

Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals: Advancing Subsidiarity in Practice



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



APRM
African Peer Review
Mechanism



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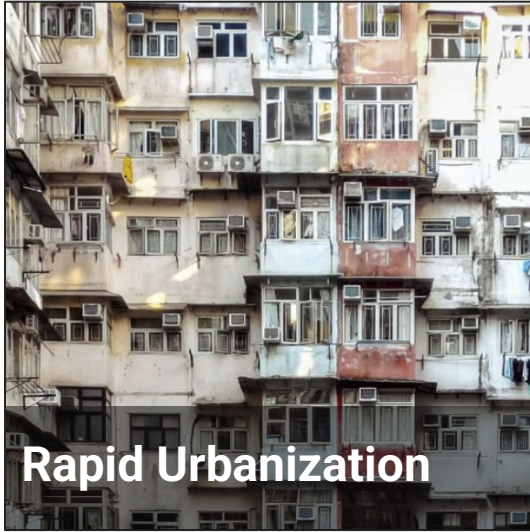


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Global Trends and Challenges



- 90% of urban growth in the coming decades is likely to occur in low and middle-income countries.
- Over the next 30 years, Africa's urban population will double, increasing from 700 million to 1.4 billion by 2050.
- Lagos is expected to host 25 million people by 2035.



- World's top 1% own more wealth than 95% of humanity.
- 2.8 billion people lacking adequate housing, including 1.1 billion in informal settlements and 300 million homeless
- In Mumbai approximately 60% of the city's population lives in slums, which occupy only about 5% of the city's land.



- Globally, 70% of cities are dealing with the effects of climate change, and nearly all are at risk.
- Asia experiences the highest number of natural disasters globally, with an average of 160 events per year, followed by North America, with 90 natural disasters per year.
- In Los Angeles, the number of wildfires has increased by 70% between 2000-2020.



- Geopolitical conflicts often result in large-scale migration, which puts pressure on cities as more than 50% of forcibly displaced people live in urban areas.
- In Aleppo, over 1.5 million people have been displaced, and the city's damages are estimated at \$100 billion since the civil war of Syria started in 2011.

What is holding cities back from achieving progress?

Political ownership gap

Sustainability and the principles of inclusion and equality are challenged. The SDGs are a common universal “language” that can help reorienting political agendas.



“The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals work hand in hand with our own plans of ensuring a better future for Brisbane.”

- **Adrian Schrinner**, Lord Mayor of Brisbane

Data gap

City-level data is lacking and is not disaggregated. Cities often lack the capacity to collect and analyze data, while local-national-global indicators are not aligned.



“In the context of data collection, SDGs and 2030 Agenda are the foundation for the establishment of relevant indicators, monitoring and evaluation methods. They enable alignment of local strategies with global standards.”

- **Dragoslav Pavlović**, Mayor of the City of Niš

Coherence and decision-making gap

National and local policies/strategies can be disconnected hindering effective decision-making and reducing the impact of policies for local communities.



“We need to work together with all levels of governments and make sure that we shape agendas locally in consultation with citizens. The top-down approach is no longer possible.”

- **Célestine Ketcha Courtes**, Mayor of Bagangté, Cameroon

Implementation gap

A gap between cities' mandates and their resources, along with challenges in attracting external financing, which weakens their ability to deliver sustainable development.



