

**SDG LEADERSHIP CITIES: SECOND CONVENING**

Mexico City, Mexico  
November 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**EVENT DESCRIPTION**

Gatherings of the SDG Leadership Cities group are conducted in roundtable format, with topics explored in highly interactive sessions designed to promote exchange by the senior city officials of their best practices, innovations, and challenges and to build relationships and opportunities for continued engagement. Sessions are held under Chatham House rules<sup>1</sup> to encourage candid discussions between peers and problem-solving by including limits, challenges, and obstacles in the discussion. The key objective remains to provide a platform for direct city-to-city discussion and information-sharing on novel practices and tactics.

Each city and organization will present on one of the four themes allocated based on survey results and earlier discussions. The four themes are:

1. **DATA AND REPORTING:** Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), pioneered by New York City based on the country-level reviews that member states submit to the United Nations, are emerging as an important tool for local leaders to track city-level progress in pursuing the SDGs and are providing a new basis for city-to-city exchanges. At the Mexico City meeting, leaders from cities that have developed VLRs will present lessons, challenges, and innovations on using data and VLRs to analyze gaps in progress and translate those gaps into the basis for targeted actions. The group will also examine whether a subset of indicators can act as a shared dashboard among cities. Cities will also explore opportunities to leverage data and reporting platforms to uncover the SDGs' hidden connections across sectors.
2. **FINANCING:** Cities play an important role in achieving the SDGs through capital expenditures, infrastructure maintenance and operation, and local public services. Many cities are testing with financial models, budget rationalization, and new means of financing the SDGs, including municipal bonds and public-private partnerships. The session will explore how policy commitments to the SDGs provide the basis for developing new financing solutions to close the financing gap required to achieve the SDGs.
3. **PROCUREMENT:** The Bellagio meeting revealed significant appetite among participants to pursue individual and collective initiatives on sustainable public procurement. Certain cities are changing their procurement policies to reflect their priorities within the SDGs. The Mexico session will further explore the integration of sustainability criteria into municipal bids and purchasing processes, as well as the challenges in balancing trade-offs among different focus

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<sup>1</sup> "When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed."

areas within the 2030 Agenda. The group will also explore collective city action on procurement, which shows promise as a powerful tool for shaping markets and accelerating investments that will drive progress.

4. SECURITY: The multi-dimensional nature of the SDGs, and the challenge of SDG 16 on the centrality of peace and justice to the sustainable development agenda, provide a collaborative platform to address the interlinked issues of violence, safety, social cohesion, and inclusive economic growth as the basis for safer cities. Making cities more secure benefits from a coordinated multi-stakeholder response and the session will explore the interrelationships of urban security, especially as it relates to education, economic opportunities, and youth engagement.

## AGENDA

The goal of the meeting is to foster a collaborative and informative atmosphere where city leaders could share pressing challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned from their journey implementing the SDGs locally. The different agenda topics each take advantage of the diverse group of cities involved:

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### *Session I*

#### **A 360° View of the Localization of the SDGs in Mexico City**

*Mexico City*

- What has been Mexico City's approach to the SDGs and other global agendas?
- How is Mexico City interacting with national and local stakeholders?
- What are the specific challenges of Mexico City in the localization of the SDGs?

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### *Session II*

#### **Lessons of Developing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)**

*Bogota*

*Helsinki*

*Buenos Aires*

*New York*

- What does the city see as the value and impetus for a VLR, and what are its key components?
- What are the lessons & challenges in successfully producing VLRs?
- How can the process of developing a VLR be used to modify policy or mobilize new action and participation, by city policymakers and/or other potential partners?

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### *Session III*

#### **Integrating Data with SDGs to Mobilize Stakeholders**

*Hawai'i Green Growth*

*Pittsburgh*

*OECD*

- What value do data visualizations and dashboard presentations provide in stimulating progress on the SDGs?
- What role does data play within planning and reporting, including a VLR? What kind of data are cities integrating (or planning to integrate) into VLRs and how?
- Are there additional analyses (e.g. gap analysis) or stakeholder engagement that would make VLRs more valuable to cities?

