



Second UN Directors Group Retreat Report

5-6 February 2025



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INTRODUCTION

The **Second Local2030 Coalition UN Directors Group Retreat**, held in **Bilbao, Spain, on 5-6 February 2025**, marked a significant milestone in advancing the Coalition's strategic shift. Focused on aligning and coordinating the strategies, efforts, and expertise of its UN members, the retreat brought together director-level representatives from United Nations Human Settlements Programme (**UN-Habitat**), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (**FAO**), United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**), United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**), International Labour Organization (**ILO**), United Nations Development Coordination Office (**UN DCO**), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (**UNECA**), **Joint SDG Fund**, World Health Organization (**WHO**), UN Refugee Agency (**UNHCR**), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (**UN DESA**), **UNICEF**, International Organization for Migration (**IOM**), **Joint SDG Fund (UN DCO)**, and Executive Office of the Secretary-General (**EOSG**) to define the strategic direction for the Coalition's new phase, aimed at operationalization and systemic, transformational impact.

operationalization of localization within the UN system and beyond, connecting global agendas and processes to local priorities and systems through a systemic view. By positioning the Coalition as the go-to platform for localization, UN members will amplify its influence and foster alignment across key agendas.

In addition to these core objectives, participants stressed the value of **stronger synergy among agencies and with local actors**. The Retreat highlighted the importance of upcoming events like **Ffd4, HLPF, UN-FSS+4, the World Social Summit and the COP30**, urging the Coalition to present **unified messages on how local solutions can help bridge the gap between global policy commitments and real change on the ground**. The Directors encouraged members to **collaborate on capacity building, financing mechanisms, and data sharing** so that local actors are genuinely recognized and empowered to implement the SDGs.

As the Coalition moves forward, the momentum generated in Bilbao will drive impactful results, establishing **localization as a cornerstone of sustainable development and a key accelerator for the 2030 Agenda**.

With a vision defined and a fully functional team, the Coalition's Secretariat is now equipped to deliver innovative solutions and foster stronger connections and collaborations, enabling higher impact and systemic transformation to **localize the six transitions and the Pact for the Future**.



Over two days of productive discussions and collaborative planning, participants outlined a clear path forward to harness the transformative power of localization as a critical accelerator for advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By focusing on the three workstreams—**advocacy, action, and monitoring**—and leveraging innovative solutions, UN entities reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring that the Coalition delivers tangible results. These efforts aim to accelerate the

KEY OUTCOMES

1) Upgrading Advocacy to Effectively Influence Global Processes

The Coalition will elevate coherent messages, evidence, and tools to influence global processes and their outcome documents and implementation, ensuring the centrality of localization and providing key guidelines for the SDG countdown. This entails developing a **unified engagement and advocacy strategy for events** (FfD4, HLPF, World Social Summit, COP30, etc.) so that Coalition members elevate consistent messages and align messaging around the idea that localization is critical for bridging global commitments and local realities.

Agencies agreed to collaborate on talking points, policy recommendations, and success stories demonstrating tangible local solutions (e.g. showcasing how local financing enable city governments to improve resilience or how local data collection supports accurate SDG monitoring). A **Network of Communications Officers** was proposed, which would catalyse information from the agencies and

training processes; connect with UN Information Centres; map out upcoming events, anticipate negotiation milestones, and provide standardized talking points that all Coalition members can adapt. This would support communications synergy, avoid duplication of effort, and embed localization language more firmly into global outcomes and public dialogue.

2) Harmonizing and Enhancing UN System-wide Capacity Building for Localization

A Task Force, co-led by UN DESA and UN DCO, will harmonize capacity-building efforts in collaboration with UN entities, including those leading on Local2030 flagships, Steering Committee members, and partners from local, national, and regional governments, including from Local2030 Hubs, and academia.

Participants noted that capacity-building has often been fragmented or repetitive, leading to confusion among local authorities. To address this, the Task



Participants of the UN Directors Group Retreat.



On 4 February, UN directors met with the President of the Regional Government of the Basque Country (Lehendakari).

Force will coordinate with the Knowledge and Scientific Network (KSN), which will compile research and proven best practices—ranging from municipal budgeting for climate adaptation to local-level digital transformation—as well as both Working Groups. The Task Force will then integrate these findings, recommendations, and resources into training modules and guidance documents for UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and local actors ensuring each entity's efforts complement rather than overlap. Priority pilot countries (where local government engagement is already strong or national leadership is open to deeper localization) will be identified, and specialized capacity-building “packages” can be deployed.

