



4.09 Engaging with Cities and Local Governments for Equitable Livelihoods

1. What, in brief, is the solution?

Develop a framework for inclusion of urban and rural at-risk populations. Raising awareness and strengthening capacity of local actors so they understand human rights and vulnerability, can contribute to identify vulnerable livelihoods and relevant local-specific issues, and facilitate appropriate response. This can be done via joint training-cum-planning and/or practice-based knowledge management.

This requires specific support in terms of networking and capacity building to promote inclusive and functional territories linking urban and rural communities, and, in particular, the mainstreaming of urban-rural linkages in social protection plans; to help local authorities and subnational actors to take the lead in overcoming existing social, economic and environmental inequalities while also leveraging the comparative advantages of the flows of people, goods and services across the urban-rural continuum; to embed human rights-based approaches in all policy instruments and actions to ensure that development initiatives and processes do not negatively affect anyone's human rights and livelihoods across the urban-rural continuum; and to strengthen urban-rural linkages to overcome conflict, recognize cultural diversity and reduce inequalities and strike a balance in measures and social protection programmes affecting men and women, and different age and socio-economic groups across the urban-rural continuum.

It is therefore important to 1/ ensure meaningful participation by people, local institutions and communities across the urban-rural continuum as well as spaces and mechanisms to engage in political dialogue and planning processes for women, Indigenous Peoples, children, youth, elders, persons with disabilities, slum dwellers, smallholders and the forcibly displaced and others at risk of being left behind, 2/ build capacity to empower vulnerable groups in urban, peri-urban and rural communities to engage in integrated territorial governance, and 3/protect and respect local and indigenous cultures. Concretely:

- Addressing disparities and integrate public services across urban and rural contexts, such as education and training, access to food and water, health services, and connectivity.
- Integrating issues of health, migration, food imports, climate change and conflict with job creation and funding for ecosystem services across urban and rural contexts.
- Promoting interculturality to design solutions that can be useful across all cultures.
- Delivering more spatially and socially equitable services and reduce the barriers to quality public social services for all socio-economic groups.
- Reviewing, adapting and using locally relevant legal and legislative instruments and methods to develop inclusive development plans.

2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

Member of AT4 Leadership Group but based on extensive multi-actor work on sustainable urban food systems and urban rural linkages for integrated development (see 7).

3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

While urbanization has been recognized as a powerful force in support of economic growth and poverty reduction, it is equally true that poverty is rapidly urbanizing. Multi-dimensional crisis are affecting vulnerable households in both rural and urban areas and accelerating migration in search of more sustainable livelihoods.

The relation of culture to migration, mobility and displacement is critical for social protection and resilience, and is a key factor in the design of appropriate strategies and interventions.



Cities and local governments are in the frontline when facing socio-economic disparities and should be recognized as key players in leaving no one behind. Cities (including small and intermediary cities) and local governments have a triple role to play: 1/ they can engage with, learn from and support relevant actors from different sectors (including civil society, private sector and academia) in participatory planning, implementation and monitoring of livelihood strategies and action at territorial level; 2/ they can link with central government and relevant national and global actors and initiatives; and 3/ they can exchange information with and mutually support with cities and local governments facing similar challenges.

Being closer to the ground, they have an understanding of local complexity and have generated significant concrete experience which is rarely linked to global and national debates on equitable livelihoods (in particular in the wake of COVID-19). They are best able to improve operations, monitoring and evaluation, and doing something concrete.

The COVID-19 pandemic has obliged municipalities from one day to the other to face dramatic livelihoods challenges, and upscale and innovate social protection interventions in collaboration with civil society and private sector. This experience can provide a useful basis for integrated strategies for more resilient and equitable livelihoods.

4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

To enhance resilience to multi-dimensional crisis and operationalise the SDG agenda at the local level.

5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

If rights of all stakeholders are reflected and respected in all policies, programmes and interventions, this will address existing inequalities, prevent future ones and reduce urban-rural economic, social and environmental disparities.

6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?

Governance for sustainable development is the key challenge if we want to change the game and come together. Technology and innovation can only contribute to sustainable food systems if they support the locally relevant combination of economic, social and environmental approaches.

7. What do you think are the key actions required to address this solution? Please mention the implementation approach for 3 levels, if appropriate: Public policies (Policies, Legal provisions, Economic leverages), Corporate actions and Civil Society actions?

Identify ongoing territorial processes in different bioregions to broaden and build upon existing experience and resources.

Organise local planning workshops (government, civil society, private sector and academia) to harmonize existing activities, discuss local challenges and set up an ad hoc working group on sustainable food systems to enhance synergies and collect lessons learned.

Strengthen and articulate relevant horizontal networks within bioregions to identify guiding principles for adaptation at local level in similar territories.

Ensure articulation of territorial and global processes to enrich policy dialogue and enhance appropriate support for sustainable territorial development.

8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

- Milan Urban Food Policy Pact <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/>



- Urban Rural Linkages for Integrated Territorial Development <https://urbanrurallinkages.wordpress.com/>
- Localizing the SDGs <https://www.local2030.org/about-us.php>

9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.

Good governance is needed everywhere but it would be useful to organize the necessary joint action learning at the territorial level according to bioregions in order to address similar natural resources management concerns and exchange locally relevant experience. Food Systems actors should build upon mapping by environment actors, e.g. <https://images.app.goo.gl/TVBQubjrnYqTziam6>.