



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

| Project Summary

Strengthening local and national government
capacities for SDG localization in Africa

January 2025-March 2027

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG)

Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)

Title of the Project

Strengthening local and national government capacities for SDG localization in Africa

Brief Description

With 65 per cent of SDG targets estimated to be linked to the work of local and regional governments, effective localization is a pre-condition for achieving SDGs. In recent years, the role of local governments has gained prominence and visibility at the international level, recognized by Member States in General Assembly resolutions and High Level Political Forum Political Declarations, and by the Secretary-General in his reports “Our Common Agenda” and “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet 2023”.

In the face of multiple global crises that have slowed, and in some cases, reversed progress on SDG implementation, localization has become more important than ever and local governments from all regions have been “rising to the occasion,” increasingly seizing upon the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and working to make it a reality in their local contexts. One of the ways that local governments have been addressing this is by preparing sub-national reviews of their SDG implementation, known as Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), to reinforce vertical and horizontal policy coherence and complement Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

However, local and regional governments, particularly in the Africa region, face significant challenges in delivering on the 2030 Agenda. The project will support both national and local governments in selected African countries to accelerate inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda by strengthening local and national government capacities for localization of the SDGs. It will do so by building on the successful implementation of the Italian funded project on Improved local and national government capacities for localizing SDGs progress through Voluntary Local Reviews (2022-2024), providing continued support for review and reporting on SDG implementation and further supporting national and local governments to strengthen effective governance and planning for SDG achievement, addressing financing challenges for SDG delivery by local governments.

Time Frame

January 2025 - March 2027

Donor

Government of Italy

Partners

- UN DESA: Financing for Development Office (FSDO), Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD) and Statistics Division (SD)
- UN System partners: UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UN-Habitat, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Local2030 Coalition, Offices of the Resident Coordinators and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in target countries.
- African Union (AU), European Union (EU), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), Action Research for CO-Development (ARCO) Institute, selected United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) Members (including, African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), global and regional networks of schools of public administration).
- Academia, civil society organizations and other development partners.

Beneficiary Countries

West Africa: Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Sierra Leone

Southern Africa: Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia

Objective

The overall goal of the project is to enhance local and national government capacities in selected countries to accelerate and scale up SDG implementation and localization through two distinct objectives, both of which will be implemented with meaningful stakeholder participation and in line with the principle of leaving no one behind.

The project's first objective is to provide support for the development of new VLRs by local governments in the project countries and ensure that the process of undertaking a review is rigorous and based on evidence, accurate and disaggregated data, and promotes the close involvement and input of national and local stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia, young people and other relevant groups.

The project's second objective is to provide capacity building support focused on producing concrete changes on the ground through SDG planning, budgeting and implementation, fostering symbiotic relations between relevant national and local processes to ensure coherence and synergies and to maximize impact in the project countries.

Link to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

The project stems from the UN DESA mandate to support implementation of intergovernmental resolutions and international conventions and internationally agreed plans and programs of action including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By working on SDG localization, monitoring, reporting, and promoting the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) principle on subsidiarity, the project touches upon the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs spectrum, supporting almost all targets related to SDGs 11, 16 and 17.

Expected Results

The project expects to deliver the following results:

- i. Strengthened capacity of local, regional and national government officials and relevant stakeholders to assess SDG implementation by reporting, monitoring and evaluating progress, and identifying gaps, challenges and opportunities.
- ii. Enhanced capacity of national and local government officials to implement the 2030 Agenda at the local level, leading to the development and operationalization of SDG-related policies and governance frameworks.



Main Activities Envisioned

The project will involve several concurrent activities:

- 1 Carrying out an analysis of national and relevant local development instruments and the status of their implementation, in each project country, including a gap analysis informed by the principle of subsidiarity.
- 2 Conducting two national/local capacity development workshops per project country, guided by the results of the analysis undertaken in each participating country. The first workshop in each project country will focus on approaches to multi-level governance and localization for SDG implementation; evidence-based planning, budgeting and policy development with a focus on the 5 strategy guidance notes for the principle of subsidiarity; and financing for sustainable development at local level. The second workshop in each project country will focus on finalizing or presenting evidence-based policy outcomes supported by the present project.
- 3 Organizing two regional peer-to-peer workshops, bringing together national government officials and local officials that have progressed on their Voluntary Local Reviews and national and local SDG implementation together.
- 4 Developing training materials and analytical materials. These will include a toolkit of case studies, good practices and guides for the development of national programmes for SDG localization and for integration of the SDGs into local level development planning and budgeting, including implementation of the principle of subsidiarity.
- 5 Designing and producing communications materials to raise awareness on the importance of SDG localization, and to share good and inspiring practices.

