Session Guidelines

Main Event	World Urban Forum 10
Event Ref No.	PUZHKTT 1- NE 100
Location	Room 20, Abu Dhabi Exhibition Centre- ADNEC, Khaleej Al Arabi Street, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Title of the Session	Join us! VLR Cities and Regions Networking and Match-Making Event
Date & Time	**Tuesday 11th February 2020 from 14:00h to 16:00h**
Total Duration	2 Hours
Capacity of Venue	100 persons maximum
Intervenants	- Mr. Amirudin bin Shari (Menteri Besar of Selangor, Malaysia) - Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana (Executive Secretary, UNESCAP) - Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi (Secretary General, UCLG ASPAC) - Dr. Junichi Fujino (IGES) - Mr. Edgardo Bilsky (UCLG World) - Representatives from City Council of Barcelona - Representative from New Taipei City Government - Representative from Shimokawa Town - Other Representatives from the cities who have submitted their VLRs

Background Description of Session:

Localisation of SDGs needs to go beyond adapting global goals to the local levels. Commitment and political will, as well as co-creation of solutions with communities to address global challenges and objectives critically needs serious effort from the Local and Regional Governments (LRGs). While the efforts to localise SDGs are progressing, their involvement in Voluntary National Review (VNRs) is still limited, despite the facts that over 60% of the SDGs are within sub-national governments authority. The level of involvement and engagement of local governments in the production of the national reviews is still limited. As per third LRG Report on Localisation of SDGs to HLPF 2019 states "Notably, there are no major differences in these figures from 2016 to 2019: still only local governments in about 40%-45% of the surveyed countries affirms having being involved properly in the reporting and monitoring processes of their countries." Thus, SDGs attainment is likely to fail without significant and accelerated LRGs involvement in attaining the 2030 Agenda.

To fill in this gap, Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) are produced. A VLR is a process in which LRGs voluntarily assess their progress towards the SDGs and other international frameworks, such as the New Urban Agenda. This makes it possible for cities to gain better ownership as they are taking role in the bottom-up monitoring process for the SDGs implementation. One of the ways to do this is by having the LRGs and Associations of LRGs to share experiences, challenges, and lessons learnt with others around the world as well as to open the door for new partnerships, further helping to implement local visions.

So far, these eleven cities have completed the VLRs: Town: Shimokawa / City: Kitakyushu, Toyama, New York, Los Angeles, Bristol, Santana de Pernaiba, New Taipei, Taipei, Hamamatsu / State: Yukatan.

In 2020, the following cities have announced that they would present their VLRs: City: Espoo, Turku, Touyuan, Shah Alam, Pittsburgh, and Manheim / State: Oaxaca.

United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific, (UCLG ASPAC), in collaboration with Association for Indonesia Municipalities (APESKI), Institute for Global Environment Strategies (IGES), United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), New Taipei City and Shimokawa Town is going to hold a networking event titled **"Join us! VLR Cities and Regions Networking and Match-Making Event"**.

The event will focus to bring cities and regions together to discuss their experiences and best practices in implementation of Agenda 2030 and developing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) for cities and states on the progress to achieve SDGs. The event offers a focused discussion, so that cities can learn from, support, and review each other for the better narrative of the VLRs. With growing interest of different entities contributing to the VLR development, this event can be "matchmaking" between LRGs and development partners so that LRGs can fully utilise the expertise exist on the globe. By doing so, this networking will push LRGs-led movements towards more inclusive, sustainable implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs.

Objective of the Session:

Following are the specific objectives of the session;

- To connect cities, regions and partners working on Voluntary Local Reviews or Voluntary State Reviews (VSRs) from around the world
- To allow these groups to discuss challenges, opportunities and solutions they have implemented in their regions, cities and towns.
- To mobilize other LRGs to join the VLR movement
- To revitalize the movements with a strong massage of inclusivity and transformation.

Relevance of the Session to 10th WUF:

Cities and Regions have an immense power to transform our society. However, there is still a presence of undervaluing the role of LRGs in implementing the SDGs and NUA. Although words said about LRGs might be positive, their actions and budgets however are limited yet. Moreover, the cities are consuming 70% of energy and responsible for the large amount of CO2 emission, the existing lifestyle and culture need transformation towards the culture of sustainability.

