

Information Note

UCLG Capacity and Institution Building Working Group Meeting

27 – 29 May 2023
Barcelona, Spain
Meeting hosted by:
Diputació Barcelona

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Introductory remarks by CIB leadership and secretariat

Dear friends, colleagues and members of the CIB community,

It is our pleasure to welcome you all in Barcelona next week for our annual meeting. We are impatient to seeing you all. Our dear friends and colleagues from Diputació Barcelona have done their utmost to ensure the right conditions for a successful week, we are very grateful to their support and generous contribution. We are glad to announce that big number of our members will make the trip and join us this time, and actively participating in the program sessions, we are very pleased to see how important and relevant CIB is for all of us.

The program this year is rich and diverse, it will be voicing the global south, praising partnership and mutual understanding, enhance belongings to our world mission under UCLG leadership and facilitate space for exchange on journey travelled and new to come. We are confident that Barcelona will be a memorable experience and a stepping stone for our network, joint vision and future perspectives. This information note should help you prepare for this inspiring event!

We strongly encourage you to carefully read this information note and in particular read the background information on the UCLG Facilities which were launched during the previous edition of the UCLG Retreat in February. During many of the sessions we would like to explore and discuss how we as a working group can best and concretely contribute to the unfolding of these different facilities.

We are looking forward to seeing you all. Safe travels and see you next week!

Dr. Neila Akrimi, chair of CIB
Gaby Senay, vice-chair of CIB

Judith Geerling, CIB secretariat
Finn Speulman, CIB secretariat

Important logistical information for CIB annual meeting

Meeting venues

For the CIB annual meeting 2024 in Barcelona, we will have **TWO** meeting venues throughout the three-day event. For the first and second day of the meeting (27th and 28th of May) the exact location will be:

- **Edifici Vagó. Recinte Escola Industrial. Carrer Roselló, 121**

For the third and last day (29th of May) the exact location is:

- **Palau Macaya. Passeig Sant Joan, 108.**

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please make sure to copy this exact location into your travel planner, because the venues have multiple entrances.

Welcome ceremony, dinner and cultural activities

On Monday the 27th of May we will have a welcoming ceremony offered by the City Council of Barcelona (18:00-19:00h).

The dinner hosted by Diputació Barcelona on Monday evening will be at Restaurant La Pau.

- **J. Anselm Clavé 19 - 08002 BARCELONA**

On Tuesday, May 28th, our hosts Diputació Barcelona will offer a cultural visit to the Palau Güell, a mansion designed by the renowned architect Antoni Gaudí, known for its unique architectural features and artistic significance.

For this visit to Palau Güell there will be two rounds of guided tours to participate in (both of 30 min).

- The first round will be in English (18:00-18:30)
- The second round will be in French (18:30-19:00)

IMPORTANT NOTE: The host, Diputació Barcelona, will provide both transportation and interpretation services for the cultural visits.

Transportation services on Tuesday afternoon will only be provided to Palau Güell. Return transportation will not be available. This allows you the opportunity to enjoy dinner in the area at your own expense.

Final draft programme CIB annual meeting

CIB annual meeting 2024 – day 1 (Monday, May 27)

Location: Vagó Building of Campus of the industrial school (Edifici Vagó del Recinte Escola Industrial) Diputació de Barcelona. Carrer Rosselló, 121. Barcelona

09:30 – 10:00	Registration
10:00 – 11:00	<p>Plenary opening</p> <p><i>Opening remarks and introduction by the hosts and CIB leadership followed by session on the latest global trends within the decentralized cooperation sector. Latest updates on developments within the World Organization UCLG by Secretary General Emilia Saiz, and open discussion on how we as a CIB working group can best contribute to the unfolding of the UCLG Facilities.</i></p> <p><i>With: Emilia Saiz from UCLG, Gaby Senay from FCM, Neila Akrimi from VNG International and Antoni Montseny Domenech from Diputació de Barcelona.</i></p>
11:00 – 11:30	<p>Coffee break</p> <p><i>At Art school Auditorium (Sala d'Actes de l'Escola d'Art)</i></p>
11:30 – 13:00	Plenary opening continuation
13:00 – 14:00	<p>Lunch break</p> <p><i>At Art school Auditorium (Sala d'Actes de l'Escola d'Art)</i></p>
14:00 – 16:00	<p>Tour de Table</p> <p><i>Coordination of projects and activities in view of enhancing development effectiveness is the raison d'être of CIB. The CIB annual meeting is a great space for knowledge exchange, and for coordination where possible. You will find or know that CIB also has other tools which can facilitate coordination.</i></p> <p><i>In response to requests from several members, this year's CIB annual meeting will include dedicated sessions to discuss the challenges and issues encountered in our project management particularly. To have a strategic but pragmatic exchange on the challenges and developments you run into in your project implementation, acquisition and evaluation. Individually, institutionally and as a network.</i></p>

