Inter-regional SDG Localization Workshop

Impact and Systemic Change through SDG Localization

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2025

**MARRIOTT HOTEL
AMMAN, JORDAN**

https://sdglocalization.org/inter-regional-sdg-localization-workshop

Background ✦

The world faces interlinked crises that threaten the 2030 Agenda — from rising inequalities and climate emergencies to a $4 trillion annual financing gap. One in twelve people still experiences hunger, while billions lack access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. Inequalities persist, with the total slum population being over 1.12 billion people. Additionally, 318 million experience absolute homelessness. With only 18 per cent of SDGs on track, localization has become the decisive lever to drive systemic change through place-based, inclusive, and multilevel action.

Localizing the SDGs is a dynamic, two-way process that aligns national and local priorities, enables data-driven planning and investment, and empowers local actors to deliver impact. It demands coherence across governance levels, integrated policy frameworks, and robust mechanisms to translate global ambition into tangible local outcomes.

Localization is *the* opportunity for governments, stakeholders, development partners and the United Nations system to collectively move beyond ad hoc project approaches toward multistakeholder inclusive processes aimed at promoting systemic change at the local level – delivering long lasting impact where it matters the most.

To this end, **UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2026–2029** identifies SDG localization and participatory multilevel governance as a means of implementation to achieve adequate housing, access to land and basic services for all.

Co-chaired by UN-Habitat, the **Local2030 Coalition** is the UN system-wide platform to accelerate the localization of the 2030 Agenda enhancing coherence, efficiency and impact of UN action, while engaging national and local governments, civil society and academia,the private sector, and youth to collectively advance SDG implementation. It does so by mainstreaming localization through four workstreams – Advocacy; Capacity building; Scale-up Action; and Monitoring, and by mainstreaming the use of tools such as the Bilbao Blueprint and the SDG Localization Marker 2.0.

Further complementing the UN-system and global efforts, the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE) and UN-Habitat jointly launched the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs. By engaging with the central and subnational governments, the Platform helps formulating policies, collecting and sharing knowledge while strengthening capacities at all levels to plan, measure and deliver impacts. Through the design and implementation of National SDG Localization Frameworks, the Platform supports countries in establishing the enabling conditions for sustainable development — fostering policy coherence, empowering local actors, and mobilizing investments for catalytic projects that align environmental, and development objectives. Launched only recently, the Partnership Platform has engaged in continuous outreach and networking to better profiling its role and operational contribution to SDGs localization. In this spirit, discussions and results of this workshop will be reported also in the context of the Partnership Platform, contributing to its vision.

Background

The National SDG Localization Frameworks are meant to be effective and country-specific tool for multilevel governance and policy coherence for sustainable development implementation, aiming at enabling systemic change at the local level. In line with the National Frameworks promoted through the Partnership Platform, UN-Habitat supports cities in simplifying complex local development processes and accelerating their path toward prosperity though the **SDG Cities initiative** – UN-Habitat's corporate approach to city development through the SDGs.

The **Arab States region** is placing capacity building at the center of SDG Localization through pioneer initiatives like the Arab Mayors Academy, led by UNESCWA and UN-Habitat. This initiative brings together governors, mayors, deputy governors, and senior local leaders from across the Arab region to enhance their ability to tackle urban development challenges.

UN-Habitat also collaborates with **academia and the sports community** to unlock the potential of SDG localization through **multi-stakeholder engagement.** As part of this effort, the agency supports the Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network and has collaborated with the International Olympic Committee to launch the Sports for Sustainable Urban Development initiative. This program integrates sport, physical activity, and active recreation into SDG localization processes, generating tangible urban impact and acting as a catalyst for the 2030 Agenda.

 In this context, Jordan has emerged as a hub of innovation, unifying and advancing multiple initiatives such as the Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network in Irbid and Aqaba and the Pathways to Inclusive Development project, among others. Notably, the country has also established local Urban Observatories in several cities, including Irbid and Mafraq, through the **Urban Monitoring Framework (UMF)**, linking local indicators to the SDGs while upholding human rights and the principle of leaving no one and no place behind. The office continues to support multiple local partners by integrating multilevel governance, data systems, and community engagement, following UN-Habitat's approach to building data-driven, inclusive, and participatory urban governance systems.

