

Joint Statement on Strengthening Local and Regional Government Engagement in UN Processes

We, the Development Partners Network on Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG), call upon the United Nations and its member states to strengthen the engagement of elected local and regional authorities in the United Nations intergovernmental bodies and processes.

The Critical Role of Local and Regional Governments

Local and regional governments are at the forefront of addressing global challenges and implementing international agendas on issues such as climate change, gender, social cohesion, peacebuilding, displacement, local democracy, local development, local public service delivery and financing for development. They are not merely beneficiaries of development results but active agents of local transformation with unique knowledge and resources closest to citizens because:

1. Effective decentralisation and local governance are key to achieving sustainable and inclusive development.
2. Local governments play a crucial role in shaping local development policy with a locally adapted and systematic approach.
3. Development partners, through networks like DeLoG, have a unique position to influence both national governments and local initiatives.
4. Locally generated solutions, practices and policies can positively influence and render effective national and global agendas.

The Need for Enhanced Engagement

Despite the increased recognition of the vital role local governments play in international fora, their formal engagement in UN processes remains limited. Currently, the organized constituency of local and regional governments is categorized as an NGO within the UN system, lacking clear, institutionalized connections with the UN's primary policy-making bodies. This is in contrast with other entities such as Parliamentarians, Chambers of Commerce, and the private sector, which have been granted expanded roles and responsibilities within the UN framework.

To accelerate progress towards locally matched sustainable development and effectively address global challenges, we urgently need a complement to the rightful place of national governments:

Direct representation of local and regional governments in UN decision-making processes.

1. Formal recognition of local and regional governments as a distinct, self-organized constituency.

2. Systematic consultation with local and regional government networks in the preparation and implementation of global agendas.

Our Commitment

We commit to:

1. Actively promote development effectiveness and decentralized cooperation in decentralisation and local governance through policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, and partnerships.
2. Provide thought leadership and forge partnerships in critical areas such as Local Finance, Gender, Local Democracy, and Local Resilience.
3. Advocate for the inclusion of local and regional governments in policymaking with increased means for action at all levels of governance to enhance representation and for the benefit of all citizens.

Call to Action

We called upon the United Nations and its member states to include text in Chapter 5 of the UN Pact for the Future on "Transforming global governance" to strengthen the engagement of local and regional authorities. We are pleased to note that our advocacy efforts have been successful, with the inclusion of Action 55 in the Pact for the Future, which requests the Secretary-General to provide recommendations on engaging local and regional authorities to advance the 2030 Agenda.

Building on this achievement, we urge the United Nations and its member states to:

1. Establish formal mechanisms for regular consultation with local and regional government networks in UN decision-making processes.
2. Recognize the unique context-adapted role of local and regional governments in implementing global agendas and allocate appropriate resources to support their efforts.
3. Support capacity building initiatives for local and regional governments to enhance their ability to engage effectively in global processes.

We acknowledge the ongoing work of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments and the global movement of local and regional governments, who come together as the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments. Their efforts have been instrumental in advancing the recognition of local and regional governments within the UN system.

Looking Forward

As we conclude the 79th session of the UN General Assembly, we look ahead to critical upcoming global forums, including COP29 and the Financing for Development Conference 2025, as well as other emerging opportunities for advocacy that may arise in the rapidly evolving global landscape. We call upon the international community to build on the momentum generated at UNGA 79 by



ensuring meaningful engagement of local and regional governments in these pivotal events and future international dialogues.

We remain vigilant and prepared to seize new avenues for advocacy as they emerge, reinforcing the localization of international agendas and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all relevant global forums.

By strengthening the engagement of local and regional authorities in UN processes, we can ensure more effective, inclusive, and sustainable solutions to global challenges. We stand ready to work collaboratively with the UN and its member states to make this vision a reality.

DeLoG Network

