involved in promoting the divestment of investments away from fossil fuels. Following the examples of **Dunedin** (New Zealand)¹⁵⁰ in 2014 and **Berlin** (Germany)¹⁵¹ in 2016, **New York City** (U.S.)¹⁵² announced in January 2018 a goal to divest pension funds from fossil-fuel reserve owners within five years. This would make it the first major U.S. pension plan to do so. New York City is also filing a lawsuit against five of the largest fossil-fuel companies, seeking damages to help protect the city from climate change.



BOX 4.12.

SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (SPP) INITIATIVES

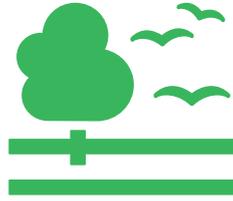
Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP)¹⁴⁴ is defined as a process whereby public organizations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value-for-money on a whole life cycle basis, in terms of generating benefits not only to the organization but also to society and the economy, whilst significantly reducing negative impacts on the environment. The 10 Year Framework Programme (10YFP) on SPP¹⁴⁵ is a global multi-stakeholder platform that supports the implementation of SPP around the world. The programme builds synergies between diverse partners to achieve the SDG target on SPP.

Procura+ and Global Lead City Network on Sustainable Public Procurement

Since 1996, ICLEI has been promoting and implementing the principles of SPP among its members, particularly in Europe.¹⁴⁶ These efforts have been led primarily by early pioneers such as **Kolding** (Denmark), **Gothenburg** (Sweden), **Zurich** (Switzerland), and **Barcelona** (Spain) and extended to recent achievers such as **Helsinki** (Finland) and **Ghent** (Belgium). The process in Europe is progressed through *Procura+* initiatives, including networks, forums, platforms and annual conferences. In April 2015, ICLEI launched the Global Lead City Network (GLCN) on Sustainable Procurement,¹⁴⁷ in collaboration with Seoul Metropolitan Government, extending this to 14 other cities worldwide. The most recent efforts from the GLCN network include **Warsaw** (Poland) purchasing 130 new e-buses (10% of Warsaw's fleet) – the largest project of its kind in Central and Eastern Europe - and **Malmö** (Sweden) starting to chair the *Procura+* Network in Europe.

Socially responsible procurement

In late 2016, dozens of municipalities, provinces, water boards and ministries signed the Socially Responsible Procurement Manifesto 2016-2020, whereby they voluntarily aspire to higher environmental standards. Together, municipalities, provinces and water boards spend EUR 28 billion per year on investments, procurement, maintenance and tenders. As part of the common investment agenda, they have now committed to opt wherever possible for energy neutral, climate proof and circular solutions, starting in 2018.¹⁴⁸



**Protect, restore and
promote sustainable use
of terrestrial ecosystems –
halt biodiversity loss**

SDG 15

Life on land

In 2015, forests covered about 4 billion hectares or 31% of the world's land area. The rate of forest loss has been cut by 25% in the period 2000-2005.

“Cities and regions directly influence the condition and preservation of terrestrial ecosystems and communities. Today, around 1.6 billion people directly depend on forests for their livelihood, including indigenous communities”

In collaboration with local, national and supranational stakeholders, LRGs can help preserve and restore life on land, through territorial planning, awareness-raising and efforts to enhance resilience

Cities and regions directly influence the condition and preservation of terrestrial ecosystems and communities. Today, around 1.6 billion people directly depend on forests for their livelihood, including indigenous communities. Biodiversity is a broad concept, cutting across many other SDGs. All forms of life depend upon biodiversity for their existence.¹⁵³ Globally, 74% of the poor are directly affected by land degradation.¹⁵⁴

It is well-recognized that biodiversity and ecosystems generate, mediate and underpin numerous resource flows into cities such as food, water, energy, health and livelihood needs. The correlation between local, regional and sustainable development has been acknowledged in the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, with a special focus on urban-rural interlinkages and value chains. Public policies on biodiversity conservation are key contributors to improvements in water quality (SDG 6), reducing the environmental impact of cities (SDG 11.6), but also strengthening urban resilience to climate change (SDG 13). Based on their different responsibilities and capacities and in close collaboration with local, national and supranational stakeholders, LRGs can provide a holistic view of how to preserve and restore life on land, through territorial planning, awareness-raising and efforts to enhance the resilience of forests and combat land degradation. In this regard, they can help localize SDG 15's targets by focusing on the areas of forestry, desertification and biodiversity. These also reflect the global agendas derived from the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992.

Policy initiatives to protect urban ecosystems and promote sustainable use of terrestrial resources

This shift towards planning for 'urban green growth' is imperative, not only to secure sustainable ecosystem services and resource flows, but also to ensure resilience in the face of climate change. In recent years, various global agreements such as the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as spaces such as the UN Forum on Forests, have acknowledged and institutionalized the participation of LRGs. The Global Partnership on LRGs and Biodiversity proposed in 2007 is one of the most successful cases for engagement of LRGs in global processes. It provides support to cities' sustainable management of biodiversity resources, and assistance to them to implement practices coordinated with national, regional and international biodiversity strategies and agendas.

In 2017, this international dialogue evolved into concrete collaborations. This was ahead of the release of the UNCCD flagship publication 'Global Land Outlook' which contained a specific chapter on urbanization.¹⁵⁶ These collaborations include:

- a dedicated session by ICLEI and the UNCCD Secretariat at the 2017 Resilient Cities Congress,¹⁵⁷ which also saw the release of ICLEI's Briefing Sheet¹⁵⁸ on land degradation and cities, integrated sustainable land management, guidelines for compact city planning and smart growth, landscape level approach and rural-urban partnerships as potential options for local governments to address

¹⁵³ We want to acknowledge the contribution of ICLEI and nrg4SD for this section.

¹⁵⁴ See also: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/>.

¹⁵⁵ See also: <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/forestarea/en/>.

¹⁵⁶ See also: <https://global-land-outlook.squarespace.com/the-outlook/#the-bokk>.

¹⁵⁷ See also: <http://resilientcities2017.iclei.org/index.php?id=1102>.

¹⁵⁸ See also: <http://www.iclei.org/briefingsheets.html>.



SDG 15
Protect, restore and
promote sustainable use
of terrestrial ecosystems

resilience, food-water security and migration challenges of desertification in cities and regions;

- specific consultations hosted by UCLG¹⁵⁹ and UNCCD Secretariat as part of D'A2017 — Désertif'Actions 2017 International Summit¹⁶⁰ of non-state actors on land degradation and climate change in local territories, organized by Association Climate Chance in Strasbourg on 27-28 June 2017;
- the first Minister-Mayor Roundtable¹⁶¹ at the UNCCD 13th Conference of Parties in Ordos, China, in September 2017, which included the Mayors of Bonn (Germany), Strasbourg (France), Quelimane, (Mozambique) and Ordos (China) as speakers.



BOX 4.13.

INTERACT-BIO

INTERACT-Bio is a four-year project designed to improve the utilization and management of nature within fast-growing cities and surrounding regions. It aims to provide expanding urban communities in the Global South with nature-based solutions and their associated long-term benefits.

Supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) Fund of the German Government (BMU), the project will be implemented in nine cities and their regions in Brazil, India and Tanzania to support mainstreaming biodiversity into core sub-national government functions. These include spatial planning, land-use management, local economic development and infrastructure design.

This will set participating cities and regions on a more resilient and sustainable path. As well as contributing to SDG 15.5, the project is expected to provide a concrete practical example of the implementation of SDG 11.a, and demonstrate good practice for synergies across SDG 11, 13 and 15.

In 2010, at the UN International Year on Biodiversity in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, the Aichi/Nagoya 'Declaration on Local Authorities and Biodiversity' was adopted and the '2011-2020 CBD Plan of Action on Cities, Local Authorities and Biodiversity' established. This strategic plan defined 20 ambitious targets, collectively known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. These demonstrated the tangible contributions LRGs can make through local actions. These were presented by the Sub-National Governments Advisory Committee to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The 'Nagoya Plan of Action' was further supported by additional initiatives such as Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity, Cities and Biodiversity Outlook, URBIO (Urban Biodiversity and Design Network), and nrg4SD's emerging Learning Platform for Regions for Biodiversity. At every CBD COP in 2012, 2014, 2016, Global Biodiversity Summit of Cities and Sub-National Governments were held as part of the official COP agenda, concluding with respective declarations and COP decisions to strengthen the implementation of the Nagoya Plan.