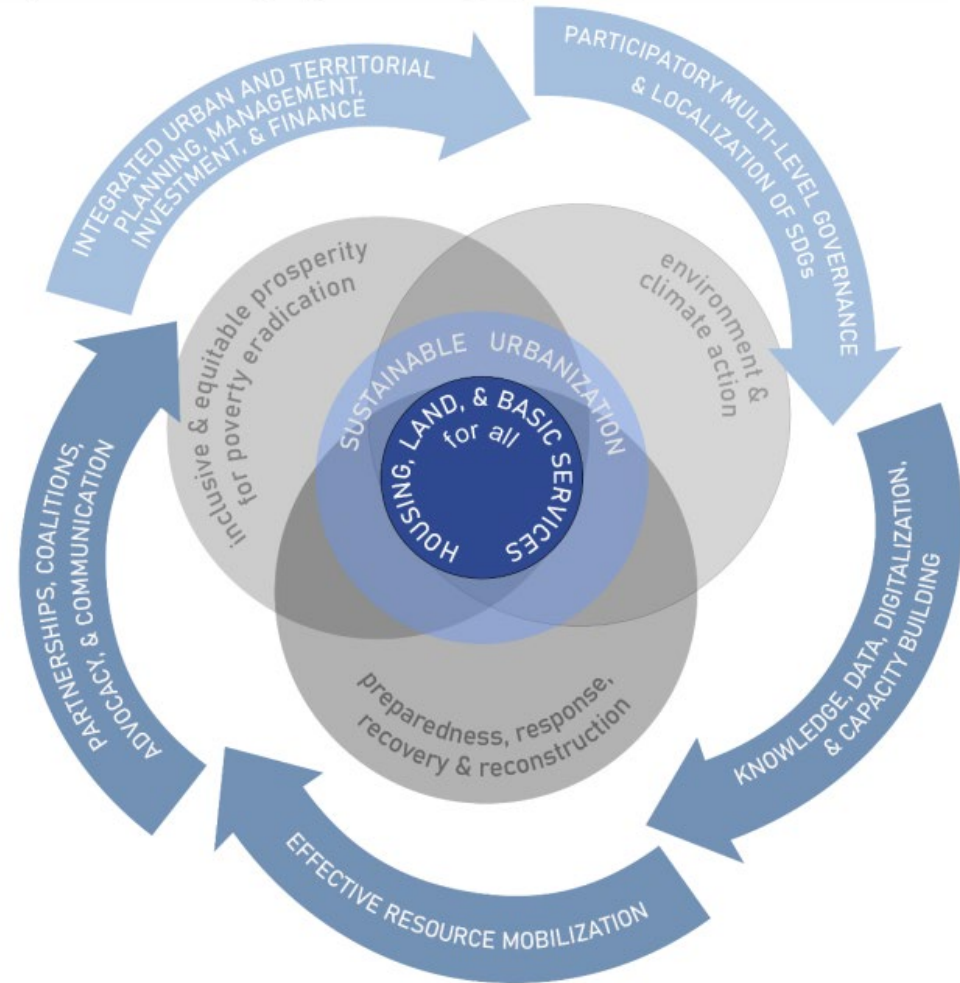
“Local governments often face socio-political barriers that impede their access to resources and funding necessary to effectively address the triple planetary crisis.”

- **Josefina Belmonte**, Mayor of Quezon City, the Philippines

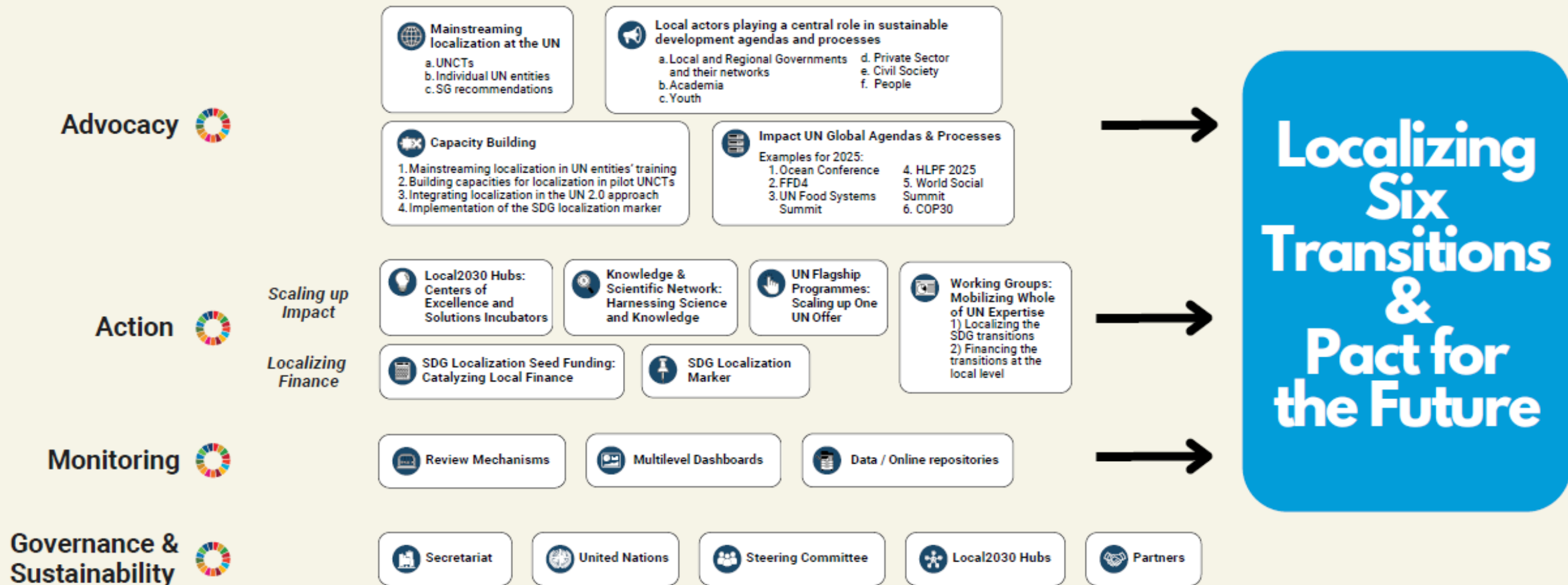
UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029

