



CITIES AND REGIONS DRIVING THE COUNTDOWN TO 2030

#LISTEN2CITIES

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As we enter the final countdown to 2030, the constituency of local and regional governments gathered in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF) continues to stress that the SDGs must be realized through local action. In the framework of the 2025 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), we are engaging in various initiatives aimed at keeping localization at the forefront of global discussions. Through dynamic processes, reports, and spaces for dialogue, LRGs are showcasing how global commitments take root through proximity, solidarity, and care.

The 2025 HLPF is a central moment towards advancing a renewed global social agenda—one that puts people, care, and public service provision at the center of sustainable development. With the in-depth review of SDGs 3 (health), 5 (gender equality), and 8 (decent work), this year's Forum provides a unique opportunity to elevate the everyday efforts of local governments in building inclusive and resilient societies from the ground up.

Local leaders around the world are already translating this vision into reality—investing in local health systems, promoting feminist municipalism, and fostering inclusive local economies. These actions demonstrate that a fairer, more sustainable future is possible when global goals are anchored in territorial governance and community realities.

We, local and regional governments, deliver a statement to the High-Level Political Forum reaffirming our commitment to the universal development agendas and stressing the need for multilevel action and localization for the Goals in the final stretch to 2030.





**THE 9th EDITION OF THE
GLOBAL TASKFORCE
REPORT *TOWARDS
THE LOCALIZATION OF
THE SDGs***



**VLRs & VSRs: *CATALYSTS
FOR MULTILEVEL
COLLABORATION AND
ACCELERATED SDG
LOCALIZATION***



**THE PACT FOR THE
FUTURE'S ACTION 55(E):
*ACCELERATING THE
2030 AGENDA THROUGH
THE INSTITUTION-
NALIZATION OF LRG
ENGAGEMENT IN
MULTILATERALISM***



**2025 LOCAL
AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENTS FORUM**



**HIGH-IMPACT
INITIATIVES FOR
LOCALIZING SDG
FINANCING**



**SDG LOCALIZATION
LEARNING MODULES:
*BUILDING CAPACITY
FOR LOCAL
IMPLEMENTATION***



**UNECE FORUM OF
MAYORS: ELEVATING
LOCAL LEADERSHIP
AND MULTI-LEVEL
COLLABORATION
IN THE UN SYSTEM
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**



**CONSOLIDATING
THE LOCAL2030
COALITION**



**TOWARDS THE SECOND
WORLD SUMMIT FOR
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
AND THE FINAL STRETCH
TO 2030**



**CITIES
COUNTDOWN
TO 2030**

*Accelerating Local
Action Through
Investable Solutions*



*Renewing the Global
Social Agenda from
the Ground Up*

ASSESSING THE STATE OF SDG IMPLEMENTATION: THE 9th EDITION OF THE GLOBAL TASKFORCE REPORT TOWARDS THE LOCALIZATION OF THE SDGs

Launch of the GTF Annual Report
“Towards the Localization of the SDGs”

 15 JULY - 18H

On behalf of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, **UCLG coordinates the annual Towards the Localization of the SDGs report**. Since 2017, this flagship report has been presented at the HLPF to offer an evidence-based overview of SDG localization worldwide and inform the global community on the efforts and priorities of local and regional governments (LRGs).

The 2025 edition, based on contributions from 178 LRGs and their associations across over 60 countries, provides strategic recommendations to strengthen multilevel coordination and integrate LRGs into SDG planning, implementation, and monitoring. It focuses in particular on the experiences of territories in countries presenting Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and highlights gaps in local participation, financing, and data systems.

For this edition, four thematic papers—developed in partnership with WHO, PSI, and ICLEI—offer an in-depth analysis of the state of localization of SDGs 3, 5, 8, and 14. These contributions reflect the leadership of LRGs in advancing rights-based public services, inclusive local economies, gender equality, and coastal resilience. **The report calls for institutional and financial reforms to unlock the full potential of LRGs as co-decision-makers in sustainable development.**



This year's report dives into SDGs 3, 5, 8, and 14 in partnership with WHO, PSI, and ICLEI



VOLUNTARY LOCAL AND SUBNATIONAL REVIEWS: **CATALYSTS FOR MULTILEVEL COLLABORATION AND ACCELERATED SDG LOCALIZATION**

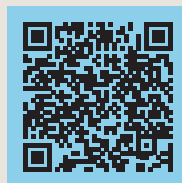
Between 2018 and 2025, more than 360 Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) have been produced by almost 290 local and regional governments (LRGs) across all world regions, demonstrating the growing commitment of local and regional governments to monitor and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. These reviews have become powerful tools for accountability, public engagement, and policy alignment, showcasing how local governments are translating the SDGs into action on the ground.

