

**Statement to the
69th Commission on
the Status of Women**
on behalf of the constituency of
**local and regional
governments**



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Our vision, our contribution: Local and Regional Governments leading the way towards equality

We, the global constituency of local and regional governments, stand united in our historical commitment to achieving true equality in all cities and regions. For over a century, our Municipal Movement has championed equality, justice, and empowerment, from our cities and territories to the global stage. Our movement contributed to the processes that led to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and for the last 30 years, we have worked towards the localization of its goals, driven by equitable local public service provision. As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform in 2025, we reaffirm our commitment to continue advancing its strategic objectives through local action and localization and mobilizing to accelerate women and girls' rights and equality everywhere.

Our vision is clear: our communities, our democracy and the resilience of our planet cannot thrive without equality, and equality cannot be achieved without a radical redistribution of power. Women and other historically marginalized groups must not only be part of policy outcomes but must also be co-creators at every stage of the decision-making process. Local and regional governments are the most responsive and inclusive sphere of governance, ensuring that all voices are heard and promoting inclusion in a moment where our communities' social fabric is most put to test. To rebuild trust in democracy and promote an inclusive, networked and efficient multilateral system that is fit for purpose to address today's and tomorrow's challenges local and regional governments must be part of the solution – as partners, co-creating public policies that prioritize people over profits care over capital, and innovation over business as usual.

Localizing the Beijing Platform for Action and SDG 5: Achievements and Challenges

Local and regional governments are at the frontline of sustainable development and peace and are crucial to realizing the global agendas, promoting equality to not leave any one or any place behind. Based on proximity, local public policies and service provision—from healthcare to education, climate resilience to social protection—are indispensable to achieving the objectives of the Beijing Platform of Action and the SDGs, as highlighted by the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR).

Local and regional governments are localizing equality around three axes:

- 1. People:** We protect the rights of all women and girls by advancing economic empowerment, fighting violence, ensuring access to education, culture and healthcare, and supporting lifelong learning and participation in cultural life. As the closest sphere of government to communities, we are uniquely positioned to co-create local care systems and implement gender-responsive policies that empower women and girls, in partnerships with all sectors of

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society. With rights and peace as our horizon, we foster social inclusion, we protect migrant women and girls, and we include men and boys in our actions towards equality.

2. **Planet:** We recognize the connection between gender inequality and environmental degradation, and stand for climate justice. Women, particularly at the local level, are key to adapting to and mitigating climate change, and we support their leadership in strengthening resilience.
3. **Government:** Local governments champion women's participation in political and public life, which in turn strengthens political agendas focused on equality. We challenge entrenched social norms and patriarchal power structures, and promote institutional frameworks that enable women to hold change and lead the transformation of our territories.

Bridging Global Agendas and Local Realities: The Local Perspective on the UN SG Report and Regional Reviews for Beijing+30

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action originated from the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China, in September 1995. Representatives from 189 countries negotiated and adopted the Declaration and Platform for Action, identifying 12 critical areas of concern and setting strategic objectives and actions to address them.

In his Report "[Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#)", the **United Nations Secretary-General** highlights global and regional progress in advancing gender equality, in six thematic chapters including all critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.

However, it gives very little attention to local governments as integral political actors in implementing these commitments.

The Beijing+30 review process included the preparation of regional reports and the organization of intergovernmental meetings, conducted in all five regions by the United Nations regional commissions—Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). These regional reports, however, include even fewer references to the local level and almost none to the contributions of local governments.

UN Women's priorities for Beijing+30 are to deliver the Beijing Platform of Action by fostering collaboration between three target groups—Member States, civil society, and the multilateral system. UN Women will present a **Beijing+30 Action Agenda** aimed at realizing the Platform for Action and accelerating the 2030 Agenda through accountability, recommitment, and resources.

At Beijing+30, the Feminist Municipal Movement calls for the meaningful inclusion of local and regional governments in global policy-making and intergovernmental processes for gender equality and social justice. Our vision, leadership and commitment promote a transformative care-

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centered economy, renewed action against gender-based violence, and an intersectional approach that empowers marginalized voices and redefines governance to build a fairer, more just future.

We further urge the United Nations and the international community to recognize and partner up with local governments' leadership in delivering accessible, inclusive public services—from care and education to safe transport and housing—while actively dismantling the barriers to women's leadership.