Advance **adequate housing for all** and transform cities into inclusive, climate-resilient, and sustainable places, in line with the **2030 Agenda** and the **New Urban Agenda**.

One of the 5 **Means of Implementation** of the Strategic Plan is **Participatory Multilevel Governance and Localization of the SDGs**



ENABLING CONNECTIONS FOR HIGHER IMPACT AND SYSTEMIC TRANSFORMATION



Joining forces to operationalize and accelerate the localization of the SDGs.

UN-Habitat Operational Support at Country Level for National and Local Governments



A joint operational initiative of the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security and UN-Habitat





SDG Cities – Expected Outcomes for Cities



Improved local governance and capacities for data, planning and project implementation, *strengthening service delivery and overall standard of living.*



Access to funding and investments
With capacities and a coherent process to implement them.



International visibility and networking
For long-lasting and successful partnerships.

SDG Cities – A proven pathway for cities to progress to a sustainable future



Data

Understanding your city

Enable evidence-based decisions through robust data and local diagnostics.

Planning

Shaping the future

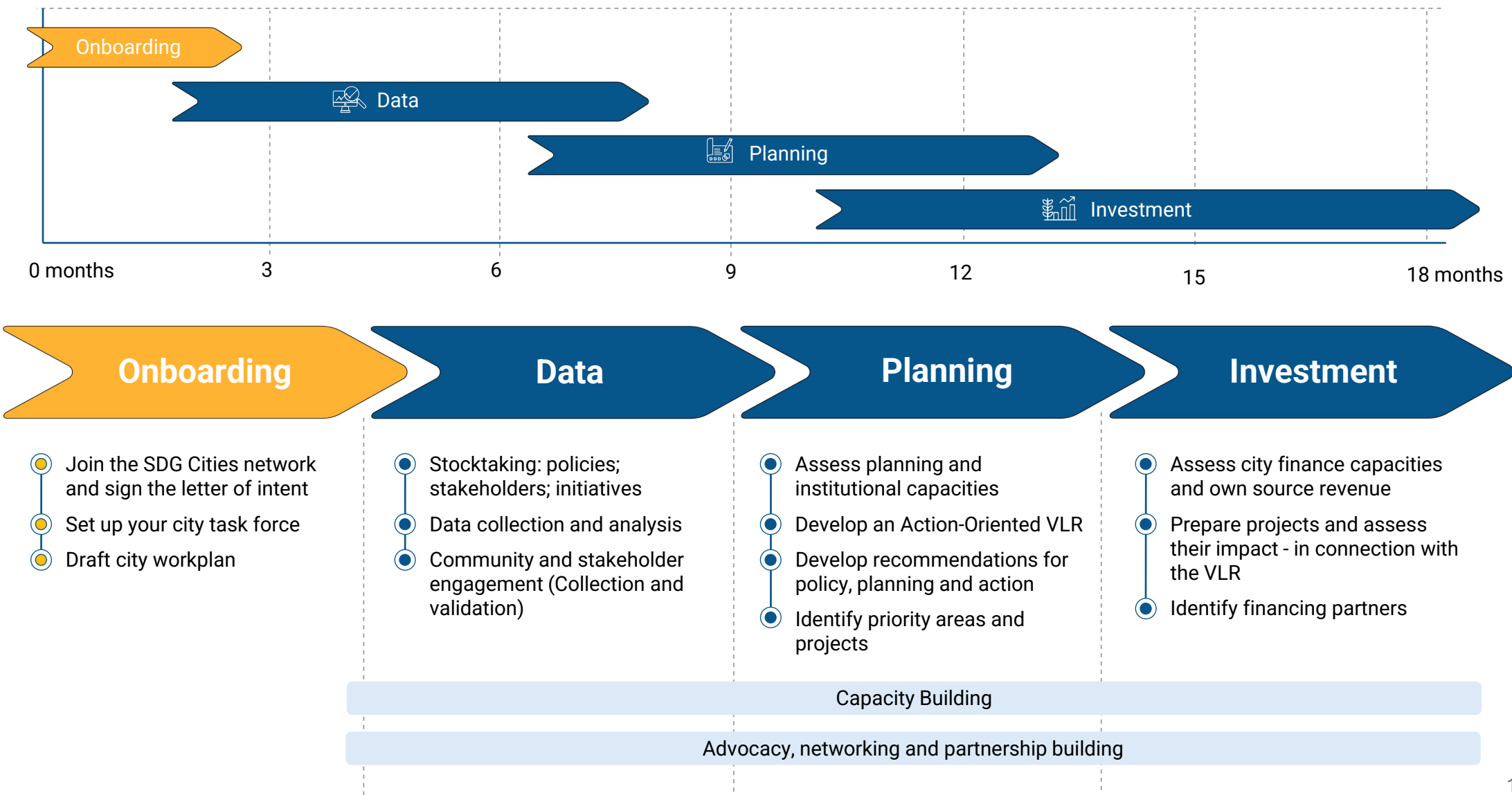
Translate data into evidence-based, sustainable, and actionable development strategies.

