



Time for a New Social Contract:

Rebuilding Trust in Local
Government

#CitiesAreListening

Town Hall Track

**A Policy Paper Prepared for the UCLG
World Congress and Summit of World Leaders**

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Submitted by

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The 2022 World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders and UCLG Congress will define the priorities for the international municipal movement through the adoption of the Pact for the Future, a pluriennial strategy that will constitute our contribution to the United Nations Common Agenda and the Summit of the Future. The Congress will be a platform for all stakeholders, connecting the local and global agendas, to come and co-create the communities of the future, with the central notion of care permeating all processes.

Special attention will be paid to creating a space of structural dialogue with other constituencies and stakeholders and in particular civil society. The outcome of this dialogue will be a corpus of integrated policy recommendations offering both bottom-up continental and region-specific priorities. The Summit will provide a space to connect the agenda of the global municipal movement and that of sister constituencies.

The Town Hall Track has been set up to this end, with discussions at the highest levels led by organized civil society. The UCLG Town Hall is the space for dialogue and interaction between internationally organized civil society and the political leadership of the local and regional governments constituency to jointly define our global policies building on the Live Learning and #CitiesAreListening Experiences, which informed UCLG's political agenda. Driven by civil society, it allows different international stakeholders to collaborate in the definition of policy priorities and the localization of the global agendas. As we face an unprecedented scenario of interconnected challenges, we need to build upon, strengthen and enhance partnerships to break through as one. The goal is not only to invite partners to join, but to collaborate in the world that we are building. No actor or sphere of government can achieve the transformation that we need on their own.

The 2022 UCLG Town Hall renewed the structured dialogue between the local and regional governments constituency and internationally organized civil society and is strengthened by the presence of international partners and 3 cross-cutting caucuses (youth, feminism and accessibility) and the contribution of UCLG UBUNTU Advisors. The subjects of the Town Hall are directly linked to UCLG's Pact for the Future and its three axes: People, Planet and Government and reflect the priorities and targets included in the UN Secretary General's Common Agenda.

The 2022 UCLG Town Halls focus on: the Global Commons and redefining public services and the notion of what is public and what should be considered as part of the commons; Trust and Government and defining how we will regain trust in the public sector and redefine our institutions; Caring Systems and understanding what we need to renew our social contract to put care at the center of our cities and territories; and Climate and Culture to guarantee that our planet and future generations are protected through culture as the backbone of our societies and as our motor for sustainable development.

Executive Summary

Recently government institutions and people are experiencing a crisis in trust. In response to this situation and other global conditions, the UN Secretary General has identified twelve pillars on which to craft a new social contract for the 21st century – building trust is central to this effort.

This policy paper argues for initiating this process at the urban level because cities are commanding the majority of the world's population today and tomorrow and their governments are closest to the people, thus providing a strong potential to implement the systemic measures that will constitute a new social contract to rebuild trust in local government, apply the results to higher tiers of government.

However, to develop a new social contract requires meeting three challenges (discussed in the document) and having an enabling environment governed by principles of inclusion, citizen commitment, and subsidiarity among governments. Based on these conditions, the authors offer five recommendations: 1. Draft a new social contract; 2. Develop a handbook or code to guide its implementation; 3. Acknowledge those people and places that have adopted the new social contract; 4. Working collaboratively, establish a research and evaluation process to disseminate and monitor best practices under the new social contract; 5. Channel the results through the Global Task Force to international meetings especially to the Summit of the Future.



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“Foederis aequas/Dicamus leges”

(Let us set equal terms for truce)

(epigram from Jean Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (1762))

Preface

Recently government institutions and people are experiencing a crisis in trust. The United Nations Secretary General in his annual address, *Our Common Agenda*, highlighted this phenomenon, observing that “increasingly, people are turning their backs on the values of trust and solidarity in one another, the very values we need to rebuild our world and secure a better, more sustainable future for our people and our planet.”¹ He called for a new social contract built on twelve pillars. “Build trust” both interpersonal and institutional are central to this charge.

This policy paper, authored by members of civil society along with contributions from UN units, focuses on rebuilding institutional trust. We believe that “trust is the foundation for the legitimacy of public institutions and a functioning democratic system. It is crucial for maintaining political participation and social cohesion [...]. Trust is important for the success of a wide range of public policies that depend on behavioral responses from the public. For example, public trust leads to greater compliance with regulations and the tax system. In the longer term, trust is needed to tackle long-term societal challenges such as climate change, aging populations, and the automation of work.”² We are committed to initiating this discussion with a focus on cities and the reciprocal agreements among residents and their governments.

Importance of Public Trust

“Public trust helps governments govern on a daily basis and respond to the major challenges of today and tomorrow: the ongoing health and economic crises, the longstanding rise in inequalities, population aging, technological advances, and the existential threat of climate change. Sufficiently high levels of institutional trust can help governments reduce transaction costs – in governance, in society, and in the economy – and help ensure compliance with public policies. Trust can help foster public investments in challenging reforms and programmes that produce better outcomes. In democratic countries, moderately high levels of trust – along with healthy levels of public scrutiny – can help reinforce important democratic institutions and norms.”³

¹ Antonio Guterres, *Our Common Agenda, Report of the Secretary General*, New York: United Nations, 2021. <https://www.un.org/en/un75/common-agenda>

² OECD

³ Elsa Pilchowski, *Building Trust to Reinforce Democracy*, Paris: OECD July 2022. <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/b407f99c-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/b407f99c-en>

The loss of trust has evolved and worsened over time. Multiple global and national conditions have exacerbated it. The 2008 recession, wars in the Middle East and in the Ukraine, massive migration, the pandemic, rising inflation, inequalities, the emergence of populist leaders and the widespread use of social media to magnify misinformation are fueling it.