17:30 – 18:00	Bus pick up, from Campus of the industrial school to City Council
18:00 – 19:00	Welcome ceremony offered by the City Council of Barcelona <i>Plaça de Sant Jaume, 1, Barcelona</i>
20:00 – 22:00	Welcome dinner offered by hosts, Diputació Barcelona <i>La Pau Restaurant. Carrer de Josep Anselm Clavé, 19, Barcelona</i>

CIB annual meeting 2024 – day 2 (Tuesday, May 28)

Location: Vagó Building of Campus of the industrial school (Edifici Vagó del Recinte Escola Industrial) Diputació de Barcelona. Carrer Rosselló, 121. Barcelona

09:00 – 10:30	Debate session <i>How are we working in context of uncertainty and crisis (where peace, human rights and local governance is at stake.)</i>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break <i>At Art school Auditorium (Sala d'Actes de l'Escola d'Art)</i>
11:00 – 13:30	Thematic workshops <i>Participants are invited to choose on of three thematic wokrshops, which are all related to priorities and activities of the CIB working group and its members. The thematic workshops should encourage peer-to-peer exchange and learning, and the outcomes of each workshop will directly feed into this year's work plan of the working group.</i>

Workshop 1:

CIB Gender Knowledge Hub – the development of a Gender Advocacy Tool for LGAs

In 2022, the CIB working group started with the development of an online [Gender, Diversity and Inclusivity knowledge hub](#). A platform where CIB members meet and can exchange knowledge and information on the themes of gender equality and inclusion with other CIB members. This resulted in the creation of a website which includes an online repository with a broad variety of resources. After the launch of the website, curation of the online repository was made a key priority. Ultimately, to lead to an improved access for CIB members – LGAs, regions, cities and local leaders – to existing evidence and research about the impact of gender mainstreaming in LRG's affairs, as part of this online space.

Therefore, in 2024, CIB developed and launched the [“Toolkit to Mainstream Gender Equality in Local Government Associations \(LGAs\)”](#), designed to accompany LGAs in their journeys to mainstream gender equality as an integral part of the services and operations of their organization. Complementing other resources available in the CIB's Gender, Diversity, and Inclusivity Hub, this Toolkit offers various tools to help LGAs kick-start a gender-equality process within their organization, integrate gender equality into governance and leadership, develop robust gender mainstreaming internal policies and plans, and effectively implement them in their services and daily operations.

However, one gap in the LGA Toolkit is the absence of tools specifically designed to support LGAs in their role related to gender advocacy. Advocacy and lobbying at the national level consistently rank among the most important LGA member services. LGA advocacy services are crucial for shaping a national gender-sensitive legal and policy framework, fostering an environment that promotes gender equality and social justice at the local level. This involves advocating for the adoption and enforcement by national governments of national laws and ordinances that promote gender equality and protect women's rights, as well as policies addressing gender-based discrimination within local government.

The Gender Knowledge Hub session at the CIB annual meeting will reintroduce the general LGA Toolkit and explore how the specific Gender Advocacy Tool could be developed. This includes engaging with the session participants to better understand what we mean by gender advocacy within the sphere of LGAs and to begin exploring the potential contents of such a specific tool. The session aims to achieve three specific objectives:

1. *Promote the Toolkit to Mainstream Gender Equality in Local Government Associations (LGAs).*
2. *Discuss the broader challenges regarding gender equality faced by local governments, which a national gender-sensitive legal and policy framework should address.*
3. *Identify the typical capacity challenges encountered by LGAs when engaging in gender advocacy at the national level.*

Workshop 2:

Localization in development cooperation and decentralized cooperation

In recent years, the term “localization” has gained popularity within the global development community, resonating in statements from development actors and inclusive donors. However, this term is now being used in two distinct ways, leading to confusion discussions surrounding localization.

