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*ELABORATION OF A*

**TOOLKIT FOR FACILITATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS AT LOCAL LEVEL**
*TOWARDS A LOCALIZATION PROCESS FOR SDGS*

*A UNDP, UN-HABITAT, GTF PARTNERSHIP*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The world is expected to adopt a new global development agenda by the end of 2015. The implementation of the new agenda will be guided by the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] due for approval by the General Assembly of United Nations in September 2015.

Lessons from the MDG implementation underlined the importance of Local Governments and local actors in delivering the development agenda. In this regard, among the issues that are critical to the successful implementation and attainment of the SDGs Agenda is "localisation"[1]. This is because local institutions, local economic actors and communities provide legitimacy to global/national efforts towards the realisation of local and national development outcomes by grounding development choices in the will of the people through popular participation and ownership.

'Localising' development should not be seen as a translation of global policies within local contexts, but rather as a process based on the empowerment of local stakeholders, aimed at making sustainable development more responsive and therefore relevant to local needs, aspirations and lives through sustained exchanges between global, national and local facets.

The search for the most appropriate means of 'localizing' the SDGs is therefore critical to the design, implementation and optimizing the success of the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Based on the outputs of the "dialogue on localization" carried out in 2014, UNDP, UN Habitat and the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments are currently embarking on an integrated process for localizing the SDGs in line with the UNDG approach for delivering effective support to countries in implementing the Post-2015 Agenda. Together, the three partners will assist in joining up Post-2015 principles and national, sub-national and local development plans, while addressing the bottlenecks and gaps – both at the national and international level – obstructing the local implementation of the SDGs through integrated and targeted solutions, paying particular attention to creating opportunities to strengthen Local Governments managerial competences. To do so, the three partners will make their expertise available to national and local stakeholders, providing coordination and policy support – including decentralized cooperation – to advance localizing the Post-2015 Agenda.

### A. 2014 – "Dialogues on Localization" to define the means of implementation of the Post 2015 Agenda from the local level perspective

In a very practical way, local and national dialogues on 'localizing' the future development agenda[2] took place in 13 countries in Africa (Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana, Malawi and Tanzania), Asia Pacific (Armenia,

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[1] See Report Delivering The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Opportunities At The National And Local Levels
[2] See Report Localizing the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Philippines, Tajikistan and Vanuatu), Europe (Portugal) and Latin America and the Caribbean (Ecuador, El Salvador and Jamaica), together with a number of regional and global dialogues, resulting in a strategic global coalitions of partners - regional/local government representatives, civil society groups, democracy advocates, United Nations agencies and Member States.

Key messages on the localization coming from these dialogues were:

I.   Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) are critical for promoting inclusive sustainable development within their territories, and as such for the implementation of the agenda;
II.   Effective local governance can ensure the inclusion of a diversity of local stakeholders thereby creating broad based ownership, commitment and accountability;
III.   An integrated multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach is needed to promote transformative agendas at the local level;
IV.   Strong national commitment to provide adequate legal frameworks, institutional and financial capacity to local governments is required;

The Governments and the relevant actors involved in the "localizing" Dialogues further expressed the need to be informed and equipped with concrete strategies, mechanisms and capabilities to translate the key outputs of the process into substantial development plans. It is exactly in the spirit of finding solutions to help countries facing this challenge that the elaboration of a toolkit facilitating the local implementation of the SDGs is conceived.

**B.   2015 – Elaboration of a practical toolkit to facilitate the implementation of the agenda at local level**

Fully committed to continue their collaboration on the localization of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and to develop a comprehensive set of mechanisms able to respond to the challenges countries will face in implementing the future SDGs at the local level, UNDP, UN-Habitat and the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments will capitalize on their alliance through the elaboration of a toolkit for localizing the

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**Principles of Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda**