Our priorities: The agenda of the Feminist Municipal Movement for the coming years

- 1. Human rights, political participation, and women's leadership:** We reaffirm that gender equality is a human right and that women's full and meaningful political participation is essential to achieving social justice and sustainable development. Without women in leadership, there can be no peace, no democracy, and no future.
- 2. Local care systems and public service provision:** As first responders to crises, local governments are committed to building care systems based on equitable public service provision. We will guarantee that all women, girls and communities, regardless of their status, thrive through the provision of essential services: housing, healthcare, water, sanitation, culture, education, care services, and food sovereignty.
- 3. Equal opportunities for women and girls:** Addressing poverty, dismantling structural inequalities in education and employment, and eliminating gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination are non-negotiable priorities. Women's aspirations and contributions to policy-making must be central to local governance in order to address the barriers they face.
- 4. Gender-responsive climate action and resilience:** Women must be at the center of our climate responses. Their leadership in shaping climate policies and solutions will ensure resilient, sustainable communities.
- 5. Safeguarding democracy and peace:** We support women's political participation as a cornerstone of safeguarding democracy and peace. In times of crisis, women's leadership strengthens social cohesion and fosters recovery.

The CSW69 Political Declaration on Beijing+30 and Our Calls for Localization

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) decided that at its 69th session, the Commission on the Status of Women will review the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda through a gender perspective. A

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Political Declaration will be adopted at its beginning, aimed at defining targeted strategies for action to implement the Beijing Platform of Action. Its [draft](#) was negotiated by Member States throughout February 2025, with no civil society engagement mechanisms put in place.

We, local and regional governments, welcome the commitments outlined in the current draft (second revision) of the Political declaration on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and its focus on advancing gender equality through transformative policies, inclusive political participation, and care-centered public services.

However, at the moment, the Declaration overlooks the critical role that local and regional governments play in delivering the goals of the Platform for Action at the community level, and their stand as political actors and the sphere of government closest to our communities.

Greater explicit recognition and resource allocation to subnational governments would enable more responsive, locally tailored solutions and enhance overall accountability. It would further contribute to the recognition and further ownership by the local government constituency of the strategic goals of the Beijing Platform for Action, as local and regional governments continue to champion the equality agenda through concrete policies and leadership on the ground.

Recognizing that true transformation begins at the local level, we assert that cities and regions are at the forefront of delivering inclusive public services and ensuring equitable political participation. Our direct engagement with local communities uniquely positions us to localize the Beijing Platform for Action in ways that are culturally relevant, locally responsive, and sustainable.

Our Calls in connection with the CSW69 Political Declaration:

1. Empower Local Decision-Making:

- We call for a greater devolution of authority and resources, enabling local governments to localize global and national gender equality policies and respond to local communities's specific needs and aspirations.

2. Invest in Local Care Systems:

- We demand dedicated funding for local public services, ensuring that all residents have access to essential services and equal opportunities. Investments in local care systems are a cornerstone of social justice.

3. Strengthen Capacity and Accountability:

- We urge national and international partners to support the capacities of local governments, enabling us to design and implement innovative, gender-responsive policies and budgets.

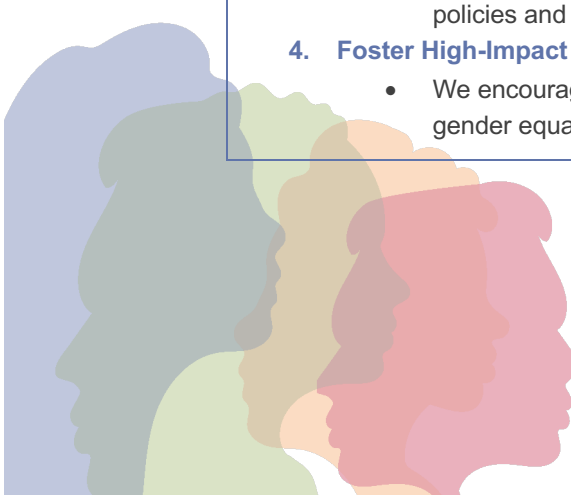
4. Foster High-Impact Multilevel Partnerships:

- We encourage collaborative initiatives that amplify our collective voice in advancing gender equality and ensuring that local perspectives are central to global policy-

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making. The local government constituency is leading high-impact, multilevel and multistakeholder coalitions to advance the [Local SDG Rescue Plan](#).