Most recently, in 2017, the 'Guidelines for an Integrated Approach to the Development and Implementation of National, Subnational and Local Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and its Compendium Volume'¹⁶² were launched to support the sub-national and local implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and to coordinate planning, governance and monitoring mechanisms between different levels of government.

Through the adoption of laws and regulations directed at industries, LRGs can implement sustainable urban development. Moreover, the development of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity has become a key policy tool for many LRGs to plan sub-national biodiversity strategies. The **Fatick Region** in Senegal has for instance developed an 'Integrated Regional Development Plan 2012-2018' which used an ecosystem approach to meet the Aichi Targets at the regional level. The transfer of environmental and natural resource management powers to the regions enabled Fatick to design and monitor its biodiversity, safeguarding efforts to protect wildlife in

¹⁵⁹ See also: <https://www.uclg.org/fr/node/27530>.

¹⁶⁰ See also: <https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/international-summit-non-state-actors-desertification> and <http://www.desertif-actions.fr/>.

¹⁶¹ See also: <http://enb.iisd.org/desert/cop13/12sep.html>.

¹⁶² See also: <http://www.cbc.iclei.org/project/bsap-guidelines/>.

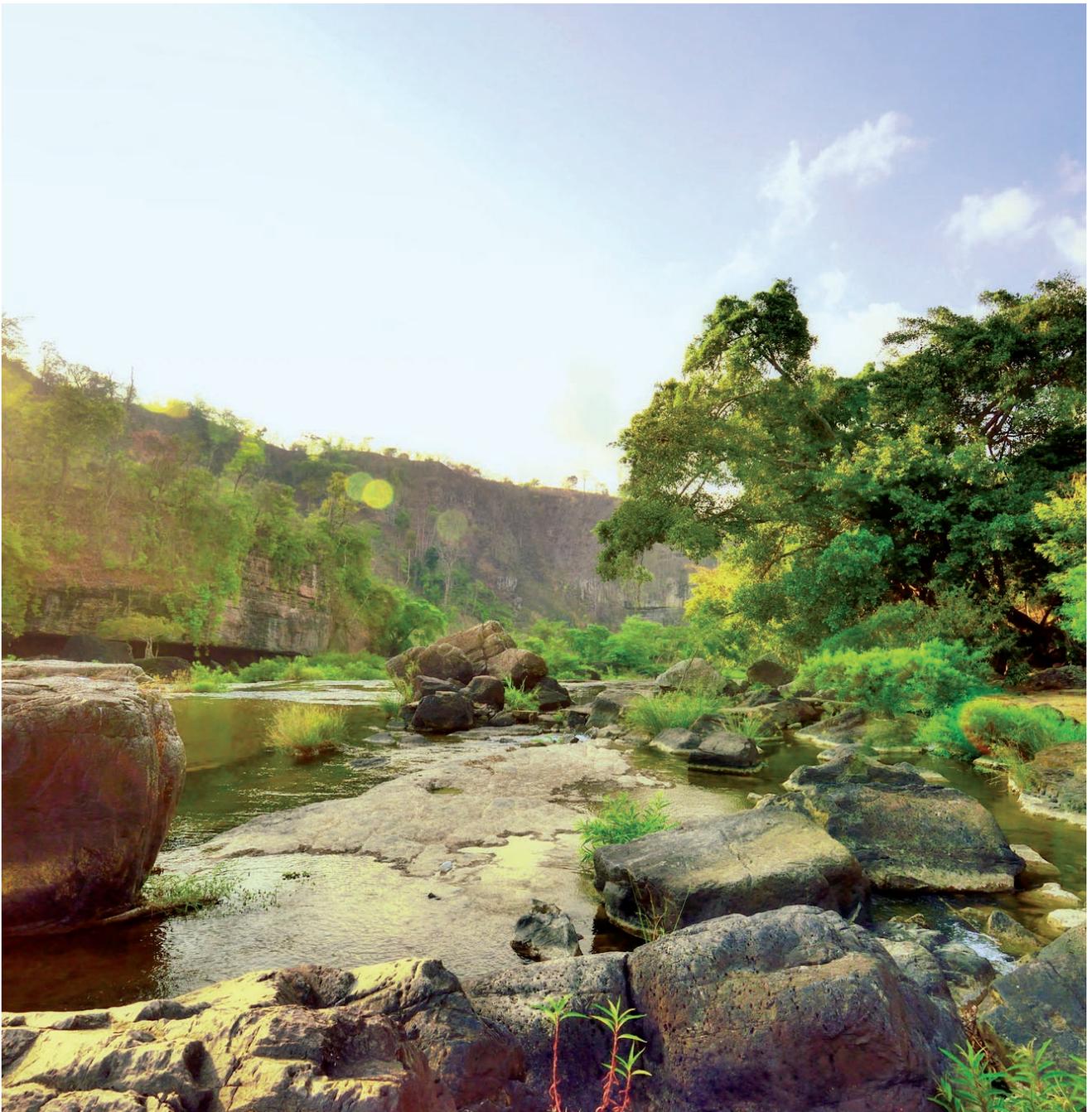
¹⁶³ Nrg4SD, Government of Québec (2016), Sub-national governments in action for biodiversity. Case studies.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

particular. As of today, 33 forests are being developed and 100 villages are involved in forest management.¹⁶³

Some regions and provinces have been very involved with the conservation and restoration of ecosystems, including through the establishment of protected areas and policies to combat fires, invasive alien species and soil erosion. As part of efforts to protect 17% of its land mass and interior fresh water areas by 2020, **Quebec** (Canada)

has established a network of protected areas by creating 206 natural reserves covering more than 21,000 hectares on private lands.¹⁶⁴ Likewise, the **Province of Lam Dong** (Vietnam) established a system of forest-based ecosystem payments. The system helped to improve the quality of life for more than 40,000 rural poor and provides instrumental support in the preservation of more than 200,000 hectares of forest.





Cross-cutting issues: Leaving no one behind

Local and Regional Governments put the 'Right to the City' at the centre of urban and territorial governance to include 'those who are furthest behind' and co-create sustainable and resilient societies.

"'Leaving no one behind' is about how cities can be a space for 'opportunities for all', for sharing universal rights, values and objectives... By acknowledging diversity and active participation, LRGs help reduce poverty and inequalities and efficiently design policies which take into account each group's specificities"

The following section describes initiatives taken by LRGs to ensure that the principle to leave no one behind has been enshrined in sustainable development strategies at the local and regional level.¹⁶⁵ It gives an overview of the efforts catalysed by LRGs and associations from around the world, in line with the Bogotá Commitment and Action Agenda, approved in Bogotá in 2016.

At the local level which is closest to communities, daily challenges include tackling socio-spatial exclusion, integrating migrants as well as the most marginalized groups, preventing urban violence, fighting discrimination and protecting social rights and justice for all. The New Urban Agenda integrates migration into the strategic planning and management of cities and national urban systems, at the same time affirming the universality of human rights regardless of the length of stay or legal status.¹⁶⁶ Hence in their efforts to promote a human rights-based approach to include 'those who are furthest behind', LRGs are instrumental in the localization of global agendas.

Putting the 'Right to the City' at the centre of urban and territorial governance

'Leaving no one behind' is about how cities can be a space for 'opportunities for all', for sharing universal rights, values and objectives. But it is also about acknowledging the diversity of inhabitants and their contexts and creating specific solutions through their active participation. LRGs help reduce poverty and inequalities by identifying deprivation and efficiently targeting outreach policies which take into account each group's specificities. The challenge is to make cities and territories a common good and implement new ways of guaranteeing human rights and participatory democracy towards economic redistribution, cultural recognition and political representation of all citizens.

