Localizing the 2030 Agenda in Canada

Engagement and participation of provincial, territorial, municipal and indigenous governments are integral for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. While implementing the 2030 Agenda is primarily the responsibility of national governments, partnership and coordination with provincial, territorial, municipal and indigenous governments are critical to ensuring that implementation is informed by local priorities and solutions and makes use of a whole-of-society approach. In Canada, many of the SDGs fall within the jurisdictions of provincial, territorial municipal and Indigenous governments. In this context, their policies, plans, programs, capacities and initiatives play an important role in linking the global agenda to local communities and their priorities. Based on a review of good practices emerging from around the world, this policy brief provides recommendations on how the Government of Canada can best localize the 2030 Agenda.

Key messages

- Inclusion and participation of provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments are crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in Canada. Participation includes mapping efforts by these governments and working with them to link their plans to the 2030 Agenda.

- As it develops the 2030 Agenda National Strategy, the Government of Canada should include a plan for inclusive and long-term engagement with different levels of government prepared in consultation with provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments. This plan should include a focus on improving capacities of these governments—particularly municipal and Indigenous governments—to participate and lead on 2030 Agenda implementation. Provinces, territories, municipalities and Indigenous governments have extensive reach and abilities to achieve the SDGs, which should be matched with capacity development by the federal government.

- Provinces, territories, municipalities and Indigenous communities have established initiatives that contribute to the SDGs, though are not explicitly linked to the 2030 Agenda. There is a need to raise awareness of the importance of the agenda with them to support their efforts to integrate it into their work as well as collaborate across levels of government to realize local sustainable development solutions.

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Introduction

In 2015, world leaders adopted the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda, which introduced 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sets out a transformative plan for people and planet. It aims to promote shared prosperity, environmental sustainability and progress on sustainable development that leaves no one behind. Realizing the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda requires a whole-of-society approach. Governments, citizens, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector all have roles to play in contributing to sustainable development outcomes.

Nearly four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, many countries have put in place building blocks for its implementation as shown by reviews of government reporting to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2016, 2017 and 2018. Many countries have integrated the SDGs into policy frameworks. Institutional and governance mechanisms have been established to oversee and evaluate progress on implementation. Partnerships across sectors are forming, while systems for monitoring and evaluation are being put in place. However, progress has been mixed across countries, particularly in terms of the extent to which countries have localized the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, integrated its transformative elements into policies and practices, and developed enabling environments that promote whole-of-society contributions to sustainable development.

Effective 2030 Agenda implementation requires efforts to localize the global agenda through whole-of-society approaches that are rooted in the priorities of local communities. In this context, coordination among different levels of government is critical to ensure coherent and collaborative approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation that support sustainable development solutions defined by local communities. The policy brief on coordination in this series examines how national and sub-national governments can best coordinate to ensure effective localization of the 2030 Agenda.

Beyond coordination, key aspects of localization include awareness raising, the identification of local priorities under the 2030 Agenda, integrating those priorities into local policies, plans and programs, and supporting local government capacities to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Fundamentally, the 2030 Agenda is an agenda for local governments. Progress on all of the SDGs requires robust contributions from local governments.[1] SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities is particularly important due to its focus on integrated planning, housing, sustainable transportation, inclusive urbanization, cultural and natural heritage, disaster resilience, waste management, and green and public spaces. The goal also includes targets associated with international cooperation to support implementation in developing countries.

This policy brief outlines emerging standard and good practices with respect to localization of the 2030 Agenda with the aim of informing Canada's approach. It is based on a review of countries reporting to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development over the 2016–18 period through Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports, which collectively serve as a key element of international follow-up and review of 2030 Agenda implementation. Supplementary information was obtained from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which produced reviews of institutional arrangements for 2030 Agenda implementation for countries reporting over 2016–17 and in 2018. Additionally, resources from United Cities and Local Governments that looked at the participation of local government associations in 2030 Agenda implementation were used. Interviews were conducted with 14 civil society organizations from 13 countries[2] and one local government association to complement and validate information presented in VNR reports. In addition to identifying emerging practices, the brief provides an overview of key considerations for the Canadian context and concludes with recommendations for the Government of Canada. An annex with detailed information on the specific good practices highlighted in this brief serves as a useful resource for the Government of Canada and other stakeholders that are keen to adopt and promote good practices for 2030 Agenda implementation.