- **Alignment** of national SGD defined development **goals and targets** at the local level.
- A review and development of **comprehensive and well-coordinated policies** that will facilitate local initiatives in response to the localised SDG targets.
- **Empowering local governments and local actors** with capacity to drive responsive, inclusive and sustainable service delivery and local economic development.
- Supporting **communities** to claim their **rights**, be aware of their **obligations** and exercise **responsibility**
- **Participation** of local communities and local actors in defining their **local needs and interests** in the context of SDGs targets.
- Existence of **local capacity** [of empowered local governments, local institutions and actors] for the **planning and implementation management** of interventions leading to the realisation of the SDGs targets at local levels
- Existence of **system to mobilise, transfer and use national and local revenues** by local governments in support of service delivery and local economic development targets in response to the SDGs.
- **Capacity** to mobilise, allocate and use national, local and donor revenues for **service delivery** and **local economic development** targets in response to the SDGs.
- Existence of **stakeholder partnerships** of central and local governments, communities and non-state actors in support of **responsive service delivery and local economic development** in response to the SDGs.
- Existence of **monitoring, evaluation and learning systems** to track implementation, evaluate impact, relevance and sustainability and report on local interventions in response to the SDGs.

SDGs in order to promote and operationalize the principles that resulted from the Dialogue on 'localising' the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

## 2. RATIONAL AND FOCUS FOR THE TOOLKIT

The need for 'localising' the SDGs begs the question how it should be implemented and ensures national compliance to the agreed principles. To respond to this, it is important to develop a shared understanding of the mechanisms that are required to drive 'localization':

- Policies
- Institutional Capacity
- Resources
- Monitoring and Accountability Systems

The purpose of the toolkit will be focusing on how to guide, adapt and initiate changes in the application of the "drivers", generating results that respond to the aspirations and needs of local communities and populations.

**Policies** are designed to influence and determine all major decisions and actions, and all activities taking place within a defined ambit, including patterns of development. To localize the SDGs therefore countries may require a change in policies processes – analysis, formulation, execution and monitoring and reporting processes – to promote an enabling environment for local development. The toolkit is thus necessary in providing guidance for influencing development policies in localizing the SDGs, supporting local ownership of sustainable developmental policies, promoting integrated multilevel and multistakeholder approaches to support transformative agendas at local level.

**Institutional capacity** is essential since policy drive may initiate the SDGs localization but it is implemented and sustained only through institutional and participative processes. The toolkit will thus be applied in order to facilitate the establishment of institutional assessments and structures enhancing the principle of subsidiarity, facilitating the assignment of responsibilities to the different levels of government, strengthening the capacity of local institutions to promote territorial development, facilitate the participation of local communities and furthering the institutional accountability vis-à-vis citizens.

The toolkit will seek to provide guidance for Governments – Central and Local – on improved multilevel governance, including coordinated development plans from local to national levels and alternative fiscal responses for financing the SDGs implementation at the local level, thus emphasizing local ownership, mobilization of national and local resources, effective management and accountability.

Countries and especially local actors should be supported with toolkits for enhanced participation of local institutions and communities in **monitoring and reporting** on the SDG planning, implementing management and specifically reporting on the level and extent of compliance to the principles of localisation.[3] This particular activity will require the development of participatory methodologies and a very reliable data base for establishing benchmarks and for changes measurement.

Such toolkits will draw on the experiences accumulated and lessons learned from the implementation of the MDGs at local level, and from the different experiences of local development policies and tools developed by the partners that support this proposal.

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[3] See Turin Communiqué on Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda

### 3. PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE TOOLKIT

The toolkit will be targeted as a **universal mechanism** responsible for elaborating a set of criteria and mechanisms aimed at facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level and **flexible enough to be contextualized** and adjusted to territories' peculiarities as well as to specific and nuance issues. It should facilitate to the extent possible compliance with 'localization' measures instituted to support the effective implementation of the SDGs by and in different countries.

### A. Governance

Capitalizing upon the strong alliance and modus operandi that was established whilst implementing the Localizing Dialogues, a **Steering Committee** composed by UNDP, UN Habitat and the Global Task Force (GTF) will be established in order to guide and facilitate the toolkit elaboration process.

UNDP through the ART Initiative (Hub for Territorial Partnerships) in UNDP Brussels, UN Habitat, through the Local Government and Decentralisation Unit and a representative of the GTF will facilitate the follow up. They will define the ToRs for the drawing up of the toolkit, will select the Lead Consultant to develop the proposal for the toolkit and report to the Steering Committee. The secretariat will support the Steering Committee to plan and implement the consultations and workshops to gather inputs on the toolkit, by defining areas and topics for discussion, mobilizing partners to be involved, identifying gaps and possible bottlenecks and consequently offering solutions.

