

## 2024 International Mayors Forum

Grand Hyatt, Jakarta, Indonesia

2-4 July 2024

### Concept Note

#### I. Context

As the world continues to urbanize, the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demands a focus on accelerating progress in cities, towns and peri-urban areas. According to the United Nations, 55 per cent of the world's population resided in urban areas in 2018. By 2050, 68 per cent of the world's population is projected to be urban.<sup>1</sup>

SDG localization is the process of transforming the SDGs into reality at the local level, in coherence with national development frameworks and in line with local communities' priorities. With 65% of SDG targets linked to the work and mandates of local and regional governments, localization has always been a pre-condition for their achievement. In recent years, the role of local governments has gained prominence and visibility at the international level, recognized by Member States in General Assembly resolutions and High-level Political Forum (HLPF) political declarations<sup>2</sup>, and by the Secretary-General in his report on *Our Common Agenda* and on *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: towards a rescue plan for people and planet*.<sup>3</sup>

In the face of multiple global crises that have slowed, and in some cases reversed progress on SDG implementation, localization has become more important than ever. At the 2023 SDG Summit, the Local2030 Coalition and SDG localization was identified as one of twelve high impact initiatives that can drive SDG progress. In addition, the SDG Summit presented [Six Key Transitions: Investment Pathways to Achieve the SDGs](#) that can have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs to ensure transformative and accelerated progress.

Following the SDG Summit, the Secretary-General launched a UN Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments, underscoring the vital role of local leaders for global solutions emphasizing, for example, that “[t]he fight against climate breakdown will be lost or won in cities.”<sup>4</sup>

Accelerated SDG localization through these six key transitions is of special focus in developing countries where rapid urbanization rates are expected most between now and 2050. The rapid rate of urbanization poses significant challenges to progress in social and economic development, particularly the need for sustained investments in urban infrastructure and

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Urbanization Prospects 2018: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/421).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, A/RES/75/290B, para. 30 and A/RES/74/4, para. 27 (e).

<sup>3</sup> A/78/80-E/2023/64

<sup>4</sup> Secretary-General's remarks to launch the Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments, 6 October 2023, available at: [Secretary-General's remarks to launch the Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments | United Nations Secretary-General](#) The work of the Advisory Group, launched on 6 October 2023, will also address: modalities and means to enhance institutional mechanisms to strengthen engagement of local and regional governments in intergovernmental processes; opportunities to strengthen cooperation between national and local and regional governments, and the UN Country Teams; and recommendations on a UN global strategy for the engagement of local and regional governments, including institutional mechanisms, intergovernmental processes, and partnership arrangements, to strengthen contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.



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services such as quality and affordable housing, education, health care, decent work and a safe environment, focusing on the needs of the most vulnerable amid rising inequality. Nearly 1.1 billion people live in slums or slum-like conditions in urban areas, with an additional 2 billion expected to live in slums or slum-like conditions over the next 30 years. The growing slum population is a manifestation of the housing crisis, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued increase in rural to urban migration. Improved planning for these mega-trends from national to local level is essential to accelerate global to local progress on sustainable development.

Cities also play a leading role in the economic development of countries and global prosperity, contributing as much as 80 per cent to the global gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>5</sup> However, the current trend of urbanization is also often accompanied by significant social and environmental challenges, such as the lack of access to adequate, affordable urban housing options, urban infrastructure and basic services for a growing number of citizens, who suffer from rising inequality and exclusion, unemployment, food insecurity and extreme poverty. This is particularly true in developing countries, where 95% of urban expansion will take place over the next decades.

Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are found to a large extent in cities, which are also main contributors to climate change and environmental degradation. Cities nonetheless account for 60-80 per cent of global energy consumption and generate as much as 75 per cent of the energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Despite the closeness of local governments to the needs and realities of sustainable development, local authorities have too often limited financial and human resources at their disposal to fully achieve the SDGs. With an estimated gap of some US\$4.2 trillion per year, the SDGs require a quantum leap in finance flows – from billions to trillions – ensuring that financing delivers results locally.<sup>6</sup> Some countries are making progress, aligning national budgets with SDG targets and issuing SDG debt vehicles such as an SDG Bond to close financing gaps even at sub-national level.

