

# The Local2030 Coalition for the Decade of Action

Accelerating progress on the Sustainable  
Development Goals at the local level

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### **About this publication:**

The Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General commissioned the Stockholm Environment Institute to develop this publication as part of the project “PO-2200177912 Supporting and Accelerating the Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals”. The project involved the development of 1) a global baseline of the localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a set of selected case studies from around the world, 2) a Local2030 Coalition 10-year strategy for the Decade of Action (this publication), and 3) a participatory consultation process including workshops and interviews to collect inputs for the baseline and this publication. The project involved the participation of researchers in SEI’s centres in Latin America, Stockholm, Africa, and Asia.

### **Acknowledgements:**

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## Summary

This publication introduces the Local2030 Coalition, a United Nations-led platform and network designed to support and accelerate local-level delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The initiative is founded on the premise that the people closest to the challenges for sustainable development are best positioned to find innovative solutions to such challenges, and that local actors play crucial roles in making change happen on the ground.

The Local2030 Coalition is a support platform intended to bring together networks of local, regional and national actors (representatives of local governments and their associations, national governments, businesses, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders) and the United Nations system. It seeks to foster collaboration, incubate innovation, share solutions, and implement strategies that advance the SDGs.

As its name suggests, the Local2030 Coalition is a collaborative endeavour that seeks to add a wide array of local perspectives to expand participation and boost innovation in implementing the sustainability agenda. The initiative seeks to bring into the global sustainability mission those who are most frequently left out of key processes and those most at risk of being left behind – among them, women, children and young people, refugees, migrants, stateless people, and members of under-represented groups, including those in the Global South, in fragile settings, and facing humanitarian crises.

The Local2030 Coalition does not intend to implement its own projects. Instead it aspires to serve as a convening space, and as a support mechanism for local stakeholders and communities to embrace and own the SDGs, and, conversely, for international actors to effectively partner with local stakeholders.

A key mission is to make localizing the SDGs a central component of national development plans and strategies. Incorporating local-level contexts is essential to make policies more effective, integrated, and coherent – and to sustain them.

This publication outlines the Local 2030 Coalition concept and strategy for the Decade of Action, the time set to accelerate SDG-related actions. It sets out the challenges facing local level actors, based on a baseline study developed in parallel, and explains why greater attention must be paid to integrating and coordinating efforts at all scales of governance. It outlines specific measures that will be taken, and sets out milestone targets and benchmarks for progress.

The effort seeks to leverage existing initiatives and alliances to strengthen advocacy for bottom-up action, and to scale up successful enterprises. It seeks to leverage opportunities for funding through, for example, workshops with United Nations finance experts, international funding institutions and national and local development banks. It intends to leverage technological advances to involve a wider array of local voices – and to connect them to one another and to those working at other scales. And it aims to leverage rapid urbanization processes and changing urban dynamics happening around the globe.

The support platform equally aims to address the absence of needed, local-level data on SDG impacts and interactions. It intends to establish an online repository of new approaches for data gathering, and to help in efforts to build local capacities to collect, analyze, interpret and use these data.

The Local2030 Coalition will focus its first two years on the mission of achieving a healthy, just, inclusive, and green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Its overall aim is broader: to take steps that accelerate global sustainability aims by giving greater attention to the local level, where people see the impacts in their day-to-day lives.

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## 1. Purpose, concept and methodology

In September 2019, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed that the next 10 years would be a Decade of Action, signaling a renewed emphasis on accelerating efforts to deliver on the ambitious, universal, and inclusive 2030 Agenda and its 17 component Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of this effort, the UN and its partners have agreed to establish the Local2030 Coalition, a platform to create a network designed to support and speed up the on-the-ground delivery of the SDGs.

The Local2030 Coalition is a platform to bring together diverse networks – of local and regional governments and their associations, national governments, businesses, community-based organizations, and other local actors – and the UN system. It seeks to foster collaboration, incubate innovation, share solutions, and implement strategies that advance the SDGs, leveraging on rapid urbanization processes and changing urban dynamics around the globe to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. The Local2030 Coalition aims to strengthen efforts by UN entities and the UN resident coordinator system to apply SDG targets in cities and in partnership with local and regional actors.

Among the diverse, ongoing efforts that can be leveraged are the UN system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development (CEB/2019/1/Add.5); the Local and Regional Governments Forum on the 2030 Agenda, which takes place around the High-level Political Forum (HLPF); the UN Task Force on Future of Cities; and a wide range of initiatives of the UN system with subnational orientations (e.g., by focusing on urban, urban-rural, territorial, landscape, or foodscape issues).

This publication sets out the aims and plans for the Local2030 Coalition. It is based on a collaborative effort to build a plan to advance SDG localization within the Decade of Action, and to integrate local input from a wide array of local participants into plans at other scales. This plan put forward here is informed by two components: the results of a global baseline developed specifically to better understand gaps and opportunities for SDG localization, and the generation of a select list of global drivers that are likely to influence the localization agenda. This publication was also informed by desktop research of academic and non-academic literatures, interviews with key stakeholders, and a mapping of existing UN initiatives. The plan was reviewed and discussed in depth in workshops held in May, June, and August of 2021 with the UN leadership.

The Local2030 Coalition will use the plan contained in this publication as the guide that describes the steps that will be taken by the UN system, in collaboration with global and local partners, to achieve an improved and accelerated implementation of the SDGs locally. As such, the plan outlines the proposed focus for the work of the Local2030 Coalition and describes milestones and benchmarks for action in the medium term (by 2030).

The plan, developed in close consultation with UN entities and key stakeholders, seeks to build on, and link to, relevant, existing strategies and initiatives within the UN system. The proposals within this plan were reached through a road-mapping approach, in which information sources were consulted to determine gaps and opportunities that the Local2030 Coalition could address and act upon to make a difference in accelerating progress in the remainder of the Decade of Action. Special focus was placed on the identification of potential solutions for the challenges faced by SDG implementors at the local level.

## 2. Background: gaps and drivers

To achieve the 2030 Agenda, local governments, communities and other actors must mobilize to implement community-based actions in support of people's well-being and the sustainable use of natural resources. The Local2030 Coalition recognizes that actors operating at subnational levels are key stakeholders that are well positioned to devise specific solutions that take local contexts into account to achieve the SDGs. The Local 2030 Coalition also recognizes that such actors require support to succeed in this mission.

To identify gaps that must be filled to achieve the aims of the 2030 Agenda at the local level, a baseline study was developed using a non-representative sample of case studies from around the world. This exercise identified significant gaps in SDG localization efforts. Its results inform this plan.

At the same time, because the baseline was developed with a limited sample, wider drivers were also identified and discussed, although the list is non-exhaustive. These overarching drivers link to current global trends that are also likely to influence the work of the Local2030 Coalition and progress on the localization agenda. This section describes both the gaps revealed by the baseline study, and the global trends regarded as influential drivers.

### 2.1 Baseline gaps

Local authorities and actors face impediments that hamper efforts to implement the SDGs and impede their ability to effectively follow up on progress. These issues can be clustered into three distinct categories: advocacy, action, and monitoring.

#### Advocacy

Local actors in the case studies expressed the need for support in accessing platforms that facilitate their engagement in national-, regional-, and global-level stages where priorities, programming, and funding are discussed and determined. As an example, the level of participation and engagement of local governments in the production of voluntary national reviews has so far been limited. The 2030 Agenda does not detail exactly how to achieve the SDGs; the absence of such direction can create conflicts amongst actors and stakeholders who have different opinions, interests, resources, and mandates about how priorities should be set, and how resources should be allocated.