The toolkit's inclusive process seeks to capitalize on the UNDG led Dialogues on implementation, while ensuring the participation of relevant stakeholders in the definition of the Toolkit mechanisms. In this regard, the Steering Committee will work in close collaboration with national, regional and local governance stakeholders. LRGs and associations thereof will be mobilized by the GTF. Likewise, there will be close coordination with UN Habitat and UNDP Offices in participating countries, as they can play a coordinating role to bring together and accompany actors from the UN system, the national and local governments, and other relevant stakeholders. UNDP and UN-Habitat Regional Centers and Regional Local Governments Associations will be also involved as they bring alone accumulated experience in promoting knowledge management and exchange of experiences. Furthermore, international organizations, research institutes, academic institutions, CSOs, the private sector, foundations and other actors gathering relevant knowledge and experience will be also invited to contribute to the process.

A UN delivering as ONE approach will lead the whole governance system in order to guarantee participation, coherence and coordination among UN entities.

### B. Organisation
#### i. Overview

The Steering Committee will mobilize an experienced Lead Consultant (tbd) to draw up the toolkitand consult a selected array of key stakeholders through workshops and consultations organized in partner countries. Particularly, the elaboration of the toolkit will be based on a preliminary identification and review of already-existing toolkits – paying special attention to the MDGs experience – and further informed through participatory workshops carried out, where possible, at *subnational* and *national* level. The process will involve a number of local and regional governments that have already expressed their interest in organizing and hosting local level discussions. It will also involve countries/national governments that are willing to be involved in the localization of the Post 2015 agenda, in particular – but not exclusively – those countries that co-hosted or participated in the Dialogues on Localization as well as those that are currently participating in the SDGs piloting exercise at national level.

The toolkit elaboration process will focus on **local development realities**, particularly looking into integrated local governance and local development systems, while taking the Localizing Dialogues main recommendations as starting point: (i) establishment of effective local governance to ensure inclusion, ownership and accountability; (ii) promote transformative agendas at the local level through an integrated multi-level and multi-stakeholders approach; (iii) foster strong national commitment to provide adequate legal frameworks, institutional and financial capacity to local governments. Among others, the process will concentrate on the key areas and underlying principles that would be essential for a successful localization of the Agenda; the necessary institutional and financial capacities; the articulation among institutions; and the interaction and interrelation among different systems.

To this end, the process will not only involve Local and National Governments, but also representatives of civil society, academia and the private sector. It will look at gathering best practices and innovative solutions for the localization, identifying gaps as well as alternative approaches for localizing the implementation of the SDGs in different institutional environments and circumstances, underlying the universality of the Goals.

A **Lead Consultant** will be involved from the very beginning of the process, to contribute to develop the toolkit. Acting in close collaboration with the Steering Committee, he/she will provide background and preliminary inputs to the toolkit structure and content though the analysis and review of existing toolkits and mechanisms, while gathering the relevant inputs to the consultation process for the elaboration of the toolkit. The process will be informed by the conclusions from the local, national, regional and global Dialogues on Localization and will also consider the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Relevant international organizations, additional research institutes, CSOs and other institutions with accumulated experience will be also invited to take part in the process as advisory partners. .

An **UNDP's in-house cross-fertilization** process will be also promoted, to make sure that inputs from different sections and professions are considered and therefore an integrated approach is applied.

### ii.    Review of existing toolkits and mechanisms

The first step for elaborating the toolkit will be the identification and review of already-existing toolkits and mechanisms that could be adapted for providing guidance and facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. This background research, which will be conducted by the Lead Consultant, will look particularly into the past experience of the MDGs implementation process – toolkits; evaluations; reports etc. – in view of capturing essential recommendations, lessons learned and best practices that could be adjusted to the SDGs and thus reproduced.

### iii.    Participatory Workshops

Following the identification and review of the extensive already-existing toolkits and mechanisms, a preliminary proposal of toolkits will be submitted by the Lead Consultant to the Steering Committee. The first outline will be enriched through technical **participatory workshops** at different levels (local, national and global in different regions of the world), relying on the meetings planned by the organizations and networks involved in this initiative, with the aim of capturing the different views and experiences of a specialized audience of local governance stakeholders.