As noted by UN-Habitat (2016),¹⁶⁷ '75% of the world's cities have higher levels of income inequalities than two decades ago' while 'too many cities today fail to make sustainable space for all, not just physically, but also in the civic, socio-economic and cultural dimensions attached to collective space.' Addressing social exclusion at the local level is a matter

of securing access to basic services for all inhabitants and safeguarding citizens' rights, but also promoting sustainable development for generations to come.

Inclusion policies are designed to satisfy both material needs for a dignified life and those related to social connections. LRGs are also focusing their resources on fighting discrimination in all its forms. For example, the city of **Pikine** (Senegal) has created a 'Human Rights Office' for women who have experienced sexual violence. In **Seoul** (Republic of Korea), the metropolitan government has created a system of human rights governance, complete with a municipal division and various ombudsmen in charge of protecting the rights of minorities.¹⁶⁸

Housing strategies are also a safeguard for human rights, particularly in urban extensions where inequalities are growing, or in places where people are being evicted through gentrification processes (for more details see SDG 11.1). The acknowledgment of the rights of homeless people is an important issue in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and has been followed by the adoption of the 'Homeless Bill of Rights' by **six European cities**.¹⁶⁹ The city of **Lisbon** (Portugal) is tackling discrimination against social groups such as Roma people, Afro-descendant or LGBTI communities through the SOMOS programme. This is a comprehensive policy based on a strong collaboration with local civil society, carrying out numerous actions in the fields of education, awareness and training of local officials.

Similarly, the recognition of cultural rights tends to play a crucial role in strengthening the local social cohesion of several groups such as indigenous or ethnic minorities. The city of **Medellin** (Colombia)¹⁷⁰ implemented a long-term cultural plan. This aimed to consolidate a culture of peace and democratic participation, recognizing cultural rights for vulnerable groups such as Afro-Columbian, indigenous, LGBTI or internally displaced populations. **Yopougon**, a suburb of **Adibjan** (Côte d'Ivoire), promotes cultural citizenship among the local youth in a post-crisis context through participatory programmes that aim to foster inter-culturalism and social cohesion. The role of many cities in the recognition of LGTBI communities through a range of initiatives — e.g. Gay Pride events — is well known globally.

¹⁶⁵ We want to acknowledge the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion and participatory Democracy and the UCLG team on MC2CM migration programme for their inputs on this cross-cutting section.

¹⁶⁶ Par. 38 of the New Urban Agenda approved in Quito in October 2016.

¹⁶⁷ See UN-Habitat 2016 World Cities Report.

¹⁶⁸ More information available at: <https://www.uclg-cisd.org/en/news/latest-news/seoul-municipal-government-division-works-mainstream-rights-approach-local-public>.

¹⁶⁹ This initiative is fostered by cities and civil society, namely FEANTSA and Housing Rights Watch. According to FEANTSA, these cities are Barcelona, Mostoles and four Estonian municipalities. Additional information available at: <http://www.feantsa.org/en/campaign/2017/11/21/homeless-bill-of-rights>.

¹⁷⁰ More information available at: http://agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/files/good_practices/medellin-eng_def.pdf.



Cross-cutting issue –
leaving no one behind

Raising awareness of the benefits of inclusion of migrants in local governance

Thus far, data monitoring has captured the regional distribution of migrants and confirmed a rapid growth in migration processes, especially in developing countries. In 2016, over 80% of the world's refugees and asylum-seekers were living in developing countries.¹⁷¹ By the end of 2016, globally refugees and asylum-seekers were estimated to total 22.5 million people, representing 10% of all international migrants.¹⁷²

The process leading to the 2030 Agenda represented an important step forward, acknowledging that cities are increasingly one of the principal determinants of migration. The SDGs also recognize migrants as a vulnerable group and highlight the particular challenges they face with regards to mobility or inclusion (once they reach their destination which in most cases is urban). UNHCR collected disaggregated data on people and location at sub-national level as part of the global framework, and was able to do this for approximately 63% of the target population, with the data confirming that 60% of refugees are indeed living in urban areas.¹⁷³

LRGs have raised global awareness of the instrumental role migrants can play in the development of both their host and origin cities. The **Mediterranean City2City Migration (MC2CM) programme**, for example, has tried to show the responsibility local governments have dealing on a daily basis with migration issues within their competencies and capacities. Through peer-to-peer learning and nurtured dialogue, cities are building bridges to engage with local stakeholders and support both migrants and host communities in sustainable development strategies. The programme also develops City Migration Profiles with key assessments such as the evolving public perception of migration and integration.

How do cities support migrants' inclusion at local level?

Cities can greatly facilitate the contribution of migrants to sustainable cities, communities and inhabitants of the territory. But a poorly negotiated inclusion policy can easily lead to vulnerability, exclusion, marginalization and social conflict. The city of **Berlin** (Germany), learning from the experiences of the city of **Utrecht** (the Netherlands), has had an

ongoing policy since 2008 to train unemployed mothers with a migration background and living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to become mentors and support newcomers in overcoming bureaucratic and cultural obstacles. The project, recipient of the Metropolis 2008 award, has now been replicated in several other cities in Europe. The city of **Madrid** (Spain) has also focused on access of migrants to decent labour as a way to promote their integration into the territory, build their capacities and provide them with vocational training in order to contribute to the city's development. Within the periphery of Paris, with the support of **Plaine-Commune** (France), the city of **Stains** is embarking on an institutional partnership with a national programme to professionalize street workers in the field of car repairing. Meanwhile the city of **Saint-Denis** is piloting a street food project with migrant women selling corn and African dishes to passers-by. However, issues related to the migratory presence in a territory are not clearly delineated in the SDGs.

Regulatory and financial barriers have often restricted local governments' capacity and means to provide equal access to rights and basic services for all, including migrants and refugees. Nonetheless, some cities are already implementing specific public policies supporting migrant inclusion at the local level, giving priority to women and children as rights holders.¹⁷⁴ Since 2005, the region of the **Marche** (Italy) in partnership with civil society has been promoting access to maternal care. This particular provision has been a key challenge for integration policies in Europe, since it also requires innovative solutions for multi-cultural mediation.

LRGs often operate at the edge of their competences to deliver on their commitments. This was the case with Sanctuary Cities — Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal in Canada, a concept shared with some other cities in the U.S. In Europe, building on the initiative in particular of **Barcelona** and **Madrid** (Spain), a network of *Ciudades Refugio* ('Refuge Cities') has been established and a resolution adopted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) that challenges national frameworks. Cities can choose to mainstream human rights-based approaches within the framework of the 'Right to the City', rather than confining them to a strictly technical definition, thus formalizing part of the UN commitment to 'leave no one behind'.

¹⁷¹ According to the UNHCR (2017), *Forced Displacement in 2016, Global Trends*.

¹⁷² In 2017, the number of international migrants worldwide accounted for 3.4% of the world's population, a total of 258 million people, surpassing the annual world population growth rate. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *International Migration Report 2017: Highlights* (ST/ESA/SER.A/404).

¹⁷³ UNHCR (2018), *The Global Report 2017*.

¹⁷⁴ According to the available data collected, roughly 51% of the global refugee population are under 18-year-olds and women represent 47 to 49% of the same population. World Migration Report 2018 (International Organization for Migration 2017).

¹⁷⁵ The Mechelen Declaration was adopted in November 2017.

¹⁷⁶ See also: www.clgf.org.uk/rwanda.

¹⁷⁷ See www.ralga.rw/spip.php?page=article&id_article=168; and www.clgf.org.uk/whats-new/news/localising-the-sdgs-in-rwanda.

Likewise, many mayoral declarations have reinforced cities' commitments to reconcile attractiveness with inclusiveness and promote the dignity of migrants. Among these, the outstanding Mechelen Declaration¹⁷⁵ captured the voice of mayors and governors in the development of a Global Compact on Migration, in partnership with IOM and UN-Habitat.

What do cities need to better support migrant inclusion at the local level?

As already mentioned, monitoring global migration at the sub-national level has proved difficult. The exact effect of migration in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and South-eastern Asia remains mostly under the radar. Yet this is where the majority of current population flows are occurring. Lack of evidence is due to obsolete census data and it is a hard task accounting for 'floating' populations (people that move from rural to urban areas, and vice versa, on a seasonal or semi-permanent basis).