At the same time, the indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda also suggests that opportunities exist for cooperation between actors operating at different levels in policy-design processes. Indeed, stakeholders with opposing aims and interests are expected to collaborate. In this sense, mechanisms must be strengthened to allow for regular interaction and meaningful engagement of local actors at national, regional, and global stages. Key local stakeholders include government representatives, community leaders, members of the private sector, and those engaged in civil society organizations (CSOs) (including youth- and women-led CSOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), and grassroots organizations.

#### Action

Many local and regional governments are working on paths to integrate the SDGs into their development plans, and they have created or modified their institutional arrangements accordingly. However, there is a real risk of delay or lack of achievement of the SDGs. Moreover, the pandemic has caused regression of progress on some goals.

Significant efforts need to be made to advance implementation in line with the Decade of Action. Specific opportunities lie in developing innovative solutions to address a lack of political will, to build up weak capacity, and to provide technical know-how. Better mechanisms and structures are needed to recognize, access, and capitalize on financial opportunities and

resources. Moreover, the notion of political coherence in the 2030 Agenda means that the systemic interactions between targets must be considered to design and implement effective policies. The existence of these interdependencies means that progress or the lack of progress in one target affects other SDGs, producing trade-offs (negative interactions) and synergies (positive interactions). These interlinkages are complex and context dependant, and the methods to identify and model them vary greatly. Nonetheless, the 2030 Agenda was developed as an “integrated and indivisible” whole, and any effort to achieve the SDGs at the local level must consider their systemic nature. Thus, there is a need to support the use of integrated, tailor-made, and well-tested methods in implementation.

As noted in the UN Global Sustainable Development Report 2019, system approaches are necessary to trace SDG interactions, both co-benefits and trade-offs. Such approaches – focused on, say, food, energy, or water systems – are often best analysed in the context of a specific subnational territory or landscape. From a modelling perspective, downscaling from global and national perspectives improves policy analysis and enables better targeting of actions. Incorporating local-level context is essential for more effective, integrated, coherent and sustained policy action and impacts. An integrated or systems approach to implementation has only become more important now, as actors devise and implement COVID-19 recovery measures that require the efficient use of resources, and the identification of catalytic actions that ensure progress in more than one SDG.

Localized approaches tend to be more resilient and politically sustainable owing to the shared context in which all stakeholders often feel a more concrete and specific sense of mutual interdependence. Localities tend to bring actors closer together to solve problems that are shared and more immediate in nature.

### Monitoring

There is a need for reliable, evidence-based data at the local level to design and monitor plans and programmes that can deliver the SDGs. Data are the backbone for implementing the SDGs at the local level – and, indeed, for implementing them at all levels. Each city and region must define for itself the relevant indicators to monitor progress. Ideally, local governments should set their own target levels for each SDG target and establish the baseline of progress based on their chosen indicators. Target setting requires mapping local socioeconomic and environmental indicators to the relevant SDGs themes. The data disaggregation needed to accomplish this is central to this mission. The central principle of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind cannot be achieved without this granular level of information.

The task is considerable. It entails harmonizing various sources of heterogenous and context-dependent data, which are often challenging to integrate and compare. One key gap is *benchmarking* of the 2030 Agenda implementation. The participation of local and regional governments in the reporting processes and coordination mechanisms is essential if efforts are to properly incorporate and reflect localization strategies.

An important contribution of the Local2030 Coalition is to leverage the Voluntary National Review process to track and report SDG progress at the local level, and to advocate for and invest in the increasingly popular voluntary local reviews. Participatory processes should be used to develop indicators and to collect data. More innovative approaches, strategies and partnerships are needed to ensure that cities and regions can learn from each other regarding new ways for data collection. Such approaches include leveraging CSOs and citizen participation to generate local-level data, particularly data on vulnerable population groups. Efforts are also underway to support monitoring at the local level, for example, through the UN-Habitat-led global Urban Monitoring Framework. Such efforts can be harnessed to support improved monitoring across the board.

## 2.2 Global drivers

The following key issues that link to overarching, world-development trends were also identified as matters that are expected to influence future efforts by the Local2030 Coalition to support SDG localization. These include:

- **Addressing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.**  
The pandemic remains a serious concern in most countries, as vaccine inequality persists, and as new variants of COVID-19 arise and spread. The pandemic experience has highlighted the key role of local and regional governments play in raising public awareness and in maintaining basic public services. Local governments have borne the burden of responding rapidly to fast-changing realities and emergencies, while ensuring that the workers who provide health, safety and protection services remain safe. Local governments and other local actors need tailored support in their efforts to drive the localization of the SDGs, and to support their attainment.
- **Achieving a green pandemic recovery.**  
In his 2021 Sustainable Development Goals Report, UN Secretary-General António Guterres emphasized that the world must capitalize on pandemic recovery efforts to adopt low-carbon, resilient and inclusive development pathways that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve natural resources. Yet, performance on SDG indicators with a direct relationship to environmental issues raises concerns; global trends instead show rising emissions. Local-level implementation of the SDGs must pay special attention to environment-related targets to avoid sacrificing ecosystems in the process of recovering from the pandemic.
- **Confronting development needs of urban and peri-urban areas.**  
Cities are home to a growing majority of the world's population. This makes them an essential locus of the global effort for sustainability. The New Urban Agenda works as an accelerator of the SDGs, particularly SDG 11, which seeks to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. At the same time, these efforts should strive to *leave no rural area behind*. Thus, localized approaches can include concepts that are specifically organized around urban-rural exchanges, such as those that occur through food systems. These “foodscapes”, for example, can serve as powerful axes of sustainable development, linking producers and consumers. Such an approach links value chains of agricultural producers and food systems in a common pursuit of inclusive and sustainable economic transformation.
- **Reducing a new rise in poverty.**  
The global extreme poverty rate rose in 2020 for the first time in more than 20 years. Progress on reducing poverty and inequality was a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic, which powerfully revealed the importance of social safety nets to protect people's health, jobs, and income. In response to the pandemic, many governments funded new social security measures to help vulnerable citizens. Such measures require a strong equality component that integrates gender equality, and they deserve greater attention in efforts to localize the SDGs.
- **Boosting gender equality.**  
Women's representation in national and local elected, deliberative bodies has been steadily increasing but remains at an average of 26%, with levels of representation varying widely throughout the world. In most countries, at the local level, the share of women mayors is even lower. Nevertheless, local, and regional governments are often closest to communities, and, as such, they are strongly placed to combat the persistence and reproduction of gender inequalities. They can and must play a pivotal role in creating cities and public spaces that are safe, healthy, fair, and sustainable for women and girls, as noted by the New Urban Agenda. The Local2030 Coalition can support greater women's participation in decision-making, including through data collection and networking with existing initiatives, such as the Safe Cities and the global Feminist Municipal Movement.

