

FROM SDG 5 TO HABITAT III

THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY



WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
UCLG Standing Committee on Gender Equality
Paris, 6 December 2015



BACKGROUND

Local and regional governments have a long track record of **working internationally for gender equality**, with a particular focus on **increasing the representation of local elected women** and the **promoting the participation of all women in local decision-making**:

1998

The International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) adopted the **Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government**, the foundational document of international principles and commitments with regard to the action of local and regional governments in the field of women's rights.

2006

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) drew up the **European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life**. The Charter encourages local and regional governments to make a public commitment to equality and to implement concrete practices in the areas of political participation, employment, public services, and urban planning to promote gender equality. So far, more than 1400 local and regional governments in 29 countries have signed the Charter.

2013

The Global Conference of Local Elected Women adopted the **Paris Local and Regional Government Global Agenda for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life**. The Agenda is inspired by the Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government and the values and principles contained in the European Charter on Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. It aims to be a strategic tool to increase equality between women and men in all spheres of decision-making.



“The construction of democracy cannot be understood without the prominent input of women and our work must be focussed on presenting concrete proposals that help us to alter the situation in our societies and organizations.”

ANNE HIDALGO

—Mayor of Paris and co-president of UCLG, chair of the UCLG Standing Committee on gender Equality



UCLG STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY

UCLG is acknowledged as the global voice of local elected women by national agencies and the UN.

The **UCLG Standing Committee on Gender Equality** monitors and promotes the participation of women at local level across the world.

The Committee firmly believes that the **participation of women in local decision-making is the foundation of global development.**

The Standing Committee works with local elected women and grassroots organizations to build their capacities and increase women’s representation.

Research on panchayats (local councils) in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with female-led councils was 62 per cent higher than in those with male-led councils. In Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage has been found.

SDG 05: “ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS”

Sustainable Development Goal 5 of the 2030 Agenda is about ending violence and discrimination against women and girls and making sure they have equal opportunities in all areas of life.

Significantly, SDG 5 both calls for policies for women, and participation by women in political, economic and public life. In other words, the goal understands that **gender equality and the empowerment of women are both a goal of, and a tool for, sustainable development.**

SDG 5 relates to many of the direct responsibilities of local governments and is an opportunity for local and regional administrations to build on our existing international commitments and demonstrate our vital role in the achievement of global gender equality.



**FEWER THAN 5%
OF THE WORLD'S
MAYORS ARE WOMEN**



**20%
OF LOCAL
COUNCILLORS
WORLDWIDE
ARE WOMEN**

“We are convinced that UCLG can strive for equality and that this will make it stronger and more representative. A world where power is shared equally by women and men will be a better world for all.”

FATIMETOU MINT ABDEL MALICK

—Mayor of Tevragh-Zeina, Mauritania and President of REFELA (network of local elected women in Africa)



RELEVANT SDG 5 TARGETS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

5.1 End ALL FORMS OF **DISCRIMINATION** against all women and girls everywhere

5.2 Eliminate all forms of **VIOLENCE AGAINST ALL WOMEN** and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and **FORCED MARRIAGE AND FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATIONS**

5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the **PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICIES**, and the **PROMOTION OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY** within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership **AT ALL LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND PUBLIC LIFE**

5.a Undertake reforms to give women **EQUAL RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC RESOURCES**, as well as access to **OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OVER LAND** and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources in accordance with national laws

5.c Adopt and strengthen **SOUND POLICIES AND ENFORCEABLE LEGISLATION** for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels



WHAT CAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DO TO HELP ACHIEVE SDG 5?

