



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME  
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## FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

### Follow up to the UNHA Resolutions Action plan and Roadmap to 2025

#### Resolution on Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals

[\(HSP/HA.2/Res.6\)](#)

Version 1 - [17 October 2023]

*This Roadmap has been prepared by the UN-Habitat Secretariat to reflect on the resolution on Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals ((HSP/HA.2/Res.6)), adopted at the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly on 09 June 2023. The Resolution was championed by Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, Italy, Malaysia, Peru, Portugal, Spain and Sweden and adopted by acclamation. This Action Plan will be adjusted and updated, as needed and relevant, during the course of implementation of the resolution.*

#### Overview of resolution

The main elements of the resolution on the Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are:

- To **promote the localization of the SDGs** and bolster local action to accelerate the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda.
- To support and further recognize the **role of cities, local governments, and local communities in achieving the SDGs**.
- To **build the capacities of local and national governments to strengthen SDG monitoring and reporting**, through the scale-up of the Global Urban Monitoring Framework and the development of Voluntary Local and Subnational Reviews.
- To **recognize and advance multilevel governance to achieve the SDGs**, including through stronger connection between Voluntary Local and National Reviews.

#### Requests for UN-Habitat

The operative elements request UN-Habitat to:

- To develop **normative guidance and practical tools** on SDG localization.
- To strengthen the capacities of local and regional governments to develop **Voluntary Subnational and Local Reviews (VLR/VSR)**.
- To improve **national reporting on the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda**, including stronger linkages between Voluntary Local Reviews and Voluntary National Reviews.
- To strengthen **multilevel governance for SDG localization**.
- To continue **mainstreaming SDG localization across the work of the UN**.
- To strengthen data environments at the local level and scale up the adoption of the **Global Urban Monitoring Framework**.
- To improve **spatial and socioeconomic data** on deprived and vulnerable urban and peri-urban areas and build capacities for collecting and analyzing the same.

#### Requests for Member States and other actors

The resolution calls upon and encourages Member States and development partners:

- To **promote SDG localization by advancing local implementation, progress monitoring and reporting**, including by enhancing national frameworks for a coherent and multi-sectorial implementation process

- To **strengthen participation and inclusion of local communities**, particularly those living in vulnerable conditions
- To support the mobilization of human and financial resources through voluntary contributions to **strengthen UN-Habitat's work on SDG localization**.
- To **increase financing for local and regional governments** to implement SDG related projects.

### Relationship with prior and existing mandates, resolutions (Governing Council, GA, UNHA, etc.)

Localization has been discussed, promoted, and recognized as a key approach to accelerate SDG achievement with various high-level reports, outcome documents, decisions, and resolutions of UN bodies, including the UN-Habitat Executive Board. A specific mandate was received through the present resolution adopted at the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly.

#### *UN-Habitat Executive Board and UN Habitat Assembly*

In November 2021, UN-Habitat's **Executive Board** reviewed the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat on SDG localization and recommended the Executive Director to "actively advance the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals in support of the Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals through normative guidance, technical assistance, strategic partnerships and harmonized data collection" (**Decision HSP/EB.2021/22**).

In line with the EB Decision, **UN-Habitat's Executive Director** identified Localizing the SDGs as one of the Agency's priorities for 2022-23.

Alongside the Resolution adopted at the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly, the **Ministerial Declaration** of the Assembly calls for strengthening SDG localization and empowering local and regional authorities and governments as central actors to accelerate action towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (paragraph 13e).

#### *United Nations General Assembly*

**Resolution 74/4** of 15 October 2019 reaffirms the pledge to make the present decade one of action and delivery on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and reaffirms the commitment to **bolster local action to accelerate implementation by empowering and supporting cities, local authorities, and communities**, as well as recognizing their role in the achievement of the SDGs.

**Resolution 53/110** of the United Nations Statistical Commission endorsed the **Global Urban Monitoring Framework and its further implementation** as part of a harmonized global urban United Nations system-wide strategy and requested for UN-Habitat to develop technical assistance programmes and instruments to build human settlements statistics capacities in Member States, with an emphasis on ascertaining consistency of data at the national, regional and city levels.

**The 75th, 76th and 77th sessions of the General Assembly** on the "Follow-up to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)" have increasingly integrated **references to SDG Localization and the role of local and regional governments**.

During the **75th session of the General Assembly (75/224)**, the contribution of the New Urban Agenda to the implementation and localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was highlighted.