3) Supporting UNCTs and Strengthening Collaboration with DCO

The Coalition will strengthen selected UNCTs by equipping them with resources to drive transformative change by operationalizing localization at country and local levels, building on the catalytic initiatives financed with the Joint SDG Fund. The Coalition will enhance engagement with DCO and Regional Commissions by supporting consultation mechanisms that engage Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) as well as other relevant local actors.

Throughout the Retreat, the need to embed and monitor the integration of localization into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSD-CFs) was emphasized. By partnering closely with the DCO, the Coalition can help Resident Coordinators

(RCs) systematically engage local stakeholders at each stage of planning. Some members suggested an approach (such as a “localization check,” or process piggybacking on the evolving Localization Marker 2.0) to ensure LRGs are involved early on.

Of the 30 Joint Programmes under the call for seed funding proposals launched by the Joint SDG Fund and the Coalition with the support of Spain, 26 have entered the implementation phase. The Directors agreed to prioritize and join efforts, convening with RCs and UN entities to boost and ensure the success of localization efforts of four-five selected UNCTs. Additionally, Joint SDG Fund investments could offer an umbrella to bring together different actors to consider how to scale up local pilot projects, potentially unlocking new models of city or district-level collaboration and catalyzing the expansion of local solutions.

A concise two-page “offer” for RCs will explain how the Local2030 Coalition can support RCs through the Localization Marker, rosters of experts, highlighted relevant Flagship programmes, guidance for engaging local governments, and other Coalition tools that provide guidance for engaging local governments and support impactful local engagement.

4) Boosting the Localization Marker

The Localization Marker will be fine-tuned into a 2.0 version, with a stronger focus on monitoring localization efforts and channeling financing to the local



Mr. Rafael Tuts, Director of the Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat, delivering opening remarks at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

level and showing how the UN can go local. In addition, the Marker will be used to demonstrate what has been learned and mainstream this as something that can support, for example, the broader portfolio of joint programmes of the Joint SDG Fund and beyond.

Feedback on the Marker found that some agencies used the current Marker as a 'tick-box exercise' that insufficiently influenced actual programming or budget allocations. By introducing clearer criteria for local involvement and outcome tracking, a Localization Marker 2.0 can guide how funds are allocated to on-the-ground initiatives, including through potential concrete action steps or justifications. Donors such as Spain and the EU have expressed interest in applying a refined Marker to support targeting resources strategically towards localized initiatives. The Coalition's Secretariat with the support of the Joint SDG Fund's Secretariat will oversee a review of the Marker's performance, collecting data on how it influences project design and actual local impact, and creating an Expert Group to advance the review and updated 2.0 version.

5) Maximizing Impact of Working Groups

The Coalition's two Working Groups (WGs)—Working Group 1 (WG1), which is focused on localizing the six SDG transitions and Working Group 2 (WG2), which is focused on financing these transitions—will align priorities, share expertise, and pool resources to maximize their collective impact, ensuring cohe-

sive actions and delivering transformative results more efficiently and effectively.

Both WGs provided updates on their workplans, with WG1 planning to present a paper to the UNDG ahead of the HLPF, focusing on localizing the SDG transitions in the context of the Pact for the Future, and identifying pilot locations in the second half of the year. WG2 aims to promote the messages of its policy brief in the FFD4 process and requested to remove its second deliverable in favor of providing inputs into WG1's report to have one consolidated deliverable. The Directors welcomed the idea of a combined final output if it streamlines and improves messages, underscoring that no new mechanism should be created, and that the priority is on the production of quality work and products and not on the details of how the workplans of the WGs are implemented, which is at the discretion of each WG. It was suggested that Flagship examples (discussed in the next section) could illustrate how WG1's transitions and WG2's financing approaches converge in real-world contexts.

6) Supporting Implementation of Action 55(e)

Expertise of the Coalition members will be gathered to support implementation efforts related to Action 55(e) and the recommendations of the Advisory Group on LRGs, including contributing to the Secretary-General's recommendations on how engagement with LRGs could advance the 2030 Agenda by

the end of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly for Member States' consideration.