Investment

Delivering long-lasting change

Improve local revenues, attract investments, and align resources with impactful SDG projects.

SDG Cities Workplan



Action-Oriented Voluntary Local Review

The Glue of the SDG Cities Process

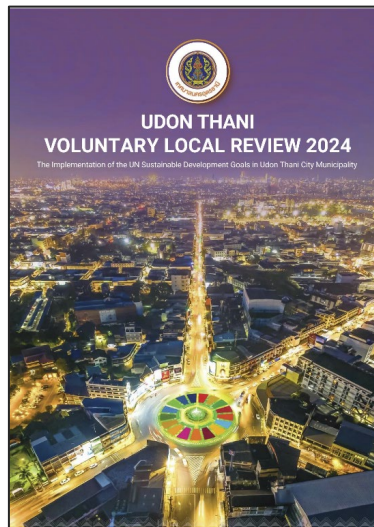
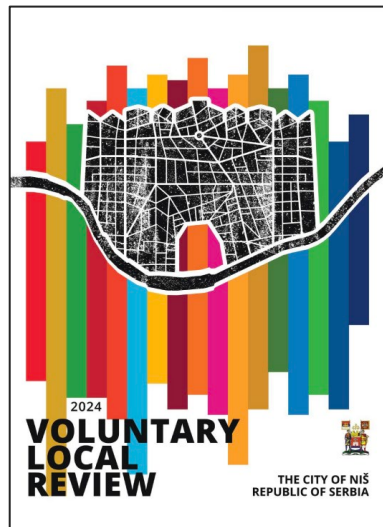
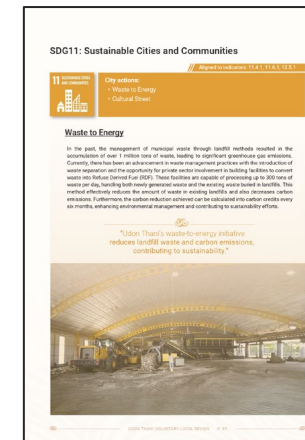
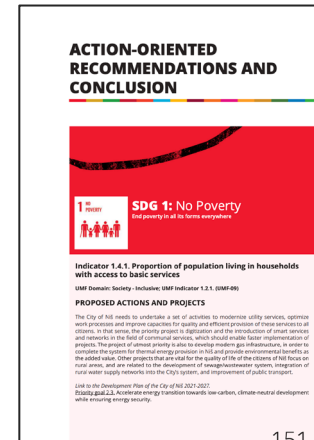
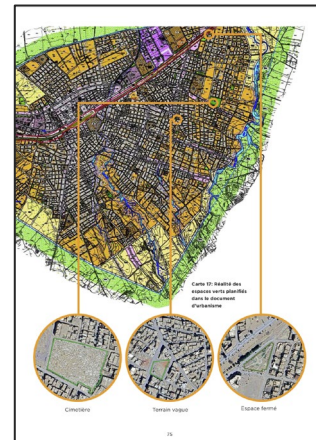
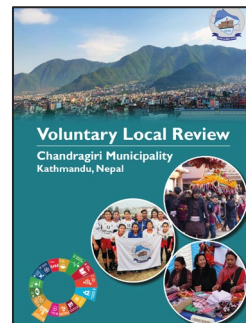
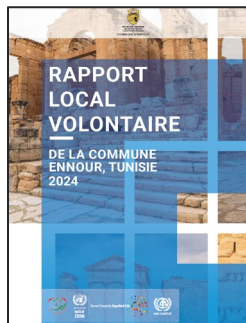
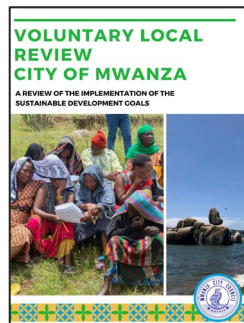