Each workshop will include a **selected number of participants** in representation of relevant local institutions and will be adapted to local/national realities and priorities; they will tackle specific aspects and will be accompanied by a facilitator to guide the process in close cooperation with the responsible Lead Consultant and the Steering Committee.

The inputs obtained from these participatory sessions will be captured and systematized by the Lead Consultant in order to inform and give credibility to the proposed toolkit.

The specific **areas and topics of discussion** in the participatory workshops will be defined by the Steering Committee in consultation with the Lead Consultant following priorities and interests of local and national governance stakeholders.

### iv. Validation meeting

A final validation event will be organized to present the toolkit elaboration process and to launch its operationalization. Particularly, the meeting will aim at gathering the recommendations shared by stakeholders during the inclusive participatory workshops and to finalize and approve the final toolkit document.

Participating in this event will be Senior Representatives from national and local governments/local government associations, the UN System, CSOs, the private sector and foundations.

## 4. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING THE TOOLKIT ELABORATION PROCESS

Several challenges would need to be addressed along the Toolkit definition process:

- Ensuring the necessary participation and representation of key stakeholders;
- Capturing the wide knowledge gathered along the process, while defining the right perspective and strategic focus to analyze it;
- Translating the diverse outcomes of the technical participatory workshops into a toolkit that captures the experiences (geographically as well as from a wide range of local governance stakeholders) and at the same time distills a number of generic and critical elements;
- Achieving substantial recommendations encompassing global needs, gaps and challenges, that are as flexible to be further contextualized within each country's situation.
- Guaranteeing the accessible and user friendly character of the toolkit.

## 5.  PARTNERS

Potential partners to host and/or participate in the toolkit events:

| Regional and local governments and Associations thereof | <ul><li>Municipality of Barcelona</li><li>Basque Country (region)</li><li>Trento (region)</li><li>Friuli Venezia Giulia (region)</li><li>Assemblée des Départements de France (association of local authorities)</li></ul> |
|---|---|
| Countries / national governments and LRGs: | <ul><li>Countries that co-hosted Dialogues on Localization (2014):<ul><li>Ecuador</li><li>Ghana</li></ul></li><li>Countries that participated in the Dialogues on Localization (2014):<ul><li>Burundi</li><li>El Salvador</li></ul></li><li>Countries participating in the SDG piloting exercise at national level (2015):<ul><li>Albania</li><li>Indonesia</li><li>Tunisia</li></ul></li><li>Other interested countries:<ul><li>Gabon</li><li>Mauritania</li></ul></li></ul> |
| Advisory partners | <ul><li>European Commission</li><li>Cities Alliance</li><li>EURADA</li><li>DeLog</li><li>Cespi</li><li>Cidob</li><li>UDUAL</li><li>African representatives tbd</li><li>Asian representatives tbd</li></ul> |
| Other UN Agencies/Programmes | <ul><li>UNCDF</li><li>UN Women</li><li>ILO</li><li>UNFPA</li></ul> |
| Other international organizations | <ul><li>OECD</li><li>IADB</li></ul> |
| CSO | <ul><li>ALDA</li><li>Youth representative tbd</li></ul> |
| Private sector | <ul><li>SEBRAE</li><li>ADELCO</li><li>GLOBAL COMPACT</li></ul> |

## 6. TIME-FRAME (2015-2016)

| Action | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | April | May |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Establishment of the Steering Committee | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Identification and involvement of the Lead Consultant | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Identification and review of already-existing toolkits and mechanisms | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | |
| Initial draft or general approach to the toolkit | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | |
| Identification and selection of territories/ regions/ countries to participate in participatory workshops | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | |
| Kick-off meeting with all the partners involved | | | ▓ | | | | | | | | |
| Plan and design of the Participatory Workshops adapted to local/national specificities | | | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | |
| Carry out the Participatory Workshops | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | |
| Capture and systematize lessons learned from the consultations/events | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | |
| Elaboration of the toolkit | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | |
| Fundraising | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | |
| Informing the international development community with preliminary results | | | | | | | | | ▓ | | ▓ |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Presentation and Validation Event | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## 7. RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