Action 55(e) provides a pathway to institutionalize LRGs within broader UN processes, and the Coalition has a role to play in providing technical advice and elevating examples of success in local engagement. The Local2030 Hubs can share insights from diverse settings—urban, rural, conflict-affected territories—to illustrate how local action can bolster SDG achievement. could inform the Secretary-General's recommendations, supplying concrete examples of how LRGs engagement unlocks more inclusive, high-impact development.

7) Roadmap from the FFD4 towards the 2027 SDG Summit

The Coalition will emphasize the transformative impact of localization by showcasing data and evidence-based results provided by UN entities, UNCTs and the Local2030 Coalition's constituencies, Local2030 Hubs and partners.

Recognizing 2027 as a milestone leading into the next SDG Summit (and potentially shaping post-2030 discussions), participants saw FfD4 in 2025 as a crucial starting point to secure multi-level processes convergence with a strong language on subnational financing, local capacity building, and enabling frameworks for local governance. The Coalition envisions a continuous narrative demonstrating how a systemic approach in localizing the SDGs accelerates broader progress.

Moving **beyond advocacy to operationalization** emerged as a guiding concept, emphasizing the need for policy commitments to translate into real investments and capacity support on the ground and for the Coalition to demonstrate how local solutions can be promoted, scaled and mainstreamed. Similarly, a robust synergy with other UN convenings (e.g., the World Social Summit) would highlight how localizing the six transitions can yield social dividends – like improved livelihoods, accessible public services, and greater inclusion of marginalized groups.

A consolidated **Engagement Strategy** was proposed, mapping how the Coalition would appear in the upcoming Preparatory Committee processes, side events, and main negotiations. The Secretariat and UNDP were identified as key leads for FfD4 coordination, while UN-Habitat might take a lead role for COP30-related advocacy, FAO for the UNFSS+4, and UN DESA and ILO for the World Social Summit. By 2027, the Coalition aims to showcase a tangible track record of local-level outcomes facilitated by better financing, improved coordination, and consistent monitoring.

8) Advance the mission and activities of the Coalition through the KSN, Hubs, and Flagships

Throughout the UN Director's Group Retreat, emphasis was placed on fostering systemic transformation by enabling connections and operationalizing local action for scaled up impact. One of the key methods



Dr. Stefanos Fotiou, Director of the Office of Sustainable Development Goals, FAO, delivering opening remarks at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

discussed to achieve this was harnessing the potential of the Coalition's existing mechanisms such as the Local2030 Hubs, the Local 2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network (KSN) and proposed new mechanisms such as the flagships.

The Local2030 Hubs and their role as centers of excellence for SDG localization, and spaces fostering collaboration and knowledge co-creation among local actors within their region, were discussed. The Secretariat briefed the UNDG on the changes in status of Local2030 Hubs, having moved from nine Hubs to four (Hawai'i Green Growth (HGG) Hub, Liverpool 2030Hub, Paraná Hub, and Shizuoka Hub) due to the formalization process adopted by the Local2030 Coalition Steering Committee in 2023 with four prospective Hubs (Cairo, Euskadi, the Province of Buenos Aires, and Cabo Verde) going through the application process.

The UNDG took note of the changes in the Local2030 Hubs and highlighted the importance of ensuring coordinated messaging and branding while balancing quality over quantity in Hub expansion, where emphasis was placed on identifying geographic gaps.

The Secretariat briefed the UNDG on the Local 2030 KSN, which scales up talent and research capacity for SDG localization through science and evidence based local public policymaking, and the pilots being implemented by UN-Habitat in Jordan and Tunisia, highlighting the expression of interest from other countries to pilot the initiative. The Coalition is

working on establishing KSN Innovation Labs – academic institutions or networks that are already succeeding as centers of excellence with local impact, scalability, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community ownership. This initiative highlights the exemplary academic institutions that are in positively connecting and applying research to local needs through innovative actions and promoting access to scientific methodologies and monitoring tools that fosters academic impact in the SDG acceleration at the local level.

The Local2030 Coalition Flagship Programmes are proposed UN key initiatives and vehicles of the that exemplify localization in action through UN support, providing system-wide stories, best practices, and tools to accelerate the implementation of tailored solutions, aiming to mobilize partners, and to scale impact. During the Retreat, the Secretariat briefed the Directors on the objectives of the flagships before various UN member agencies presented their ideas for proposed flagships, which the Directors agreed will be validated to showcase effective localization.