Action-Oriented VLR – the “glue” connecting the phases of the SDG Cities process

With over **350** examples worldwide, VLRs are a **globally established tool** to report progress on the SDGs, and provide insight and recommendations for policy, planning and investment.



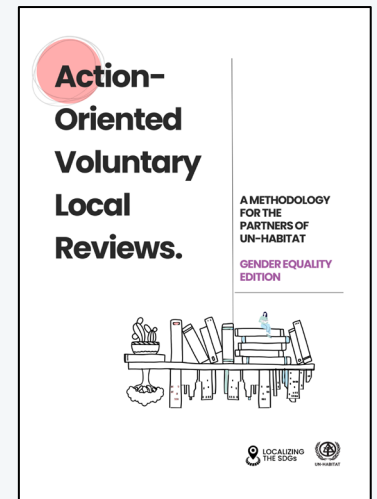
Global VLR
Repository:
<https://sdglocalization.org/voluntary-local-reviews-page>



Data and
spatial analysis

Planning

Projects



New appendix to the **Action-Oriented VLR Methodology** that
mainstreams the gender
perspective in SDG Localization.



Stadt Zürich
Stadtentwicklung



Implementation of the City-to-City Cooperation between Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Zurich, Switzerland

- **Objective:** Support Freetown's Central Business District Urban Regeneration Programme (CBDURP) by enhancing transportation, public space, greening, and governance.
- **Partners:** City of Zurich (donor), Freetown City Council, UN-Habitat, GOAL Sierra Leone
- **Duration:** 5 years