Our call to action: Towards a new multilateralism rooted in equality

As we prepare to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2025, we call for bold action and the full engagement of local and regional governments at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and beyond. Our specific calls are as follows:

- 1. Reshape the multilateral system for gender equality:** We demand a fundamental shift in global governance structures to ensure that women are at the center, and that local and regional governments are recognized as key actors in achieving the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda.

Our self-organized constituency of local and regional governments stands ready to reinvigorate multilateralism with a steadfast commitment to equality in the implementation of the UN Pact for the Future, guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Group of the UN Secretary-General on Local and Regional Governments.

The adoption of the UN Pact for the Future in September 2024 marked a significant step towards strengthening global partnerships to deliver on existing commitments and address emerging challenges. Local and regional governments through the Advisory Group of the UN Secretary-General on Local and Regional Governments—facilitated by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and UN-Habitat—actively engaged in the preparatory process, underscoring their commitment to ensuring the voices of local and regional leaders are reflected in global decision-making.

As part of its contribution to the Summit of the Future, the Advisory Group developed a global strategy for the UN's engagement with local and regional governments, identifying key priorities for strengthening local action in global agendas that included (i) caring cities and territories that provide universal local public services and promote gender equality; (ii) human rights-centered governance that ensures equity and social cohesion; (iii) local policies to end violence and discrimination rooted in people-centered approaches; and (iv) youth within governance mechanisms and future generations as core element of the political agenda. These priorities, shaped by the work of the Advisory Group and the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, reaffirm the commitment of LRGs to advancing a people-centered, rights-based multilateralism that delivers for all and ensures no one is

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left behind while contributing to advance the implementation of the Pact for the Future and the 2030 Agenda.

Local governments' vision for the CSW Revitalization mandated by the UN Pact for the Future

The UN Pact for the Future, adopted in 2024, includes a request for the ECOSOC to “explore options, in the context of the forthcoming thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to revitalize the Commission on the Status of Women to promote the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and promote and protect their human rights and ensure that the Commission is fit for purpose”. Botswana and Ireland were appointed by the President of ECOSOC as facilitators of this process in December 2024. Consultations will take place in the spring of 2025, culminating in the adoption of a resolution and a celebratory event during UNGA80 in September 2025.

Civil society recommendations for CSW revitalization focus on its purpose (accountability), its process (participation and engagement strategies), and its content (substantive and strategic themes and priorities). Ambition for such revitalization includes: policy relevance, enabling effectiveness, and enhanced multistakeholder participation.

The local and regional government constituency will follow closely this process and negotiations, guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Group of the UN Secretary-General on Local and Regional Governments for a more inclusive, networked and gender-equal multilateralism.

- 2. Reform the global financial architecture:** The global financial system must be rethought from the perspective of redistribution, decentralization, and redefinition of care based on renewed public responsibility. Local and regional governments must have the fiscal power and resources necessary to accelerate the localization of the global agendas for equality.

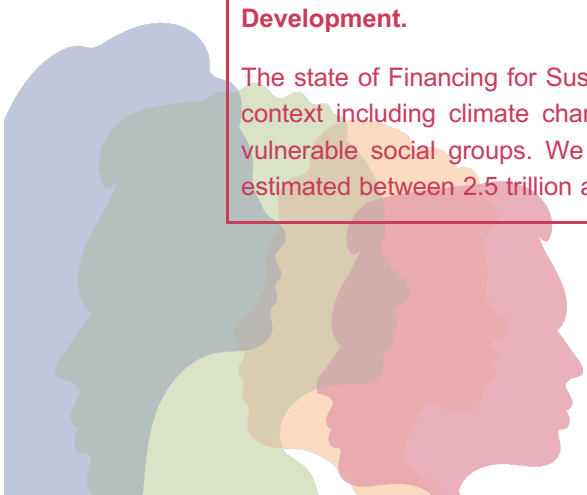
Financing equality and care in all cities and territories will be a key priority of the local government constituency at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.

