

Local Authorities Major Group

Gathered within the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments.

Sectoral Position Paper

1. **Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) share the concern of the international community and the UNSG** regarding the need to embolden ambitions and accelerate the pace of transformation as we have entered the implementation decade. In these trying times, with the world facing an unprecedented crisis it is also becoming very clear that there is a **window of opportunity to bend the curve of the current unsustainable trajectory. As the pandemic is demonstrating, all development agendas need to be addressed as one and need to be underpinned by local service provision driven by strong LRGs close to the communities they serve.**
2. **In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, the provision of public services has proven to be essential for addressing the crisis. The efforts shared among LRGs, supported by their networks, civil society and the private sector through peer-learning and decentralised cooperation, will prove to be key** to solve the interconnected challenges that our world faces, and accelerate action for the achievement of the SDGs.
3. **Localization requires multilevel and multistakeholder coordination**, the incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into local and regional plans and policies, and financial support and capacity development for LRGs to effectively participate. Rooting the 2030 Agenda's implementation in local and regional priorities would allow for the creation of a new framework of governance that is meaningful and practical in the day-to-day lives of citizens.
4. **The VNR reporting continues to show that localization varies widely across countries and it is critical to revise the strategies to mobilize and involve LRGs.** LRGs have been consulted in VNR processes in only 42% of the countries that reported to the HLPF between 2016 and 2019 and only 33% of LRGs have been involved in national coordination mechanisms for the SDGs' implementation. **If the SDGs are to be achieved, it is critical to ensure the involvement of LRGs in the VNR processes, and the availability of local, and gender-disaggregated data. These should be seen as policy revision opportunities in order to create more traction and ownership of the Goals.**
5. **We call on international systems and national governments to promote reforms necessary to strengthen municipal and regional governments' own resources** together with adequate regulatory frameworks that allow for the alignment of national, regional and local plans, in order to finally unlock the means of implementation for LRGs to carry out the goals.
6. **We underscore the necessity for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to create space to discuss innovative governance mechanisms between local, regional and national governments**, and call for an inclusive HLPF that promotes and institutionalizes strong dialogue with LRGs and stakeholders, and in which all spheres of government have a platform to follow-up, present and exchange their efforts to avoid leaving local and regional governance and territorial cohesion behind.

7. **We welcome the inclusion of a session on *Bolstering local action to accelerate implementation*** to address measures to empower and support cities, local and regional authorities, territories and communities, as well as issues related to climate adaptation, biodiversity, sustainable urban development, infrastructure, culture, urban-rural linkages and people-centered services, among others. We strongly suggest to link this session with the Local and Regional Government Forum to be held during the HLPF 2020.

8. **We reiterate the commitment of our organized constituency towards the localization of all the universal development agendas**, as well as to fostering the development of Voluntary Local and Regional Reviews, promoted by Local and Regional Governments' Associations, with inputs from all LRGs in the territory.