Aims and objective of the Transform Freetown Transforming Lives Initiative

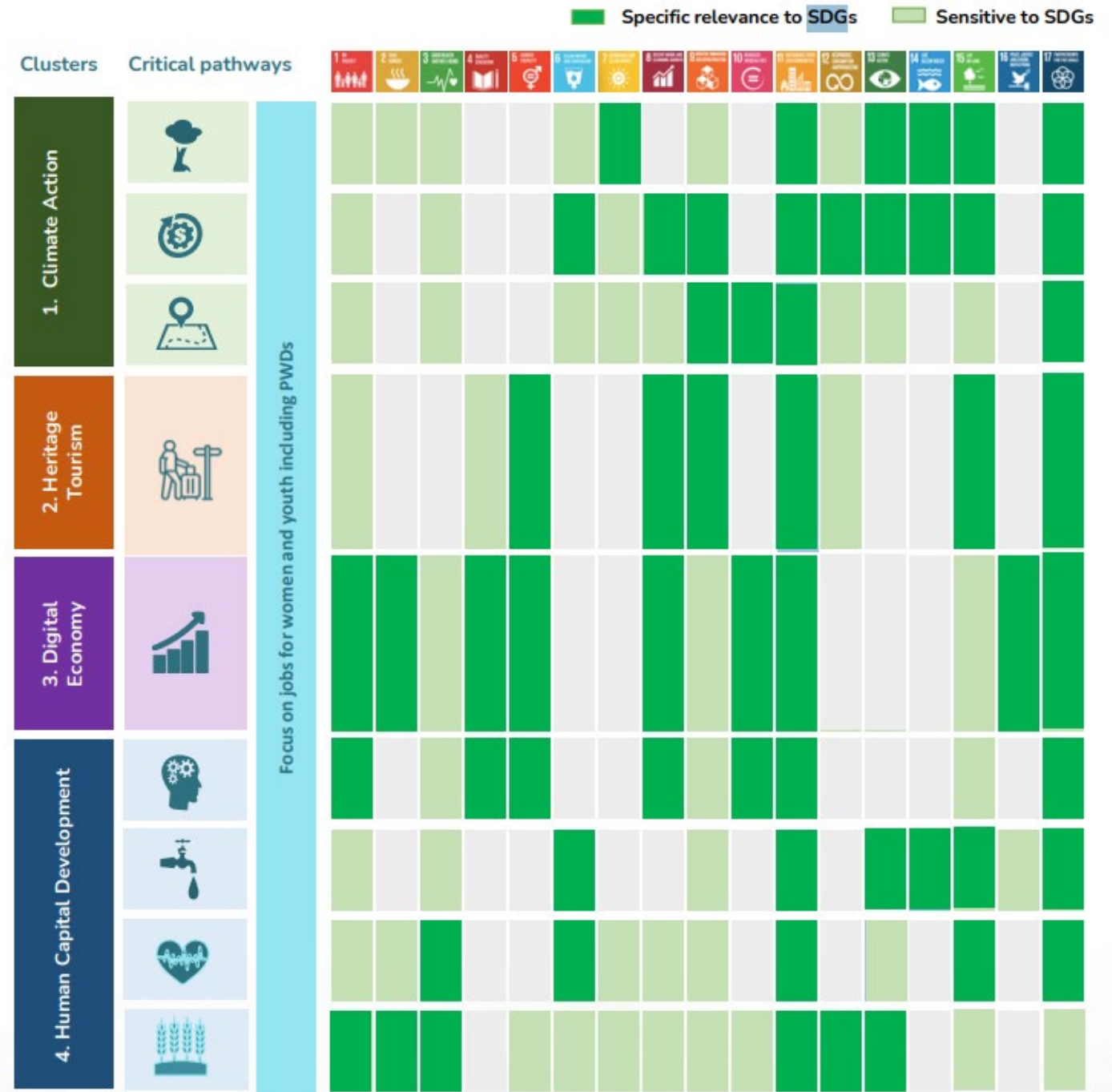
1. Climate Action	 Invest in afforestation, green energy and heat mitigation
	 Expand investments in solid and liquid waste management value chains
	 Undertake informal settlement upgrades, city regeneration & green urban mobility
2. Heritage Tourism	 Preserve, develop and market heritage sites
	 Develop and market cultural heritage products and the creative arts
3. Digital Economy	 Increase digital literacy skills and support enabling environment for <u>data hub</u>
4. Human Development	 Strengthen early childhood development, basic <u>education</u> and skills development
	 Improve access to water
	 Improve health outcomes
	 Improve access to food via urban farming

Focus on jobs for youth and women including PWDs



Planning in line with the SDGs

- **Anchoring urban transformation in local priorities** (urban regeneration, transport, jobs)
- **Co-developing context-specific solutions** through international municipal collaboration (Freetown–Zurich)
- **Strengthening local capacities** in planning, finance, infrastructure, and inclusive service delivery
- **Creating inclusive economic opportunities** at neighborhood level (CBD, street traders, youth employment)



VLR of Nakuru: Result

Dashboard



Living data lab

Plans and Priorities Analysis

Localization of SDG indicators

Continuous monitoring and reporting

Increased Transparency and Accountability

- Collaborative, **multi-stakeholder** process. Inclusive governance: grounded in community realities, owned by residents.
- Action-oriented: reviews 7 SDGs, proposes **evidence-based next steps**
- Innovative digital dashboard for **transparency and citizen engagement**

Multilevel Governance for SDG Localization – Ghana Smart SDG Cities Country Project

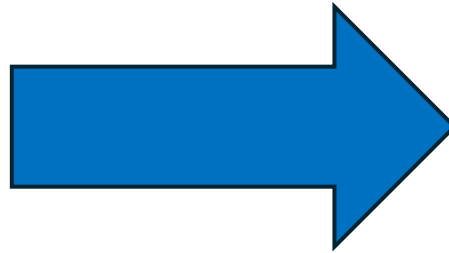
Accelerated achievement of the SDGs at the local and national level in Ghana, including enhancing urban climate resilience and promoting a green transition with the use of digital tools.

Outcomes:

1. Improved support structure for accelerating SDGs in cities and at the national level
2. Improved evidence-based planning
3. Strengthened local institutions, able to effectively progress economic, social and environment dimensions of sustainable urban development through digital training resources and tools



VLR of Ennour – Scaling up SDG Localization efforts to the National Level



From the first VLR in Tunisia to Implementing a National SDG Localization Framework together with the national and government and multiple cities



Thank you!



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