Today, a lack of trust is being experienced in all sectors of society, especially among women, people from low income backgrounds, persons with disabilities, minorities older persons, and young people. The loss of trust from the last group, the youth, is especially worrying, as political disaffection and loss of trust in democracy could have strong long-term effects in the quality of institutions and the political system developed to live in peace. In Spain, for instance, a study showed that 92% of the young people do not feel represented by the political parties.⁴

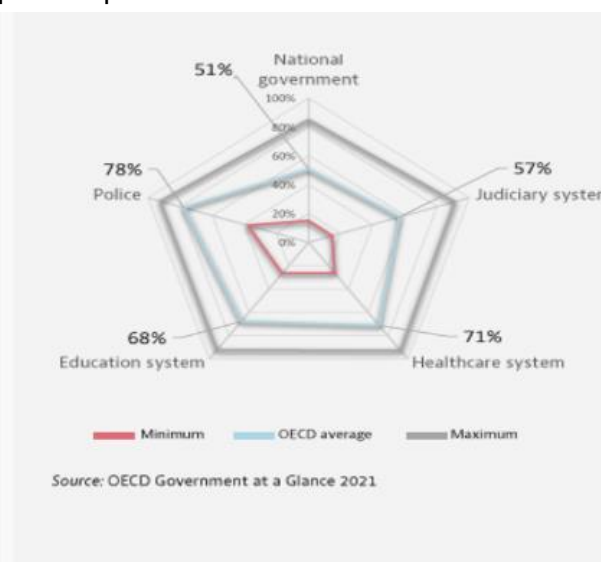


Figure 1. Differential Levels of Trust

Differences in trust also exist among the above-mentioned groups and others in relation to different government agencies (e.g. police, education, unemployment services). Figure 1 offers an illustration of this phenomenon.

At all levels of government, perceived and actual failures to deliver basic services, to operate in a fair, transparent and inclusive manner, and to provide reliable and accessible information are some of the sources of distrust. And these conditions create a distrust loop or “trust deficit,” that is a barrier to economic growth, digital innovation and social cohesion.⁵ For example, where there is an existing low level of trust in local government, residents are less likely to respond positively to technical guidance, whether

⁴ “A macro survey reflects that 92% of young people do not feel heard by political parties” Ser, July 7, 2021. https://cadenaser.com/programa/2021/07/22/hoy_por_hoy/1626930334_751590.html

⁵ McDermott B. (2019). *Trust is at breaking point. It's time to rebuild it.* <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/trust-is-at-breaking-point-it-s-time-to-rebuild-it/> <https://academic.oup.com/joc/article/71/2/163/6252344>

in the form of policy, by-laws or regulations – in many instances perpetuating and making more intense such behaviors as building below flood lines, littering, abuse of water systems, ignoring preventative public health services.

Under these conditions, the results are tangible. Among citizens, distrust results in low voter turnout, lack of respect for rules, fiscal evasion, obstructive behavior without offering solutions, automatic rejection of government decisions, hate speech in social media, and at its worst, violence.⁶ At the same time, government officials can be worn down by trying to respond to demands that can exceed their ability to deliver and may become less open, more defensive and prey to clientelism.

Decline in Voter Turnout

“It is part of a general trend, apart from anything else, that turnout is declining internationally, and it is particularly challenging at the local government level. And I guess if you turn it around the other way, it is helpful to kind of think about the reasons that we know people will vote. So we know they will vote when they have been socialized into voting which is a part of the challenge that we are confronting, but we know that they will vote when they care about the issues, when they think there is a really tight contest, when they feel that their vote is going to make a difference, or when there is a really good profile for the election.”⁷

Violence

“Protests in cities as otherwise diverse as Beirut, Santiago, Paris, Hong Kong, Delhi and cities throughout the United States that dominated global media had diverse proximate causes, ranging from increases in bus and train fares in Chile, racially targeted police brutality in the United States, taxes on diesel fuel in France, farmers’ protests against agricultural reforms in India, a proposed tax on use of the WhatsApp app in Lebanon, and the extradition bill between Hong Kong and China. But the diverse constellation of street actions—which were diminished, but never halted, as a result of COVID-related lockdowns—reflected widespread distrust of, and discontent with, practices of government-as-usual, and the demand for greater accountability on the part of the political classes in these places.”⁸ For another example see <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/may/05/the-fight-disability-rights-protestors-in-bolivia-on-the-barricades> that reflects the situation of persons with disabilities in Bolivia. Their spokesman captured their level of distrust: “Like any Bolivian citizen, we want to be treated with equality and for the government to treat us as citizens, to give us the opportunity to work. We do not want any more silent deaths. We want society to include

⁶ Terry Flew, “The Global Trust Deficit, A Communications Perspective on Trust in the Time of Global Pandemics” *Journal of Communication*, 71:2, April 2021.

⁷ Janine Hayward, “Q+A: Why Do So Few People Vote in Local Elections?” *Politics & Society*, September 4, 2019, <https://www.thebigq.org/2019/09/04/qa-why-do-so-few-people-vote-in-local-elections/>

⁸ Terry Flew, “The Global Trust Deficit Disorder: A Communications Perspective on Trust in the Time of Global Pandemics,” *Journal of Communications*, 71:2, April 2021 <https://academic.oup.com/joc/article/71/2/163/6252344>

us, and also to take care of us. We just hope that the government isn't lying to us again."⁹



Figure 2. With Distrust Comes Violence

A lack of trust affects larger concerns. It signals "that we are incapable of dealing with the much larger threats of global warming and devastation of the environment no matter what engineering miracles we discover, because we lack the solidarity and trust necessary to tackle those threats to continued human existence."¹⁰

The Challenge

Trust is critical to the smooth functioning of a democracy, the form of government based on a social contract or agreement among parties about their reciprocal responsibilities and rights. Achieving trust calls for addressing three challenges, ones that involve defining and adopting reciprocal responsibilities among the parties – government and residents. Here we list the challenges faced at the local level, understanding that we can apply it to higher tiers of government.