- Leveraging new digital tools.**

New technologies are transforming how we live and work. The pandemic experience has exposed a digital divide driven by unequal access to the technologies that power modern life. Millions of people around the world still lack access to digital technologies and the internet, which are the basic infrastructure of the Information Age. Digitalizing of data, delivery of services online, and the possibility of working remotely are bringing new opportunities. Cities and towns will need new models to adapt to this change and to benefit from it. Local input, involvement and ownership are needed to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the digital age, and to adapt to change. The Local2030 Coalition can harness digital tools and technologies to expand their reach, and to collaborate with new local actors in new ways.
- Enhancing local service delivery.**

Achieving the SDGs is directly linked to the capacity of local and regional governments to ensure that their populations have access to the basic services that underpin human well-being. This means ensuring that people have access to adequate housing, water, sanitation, education, food systems, transportation, and healthcare services. Thus, capacity development must be a strong component of the work of the Local2030 Coalition.
- Speeding up and scaling up innovation.**

Many promising local initiatives illustrate the power of innovation to lead to change. But to achieve the 2030 Agenda the pace of implementation must speed up. Key issues in search of innovative solutions include ensuring that workers' rights and needs are addressed in economic, social, and environmental policies; improving access to local basic and social services; and supporting green and circular economies. Other key needs include improving food-supply systems; fostering gender equality; and strengthening urban-rural linkages. Innovation and the promotion and scaling up of promising local initiatives requires systematic engagement. The Local2030 Coalition must foster collaboration and knowledge sharing that can pick up the pace of innovation and its spread.

### 3. Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis)

This Section provides an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) facing the Local2030 Coalition and its agenda. The Local2030 Coalition will aim to achieve ambitious outcomes (see Section 5), supported by its unique value proposition and awareness of potential challenges ahead.

#### Strengths

- The Local2030 Coalition is well positioned at the core of the UN to provide inputs to inform global policy discussions based on the realities and priorities of local actors.
- It can access tools to support local decision-makers and leaders in collaboratively incubating and sharing solutions, unlocking bottlenecks, and implementing strategies that advance the SDGs at the local level.
- It has direct access to the UN Secretary-General's office, UN Secretariat alignment and coordination structures, and data and statistics produced by the different UN agencies.
- It has access to the global and regional expertise of the staff of the UN system, including on-the-ground staff, represented by UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams.
- The Local2030 Coalition fully supports an integrated approach to the SDGs.

#### Weaknesses

- There is little or no interaction between various initiatives that have been established to support SDG localization under specific theme areas. There is a need for integration between initiatives and networks to support more holistic local development. For example, "climate neutral cities", "circular

Figure 1. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 individual goals. Achieving the wider agenda will require an integrated approach that manages trade-offs and maximizes synergies across these goals..



cities”, healthy cities” and “socially sustainable cities” are separate enterprises; valuable work conducted under each of these initiatives must be shared and coordinated.

- UN Agencies have specific thematic focuses that are well cemented into their strategies, plans and budgets. Thus, to achieve the aims of localizing and integrating the 17 SDGs, these aims must also become well-cemented, mainstreamed priorities across the key strategies of the involved agencies, and at different levels (local, national, regional, and global).

### Opportunities

- The Local2030 Coalition agenda creates new spaces for engagement between the UN, Member States, subnational governments, civil society, and global movements, with the potential to bring them together.
- The Local2030 Coalition promises to become an interactive and collaborative platform, where partners share tools, experiences, new solutions and guides to support SDG localization.
- The Local2030 Coalition initiative builds on the efforts of others, such as the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, and the global forum for cities within the G20.
- The Local2030 Coalition hubs have the potential to be used to create commonalities among various localities, giving them an opportunity to speak with and learn from each other, and to contribute to the wider Local2030 Coalition agenda.
- Digital tools and technologies can be harnessed to support Local2030 Coalition outreach and to expand participation.

### Threats

- The Local2030 Coalition encompasses many stakeholders from varied realms, each with their own interests, ideas, beliefs, and processes. These actors want to see themselves and their points of view reflected in the work of the Local2030 Coalition. Thus, it is important to engage with all these stakeholders systematically and meaningfully, and to devise specific joint activities for the different types of partners.
- Significant efforts will be needed to ensure widespread buy-in, and to establish the reputation of the Local2030 Coalition as a platform for capacity building, knowledge sharing, collaboration, and inspiration to accelerate local implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- The definition and concept of the Local2030 Coalition must be inclusive so that specific actors are not left out. Actors must come together to contribute and cooperate with stakeholders from other sectors.
- Backers must secure sufficient funding to ensure the work of the Secretariat of the Local2030 Coalition.
- Efforts must be made to ensure that the Local2030 Coalition does not duplicate the work of others.

## 4. Core work of the Local2030 Coalition

The Local2030 Coalition is founded on the premise that the people closest to the challenges for sustainable development are best positioned to solve them. Local and regional governments consulted in the context of the baseline study have indicated that their SDG localization efforts were disrupted on many fronts by the pandemic, which thrust them onto the frontline of a crisis. They have had to guarantee the safety of their communities, ensure the just and inclusive provision of essential public services, and move quickly to support the most vulnerable. Local actors facing several scarcities and pressures require strengthened support, from national governments, the UN system, and the Local2030 Coalition, amongst others, to continue carrying out transformative actions in their territories.

To respond to the challenges outlined above, and to maximize advance in the Decade of Action, the Local2030 Coalition will focus its first two years on the mission of achieving a **healthy, just, inclusive, and green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic**. A stocktake will be conducted every two years to refine the approach and set the priorities. The aim will be to reflect on the action areas that have the greatest potential to cumulatively accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs at the local level.

Figure 2. Existing UN mechanisms that can enable engagement by local actors



### 4.1 Principles

**Taking a rights-based approach.**

We will apply a human rights-based approach through a focus on equality and non-discrimination, accountability, justice, and transparency as the core of human-development results.

**Leaving no one behind.**

The review and implementation of national and subnational plans integrating the SDGs must make the “leaving no one behind” principle a reality. It must build on existing commitments to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and advance the meaningful participation of young people, among others. The Local2030 Coalition will systematically uphold this principle.

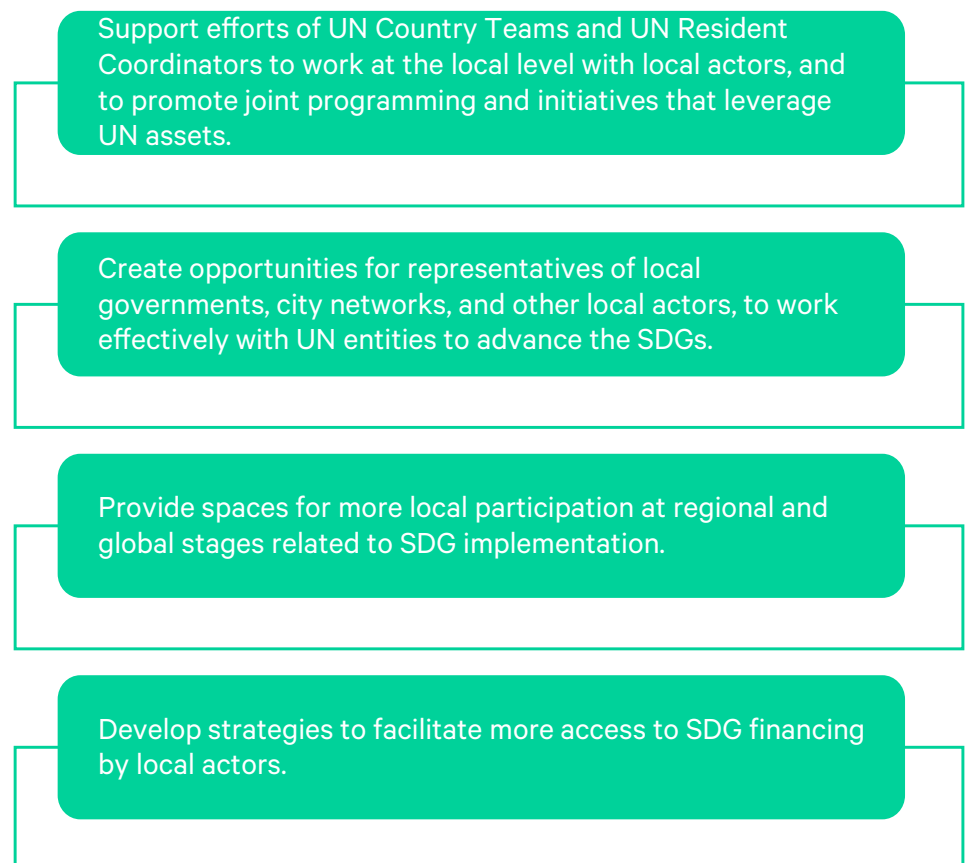
**Spurring innovation.**

To achieve the SDGs, governments and the UN must harness and innovate targeted approaches to apply the global 2030 Agenda at the local level. We will seek to constantly identify and highlight innovative solutions being developed by different actors to achieve the aims of localization of the wider agenda.