The state of Financing for Sustainable Development is being increasingly challenged by the global context including climate change impacts aggravating yearly, with stronger impact on the most vulnerable social groups. We are far off track with the SDGs, which reveal an investment gap estimated between 2.5 trillion and 4 trillion USD annually in developing countries. There is a central

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need to scale up and improve affordable financing availability to reach SDGs and provide the means to cover the deep financing gaps in developing countries, in urban settings, and specifically on adaptation issues.

The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) is to be hosted by the Spanish Government and will take place from June 30 to July 3 2025 in Sevilla. This Conference, which took place a decade ago, will be a key opportunity for the local and regional government organized constituency to ensure that Paragraph 34 is updated, and that the references to local and regional government finance are strengthened to be action-oriented.

The overarching goal of our organized constituency is to contribute to reshaping the international financial architecture and redefining finance and the economy in a way that is more sustainable, and inclusive and considers the capacities, realities, needs, and potential of local and regional governments. We aim to work for a deep transformation in the governance and rules of the current economic system, paving the way for scaling up affordable financing, technical assistance and developing innovative financing mechanisms, to boost investment for social infrastructure in particular and to close the SDG financing gap.

- 3. Power women's participation at all levels:** We urge the United Nations, Member States, and the CSW to acknowledge the role of local governments and support women local leaders, as pivotal in advancing gender equality. We must be fully integrated into global decision-making and implementation processes.

The review of the localization of SDG 5 ahead of the next HLPF will be another key step in the Beijing+30 roadmap of the local government constituency, with a focus on challenges and opportunities for women's political participation.

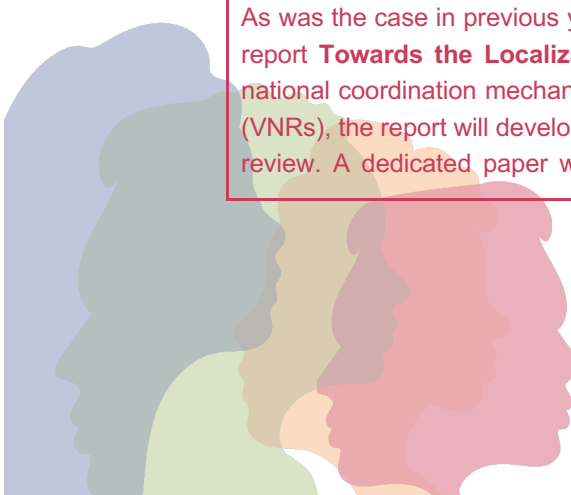
The 2025 edition of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) will be convened on July 14 – 23 July 2025, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, with the following theme: "Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind". The 2025 HLPF will conduct an in-depth review of SDG 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls".

As was the case in previous years, the Global Taskforce will be presenting to the HLPF its annual report **Towards the Localization of the SDGs**. In addition to analyzing LRGs' involvement in national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation and in the Voluntary Nations Reviews (VNRs), the report will develop the local perspective in this year's theme, covering the SDGs under review. A dedicated paper will review the localization of SDG 5 in cities and territories across

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regions, and reflect the experiences and insights of local and regional governments in championing women's political participation, co-creating local care systems, and ending violence and discrimination. **The Local and Regional Governments Forum** is confirmed to take place as a special session within the 2025 HLPF and will emphasize the SDGs in review this year, including SDG 5.

- 4. Support local policies of care and well-being:** Promoting comprehensive care policies and systems emphasizes shared responsibility not only between men and women, but also involving governments. We appeal to the global community to support local governments as they lead the way toward a politics of care, participation, and well-being. Policies centered on equality at the local level are key to building societies where both people and the planet can thrive.

Towards the World Social Summit: The Local Social Covenant and its Transversal Priorities on Equality and Caring Territories

In 2025, the Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2) will be held in Qatar, 30 years after the Copenhagen Declaration. This summit, called for by the UN Secretary-General, will be a pivotal moment for creating a new global social agenda focused on advancing social justice, solidarity, and equality through multilevel cooperation and partnerships. Key themes will include poverty eradication, full and productive employment, decent work for all, and social integration. For local and regional governments, along with their global partners, the World Social Summit is an opportunity to lead in shaping a global social agenda driven by local public service provision and by governing in partnership.