The first challenge is to affect a mutual understanding among all parties of the responsibilities and rights of local government that encompass the following roles:

- Provider (offers services and programs)
- Educator (offers information and knowledge)

⁹Jonathan Watts, "Bolivia's Caravan of Courage Leaves a Bittersweet Legacy for Disabled Protesters," *The Guardian*, May 5, 2017 <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/may/05/bolivia-caravan-of-courage-bittersweet-legacy-disabled-protesters-the-fight-documentary>

¹⁰ Richard H. Cantor, "Mistrust in Government Can Be Fatal," *New York Times*, Feb 20, 2022 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/20/opinion/letters/mistrust-government.html>

- Innovator (provides new ways of doing things)
- Regulator (develops rules to organize places or protect residents e.g zoning, licensing)
- Enforcer (detects wrongdoing and enacts consequences)

In carrying out these roles, local governments need to exhibit the following basic or foundational attributes:

- *Humanity*: local government genuinely cares for its constituents well-being. This includes upholding and protecting the human rights of its residents, while exhibiting empathy, kindness and fairness, and justice, captured in a single word: caring.
- *Transparency*: local government shares information in accessible clear language regarding choices and motives relative to budget, policies, programs and allows for residents to respond to these decisions and continues throughout the implementation process of any decision
- *Capability*: local government is efficient and effective in delivery of services and carrying out its legislated (or mandated) functions
- *Reliability*: local government offers adequate, consistent and regular delivery of services and programs across geographies, platforms and populations.

The second challenge is to affect a mutual understanding among all parties of the responsibilities and rights of residents that encompass the following:

- To use civil rights peacefully and political participation mechanisms to ensure democracies and societies are alive.
- To respect the law, and in case the law is perceived as unfair, make use of public mechanisms to influence its change and associated decision-making.
- To participate in the political and social life of the polis, and ensure civic behaviors.
- To inform themselves about the political programmes and go to vote.
- To make use of public resources consciously and take advantage of the opportunities provided by the institutions.
- To hold their governments accountable via inclusive, transparent and accessible mechanisms and platforms.

Legitimacy Input vs. Legitimacy Output

The European Union became aware that without effective citizen participation and the involvement of the citizens in the communication of their activities, and by building the feeling citizen's opinions matter despite the representative system, they would not build trust nor legitimacy. So, at this point, they started to invest in the legitimacy "input" instead of the "output". Which means that they are building trust by having a bidirectional

conversation with the European citizens, informing constantly about every edge of activities in a plain vocabulary,... An example is the campaign together.eu or the Conference for the Future of Europe. Despite talking about different political levels, the gap between citizen-institution is still applicable, and not all citizens have the feeling their local institutions are there, nor know how to communicate with them. Moreover, institutional visits are sometimes focused on the stakeholders (clubs, entities, companies,...) and the un-organised citizen finds it more difficult to be heard, engage or collaborate.

Enabling Environment

Cities and their governments provide a sympathetic writ broadly to include an accessible environment for meeting the challenges listed above.¹¹ Local governments are, in effect, "on the front lines of delivering services—and restoring trust in government."¹² They are closer to the residents and are more capable of interacting directly with them. This can potentially be problematic, as local government is as often the most visible face of failures of government at all levels as it is of its own or successes or those occupying other tiers. In the model below, it is suggested that the traditional position of local government at the base of a hierarchical pyramid that has national or regional governments at the pinnacle, should be inverted, thus placing local government, and the people it serves, on top. The other tiers of government are seen as providing support for the delivery of services at local level, while local government is responsible for creating and maintaining feedback loops that normalize dialogue and enable responsive policies and budgets. This model also promotes shared accountability, in which success is measured in an inclusive, participative and practical way. See Figure 3.

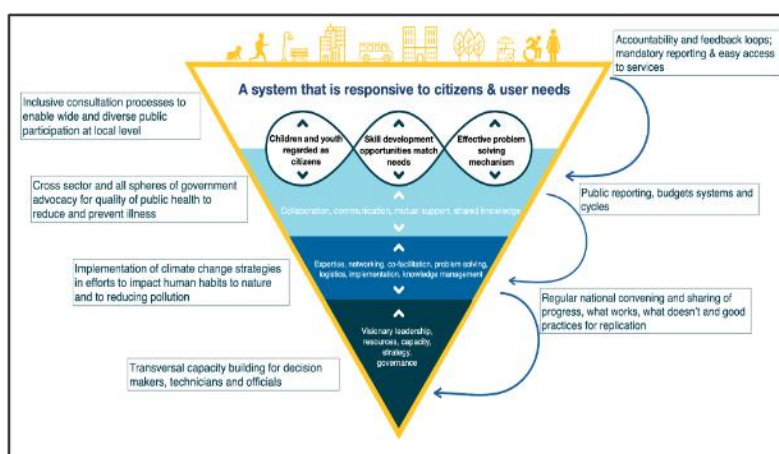


Figure 3. Transformed Local Government

¹¹ See Article 9. *The Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities* for a definition of accessible https://treaties.un.org/doc/source/docs/A_RES_61_106-E.pdf and General Comments on Article 9 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G14/033/13/PDF/G1403313.pdf?OpenElement>

¹² O'Leary, Agarwal, and Welles, "Trust in State and Local Government, *Deloitte Insights*, September 21, 2021. <https://www2.deloitte.com/xe/en/insights.html>

Cities are home for 55% of the world's population – 4.2 billion inhabitants – by 2050 these figures will likely rise to 70%, with some 7 billion people being urbanites.¹³ Thus, as the urban population nearly doubles its current size, it has a strong potential to implement systemic measures that will constitute a new social contract.¹⁴ This can only be done by adopting a transformative approach that establishes new principles for relationships transversally within local government, across tiers of government and most importantly, among residents and users of cities.

Three principles are the foundation of our proposed new social contract. The first set of principles relates to the determination of the current and future delivery of services writ large and references globally agreed on rights concepts.

Principle 1. Involve residents in problem-solving and policy-making through transparency and access to useful information and data, promoting widespread and meaningful engagement consciously including under-represented groups, and supporting civic space for dialogue, expressing ideas, co-creating policies and programs, and partnering on various projects.

