
UCLG and UN Habitat: VLR Series Launch

Wednesday, 8 July

10.00 – 11.30 ET

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Local and regional governments, as the closest level of government to the people, are well aware of the unique characteristics, expectations, and needs of citizens and territories and can effectively support the development of policies which directly respond to the risks and vulnerabilities that society face on a daily basis. Furthermore, public service delivery is indispensable as a means to support citizens, especially during crises, and is the basis upon which structural inequalities will be mitigated and the achievement of the global goals will happen.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic which has quickly and deeply affected our world, it is clear that our towns, cities, regions, and territories will never be the same in the aftermath and that no sole level of government can overcome this crisis alone. The efforts shared among local and regional governments, supported by their associations and networks, through decentralized cooperation will prove to be key to solve the interconnected challenges we face today caused by the most pressing global trends such as climate change and biodiversity loss, changing demographics and rising inequality, among others.

In this sense, local and regional governments, and their associations and networks, are working towards providing comprehensive systems-based strategies to the implementation of the universal agendas via the effective localization of the global goals and the development of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs). This with the aim to foster the transformative diplomacy necessary to achieve sustainable development, help take stock of progress made, and contribute towards transparency and accountability towards citizens. This global 'localization' movement of the universal agendas is a testimony of support towards territorial cohesion, multilevel governance and leaving no one and no place behind.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), as the world organization of local and regional governments, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) are committed to support the development of VLRs and will be launching a *VLR Series* which aims to provide guidance, definitions and technical support to any local and regional government aiming to engage in the VLR process. This *VLR Series* will act as an integral part of the work that will be undertaken by the UCLG Community of Practice on VLRs which reflects the advocacy movement of UCLG and the members of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments with regard to increasing awareness of local and regional governments' co-ownership of the 2030 Agenda and providing them with an institutional harbor to share knowledge, experiences and learn mutually.

This launch event session will be presenting the first volume of Guidelines for VLRs of the *VLR Series* jointly developed by UCLG and UN-Habitat and will showcase the importance that VLRs play not only in monitoring and evaluating progress towards the SDGs but also in contributing towards multilevel governance and the transformation necessary to achieve just, resilient, and sustainable cities, territories, and societies that guarantee protection to all citizens during and beyond times of crisis.

It will aim at bringing out the intrinsic value of VLRs as a political process that can enhance coordination between different spheres of government. The localization of the universal development agendas that are being driven by our communities offer the only viable way of ensuring that no-one and no place is left behind in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.



SPEAKERS

Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director

Penny Abeywardena, Commissioner of NYC for International Affairs

Santiago Saura, Councillor of Madrid for International Affairs

Nikita Rummyantsev, Head of Moscow Urban Forum Research Centre

Miquel Rodriguez, Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda of Barcelona

Yolanda Martínez, Secretary of Social Development of Oaxaca

Luiz Alvaro Salles, Secretary of International Affairs of Sao Paulo

Francisco Resnicoff, Under-Secretary for International Affairs of Buenos Aires

Marilia Sorrini Peres Ortiz, Deputy Secretary of Planning of Niteroi

Amson Sibanda, Chief, Division for Sustainable Development Goals of UN DESA

The session will be in zoom. No advance registration is required.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81803089876?pwd=VGJVOUpGamsyUEE0aTNIS2dPbUJGUT09>

ID: 818 0308 9876

Password: 766543