In parallel, since 2020, 45 Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) have been published in 33 countries, with two additional reports currently in preparation. VSRs reflect the collective voice of LRGs within national contexts, often in dialogue with national governments and other actors. They represent an increasingly structured approach to monitoring and reporting on localization, and are frequently integrated into the official national review processes at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

The VLR and VSR processes are more than reporting tools: they are catalysts for institutional innovation, multilevel collaboration, and stronger governance. They help identify priorities, bridge data and policy gaps, and build shared ownership of the SDGs among citizens, civil society, and all levels of government. Their expansion is key to advancing a territorialized approach to sustainable development and ensuring no one and no place is left behind.



**See the
published
VLRs and
VSRs**



THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE'S ACTION 55(E): ACCELERATING THE 2030 AGENDA THROUGH THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT IN MULTILATERALISM

As part of the efforts to deliver on the Pact for the Future, Action 55(e) mandates the UN Secretary-General to provide recommendations on how engagement with local and regional governments can be further institutionalized and leveraged to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Anchored in the Pact's recognition of sustainable development as a central objective of multilateralism, and its emphasis on inclusive, networked, and effective governance, this work builds upon the outputs of the Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments (2023–2024).

The Advisory Group's Global Strategy laid the groundwork for enhancing the participation of local and regional governments across intergovernmental processes, and for fostering stronger cooperation between national governments, LRGs, and UN Country Teams. Although the Advisory Group concluded its term in 2024, the Secretary-General continues to rely on the self-organized constituency of local and regional governments to advance this agenda, including through high-level dialogues in forums such as the Local and Regional Governments Forum at the HLPF.

The forthcoming Secretary-General's report on the engagement of LRGs within the UN system, to be presented in line with Action 55(e), will assess existing mechanisms, identify opportunities for institutional innovation, and offer forward-looking guidance to Member States on how to strengthen multilevel partnerships to accelerate SDG localization and delivery, building on the recommendations provided by the Advisory Group throughout its year-long tenure.



**Read
the United
Nations Pact
for the Future
here**



2025 LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS FORUM

 16 JULY, 10:00 - 13:00

The Local and Regional Governments Forum (LRGF) is the political space of our self-organized constituency within the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), where the voices of mayors, governors, and local leaders are brought to the forefront of the global review of the 2030 Agenda. Co-organized with UN DESA, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, UN-Habitat, UNDP, and Local2030, the LRGF stands as a testament to the unwavering commitment of local and regional governments to sustainable development and their vital contribution to delivering the SDG Rescue Plan in the countdown to 2030.

This year's edition put particular focus on the leadership of local and regional governments in powering the six key SDG transitions through transformative local public service provision and high-impact partnerships. The Forum also includes a dedicated discussion on the implementation of the Pact for the Future's recommendation on how the meaningful engagement of local and regional governments in the multilateral system can advance the 2030 Agenda.

A particular emphasis is placed on the SDGs under review in 2025—SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 14 (Life Below Water)—exploring how localization, multilevel governance, and the alignment of local, national, and global efforts can catalyze progress, and envisioning the next generation of local public service provision for future generations.



Co-organized
by the Global
Taskforce with
UNDESA, UNDP,
UN-Habitat, and
Local 2030



HIGH-IMPACT INITIATIVES FOR LOCALIZING SDG FINANCING

At the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), the self-organized constituency reaffirmed the central role of local action in unlocking transformative investments aligned with the SDGs. LRGs showcased key tools such as the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment (WOFI), developed by UCLG and the OECD. Officially recognized as a high-impact initiative of the Seville Platform for Action WOFI provides essential data and analysis on subnational government finance across the world.

The Seville Platform for Action also identified the IV World Forum on Local Economic Development (WFLED) as a strategic mechanism to advance sustainable territorial development, recognizing it as a key milestone in the lead-up to FfD4. The WFLED harnesses local economic development experiences and scales solutions to global challenges to support SDG implementation through place-based strategies.

The constituency also played a key role in the Road to Seville initiative of the Local2030 Coalition, which highlighted localized financing solutions ahead of FfD4 and reaffirmed LRGs' readiness to promote local financing mechanisms.



Explore how local governments are driving impact in global financing debates through the Seville Platform for Action



SDG LOCALIZATION LEARNING MODULES: BUILDING CAPACITY FOR LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

Developed by UCLG in collaboration with UN-Habitat, UNDP, and the European Commission, **the SDG Localization Learning Modules are a key component of global efforts to empower local and regional governments to implement the 2030 Agenda.** These modules offer hands-on tools, adaptable methodologies, and real-world case studies to support effective SDG localization. By promoting institutional learning and peer exchange, they help local actors translate global goals into local policies, plans, and services.