- 1. Engage in frequent, transparent, and accurate sharing of information. Regular communication with residents through multiple accessible channels and formats – newsletters, social media, radio, television, signage are common approaches. Use of mobile phones is an increasingly effective tool. Communications also need to provide space for hearing from and listening to residents' views. Here, mobile phone apps are useful. Enhanced accessible communications during crises are essential. Effective communication among city agencies is also important in providing clear messages to residents about local government activities, policies, and programs. Of note, if not handled responsibly the increasing use of digital technologies for surveillance or other purposes, have evoked strong privacy concerns among citizens and leaving out those facing limited connectivity or where lack of accessibility of platforms, technology or devices are sustaining barriers for equal access.**

Providence, Rhode Island, USA

In 2013, the city initiated an open meeting portal and followed with an open data portal that provides information on city activities ranging from the police logs to budget expenditures and meeting minutes. The portal also includes important maps: flood

¹³ Department of Social and Economic Affairs, *World Urbanization Prospects 2018 Highlights*, New York: United Nations, 2019. <https://population.un.org/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2018-Highlights.pdf>

¹⁴ World Bank, Urban Development Overview
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview#1>

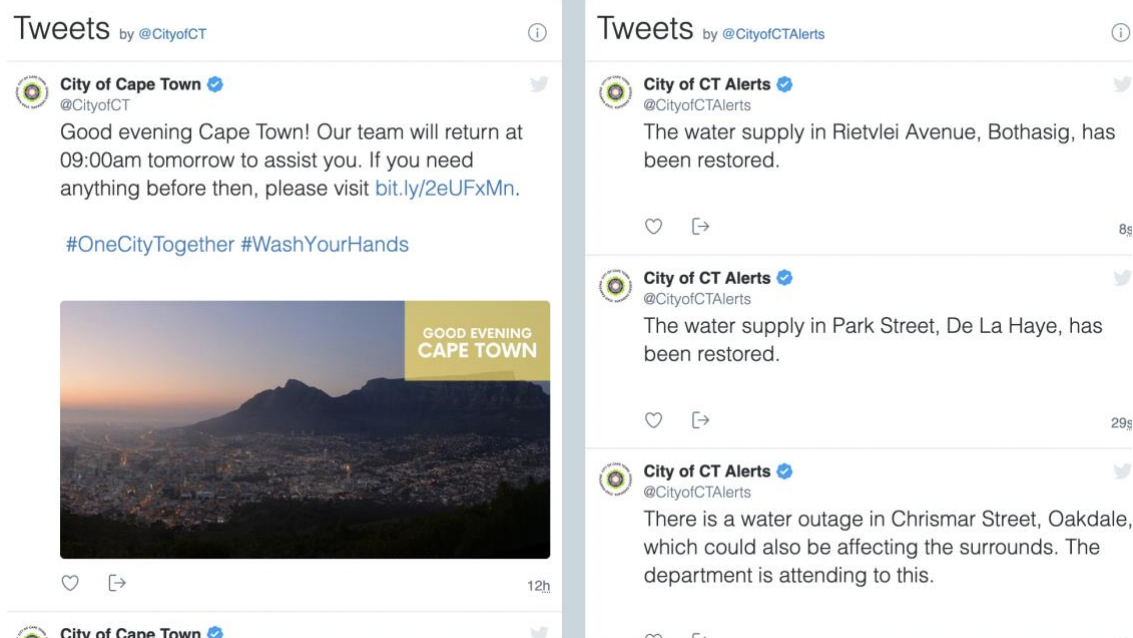
plains, capital budget projects, and open space/parks.¹⁵ <https://data.providenceri.gov/>
https://media.erepublic.com/document/GOV14_BRIEF_Accela_Legislative-V.PDF

Chula Vista, California, USA Technology and Advisory Task Force

Selected through a community consultation process, this 12 member group, composed of residents with expertise in technology, law enforcement, small business, and civil rights and is charged with making policy recommendations related to the city's use of technology, reporting to the City Council in Fall 2022. One of its first tasks is to assess the results of a public opinion survey conducted in English, Spanish, and Tagalog with responses to the city's "Drone First Responder" program instituted by the police department as the only municipal program authorized by the US Federal Aviation Administration to use drones proactively, as well as other how to protect individual privacy. The city also hired a public affairs firm to assist the Task Force and the city in developing a smart city plan through widespread consultation within government and among community members. All Task Force meetings are open to the public.¹⁶

Cape Town, South Africa Communications

The City of Cape Town uses multiple communications tools. Its twitter account reports important information about a wide range of city/citizen concerns including services (and service outages), public meetings, crime, and educational opportunities.



¹⁵ City of Providence, Open Data Portal, <https://data.providenceri.gov/>;

¹⁶ "Privacy Task Force Meets April

25,"<https://www.chulavistaca.gov/Home/Components/News/News/3463/3175> Chula Vista Police Department, Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), Drone as First Responder Program (DFR) <https://www.chulavistaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/21833/63744844905310000#:~:text=The%20Chula%20Vista%20Police%20Depart> Madaffer Enterprises, "Chula Vista Case Study," <https://www.madaffer.com/case-study-chula-vista/>

An evaluation indicated citizen satisfaction with this approach.

Foli, Matilda & Van Belle, Jean-Paul. (2015). Using mobile phones for public participation with the local government in Cape Town. 1-10. 10.1109/ISTAFRICA.2015.7190526.

Buenos Aires, Argentina - Transparency in Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches

As part of their 2017 OGP Action Plan, [Buenos Aires committed](#) to make more transparent the work of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches and the Ombudsman. In doing so, all four institutions set out a plan to open the life cycle of public policies, the life cycle of the legislative process, indicators on the management of the local courts as well as information on the complaints and their responses made to the Ombudsman. Information was presented in open data formats where suitable to ensure its reusability.