What is a good practice?

TRANSFORMATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE 2030 AGENDA

A good practice is an activity or approach that demonstrates incorporation of one or more of the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda. The 2030 Agenda is human rights-based and focuses on the inclusion of, and change for, the poorest and most vulnerable, promoting their inherent dignity and human rights through efforts to leave no one behind. Efforts are informed by inclusivity, solidarity and participation. The 2030 Agenda is also universal in nature applying to all countries and people. The economic, social and environmental pillars of the 2030 Agenda are of equal importance,

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1   Over 65% of SDG targets relate to basic services delivered by sub-national governments.

2   Interviews were carried out with civil society organizations from the following countries: Brazil, Belgium, Bhutan, Canada, Colombia, Denmark (two interviewees), Finland (two interviewees), Latvia, Nepal, South Korea, Switzerland, Sweden and the Netherlands. This brief also includes a number of good practices based on VNR reports for other countries, but it should be noted that information for these countries could not be validated beyond additional Web-based searches.

the SDGs are integrated and indivisible with achievements on any one goal linked to progress on others. Achievement of the 2030 Agenda occurs within the context of respect for planetary boundaries and inter-generational responsibility, recognizing the need to protect the planet's resources now and for future generations. Importantly, good practices also respect the aspirational nature of the 2030 Agenda, demonstrably moving beyond business-as-usual approaches or standard practices. Finally, the 2030 Agenda is grounded in the principles of transparency and accountability.

HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

INTEGRATED AND INDIVISIBLE

INCLUSIVITY AND PARTICIPATION

PROGRESS WITHIN PLANETARY BOUNDARIES

INTERGENERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

ASPIRATIONAL

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda are critical for localization, so good practices should demonstrate contribution to one or more of the transformative elements. Localization promotes greater inclusivity by creating more opportunities for engagement through 2030 Agenda implementation at multiple levels of government and in line with community priorities. Localization is an important element of leaving no one behind. The "Right to the City" principles, introduced in Habitat III, strongly encourage the

3   Good practices in these areas are captured by other briefs in this series on these topics.

pledge to leave no one behind, specifically ensuring inclusivity for "women, those living in poverty or situations of environmental risk, informal economy workers, ethnic and religious groups, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, the differently abled, children, youth, the elderly, migrants, refugees, street dwellers, victims of violence and indigenous peoples." Localization strengthens local awareness of the agenda and can promote initiatives grounded in local community needs and ownership, including for historically marginalized groups. It has the potential to link global and local commitments to sustainable development and promote new forms of collaboration. Localization can support accountability for 2030 Agenda implementation by offering opportunities for citizens to engage with elected officials at different levels of government and hold them accountable for their commitments.

INTEGRATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA INTO LOCAL EFFORTS

Working with and supporting sub-national governments to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their policies, plans and programs through approaches that respect local priorities are good practices that present an opportunity for all levels of government to work towards shared objectives. As pointed out in Towards the Localization of the SDGs, many policies from local governments already contribute to the 2030 Agenda even if they are not explicitly linked. The identification of local priorities to inform these efforts allows for appropriate differentiation of strategies to promote effective implementation in diverse communities and regions where the needs of historically marginalized groups may vary. Leaving no one behind requires differentiated approaches that respect local realities and are grounded in solutions that local communities are best placed to identify. Good practice includes carrying out policy and data gap assessments to inform the selection of local priorities, developing systems to monitor and evaluate progress at the local level and reporting on progress.[3]

ADDRESSING LOCAL CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS

While sub-national governments have a critical role to play in 2030 Agenda implementation, their capacities to do so are not inherent. As noted in the policy brief on capacity development in this series, a whole-of-society approach to 2030 Agenda implementation requires dedicated support to capacity development as part of national strategies. While they are often best placed to reach citizens, sub-national governments do not always have the necessary human and financial resources to effectively participate in 2030 Agenda implementation. This challenge is recognized by the global community, which has developed a range of resources to support

capacities for localization. While these resources are important tools, good practice includes dedicated efforts by all levels of government to develop sub-national government capacities to effectively participate and lead in 2030 Agenda implementation.