In the regions described above, as well as in the Middle East and Western Asia, the role of intermediary cities within a system of cities is instrumental in maximizing the opportunities presented by migration. This is particularly true of rural and urban interlinkages. Within this, there is a need to enhance MLG mechanisms to strengthen dialogue between spheres of government and improve the inclusion of migrants with the support of civil society as well as the private sector. Inclusion of migrants is a win-win for all stakeholders involved in the territory.

An example of national government coordination can be found in Sweden where, coordinated by the national level, LRGs, civil society and the private sector work in partnership to fast track employment of migrants and closely match job markets with host cities. The pilot project was conducted in partnership with the city of **Stockholm** and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). Another example can be found in Jordan. Here, the international community (the French Development Agency and the Red Cross) have contributed financially to support the city of **Amman** in enhancing social cohesion of Syrian refugees, in partnership with local civil society. The city government has fostered improved access to healthcare and social, employment and cultural opportunities for

refugees, which has benefited Jordanian citizens, created jobs and built up the capacity of public servants.

In regions where there is an ongoing or recent refugee crisis, cities need national government support in order to plan for the additional pressure of inflows of migrants on urban infrastructure, as well as the operation and maintenance of systems that sustain their access to public services.

Lastly, the international community has a fundamental role to play in supporting local governments' capacity-building, cooperation and dialogue between cities. The Network of Educating Cities, for example, disseminates a 'Municipal Prevention Plan against Discrimination' for employers, in order to help them reach out to populations with a migration background, as well as newcomers and diverse ethnic and religious groups in general.



BOX 4.14.

DEMYSTIFYING THE SDGs IN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In Dominica, Jamaica and Trinidad Tobago, among others, LGAs are engaging their membership to bring together LRG sector stakeholders to support pilot programmes tailored to the specific national and local contexts to explore how localizing the SDGs can be part of the national planning and reporting processes. In Africa, this is also the case in many country and, in particular, in Ghana, Malawi and Rwanda. For example, the Rwandan Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) are working with the CLGF¹⁷⁶ on an EU-funded project to strengthening LRGs' role as a partner in development which aims to foster inter-governmental dialogue on how best the localization of the SDGs can be pursued to ensure no one is left behind.¹⁷⁷ Through this project the SDGs are adapted to three pilot districts' realities, needs, priorities and aspirations and mainstreamed into their own short and mid-term development plans. In **Bugesera**, **Gicumbi** and **Ruhango** districts, the councils are leading on awareness raising and networking in a process of demystifying the SDGs in an ambitious and people oriented planning process. This is helping inform the development of a national roadmap and factsheet for SDGs localization in Rwanda.

05

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

This section analyses initiatives generated by countries and their LRGs in order to mobilize adequate and effective **means of implementation of the SDGs at the local level**. It focuses specifically on five dimensions: policy reform; LRG financing; capacity-building initiatives; monitoring; and international cooperation.

5.1 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND POLICY REFORMS

Effective policies and collaborative MLG are essential to empower LRGs in the implementation process. They should be integral parts of national implementation frameworks for the 2030 Agenda. This report summarizes different institutional mechanisms for coordination and follow-up of the SDGs at the national level (see Section 3.3), as well as various initiatives to align national and local development strategies. LRG participation in these mechanisms, however, is still limited to 39 out of the 99 countries that reported to the HLPF in the last three years. At this stage, 'whole-of-government' or MLG approaches are functioning more as horizontal inter-agency or inter-ministerial collaboration, rather than vertical communication and integration of different levels of government.

However, there is encouraging progress. In **Spain**, LRGs' strong involvement in the preparation of the National Action Plan for the SDGs, especially through their LGA, FEMP, led to their full integration in the national SDGs coordination mechanisms and to the commitment to include SDGs in Presidential and Sectoral Conferences of Regional Governments, which have been essential for policy coordination. But without broader reforms that ensure real buy-in at the LRG level, these efforts will remain tokenistic.

In this regard, in **Mexico**, the creation in 2017 of the National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a promising move towards dialogue and alignment across federal, state and municipal levels, while also including civil society, the private sector and academia. The reform of national planning and budgetary processes in February 2018 went a step further. The scope of the initiative, however, was limited by weak local government involvement. The peculiar electoral conjuncture in 2018 may have ultimately reduced such involvement even more. A strong political push and transformation at the institutional level are needed to foster localization. Mobilization, real empowerment of local officers, and more resources and capacities for LRGs are all needed to move forwards.

Coordination at the territorial level is also fundamental. With this in sight, some countries (e.g. **Mali**, **Benin** and **Togo**) are establishing or strengthening institutional mechanisms at regional and local level.

Mali created regional development agencies in all its regions — as well as in the District of Bamako — to assist the local authorities with project management. Similarly, the national government in **Paraguay** set up local and regional development councils as ‘consultative mechanisms’ for cross-level coordination. In Paraguay, however, the fact that the national LGA was not aware of such developments demonstrates how national governments must involve local leaders in the entire process — from definition to implementation and evaluation — to ensure local ownership and strengthen mutual confidence and accountability.

A specific kind of joint multilevel collaboration via objective-based ‘contracts’ or agreements — defining common priorities and co-financing investments in a specific geographic area — has also been a useful means of improved cooperation. In **Australia**, the federal government is using ‘City Deals’ to bring together their three levels of government and deliver long-term outcomes for cities and regions, e.g. the Western Sydney City Deal already provides the basis for a 20-year-long agreement. Likewise, **Colombia** is promoting contracts between cities or regions (*Departments*) and the national government to align national and local priorities. Colombian LGAs have questioned some of the mechanisms for resource mobilization, which sometimes introduce new conditions and obstacles for local authority projects.¹ Contradictory policies and a lack of policy coherence can undermine confidence and deter the active participation of local leaders.

Multi-annual strategic plans, which are updated and revised on a cyclical basis, help many countries to redefine their planning in collaboration with local levels, as well as renegotiate indicators and promote more result-oriented approaches. **Bhutan** has established its national strategy to build ‘a just, harmonious and sustainable society with enhanced decentralization.’ With its 12th Five Year Plan 2018 — 2023, the country focuses on ‘consolidation, coordination and collaboration’ and adopts the SDGs as a mechanism to monitor progress in Local Government Key Result Areas.

In the 2018 VNRs, 15 out of 47 countries mention decentralization as an ‘important challenge’ or consider the need to ‘territorialize’ their policies and adopt a place-based approach to ensure localization.²

Other countries have demonstrated a longer tradition of decentralization.³ In many cases, assessing the real impact of reforms remains a difficult task, due either to delays in application, or contradictory regulation, or insufficient support for implementation. In **Senegal**⁴ and **Niger**, while institutional reforms are mentioned, an AIMF-led assessment reveals limited LRG involvement. Similar challenges can be seen in **Burkina Faso**, **Côte d’Ivoire**, **Guinea** and **Mali**. In Mali, for example, where the political situation is volatile, the 2016 national action plan mentions decentralization as a priority to improve the transfer of competences and resources to LRGs. However, the national LGA estimates that roughly 50% of local development plans could be implemented by LRGs under current conditions. Regardless of context, however, reforms of this kind will inevitably take time.

Finally, according to the surveys analysed in this report, LRGs in most countries still consider the institutional framework to be far from free of obstacles. Accordingly, many have been advocating for effective institutional reform, improved coordination and more effective MLG.⁵

5.2 HOW TO FINANCE THE LOCALIZING PROCESS

Another reliable indicator for effective implementation is the mobilization of adequate resources to support the localization process. Financing was the top priority for most LGAs in their survey responses. An overview of LRG finance in a sample of 28 countries (out of 47 reporting to the HLPF this year) shows a large divide both between countries and between regional and local tiers. Data show that in the five federal or quasi-federal countries of the sample, LRGs account for 56% of total public spending and on average their revenues represent 57% of national public accounts. These percentages drop to 13% and 14% respectively in the 23 remaining unitary countries.⁶ The share of total public spending and revenues by LRGs is above the world average in only five unitary countries of the sample (19% and 18.8% respectively).⁷ Globally, resources available for local governments to assume their competences

¹ For example, LGAs asked for the reform of the *Órgano Colegiado de Administración y Decisión* managing royalty revenues in Colombia. In April 2018, *Resolution No. 1084* gave 550 municipalities greater autonomy on investment projects within the framework of the *Final Agreement for the End of Conflict and Peace-Building*.