Until 2015, the prevailing understanding was that localization dealt with bring the public sector closer to the people, whether the discussion dealt with ‘localizing the MDGs’, participatory local development, or localizing public services, such as health and education. Since 2015, the concept of localization has been closely associated with the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As UCLG members, we are and have been at the heart of this movement, promoting local action to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. Local and regional governments are taking ownership and implementing the agenda, often without adequate resources. That's why we see localization, considering local realities and communities in SDG implementation, as crucial for both local and global development.

Yet, in the last few years, we see that the term ‘localization’ (or localizing global development or ‘locally-led development’) is increasingly being applied to refer to a phenomenon that has less to do with the local governments sector, but instead, relates to efforts aimed at shifting the power.

A careful reading of this trend suggests that the term ‘local’ does not refer to local government institutions or other subnational actors, but rather to national actors in partner countries. This way, efforts to ‘localize’ global development assistance are at greatest risk of failing exactly where the chosen terminology obscures at which level governance and sustainable development really takes place, namely the local government level.

At the UCLG World Congress in Daejeon (2022), the UCLG-CIB policy paper on development cooperation of local governments was adopted. As part of CIB's annual plan this year, we are focusing on objective no. 2 of the policy paper, which is to "Make Decentralized Cooperation a Fully Recognized and Resourced Development Cooperation Approach."

This workshop will serve as the initial steps in this endeavor, gathering input to support the implementation of these activities which are part of the CIB work plan for 2024. The workshop aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1. To discuss how to develop new methodologies to better show how decentralized cooperation facilitates the engagement of local governments, civil society organizations, and community stakeholders, to increase the local ownership in development cooperation projects.*
- 2. To discuss how we as CIB can best encourage structured dialogues and the adoption of formal strategic partnership agreements between LRGs and LGAs, and national Ministries and/or Development Cooperation ministries.*

Workshop 3:

Local governments at the forefront of resilience: climate resilience, crisis preparedness and response

Manmade or natural disasters are engulfing the world. Wherever you put on the news you are being faced with disasters, such as the recent earthquake in Türkiye and Syria, the current context in Ukraine, or the reoccurring drought in the Horn of Africa. As the tier of government closest to people, local authorities play a vital role in responding to these challenges, but increasingly also in the preparation for disasters.

One of the key objectives for this workshop is to discuss how local authorities can engage with, and make the transition from, humanitarian response initiatives, to more structural recovery and reconstruction activities. What overarching policies are in place, how are they used, but also what initiatives are being implemented by CIB members and what can we learn from them?

In addition to the sharing of best practices and lessons learned from CIB members, this session will include a presentation by UNDP on the "staying and delivering" approach in crisis situations to collectively identify enablers as well as hurdles for its applicability by CIB members. After this, we will brainstorm together on how we can sustain and enhance knowledge-sharing and peer learning in this field, through CIB and/or other networks.

13:30 – 14:30	Lunch break <i>At Art school Auditorium (Sala d'Actes de l'Escola d'Art)</i>
14:30 – 16:30	Strategic session of CIB working group <i>Reflecting on the vision, the mission, the strategies and the activities – including a reflection upon the CIB strategic review of 2023 and a discussion on how we can best contribute as a working group to the UCLG Facilities.</i>
17:30 – 18:00	Bus pick up, from Campus of the industrial school to Palau Güell
18:00 – 19:00	Cultural visit offered by hosts at Palua Güell of Barcelona

CIB annual meeting 2024 – day 3 (Wednesday, May 29)