- 2. Support institutionalized processes which are inclusive, participatory, and accessible for consciously including residents' views in formulating, executing, and evaluating policies, programs and practices. These processes provide opportunities for diverse voices to be heard and accounted for on issues that matter to residents and allow them to share their expertise, knowledge, insights, concerns and experiences. They can offer new perspectives, information and ideas with local governments that result in policies and services that are better designed, more practical and relevant, and more efficiently and effectively delivered. Inclusive processes strengthen the legitimacy of decision-making and build ownership of policies and programs by enabling people to identify priorities and share in decision-making, thereby assuming greater ownership of solutions and responsibility.¹⁷**

Participatory Budgeting

Initiated in 1989 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, more than 1,500 cities around the world have adopted the practice of allowing citizens to decide how a portion of the municipal budget will be spent. Ranging from Yaounde, Cameroon to Rosario, Argentina, to Berlin, Germany and New York City, USA, participants follow a standard process: Residents brainstorm spending ideas, volunteer delegates shape them into proposals, residents vote on the proposals and governments adopt the top ideas.¹⁸

¹⁷ No author, *Promoting Inclusive Government Consultation*, <https://www.sdgaccountability.org/working-with-formal-processes/promoting-inclusive-government-consultations/>, Lindsay Pico Alfano, *Six Ways Cities Can Promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*, <https://govlaunch.com/stories/6-ways-cities-can-promote-diversity-inclusion-and-equity>, No Author, "Promoting Inclusive Government Consultations," *SDG Handbook*, <https://www.sdgaccountability.org/working-with-formal-processes/promoting-inclusive-government-consultations/>, Center for Public Impact, *Innovation in the Face of Crisis*, September 2020, https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/assets/documents/CPI_Innovation-in-the-face-of-crisis_EN_FINAL.pdf, City of New York, *Mayor's Management Report*, New York City: Mayor's Office of Operations, 2022. <https://dmmr.nyc.gov/>, International Budget Partnership website <https://internationalbudget.org/>

¹⁸ Cat Johnson, "15 Participatory Budget Projects that Give Power to the People," October 8, 2014 https://www.shareable.net/15-participatory-budgeting-projects-that-give-power-to-the-people/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw4PKTBhD8ARIsAHChzRKH6yiRZQ3fFioSIImQPgeKqpnPC_cAaNsEJ_ERodZiDRuPn1CjMSZUaApT0EALw_wcB

In 2017, Madrid, Spain, [committed](#) to expand their participatory budgeting and enhance their engagement and transparency of this process as part of the OGP Local Action Plan. As a result, during that year 67,133 residents participated in the participatory budgeting process which generated more than 3,200 public proposals - an increase of 47% from the previous year. In 2021, 50 million Euros have been allocated to be decided by the residents of Madrid through the [participatory budget](#).

Village Communities in Seoul, Korea

In 2012, the Seoul City Council passed legislation authorizing the creation of village communities within the city's 25 administrative districts under the jurisdiction of Seoul's Metropolitan Government's Seoul Innovation Bureau. The law also authorized the creation of Village Communities Support Centers to aid the groups. Within two years, nearly 2,000 neighborhood groups emerged to make suggestions for projects that would improve their quality of life. Included among the allowable projects are: improvement of the residential environment and landscape, creation of public space, community meeting and cultural facilities, schools, and small business support. Based on the advice of a citizen committee, the mayor funds the projects that fall within the city's budget.¹⁹ See Figure 3.

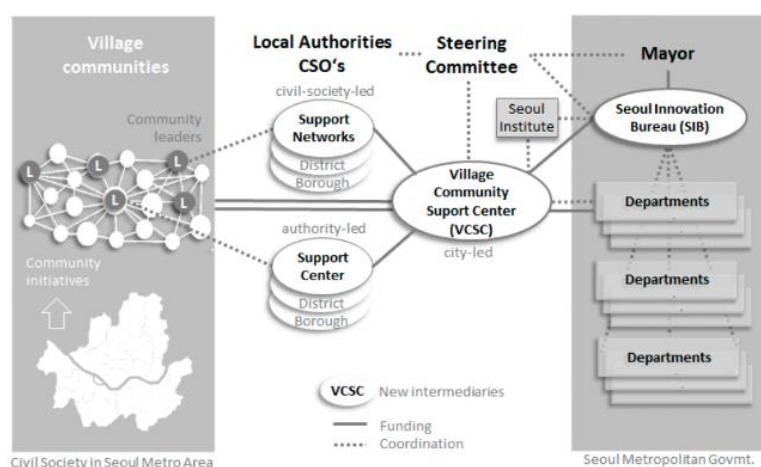


Figure 3. Village Communities Organization. Source: Wolfram <https://sciforum.net/paper/view/2703>

Eyes and Ears in Kaduna State, Nigeria

In order to improve delivery of services and public infrastructure, Kaduna State has engaged residents in monitoring delivery. Citizens act as the [eyes and ears](#) of the government to monitor public services and report the conditions of hospitals, schools,

¹⁹ Seoul Metropolitan Government Legal Administrative Services, Ordinance on Village Communities. https://legal.seoul.go.kr/legal/english/front/page/law.html?pAct=lawView&pPromNo=4393&fstYn=Y#article_9 Mark Wolfram, Village Communities and Social Innovation in Seoul, Exploring the Urban Dimension of Grassroots Niches" in Frantzeskaki et al., *Urban Sustainability Transitions*, London: Routledge, 2017. https://books.google.com.co/books?hl=en&lr=&id=n_8nDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA106&dq=seoul+village+communities&ots=TBjY0FGK98&si

water and sanitation infrastructure, and more. For example, a concerned mother sent feedback via her mobile phone to government leaders so they could fix a healthcare clinic in her community so everyone, especially women, could have access to health services. This feedback platform was developed in 2018 as part of Kaduna State's OGP Local action plan, which sought to give citizens a voice in governance and make government more responsive to their priorities, build mutual trust and confidence between government and citizens and include all members of the society including people living with disabilities and to promote improved service delivery.