² ‘Decentralization’ is mentioned as a principal or key lever by Bhutan, Benin, Cabo Verde, Ecuador, Mali, Namibia, Romania, Senegal, Togo, and Uruguay. ‘Subsidiarity’ is mentioned by Poland and Latvia. ‘Territorialization of strategies’ is mentioned by Colombia, Paraguay, Poland, Senegal and Uruguay. Since 2015, Jamaica too has been promoting various local government reform.

³ Ecuador, Colombia and, to a lesser extent, the Dominican Republic have been developing decentralization policies for the last few decades. Australia, Canada, Spain and Switzerland also have a strong track record of decentralization initiatives.

⁴ The *VNR of Senegal (2018)* shows important initiatives are being taken through effective implementation of the *Act III of Decentralization regulation*.

⁵ Similar conclusions are drawn from the *Assessments of the Institutional Environment of Local Governments for Africa and the Asia-Pacific region*. These were developed by UCLG Africa in 2012 and 2016, with the support of Cities Alliance [available online at: <http://www.citiesalliance.org/node/5799>], and by UCLG-ASPAC in 2018, with the support of Cities Alliance and UNDP [available online at: <http://www.citiesalliance.org/node/6518>].

⁶ Spain is considered a quasi-federal country. Among the five non-unitary countries, there is a 30% difference between the highest scoring country, Canada, in which LRGs account for 76.5% of public spending and the lowest scoring country, Australia, in which LRGs account for 46.6%. In federal countries, the percentage of municipal spending is far lower than that of regional levels: 7% in Mexico, 13% in Spain, and 20% in both Canada and Switzerland. See also: OECD and UCLG (2016) *Sub-national Governments around the World – Structure and Finance*.

⁷ From highest to lowest: Colombia, Poland, Latvia, Romania and Lithuania. Among the 23 countries whose levels of LRG expenditure and revenue fall below world average, LRGs amounted to between 10% and 19% of the national public budget in a first sub-group of seven countries: Cabo Verde, Slovakia, Hungary, Albania, Ecuador, Mali, and the State of Palestine; and to below 10% in a second sub-group of 11 countries: Armenia, Ireland, Paraguay, Senegal, Greece, Benin, Dominican Republic, the Republic of Congo, Jamaica, Malta and Guinea.

in the localization process remain extremely limited.

As part of the follow-up on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), a specific section of the '2018 Progress Report on Financing for Development' addressed the issue of sub-national development finance. This highlighted the need to strengthen institutional and fiscal frameworks to empower LRGs to act autonomously within their competences and possibilities.⁸

Several countries are reporting on the financial assessments they carried out to estimate the cost of localizing the SDGs (e.g. **Benin, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay**). In **Benin**, the assessment is still taking place and aims to integrate all financial sources (domestic and international), and identify major gaps. The LGA has played a key role supporting its members in the alignment of budgets in a third generation of local development plans and negotiate budget support from the national government. **Uruguay** created a National Portal for Budget Transparency to facilitate the follow-up of SDG commitments in budgets and is also piloting initiatives to support LRGs in this task. At the global level, efforts to tighten the link between planning, policy-making and budget allocation processes across different levels of government are urgently needed to better support LRG finances and policies. In particular, earmarked or conditioned grants should be limited since they are a constraint on LRGs' capacity to respond to local priorities of localization.

Other countries report on both new and existing sectoral programmes to finance specific initiatives in support of LRGs. **Greece** is planning to allocate EUR 7 billion in 2019-2020 for administrative reforms and LRG investment programmes. **Senegal** is mobilizing USD 9.5 million for sustainable cities. Other national governments are targeting subsidies for sectoral investments, yet this is often ad hoc funding. Many financing proposals do not provide reliable information on the management of potential funding and, most importantly, whether this would eventually be accessible to local governments to upscale their capacities and maintain new infrastructures.

Few VNRs (e.g. **Armenia, Latvia and Togo**) refer to concrete proposals that directly address the main pillars of sub-national finance — i.e. taxes and transfers, asset management and borrowing.⁹ Likewise, it is important to improve access to, and availability of, shared revenues between national and sub-national governments through enhanced and transparent transfers in order to strengthen local budgets (e.g. **Mali**).¹⁰

In the follow-up process to the AAAA, several local resource mobilization initiatives for urban development — e.g. land-value capture actions in **Brazil** and **Colombia** — stand out as innovative ways of funding strategies compatible with the principle of 'leaving no one behind'.¹¹ These are often the starting point to increasing LRGs'

⁸ See IATF (2018), *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects*.

⁹ Latvia reports new tax reforms aimed at ensuring sufficient and predictable tax revenues to finance state and local government commitments. Togo reports on its initiative to boost LRGs' finance management capacities (e.g. enhancing taxpayer files), and to create an Observatory on Local Finances. The VNR of Mexico (2017) announced reforms to support local taxes, but this is not mentioned in the 2018 report. Moreover, in its answer to the UCLG Survey, the LGA from the Dominican Republic calls for the creation of an economic and property tax.

¹⁰ In its framework of decentralization policies, Mali committed to an increase in transfers to local levels, reaching 30% of the national budget in 2018 (in 2016, it was 16.7%). In their answers to the UCLG Survey, Republic of Central Africa, Vietnam and Sri Lanka underline that transferred funds have decreased or regulation is not being respected.

¹¹ Paul Smoke (November 2017) *Policies, Reforms and Strategies for Enhancing Sub-national Development Finance*, Informal Note for the 2018 IATF Report, Coordinated by New York University, in collaboration with UCLG, UNCDF and UN-Habitat.



creditworthiness and their ability to access long-term financing. Thus, many LRGs have fought to be able to issue municipal bonds and, eventually, 'green' municipal bonds. For example, the city of **Johannesburg** and more recently **Mexico City** became the first cities in Africa and Latin America to achieve this goal. In 2017 however, mapping by the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance revealed a lack of visibility of funding and financing options for sub-national tiers of governance.¹² The **Basque Government** has recently developed a new Sustainability Bond Framework, under which it issues multiple sustainability bonds to support regional programmers aligned with SDGs.¹³

In more general terms however, many countries — especially lower middle and low-income — simply do not have the right conditions to foster LRG borrowing and funding. For sub-national credit markets to work effectively, incremental development and the support of the national government remain essential. This has been the pattern in many high-income countries, and recently also in several middle-income ones, such as **Brazil**, **Mexico** and **South Africa**. More effective municipal development funds or banks could play a key role in providing resources and developing creditworthiness, as well as mobilizing private finance. Multilateral and national development banks should find ways to lend more to LRGs; and local access to climate-related financing should also be facilitated.

Finally, LRGs have pointed out a persistent lack of clarity on fiscal and financial reforms, despite international commitments relying on localization processes. Thus, LRGs in several regions of the world — e.g. **Brazil**, **Lebanon** and **New Zealand** — emphasize that little or no national funding is allocated to the localization of the SDGs. Cities (e.g. **Rio de Janeiro** and **Medellin**) have also been vocal about seeking alternative ways to fund the implementation of the global agendas as it becomes increasingly clear that conventional approaches to revenue mobilization are inadequate. UCLG and OECD, with the support of the French Development Agency (AFD), have joined forces with UNCDF to create the World Observatory of Sub-National Government Finance and Investments. This is to better monitor LRGs' finances. The Observatory's pilot study was published in 2016.¹⁴

5.3 CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES

An effective institutional framework for the localization of the SDGs depends on human capacities. Public servants need to be trained in the new integrated framework and thematic scope covered by the SDGs. This degree of commitment is essential to internalize new, inclusive and participatory methods, as well as the principles underpinning a truly rights-based approach.