SUPPORTING LOCAL INITIATIVES

There is extensive work being done to support 2030 Agenda implementation in many communities. Many initiatives, however, are not framed as part of this implementation. There is a need for national governments to work with existing initiatives and efforts to realize sustainable development in local communities as part of overarching approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation. At the same time, some communities have developed 2030 Agenda initiatives that demonstrate good practice in implementation. Good practice is sub-national government leadership in spearheading local initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda. Mapping existing efforts is a good practice to inform policy integration and planning.[4] Finally, good practice is recognizing the role that national governments have to play in supporting these efforts and providing appropriate support.

Standard practices

Civil society reviews of VNR reports show a wide variation in efforts to localize the 2030 Agenda, making it difficult to identify emerging standard practices. In 2017, VNR reports suggested that governments were considering their next steps in terms of localization. The civil society review of 2018 VNR reports showed that 16 of 46 countries acknowledged the incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into local policies and plans. Given emphasis by the global community on supporting local governments in this area, integration of the 2030 Agenda into local policies and plans is likely an emerging standard practice. Nevertheless, limited reference to policy integration overall, local monitoring and evaluation efforts, capacity development activities and inclusion of sub-national governments in coordination mechanisms suggests that there is a need for further progress on localization. Indeed, the Global Taskforce of Regional and Local Governments and United Cities and Local Governments' 2018 report, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, found that progress on localization is occurring in all regions, albeit at different paces. The report also found that participation by sub-national governments in coordination mechanisms and follow-up and review processes needs to be scaled up. It noted that there continues to be insufficient support for localization, including in terms of sub-national financial architectures and municipal finance in particular. On the other hand, surveys of local government associations showed that training and knowledge sharing programs and preparing publications on the 2030 Agenda appear to be standard practices for local government associations.

Good practices

While there are many good practices related to localization captured in this series, this policy brief focuses on three areas: integration of the 2030 Agenda into local development plans, capacity development for sub-national governments and local initiatives.

Two key forms of good practice emerge with respect to integrating the 2030 Agenda into local policies, plans and programs. The first is including localization as part of national 2030 Agenda implementation strategies. For effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, there must be a clear roadmap for how sub-national governments will be included in implementation. This roadmap should include roles and responsibilities as well as how sub-national governments will be engaged in overall implementation, including in terms of establishing their own priorities. Second, good practice is the identification of sub-national priorities and the creation of policies, plans and programs through inclusive, human rights-based approaches that work to leave no one behind.

The provision of finance and capacity development resources to support the capacities of sub-national governments to advance the 2030 Agenda is a good practice. Approaches include developing appropriate systems to ensure that local governments have the necessary finances to carry out their plans. They also include providing dedicated support to build human and institutional capacity to identify and follow through on priorities as well as adopt approaches that work to leave no one behind. The establishment of government training programs, guidebooks and other educational resources is a good practice for localization of the 2030 Agenda. Facilitating peer exchanges and learning within and between countries as well as supporting sub-national governments through international cooperation are also good practices.

Sub-national governments use innovative approaches to localizing the 2030 Agenda. Good practice includes the development of specific initiatives that engage citizens, use of events to convene sub-national governments, and creation of local multi-stakeholder networks to advance local sustainable development priorities. Good practice is also linking existing initiatives to the 2030 Agenda, particularly in terms of understanding existing contributions and identifying gaps.

INTEGRATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA INTO LOCAL EFFORTS

Localization as part of national 2030 Agenda strategies
Some countries have included localization as an important aspect of national strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda. **Argentina's**

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4   See The Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs in the municipal map for how efforts to map local initiatives fit within the broader context of localization.

National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies, 10 provinces and the capital Buenos Aires signed agreements to adapt and implement the 2030 Agenda at the local level, with negotiations ongoing in six more provinces. These efforts are focused on the implementation, dissemination and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda's transformative elements and SDGs at sub-national levels. In **China**, 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities created five-year plans based on the country's 13th Five-Year Plan. Also, cities and counties completed annual plans that have synergies with the 13th Five-Year Plan and 2030 Agenda. The plan also outlines local-level actions needed to address goals and targets. **Ireland's** plan to implement the 2030 Agenda includes reference to how local governments will be engaged and participate in policy alignment.

