



**2020 International Mayors Forum Preparatory Webinar #4:
“Leaving No One Behind – Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in our
Cities and Communities”**

**Date: 15 October 2020
4:00pm (Republic of Korea), 12:30pm (Delhi), 9:00am (Geneva)**

Concept Note

*“We need to turn the recovery into a real opportunity to do things right for the future”
– United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres*

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/2Hjpx6x>

Background

To ensure that “No One Is Left Behind”, the 2030 Agenda calls for a special effort to ensure that countries make accelerated progress in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹ The 2030 Agenda commits UN Member States to take bold and transformative steps to ‘shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path’, seeks to realize the human rights of all, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and ensure ‘no one will be left behind’ (A/RES/74/4).

Sustainable Development Goal 5 aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, while Target 5.5 “Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life”.² SDG 11, “Sustainable cities and communities”, aims at enhancing “inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries” (Target 11.3), and calls for the provision of “universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.” (Target 11.7).³

With the multiple co-benefits of advancing women’s empowerment, it is clear that closing gender equality gaps is central to achieve sustainable development in cities and communities everywhere. Still, inequality is increasing and the United Nations 58th Commission on Social Development noted this year that we are facing historically high levels of inequality, with gender inequality acting as a foundation for economic, political and labour market inequality

¹ GA Resolution 70/1 of 21 October 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

² <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>

³ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>

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as well.⁴ At the local level, women hold 36 per cent of elected seats in local deliberative bodies, based on data from 133 countries and areas, well below gender parity.⁵ In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and vulnerabilities, reversing progress on women's well-being and empowerment.

Women are often half of all citizens in countries, but often face major barriers for their equal participation in local planning and political representation, employment and access to basic services. Cities define the planning and programmes that determine gender inequalities, whether through inclusive local governance or women's engagement in public service design and delivery.⁶ Women have been central to ensuring continuity of public services during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially local health services, education, care and more, but it is necessary to ensure their inclusion in the design of local programmes and services as well.⁷

Accelerating progress for SDG 11 and the SDGs overall requires a focus on gender inequality's root causes and models to fast track progress, such as the inclusion of women in local decision-making and representation. This webinar will focus on accelerating progress and achieve synergies to empower women locally and leave no one behind.

Objective and Content

This webinar is part of a series of online webinars exploring specific sessions under the 2020 International Mayors Forum. The 2020 International Mayors Forum examines the social, economic and environmental impacts of the current crisis on cities and local governments as well as potential solutions for sustainable response and recovery.

This webinar aims to provide local governments and local actors with knowledge to help them go in that direction, supporting a swift recovery from COVID-19 and advancing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. Local governments are currently facing multiple challenges in reducing inequality, especially gender inequality. This webinar will focus on accelerating progress in promoting gender equality and empowering women locally and leave no one behind.

Speakers

Moderator: Mr. Jean D'Aragon, Officer-in-Charge, UNOSD

- Ms. Angela Mwai, Head of the Gender Equality Unit, UN-Habitat
- Hon. Ms. Beng Climaco, Mayor of Zamboanga City, Philippines
- Ms. Gogontlejang Phaladi, Executive-Director, AMANYA Group consultancy, Pillar of Hope NGO
- Ms. Amanda Austin, Head of Policy and Advocacy, Equal Measures 2030

⁴ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/02/World-Social-Report2020-FullReport.pdf>

⁵ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>

⁶ https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/Gender_Inequalities_in_Cities.pdf

⁷ <http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/response-recovery-and-prevention-in-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-in-developing-countries-women-and-girls-on-the-frontlines-23d645da/>

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Organizer

The United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

AGENDA (The webinar will last for 1 hour):

- Opening (3 minutes)
- Presentations (40-45 minutes)
- Question & Answer and Discussion (10 minutes)
- Final reflections from the speakers (2 minutes)
- Closing wrap-up (1 minutes)

Target Audience

This webinar aims to engage sub-national government representatives and national institutions, as well as civil society, private sector and local leaders across UN Member States (time zones: Africa, Europe, and Asia-Pacific).

The webinar also seeks to ensure the participation and contribution of non-government experts working in the areas of national to local SDG implementation, gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as all areas of municipal management and territorial development. Experts working on all related areas across sustainable cities and public services are also welcomed to join. The webinar is also open to academia, youth, and other interested stakeholders to ensure an inclusive and integrated discussion on accelerated local solutions for accelerating the 2030 Agenda in the decade of action.

Contact Information

For any questions or comments please contact Mr. Jean D'Aragon, Officer-in-Charge, UNOSD at daragon@un.org and Ms. Sara Castro-Hallgren, Programme Management Expert, UNOSD at sara.castrohallgren@un.org

The webinar will be conducted in English.