



Fourth Local and Regional Governments Forum on the 2030 Agenda

“Fostering a recovery that is resilient and led by the communities”

Special High-Level Event on the occasion of the 2021 UN High-Level Political Forum
(HLPF)

12 and 13 July 2021, 8:00-10:30 AM (EDT)

PANEL 4: MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE, AND STRONG, INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS BASED ON SOLIDARITY

SDGs in focus: SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, SDG 17 on partnerships; all other SDGs crosscutting

Weak institutions and poor governance increase the risk of low performance, wasted resources, human rights violations, and an overall lack of progress. At the same time, the major crisis of our time -health, climate, and social emergencies- deserve a holistic response based on solidarity among different government levels and stakeholders. Multi-level governance and multi-stakeholder partnerships are hence key to ensure development that is sustainable and inclusive, as well as to prevent the outbreak of future crisis.

It is widely acknowledged that the successful implementation of the SDGs will highly depend on local action and local leadership. But local governments and communities cannot act alone, they need support from their national counterparts and coordinate efforts with territorial stakeholders. Multilevel governance is hence also a decisive factor for achieving the commitment set on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has abruptly disrupted implementation towards many of the SDGs and turned back years of progress¹. The latest 2021 *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report* of the Secretary-General accounts that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased inequalities and discrimination weakened, and even led to shattered rights and protection systems². The ability of cities and local governments to provide basic services has been affected by the impact of the economic decline on cities and local governments resulted in significant losses of revenues, thus affecting their ability to provide basic services.

Still, the recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic is a window for opportunity to explore new and cross-cutting forms of governance that enhance multi-level cooperation and solid mechanisms

¹ UNDESA Policy Brief #81: Impact of COVID-19 on SDG progress: a statistical perspective

² Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General, paragraph 167. Available on: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27610SG_SDG_Progress_report_2021.pdf.



for vertical and horizontal integration. In the promotion of a lasting sustainable recovery, the successful implementation of SDGs 16 and 17 is key, this specifically in relation with enabling local governance environments, and for the inclusion of the often excluded groups in decision-making processes.

In this panel, speakers will discuss concrete aspects related to multilevel governance, and strong, inclusive institutions based on solidarity including: a territorial approach to sustainable development; partnership for the SDGs between different levels of governances stressing the role of subnational urban policies; financing the 2030 agenda at the local level through renewed multilevel and multi-stakeholders' partnerships; local participatory democracy, human rights and peacebuilding; and open government, and transparency.

Speakers are invited to deliver a statement (**3 minutes maximum**) considering the proposed guiding questions below:

- *How can enhanced multilevel dialogues advance SDG localization and inspires a long-lasting recovery that is green and resilient?*
- *Which are the best practices and effective mechanisms that both local and national governments can learn from?*
- *What are the essential challenges that need multilevel coordination the most?*
- *How to improve multi-stakeholder partnerships and participatory and inclusive environments at local level? Which role local governments have?*
- *What types of partnerships between different levels of government and other stakeholders are beneficial for the realization of SDGs?*
- *How to guarantee participative and balanced decision-making in multi-level governance arrangements?*