Greater financial resources, capacity and innovation are required through strengthened national to local coordination and multi-level governance for the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs can only be achieved through the substantial involvement of local actors, hence the need for localizing the SDGs, where local governments and stakeholders play an essential role in accelerating SDG targets in communities. This background serves as the focus for the 2024 International Mayors Forum to be hosted from 2-4 July 2024 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

## II. Organizers

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) provides support and servicing to intergovernmental processes by facilitating agreement on political declarations, resolutions, strategies and international standards and norms through the General Assembly (Second and Third Committees) and ECOSOC's functional commissions,<sup>6</sup> expert bodies, and Forums. The Department further serves as Secretariat to the sessions of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) carried out annually under the auspices of ECOSOC and every four years under the General Assembly. In October 2023, UN DESA initiated a strengthened focus on SDG localization and coordination for accelerating the 2030 Agenda at local level.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview>

<sup>6</sup> UN Sustainable Development Group. Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs September 2023. [https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf#:~:text=These%20include%3A%20\(1\)%20food,are%20not%20a%20new%20agenda](https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf#:~:text=These%20include%3A%20(1)%20food,are%20not%20a%20new%20agenda)



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Over the course of the past several years, DESA has supported the engagement of local government representatives at the HLPF by serving as Secretariat for the HLPF's official

session on "Acting at Local Level," co-organizing the Local and Regional Governments Forum as an HLPF Special Event, organizing VNR/VLR Labs and participating in parallel events that provide platforms for the sharing of good practices by local governments. DESA also provides technical cooperation and support, including capacity development, to Member States at their invitation, working at national and regional levels with governments, members of civil society, Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and other key stakeholders to advance sustainable development and ensure that no one is left behind.

Established in 2011, the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) is part of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). UNOSD contributes to building, exchanging, and facilitating the use of knowledge in support of sustainable development. Over the recent years, UNOSD has organized various capacity building activities and events in support of the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs, especially on climate action, and environmental targets. These activities annually include preparatory meetings for international conferences and events, as well as trainings, expert group meetings and fora.

More recently, UNOSD has undertaken a series of activities targeting subnational authorities, including mayors and national planning officials supporting the implementation of the SDGs from national to local level. The International Mayors Forum has been held annually since 2017 to strengthen SDG Localization and increase knowledge and commitments towards advancing the SDGs through national to local leadership. The most recent International Mayors Forum was held from 25-28 April 2023 in Dakar, Senegal with a focus on building sub-national knowledge, skills and engagement with the 2023 High-Level Political Forum's focus on SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17. The focus was also on enhancing Voluntary Local Reviews to increase visibility and review of sub-national progress towards accelerating sustainable development.

In 2024, the International Mayors Forum is a DESA-wide event with the UN Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and the UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), to strengthen the focus on multi-level governance for accelerating local progress on the SDGs. UNCRD and UNPOG are offices focused on strengthening a multi-level approach for the 2030 Agenda.

The 2024 International Mayors Forum is also organised in partnership with United Cities and Local Governments in Asia-Pacific (UCLG-ASPAC), and under the auspices of the Special Region of Jakarta. The International Mayors Forum is also organized in coordination with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Indonesia.

The International Mayors Forum is also organized in coordination with the Local2030 Coalition, as a high impact initiative that aims to accelerate the six key SDG transitions through three action areas focused on advocacy, action and monitoring and reporting. The Local2030 Coalition enables connections across a diverse range of stakeholders – from local and subnational governments to the private sector other local actors – with the shared aim of localizing the SDGs.