Integration of the 2030 Agenda into sub-national policies and plans

Benin, **Ecuador**, **Jamaica**, **Latvia**, **Nigeria**, **Paraguay** and **Spain** demonstrate good practice in terms of the creation of sub-national policies, plans and programs. In **Benin**, a benchmarking process in 15 municipalities and a process of capitalizing on experiences in 22 municipalities were initiated to assess SDG implementation at the local level. The national government and local government association organized 10 regional workshops that focused on aligning national and local plans. In **Ecuador**, provincial and local governments participate in territorialization of the SDGs and alignment with local Development and Land Management Plans. Local governments have begun processes of aligning local priorities with the SDGs. The ODS Territorio Ecuador has worked to localize the SDGs in five provinces. In addition, the capital Quito launched a consultative process to integrate the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda into its development and land use plan and disaster risk prevention plan.

The formation of Local Sustainable Development Plans in **Jamaica** has provided a valuable mechanism for localizing the SDGs. Five of the 14 municipal corporations have developed the plans and preparation of the final plans will commence this year. In **Latvia**, territorial governments have adopted sustainable development strategies, which are the most important territorial development documents at the local government level. They describe problems, approaches and localized solutions for economic, social and environmental issues addressed in the SDGs. In **Nigeria**, local authorities in 36 states work closely with the national government to incorporate the SDGs into sub-national governing plans. Many existing State Development Plans are now aligned with the SDGs.

Local governments in **Paraguay** have designed plans that are aligned with the National Development Plan and the SDGs. In **Spain**, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces has prioritized the localization of the 2030 Agenda. A number of Spanish sub-national governments such as the Council of Andalusia, Basque Government, Government of Catalonia and Government of Navarre have or plan to establish sustainable development plans and indicator frameworks to monitor progress on the agenda.

A cultural and human rights-based approach

United Cities and Local Governments developed four tools that address cultural and human rights-based development. One of them is a global database of good practices that includes 120 good practices on culture and sustainable development. One of the main criteria for this database is linkages to the SDGs. The organization also developed a document titled Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals: A Guide for Local Action,[5] which provides guidance to strengthen policies, practices, partnerships, and projects specifically for culture and the SDGs. A toolkit, Culture 21: Actions, is a practical supplement for Agenda 21, an agenda on citizenship, culture and sustainable development, that enables cities and local governments to self-evaluate policies that deal with human rights and sustainable development. The Pilot Cities program enables cities to participate in capacity building and connectivity programs. The United Nations Human Rights Programme is assessing the impact of the 2030 Agenda on the advancement of human rights globally. United Cities and Local Governments contributed to this process by publishing a report on local governments and human rights.

A city in **South Korea**, Gwangju, has adopted the Gwangju Human Rights Cities Agenda 2030. According to the report submitted to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights by Gwangju, it plans to integrate the SDGs, UN habitat New Urban Agenda and the peace-building agendas into one integrated implementation agenda. The agenda takes an in-depth look into the categories of human rights, human rights at the city level, institutions, policies and programs.

☿ ADDRESSING LOCAL CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS
Government efforts

National governments and sub-national government associations have demonstrated good practice in supporting local governments' capacities to advance the 2030 Agenda. The national government in **Colombia** created the "Territorial Kit," a tool that local authorities can use in their planning of SDG implementation.

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5   This document is structured around the 17 SDGs and under each goal there is information about their cultural relevance and connections at the local level. It offers several examples to show direct relation to the goals.

Egypt's General Organization of Physical Planning prepared a general strategic plan for local governments to consult when establishing development plans for cities, villages or governorates and fostering public awareness of the SDGs. **Germany** created the Sustainability Network of Lord Mayors, complete with regional hubs for sustainability strategies. Its purpose is to strengthen capacities, nationwide networking and connections of sustainability initiatives launched by federal, state and local governments by establishing mechanisms for all levels of government to collaborate. To help achieve the ambitions of its National Economic and Social Development Plan and the SDGs, the national government in **Guinea** is implementing a coherent and relevant capacity-building program that includes institutional capacity development. In **Laos**, the national government initiated institutional strengthening within local administrations to understand, implement and monitor progress towards the SDGs and selected SDG targets.