During the **76th session of the General Assembly**, the Assembly's resolution 75/224 was reaffirmed, including review of advancements on the topic. Paragraph 68 of the **Quadrennial Report on the New Urban Agenda** identifies the New Urban Agenda as a comprehensive, action-oriented framework, aimed at advancing the localization of the SDGs beyond SDG11, offering countries ways to plan, finance, develop and manage cities and other human settlements. It also **mentions Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and their**

**connection with the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)**, highlighting the importance of the local-national link.

During the **77th session of the General Assembly (77/173)**, multilevel governance was acknowledged as a key driver for SDG Localization, reaffirming that the implementation of the NUA contributes to the implementation and localization of the SDGs at all levels. **Multilevel governance and the localization of the SDGs are identified as one of the five action areas to accelerate the implementation of the NUA.**

**The General Assembly's High-Level Meeting on the review of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (HLM)** in April 2022 invited local government representatives to address Member States. Its outcome document confirmed Member States' **commitment to strengthen support to localization** as well as move towards more effective multilevel governance systems.

### *High-Level Political Forum*

**The Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Political Forum of Sustainable Development in 2022 (HLPF 2022)** acknowledges the need to **empower local and regional governments to ensure ownership and localization of the SDGs.**

- Paragraph 27 encourages the full, equal, and meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders, including local governments, civil society organizations and academia, in the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national sustainable development strategies and in the preparation of voluntary national reviews. It also encourages the involvement and empowerment of local authorities, to ensure ownership and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, welcoming voluntary subnational and local reviews as an essential tool to show progress and foster exchange on local implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, in coordination and synergy with national actors.
- Paragraph 28 encourages all relevant actors to better address interlinkages, synergies and tradeoffs between the Sustainable Development Goals, enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development and localization of the Goals, including through whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, as well as inclusive governance that can bring about transformative change.

**The 2023 Political Declaration of the High-level Political Forum of Sustainable Development (HLPF 2023)**, convened under the auspices of the General Assembly on September 2023 during the SDG Summit, **recognizes the importance of SDG Localization enhancing a multilevel governance and multistakeholder collaboration approach.**

- Paragraph 23 refers to the enhancement of global, regional, national and local partnerships for sustainable development, engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and youth, recognizing the important contribution they can make toward achieving the 2030 Agenda, and the localization of the SDGs, as well as reaffirming the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development in addressing regional challenges and scaling up action among countries.
- Paragraph 38(h) commits to making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, including through the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, to contribute to the achievement and localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and enhancing financial and technical assistance to plan and implement sustainable urbanization and human settlements programmes and projects, while promoting access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing.

### Other High-Level Reports

Some of the latest key reports on the SDGs that note the relevance of local action and SDG Localization include:

- The **High-Level Advisory Board's report**, established by the United Nations Secretary-General and entitled "A Breakthrough for People and Planet: Effective and Inclusive Governance for Today and the Future" emphasizes the need for localization to be at the forefront of national commitments on the 2030 Agenda. It pushes for the Summit of the Future to recognize the importance of local and regional governments and take specific measures to support them going forward.
- The **UN Secretary-General's SDG Report 2023: Special Edition**, entitled "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet", recognizes localization, anchored on the principles of multilevel governance and multistakeholder collaboration, as a key approach to collectively propel us toward greater inclusion and sustainability. It acknowledges the crucial role of local and regional governments in achieving the 2030 Agenda and recognizes Voluntary Local Reviews as key accelerators for SDG Localization.

### Implementing the resolution through the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-25

The overall aim and requests of the resolution are directly related to the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the Work Programme and Budget for 2023 and 2024.

- **UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2025** recognizes subnational and local governments as key actors for the pursuit of all four Domains of Change and for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda as well as for the urban dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **Domain 2** (enhance the shared prosperity of cities and regions globally) recognizes the importance of local governments' mandate to deliver public services and the need to address their limited capacity to fulfil such mandate due to a financial gap at the local level. The Strategic Plan calls for greater and more efficient sharing of financial resources between central and local governments.
- The **Work Programme and Budget for 2023** reaffirms UN-Habitat's intention to reinforce collaboration with local governments and city networks to support the localization of the SDGs.
- The **proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2024** includes deliverables on Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) under Sub-programme 2.