2nd Edition of the Joint CIB-DeLoG meeting

Location: Palau Macaya. Passeig Sant Joan, 108. Barcelona

09:00 – 09:30	Defining and discussing the CIB-DeLoG joint visions <i>Setting the scene – why CIB & DeLoG join efforts</i>
09:30 – 10:30	Placing our partnership in the spotlight <i>Two rounds of inspirational panel discussions</i> <i>Panel 1: Placing DeLoG partners in the spotlight – decentralization and local governance from a development partner perspective</i> <i>Panel 2: Placing CIB members in the spotlights – decentralization and local governance from a practitioners perspective</i>
10:30 – 11:00	A conversation between development partners and practitioners – how to better collaborate and achieve greater impact?
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 – 13:00	Action planning <i>Co-creating joint actions for the following topics through a breakout exercise:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy - Communications - Partnerships
13:00 – 14:00	Closing ceremony of the CIB annual meeting 2024
14:00	End of CIB annual meeting 2024

Draft list of participants

HOST ORGANIZATION

Diputació Barcelona

- 1. Antoni Montseny Domenech**
International Relations Director
- 2. Marga Barceló Fontanals**
Head of Development Cooperation Office
- 3. Octavi de la Varga Mas**
International Strategic Projects Advisor
- 4. Ana Alos**
Head of Development Cooperation Section
- 5. Lali Carrillo**
Cooperation Development Office
- 6. Sandra Facerías Martín**
Cooperation Technique

CHAIR

VNG International

- 7. Neila Akrimi**
Chair UCLG-CIB working group
- 8. Judith Geerling**
Senior Manager
- 9. Finn Speulman**
Project Manager
- 10. Michelle ter Meer**
Senior Policy Advisor International Affairs

CO-CHAIR

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)

- 11. Gaby Senay**
Acting Director International Programs

- 12. Elsie Eleanora A. Odonkor**

GESI Specialist, Gender Equality and Social
Inclusion Advisor, PMI-WILL

CO-ORGANIZERS

DeLoG

- 13. David Jackson**

DeLoG Secretariat, Director, Local
Transformative Finance

- 14. Nan Zhang**

DeLoG Secretariat, Programme
Management Specialist, UNCDF

CIB MEMBERS & OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Africa for Education and Development

- 15. Courage Tengey**

Executive Director

Agence du Monde Commun

- 16. Yannick Lechevallier**

Director

Arab Urban Development Institute

- 17. Montaser A. Hiyari**

Director of Capacity Development

Association des Communes du Burundi

- 18. Anabele Niyubahwe**

Secrétaire Exécutive

Association Nationale des Communes du Bénin (ANCB)

- 19. Ségla Lihoussou**

Directeur Exécutif

Barcelona City Council

- 20. Jordi Cortés**
International Cooperation Officer

Commune Agadir Morocco

- 21. Ahmed Abdullahi Mohamed**
Head of Sister Cities

Commonwealth Local Government Forum

- 22. Lucy Slack**
Secretary-General

**Council of European Municipalities and
Regions**

- 23. Annelies Coessens**
Policy Officer

Ethiopian Cities Association

- 24. Andualem Tenaw Habtie**
Director General
- 25. Zerihun Workneh Abate**
Capacity Building & Knowledge
Management Director

FLACMA

- 26. Fernando Arnaiz Ramos**
Jefe de la Oficina en Europa

**Fons Català de Cooperació al
Desenvolupament**

- 27. Marta Anglès Masias**
Desk Officer for European Projects

GIZ

- 28. Sabrina Storm**
Advisor

- 29. Maria Koenig**
Project manager

- 30. Hannah Schabert**
Project manager

Government of Catalonia

- 31. Toni Ferrer**
Head of Service - Directorate
General for Development
Cooperation