**Integrating plans, people, processes.**

We will seek to uphold the SDGs as an indivisible set of goals, to make use of evidence-based processes, and to provide truly integrated SDG policy support and to provide truly integrated SDG policy support involving the members of the Coalition and other interested stakeholders. The integrated approach seeks to identify the SDGs and targets that have catalytic power to move the whole agenda forward.

Figure 3. Objectives of the Local2030 Coalition

**Making co-creation a norm.**

We aim to become a space where members come, not only to showcase their work, but also to co-create solutions.

**Responding nimbly to demands.**

The roles presented in this strategy aim to provide an initial set up to ensure good coordination. Nevertheless, the aim is to remain flexible to the needs of the actors involved. This includes, for instance, organizing new models of engagement and regular interaction. Community leaders and small, local civil society organizations also must become partners in these efforts.



African vegetable market, Assomada, Santiago Island, Cape Verde © PETER ADAMS / GETTY

#### **Valuing a local approach and local contributions.**

This agenda is premised on the belief that cities and regions play critical roles in the paradigm shift needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Traction on this agenda depends on cities and regions embracing the full potential of the SDGs to improve people's lives.

#### **Harnessing the strengths of the UN system.**

The different UN entities work with many aspects related to sustainable development at the local level in their current portfolios. We will aim to harness those strengths and activities, and to identify new ways in which the UN system can better deliver at the local level. We aim to leverage needed data, support scalable innovations, and work with networks of local actors, including women, young people and other vulnerable groups.

### **4.2 Focus Areas**

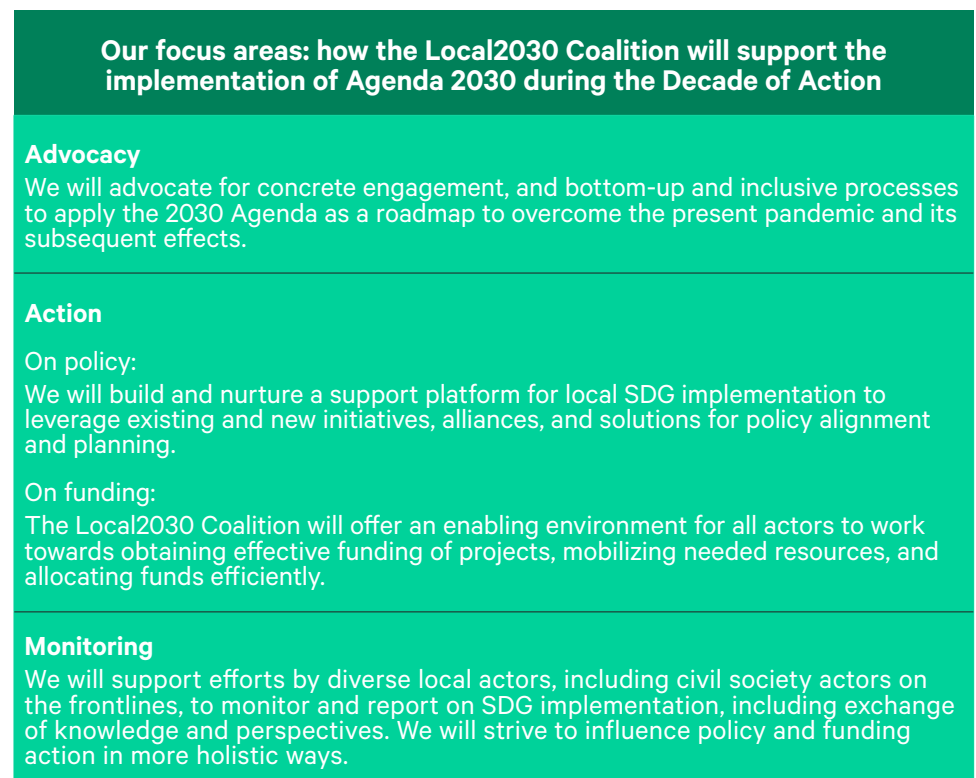
It is important to highlight that the Local2030 Coalition is not aiming to implement its own projects, but rather to be a convening space, and to support partners in the development of ideas and support for their own projects.

Inside the UN system, the Local2030 Coalition aims to strengthen efforts by UN entities and UN Resident Coordinators leading UN Country Teams to share lessons and tools from UN project activities, to advance SDG targets in partnership with local and regional actors, and to offer significant support to local and regional governments. The Local2030 Coalition aims to connect those working to localize the SDGs, and to provide the ingredients needed to scale up promising

enterprises. The Local2030 Coalition will encourage UN Resident Coordinators<sup>1</sup> to engage more systematically and effectively with local actors in SDG implementation.<sup>2</sup> An overarching aim will be to strengthen the application of the expertise and capacities of UN entities at the local level, and to create strong coalitions with Member States and local and regional authorities. Specific options for activities by the UN Resident Coordinators can be found in the stakeholders' section of this document.

Beyond the UN system, the Local2030 Coalition will seek to leverage resources in a complementary, coordinated, and effective manner.

Figure 4. Focus areas for the work of the Local2030 Coalition



- 1 A United Nations Resident Coordinator is the highest-ranking representative of the UN development system at the country level, and (s)he is the designated representative of – and reports to – the Secretary-General (except when there is a mission of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations or similar, in which case the Special Representative of the Secretary-General is the highest official).
- 2 The Report of the Secretary-General from July 2021 on the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 75/233 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system lays out what is expected of the reformed UN development system during the Decade of Action and delivery for sustainable development. It focuses on countries in particularly vulnerable situations and several areas that are critical to recovering better and accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The report contains an outline of the initial way forward with regard to these new mandates, centred on a whole-of-system response, transformative integrated policy advice, and strengthened support for financing and the means of implementation.

## 5. Outcomes, milestones and targets by 2030

The Local2030 Coalition will seek to achieve key outcomes, as shown in Table 1. Progress will be measured through the use of specific milestones and targets. A review will be conducted in 2025-27 time frame. The review will be designed by the Steering Committee and the Secretariat of the Local2030 Coalition.