Associations

Sub-national government associations in **Belgium**, **Denmark** and **Senegal** are working to support their members' capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda. In **Belgium,** local governments are directly engaged in bottom-up implementation of the SDGs, with support from networks such as the Union des Villes et Communes de Wallonie, Brulocalis and the Vereniging voor Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten. The umbrella organization for the local networks has partnered with regional governments to support localization projects in 20 pilot municipalities and develop a strong advocacy and awareness campaign. In **Denmark**, Local Government Denmark established an initiative with Statistics Denmark to integrate localized monitoring on SDG progress into their SDG portal. They also ensure proactive SDG implementation by securing funding for municipal activities and a SDG portal to provide knowledge and resources to municipalities. In **Senegal**, the Association of Mayors of Senegal mandated experts to carry out studies on various themes related to the SDGs to help local elected officials make better decisions, ensure coherence in local development policies, and increase SDG ownership with a view to promote local development.

Global community

In addition to efforts in countries, various global efforts have been under way to support sub-national governments' capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda. Localizing the SDGs, an initiative of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, United Nations Human Settlements Programme and United Nations Development Programme, curates a toolbox to support localization of the 2030 Agenda including through the provision of various guides and courses. Resources have been developed to support awareness

raising, baseline assessments, establishment of strategies and plans as well as monitoring and evaluation systems, and institutional arrangements for implementation (including with respect to capacity development). United Cities and Local Governments also supports localization by advocating on behalf of local governments and preparing resource guides and tools. A guide for getting started with the SDGs in cities was also developed by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network with support from the government of Germany. Notably, the United Nations' multi-stakeholder initiative Local2030 supports capacity development by convening stakeholders to make commitments on issues related to localization, scaling local-level finance, supporting coordinated actions through local hubs, and working to include data from sub-national governments and other stakeholders in monitoring efforts.

International development partners

In terms of efforts by international development partners, **Singapore** partnered with United Nations Human Settlements Programme on a capacity-building program in support of the United Nations' New Urban Agenda and the achievement of SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities. Participants comprise mayors, city councillors, chief engineers and other city leaders. This governance program strengthens the capacity for sustainable cities and communities. Some of the topics covered include finance, housing, land management and urban planning.

In **Brazil**, the National Confederation of Municipalities of Brazil and United Nations Development Programme are working together to improve and strengthen the ways that municipalities localize the SDGs according to the United Cities and Local Governments' report on localizing the SDGs, which explains the UNDP ART Initiative. This initiative looks at raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda among municipalities across the country and helping them integrate it into their local plans. Activities include identifying indicators, guidelines or the role of local governments, capacity building and monitoring progress.

Finance and peer learning

Efforts by national governments, sub-national government associations and the global community to support capacities for localization are welcome. Two good practices were identified through the research process, though no specific examples were found in VNR reports. The first is the provision of financial support to sub-national governments to advance the 2030 Agenda. As mentioned, sub-national governments, particularly at the local level, often have limited means to raise funds to advance their sustainable development priorities. There is a need to ensure that financing

is an important aspect of enabling sub-national governments to contribute to the 2030 Agenda, alongside capacity development tools and resources. The second is that sub-national governments have identified peer learning and exchange as a powerful tool for capacity development.

⚷ SUPPORTING LOCAL INITIATIVES
Campaigns and programs

Sub-national governments in **Belgium**, the **Netherlands** and **Poland** have established specific initiatives to promote the 2030 Agenda. **Belgium** employs a variety of initiatives to foster the localization of the SDGs including a political steering committee, vertical governance integration, and initiatives focused on women and children. Ghent, a city in the country, launched inter-city challenges to promote inclusion and gender equality through "Everybody on the bike" and "Everybody feminist" initiatives. The initiatives engaged a wide range of organizations and citizens, raised awareness of the SDGs and provided examples of how to incorporate the SDGs into daily life. The **Netherlands** established the Global Goals Municipal Campaign for implementing the SDGs at the municipal government level. The government has also instituted a platform for local governments to inquire about how to incorporate the SDGs into policies at the local level and establish robust communication tools for sharing experiences. In **Poland**, 16 cities are engaged with the European Union program URBACT III, which seeks to improve social, economic and environmental aspects of urban life. Another 34 cities have participated in pilot programs focused on the revitalization of urban areas and sustainable transportation.