Most surveyed countries have emphasized the need to adequately train their staff across national and local administrations for the implementation of the SDGs. In the past few months, LRGs and international institutions have carried out specific training initiatives for local officers in all world regions. UCLG and its regional sections reported in 2017 alone over 25 training sessions, involving more than 500 local officers and leaders from cities in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Most global and regional networks (e.g. AIMF, CLGF, ICLEI, Metropolis, Platforma and UCCI) and several national LGAs have been developing similar initiatives (for more information, see also Section 3.4).

Various national governments are also redoubling their efforts: among those reporting in 2018, the **Greek Government** has engaged its National School of Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA), while **Mexico** is acting mostly through the National Institute for Federalism and Municipal Development (INAFED). In their answers to the UCLG survey, the LRGs of **Benin**, **Cabo Verde**, **Cameroon**, **Colombia**, **Jamaica**, **Mali**, **Peru**, **Sri Lanka**, **Togo**, **Uruguay** and **Vietnam**, among others, said they have been training public servants, in partnership with national and international institutions.

Dissemination of information about the SDGs and related national strategies builds on diverse methods and tools. These include local and regional workshops, 'rapid integrated assessments' to mainstream the SDGs in local plans (UNDP), and several other actions to promote local planning, public services, climate-change mitigation and adaption, urban resilience and gender equality. There is also a plethora of guidelines, manuals, webpages (e.g. *LocalizingtheSDGs*).

¹² Starting with the lack of materials in languages other than English.

¹³ See also: www.euskadi.eus/gobierno-vasco/-/noticia/2018/presentacion-publica-del-bono-sostenible-euskadi/.¹⁴ OECD and UCLG (2016).

¹⁴ OECD and UCLG (2016).

org) and templates that promote and define tools and initiatives for SDG mobilization, alignment and participatory monitoring.

Moreover, SDG localization has been integrated in certain countries' strategies for the modernization of their public administration — e.g. **Latvia, Colombia, Lao PDR, Mali, Mexico, Senegal, and Togo**.¹⁵ Within the framework of SDG 16, 'open government' as well as anti-corruption policies are also receiving attention (e.g. **Latvia, Spain**).

LRGs in several countries from all continents agree, to varying degrees, that further training is needed to localize the SDGs. This is particularly the case in lower middle and low-income countries where LRGs suffer from a chronic lack of professionals and well-trained officers.

5.4 PRIORITIZING CO-PRODUCTION OF DATA AND LOCAL MONITORING

How to develop reliable monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools to guarantee SDG implementation at sub-national level remains an open question.¹⁶ To respond to the challenges posed by the current global system of indicators,¹⁷ several countries have suggested monitoring SDG implementation at the sub-national level. This would be coordinated with central governments through the establishment of dedicated sub-national monitoring or joint, multilevel structures and mechanisms.¹⁸ Mexico has been an example in this regard: its VNR disaggregates indicators at the federated state level and, for specific indicators, even at municipal level. However, this is hindered by inadequate adaption and disaggregation of data at the local level in the current system.¹⁹ To generate true local ownership of the SDGs within a transparent and accountable system, it will be essential for indicators, data collection and monitoring to be led at the local level

Since 2016, many LRGs have made progress in sub-national monitoring.²⁰ For example (see Section 3.4), the most relevant German LGAs, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Territorial Research and with the technical

assistance of the Bertelsmann Foundation, created an assessment model whose indicators stem directly from the requirements, targets and indicators of the SDGs. In the same period, CEMR-CCRE, in collaboration with the French Ministry of Housing, has developed the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC), a monitoring tool to assist cities in the implementation of urban SDGs.²¹ In Brazil, CNM has developed a *Mandala* of SDGs, with its own measurement and reporting on 28 indicators at municipal level, easily visualized using a radar chart. Other initiatives are planned for 2018 in Belgium and the Netherlands, with the support of VWSG (the Flemish LGA) and VNG (the Dutch LGA) respectively.

Various cities are developing their own monitoring initiatives: **Utrecht**, in the Netherlands; **Winnipeg**, in Canada;²² **Mexico City**, which created the *Monitoreo CDMX*, an initiative acknowledged by Cities Alliance as one of the five best practices to strengthen local voices in the reviewing process in 2018;²³ and **Rio de Janeiro**, where *Casa Fluminense* developed the SDG Metropolitan Observatory (METRODS), with support from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).²⁴ As part of the urban contribution to the climate-change mitigation agenda, global networks have also set up systems and databases to monitor LRGs' carbon emissions and footprint — e.g. ICLEI's *Carbonn* Climate Registry (involving 83 countries), and the GPC Interactive Dashboard, developed by C40.²⁵

Other international institutions have adopted similar approaches, with city performance and the monitoring of SDG 11 at the centre of this. UN-Habitat has developed its City Prosperity Index, which monitors 450 cities worldwide. It has also spearheaded the Global Sample of Cities database, covering 200 municipalities with 100,000 inhabitants or more.²⁶ Both of these are being used to report on the SDG 11 to the HLPF. Other examples include the World Council on City Data,²⁷ and the SDSN reporting initiative to 'Leave No U.S. City Behind'.²⁸

LRGs are aware of the huge volume of information that their activities and competences can bring to the development of new public and private development initiatives. They have been shown to be willing to build partnerships to collect, systematize and build on their knowledge. Such an ambitious agenda will need the support of international partners and UN agencies.

¹⁵ See UCLG (2017) and UNPAN (2018) p. 49.

¹⁶ Paragraph 77, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development*, United Nations, General Assembly, A/RES/70/1.

¹⁷ Roughly a third of UN-proposed indicators have no widely available data or internationally-agreed methodology.

¹⁸ UNPAN (2018).

¹⁹ This challenge was identified in most surveyed countries. In Latin America, for example, according to ECLAC's 2nd Regional Annual Report (2018), only about 45% of all indicators are being monitored at the national level. Since SDGs 11 and 12 both have strong territorial components, to date they are among the SDGs where less data is being produced and analysed.

²⁰ See UCLG (2017), Section 5.3.2, and UNPAN (2018).

²¹ The RFSC identifies five key dimensions and 30 objectives/indicators to assess city performance in spatial organization, governance, society, environment and the economy. See also: www.rfsc.eu/european-challenges/.

²² For Utrecht, see Section 3.4. For Winnipeg, the 4th edition of the *Our City: A Peg Report on Sustainability* report evaluates progress by linking the city's wellbeing with the SDGs, according to the indicator system of the Peg online community (<https://peg.tracking-progress.org>). The report is also available online.

²³ The other four winners were a network of 19 Colombian cities *Ciudades cómo vamos*; #weResilient, including the 100 municipalities of the Province of Potenza in Italy; the City Footprint Project (SASA-Servicios Ambientales S.A.) across Latin America; and the Marunda Urban Resilience in Action project, led by Cordaid, with slum dwellers in Indonesia. See also: www.citiesalliance.org/beyond-sdg11-winners. For Mexico City's *Monitoreo*, see: <http://www.monitoreo.cdmx.gob.mx>.

²⁴ The project also received the support of the CNM and the ABM — two LGAs in Brazil — as well as Cities Alliance, ITDP and the GIZ. It aims to support peripheral cities in metropolitan areas to take informed decisions with data aligned with the SDGs.

²⁵ See also: <http://carbonn.org/> and <http://www.c40.org/other/gpc-dashboard>.