For the self-organized constituency of local and regional governments together with its partnership ecosystem, the World Social Summit will be a critical moment to galvanize a multistakeholder, multilevel coalition that, driven by local public service provision, puts reducing inequalities at the center of a new social contract. Our constituency will emphasize feminist leadership and local public service provision as a key lever to reduce inequalities and advance a new social contract.

In the lead-up to the Summit, the local government constituency will focus on the role of local and regional governments in reducing inequalities, anchored in the Local Social Covenant launched in 2024 by UCLG. Centered on essential rights, such as access to housing, food, culture, health, conflict prevention and public services, the Local Social Covenant is a multi-stakeholder political coalition focused on localization to build a society of rights and reduce poverty and social inequality in the final stretch to 2030. Its goal is to envision local and regional futures, accelerate political commitments, and foster collaboration among mayors, governors, and stakeholders focused on urban dynamics. The Local Social Covenant will channel a platform for structural dialogue among stakeholders; high-level political commitments; actionable solutions for present and future generations; and multilateral

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strategies for implementation. Equality and care will be key transversal axes of the Covenant, shaping the priorities of the Municipal Movement for local public service provision and the localization of sustainable development.

Achieving ecological transformation is a key priority on the equality agenda of the Municipal Movement as per the connections between gender equality and climate justice.

At the 2025 UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, from 9–13 June, we will unite to reaffirm our collective commitment to protecting our oceans as a shared resource and upholding the principles of equality and inclusivity in environmental governance. On 7 June, the Ocean Rise and Resilience Summit for Cities and Regions will launch the Ocean Rise and Resilience Coalition, a decisive step toward adapting coastal cities and regions to ocean hazards. With key partners including ICLEI, C40, Resilient Cities Network, FMDV, and UCLG, this initiative champions not only sustainable development but also equal access to safe, resilient urban futures for all communities.

At COP30 in Belem, Brazil, from 10–21 November 2025, we will commit to forging a resilient, inclusive future through multilevel collaboration. Local governments will lead the design of next-generation national climate plans (NDCs3.0), drive bottom-up leadership with Town Hall COPs, and play a key role in mobilizing the \$1.3 trillion global climate finance package, ensuring that cities and regions, especially in the Amazon, are at the forefront of climate action. We recognize that climate change disproportionately affects women and girls, and we are dedicated to elevating women's leadership in every facet of our response, ensuring that our efforts advance both climate resilience and equality. Together, we will transform challenges into opportunities, reinforcing our commitment to the Paris Agreement, Agenda 2030, and a sustainable, equitable future for all.

At the 7th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) in Nairobi, from 8–12 December 2025, we will advance a resilient planet by accelerating sustainable solutions to our intertwined environmental crises. The upcoming Cities and Regions Summit on 5 December will showcase the indispensable role of local and regional governments in implementing sustainable development and Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Moreover, we will insist that women and structurally discriminated communities's voices must lead our collective efforts to drive change and fortify multilevel governance under the 2030 Agenda.

The Municipal Movement will champion placing Equality at the center of the Post-2030 Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda has been a transformative framework for sustainable development, yet with the 2030 deadline approaching and many targets still unmet, a strategic pivot is necessary. This includes

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a deliberate, transversal focus on equality and the empowerment of women and marginalized communities in leadership, to revitalize democratic processes and leverage local governance for global transformations.

We call for a stronger recognition of, and support for, the impressive strides local governments have made for equality through the transformation of social norms, movement-building, innovative public policies and services, and community mobilization. Yet we also acknowledge critical gaps in funding, capacity-building, and communication that must be addressed. To truly realize equality, we call for broader commitments to empower women's leadership, not only as a rights imperative but as a cornerstone for transparent, accountable, and responsive governance. By creating safe, supportive environments and investing in targeted training and mentorship, we will forge strong pipelines for future women leaders and embed gender-sensitive policies in our institutions. Through strategic cross-sector partnerships and enhanced metrics that track gender-specific progress, we commit to renewing leadership and fortifying democracy, laying the groundwork for a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future beyond 2030.

The road to gender equality is paved with local action, women's leadership, and global solidarity. As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, **let us recognize the transformative power of local and regional governments to localize its objectives and lead the way to a more equal, just, and sustainable world.** We stand ready to partner with the global community, to ensure that no woman, no girl, no community, and no territory is left behind.



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