### **III. Goal and Objectives**

The broader goal of the International Mayors' Forum is to provide an annual platform for policy dialogue and knowledge sharing on key aspects related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The Forum will also be an important opportunity for local and regional governments to explore how they can contribute to the Summit of the Future in 2024 as an important opportunity to, inter alia, accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its



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SDGs. Building on the outcomes of the 2023 International Mayors Forum held in Senegal, the specific objective of the 2024 International Mayors Forum is to achieve common dialogue on how to practically accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda through localization of the SDGs in the six remaining years.

The Forum will focus on accelerating action at the local level on transformative entry points – or the [Six Key Transitions: Investment Pathways to Achieve the SDGs](#) - that can have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs, as identified in the context of the 2023 SDG Summit to ensure transformative and accelerated progress. These transformative entry points or investment pathways include (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

In line with the 2024 High-level Political Forum, the International Mayors' Forum will strive to support local and regional governments to share experiences, lessons learned and good practices, focusing on accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the local and regional levels. This will include presentations on local progress through Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), including the Jakarta Special Region's 2024 VLR, as well as that of other sub-national governments presenting their VLRs.

#### **IV. Target Audience**

Mayors and local leaders sub-national government entities, as well as key ministerial representatives from developing and developed countries, countries in special situations (Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States), as well as middle-income countries with specific challenges, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. Representatives of UN agencies, international experts and other stakeholders will discuss practical solutions to accelerate the 2030 Agenda at local level.

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### Agenda At-a-glance

Day 1 – 2 July 2024	
Time	Session
8:30 – 8:55	<b>Registration</b>
9:00 – 10:15	<b>Opening of the Forum</b> Cultural Performance Welcome Remarks by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hon. Heru Budi Hartono, Governor of the Special Region of Jakarta</li> </ul> Opening Remarks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Navid Hanif, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</li> <li>- Minister of Home Affairs</li> <li>- Other Honorable Ministers and ministries to be engaged by Jakarta Special Region as well</li> </ul> <b>Keynote</b> <i>H.E. Mr. Suharso Monoarfa, Minister for National Development Planning/Head of National Development Planning Agency</i>
	<b>Inaugural Ceremony &amp; Group Photo</b>
10:15 – 10:30	<b>Outline of the Forum, Introduction of Participants and Sub-national leaders</b>
10:30 – 10:45	<b>Group Photo and Coffee/Tea Break</b>
10:45 – 13:00	<b>Session 1: Status of implementing the SDGs at local and regional levels: progress, gaps and challenges</b>
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00 – 15:30	<b>Session 2: Leveraging the Six Key Transitions: Investment Pathways to Achieve the SDGs at the local and regional levels - A</b>
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>
16:00 – 17:00	<b>Session 3: Leveraging the Six Key Transitions: Investment Pathways to Achieve the SDGs at the local and regional levels - B</b>
17:00 – 17:30	<b>Wrap up – Rapporteur</b>
19:00 – 21:00	<b>Gala Dinner hosted by the Governor of Jakarta</b>
Day 2 – 3 July 2024	
Time	Session
09:00 – 10:30	<b>Session 4: Country experiences implementing multi-level governance</b>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>
11:00 – 12:30	<b>Session 5: Measuring, Monitoring and Evaluating SDG localization</b>
12:30 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00 – 15:00	<b>Session 6: Mayors Dialogue</b>
15:00 – 15:30	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>
15:30 – 17:00	<b>Session 7: Defining the 2024 International Mayors Forum declaration – Groups</b>
17:00 – 17:30	<b>Wrap up – Rapporteur</b>
18:00 – 20:00	<b>Networking Dinner</b>
Day 3 – 4 July 2024	
Time	Session
09:00 – 10:00	<b>Session 8: Declaration of the 2024 International Mayors Forum</b>
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Closing of the 2024 International Mayors Forum</b>
10:30 – 17:00	<b>Site visit – Jakarta Special Region including lunch</b>
19:00 – 21:00	<b>Farewell Dinner</b>

## V. Contacts

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