



Local and Regional Governments Forum (LRGF) on the 2030 Agenda

“A networked multilateralism for present and future generations: Local governments at the heart of the countdown to 2030”

Special High-Level Event on the occasion of the 2025 United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

16 July, 10:00 - 1:00PM - UNHQ (CR3)

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

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Background

- Amidst rising inequalities, ecological breakdown, and shifting global economic dynamics, the need for a new social contract rooted in a renewed and networked multilateral system has never been more urgent.
- In the [UN Pact for the Future](#), world leaders recognized that the multilateral system needs to be strengthened to be fit for purpose, to deliver a better future for people and the planet, and to address persistent inequalities within and between countries. They further affirmed their commitment to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to leave no one behind, including through the localization of sustainable development.
- The Pact further stressed that sustainable development is and will always be a central objective of multilateralism. It called for strengthening partnerships to ensure the meaningful participation of stakeholders as a crucial means for accelerated action. As part of this call, the UN Secretary-General is requested to provide recommendations regarding how engagement with local and regional governments could advance the 2030 Agenda. The forthcoming report of the Secretary-General is expected to build on the work of his [Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments](#) (2023-2024), in particular the group's [Global Strategy](#)¹.

¹ “A United Nations Global Strategy for the Engagement of Local and Regional Governments in Intergovernmental Processes”

- While the Advisory Group ended its term in 2024, the Secretary-General is set to continue to count on the group advocacy and interactions through the self-organized constituency of local and regional governments, including with high-level dialogues in relevant events, such as at the Local and Regional Governments Forum at the HLPF.
- The UN system has identified the need for a systems-based approach to SDG implementation. In particular, it has identified six key SDG transitions —food systems, energy, digitalization, education, social protection and jobs, climate and biodiversity— as investment pathways to deliver the Goals. These transitions connect to High-Impact Initiatives (HII), including Local2030 on Localization, with a view to demonstrate transformative impacts and measures to scale financing to close the SDG investment gap.
- As highlighted in the latest [Global Sustainable Development Report](#) and the [Global Taskforce's annual "Towards the Localization of the SDGs"](#) reports, the role of local and regional governments in SDG implementation has been central to promote implementation through political commitment and impactful, sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions. Cities are producing concrete, measurable evidence of investments and resource mobilization for transformative SDG action that is crucial to inform global decision-making processes.
- Several intergovernmental processes in 2025 — [including the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(Beijing+30\)](#), the [Third United Nations Ocean Conference](#), the [Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development \(FfD4\)](#), and the [Second World Summit on Social Development \(WSSD2\)](#) — provide important platforms to foster policy alignment and reinforce the integration of the SDGs across agendas with local action at the center.
- Cities and regions, their networks and associations have been actively involved in these inter-governmental processes, ensuring ways to strengthen engagement between local and regional governments and the UN System. Such processes offer a chance to promote strategic investment in sustainable social development and strengthen inclusive, locally-driven, rights-based approaches. Mobilizing finance for a renewed social compact rooted in community needs and multilevel governance is key to rebuilding trust and advancing inclusive, sustainable development.

The 2025 Local and Regional Governments Forum (LRGF)

- The Local and Regional Governments Forum will bring together local, regional, and national governments as well as representatives from the United Nations and other stakeholders to discuss how high-impact localization policies, partnerships, multilevel governance and financing can close the gap in the implementation of the SDGs.
- Within this context, the Local and Regional Governments Forum (LRGF), will highlight the interconnectedness between local action and collaborative multilevel governance as key drivers for SDG implementation. It will also underscore the need for a renewed, networked, and inclusive multilateral system—one that delivers for present and future generations by recognizing local and regional governments as political actors with a legitimate mandate from their communities, and meaningfully engaging them in intergovernmental processes and UN policy-making bodies.

- This LRGF will include a high-level briefing session on the process for the drafting of the SG's Report on the Engagement on Local and Regional Governments, as mandated by Action 55 (e) of the Pact for the Future. The session will reflect on the existing mechanisms and opportunities for engagement of Local and Regional Governments within the UN system, followed by an open and horizontal exchange
- As part of the 2025 edition of the LRGF, a dedicated session will focus on the SDGs under review—namely SDG 3 (Health), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 17 (Partnerships)—highlighting their relevance to local and regional governments and centrality in accelerating the 2030 Agenda. Particular emphasis will be placed on the outcomes of the CSW69, the Beijing+30 process and the centrality of gender equality towards building a local social agenda ahead of the WSSD2. The LRGF will delve into the Cities Countdown to 2030 [add link] and will feature practices and policies that are already mobilizing investments; impacting lives and accelerating transformative action.
- The LRGF will aim at featuring innovative advancements in local reporting and monitoring initiatives such as the VLRs and VSRs in connection to VNRs, as well as to foster multilevel governance and partnerships among different spheres of government, the international community and other stakeholders towards closing the gap on SDG implementation.
- The LRGF will also explore how local and regional governments can shape inclusive and innovative public services as levers for the rights and needs of future generations. Rooted in the Declaration on Future Generations, a dedicated session will explore how to advance sustainable development by 2030 and beyond, including in connection with the FfD4; WSSD2 and the ECOSOC and HLPF review to be conducted by Member States during the 80th Session of the UN General Assembly.