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### *Session IV*

#### **Accelerating and Strengthening the VLR Movement**

*Los Angeles*

*Brookings*

- What are the benefits of collectively pursuing VLRs? What can help support the scaling up of VLRs among a critical mass of cities worldwide?
- What would help enable higher quality VLRs that maximize their value for cities and for cross-city learning?
- Does it make sense to have a common set of components, or even a subset of SDG targets or indicators, for a basic VLR? What other kinds of initiatives or tools could be useful?

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### *Session V*

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**Supporting Urban Security with the SDGs Agenda**

- What new forms of collaboration does the SDG framework bring to securing cities?
- How to leverage the SDGs to bring in new evidence and citizen-supported violence reduction strategies?
- What policy, funding, and staffing changes are necessary to reach the 2030 goals in urban violence reduction?

*Rachel Locke*  
*Mexico City*  
*Bogotá*  
*Madrid*

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*Session VI*

**Integrating the SDGs into Budgeting and Procurement**

- How are cities shifting procurement policies to reflect SDG priorities? At what point in the procurement process can this have the most impact? What are the important elements to be successful?
- How do cities deal with policy trade-offs during procurement decisions?
- Can sustainability-driven procurement support collective city action? If so, what would be the best avenues and approaches to pursue collective action?

*Mannheim*  
*Bristol (call)*  
*Andreas Stamm*

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*Session VII*

**Mobilizing Resources: New Avenues for Financing and Partnerships**

- How can being SDG-oriented offer cities the opportunity to tap into new partnerships, new investors, or sources of financing?
- How can a city use its SDG efforts to strengthen its financial credibility?
- How can public-private partnerships help finance efforts aligned with the SDGs?

*Yokohama*  
*Madrid*  
*Durban*

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*Session VIII*

**Mobilizing Resources: Sustainable Investment and Bonds**

- How to strategize investment promotion in sustainable city development?
- How do we make the SDG policy commitments attractive to the investment community?
- What type of new financial instruments, such as SDG bonds, would be a compelling vehicle to finance the pursuit of the SDGs? What are the obstacles for the emergence of such instruments?

*Gavin Templeton*  
*OECD & Brookings*

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

**SDG Leadership Cities Network:**

- ❖ Diana Alarcón González, Chief Advisor and Foreign Affairs Coordinator, Mexico City
- ❖ Maria Vittoria Beria, Director of International Affairs, Office of the Mayor, Milan
- ❖ Maria Alejandra Botiva, District Planning Secretary, Bogota
- ❖ Erin Bromaghim, Director of Olympic and Paralympic Development, Mayor's Office of International Affairs, Los Angeles
- ❖ Kaysie Brown, Head of Policy Planning, UN Foundation
- ❖ Mariana Cammisa, SDGs Analyst, General and International Affairs Secretariat, Buenos Aires
- ❖ Mariana Flores Mayén, Executive Director for Institutional Representation, Mexico City
- ❖ Nicolas Gharbi, Global Urban Policy, City of Madrid
- ❖ Alex Hiniker, Program Director, Mayor's Office for International Affairs, New York City
- ❖ Christian Hübel, Head of Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Mayor, Mannheim
- ❖ Jani Moliis, Head of International Affairs, Helsinki
- ❖ Beryl Mphakathi, Deputy City Manager for Human Settlements, Engineering and Transport, Durban (Ethekewini Municipality)
- ❖ Shuma Panse, Senior Program Officer, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- ❖ Breanna Rose, Operations & Partnerships Director, Hawai'i Green Growth, Hawaii
- ❖ Ricardo Williams, Manager of Equity and Inclusion, City of Pittsburgh
- ❖ Toshikazu Yazawa, Director, Office of the City of Yokohama, Rep. to the Americas, Yokohama
- ❖ Leticia Gutiérrez Lorandi, Director-General, Policy Coordination and Environmental Culture, Ministry of Environment, Mexico City
- ❖ Liliana Rosales Contreras, Office of the Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Mexico City

**Moderators:**

- ❖ Tony Pipa, Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development, Brookings Institution
- ❖ Max Bouchet, Research Analyst, Brookings Institution

**Contributing experts:**

- ❖ Rachel Locke, Director, Impact:Peace, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego
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- ❖ Andreas Stamm, Senior Researcher, German Development Institute
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