| Intended Outputs | Output Targets | Indicative Activities | Responsible Parties | Inputs/Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OUTPUT 1**<br><br>**Toolkit to facilitate the localization of the SDGs elaborated**<br><br><br>**Baseline**<br><br>No toolkit related to SDGs' implementation at the local level exists<br><br><br>**Indicators**<br><br>Toolkit facilitating the localisation of the SDGs available | Toolkit elaborated and validated by April- May 2016 | **1.1** Finalized the toolkit concept note and share it with partner<br><br>**1.2** Establish the Steering Committee<br><br>**1.3** Identification and involvement of a Lead Consultant<br><br>**1.4** Reach out and mobilize partners for the toolkit elaboration<br><br>**1.5** Identify partners, timing and location for Participatory Workshops<br><br>**1.6** Carry out Participatory Workshops in view of capturing the knowledge to inform the toolkit elaboration process<br><br>**1.7** Capture and systematize lessons learned from the participatory workshops<br><br>**1.8** Organise a final event to present and validate the toolkit document | **UNDP**<br><br>**GTF**<br><br>**UN-Habitat** | |

| | | **1.9** Finalize the Toolkit document and publish it – virtual and printed versions | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OUTPUT 2** **Partnerships/Alliance for implementing of the SDGs at the local level strengthened** **Baseline** Existing alliance between UNDP, UN-Habitat and GTF matured during the Dialogues on localizing the Post-2015 process **Indicators** # of partners involved in the toolkit elaboration process # of participants to the participatory Workshops Extent to which the Participatory Workshops involve actors at different levels and from different sectors Extent to which Participatory Workshops are representative of different World's Regions | Participatory and inclusive toolkit elaboration process assured Actors form different levels of governance – central and local – as well as from different sectors – public and private – involved in the toolkit elaboration process, namely: national governments; LRGs; NGOs; CSOs; private sector. Technical Participatory Workshops carried out in at least (10) countries of different World's Regions | **1.1** Carry out Joint advocacy and initiatives promoting the importance of the local level within the SDGs implementation process **1.2** Further raise awareness on LRGs and local actors' key role in the Post-2015 framework **1.3** Inform the international development community with preliminary results | **UNDP** **UN-Habitat** **GTF** | |

**ANNEX 1**

Tentative list of events to host a participatory workshop for the elaboration of the toolkit:

| Decentralized cooperation partners | Interesting event for the presentation of the Hub/Toolkit | Country | Date of the event |
|---|---|---|---|
| Regional Forum on Territorial Development | | Quito, Ecuador | 18-19 May 2015 |
| CRPM | CoR-CPMR co-organised Conference: The Balkan and the Black Sea Area on the move: perspectives for Regional Authorities | Brussels, Belgium | 29-May-15 |
| Committee of the Regions | 4th Assises of Decentralized cooperation | Brussels, Belgium | 1-2 June 2015 |
| MED Programme - European Territorial Cooperation | MarInA- Med Final Conference | Barcelona, Spain | 2-3 June 2015 |
| ORU FOGAR | ORU/FOGAR Executive Bureau | Paraguay | 3-5 June 2015 |
| Medcities | Atelier "Villes et territorires durables" | Marseille, France | 4-5 June 2015 |
| UCLG | UCLG Executive Bureau | Porto Alegre, Brazil | 10-12 June 2015 |
| CLGF (Commonwealth Local Government Forum | CLGF Biennial conference | Gaborone, Botswana | 15-19 June 2015 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| **CCRE/CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and regions** | CEMR Policy Committee | Munich, Germany | 25-26 June 2015 |
| **Cités Unies France** | 6em Forum de l'action internationale des collectivités | Paris, France | 29-30 June 2015 |
| **ORU FOGAR** | ORU/FOGAR General Assembly | Andalucia, Spain | 23-25 September 2015 |
| **UCLG** | UCLG CIB annual meeting | The Hague, The Netherlands | 1-2 October 2015 |
| **World Forum on Local Economic Development** | | Turin, Italy | 13-16 October 2015 |
| **CCRE/CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and regions** | CEMR Secretaries general and Directors of member associations | Nicosia, Cyprus | 29-30 October 2015 |
| **UCLG** | UCLG World Council | Paris, France | 5-7 December 2015 |