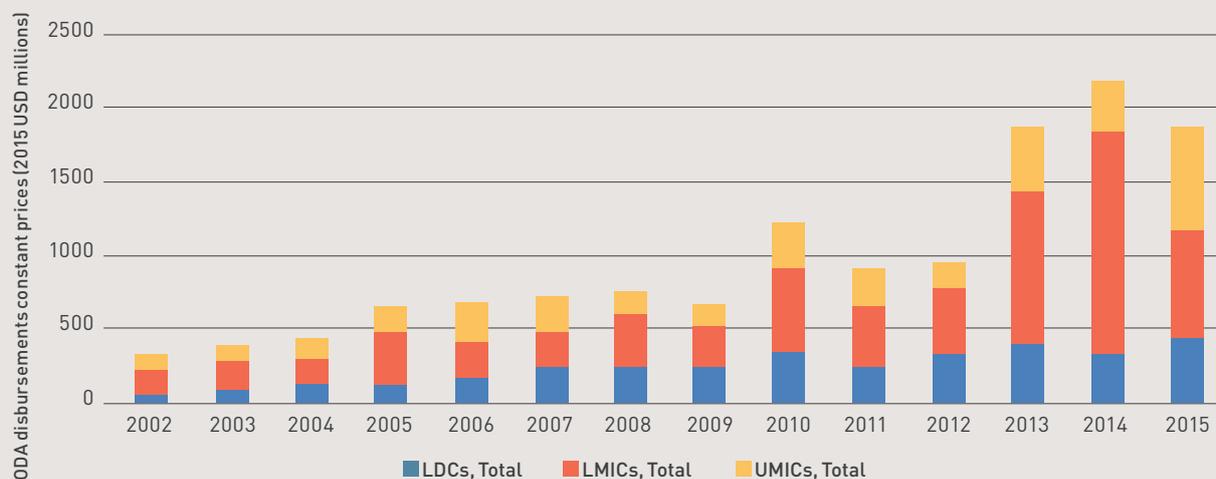
²⁶ The CPI is a composite index based on six dimensions over 15 sub-dimensions with 72 urban indicators, which are designed to be contextually specific and globally comparable. UN-Habitat is also leading the Global Sample of Cities in partnership with New York University and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. See also: UN-Habitat (2016), *The Fundamental of Urbanization Evidence for Policy Making*, Annex 2.

²⁷ WCCD collects and organizes relevant urban development data on 100 socio-economic indicators [46 are defined as 'core'] in about 250 (mostly large) cities. 84 cities are either certified or processing their application.

²⁸ See Section 3.4.

FIGURE 5.1.

ODA DISBURSEMENTS FOR URBAN PROJECTS (LOW-COST HOUSING, HOUSING POLICY, URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT), 2002-2015



Sources: OECD Creditor Reporting System, 2017. LDCs (Least Developed Countries), LMICs (Lower-Middle Income Countries) and UMICs (Upper-Middle Income Countries) based on UN DESA, UNCDF (2017) Financing for Sustainable Urban Development in the Least Developed Countries, p. 115, figure 6.1.

5.5 INTERNATIONAL AND DECENTRALIZED COOPERATION

The international community can play a fundamental role in supporting LRGs in the localization of the SDGs. A quick overview of sectoral ODA in 2015 shows that disbursements to support decentralization efforts have grown steadily in the last decade, especially to lower middle-income countries. Moreover, despite some volatility, total ODA for projects at the urban level — including urban development and management, housing policy, and administrative management — has more than doubled in the last ten years. However, data for 2015 show a decrease in total bilateral and multilateral ODA disbursements for urban projects. The share of ODA for urban projects as part of total ODA to least developed countries peaked in 2015, but is still less than 1%.²⁹

Donor support is instrumental in encouraging partners to engage with the global agendas, and important efforts have been made to report on investments within the SDG framework. Yet many donors still do not explicitly tie their funding to the SDGs (as

various LGAs report in their survey answers). Thus, LRGs are disincentivized to align their programmes and projects with the SDGs.

Development banks and international donors need to develop criteria that are inclusive of the LRGs; build up operating and reporting capacities; and catalyse further investment so that multilevel and multi-sectoral partnerships can be built at the territorial level. Several networks — e.g. the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance or the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate Change and Energy — provide context-specific support for LRGs to improve project preparation and financial structuring, mobilize long-term financing, and internalize adequate financial strategies.

The OECD recently evaluated that Decentralized Development Cooperation (DDC) led by LRGs amounted to USD 1.7 billion in 2005, reaching USD 1.9 billion in 2015.³⁰ International solidarity between LRGs across the world has been instrumental to development, and the principles of reciprocity and universality have further contributed. Decentralized cooperation has been key to efforts to localize the SDGs and to adapt progressive approaches and secure adequate territorial strategies and partnerships that truly engage and involve LRGs throughout the whole process.

²⁹ UNDESA, UNCDF (2017).

³⁰ OECD (2018), *Reshaping Decentralised Development Co-operation*.

06

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

The second report on the ‘Localization of the SDGs’ presents a comprehensive summary of the progress made by Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) worldwide. It complements the information presented in the ‘Main Messages’ and the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) from the perspective of LRGs in 99 countries.¹ It also shows the diversity of actions and innovative approaches to localize the six goals assessed by the HLPF under the theme ‘Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies’. Furthermore, it explains SDG 11 and provides an in-depth assessment of the initiatives that are working towards ‘sustainable cities and communities’.

Visionary local and regional leaders champion policy changes

The report showcases how cities and regions are fostering alternative policies. Countries where LRGs benefit from an enabling institutional framework can play a key developmental role — e.g. by supporting affordable housing policies, effective mobility systems, more sustainable use of water and energy, integrated waste management, and participatory planning approaches that protect public space and include risk prevention. Many LRGs are committed to promote culture as the fourth pillar of

sustainability. They are protecting heritage and promoting creativity for all. The cities in these regions and areas are driving new forms of urbanism that promote new opportunities, social inclusion, new patterns of consumption and production, as well as urban-rural linkages and environmental sustainability. However, systemic global trends could undermine much of the progress promoted by LRGs in their territories.

Critical global trends and sub-national governments

The report flags many of the global constraints that directly impact LRGs and explores how they address these challenges.

It also makes a general call to action to the international community to undertake the necessary measures to accommodate the ‘one million’ new urban dwellers per week that it is estimated will reach existing cities, large and small, in the coming years. It is expected that 2.5 billion people or more will be living in cities by 2050. This urban growth will be concentrated particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The report highlights the fact that sustainable provision of basic services and harmonious urban development will be extremely challenging. It posits supporting adequate urbanization and implementing the New Urban Agenda as the main ‘accelerators’ of the 2030 Agenda, which

is key to sustainable urban development. Climate change and the increasing impact of natural and man-made disasters are among key global threats. At the same time, the commodification of urban services worldwide and particularly the evolution of real-estate markets are exacerbating the housing crisis, which is now affecting newcomers and existing residents alike. As a result, spatial segregation and inequalities are growing.

An expanding global movement of involved LRGs

Cities, both large and small, as well as regions and their associations at the national, regional and international level are championing a 'localization movement'. Large cities have been particularly vocal in calling for transformation. This raises awareness of the links between local action and the global agenda, while at the same time strengthening action and aligning policies and action plans with the 17 LGAs. SNGs, cities and regions are leading the localization process in many countries (e.g. Australia, Brazil, Canada, Spain, as well as most Northern and Western European countries). They have also been proactive in establishing multilevel and multi-stakeholder partnerships to catalyse the localization process (e.g. Benin, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Korea, Japan and South Africa).

In countries with strong centralized planning traditions, SNGs usually follow the guidelines from national governments (e.g. Armenia, China and Vietnam) or adopt a more 'passive by default' approach, particularly in countries where the local administration has limited or no formal autonomy.

Despite these trends, outreach is still limited. It is important to recognize that the vast majority of LRGs are either not acquainted with the SDGs or perceive the 2030 Agenda to be yet another external 'burden', and an 'internationally imposed agenda'.

Global, regional and national organizations of LRGs, including specialized thematic networks, are increasing their efforts to raise awareness to mobilize and guide their constituency. Clear high-level political support at the global level and the commitment of national governments are critical to fostering greater action at the local level.

The report calls for clear and unequivocal actions to empower LRGs and to develop collaborative governance approaches as an integral part of the national framework for implementation.

Improvement of LRGs' involvement in the VNRs and institutional mechanisms for coordination and follow-up

Less than half of the VNR consultations and one third of the follow-up mechanisms in 99 countries involve local governments. The achievement of the SDGs will require collaboration within and between governments 'to a level that has not been seen before'.² Current levels of involvement are clearly insufficient and threaten to become an unbridgeable gap for the achievement of the goals.

National governments and UN institutions need to further develop multilevel spaces for dialogue and joint action. These must ensure the participation and engagement of local and regional leaders, both in the reporting process through the VNRs and in the national and global follow-up institutional mechanisms, with adapted agendas and policy support.