- 32. Javier Sanchez Cano**
Manager - Strategic Programmes
and Networks

- 33. Leticia Barrios Trullols**
Policy Officer

ICLD

- 34. Johan Lilja**
Secretary General

- 35. Suzana Fatah**
Programme Officer

**International City County Management
Association**

- 36. Shraddha Kharel-Pandey**
Director, International Technical
Assistance

**Latvian Association of Local and Regional
Governments**

- 37. Mudite Juhna**
Secretary General

Local Councils Association of the Punjab

- 38. Anwar Hussain**
Representative Association of Local
Governments

Local Government Association of Zambia

- 39. Mpatanji Namumba**
Executive director

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

- 40. Nawal Goblan Alajmi**
Project Manager

Municipality of Abasan Al-Kabira

- 41. Anwar Abu-Zarifa**
Mayor

NALAG

- 42. Kokro Amankwah**
Secretary General

NALAS

- 43. Joachim Roth**
Secretary General

National League of Local Councils

- 44. Pok Sokundara**
Secretary General

Nexus Cooperation

- 45. Hadeel Khasawneh**
Consultant

PLATFORMA

- 46. Boris Tonhauser**
Director

SALAR International

- 47. Ryan Knox**
Managing Director

SALGA

- 48. Winnie Dhlamenze**
Project manager

- 49. Lance Joel**
Chief of operations

The Hague Academy for Local Governance

- 50. Esmeralda Garcia**
Representative

UCLG

- 51. Emilia Saiz**
Secretary General

- 52. Sara Hoeflich**
Assistant Secretary General

- 53. Firdaous Oussidhoum**
Assistant Secretary General

- 54. Cecile Roth**
Policy officer

UCLG Africa

- 55. Najat Zarrouk**
Director ALGA

UNDP

- 56. Giacomo Negrotto**
Policy Specialist - Local Governance

Urban Training Center Saudi Arabia

- 57. Dr. Majed Mustafa**
Director of the training center

VVSG

- 58. Jules de Winter**
International Policy Officer

What is the CIB working group?

The Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group of the world organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a technical platform for professionals from Local Government Associations (LGAs) and individual local governments active in the field of capacity development and local government development cooperation. The Working Group is a community of enablers and practitioners. All members are engaged in international activities, and most are involved in international capacity building programs.

CIB aims to advance the effectiveness and quality of international policies and programmes of local and regional governments and their associations. The working group achieves its purpose by exchanging knowledge and information, enabling cooperation among its members and within UCLG. All to achieve concrete results on the ground, all around the world.

What is the history of the CIB working group?

LGAs active in capacity building programmes already gathered within the Association Capacity Building platform of IULA, the predecessor of UCLG, from the early 00s onwards. The ACB-platform transitioned into the CIB working group in 2005, when the UCLG Executive Bureau agreed to establish Committees and Working Groups. The Working Groups develop proposals and/or cooperation initiatives between local governments and their associations in order to enrich the discussions within UCLG and its Committees, and policy councils, nowadays. The CIB working group is one of the most active working groups of UCLG. It has been a driving force for putting development cooperation of local governments on the agenda of UCLG and international organisations, through its dedicated policy papers (2013 and 2022), and an active peer community, aimed at improving development cooperation as a whole, and capacity building programmes in particular.

What is the CIB annual meeting?

The CIB members meet each other at least once a year, at the CIB annual meeting, hosted by one of the members of partners of CIB. At the two- or three day annual meeting the CIB Working Group members discuss developments in local government development cooperation, in order to enhance the quality of their work, and to coordinate activities and programmes in order to avoid overlap and duplication of efforts. CIB annual meetings have been organized yearly since 2007, with the exception of 2020 and 2021, because of the COVID pandemic.

More information on CIB?

More information about CIB can be found on the website: www.cib-uclg.org and in this digital flyer. You can also reach out to the CIB secretariat by sending an email to uclg.cib@vng.nl or by phoning/texting to +31 6 1215 6647.

UCLG Facilities

Presented and approved during the World Council in Konya, the UCLG Facilities were launched during the 2024 Retreat held in Barcelona last February. The Facilities are an instrument to funnel and strengthen the network's efforts to forefront key political agendas as levers to re-shape development action. Facilities contribute to unfolding the UCLG Pact for the Future - Daejeon Political Declaration. In order to do so, they bring together UCLG leadership, partners, coalitions, and work teams of the Organization. Each Facility will decide on their concrete objectives, milestones and roadmap – UCLG will provide advocacy, learning and research tools to achieve these.

Three Facilities were launched at the 2024 UCLG Retreat: the Caring Systems Facility, the UCLG-Women Facility and the Local for Action Facility. They are articulated around five main components.