Table 1. Outcomes, milestones, indicators and targets by 2030

	Outcome	Milestone	Targets	Responsible
1. Advocacy	1.1 Within the Decade of Action, local actors are empowered to accelerate achievement of the SDGs.	Local networks and actors participate in the Local2030 Coalition Steering Committee from its inception.	Final percentage to be determined after the DSG signing of the proposed composition of the Steering Committee.	Local2030 Coalition Co-chairs.
	1.2 Local actors and lessons learned in the localization of the SDGs inform national, regional, and global SDG events.	Knowledge on SDG localization is disseminated, and local action is highlighted in relevant national, regional, and global events.	At least 200 partners are engaged in global and regional events per year, and a balance is achieved in terms of participants' gender, age, background, region, and stakeholder group. Number of references to SDG localization issues in the outcomes of regional and global events addressing the SDGs.	Members of the Steering Committee, partners of the Local2030 Coalition, and the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat in coordination with the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments.
	1.3 Knowledge-sharing and capacity-building opportunities on SDG localization are provided as an integral part of the Local2030 Coalition's work.	Spaces for knowledge and information sharing on SDG localization are available through the Local2030 Coalition.	Number of events and experience-sharing sessions organized. Number of SDG localization-related resources, events and stories updated in Local2030 web platform. Integration of a repository for voluntary local reports in the Local 2030 Coalition online platform.	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat with the support of its members and partners.
	1.4 Increased engagement opportunities are made available to vulnerable groups that are most often left behind – with a specific focus on the inclusion of women, refugees, migrants, stateless people and youth from the Global South and humanitarian and fragile settings.	Vulnerable groups are identified and prioritized in Local2030 Coalition activities to ensure that no one is left behind.	At least 100 activities per year are reported as held by the Local2030 Coalition members as part of their efforts in support the localization of the SDGs. Activities include but are not limited to gender- and youth-oriented events.	Members and partners of the Local2030 Coalition.
2. Action	2.1 The UN system prioritizes promoting SDG localization.	Local actors participate in the formulation of the relevant Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF).	Number of countries in which local actors are engaged in the new CCAs and CFs.	UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams.
	2.2 Member States adopt localization as a central component of national development plans and strategies.	Local actors are increasingly integrated into national processes for sustainable development and SDG implementation.	Number of mechanisms, spaces, and activities to which the Local2030 Coalition contributes as part of an effort to enable local actors to engage in national processes.	UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams in collaboration with Local2030 Coalition Steering Committee members (as relevant).

	Outcome	Milestone	Targets	Responsible
2. Action	2.3 SDG financing is promoted as a priority for effective localization.	Access to financing for SDG localization is promoted and facilitated for local and regional governments, and a variety of local actors and stakeholders.	Workshops with UN finance experts, international funding institutions, and national and local development banks are facilitated to identify opportunities to strengthen direct finance access.	Co-chairs in collaboration with Steering Committee members, UN Country Teams and UN Resident Coordinators (as relevant).
			Effective links are made so that local and regional authorities have input SDG localization into their country's Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF), for the 70 countries where this is currently a practice.	Co-chairs in collaboration with Steering Committee members, UN Country Teams and UN Resident Coordinators (as relevant).
			An updated baseline of SDG localization commissioned by the Local2030 Coalition shows great improvement in UN system support provided to SDG financing at the local level in 2025.	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat.
3. Monitoring	3.1 Data environments and capacities at local level are strengthened.	Exchange spaces are created and used to promote promising approaches for monitoring SDG progress, and to promote SDG benchmarking and monitoring as standard practices.	A repository of opportunities for funding and new approaches for collecting SDG indicator data is created and maintained.	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat.
			Support is given to programme countries to use geo-referenced census data to disaggregate and visualize SDGs at local levels, to identify pockets of need, and to improve local solutions led by local actors.	Number of voluntary local reviews that use these types of data and reference the support of UN agencies.
	3.2 Local and regional governments are included in the preparation of voluntary national reports or existing national reporting mechanisms.	Local and regional governments are structurally included into preparation processes for voluntary <i>national</i> reports, and these reports are used as sources of information and prioritization.	Number of local governments included in processes that underpin the preparation of voluntary <i>national</i> reports. Number of voluntary <i>national</i> reports dedicating sections to voluntary <i>local</i> reports and the issue of SDG localization.	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat, in collaboration with UN Country Teams and Steering Committee members.
3.3 Information on SDG localization status is available and updated regularly.	Data on SDG impacts – including interlinkages of policies, plans, projects and investments at the local level – are systematically collected, analysed, and made publicly available.	An updated Local2030 Coalition baseline is published every two years.	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat, in collaboration with Steering Committee members and partners, particularly academic institutions.	

## 6. Participants and stakeholders

**The Local2030 Coalition will be anchored within the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and co-chaired by UN-Habitat as fixed co-chair and one other participating UN entity**, which will serve on a rotational basis for two years. The rotation of one of the two co-chair positions is intended to diversify the leadership, and to ensure the ownership of the coalition across different parts of the UN. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) will assume the co-chairmanship for the first two-year period (2022-2024), followed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)<sup>3</sup> for two years each. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) will actively accompany and support the work of the Local2030 Coalition.

**A steering committee** will guide the work of the Local2030 Coalition. The Steering Committee will include representatives of UN entities, local authorities and networks, Member States, academic institutions, grassroots and non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Efforts will be made to underscore the importance of having diversity in the composition of the committee.

The Steering Committee will be the governing body of the Local2030 Coalition, and will provide strategic leadership and governance oversight. The Steering Committee is expected to make key strategic decisions and guide the implementing partners in the execution of the work. It will receive regular reports and review the results. It will be supported in ensuring good governance and financial oversight by the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat.

The Steering Committee composition will secure the principles of national ownership, inclusiveness, and balanced representation, as well as the need to have a manageable size for decision-making effectiveness. The Co-chairs will ensure the active engagement of those UN entities that are not members of the Steering Committee.

**UN Resident Coordinators** will play a key strategic and coordinating role in supporting national governments to engage more systematically and effectively with local actors in the SDG implementation. Beyond coordination with national governments, the UN Resident Coordinators will assume the special task of actively engaging local-level governments and civil-society actors in the wider Local2030 Coalition Agenda. The aim is for the UN Resident Coordinators to assume a connecting and facilitating role linking the local and national levels, with the active support of the wide UN Country Team (UNCT).

The prioritized role for UN Resident Coordinators in the Local2030 Coalition does not imply extra or additional reporting mechanisms. The idea, rather, is to highlight and enhance their role as a key bridge to establish and tap networks that help localize the SDGs. For example, the following are activities that could be performed by UN Resident Coordinators:

- Organize annual or biannual exchange meeting between UN Country Teams and local and regional government associations on SDG localization to discuss different related topics (such as the results of the HLPF, upcoming revision of the New Urban Agenda, and analysis of Secretary General reports, support to create and use voluntary local reports.
- Create a link through meetings or events to advocate for increased engagement of in-country-based offices of international financial institutions and local and regional government associations.
- Promote a significant increase in participation of local actors in global stages (such as the HLPF), and tailor approaches to facilitate engagement (recognizing the limited resources/

<sup>3</sup> This decision will be evaluated in due course.

Figure 5. Local2030 Coalition stakeholders



capacities of grassroots CSOs, and their digital connectivity). This implies raising awareness with national authorities to include local actors, especially women, youth, and members of other under-represented groups; and raising awareness of local actors to highlight the benefits of this type of participation.

- Gathering input from local and regional authorities as part of the process of developing a UN Common Country Analysis or a UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams should gather input from local and regional authorities and from civil society so that their perspectives are incorporated into the analysis and future programming, monitoring, implementation, and evaluation. This can be achieved by online consultations and the use of voluntary local reports.
- Encourage UN agencies to look at how their programmes and budgets can better align with SDG localization efforts.
- Adopt a gender equality-based approach and support the inclusion of young people and those from under-represented populations. This can be achieved by including on an equal basis, women, youth, and members of under-represented groups in the above-mentioned activities.

