

LOCAL ACTION

SDG LOCAL SOLUTIONS

Barcelona, 7 and 8th November 2024



Organized by



Invitation

The United Nations Development Programme and the Barcelona Provincial Council would like to invite you to share with us your ideas on how to innovate local government management.

We speak a lot about innovation, but for those working in public administrations, we know how difficult this is. We hope to focus on specific solutions about how to make innovation a reality for all: small and bigger cities, rural towns, high- and low-income territories and places where the capacities are limited and unable to identify even where to start.

Our meeting is called “SDGs local solutions” because the Agenda 2030 is providing inspiration for local and regional governments around the world to do things differently: bringing different aspects of development together, addressing different SDGs themes at the same time, breaking silos, or planning and budgeting in a different way. The SDGs also provide a framework to better explain to citizens what their local governments do, and communicating how public services are changing for the better is such an important thing regarding innovation in public management, often underestimated. More importantly, the Agenda 2030 provides a new “spirit” of doing things, based on the principle of leaving no one, and no place, behind.

The event will take place around the same dates of the Smart City Expo, that every year brings to Barcelona leaders from the most innovative companies, governments and organizations to discuss urban innovation. In 2023, the event attracted 25.000 participants, 1.100 exhibitors and 800 cities from all over the world.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Barcelona!


Themes

Innovation can mean a lot of things, but for the purposes of our event, it wants to identify concrete solutions to make it a reality. We are not talking about digital innovation here, but about how to flip the way public administrations are looking to improve their public policies, inspired by Agenda 2030.

It is always difficult to select from the many issues that can make innovation succeed or fail. After some serious thought, we are proposing to focus on the following ones.

1. Innovating local public policies, how to really do it?

We want to start with the most complicated question of all: how we can really innovate local policy making?



We are aware that this can never be a universal question, and that each of us needs to fight their own battles at home. Resistance to change is a human quality, and most public innovation fails because of it. But we are not to be deterred, the objective of this session is to identify, together with other peers, what are the questions that we need to ask to make innovation possible, effective and sustainable at local level.

2. Cities creating livelihoods

A lot of innovation is happening around the role of municipalities or regional governments, to correct market inefficiencies and provide services that can take people out of poverty. Cities care about the most vulnerable, and this session wants to bring concrete examples about how local governments can generate not only employment, but jobs that are able to make people afford an increasingly inflated cost of life.

3. Financing innovation, opening doors

We cannot talk about innovation without considering how to pay for it. Including start with the minimum human resources needed to start even thinking about it. The session will present the first results of UNDP and FMDV toolbox on accessing financial resources to facilitate SDG local action and start opening some doors.

4. Visualizing innovation in cities

Explaining innovation to citizens is a very difficult thing to do, but it is essential to reach out when this innovation has a direct effect in service delivery in the city. Many cities are designing data platforms to help citizens getting involved in the design of the city, involving users in running public services is a trend that no city can ignore, but many are finding difficulties to make the right choices about how to visualize data, that is key to communicate what the city is doing and recreating trust. This session will present some of the work that UNDP is doing with partners and offering some sensible solutions that can apply to challenging contexts when local governments do not have a lot of resources or capacities but a will to keep innovating city management.

5. Innovating procurement for public services: procurement as an instrument for inclusion, sustainability and efficiency

Finally, we need to look at the “backbone” of all public action: procurement. UNDP has accumulated 50 years’ experience in providing local governments with services, human resources, construction, goods and advice about how to make choices that are sustainable in time and effective even in very fragile or conflict situations. Many public administrations operate services through contracts with external providers. Choosing the best one is never easy, and failing service provision always takes its toll. Mayors can lose an election for failing in procuring

proposed innovations. But procurement also has an enormous potential to change the way things are, address inequalities, listen to the users and introduce other principles beyond the “value for money”. This session will think about how the spirit of Agenda 2030 is also relevant for public procurement. Believe it or not!

6. Putting innovation into practice: lessons from the Global Mayors Challenge

As a concrete example of how cities can innovate, even in the most challenging contexts, we are bringing you the case study of the Global Mayors Challenge with experiences from the 2021 edition, that was also the first one that included Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Their travel to innovate basic public services is now showing fruit and their stories are worth learning from!

UNDP will be working around all these themes throughout the year 2024. We are mobilizing cities, experts and other UN colleagues to come up with ideas and new trends. The event will be fueled by the work of UNDP Taskforces on Urban and Local Action, as well as dedicated working groups. The final output will consist of short and to-the-point guidelines to better identify questions and inspire others to innovate policy making.

The organizers

The [Barcelona Provincial Council](#) is structured as a network of municipalities. Through technical, financial, and material support to the different local governments in its territory, it promotes the development of public policies that allow us to face the global challenges we face, such as poverty and climate change. The Barcelona Provincial Council, as a supra-municipal administration, has always promoted and defended quality, close and transparent local public services with the goal that equality, opportunities and sustainability help us build a fairer and more hopeful future here and everywhere.

The Barcelona Provincial Council, host of the event, will present its cooperation model with the 311 municipalities of the province of Barcelona, developed under a dynamic of innovation and continuous improvement, to ensure the provision of quality local services in a more homogeneous way throughout the territory. He will also unveil the future Center for Innovation in Public Services, whose mission will be to accompany the transformation of the administration and define new municipal products and services to face the complexity of the 21st century.

The [UNDP SDG local action](#) team supports cities and local governments to engage with Agenda 2030, showcasing how they are making SDG a reality for all, and everywhere. The team is part of the UN SDG Action Campaign and supports UNDP work with local and regional governments and works closely with local government associations in their contribution to the UN global agendas.

How to participate?

We are expecting a small group of maximum 100 people between local decision makers, city

managers, local government associations and selected academic and private sector partners.

Participation is by invitation only. Send us your interest by email to info@sdglocalaction.org

Please, do not initiate travel arrangements until the organizers accept your registration and confirm your participation. Places are limited.

The event will take place in English, French and Spanish. Remote connection will be available through the Zoom platform and some of the sessions will be broadcast online.

A limited number of sponsorship opportunities are offered to facilitate travel and accommodation for selected participants.

For more information, please contact us at: info@sdglocalaction.org

Agenda

Thursday 7th November

9.00 – 9.30	Institutional welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Representative from the Province of Barcelona- Representative from UNDP- Others to be confirmed
9.30 – 11.00	Innovating local public policies, how to really do it?
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	Cities creating livelihoods
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Putting innovation into practice: lessons from the Global Mayors Challenge
15.30 – 16.00	Coffee break
16.00 – 17.30	Innovating procurement for public services: procurement as an instrument for inclusion, sustainability and efficiency

Friday 8th November

9.00 – 9.15	Trendsetting: ideas emerging from day 1 by the Rapporteur
9.15 – 11.00	Financing innovation, opening doors
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	Visualizing innovation in cities
13.00 – 14.00	Trendsetting: ideas, recommendations, way forward by the Rapporteur
14.00 – 15.00	Lunch