This workshop falls under the **2030 Agenda Sub-fund Project** on SDG Localization co implemented by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

Objectives of the workshop

- Strengthen capacities of national and local actors to localize the SDGs through integrated data, planning, and financing approaches for systemic change.
- Facilitate a multilevel and multi-stakeholder dialogue focusing on solutions and impact-oriented innovation contributing to the delivery of the SDGs.
- Discuss the relevance and practices of multilevel governance as a contribution to the modelling of the National SDG Localization Frameworks, anchored to the process promoted by the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs.
- Build local and regional capacities through training and peer learning, including through the Enhanced VLR Tool and Arab Mayors Academy, contributing to the Local2030 Coalition's Task Force on capacity building.
- Discuss and advance Jordan's leadership in SDG localization, inspiring related processes in other countries and with other partners in the region.
- Illustrate how research and sport can be a leverage for sustainable development and catalyse multistakeholder coordination and transformation at the local level.
- Contribute to a shared understanding of systemic change as the overarching outcome of integrated local action.

Expected participants

The workshop is designed to target technical representatives from local and regional governments, both with experience in SDG localization or new to the process. Experts and practitioners from national governments and agencies are also encouraged to contribute and engage. In addition, international networks, academia, PhD students, and civil society organizations will be invited to reflect the on how to collectively advance salutation for integrated local development, multilevel and multi-stakeholder approaches to SDG localization. The organization of the workshop will ensure both geographical and gender balance.

Agenda

Day 1. Monday 10th of November	
08:30-09:00	**Registration**
	Master of Ceremony: Deema Abuthiab, Head of the UN-Habitat Jordan Country Office
09:00-09:30 30mins	**Jordanian National Anthem** **Opening** • **Rania Hedeya**, UN-Habitat Regional Director for Arab States • **Sukaina Al Nasrawi**, Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio, UNESCWA • **Sami Areikat**, Sustainable Development Officer, UNDESA
9:30-9:50 20mins	**Setting the scene** *SDG Localization as the "opportunity" to turn global agendas into systemic change – the role of the Local2030 Coalition and related initiatives.* Presentation by **Martino Miraglia**, Coordination SDG Localization and Local Governments Team & SDG Cities Flagship, UN-Habitat
09:50-10:00	**Family picture**
10:00-11:00 1.00h	**Session 1. City Development Made Simple** *Data to impact investment and how cities have leveraged the potential of the SDG Cites approach to simplify complex urban development. The session explores how cities are leveraging Voluntary Local Reviews and the SDG Cities approach to translate complex urban data into actionable strategies that drive systemic change.* **Moderator**: **Sukaina Al Nasrawi**, Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio, UNESCWA (10mins of introduction) **Panel discussion** (50 mins) • Mr. **Saeed Al-Dabbas**, Head of Tanmiah Tool Unit, Jordan Cities and Villages Development Bank • Mr. **Usama Iddrisu Samu**, Director of Policy, Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, Ghana • Mr. **Shalend Prem Singh**, Head of Services and VLR Focal Point, Laukota City Council, Fiji • **Ahmad AbuLaban**, City Director, Ramallah Municipality, Palestine

11:00-11:15	Coffee break

11:15-12:15 <u>1.00h</u>	**Session 2. City solutions for Systemic Change** *This session explores how city-led innovations and strategic initiatives are shaping prosperity and driving systemic change at the local level.* **Moderator**: **Sami Ariekat**, Sustainable Development Officer, UNDESA **Presentation of City Solutions** (40 min) 1. Housing and sustainable urban development: Eng. **Sirina Haddad,** Head of Planning Department at the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, Jordan 2. Enabling adequate housing through localization: Mr. **Uriel Eugenio Correos**, Lead VLR, Urban Development and Housing supporting the office of the Mayor, Surigao (The Philippines) 3. E-governance driving transparency and decision-making: Mr. **George Wasonga**, VLR Expert, Nakuru, Kenya 4. Facing rapid urbanization and environmental challenges: Mr. **Ndiaga Fall,** Secretary General, Pikine Town, Senegal and representative of the Convention of Mayors of Sub-Saharan Africa **Joint reflection on scale-up transformative solutions** facilitated by the moderator (20 min)

12:15-13:15
 <u>1.00h</u>
	Session 3. Part 1. Building multilevel enabling environments for catalyzing solutions: The Local2030 Coalition Bilbao Blueprint and the path towards the National SDG Localization Frameworks of the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs (Panel discussion)
	 Focuses on fostering collaboration across national, regional, and local levels to create frameworks at country level that accelerate sustainable development. It investigate the elements of the Local2030 Coalition Bilbao Blueprint and discover how to use them to contribute to the modelling of National SDG Localization Frameworks promoted by the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs.
	