**UN Country Teams and UN entities** will be key players in the Local2030 Coalition. UN Country Teams will play an important operationalization role, as sustainable development professionals with a deep understanding of the conceptual shift brought by the 2030 Agenda and national planning processes. In support of the agreed UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, UN entities will play a key role not only as thought leaders and members of the UN Country Teams, but also critically as the implementors of UN actions.

**A Local2030 Coalition Secretariat** will be established with dedicated staff to ensure that the activities are implemented, and to organize meetings and prepare reports. Knowledge management will be a key function of the Secretariat. The Secretariat will also help members strategize to bring global attention to and support for SDG localization solutions and initiatives, especially through major international meetings and conferences. Key outputs will be the yearly organization of a Local and Regional Governments' Forum during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and an own side event for the Local2030 Coalition, and events at the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development. UN-Habitat will host the Secretariat of Local2030 Coalition.

**UN Agencies and other members (e.g., local governments and academic institutions) may organize working groups** to address different issues, such as, for example, policy, legislation, governance, financing instruments, and partnerships. They may actively engage with country offices to follow up on support to local actors. Agencies can also support communication about the SDGs, promote SDG model curriculum and quality reporting. They may undertake efforts to strengthen and develop partnerships for implementation, and they may help fill in the gaps in available data for monitoring and review. We emphasize that the UN's policy expertise on sustainable development and governance should be made available to governments at all stages of implementation.

**The UN regional commissions** will represent the regional level. The commissions will provide spaces for multi-stakeholder dialogue at the regional level, and encourage peer-to-peer learning by incorporating and engaging local actors at the regional sustainable development fora they coordinate.

**Local2030 Coalition hubs** can provide local-level nodes that inform the global plan for the Local2030 Coalition. They can support the link between local actors and global governance of the Local2030 Coalition. The hubs must speak to each other in terms of functions, for which terms of reference should be developed and approved by the Steering Committee.

## 7. Communications and outreach

### 7.1 Target audience

The communications strategy of the Local2030 Coalition will target key actor groups that can fulfil the following functions: 1) decision-making ability to localize the SDGs, 2) access to networks to share new developments and promising approaches, and 3) support for technical or financial implementation at the local level. These actor groups include the following:

**National, local, and regional governments.** Governments are essential in terms of their legislative and formal role in policy formation and implementation, and for their capacity to promote inclusive sustainable development within their territories. Therefore, they are necessary partners in the implementation of the SDGs.

**Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments.** The task force serves as a contact point for related networks. For example, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a very broad organization with over 250,000 members from 140 countries, with SDG localization at the core of its strategy. Another example is Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), a global network of more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Other related networks will also be part of this target group.

**Civil society organizations, the private sector, and other related networks.** Such organizations provide access to those left furthest behind. They thus play an imperative role in SDG advocacy, visibility, and programming. Other related networks will also be part of this target group.

**Development banks.** A vast amount of funding is needed to finance the localization of the 2030 Agenda. Development banks can accelerate implementation of the SDGs, by coupling their leverage capacity with systemic and cross-cutting 2030 Agenda alignment practices that catalyse real transformations via their investments.

Figure 6. Target audiences for the communications strategy of the Local2030 Coalition (non-exhaustive list)

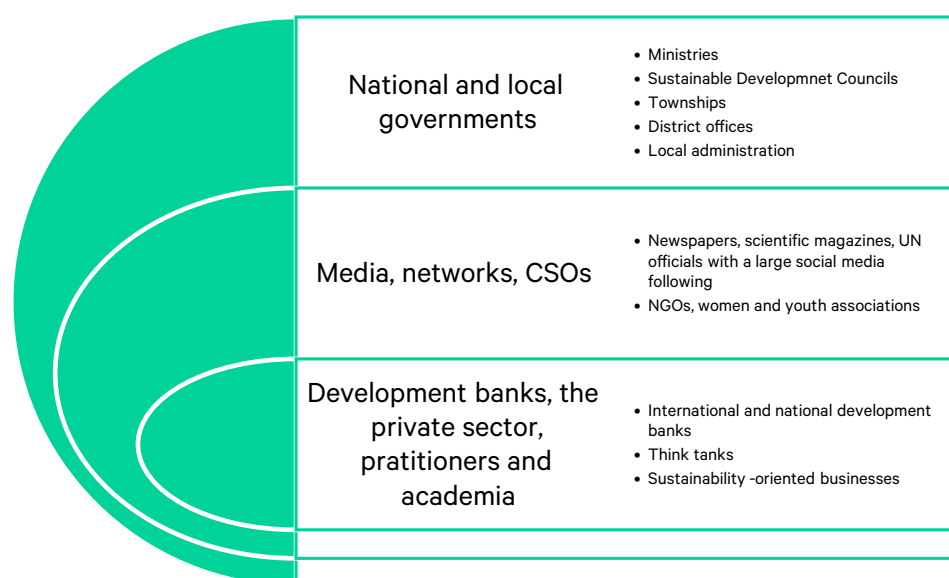


Table 2. Communications plan

Communication	Audience	Goals	Format	Responsible
<b>Reports of activities of the Local2030 Coalition and on SDG localization</b>	Donors, Local2030 Coalition members, UN system	One yearly report and Four yearly newsletters with results from various key events HLPF, UNGA, etc.	E-documents, executive summaries, press releases, printed materials	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat and key partners (e.g., Global Taskforce and UCLG)
<b>Social media feed</b>	General population, CSOs, associations, networks, practitioners	3,000 new followers per year in each platform (e.g., Twitter, Facebook and Instagram)	Build an effective and broad social media following for the Local2030 Coalition on social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook and Instagram).	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat
<b>Video materials</b>	The general population, CSOs, associations, networks, practitioners	24 videos a year	Short tutorials based on localization guidelines, for example; videos for the website, YouTube, and social media	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat and key partners
<b>Normative tools, guidelines and other materials related to SDG localization</b>	Local and regional governments and other Local2030 Coalition partners	10 new publications a year, or promotion of an existing guide	Webinars, PDFs, surveys, tools, etc.	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat and UN Member Agencies
<b>Academic publications</b>	The academic community, UN system, all Local2030 Coalition partners	Three to four publications a year by different partners or groups of partners	Reports, scientific articles, methodologies, tools, policy briefs	Alliance of think tanks supporting the research work of the Local2030 Coalition

Communication	Audience	Goals	Format	Responsible
Cultural activities	The general population, CSOs, associations, networks, practitioners	25-50 actions per year	Concerts, bike rides, campaign buses, fairs, events showcasing success stories, award ceremonies, and collaboration with well-known figures (e.g., actors, musicians, sportspeople, writers, and photographers) or foundations that can act as ambassadors for the SDGs	All Local2030 Coalition partners
Web platform <a href="https://www.local2030.org/">https://www.local2030.org/</a>	Repository of materials and event news, as well as a built-in platform for voluntary local reports.	500-700 monthly visits to the website	Website	Local2030 Coalition Secretariat to collect and curate own content and materials by the partners

## 7.2 Messaging

The content of the campaign will relate to the main work areas of the Local2030 Coalition:

### Advocacy

- The Local2030 Coalition focuses on local action, sustained in efforts by the UN to provide the space and adequate frameworks and tools for a more integrated response from the national and local levels to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Efforts prioritize decisions, actions, and solutions to benefit the most vulnerable places and most marginalized groups of people.
- SDG localization is a predominant factor to ensure that “no one is left behind”. It is at the heart of creating social inclusivity, gender equality, and the fulfilment of human rights. It is also central to the mission of increasing resilience.
- Local governments should use the SDGs as an opportunity to engage with a broader cross section of actors, such as the private sector and community organizations, and to launch new forms of collaboration and participation.