Anchored on UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan and Workplan, and inspired by the high-level documents mentioned above, UN-Habitat has developed the most comprehensive approach to SDG localization within the UN. It is anchored on five pillars connecting all dimensions of SDG localization: **Global Urban Monitoring Framework; Voluntary Local Reviews; SDG Cities Flagship Programme; Multilevel Governance for SDG Localization; and the Local 2030 Coalition.**

UN-Habitat has been consolidating technical and operational support to local and national governments to advance SDG localization through its comprehensive approach in more than 20 countries across the globe (Costa Rica, Finland, Georgia, Ghana, India, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Palestine, Philippines, Serbia, Tajikistan, Thailand, The Gambia, Tunisia, Tanzania). Support is specifically articulated across five workstreams: **Technical cooperation; Strategic partnerships building; Knowledge development and research; Learning and capacity building; Advocacy and visibility.**

UN-Habitat's leadership on SDG localization has been widely recognized and consolidated also through direct mandates from the UN Secretary General to lead the implementation of the **Advocacy Group on Local and Regional Governments and the Local 2030 Coalition** – the UN-wide initiative on localizing the SDGs.

## Fundraising strategy and key opportunities

The fundraising strategy targets both recurring and one-time funding, including earmarked or non-earmarked voluntary contributions, assessed contributions, or in-kind contributions such as Junior Professional Officers (JPO) and seconded personnel.

The strategy entails a first brainstorming with the countries that have supported the resolution: Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, Italy, Malaysia, Peru, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. Soft earmarked funding will be sought for the normative asks outlined in the resolution. Some resources will be directed from the SIDA PCA 2024-25 if agreeable to the donor. In addition, in-kind support such as a JPO or secondments will also be sought from member states as well as other partners. Cooperation is also being explored with private foundations and development banks.

Sub-national governments will also be approached for partnership and joint fundraising. Key upcoming SDG-related events such as the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development, the HLPF, and the Summit of the Future will be used as potential fundraising moments/ opportunities. In addition, WUF 12 will be an important moment to showcase and consolidate the mobilization of resources for the localization agenda.

## Challenges or gaps foreseen in the implementation of the Resolution

**Insufficient funding:** UN-Habitat's SDG Localization and Local Governments team is entirely project-funded. The imperative of project implementation will take time away from normative work as well as the necessary resource mobilization efforts.

**Lack of coordination:** More and more parts of the house are focusing on the SDGs, which requires coordination. Unless the SDG localization work (including SDG Cities, as well as all other normative and operational activities) is consolidated within one section or unit, the implementation of the Resolution will remain fragmented.

**Operational capacities:** the operationalization of UN-Habitat's approach requires technical capacities spread across all regional and country offices. More efforts are needed to build internal capacities for delivery.

## Roadmap for implementation of the Resolution including timelines (indicate if time-bound or open-ended)

### Continuing implementation of ongoing projects in 17 countries

- **Fostering COVID-19 recovery and SDG implementation through local action in Asia-Pacific, Arab and African countries:** in Surigao (The Philippines), Udon Thani (Thailand), Chandragiri (Nepal), Nakuru (Kenya), Banjul (The Gambia), Obuasi (Ghana), Ramallah (Palestine), Irbid (Jordan), Ennour (Tunisia), implemented
- (UNDA14): implemented by UN-Habitat, UNDESA, UNECE, UCLG.
- **UN-Habitat-Finland Strategic Partnership on SDG Localization:** Tampere (Finland) and Mwanza (Tanzania)
- **Local 2030 Knowledge Hub: Jordan and Tunisia (tbc).** The project funded by the Italian cooperation as an integral part of Italy's contribution to the Local 2030 Coalition and co-implemented by the Local 2030 Secretariat and UN-Habitat.

### **Expansion of project activities (subject to funding availability) in over 30 (potentially) countries**

- **Empowering Urban Regeneration: Action-Oriented Voluntary Local Reviews in the Arab States** (UNDA17 Tranche project proposal):
- SDG localization projects funded through the **SDG localization window of the SDG Fund**.
- Technical cooperation in **Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia supported by the Government of Italy**.
- **All pilot countries listed above have the potential to become UN-Habitat wider-country projects on SDG localization**. Main results will be delivered throughout 2024, which will be a strategic year for further resource mobilization.
- Implementation of **The Global Urban Monitoring Framework (UMF)** in 120 cities for the period 2023-2025, as well as building new partnerships and data production alliances with academia, civil society and private sector partners to enhance local urban data generation and management tools.

### **New normative tools:**

- **Development and use of the Action-oriented VLR methodology** (November 2023)
- **Urban Regeneration and SDG Localization paper** (November 2023) **and methodology** (September 2024, pending approval of UNDA17 project proposal).
- **Youth and SDG localization methodologies**, through collaboration with the Young Game Changers project team and support of Fondation Botnar (November 2023-November 2024).