9) Monitoring

The SDGs provide a clear framework with indicators for tracking progress, but local-level data gaps hinder effective monitoring. During the Retreat, members of the Coalition reviewed previous workplan, the High Impact Initiative (HII) targets, and the UN system's role in SDG monitoring (e.g., Pact for the



Mr. Sébastien Vauzelle, Head of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.



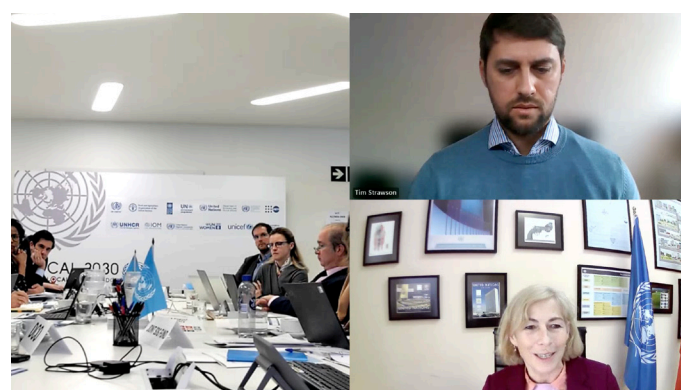
Ms. Lara Blanco, Deputy Director of the Sustainable Development Unit, EOSG; Ms. Catherine Northing, Head of International Partnerships, IOM; Ms. Nathalie Laure Roebbel, Head, Urban Health, WHO; and Ms. Johanna Dorenborg, Migration Policy Officer, IOM, joining the UN Directors Group Retreat virtually.

Future, SDG Localization Marker) before discussing ways to strengthen reporting processes at global, national, and local levels, ensuring integration across stakeholders and identifying existing tools, priority products, and opportunities for collaboration. Mapping and engaging proven transformative experiences in SDG localization helps identify effective multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance approaches, and by documenting successful review mechanisms and progress tracking dashboards, the Coalition can promote better evidence-based policy-making and foster peer learning across territories.



Mr. Jurgen Gafke, Senior Programme Management Officer, UN DESA, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

Specific reference was made to strengthening VLR-VNR Linkages, including developing metrics to measure how well Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) integrate with Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), capacity building and data gaps, including leveraging academic research for monitoring urban issues (e.g., NDCs and cities), Action 55(e) and SDG acceleration, ensuring SDG localization is reflected in global SDG reports and discussions (e.g., HLPF, WB/IMF Spring Meetings), and strengthening coordination between agencies, UNCTs, and local governments, among others, on monitoring SDG localization.



Ms. Fiona McCluney, Resident Coordinator in Albania, and Mr. Tim Strawson, UNDP Sustainable Finance Hub, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

COMMITMENTS

The retreat has provided a critical opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the UN members of the Coalition to chart a clear path toward a stronger, more action-oriented Coalition. UN entities have developed a clear common understanding of what the Coalition can deliver and the responsibilities of each entity to realize this vision, translated into:



1. Collective Ownership: Members reaffirm their commitment to a collaborative and inclusive approach, leveraging the expertise of all 14 UN entities to implement localization strategies effectively and ensure a ONE UN approach. Agencies also pledged to include localization aspects in their own strategic plans, reporting regularly to the Steering Committee on progress.



2. Leveraging UN Expertise for Transformative Change: Members will identify, share, and scale their UN entities' best practices to drive the Coalition's impact, ensuring sustained progress and innovation in 2025 and beyond. This includes systematically exchanging local-level success stories—such as municipal climate action or inclusive urban planning—and jointly adapting them to new contexts.



3. Support the Coalition's Constituencies on Implementing Localized Efforts: Identify and develop coordinated partnerships with national, regional, and local governments, private sector, academia, civil society, and local actors to build capacities, foster exchanges, and scale up local-based solutions. Participants further noted the importance of engaging youth networks and philanthropic foundations to secure additional support for local initiatives.



Mr. Jordi Llopart, Senior Advisor, Strategic Alliances, UNDP, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.



Mr. Jean-François Klein, Senior Policy Advisor and Head of Department Management and Coordination Unit, ILO, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.



4. Impact on Internal and Global Processes: Members will utilize upcoming processes and high-level events, such as FfD4, HLPF, and COP30, as pivotal platforms to embed localization in global frameworks and ensure its impact on key outcomes. Likewise, members will advocate for mainstreaming localization within their organizations and processes to ensure that messages of the Coalition are embedded in its priorities and offer, using the Coalition as the go-to platform. Many suggested building cross-agency panels or side events that directly spotlight new, local voices, thereby demonstrating the value of local action and localization in global debates.