	 Moderator: Martino Miraglia, Coordination SDG Localization and Local Governments Team & SDG Cities Flagship, UN-Habitat
	
	 - Introduction by the moderator (10 mins)
	 - Panel discussion (50 mins)
	   - Ms. **Rasha Dabbouri**, Head of SDG Unit, Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan
	   - Mr. **Aboubakry Gollock**, Director of Territorial Development, National Agency for Territorial Development, Senegal
	   - Mr. **Pa Momodou Taal**, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands, and Regional Government and Religious Affairs, The Gambia
	   - Mr. **Nirajan Mainali**, Section Officer, Chandragiri Municipality, Nepal
	   - Mr. **Mahdi Makhlouf**, Municipal Representative, Kerkennah Municipality, Tunisia

13:15-14:00 **1.00h**	**Lunch break**
14:00-16:00 2.00h	**Session 3. Part 2. Building multilevel enabling environments for catalyzing solutions: The Local2030 Coalition Bilbao Blueprint and the path towards the National SDG Localization Frameworks of the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs (Interactive Exercise)** **Facilitated by** Martino Miraglia, Claudia Garcia, Nagwa Lachine, Tigui Drame, UN-Habitat Head Quarters, Regional Office for Arab States and West Africa Sub-Regional Hub *Starting with an analysis of the elements of the Bilbao Blueprint, proceed through a dynamically moderated discussion to exchange ideas, practices and elements that can be considered in moving towards a National SDG Localization Framework. Investigate the elements of the Local2030 Coalition Bilbao Blueprint and discover how to use them to contribute to the modelling of National SDG Localization Frameworks promoted by the Partnership Platform on Localising the SDGs.*

Day 2. Tuesday 11th of November

Master of Ceremony: Deema Abuthiab, Head of the UN-Habitat Jordan Country Office

09:00-9:15 15mins	Introduction of the day

09:15-10:15
1h
	Session 4. Localizing the SDGs in Jordan
	Advancing prosperity at the local level through effective multilevel governance and multistakeholder engagement
	
	Moderator: Deema Abuthiab, Head of the UN-Habitat Jordan Country Office
	
	• Introduction by the moderator (5 mins)
	• Opening Remarks from H.E. Mr. Imad Azzam, the Head of Greater Irbid Municipality Committee (5 mins)
	• Panel discussion (40 mins)
	  ○ Ms. **Rasha Dabbouri**, Head of SDGs Unit, Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
	  ○ Dr. **Sudki Hamdan**, Head of Environment Statistics Division, Jordan Department of Statistics
	  ○ Eng. **Akram Khraisat**, Director of Amman Urban Observatory, Greater Amman Municipality
	  ○ Eng. **Leila Youssef**, Director of the Directorate of International Programs and Development, Greater Irbid Municipality
	• Launch of Irbid Voluntary Local Review (10 mins)

10:15-10:30 **15mins**	**Coffee Break**

10:30-12:00
1.30h
	Session 5. Putting the right capacities in place – what is needed to accelerate the localization of the SDGs
	The example of the Arab Mayors Academy and the global effort of the Local2030 Coalition.
	
