



G20 Platform on SDGs Localisation and Intermediary Cities (G20 PLIC)

G20 Development Working Group Outcomes: intermediary
cities and city to city partnerships for the SDGs

Launching event

23 November 2021, 12.00-14.30 CET

Held in virtual format

Agenda

Working language: English

G20 Development Working Group outcomes: the PLIC and the “Ten G20 Rome High-level principles on city-to city partnerships for localising the SDGs”

Cities, especially the small and medium ones, are playing a major role in the response to the pandemic and are critical actors for an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery. They are at the forefront of both emergency response and recovery efforts and are best placed to localise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They provide services to their citizens and to nearby areas, offer market places to enterprises, and have a major role in the protection of nature, in the adaptation and mitigation of climate change. But these cities are often overlooked in national strategies and international co-operation programmes and face enormous constraints - in terms of data, financing, policy, and capacity - to realise their development potential.

For the first time in the history of the G20, G20 Ministers of Development and International Co-operation met in Matera, on June 29, to reaffirm the commitment of G20 countries to support an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery in developing countries and accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In their final Communiqué, Ministers recognised that “intermediary cities offer a significant, but often unexplored and underutilised, potential for achieving the SDGs at the local level and [...] can play a determinant role in articulating a rural-urban continuum, addressing problems, finding solutions, and implementing actions, in concert with national governments, to advance a development model that is more inclusive, resilient and sustainable, and leaves no one and no place behind.”

This year, under the Italian Presidency, the G20 Development Working Group (DWG)¹ agreed to establish a **G20 Platform on SDG Localisation and Intermediary Cities (G20 PLIC)**, and adopted High Level Principles on city to city partnerships, that will help maximise synergies across existing initiatives and address some of the major gaps these cities face to realise their development potential. The Platform will operate as an open and collaborative space gathering G20 and other interested parties for peer dialogue, knowledge sharing, capacity building and consensus building on effective approaches to SDG localisation and the strengthening of intermediary cities and rural-urban linkages in developing countries. As such, it will foster regular policy dialogues among various stakeholders from the G20 and developing countries, international organisations, as well as regional, local governments, mayors and their networks. In particular, the Platform, will benefit from the expertise and support of the OECD, UN-HABITAT and will work very closely with UCLG.

The G20 DWG also developed the **Ten G20 Rome High-Level Principles on city-to-city partnerships**, in close consultation with member states, regional and local governments, international organisations, experts and G20 engagement groups. These principles are of a voluntary nature and they represent a stand-alone output of the Italian G20 Presidency. Building on the High-level Principles, the G20 DWG – supported by the OECD and UN Habitat - will engage with relevant actors to identify and compile a **Compendium of good policy practices and inspiring examples** to promote intermediary city-to-city partnerships for the localisation of the SDGs. The goal of this initiative is to provide a common framework for policy makers at international, national, regional, and local levels to initiate, develop and monitor city-to-city partnerships for the SDGs and promote greater attention to and involvement of small and intermediary cities.

¹ The DWG is the co-ordinating body of the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a key G20 framework to align the work of the G20 with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The DWG is also the G20 Group working to support developing countries and the most vulnerable people in the world.

12.00-12.30 Opening remarks

- Ms. Marina Sereni, Italian Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, G20 Presidency
- Mr. Schneider CH Siahaan, Indonesian Deputy Minister for Development Funding, next G20 DWG Chair, incoming G20 Presidency
- Mr. Mathias Cormann, OECD Secretary General
- Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director

12.30-13.30 Session 1 - Transforming the middle: the role of intermediary cities for achieving a territorial and ecological transition

Intermediary cities offer a significant, but often unexplored and underutilised, potential for achieving an ecological and territorial transition, especially in developing countries. Indeed, these agglomerations play a key role as strategic partners for a sustainable and inclusive growth, tackling climate change and speeding up a sustainable energy transitions, while providing an enabling environment for the empowerment of women, youth, and people living in vulnerable situations, including those in remote and rural areas and informal settlements. Intermediary cities act as “bridges” in local economic systems and national urban systems. They can play a determinant role in articulating the rural-urban continuum towards a development model that is more inclusive, resilient and sustainable. They deserve greater attention, in all countries, and in particular in developing and emerging economies. For all these reasons, intermediary cities are key for achieving the SDGs at local level.