5. Enabling Inclusive Local Action: Members will join expertise and capacities to promote localization within and outside the UN to enable transformative change at all levels and leave no one and no place behind. Some recommended forging stronger ties to private sector alliances and local civil society networks to ensure sustainability and broader ownership of localized projects.



Ms. Catalina Santamaria, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, EOSG, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

NEXT STEPS

- **Develop an action plan** for the involvement of local actors in the localization of the Pact for the Future, ensuring their active participation and integration in decision-making. Agencies suggested leveraging the Local2030 Hubs to mobilize community leaders, youth groups, and local entrepreneurs, among others, to share ground-level insights.
- **Define concrete roles** for the Coalition, engaging its capacity in key ongoing global processes, including FfD4, UNFSS+4, HLPF 2025, World Social Summit, and COP30, among others. The Secretariat will develop an “**Engagement Strategy**” with relevant responsible agencies to identify top priorities and the Coalition's proposed participation, including potential side events or speaking slots, for each milestone. Regular check-ins each year will measure whether local perspectives are more deeply embedded in global agreements.
- **Develop info graphs and communication materials** that show the results of localized actions. Both Working Groups will feed content for these materials, highlighting recommendations and best practices from pilot countries or Flagship projects.
- **Set a clear, actionable strategy to enhance the capacity of Local 2030 Hubs**, enabling them to exchange their best practices and lessons learned, as well as to actively engage in and contribute to global processes. This includes standardized tools for knowledge-sharing, so Hubs can effectively document and disseminate innovative local solutions. The Coalition will also welcome applications, particularly of Hubs from under-represented regions such as from the Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific and North America regions, to ensure global representation.
- **Formulate strategic goals and actions for the Knowledge and Scientific Network** to foster greater international collaboration and knowledge exchange. The KSN will partner with academic institutions or networks to establish KSN Innovation Labs to promote knowledge sharing globally, scale up talent and research capacity, translate research into policy and action, and strengthen multi-level cooperation. The Secretariat will provide a two-pager outlining the global strategic approach of the KSN Innovation Labs.
- **Validate a set of UN Local2030 Flagship Programmes** that showcase effective SDG localization, illustrating UN entities best practices and providing UNCTs with localization strategies and tools tailored



Mr. Gonzalo Pizarro, Chief of Policy, UN DCO, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.



Ms. Lisa Kurbiel, Head of Secretariat, Joint SDG Fund, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

to country-level needs. The Joint SDG Fund proposed identifying four-five Flagship projects for broad Coalition support, emphasizing cross-agency collaboration to demonstrate “One UN” impact.

- **Identify collaboration modalities for UNRCs and UNCTs**, identifying key resources and timing for empowering them to implement localization strategies at the country level. Immediate actions include finalizing a **two-page offer** for RCs, which the Secretariat will finalize an easy-to-read offer describing the Coalition’s direct value to UNCTs and RCs, with bullet points on Flagships, the Localization Marker, capacity-building, and potential financing avenues. A **roster of experts** (including possible secondments from agencies or external specialists) will also be curated for quick deployment, which can also be promoted to Issue-Based Coalitions for synergy.

- **Define the technical capacity and targeted support** through capacity-building initiatives and tools to be provided by the Secretariat, in collaboration with the DCO, DESA, and the Flagship-leading agencies. Secretariat-led coordination calls will clarify how WG1’s policy guidance merges with WG2’s financing solutions in these capacity-building efforts.

- **Coordinate with DCO** in parallel, collaborating closely on an approach for ensuring LRGs input into the drafting and implementation of Cooperation Frameworks. This can be tested in two-three pilot countries, possibly in Africa or Asia, with results to be showcased by late 2025.

- **Deliver on Working Groups** work plans, with the Groups taking ownership of their work plans and engagement in the FfD4 and HLPF processes, providing interagency strategic guidance to ensure their deliverables align with high-level priorities. The Secretariat will provide coordination support to ensure increased synergies between the two groups to find the most efficient ways to deliver. They may issue separate or consolidated deliverables as long as there is clarity and concision, and details on executing the work plans are left to the lead agencies.

- **Refine the concept** of the Localization Marker and define the scope, key stakeholders, and timeline for piloting it with key donors. Marker 2.0 prototypes could be tested in selected Joint SDG Fund proposals, measuring how effectively local voices are integrated.