	Moderator: Nagwa Lachine, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States
	• Introductory presentation/keynote (15mins)
	• Panel discussion (1 hour)
	    ○ **Sukaina Al Nasrawi**, Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio, UNESCWA
	    ○ **Ali Al-Khalaf**, Assistant Governor for Organizations and Displaced Affairs, Ninevah Governorate
	    ○ **Pa Momodou Taal**, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Admin and Finance, The Gambia's Ministry of Lands, Regional Government & Religious Affairs
	    ○ **Joao De Freitas**, SDG Localization Expert
	    ○ **Abdelrahman Abu Hamdeh**, Academic of the Knowledge and Scientific Network
	    ○ **Adel Sghir**, Municipal Representative, Sousse Municipality
	• Interactive Q&A (15mins)

12:00-13:00 1.00h	**Interactive Exercise on 15-minutes Cities** **Reem Abusamra**, International Relations Coordinator, UCLG MEWA
13:00-14:00	**Lunch Break**
14:00-16:00 2h	**Session 6. Enhanced VLR Tool Training** *Participatory training on how to use Voluntary Local Reviews, with enhanced content and process, as an integrated tool for sustainable, green and resilient transition.* Facilitated by **Sami Areikat,** Sustainable Development Officer, UNDESA Part 1: Introduction Part 2: Advancing Green Growth at the local level Part 3: Strengthening resilience at the local level Part 4: Achieving Enhanced VLR The training includes case studies from the participating cities and contributions by their representatives in the workshop.

Day 3. Wednesday 12th of November	
Master of Ceremony: **Martino Miraglia**, Coordination SDG Localization and Local Governments Team & SDG Cities Flagship, UN-Habitat	
09:00-09:15	Introduction of the day
9:15-10:15 1.00h	**Session 7. Multistakeholder action and catalytic initiatives** *How to leverage the potential of research and sports to advance integrated local development and transformative change at the local level. This session will convene representatives from the sport sector, academia, and local institutions to examine how sport and research can serve as strategic enablers of sustainable urban development. The first panel will feature the Sport for Sustainable Urban Development Initiative, implemented by UN-Habitat in collaboration with the International Olympic Committee. The second part will highlight the experience of the Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network (KSN) and its pilot cities in Jordan and Tunisia. Together, these experiences will demonstrate how multi-actor partnerships can effectively translate global agendas into tangible local impact.* **Moderated by**: Martino Miraglia, Coordination SDG Localization and Local Governments Team & SDG Cities Flagship, UN-Habitat *Panel 1. The role of sports to advance integrated local development (30 mins)* • **Ms. Lina Nasereddin**, UN-Habitat Jordan Country Office • **Mr. Aboubakry Gollock,** Director of Territorial Development, National Agency for Territorial Development, Senegal • Ms. **Rania Ibrahim Subaih**, CEO, Zaha Cultural Centre, Jordan *Panel 2. Engaging the academia in local decision-making: the Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network (30 mins)* Keynote presentation and moderation: **Thouraya Bekri**, National Officer of the Knowledge and Scientific Network in Tunisia • **Mahdi Makhlouf**, Municipal Representative, Kerkennah Municipality • **Eng. Leila Youssef,** Director of the Directorate of International Programs and Development, Greater Irbid Municipality
10:15-10:30	**Coffee break**

10:30-12:15 1.45h	**Session 8. Academia and local leadership discussion** This session brings together academia, practitioners, and governments to explore collaborative approaches for localizing the 2030 Agenda. Focusing on pilot cities -Aqaba, Irbid, Sousse, and Kerkennah-, it highlights how integrated, evidence-based solutions can address complex local challenges. Moderated by: **Thouraya Bekri**, National Officer of the Knowledge and Scientific Network in Tunisia • Reconnecting with previous session and Setting the Scene (10 mins) • *P*arallel Thematic Breakout Sessions (1hour 10mins) 1. *C*limate change and coastal resilience, encompassing marine ecosystems, sustainable agriculture, and climate adaptation strategies; 2. Urban heritage and city development, reflecting on cultural identity, spatial equity, and the adaptive reuse of historical assets; 3. Digitalization and urban economy, exploring the transformative role of digital infrastructure, urban innovation, and the energy transition toward more sustainable local economies. • Plenary Feedback (20 mins) • Closing Reflections (5 mins)
12:15-12:30 <u>15min</u>	Launch of the VLR of Ramallah Municipality
12:30-13:00 <u>30min</u>	**Institutional closing** • Government of Jordan • **Rania Hedeya**, UN-Habitat Regional Director for Arab States • **Sukaina Al Nasrawi**, Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio, UNESCWA • **Sami Areikat**, Sustainable Development Officer, UNDESA
13:00	**Lunch**
16:00	**Visit to Sport City (optional)** Address: Queen Alia St. Al madeina Square

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