Yet, they are systematically confronted with a series of constraints or gaps that limit their potential. In particular: a “knowledge gap”, resulting from insufficient information and empirical evidence on intermediary cities; a “policy gap”, related to fragmented national policies and governance structures that overlook them; a “financing and resources gap” due to low revenue base, high reliance on transfers and limited access to financial markets; a “capacity gap” related to staff, skills and technical equipment to fulfil their duties and engage with public and private partners to develop programmes and projects.

This session aims to discuss how to address these gaps and build on the potential of intermediary cities to transition into a sustainable and inclusive development path in emerging and developing economies.

Chair: Ms. Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir, Director, OECD Development Centre

- Mr. Remy Sietchiping, Chief Policy, Legislation and Governance Section, UN-Habitat
- Ms. Emilia Saiz, Secretary General, UCLG
- Ms. Sang Hee Hong, Director, Development Agenda and Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea
- Ms. Eva del Hoyo, Director General for Development Policies, Spain
- Ms. Carla Barroso Carneiro, Head of the International Office of the Ministry for Regional Development, Brazil
- Ms Nomkita Fani, Director of Intermediate Cities and Spatial Planning, Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Republic of South Africa
- Mr. Manuel de Araujo, Mayor of Quelimane, Mozambique

Interventions from the floor

13.30 - 14.15 Session 2 - Building together a sustainable recovery: city-to-city partnerships

City-to-city partnerships are gaining traction as a mechanism to achieve the SDGs with, in particular, the dedicated goals on “Partnerships and enablers for SDGs” (SDG 17) and on “Sustainable cities and communities” (SDG 11).

The DWG – supported by the OECD and UN Habitat - developed the **Ten G20 Rome High-Level Principles on city-to-city partnerships for localising the SDGs**, in close consultation with member states, regional and local governments, international organisations, experts and G20 engagement groups. These principles are of a voluntary nature and they represent a stand-alone output of the Italian G20 Presidency.

Building on those principles, the DWG will engage with relevant actors to identify and compile a Compendium of good policy practices and inspiring examples to promote the localisation of the SDGs (“Compendium”) in particular in developing countries through partnerships between cities, notably intermediary cities, in co-ordination with national governments.

The goal of this initiative will be to provide a common framework of good practices and inspiring examples for policy makers at international, national, regional, and local levels to initiate, develop and monitor city-to-city partnerships for the SDGs and promote greater attention to and involvement of small and intermediary cities, including by leveraging on relevant existing initiatives and material. It will be an action-oriented experience-based and lesson-learned guiding document and will support national, regional and local governments in the implementation of city-to-city partnerships.

This session aims to present the G20 High-level Principles, discuss the potential of city-to-city partnerships to accelerate the achievement of SDGs and set the basis for the compendium.

Chair: Mr. Nadim Ahmad, Deputy Director, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

- Ms. Marlene Holzner, Head of Unit, Civil Society and Local Authorities, DG INTPA, European Commission
- Ms. Anja Wagner, Head of the Federal States and Local Authorities Division, German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ), Germany
- Mr. Giorgio Gori, Mayor of Bergamo, Italy
- Mr. Wim Dries, President of the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) and Mayor, City of Genk, Region of Flanders, Belgium

Interventions from the floor

14.15-14.30 Closing remarks

- Mr. Marco Ricci, G20 DWG Chair, Italy, G20 Presidency
- Ms. Shipra Narang Suri, Chief Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat
- Mr. Federico Bonaglia, Deputy Director, OECD Development Centre