### **Roll-out of technical capacity building programmes:**

- Conceptualization and launch of **UN-Habitat's SDG Localization Training Centre** (January 2024) annexed to the UN-Habitat sdglocalization.org platform (<https://sdglocalization.org/>)
- Finalization of the new **SDG Localization Training Module on Territorial Planning and the SDGs with UCLG** (February 2024)
- Co-creation and co-implementation of the **Mayors' Academy in Africa (with UNECA), and Arab Countries (with UNESCWA)**. Plus, continued support to the Mayors Academy in Asia Pacific, with UNESCAP (March 2024)
- Finalization of the **VLR-Recovery Tool** with UNDESA (April 2024)
- Build capacity of **25 National Statistical Offices on urban data generation and reporting** as per the UMF and VLR guidelines (2023-2025)

### **Continue the support to UN-Habitat's corporate engagement and resource mobilization efforts as well as the mobilization of local and regional governments in upcoming high-level and UN-led events.**

- **SDG Summit (18-19 September)**

Previous to the SDG Summit, the SDG Action Weekend was organized. Within the weekend, localization was identified as one of the enablers to accelerate progress toward the SDGs, and the Local 2030 Coalition was selected as the localization High Impact Initiative. With more than 200 participants attending the Local2030 event, it confirmed the global attention toward the localization agenda.

The Summit resulted in a negotiated **political declaration** which explicitly refers to Member States' commitment toward localization, "We will further localize the SDGs and advance integrated planning and implementation at the local level."

- **COP28 (30 November – 12 December)**

During COP28, UN-Habitat will co-host the second ministerial meeting on Urbanization and Climate change alongside COP28 presidency, in which it will foster dialogue between ministers of housing, urban development, environment, and finance as well as local and regional governments – participation of non-state actors is also planned.

- **Global Refugee Forum (12-15 December 2023)**

Discussions are currently being held on the possibility of co-organizing a side event between Local2030 Coalition and UNHCR.

- **Regional Forums on Sustainable Development (March-April 2024)**

During the Regional Forums, UN-Habitat will co-organize sessions related to SDG Localization. Capacity-building activities will also be organized to pilot the SDG Localization Training Module 2 and the Mayor's Academy.

The preliminary results of many of the VLRs being developed will be presented.

- **High-Level Political Forum (July 2024)**

We will continue to support UN-Habitat's corporate engagement during the HLPF, specifically coordinating the SDG Localization Track. We will also work with the countries that will present their VNR in 2024 so as to connect the work at the local level and prepare VLRs that feed into the VNR and vice versa. Some potential examples are Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Georgia, Kenya, and Spain.

- **Summit of the Future (22-23 September 2024)**

During the Summit of the Future, we will provide the support to consolidate the work of the Advisory Group of Local and Regional Governments. As well as positioning SDG Localization and local action, as well as our upcoming work on youth, as part of the Pact for the Future.

- **Forum of Mayors (October 2024)**

During the Forum of Mayors, we will work with UNECE to position SDG Localization, Local2030 Coalition and VLRs into discussion. We will also use this opportunity to coordinate with UNECA to be part of the African Forum of Mayors.

- **World Urban Forum 12 (November 2024)**

WUF12 will focus on the Localization of the SDGs. It will set the perfect scenario for maintaining the role of UN-Habitat as the leader on this topic as well as for resource mobilization and taking the resolution forward.

#### **Focal point and contact**

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## Annex – Programme Budget Implications Summary (as of after UNHA2)

Relevant Subprogramme(s)	Budget Category	Total Resources	Existing Resources	Net total
<b>Recurrent Resource Requirements (Annual)</b>				
SP1 (20%), SP2 (40%), SP3 (20%) and SP4 (20%)	Post Costs	829,483	-	829,483
	Non-Post Costs	1,175,665	-	1,175,665
	<i>Documents, Meetings and Services</i>	445,000	-	445,000
	<i>Consultants</i>	315,160	-	315,160
	<i>Travel</i>	354,500	-	354,500
	<i>Other Operating Expenses</i>	61,005	-	61,005
	<b>Subtotal, Recurring Resource Requirements</b>	<b>2,005,149</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,005,149</b>
<b>One-Time Resource Requirements</b>				
SP1 (20%), SP2 (40%), SP3 (20%) and SP4 (20%)	Post Costs	-	-	-
	Non-Post Costs	2,181,800	-	2,181,800
	<i>Documents, Meetings and Services</i>	400,000	-	400,000
	<i>Consultants</i>	993,600	-	993,600
	<i>Travel</i>	788,200	-	788,200
	<i>Other Operating Expenses</i>	-	-	-
	<b>Subtotal, One-Time Resource Requirements</b>	<b>2,181,800</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,181,800</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>4,186,949</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,186,949</b>