- **Propose an action plan** to support catalytic initiatives in collaboration with the Joint SDG Fund and its SDG Localization Portfolio, which includes the seed funding proposals. This includes identifying four-five Joint Programmes (JPs) agreed by all agencies to support capacity building and additional funding to continue to expand, scale up, and demonstrate the impact of the JPs. This could involve harnessing new philanthropic or private investments, ensuring that local government or civil society groups can scale effective interventions that unite global commitments with local realities.

- **Develop shared advocacy messages** around the **SDG countdown**, focusing on bridging any knowledge



Dr. Gulnara Roll, Head of Cities Unit, UNEP, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.

gaps within the UN system itself and among external partners. This will scale up success stories, harness local data, and advocate for subnational financing solutions.

- **Refine monitoring and evidence approaches**, with the Secretariat mapping which countries have the strongest momentum for localization and sharing these success stories widely. The refined Localization Marker 2.0 would track progress in real time, ensuring those examples feed back into global advocacy.

- **Expand the Local2030 Hubs**, inviting Coalition members may propose new Hubs, especially in underrepresented regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific and North America. These Hubs should link local actors with Coalition resources, forging local-national-UN synergy. The Secretariat to this end will explore these options and set a clear, actionable strategy to enhance the capacity of Local 2030 Hubs, enabling them to exchange their best practices and lessons learned, as well as to actively engage in and contribute to global processes.

- **Elevate the Flagships as exemplars**, in line with the Joint SDG Fund's proposal to identify five-six Flagship projects that all Coalition members can rally behind is a priority. These Flagships would highlight end-to-end solutions—policy, finance, implementation, and monitoring—demonstrating what “scalable localization” truly looks like on the ground.



Participants of the UN Directors Group Retreat.



Participants of the UN Directors Group Retreat.

CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

The Second UN Directors Group Retreat of the Local2030 Coalition demonstrated both **continuity** and **renewed momentum** in championing localization as a catalyst for transformative change. Building on the core outcomes first articulated, the Coalition is now ready to tackle the next phase of operationalization—one that unites advocacy, action, and monitoring under a cohesive strategic framework.

Key themes that emerged include:

- The vital role of **joint advocacy** in positioning localization at the heart of global policy deliberations.
- The necessity of a **system-wide capacity-building approach**, guided by the newly mandated Task Force and enriched by the Knowledge and Scientific Network.
- A robust partnership with **DCO** to empower UNCTs through practical funding streams, dedicated tools, and simpler ways to incorporate local priorities into UN cooperation frameworks.
- **Effective flagships** as a powerful method to showcase high-impact localization in selected countries or cities, offering tangible examples of how the UN sys-

tem, local authorities, and other stakeholders can align resources for scaled results.

- The evolution of the **Localization Marker 2.0**, which will help mainstream local thinking in programme design, financing, and reporting.
- The synergy needed between **Working Groups 1 and 2** so that conceptual transitions and financing solutions converge into actual local impact, advocated directly throughout the processes directly by member agencies.
- A **forward-looking roadmap** from FfD4 to the 2027 SDG Summit, ensuring sustained momentum and evidence-based decision-making along the way, and **moving from looking at milestones in siloes to milestones as processes**.

All participants agreed that the Coalition must capitalize on upcoming opportunities—like the **SDG countdown** narrative and potential expansions of the Joint SDG Fund—to embed localization more firmly in the UN's DNA.



Ms. Atkeyelsh Persson, Chief, Urbanization and Development Section, Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division, ECA, speaking at the UN Directors Group Retreat.



On 6 February, UN directors attended a reception hosted by the Mayor of Bilbao.

The Secretariat stands ready to provide coordinating functions, knowledge resources, capacity-building packages, and communications alignment, but the **real success will come from each UN entity actively championing localization within their respective mandates.**

Ultimately, through stronger collaboration, well-designed Flagships, refined markers, and deeper synergy

with the UNCT system, the Local2030 Coalition envisions a more inclusive, impactful path to achieving the 2030 Agenda. Local actors, public and private, traditionally seen as implementers, are now recognized as essential co-creators and innovators, bridging global commitments with tangible outcomes that genuinely leave no one and no place behind.



On 7 February, directors from UN entities convened in Madrid for a high-level meeting with the Secretary of State for International Cooperation of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, and Director General for Development Policies, Spain.



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