- a) They are **connected with the communities**: rooting debates and shaping upcoming joint efforts with the guidance of UCLG leadership who are leading innovation in these agendas.
- b) They are **based on network engagement**: making visible and strengthening the links that exist between the different work lines of the Organization.
- c) They are **synergetic**: bridging together partnerships and coalitions, collectively shaping pathways through which to re-shape development agendas.
- d) They are **based on strengthened outreach**: allowing to reach wider audiences across territories and political processes at the local, national and international levels.
- e) They are **evidence-based**: reinforcing the connections between bottom-up, research-based processes and the network's shared advocacy efforts.

The Facilities should enable UCLG members to contribute to specific work on priority areas by facilitating specific activities. They should further allow UCLG partners to support action and finance different inputs. A yearly plan will be presented to the World Council.

The Caring Systems Facility

The Caring Systems Facility funnels and strengthens the network's efforts to advance a **renewed understanding of care**: expanding it to reflect the need for caring cities and regions that allow all populations to prosper sustainably on their own terms, countering inequalities and ensuring dignity throughout life and in death.

The Caring Systems Facility forefronts how populations' care needs have changed to become collective and felt depending on the territories people inhabit. And in response, the Caring Systems Facility proposes **changing discussions around care to a territorial scale**. Presently, populations experience collective care needs depending on the territories they inhabit: these relate to protection from the impacts of complex emergencies, including climate change or global pandemics, violent conflicts, rapid technological change, the precarization of urban life and its complex relations with demographic change and poverty. These needs add up to the care needs that sustain life, often undertaken by feminized, racialized, and marginalized populations.

As such, the UCLG Caring Systems Facility seeks to promote **care-driven innovation** in how local and regional governments relate to their local systems. Whereby local and regional governments play a central role in promoting a systemic change, responding with their actions to a key question: **If care is put at the center of local public action and urban life, what would change?**

The launch of the Facility at the UCLG Retreat took place through a public, moderated debate, counting on the participation of members and key partners working on agendas around care in partnership with UCLG, and whose work the Facility could contribute to supporting. These included representatives from Metropolis, the Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation, the Global Platform for the Right to the City, the Global Alliance for Care, the International Institute for Environment and Development, Public Services International and partner researchers.

The launch session contributed to identifying how leveraging care can lead to new policies and debates, with panellists sharing concrete experiences of this stemming from LRGs' actions as compiled by the Guangzhou Urban Innovation Award, concrete initiatives like the Metropolis Care Campaign, and research and learning tools that UCLG is advancing to support how the Facility contributes to funnelling the network's efforts.

What is next for the Caring System Facility

GOLD VII Multimedia Journal will be dedicated to Economies of Equality and Care, and a Peer Learning on the Commons will explore public-community partnerships as care-based channels to innovate local public service provision.

Other initiatives include:

- a) Development of training with the Global Care Alliance;
- b) Metropolis Care Givers Labs;
- c) Further initiatives identified by the members.

The UCLG-Women Facility

The UCLG-Women Facility carries the proud legacy of our equality-driven movement: from the establishment of our Standing Committee on Gender Equality, to nurturing a bold Global Feminist Municipal Movement, and a Pact for the Future that puts **care, equity and solidarity** at the center.

The recent global crises have highlighted the critical role of women elected leaders in advancing **inclusive and rights-based agendas**. Yet today we are seeing increased backsliding on women's rights and increasing gender-based violence, in particular against women in decision-making.

The UCLG-Women Facility aims to take a whole-of-society and whole-of-network approach, collectively joining efforts to tackle the old, new and systemic challenges of inequality and discrimination, with women's and feminist leadership as an essential lever for change. As such, the Facility aims to contribute to responding to a critical question: **What are the key entry points to accelerating women's meaningful and safe participation in political and public life?**

The launch of the Facility at the UCLG Retreat took place through a public, moderated debate, in which local and regional governments and key partners that support the Feminist Municipal Movement, shared their thoughts. The Vice-President of UCLG for the Forum of Regions, as well as representatives from the UCLG Regional Sections and UCLG UBUNTU advisors, and partners such as the Carter Center, brought local, regional and forward-thinking perspectives to the launch.

The launch of the Women Facility aimed at bridging the gap between **the innovative narrative** that the World Organization has developed in regards to gender equality and the action on the ground. With this in mind, participants brought to the table the need to develop local reviews of SDG 5, and mainstream the conversations around gender policies in territories. Participants also called to **budget gender equality in our territories**, so that feminist policies can be adequately implemented. This also includes developing mechanisms that monitor the implementation of said policies, so as to ensure gender is mainstreamed across all policies.