- 3. Mediate conflicts that arise among residents, among city agencies, and among city agencies and residents. Due to their large populations and complex governance structures, differences are constantly present in both the Global North and Global South whether they relate to internal matters (e.g. the allocation of a budget for a particular service) or external circumstances (disputing national or global conflicts). For example, conflicts over land use and titles are rampant in rapidly developing cities with large proportions of the population living in informal settlements, often resulting in evictions and displacement or unlivable conditions due to the lack of public services. Central to this issue are questions of gender equity.**

Conflict Resolution Training for Local Government Stakeholders

ACCORD, in partnership with United Cities and Local Governments – Africa (UCLG-Africa), conducted two three-hour training of local government stakeholders within the UCLG-Africa network via Zoom...The training aimed to deepen knowledge and understanding of conflict management skills, specifically conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation, as a means to strengthen local government stakeholder's capacity to manage conflict. It unpacked how to conduct conflict analysis, describing the characteristics of different types of conflict and how to adequately analyze them, the foundation upon which to build interventions. It illustrated the role of a mediator and the

various tools to use in conflict management, including the stages of mediation: the preparatory phase, the mediation phase and the post-agreement phase.

Capacitating cities and local government stakeholders with the skills and knowledge to manage conflict is a proactive measure that will support their efforts to prevent and mitigate conflicts that may arise in these increasingly densely populated urban environments. The rapid rate of urbanization can contribute to the disruption of established interests and power balances. It changes a society's political economy and economic geography by moving power away from rural, often agrarian, forces, towards industrial, commercial and urban actors, disrupting established social institutions, and changing identities. Inevitably, these socio-economic and political changes are contested, and that contestation can generate conflict, including conflict over how the city, and those who live within it, should be governed.²⁰

- 4. Build on existing strengths to enhance public services with attention to underserved populations. In the Global South, local governments struggle with providing core services (e.g., water, sewer, police, fire protection, education, health care) while sorting out how to address land title issues.**

Negotiating Public Services in Informal Settlements

“Know Your City” is a global campaign of Slum Dwellers International (SDI), United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa), and Cities Alliance. Around the world, slum dwellers collect city-wide data and information on informal settlements. This work creates alternative systems of knowledge that are owned by the communities and have become the basis of a unique social and political argument that supports an informed and united voice of the urban poor. SDI's databases are becoming the largest repositories of informal settlement data in the world and the first port of call for researchers, policy makers, local governments and national governments.” More than 7,000 slums in 224 cities are profiled.²¹

The Caring City, Ciudad Bolívar, Bogota, Columbia

Ciudad Bolívar, a consolidated informal settlement in Bogota first occupied in the mid 20th century, now houses more than half a million low-income residents. It occupies steep hilly areas in the south of the city. Prior to the construction of the 3.3 km Transmicable, travel from the neighborhood to the rest of the city took hours rather than the 15 minutes now possible. The increased mobility offered more employment opportunities within and outside the neighborhood. However, low educational attainment and lack of childcare and eldercare facilities hindered many, especially women, from securing jobs. In response, the current mayor, Claudia Lopez, initiated a reorganization of the city's infrastructure guided by a feminist view concept district care blocks (*sistema distrital cuidado*) that offer training, daycare for children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, associated with advanced training modules and other services at the scale

²⁰ Savannah Wilmott, *Keeping it local: Strengthening Conflict Management Capacity in Local Government*, May 21, 2021. <https://www.accord.org.za/news/keeping-it-local-strengthening-conflict-management-capacity-in-local-government/>

²¹ SDI <https://sdinet.org/explore-our-data/>

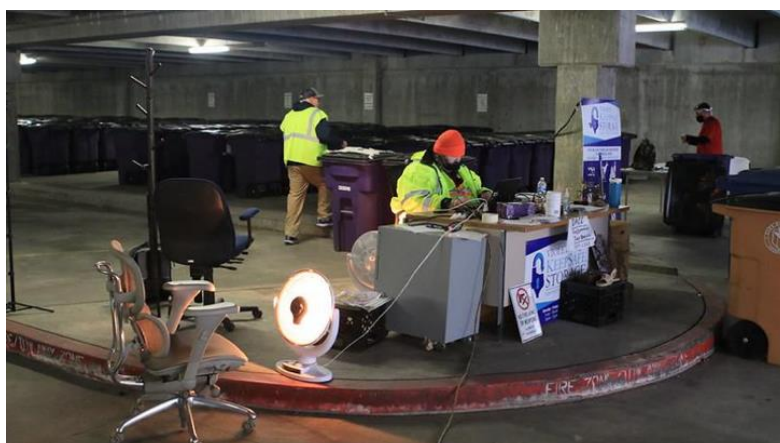
of the block or a 15-20 minute walk (800 m radius). The caring community idea goes well beyond these services to include the provision of new schools, enrichment activities for children, women, and men, including a “School for Men,” whose curriculum covers domestic issues. Finally, in instilling pride in the community, the city sponsored a Museum of Informality that documents the area’s history, especially its fight for recognition, and an art demonstration, with households painting their dwellings to brighten up the district as seen in the image on the left.



<https://bogota.gov.co/en/international/latin-americas-first-care-block-starts-ciudad-bolivar>
<https://colombiacorners.com/bogota-day-trip-to-ciudad-bolivar/>
<https://newcities.org/wellbeing-bogota-bibiana-aedo-almagro/>
<https://www.citiesforglobalhealth.org/initiative/bogotas-district-care-system-sistema-distrital-de-cuidado>

Engaging Persons Experiencing Homelessness to Improve Services in Austin, Texas, USA.

Many people experiencing homelessness find themselves stuck in a relentless revolving door of emergency shelters, justice systems, and emergency services. In order to break this cycle, the City of Austin committed as part of their 2018 OGP Action Plan to engage with the community to make their services more responsive to this community. As a [result](#), the city was able to make more responsive the provision of services like storage, health, and job placement to the community.



Principle 2: Commitment by the residents to participate actively and accept multi-stakeholder leadership in civic life to advance and improve agreed upon collective action.

- 1. Exercise resident responsibilities. In a democracy, residents have basic responsibilities to observe the law, participate in elections, respect the views of others and other duties specified within the context of their local government (e.g., serve on juries, pay taxes or fees).**

Voter Turnout in Prague after Introduction of Participatory Budgeting

In 2020, a pair of scholars published the results of their multi-year study of 48 Czech municipalities that queried whether participatory budgeting increased voter participation. They found that it did increase voting in municipal elections more than in national contests. They also found that the higher the total budget allocated to participatory decision-making and the size of the city were also critical factors in the increase, all lessons to be probed more deeply with additional qualitative studies.