New institutional frameworks for collaborative governance

Coordination between administrations and spheres of government remains a critical issue. Moreover, the transformation of institutions takes time and effort.³

These challenges necessitate new governance systems that provide more strategic and integrated solutions at all levels. Indeed, top-down sectoral policies, poor coordination between spheres of government, and insufficient access to financing for local investments persist. This undermines efforts to address the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development more holistically at the urban and territorial levels.

Progress towards more collaborative governance requires better spaces for dialogue between different levels of administration. It also necessitates respect of the principle of subsidiarity, fully acknowledging the critical role and responsibilities of LRGs in urban and regional planning and local development, and in overcoming institutional blockages and improving shared financing.

Many countries acknowledge the role of LRGs, and yet their VNRs or national strategies do not always demonstrate a clear strategy for the 'localization' or 'territorialization' of the SDGs. The SDGs are an opportunity to catalyse both local sustainable development

¹ In total, 112 countries reported between 2016 and 2018 (22 in 2016, 43 in 2017 and 47 in 2018). The total (99) records a country once even though it has reported twice (the case with nine countries), or three times (one country). Countries with no information were removed 4 countries (Bahamas, Hungary, Namibia, Republic of Congo).

² United Nations, 2018, *Working Together: Integration, institutions and the Sustainable Development Goals, World Public Sector Report 2018*, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, (DPADM), New York.

³ However, the ambition of more collaborative governance is fully integrated in SDGs' holistic approach (cf. SDG 16.6 and 16.7 *develop effective accountable, transparent and participative institutions and SDG 17.14 enhanced policy coherence*).

as well as a more inclusive and resilient urban development.

Localization of the SDGs can only be scaled up as an integral part of national strategies

Effective localization (or a territorial-based approach) entails integrated planning efforts linking national, regional and local development strategies, aligned with the SDGs. Whilst many VNRs reproduce a 'top-down' vision, emphasizing the inclusion of national priorities on the SDGs in local plans, few VNRs stress the need for scaling up local innovative actions and local priorities aligned with the SDGs in national strategies.

Nevertheless, LRGs are moving towards full alignment of their plans and strategies with the 2030 Agenda. On the one hand, decentralized governance fosters flexible and strategic forms of regional and urban planning to mainstream local priorities. On the other, in countries with weak local governance, urban planning modalities — where they do exist — remain top-down and hamper local capacities for implementation. The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda offer a real opportunity to reform and strengthen the role of LRGs in planning and to promote them as key drivers for the localization of the 2030 Agenda, thus broadening and empowering local stakeholder involvement.

National Urban Policies (NUPs) can help build a more collaborative framework to develop cross-sectoral and coherent approaches to guide sustainable urban development. While important to ensure their development, NUPs cannot and should not replace local urban policies. Improved collaboration across different levels of government and stakeholders is imperative to creating ownership and supporting implementation at a later stage.

Financing the localization of the SDGs: a pending issue

The '2018 Progress Report on Financing for Development', in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (paragraph 34), highlights the need to strengthen institutional and fiscal frameworks to empower LRGs to act within their competences. This means a more integrated framework for LRGs' planning and financing. Across the world, LRGs are

proposing a re-think of municipal financing to provide them with sufficient capacities, enabling regulatory frameworks and institutional incentives to function effectively.

Moreover, at the global level, while an increasing amount of funds are available for urban infrastructure, they are failing to reach LRGs and those territories most in need. From the perspective of LRGs, there is a lack of visibility about the funding and financing options available to them. More efforts by international institutions are needed to understand the potential diversity of LRGs, and to build partnerships and catalyse investments in sustainable long-term local financial projects.

'Make the Shift': a rights-based approach at the centre of local agendas

The implementation of the 'Right to the City' acknowledged in the Habitat III outcome document is an important vehicle for linking the implementation of SDGs with a rights-based approach. The development of urban planning and particular local policies are important levers to delivering on the core promise to 'leave no one behind'. Such policies combine the right to housing and the rights of women with inclusion strategies, giving particular attention to youth, people with disabilities, older persons, migrants and other vulnerable groups. The initiatives that have been shown to protect the right of migrants create new forms of solidarity within the urban fabric. All these actions contribute to a broader understanding of governance based on the co-creation and protection of the commons.

The report highlights cities as leading a call to action to 'put the right to housing and the Right to the City as an unequivocal necessity to comply with the SDGs'. It showcases the support of global networks for the 'Make the Shift' campaign, promoted by the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, LRG networks, and civil society.

Participation to co-create cities and territories

Instruments of participatory democracy at the local level are expanding. The report presents a diversity of existing mechanisms and channels, including digital instruments that create 'virtuous circles' of engagement between citizens and institutions. However,

it also warns that citizen participation can be limited to a consultative role (public surveys, workshops, forums and polls) when the decision-making process is mainly controlled by political and administrative authorities or driven by economic development interests.

To move forward, participation is needed to frame a new paradigm for sustainable development: the 'co-creation' of cities and territories based on a stronger involvement of local actors throughout the process.

The need for disaggregated data to feed into bottom-up monitoring

Monitoring of the localization process requires disaggregated and place-based data. Extreme poverty is localized and inequalities between countries, as well as between territories and within cities, are widening. Without localized data, it will be particularly difficult to ensure that 'no one is left behind'. LRGs are launching initiatives to collect data on the ground, but stronger support and coordination are essential to disaggregate and localize data.

International cooperation focusing on, and led by, LRGs

As this report shows, the alignment of international development cooperation with the 2030 Agenda is laborious and has not yet reached local levels. The efforts of LRGs and their associations involved in international development cooperation are significant and productive. However, to enhance and upscale these practices, there needs to be a clearer focus on enabling policy frameworks for decentralized cooperation, as well as much greater support for the involvement of LRGs in general development cooperation plans.



A WAY FORWARD

Within the framework of their global commitment to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global agendas through localization, the Local and Regional Government (LRG) networks gathered in the GTF to commit to:

1.

Strengthening awareness, policy commitment and ownership among LRGs and their partners to expand their involvement in the localization process.

2.

Supporting the proactive involvement of LRGs in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) process in the countries that will report in 2019, as well as their collaboration with the institutional mechanisms for coordination and follow-up in each country.

3.

Ensuring the active participation of LRGs in the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development, organized by the UN Regional Commissions, to provide regional inputs to the HLPF.

4.

Promoting and supporting the development of tools for LRGs' self-assessment on the alignment of their development plans and strategies with the SDGs to foster the localization process.

5.

Promoting Voluntary Local Review at city and regional levels, and recording and monitoring these reviews through the annual LRGs' report to the HLPF.

6.

Promoting international cooperation and peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge for localization through city-to-city and decentralized cooperation, aligned with the SDGs.



GTF MEMBERS AND PARTNERS CALL FOR:

1.

Fostering the integration of specific references (or a section on LRGs' actions) in the VNRs to monitor the implementation of the SDGs at sub-national levels in each country, as is already the case in some countries.

2.

Including specific follow-up processes to the VNRs and developing the HLPF as a space for further identification and exchange of successful practices.

3.

Enhancing the presence and spaces for dialogue between LRGs and national governments in the context of the HLPF, in particular by supporting existing efforts promoted by the GTF such as the Local and Regional Governments Forum, Local 2030 and the Localizing the SDGs platform.

4.

Paying specific attention to local solutions and actions in the Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report to be released in 2019.

5.

Promoting the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as a key cornerstone and accelerator of the localization and achievement of the SDGs.

6.

Rallying LRGs to lead an international coalition for the implementation of SDG 11, linking all stakeholders to the localization process.

The members of the GTF further commit to continue to contribute to the **mapping of LRGs' initiatives and perspectives** that will enhance the collective Annual Report of LRGs to the HLPF



**GLOBAL
TASKFORCE**
OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENTS

Member networks of the Global Taskforce:



With special contributions from:

C40, ICLEI, CLGF, AIMF, International Union of Public Transport (UITP), International Solid Waste Association (ISWA), IIED, OIDP and UCLG's Committee on Culture and the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (CISDP)

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