



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



2025 INTERNATIONAL MAYORS FORUM

Actions Today for a Resilient Future



Toyota City, JAPAN

14-16 October 2025

Session 8: Country Experiences Implementing Multi-level Governance to Achieve the SDGs



65% of SDG targets **cannot be achieved** without proper engagement of local and regional governments

Why Localization is Urgent

- **Local to global approach** - Transforming SDGs into reality at the local level, in coherence with national frameworks
- **Direct impact on communities** - LRGs deliver essential services and understand local needs
- **Post-pandemic imperatives** - COVID-19 highlighted the importance of local action and resilience
- **Critical time constraint** - Less than 5 years remain to achieve the 2030 Agenda

Localization in Post-Pandemic Recovery



Crisis Response

Local governments were first responders to the pandemic, highlighting their essential role



Service Continuity

LRGs maintained essential services despite disruptions and resource constraints



Recovery Planning

Integrated local recovery strategies aligned with SDGs show faster, more inclusive results



Resilience Building

Building back better requires strengthened multi-level governance systems



The Critical Role of Governance for Sustainable Development

- **Integrated challenges require coordinated responses** - The 17 SDGs address interconnected economic, social, and environmental issues
- **Localization accelerates progress** - 65% of SDG targets cannot be reached without proper engagement of local and regional governments
- **Balanced power distribution** - Effective governance balances authority across levels while maintaining coherence
- **Context-sensitive implementation** - Local adaptation ensures solutions match territorial needs

Global Level

International agreements, frameworks, and coordination



National Level

Policies, legal frameworks, and national coordination



Regional Level

Territorial planning, resource coordination, and integration



Local Level

Implementation, service delivery, and direct engagement





Vertical Integration

Embedding SDGs at multiple levels of government

- **Alignment** of strategies across national, regional, and local levels
- **Coordinated reporting** through VNRs, VLRs and VSRs
- **Clear mandates** for local and regional governments
- **Resource sharing** and fiscal alignment



Horizontal Integration

Breaking silos to address the integrated nature of the SDGs

- **Inter-ministerial** and cross-departmental coordination
- Whole-of-government approach **to planning**
- Cross-sectoral **policy coherence**
- **City-to-city** cooperation and knowledge exchange



Stakeholder Engagement

Enabling inclusive, participatory decision-making

- **Civil society** and private sector participation
- **Participatory budgeting** and co-creation
- **Inclusive platforms** for marginalized groups
- **Accountability** through public monitoring

These three dimensions are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The most effective multilevel governance systems for SDG localization balance all three dimensions through coordinated institutional arrangements across the full policy cycle.

Knowledge Products



Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation (Foundational)

Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation (Advanced)