Networks

Networks to promote localization have been established in **Brazil** and **South Korea**. **Brazil** established a National Commission on Sustainable Development, which through officials from all levels of government fosters dialogue, engagement, and promotion of the integration of SDG-related initiatives within civil society and at the sub-national government level. Comprised of representatives of civil society, academia and the public and private sectors, Brazil's Metropolitan SDG Observatory is a network of institutions and organizations dedicated to monitoring progress against SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities. In **South Korea**, the Local Sustainability Alliance of Korea, comprised of local governments and civil society (approximately 200 organizations in 17 provinces), has contributed to the establishment of local institutional and organizational frameworks to promote the SDGs. South Korea is also supporting events that convene sub-national governments. In 2016,

the Seoul Metropolitan Government announced its plan to host the International Forum on Urban Policy to provide a platform for supporting SDG policy implementation at the local government level.

Responsibilities for 2030 Agenda implementation in Canada

All levels of government in Canada must work together to catalyze progress on the 2030 Agenda. While the responsibility for implementing the agenda lies primarily with the federal government, equally important roles in SDG achievement are played by provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments. The Government of Canada deals with areas of law listed in the Constitution Acts that generally affect the entire country. With its broad reach, the federal government has policies and strategies for all 17 SDGs. Provincial and territorial governments deal with areas listed in the Constitution Acts such as education, health care, some natural resources, and road regulations. Municipal governments[6] are responsible for areas such as libraries, parks, community water systems, local police, roads and parking.

Indigenous self-government is guaranteed in the Constitution Acts, which allows for control by Indigenous peoples over programs and services in their communities, including management of their own lands. In the context of building a new nation-to-nation relationship based on reconciliation, the Government of Canada committed to "undo federally imposed systems of governance and administration in favour of Indigenous control and delivery" and "advance self-determination." Canada's efforts to leave no one behind need to be rooted in reconciliation and the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination. Collaboration and partnerships that respect Indigenous priorities, knowledge and history are crucial.

The federal government does not have a specific localization strategy for the 2030 Agenda. Efforts to integrate federal and provincial initiatives with local-level implementation of the 2030 Agenda have so far been ad hoc and not part of a broader coordinated strategy. The SDG Unit at Employment and Social Development Canada has begun supporting non-state actors to mobilize efforts on the 2030 Agenda across Canada. These efforts are also generating inputs for Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy. The consultation on the national strategy provides an important opportunity to socialize all levels of government on the SDGs and develop a model for localization.

Some examples of efforts to localize the 2030 Agenda in Canada exist. BCCIC, in partnership with the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, has begun working on a pilot project with the City of

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6   No term adequately captures the diversity of cities, towns and local regions in Canada. For consistency, the terms "municipalities" and "municipal governments" are used throughout.

Kelowna to localize the SDGs, which is the first of its kind in British Columbia. The partners are working closely with City of Kelowna staff to review policies, targets and indicators in local-level plans, including the city's Official Community Plan, Climate Action Plan and Healthy City Strategy, and other reports and supporting strategies to identify how they align with SDG targets and indicators.

Municipalities in Canada face various challenges in localizing the 2030 Agenda. First, municipalities have limited exposure to goal-based frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda. There is a need to raise awareness of the agenda among municipal governments and in communities across Canada, where the federal government has a leadership role to play. Second, while the 2030 Agenda could be a framework through which municipalities carry out their work, many have limited financial resources to make investments and do not have enough fiscal support to fully realize sustainable development. Third, coordination is required to maximize synergies and reduce duplication of efforts between different levels of government and non-state actors. Municipal governments should have a seat at the table for national conversations on the 2030 Agenda.

Photo: BCCIC, 2018
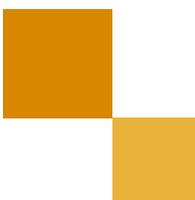
Recommendations

This policy brief showcases a range of approaches to localizing the 2030 Agenda such as identifying local priorities, aligning local plans and increasing capacity for provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments. It also provides an overview of the current state of play with respect to Canada's federal system and identifies constraints and opportunities for all levels of government in localizing the SDGs. Several recommendations emerge.

In consultation with provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy should include plans to localize the 2030 Agenda.

As Canada develops its 2030 Agenda National Strategy, localization must be taken into consideration. There must be a mechanism for provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments to work in partnership with the federal government to plan local implementation. Many local plans already contribute to the SDGs even if associated language is not used, which needs to be considered in strategy development. In addition, efforts to localize the 2030 Agenda should be informed by an assessment of local capacity development needs and set out overarching and inclusive approaches to capacity development for provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments.