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Juraj-Nemec/publication/345356530_Welfare_Co-Production_Hungarian_and_Slovak_Reality/links/6035372fa6fdcc37a8495dba/Welfare-Co-Production-Hungarian-and-Slovak-Reality.pdf#page=111

- 1. Train and educate current and future leaders in civic responsibilities. Trust in government grows when the constituents understand the “how, what, and when” they can participate in determining public policy and programs and then they take advantage of these conditions. A basic requirement, then, for participation in decision-making is education and training, starting with civics and then moving into participation and leadership roles among residents, especially youth. Do not ignore the important role of older residents who have accumulated knowledge and wisdom of their communities but are too often left out of leadership roles.**
- 2.**

Werkstadt Junges Wien

From February to April 2019, the city of Vienna sponsored 1,300 workshops attended by 22,000 children (ages 4-19) focused on their responses to several questions: what does or doesn't work well in Vienna? What are the city's most pressing issues? What kind of Vienna would you like to live in? The collated responses yielded a nine-point Children and Youth Strategy for Vienna 2020-2025 now being implemented. The object of this exercise was to teach you that they could affect public policy in tangible ways.

https://www.advantageaustria.org/cn/news/Vienna_Wins_Guangzhou_Award_Again_e_n.html

Open Eskola, Basque Country, Spain

An open government and engaged residents are necessary for increased trust; however, a lack of participatory culture in public governance by different agents can undermine these efforts. In recognition of this, the Basque Country, committed as part of their 2018

OGP Local Action plan to [develop an open school model for citizens](#), that among other things would promote learning and motivation towards participation and co-responsibility of residents in public affairs and develop the necessary skill and attitudes for deliberation by all stakeholders.

Mandela Washington Fellows for Young African Leaders, USA

The Department of State funds some 700 competitively selected young professionals, ages 25-35, to attend courses on business, civic engagement, or public management offered by 27 universities throughout the country. Afterwards, they convene in Washington DC for a Youth Summit. One hundred remain for another four weeks of professional development courses. Returning home,, they can continue learning via 21 online courses.

<https://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/mandela-washington-fellowship-young-african-leaders>

Principle 3. Acknowledge and respect subsidiarity. All countries decide how to allocate power and responsibilities. An important guiding principle is subsidiarity that holds that functions which are performed effectively by subordinate or local government belong more properly to them than to a higher level of government. This is the foundation of the many decentralization efforts occurring around the world in the past decades: "Decentralization transfers authority and responsibility of major government functions from central to sub-national governments — including local governments, civil society, and the private sector."²². A critical dimension to any decentralization policy is the clear articulation of the associated obligations, powers and resources to undertake the assigned tasks.

Types of Decentralization and Associated Subsidiarity Characteristics

“Political decentralization transfers policy and legislative powers from central governments to autonomous, lower level assemblies, and local councils that have been democratically elected by their constituencies.

- To be effective, it requires regular elections, clearly defined jurisdictions and powers, and the appropriate legal, political and functional space.

Administrative decentralization places planning and implementation responsibilities in the hands of locally situated civil servants and these local civil servants under the jurisdiction of elected local governments.

²² World Bank, 2013

- To be effective, it requires ability to make independent staffing decisions and ability to negotiate conditions of service (though the center may retain a useful role in training)

Fiscal decentralization accords substantial revenue and expenditure autonomy to local governments, including the power to levy taxes and user charges.

- To be effective, it requires linking pleasure of spending with pain of revenue generation, increasing revenue autonomy, building capacity to analyze data for budget decisions and establishing proper fiduciary controls.”

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/communitydrivendevelopment/brief/Decentralization>

Recommendations for A New Social Contract to Rebuild Trust

It is imperative that a new social contract is forged, to enable governments to be more trustworthy and to increase trust between public institutions and citizens. Understanding the drivers of trust is a complex endeavor, however, there is a general consensus that trust in public institutions is contingent on the perceived competence of the institutions as well as their values and their communications; communities need to see that their governments are responsive to their needs . That is to say, persons ascribe greater trust to governments that deliver on their mandate (responsiveness) and do so consistently by anticipating the needs and context of society (reliability). In addition, persons ascribe greater trust to governments that demonstrate specific values in how decisions are made, such as integrity, openness and fairness²³. These two drivers of trust, competence and values, create a virtuous cycle in that public institutions that are open and act with fairness and integrity tend to be more responsive and reliable.

Using this framework as a guide we can identify practical, measurable actions to restore trust in public institutions. Like any recommendation, the following are not a panacea and must be coupled with credible, long term changes in the way governments, citizens, businesses and the media relate to each other. However, the following recommendations are a fundamental stepping stone to building a new social contract and restoring trust.

1. Engage people in problem-solving and policy making

- Establishing permanent spaces for social dialogue as well as mechanisms to engage residents and government institutions to jointly identify problems and potential solutions (e.g. citizen advisory councils, petitions, co-management of public services with workers and trade unions, etc.), having regard to the existing processes of representative democracy.