### Action

- The Local2030 Coalition will be an appropriate vehicle to mainstream urban work across the UN, and for bringing local actors to the policy discussions and cooperation frameworks at the national level. At the global level, the Local2030 Coalition structure, with a two-years’ rotational UN co-chair, will serve as a cross-fertilization on urban management, urban campaigns based on the rotational UN entity’s mandate, and the localization of the SDGs.
- The Local2030 Coalition brings a new approach to the localization of the SDGs, elevating local and regional governments on defining the adequate steps towards more sustainable development.
- As countries and international entities discuss financial packages and funds to help economic recovery, there remains a pressing need to reinforce essential public services and to ensure that funding reaches territories and communities most in need through recovery packages and funding policies that prioritize investing in basic services. Localization requires multi-level and multi-stakeholder coordination, financial support, and capacity building for local and regional governments to effectively participate.

### Monitoring

- The Local2030 Coalition will promote the participation of local and regional governments in national monitoring, and it will adapt national indicators to local and regional contexts. Where SDG data collection is already occurring at the local level, the Local2030 Coalition will promote the sharing of lessons and capacities between local and regional governments, and through voluntary local reports.
- The Local2030 Coalition web platform will allow users to explore reports that contribute to the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, including voluntary local reviews and other progress reports.
- The Local2030 Coalition will seek to partner with academic institutions and organizations and other partners to organize dialogues, and to develop data and strategies for SDG monitoring at the local level.



Indian schoolgirl watches education classes at home as COVID-19 forces learning online © GREENAPERTURE / GETTY

## Annexes

### a. Terms of reference for the Local2030 Coalition Steering Committee

#### STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE LOCAL2030 COALITION

##### Terms of Reference

##### Aim and Composition

The Steering Committee of the Local2030 Coalition will be the governing body of the Local2030 Coalition and will provide strategic leadership and governance oversight. The Steering Committee is expected to make key strategic decisions, guide the implementing partners in the execution of the work, and ensure effective oversight through receiving regular reports and reviewing the results. It will be supported in ensuring good governance and financial oversight by the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat.

The Steering Committee (SC) is co-chaired by UN-Habitat and one participant UN entity, which will rotate every two years. The second co-chair will be held by UNDP, followed by FAO and UNICEF<sup>4</sup>. The rotation of one of the two Co-chairs is intended to diversify the leadership of the Local2030 Coalition across different parts of the UN to promote a whole-of-system approach. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) will closely support and advise the work of the Local2030 Coalition.

Non-UN members of the Steering Committee will be appointed by the Co-chairs based on the suggestions that bodies like the Global Compact or the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments could make, as well as based on Local2030 Coalition partner advice. Other members of the Steering Committee include UN Member States, academic and research institutions, grassroots and non-governmental organizations, and private-sector actors.

The Steering Committee composition will ensure the principles of national ownership, inclusiveness, and balanced representation are met, as well as the need to have a manageable size for decision-making effectiveness.<sup>5</sup> The Co-chairs will ensure the active engagement of those UN entities that are not members of the Steering Committee.

The UN entities that are members of the Steering Committee are expected to formally appoint a focal point at the director level to be the liaison with the work of the Local2030 Coalition; to advance in the implementation of other UN-related strategies, such as the “System-wide strategy for sustainable urban development”; and to assume commitments and carry out activities as part of the work plans of the Local2030 Coalition. They are also expected to provide secondments and to contribute to the functioning and activities of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat.

##### Key tasks and responsibilities:

- To review and approve these terms of reference and update and/or modify them, as necessary, in case of compelling requirements.
- To provide strategic guidance to the work of the Local2030 Coalition.
- To approve the annual work plans and the annual reports of the Local2030 Coalition, and to revise its objectives and indicators
- To review and ensure the alignment of the allocations for funds earmarked by donors to specific activities.
- To lead a stocktaking every two years to refine the approach and set the priorities, to reflect

<sup>4</sup> This decision will be revised in due course.

<sup>5</sup> The Steering Committee will consult with participating UN Agencies on all relevant issues. The design/development of proposals for consideration by the Steering Committee will involve formal consultations with all relevant agencies.

the most impactful action areas that will cumulatively accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs at the local level.

- To review and approve proposals from members submitted for funding and/or for changes to the thematic or work focus, and to ensure their conformity with the 10-year strategy of the coalition.
- To define terms of reference and composition for the Local2030 Coalition hubs, potential thematic clusters, or other similar groups.
- To ensure appropriate consultative processes take place with Local2030 Coalition members and key stakeholders at the local level to avoid duplication or overlap of activities.
- To review and approve the periodic progress reports (programmatic and financial) consolidated by the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat.<sup>6</sup>
- To ensure participation by at least one member in the Local2030 Coalition-organized events, according to the members' expertise.
- To identify and highlight best practices in realizing long-term sustainability.
- To advocate for enhanced and accelerated SDG action, especially at the local level.

#### **Decisions:**

- The Steering Committee makes decisions based on a majority. Decisions of the Steering Committee shall be duly recorded.
- Prior to presenting their position on a significant issue to the members of the coalition, Steering Committee members must make sure that it is endorsed internally by participating UN agencies and is in line with the agencies' regulatory requirements.

#### **Role of the Co-chairs of the Steering Committee:**

- To make sure that the decisions taken by the Steering Committee are in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the participating agencies and agreements with the participating Member States and donors.
- To ensure that the decisions taken by the Steering Committee are duly recorded and promptly communicated to the members of the Local2030 Coalition, including participating agencies, the UN Country Teams and donors, as appropriate.
- To appoint the non-UN members of the Steering Committee
- To monitor the implementation of the decisions of the Steering Committee.
- To make the full power and expertise of the participating UN Agencies available to the Local2030 Coalition.
- To summon members and Steering Committee for Local2030 Coalition meetings.
- To provide an efficient platform for engagement amongst Local2030 Coalition members.

## **b. Partnerships and fundraising strategy**

The fundraising strategy of the Local2030 Coalition focuses on three key elements: i) secondments of the institutions which comprise the Steering Committee to staff the Secretariat; ii) Co-chairs and Secretariat reaching out to potential donors championing the localization of the SDGs to fund activities of the Secretariat and some activities with the partners, and iii) the identification and mobilization of resources and in-kind contributions by coalition partners to support the work of the Secretariat, but also to make them more accessible to local partners for local actions.

<sup>6</sup> A Local2030 Coalition Secretariat will be established with dedicated staff to ensure the activities are implemented, organize meetings, prepare reports, etc. The secretariat will also help members strategize to bring global attention to and support for SDG localization solutions and initiatives, especially through major international meetings and conferences. The team can also support the development of national SDG localization roadmaps. A key deliverable will be the yearly organization of a Local and Regional Governments' Forum during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). UN Habitat will host the Secretariat of Local2030 Coalition.

**i. Secondments**

To keep the funds that need to be raised to a minimum, the coalition will focus on secondments to staff the secretariat of the Local2030 Coalition, which will be anchored at UN-Habitat. This option remains crucial to mobilize expertise, skills, and know-how to reinforce activities outside and within the UN system.