This networking event will be a space of LRGs who are dedicated to such a transformation. They are embracing the culture of changes and innovation to achieve them. The participants will interact with and learn from committed cities and regions who are working tirelessly on sustainability. By doing so, the networking event contribute to the paradigm shift in thinking around cities and regions, which support a new norm of partnerships between national governments, sub-national governments, and other local, national, and global organisations willing to support governments to achieve their long-term sustainability objectives. By doing so, this networking event creates the coalition of willing who sees the importance of New Urban Agenda in implementing the SDGs and integrate them into the Voluntary Local Reviews.

With cities who have conducted the VLRs, UCLG ASPAC can continue maintain relationships through its existing members network and help promote the work of cities who have conducted the VLR widely in the Asia Pacific region, thus demonstrate the importance of doing VLRs and encourage others to also do the same. IGES, as a partner of UCLG-ASPAC, would contribute to maintaining the VLR-Lab (UCLG-ASPAC and IGES launched in 2019) and conducting the research on the methodologies and assessment of VLRs as well as providing technical assistance to cities who would like to conduct the VLR.

UCLG ASPAC is planning to promote the event to its LRGs and LRG's associations in the Asia Pacific region, through its regular e-newsletter, newsletter, and official website and social media platform. IGES, and UNESCAP would also support the dissemination of information by disseminating both on social media and newsletters.

Methodology & Session Flow:

The event consists of two segments. After the welcoming remarks, the co-organisers shall present their regional and global experiences on supporting cities and local governments and tools used to develop the VLRs. In the second part of the session, cities shall be asked to share their VLR experiences and messages for others and hear from entities of how they contribute to the VLR development and SDGs localisation. Finally, a world-café style discussion assisted by innovative meeting tools will help explore how LRGs can advance the VLR agendas.

The session shall be organised through a moderated discussion, generated through leading questions to the Speakers. Following shall be the sequence and flow of the session:

Sr. No	Session Flow	Intervenant	Time
Session Part I:			
1	The session is started by moderator, introducing the session brief and introduction of the panelists to the audience.	Moderator: Ali Imran Team Leader LEAD for SDGs Pakistan	2 minutes
2	The moderator shall then invite the UCLG ASPAC Secretary General for her welcome remarks and efforts being taken by UCLG ASPAC in facilitating its members in developing VLRs and promoting contribution to VNR	Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi, UCLG ASPAC Secretary General	7 minutes
3	The moderator then shall ask Executive Secretary of the UNESCAP to share her opening remarks	Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana Executive Secretary UN ESCAP	7 minutes
4	The moderator shall then invite IGES to share initiative of the Online VLR Lab and how the cities and states can get benefit from it	Dr. Junichi Fujino, IGES	7 minutes
5	The moderator invites Menteri Besar of Selangor Malaysia to share the overall strategy and actions on the SDGs localisation in Malaysia	Dato' Seri Amirudin Bin Shari, Menteri Besar Selangor, Malaysia	7 minutes
6	The Moderator invites participants for Question/Answers and wraps up the discussions	Participants Responses by Speaker	15 Minutes
Session Part- II			
7	The second part of the session starts by moderator, introducing the session brief and introduction of the panelists to the audience.	Moderator: Edgardo Bilsky UCLG World	3 Minutes
8	The moderator invites the cities of Barcelona, New Taipei and Shimokawa Town to share their experiences on localisation of SDGs and developing their Voluntary Local Review (VLR) Reports	City Representative	15 Minutes
9	The Moderator opens the floor to the cities present in the plenary to initiate a café style discussion on the challenges, opportunities and solutions to localise and implement SDGs. The resources are highlighted for the cities intending to develop their VLRs/VSRs.	Open Discussions by the Participants	40 minutes

10	Recommendations, Way Forwards and Wrap-up		17 Minutes
Total Time			120 minutes

Target Audience:

Followings are the expected target participants of the session:

1- Mayors and Officials of the Local and Regional Governments from around the world
2- Associations of Local Governments
3- UN Agencies
4- INGOs/NGOs working on sustainable development goals
5- Private Sector

Focal Person (s):

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