²³ OECD, 2017. *Trust and Public Policy: How Better Governance Can Help Rebuild Public Trust*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264268920-e>

- Enabling participatory mechanisms in the budgeting and public financial management process, through participatory budgeting for example.²⁴
- Requiring public authorities to organize participatory or deliberative engagement processes under certain conditions, for example, when decision-makers have limited information on experiences of a policy, or when a decision involves complex issues, conflicting beliefs or requires trade-off which would benefit from the involvement of people outside of government.²⁵

2. Strengthen social inclusion

- Promoting engagement of underrepresented groups in the public decision-making process and incorporating their perspective in the identification of policy problems and solutions.
- Ensuring public infrastructure and services are responsive to the needs of the different groups within society, particularly those that aim at socio-economic inclusion, for example, ensuring public information is accessible for persons with different disabilities or setting up citizen consultation processes on inclusion.
- Nurture leadership of diverse views and backgrounds by establishing spaces for young diverse leaders to participate and gather experience engaging in public policy and political life.²⁶

3. Improve service delivery using a user-centered design approach

- Engaging residents to gather direct input from users of programs and services to better understand their needs and identify barriers to access.
- Using new technologies to meet users' needs more efficiently are truly accessible to all and reduce unnecessary red tape.²⁷
- Ensuring resources are available to make engagement with people adequate and improvements in user-centered services are done quickly and efficiently.²⁸

4. Promote democratic freedoms for a healthy civic dialogue

- Safeguarding free expression and addressing threats to journalists, bloggers, and activists.
- Addressing key constraints on civil society by ensuring a fair and efficient legal, policy and institutional frameworks that are necessary for non-governmental

²⁴ Kumagai, S. & Iorio, F.. 2020. *Building Trust in Government through Citizen Engagement*. World Bank, Washington, DC. World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33346>

²⁵ OECD (2020), *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/339306da-en>, Involve (n.d.), *Deliberative Public Engagement*. <https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/what/deliberative-public-engagement>

²⁶ Lord, K. M. (2019), Six Ways to Repair Declining Social Trust. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. <https://doi.org/10.48558/60R4-F118>

²⁷ Hwang, S. & Goger, A. (2022, January 12) What to restore trust in government? Start with customer experience. The Avenue. Brookings, Washington DC, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2022/01/12/want-to-restore-trust-in-government-start-with-customer-experience/>

²⁸ Ibid.

actors to access information, express themselves, associate, organize, and participate in public life.

- Countering misinformation by promoting the dissemination of accurate information, while avoiding punitive measures that could lead to censorship.²⁹

5. Transparency and access to useful information and disaggregated data

- Ensuring proper implementation of legislation on the right to information - for example by ensuring good record keeping and prompt responses to information requests – and addressing constraints in accessibility and usability of information by ensuring adequate resources, quality of data, and technical barriers.
- Adopt and implement an open data strategy that will enhance accessibility, usability and interoperability of government data.
- Adopting and implementing an open by default policy and establishing clear criteria and mechanisms for exceptions.

6. Ensure justice and accountability

- Breaking the cycle of impunity through effective law enforcement; improving financial management and auditing; identifying and sanctioning unacceptable behavior by public officials; publishing audits and compliance records; and establishing effective public complaints mechanisms.³⁰
- Seeking public official's accountability by making more open the balance-of-powers institutions to carry out their mandate, such as making more transparent and open to participation council proceedings, internal workings and decisions.
- Strengthening access to justice to allow people to seek remedy and redress for disputes and harms including through improving monitoring and evaluation of justice related service delivery; empowering the poor and marginalized to seek response and remedies for injustice; improving legal protection, legal awareness, and legal aid; and enabling civil society oversight.³¹

7. Establish credible way forward

None of these recommendations will have an effect on rebuilding trust unless government, business, trade unions, civil society organizations and people make sincere commitments to make changes in their policies, practices and lifestyles³². International platforms like the UCLG and the Open Government Partnership can be used to demonstrate commitment and action towards these values and practices, share good examples and demonstrate leadership to have trustworthy institutions and renew trust.

²⁹ OGP (2021). Actions to Protect and Enhance Civic Space. *OGP Blog*.

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/actions-for-a-secure-and-open-civic-space/>

³⁰ Lord, K. M. (2019), op. cit.

³¹ UN. (n.d.) Access to justice. <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/thematic-areas/access-to-justice-and-rule-of-law-institutions/access-to-justice/>

³² Lord, K. M. (2019), op. cit.

Way Forward

Going forward, we turn to our local governments to ask them to share in the implementation of several initiatives that are based on the discussion of the challenges, the principles of a successful enabling environment, and recommendations above.

The first project focuses on drafting a New Social Contract Built on Trust and Local Government, the others follow. The aim of the agreement is to strengthen social inclusion, ensure justice and accountability, support the efficient and equitable provision of public services, and protect and enhance the quality of life of residents while preparing them to participate in meeting global challenges such as sustainable urban development, climate change and inequality. It also aims to produce an agreement that is fit for purpose in the 21st century, one that incorporates current and future concerns.

The first steps are:

- 1. Produce a draft of a New Social Contract to Rebuild Trust in Local Government**
 - a. Develop a simple, short declaration incorporating the rights and responsibilities of all parties and encompass the recommendations.
 - b. Incorporate agreed upon goals of eliminating poverty and inequities, supporting economic prosperity for all, and protecting and promoting an improved environment and adding considerations of new areas of activity such as health disparities, emergency preparedness, use of technology, measures of progress to sustainable urban development, and others making sure to leave no one behind.
 - c. Reflect the diversity of the residents and be truly accessible for those with special needs.
 - d. Link to UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity.
- 2. Work with key city networks - official and residential - to develop a code or handbook on reciprocal responsibilities and rights for local government and residents under a New Social Contract. Suggested entries might cover ideas and examples of how to:**
 - a. Demonstrate the responsibilities and rights of all parties and discuss the details of the recommendations above
 - b. Discuss of areas of concern on which local governments and residents can partner
 - c. List civic spaces in which engagement can take place
 - d. Promote continuous training and capacity building for government officials and residents paying special attention to



3. Establish a recognition program for places and people who are achieving the aims of the New Social Contract to Rebuild Trust in Local Government

Work with UCLG's tools to implement this idea.

4. Support research on evaluation of, and disseminate best practices exemplifying the implementation of the New Social Contract to Rebuild Trust in Local Government

Develop a knowledge component to disseminate these ideas in global fora including the UCLG Congress, UN convenings (WUF, COP etc.), urban engagement groups of the G-7, G-20, other city networks.

5. Through the Global Task Force establish a web-based interactive platform to announce, recruit participants and their ideas, and monitor progress on these activities. Channel the results to international meetings, focusing especially on the UN's Summit on the Future.

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