Another issue that was addressed in the launch was the gap between the push for feminist policies, and the actual **representation of women in public positions** and work. Participants reminded that gender equality is also an issue about working to ensure women are a part of municipal bodies, and not just in lower positions. Ultimately, participants called on the need to advance in quota systems, but also furthering the advocacy of the municipal movement around women's representation, as well as capacity building and mentoring for women elected leaders. Among the way forward identified for the Women Facility, participants suggested **evidence based research, innovative services and local-to-local dialogues, training and establishing partnerships** and monitoring, for example, through Voluntary Subnational Reviews of gender policies.

What is next for the UCLG-Women Facility

UCLG takes part in one of the five components of the Women and Youth in Democracy Initiative (WYDE): **“Advancing Women’s Political Participation and Decision Making” (WYDE – Women Leadership)**, together with UN Women, International IDEA, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). WYDE – Women Leadership was launched during the 68th Commission on the Status of Women, in March 2024, and will be implemented for the next three years. UCLG will lead three activities.

- a) Support networks of locally elected women through cross-regional exchanges to amplify the voices of women and gender-diverse local government leaders in regional and international fora;
- b) Produce tools and guidelines on enhancing inclusive local governments through gender mainstreaming;
- c) Convene global and regional dialogues on the transformation of social norms to increase women's participation at the local level.

UCLG has been a member of the Action Coalition 6 for the past three years, since the formation of the six Action Coalitions, convened by UN women as part of the Generation Equality Forum, which kick-started in 2021. UCLG's role as co-chair and co-leader of the Action Coalition 6 on Feminist Movements and Leadership is vital for the localization of Generation Equality.

The Action Coalition is guided by the following objectives: fund and support diverse feminist activities, organizations, funds and movements; promote, expand and protect civic space for feminist action, organization and mobilization; advance and increase meaningful participation, leadership and decision-making power of women, girls and non-binary people, in all their diversity; strengthen adolescent girls and young feminist leaders, their movements and organizations.

Other important ways forward for the UCLG Women Facility include:

- a) A mapping of violence against elected women, in relation with the work of the UCLG Special Envoy for Freedom, Solidarity and Fighting Violence against Local Political Leaders, and that of the **UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights**, together with the **Observatory of violence against women** of the Department of Seine Saint-Denis (OVF).
- b) The research project “NextGenC”, led by the London School of Economics, UCLG, Universidad de los Andes, Universidad ICESI, and the NGO Despacio, explores how youth participate in urban governance processes in intermediate cities in Colombia and in other cities around the world, specifically focusing on the role and impact of digital technology in shaping their participation. This project connects with UCLG’s work around **youth participation, with specific attention to young women**.

The UCLG Local4Action Facility

In the era of global shocks, the Local4Action Facility is the natural evolution of UCLG’s political mandate and the frontrunner role embodied by the members of the World Organization. Over the past decade, the World Organization has embraced a historic mandate —to achieve the 2030 Agenda through localization. This approach is rooted in the Bogotá Commitments, placing localization at the core of UCLG endeavor, and was further strengthened by the Pact for the Future - Daejeon Declaration.

Today, there is widespread consensus at the global level about the important role that local and regional governments and localization play in the quest for global sustainable development. With 65% of SDG targets estimated to depend on the **direct involvement of local governments**, this leadership has been consistently reflected in trajectories for change that promote more equitable futures, fostered by cities and territories through political drive and policy innovation. Localization is now formally mainstreamed as a **high-impact initiative** and crucial accelerator of the 2030 Agenda, including at the 2023 SDG Summit.

The Summit served to consolidate localization’s indispensable force, but also rang the alarm bell to **rescue the SDGs**. As preconized since the inception of the 2030 Agenda, when LRGs fully committed with its realization, the Local4Action Facility is the answer of the World Organization and the LRG constituency to this foundational moment to put the SDGs back on track from our communities.