- 01** The first task of local governments is to **act as a model of best practice for our communities.** As major employers and service providers, local governments can have a significant impact on women's lives by using fair employment practices and ensuring non-discriminatory service provision to citizens.
- 02** Local governments are on the frontline of **tackling violence and harmful practices against women** in both the public and private spheres. Local policing and urban planning, particularly the creation and maintenance of public spaces, are essential tools in tackling violence against women. Local governments have an important role to play in identifying women and girls affected by violence and providing them with the appropriate support and services to escape it and rebuild their lives.
- 03** Women are significantly underrepresented in leadership positions at all levels of government in most countries. **Local governments must take action to improve female representation in elected, administrative and appointed office at the highest levels in our own institutions.** This can be achieved through a combination of anti-discrimination and positive action measures, and additional support through mentoring schemes, flexible working, and affordable childcare provision.
- 04** Local and regional governments have a duty to **ensure women's equal access to land and economic and natural resources.** Local authorities can establish mechanisms to make it easier for women to obtain basic legal documents such as birth certificates, provide legal aid services that support women in exercising their rights, and guarantee women's participation in land governance institutions and policy-making processes.
- 05** Local governments should **fully mainstream a gender perspective into local legislation, urban planning and policy-making** in order to tackle the multiple barriers to women's empowerment. Only in this way will women and girls be able to play an equal role in the economic, social, political and cultural life of our cities.



HOW DOES SDG 5 RELATE TO THE NEW URBAN AGENDA?

The New Urban Agenda, to be adopted at the Habitat III Conference on Housing and Human Settlements in October, 2016, is tasked with creating mechanisms that promote social inclusion and reduce inequalities to ensure sustainable development in the world's cities. This ambition can only be realized by using a gendered lens to ensure that women's particular needs in urban areas are understood and addressed.

Women and girls experience cities in different ways to men and boys. While the city has been a place of liberation for women in comparison to their rural counterparts, it has also been a site of gender violence and female exploitation. Women still face discrimination in access to income earning opportunities, education, housing, the rule of law and participation in local governance.

Gender equality, equality of opportunity, urban living conditions and sustainable development are intrinsically linked. These linkages cut

across the social, economic, environmental and governance dimensions of sustainable development. Initiatives that engage women as active participants in urban development have proven to boost both sustainable livelihoods and national economies.

SDG 5 and the New Urban Agenda represent an unprecedented opportunity to harness the mutually reinforcing goals of women's empowerment and sustainable urban development over the coming decades.



GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF LOCAL ELECTED WOMEN

PARIS LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS'
GLOBAL AGENDA FOR EQUALITY
OF WOMEN AND MEN IN LOCAL LIFE



We, local elected women and men gathered in Paris on 31 January-1 February 2013, together with women and men from all spheres of society, at the initiative of the City of Paris and the UCLG Standing Committee on Gender Equality, with the contribution of the UCLG Regional sections and the patronage of UN Women,

- 01 RECALLING** that in all aspects of politic, economic and social life, women continue to be under-represented in the decision-making bodies around the world;
- 02 CONVINCED** that the participation of women in local decision-making, strongly strengthens the democratic base(s) of society and contributes to successful development;
- 03 CONSIDERING** that the problems and challenges that humanity is facing are global but have to be dealt with at the local level;
- 04 UNDERLINING** that democratic local self-government plays a critical role in securing social, economic and political justice for all citizens of every community in the world and that all members of society, women and men, must be included in the governance process;
- 05 CONSCIOUS** of the great potential of the local level in the promotion of innovative and transformative solutions and conscious of the vital role of women's talent in society;
- 06 COMMITTED** to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the MDGs and the Roadmap of UN Women;
- 07 BUILDING** on the knowledge gathered by our worldwide international movement and inspired by the **Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government** and the values and principles contained in the **European Charter on Equality of Women and Men in local Life**;
- 08 COMMITTED** to contributing to improve the status of women and promoting gender equality and coresponsability around the world.

We launch a local and regional GLOBAL AGENDA for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life as a strategic tool to increase the respect for equality of women and men in all spheres of decision-making with focus on the following issues:

**I.
INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN LOCAL DECISION-MAKING, IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE EQUAL REPRESENTATION AND TO ACHIEVE A SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA POST-2015**

We call for:

- 01 INCLUDE** women in local decision-making as a clear target of the MDGs;
- 02 POLITICAL** parties to include women in all their decision-making bodies and respect gender equality and parity in all their processes of appointment or election;

- 03 WOMEN** who are decision-makers in their political parties to mobilize, set up a framework and support other women to integrate the political stage, face difficulties and promote female leadership;
- 04 GOVERNMENTS** to establish mechanisms that will help to achieve equal representation;
- 05 LOCAL GOVERNMENT** associations to create and strengthen Standing Equality Committees;
- 06 LOCAL GOVERNMENT** associations to closely collaborate with women NGOs and the private sector in order to tackle inequality issues.