As part of UCLG's broader capacity-building strategy, the modules foster multilevel dialogue, improve coordination between levels of government, and contribute to more coherent and inclusive policy frameworks. They also strengthen the foundation for meaningful participation in SDG monitoring and reporting processes, including VLR and VSR processes.



Visit the LearnignwithUCLG platform to know more about the learning modules



UNECE FORUM OF MAYORS: ELEVATING LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND MULTI-LEVEL COLLABORATION IN THE UN SYSTEM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 2025, UCLG joined UNECE as co-organizer of the Forum of Mayors, strengthening this United Nations platform where mayors engage in international policymaking on central areas to the 2030 Agenda, such as sustainable urbanization, housing, mobility, energy, climate resilience, and inclusive infrastructure.

This partnership is a direct result of the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments, which called for leveraging existing UN platforms to enable the meaningful LRG engagement in multilateral processes. By elevating the Forum of Mayors as a space of collaboration between the United Nations, Member States, and the self-organized constituency of local and regional governments, this partnership advances that vision a contributes to the reinforcing multilevel governance as a cornerstone of a more inclusive, networked, and effective multilateral system.



UCLG and UNECE join forces to organize the UN Forum of Mayors in Geneva



CONSOLIDATING THE LOCAL2030 COALITION

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF) continues to play an active role in the Steering Committee of the Local2030 Coalition, a UN-led multistakeholder platform dedicated to accelerating SDG localization. Co-chaired by UN-Habitat and FAO, the Coalition brings together a diverse set of actors with a shared commitment to advance the six key SDG transitions. In 2025, the **GTF has strengthened its collaboration with the Coalition through joint engagement in strategic global moments such as the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4)** and the Local and Regional Governments Forum (LRGF) at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).



Accelerating localization to achieve the SDG transitions and deliver the global goals



TOWARDS THE SECOND WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE FINAL STRETCH TO 2030 FOR LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

CITIES COUNTDOWN TO 2030

Accelerating Local Action Through Investable Solutions

Local and regional governments are on the frontlines of today's most pressing global challenges. As we approach 2030, the Cities Countdown to 2030—an initiative led by UCLG and the United Nations, under the auspices of UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed—aims to accelerate SDG localization by promoting existing, concrete, scalable, and investment-ready solutions aligned with the SDGs and grounded in political leadership at the local level.

Across key transitions such as energy, food systems, mobility, housing, education, and digitalization, local and regional governments are mobilizing millions of dollars to impact millions of lives. These real-world initiatives are not only advancing the SDGs but also driving the structural transformations required to deliver the 2030 Agenda from the ground up.

Guided by a mission-driven and partnership-based approach, **the Countdown is building momentum behind the SDG transitions, helping direct resources where they are most needed** to accelerate the shift toward more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient local systems. It gives concrete form to the vision of the Pact for the Future—placing sustainable communities at the heart of renewed multilateralism—and reinforces the priorities of the SDG Summit Political Declaration to localize action and fast-track delivery in the final stretch to 2030.



Explore how
cities are
accelerating local
action through
investment-ready
solutions that
deliver on the
SDGs from the
ground up



**LOCAL
SOCIAL**
covenant

Renewing the Global Social Agenda from the Ground Up

The Local Social Covenant is a multi-stakeholder platform for political dialogue and action, aimed at advancing localization to reduce poverty, address social inequality, and build a society grounded in rights as we enter the final stretch to 2030. It brings together mayors, governors, civil society, the private sector, and international partners to co-design integrated responses to today's interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges.

Built around three core pillars—high-level political commitments, actionable solutions for current and future generations, and multilateral strategies for implementation—**the Covenant provides a roadmap to guarantee fundamental rights such as food, housing, culture, conflict prevention, finance, health, and climate justice**, through a new generation of inclusive and caring local public services that are grounded in human rights.

As we look ahead to the Second World Summit for Social Development, the Local Social Covenant stands as a unifying call to reimagine a global social agenda rooted in care, equality, and solidarity. The 2025 High-Level Political Forum marks a critical milestone in this process, with the in-depth review of SDGs 3 (health), 5 (gender equality), and 8 (decent work) providing a timely opportunity to recognize the transformative power of local leadership and its contribution to more equitable and sustainable societies.



**Read the letters
from the local
social covenant:
A dialogue with
civil society and
stakeholders**





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