What drives the Local4Action Facility forward is **active localization**. Active localization entails defining, implementing, communicating, monitoring and evaluating leading innovative action and collective political will by local and regional governments to achieve the 2030 Agenda as the framework to realize all the global development agendas at the unison and rescuing the SDGs.

Active localization mainstreams the narrative of the Power of We to regenerate hope and catalyze action, fostering partnerships and promoting multilevel coordination to unlock enabling governance frameworks and financial environments that foster the understanding of all the global development agendas as multi-level, whole-of government, whole-of-society targets, and integrate it into all planning, resourcing, policy making and action.

By fostering active localization, local and regional governments and the World Organization are setting ambitious goals, and determining targets and means of implementation through transformative policies, programmes, planning, finance, organizational tools, processes, arrangements and local and multilevel partnerships to make sure cities and territories are fully equipped to unlock their potential as indispensable actors for achieving **sustainable peace**, **inclusive development** and **course-correcting climate action** at the global level.

The UCLG Local4Action Facility turns the localization of the 2030 Agenda into an ecosystem of transformative local actions that, put together, elevate the vision, action, and political leadership of our members and amplify their impact at the global scale, bringing partners together, promoting enabling environments, and subsidiarity frameworks for collective empowerment. It does so by strengthening strategic thinking and planning to define the collective criteria required for working towards a common vision of the change we need.

The Facility builds upon **high-impact localization policies**, such as those emanating from the Local4Action HUBs, and transform our alliances and coalitions through joint advocacy, learning, and research, but also to impact assessment. All this put together with the goal of building a structured, all-encompassing space/infrastructure that harnesses the full dimension of active localization, to activate all the global development agendas within the framework of the SDGs and the Pact for the Future of Humanity.

The launch of the Local4Action Facility brought together longstanding champions of localization and innovative local action, embodied by the Local4Action HUBs initiative, representatives from the political leadership of the World Organization, together with partners that have been with us along the way.

The goal of the launch was to strategize about how to bring the power of localization in all fronts, taking stock of the main milestones down the road and connecting it with concrete action that had led the 2030 Agenda implementation and political drive from the ground. The session explored the importance of keeping innovation at the heart of acceleration as we aim to break new ground through this new collective space for the era of global shocks.

What is next for the Local4Action Facility

UCLG will continue its commitment to **fostering VLR and VSR Initiatives** by supporting local governments associations for the fifth consecutive year, focusing on promoting Voluntary Subnational Review (VSR) processes through the Local4Action Facility. This year, UCLG extends support to UNGL in Costa Rica, ABM in Brazil, SALGA in South Africa, AMR in Mauritania, and MuAN in Nepal. Through various means, including workshops and bilateral support, UCLG aims to raise awareness and strengthen capacities surrounding the significance of VSR processes. The recent VSR Action Platform workshop on 21st March facilitated peer exchange among associations and partners, enhancing their VSR processes.

Further support will be provided leading up to and beyond the High-Level Political Forum, where VSRs will prominently showcase local and regional governments' efforts towards the 2030 Agenda. These processes involve critical monitoring, reporting, and a fundamental reframing of local governance for SDG localization.

UCLG will double down on its efforts in **cultivating local expertise by bolstering training for localization initiatives** enhancing our training programs to ensure they remain relevant, impactful, and responsive to the evolving needs of our constituency and the local realities.

These efforts will include:

- a) Enrich SDG Module 2 by establishing practical links to urban and metropolitan planning, ensuring that training remains pertinent and actionable.
- b) Launch the second online course on SDG Module 4 on Localizing the SDGs through Decentralized cooperation, set to provide participants with immersive learning experiences from June to August 2024.
- c) Leveraging the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) as a foundational resource for collective capacity building and discussions on Climate Change.
- d) Developing interactive learning experiences, and practical resources to empower local leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively localize SDG 5 and advance gender equality within their communities, centered on Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) – gender equality.

UCLG continues to **foster innovation and collaboration through the Local4Action HUBs Program and initiatives**. These HUBs act as catalysts for innovation, collaboration and transformative change, providing platforms for local leaders to share best practices, forge partnerships, and drive meaningful action towards global sustainability goals. By drawing inspiration from local champions within the network, UCLG accelerates localization of global agendas, leveraging shared experiences and key local data, and progress towards a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive future.