

Localizing the 2030 Agenda: Building on What Works

Participants' Roles at the Exchange Forum

Background

Adopted in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a roadmap for collective action towards a world where all people can live productive, vibrant and peaceful lives on a healthy planet. While progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been made in certain areas, there needs to be a more ambitious response at the community, national, regional and global levels to realize the transformation envisaged. To this end, greater attention should be focused on mobilizing the capacities and ingenuity of local actors as well as building inclusive, multis-stakeholder partnerships that can take successful local initiatives to scale for a locally-led, nationally-owned, and regionally- and internationally-supported development trajectory.

Purpose of the Exchange Forum

The Exchange Forum will provide a model for a different way of working that puts the local at the center of multi-stakeholder engagement in order to lay a stronger foundation for achieving the SDGs in West Africa and beyond. By bringing together stakeholders from diverse sectors and institutions, the Forum will create a unique platform for sharing experiences and knowledge that go beyond traditional forms of cooperation. Through this dialogue and collective exploration, participants will (i) highlight innovative and successful solutions at the local level that are responding to interrelated development challenges, (ii) identify key elements and contributing factors behind the success of their activities; and (iii) map out how these initiatives could be brought to scale through multi-stakeholder partnerships across the local, municipal, national, regional and global levels.

Understanding each actor's role

For **champions**, your role is to share your example, based on your experience of responding to development challenges in your communities. These experiences should provide insights into why your initiative was successful and how you know it was successful. It should highlight specific “ingredients” (e.g. community assets, capacities, resources, processes, partnerships, etc.) that you believe were instrumental in making the initiative successful, as well as outline key elements for scaling up the initiative to advance the SDGs at the local and national level. As your example will form the foundation for developing a localized strategy in consultation with your country colleagues, we look to you to offer a rich narrative of your experience as well as a candid assessment of what success looks like on the ground and what is necessary for it to be scaled up.

For **municipal authorities**, as the level of government closest to the people, your role is to share knowledge and experiences of how governance arrangements and partnerships can support the scale-up of successful locally-led initiatives. These experiences should highlight specific “ingredients” (e.g. community assets, capacities, resources, processes, partnerships, etc.) that you believe are instrumental to advance a locally-led, nationally-owned, and regionally- and

internationally-supported development strategies. In addition, as an important intermediary between community leaders and the central government, your insights on how to create mechanisms for cooperation across local, national, regional and global stakeholders, as well as how to mobilize and engage leadership at the community level will be crucial contributions to the dialogue.

For **national government representatives**, as the stewards of sustainable development in your country, your role is to share insights and experiences on efforts being made to foster institutional collaboration and create ownership across institutions, as well as to mobilize and harness the contributions of a diverse set of stakeholders towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. Your knowledge of existing mechanisms that can be leveraged or new platforms that can be established to advance an inclusive and participatory development strategy that builds upon the innovations and successes at the local level towards national development objectives that leave no one behind will be instrumental to the discussion and action planning. In addition, as the key intermediary between the municipal, regional and global partners, we would appreciate your perspectives on how to implement an integrated approach to sustainable development and collective action at all levels.

For **UN Resident Coordinators**, as the United Nations representative in country responsible for the coordination of operational activities for development in support of the government's efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, your role and that of UN Representatives is to share insights and experiences on how the UNCT can help accelerate progress on the SDGs through localization. Building upon the successful local initiatives shared by champions and municipal authorities, your experiences developing integrated strategies will be invaluable to the process of connecting "ingredients" (community assets, capacities, resources, processes, partnerships, etc.) for ground-up strategies. In addition, your experience harnessing the comparative advantage of a wide range of stakeholders across the UN system, government, civil society and the private sector will be important for action planning. In addition, your leadership to develop operational programmes to take forward the outcomes of the Forum will be essential to move from dialogue to action.

For **regional and international participants**, your role is to listen and consider how your efforts can catalyze action at the local level and support the scale up of successful initiatives through multi-stakeholder partnerships. Based on your extensive experience, your insights into the mechanisms, capacities and contributing factors that can support a locally-led 2030 Agenda will be crucial to the discussion and the action planning for concrete follow-up after the Forum.