II.

EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN TO BE ON THE TOP OF THE AGENDA OF LOCAL PUBLIC POLICY MAKING AND FOR ADEQUATE SERVICE PROVISION THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVE THE CONDITION OF WOMEN AND THEIR EMPOWERMENT

We call for:

- 01 A CHANGE** in the laws that affect the condition of women and for the efficient implementation of laws;
- 02 WOMEN** to be involved in the development, management and monitoring of public services. Their needs must be made visible and taken into account at all times in planning and budgeting;
- 03 PUBLIC SERVICES** to avoid perpetuating stereotypes of women and men;
- 04 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** to make additional efforts to provide employment to women and provide adequate training;

- 05 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** to play an important role in providing local, professional and safe care services for children, older people and people with specific needs contributing to alleviate the heavy workload of women preventing them to play a full role in society;
- 06 INNOVATIVE** financial mechanisms to be developed to stimulate the independence of women and their active participation in the economic life;
- 07 MAINSTREAMING** a gender approach in the design and implementation of local and regional policies.

III.

A SAFE WORLD IN PARTICULAR FOR WOMEN, WHO ARE TRADITIONALLY THE MOST VULNERABLE TO ALL TYPES OF VIOLENCE

We call for:

- 01 PARLIAMENTS** to legislate on violence and harassment towards women;
- 02 CENTRAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** to develop programmes that protect women from violence and allocate resources;
- 03 LOCAL PUBLIC POLICIES** to ensure safe mobility and access to the territories;
- 04 PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS** to be developed educating girls and boys on the importance of avoiding all forms of physical, psychological and sexual violence and abuse;
- 05 CENTRAL, LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS** to provide special training to relevant staff, especially

for police forces, concerning gender violence and contributing to eliminate stereotypical attitudes and behaviour;

06 THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT of the situation of women in countries in times of conflict and post-conflict;

07 THE MEDIA to be responsibly involved in the struggle against violence and harassment towards women.

We, the members of uclg, representing local and regional governments worldwide, commit ourselves to implement and follow the paris agenda and:

01 CALL UPON UCLG and its Regional Sections to support our commitments and give the example of a more balanced participation of women and men in their decision-making bodies with the aim for UCLG to reach an equal representation of women and men in its governing bodies in 2015;

02 PROMOTE the public adoption and debate of measures favouring balanced representation of women and men in decision-making, clearly stating the local and regional governments public commitment to equality;

03 DEVELOP INITIATIVES and programmes to promote a public commitment for equality at local and regional level based on the Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government, the European Charter of Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, the MDGs and the Roadmap of UN Women;

04 FOSTER GLOBAL solidarity strengthening international cooperation between central, local and regional governments, supported by national, regional and international associations of local governments, as well as civil society, in order to help eliminating barriers to

women's participation in local decision-making, with a special focus on developing countries, vulnerable countries and countries in situations of conflict;

05 DEVELOP AND INCREASE knowledge in the field of gender by ensuring that statistics are gender disaggregated and analysed from a gender perspective;

06 MOBILISE RESOURCES for academic research with a gender perspective, that can be of use for the development of gender equality in local government;

07 DEVELOP specific collaborations with civil society, in particular grassroots women groups, parliamentarians, UN Agencies and private sector to promote capacity building of local and regional authorities in relation to equality between women and men;

08 PROMOTE the implementation of this agenda and its further development adapted to the specificities and needs of the members in the different parts of the world;

09 ENCOURAGE other regions of UCLG to develop charters for gender equality based on the European Charter on Equality of Women and Men in Local Life.



UCLG

United Cities
and Local Governments

Carrer Avinyó, 15
08002 Barcelona - Spain
Tel. +34 933 428 750
Fax +34 933 428 760
info@uclg.org

www.uclg.org



UCLG WOMEN

Standing Committee
on Gender Equality

women.uclg.org
[@uclg_women](https://twitter.com/uclg_women)

Africa



Asia-Pacific



Euro-Asia



Europe



Latin America



Middle East-
West Asia



North America



Metropolitan Section



Forum of Regions



Supported by:  European Commission