**ii. Donor funding**

The Co-chairs and the Secretariat Coordinator lead the donor resource-mobilization efforts, provide strategic and policy guidance, and implement the decisions by the Steering Committee. Their engagement with donors and partners will be strengthened with increased prior planning and the support of the Local2030 Coalition plan for the Decade of Action.

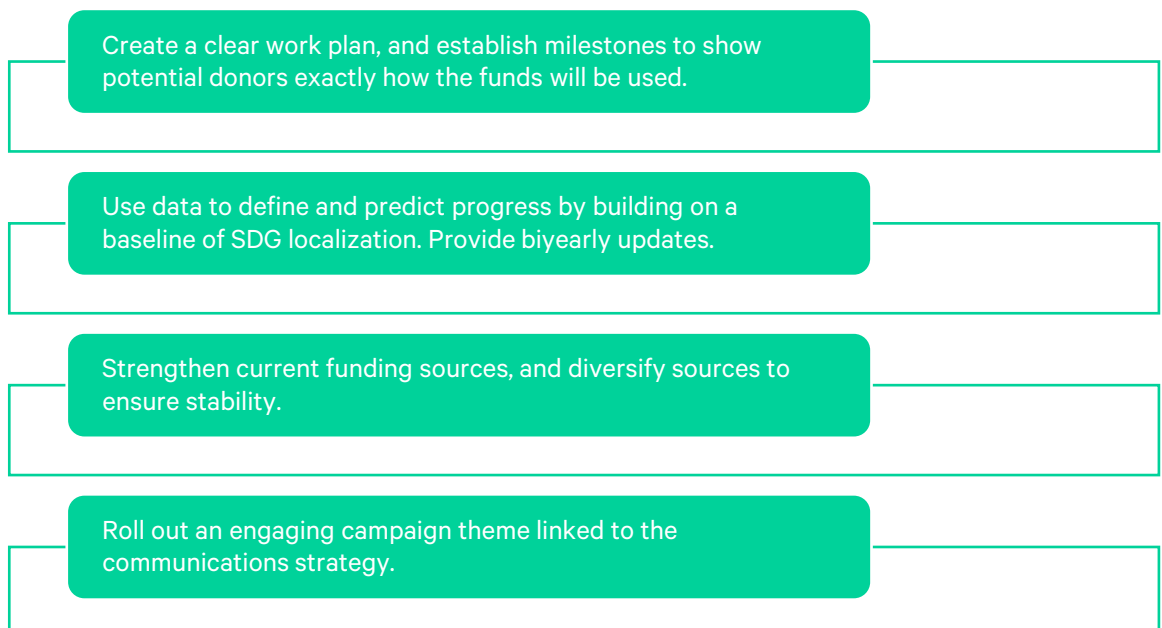
**iii. Mobilization of third-party funding and in-kind contributions**

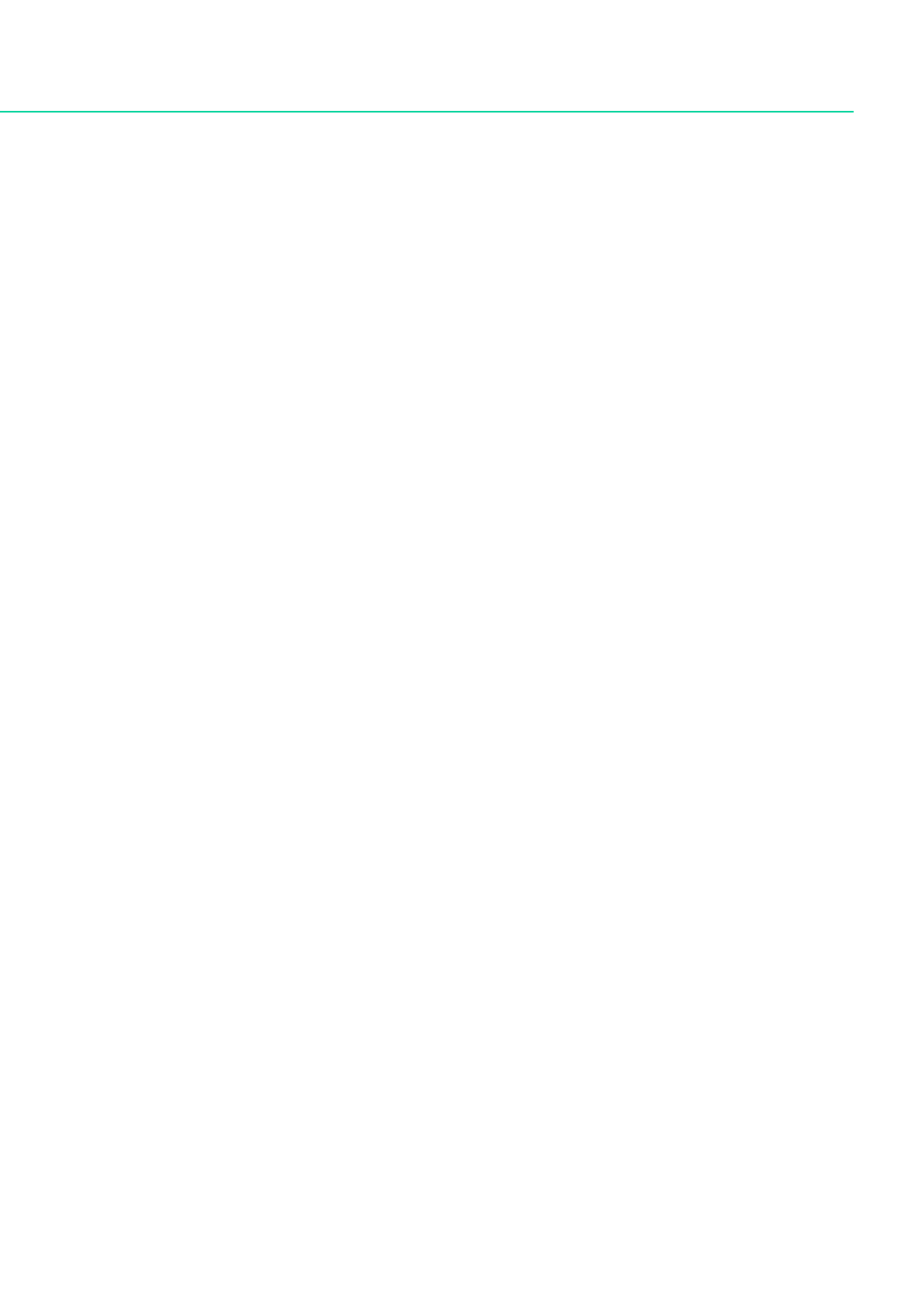
Support in other forms (e.g., hosting important meetings and events; adopting, scaling up, or otherwise implementing SDG localization methodologies and tools) is also welcome. The more we move towards national and local delivery, the more other resources have a role to play. This includes in-kind contributions from coalition partners. For instance, partnering with academic organizations would open new lines of access to funding that could support core Local2030 Coalition activities such as organizing dialogues, developing data, and undertaking monitoring.

**Monitoring achievements**

The Local2030 Coalition Steering Committee and Secretariat will monitor the implementation of this plan in as concrete a manner as possible (e.g., by quantifying the shifts between and within funding sources, the number of Member States that contribute to the coalition, the number of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks that identify specific actions for subnational SDG engagement; and by marking the progress made in providing the communication messages and products). Information on these shifts, changes and achievements will be shared with the donors and Local2030 Coalition partners.

Figure 7. Work components of the fundraising strategy





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