Ensure that provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous peoples' priorities are reflected in Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy.

The 2030 Agenda National Strategy should reflect local priorities, policies and plans that are informed by inputs from all levels of government, non-state actors and people living in Canada. It should present a whole-of-society vision that respects the roles, responsibilities and capacities of different stakeholders, including provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, in contributing to sustainable development. This approach can also facilitate alignment between local and national approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation.

Support integration of the 2030 Agenda into provincial, territorial municipal and Indigenous governments' policies, plans and programs based on inclusive consultations on local priorities and with reference to national priorities.

All governments in Canada have the challenge of developing policies, plans and programs that align with national priorities while simultaneously focusing on local needs and priorities. Human and financial capacity constraints also impact the scope of policies, plans and programs. The creation of a 2030 Agenda National Strategy that reflects local priorities should help in the localization process by providing a collective vision for sustainable development. From there, provincial, territorial and municipal governments can align their policies, plans and programs with the 2030 Agenda through inclusive multi-stakeholder engagement that allows for the identification of local priorities that work to leave no one behind.

Support Indigenous governments that want to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their policies and plans.

Respecting the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination means that externally negotiated agreements, such as the 2030 Agenda, cannot be imposed. There is a need to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and work with Indigenous communities to identify how Canada's implementation of the agenda can support their priorities, if at all.
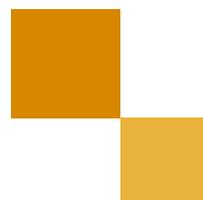
Localization of the 2030 Agenda requires continued partnership with historically marginalized communities, including Indigenous communities, at all levels of government.

Partnership with historically marginalized communities in Canada to achieve the 2030 Agenda requires cooperation and collaboration at all levels of government. These partnerships allow for local problems to be addressed on a local scale through priority setting. Localization and continued partnerships with historically marginalized communities, specifically Indigenous communities, works to ensure that no one is left behind. Many of the problems that historically marginalized communities have faced fall within provincial, territorial, municipal or indigenous jurisdictions and therefore require partnerships to reduce the issues and to achieve the SDGs.

The Government of Canada and provincial, territorial, and municipal should support inclusive multi-stakeholder approaches to localization.

Non-state actors connect in their local communities within provinces or territories. All levels of government have a role to play in multi-stakeholder engagement. Moreover, opportunities should exist for different levels of government to engage one another. There should be efforts to support the building of and connection among local networks at the national level, including Web-based connections.

Provide financial support to provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments and relevant associations to ensure effective localization of the 2030 Agenda.

With increased financial support, provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments in Canada would be better positioned to contribute to national progress on the 2030 Agenda. There is a need for particular attention to the diverse budgetary constraints facing municipalities across the country and the roles that the federal, provincial and territorial governments can play in addressing these constraints. Financial support for Canada's municipalities and Indigenous governments to advance the 2030 Agenda should be in line with the ambition to localize the agenda.

Provide capacity development support to provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments and relevant associations to ensure effective localization of the 2030 Agenda.

The capacity constraints facing provinces and territories differ from those facing municipalities and Indigenous governments. With many of the SDGs falling under provincial and territorial jurisdictions, there may be a need for support in terms of raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda and understanding its implications for provincial and territorial governments. Municipalities in Canada vary greatly in terms of their size and capacities. Capacity development for municipal governments should be informed by an assessment of their needs, including in consultation with them, with programs and projects catered to their specific needs, including through the use of different capacity development methods such as guidance notes, toolkits, training, specific initiatives and institutional mechanisms. Capacity development opportunities should be available to Indigenous governments as well that are keen to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their efforts.

Partner to support effective capacity development for different levels of government.

Inclusive, participatory approaches to capacity development are in line with the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda. A range of organizations are supporting efforts to build capacity for localizing the agenda, including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and civil society organizations. Many of these organizations have comparative advantages in terms of understanding local challenges and delivering capacity development activities that can best meet the needs of provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments.

Support capacity development efforts for sub-national governments globally, in line with commitments under SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

The Government of Canada has committed to support localization and partnerships to implement the 2030 Agenda. It should ensure that its contributions to capacity development target sub-national governments in partner countries and under-resourced aspects of localization with efforts delivered according to internationally recognized good practices.