



18 MAY 2021
12:00-13:30 (CEST)

THEMATIC SESSION

A RENEWED ROLE FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: TOWARDS A NEW UCLG POLICY

Organized under the umbrella of the UCLG Policy Councils on Multilevel governance, Resilience and the New Urban Agenda

Background and objectives of the Thematic Session

Back in 2013, UCLG, together with its Working Group on Capacity and Institution Building CIB, developed the first UCLG Policy Paper on “Development Cooperation and Local Government”, putting forward the crucial role that local and regional governments play in the development of nations and the importance of development cooperation by peers to support local governments.

In the past eight years, the international context and UN agendas have evolved, as well as the relations with donors. Priorities and modalities of cooperation have also changed. With the current crisis, the need for a new social contract and the need to care for local service provision form part of the importance to develop a strong Pact for the Future, where development and cooperation have all their place.

In order to increase ownership of the network on the issue, UCLG through its Working Group on Capacity and Institution Building, has started the process of renewing the Policy Paper on “Development Cooperation and Local Government”. This process of redrafting is taking place in close consultation with the Regional Sections, national associations of local governments, individual cities, the thematic parts of the networks including the Policy Councils, and in close coordination with international partners already working with the network.

This Thematic Session will enable the Sherpas and Councillors of the Policy Councils to provide further guidance and inputs on policy statement which has been drafted for the Executive Bureau meetings, which serves as a basis for the longer policy paper, to be launched later this year.

First key findings on the new reality of development cooperation

Based on the surveys received, interviews undertaken and this initial draft policy statement, the Policy Paper will focus on the following challenge areas and key implications for development cooperation, set in the urgency of the final decade of the 2030 Agenda and key priorities of the UCLG membership:



Care at the heart of local service provision for an inclusive recovery

- Ecological Transition: particularly in light of multiple and cascading risks faced by least-resourced and most-marginalised urban residents (particularly in, but not limited to, low- and middle-income countries).
- Health systems and pandemic response: the impact of a major health crisis, its impacts and the consequences of policy and individual responses
- Local service delivery and access to finance
- Addressing inequalities

The Paper will also in a transversal manner look into the developments and mechanisms within the local government development sector, based on facts and evidence from the field, particularly:

- Co-production and capacity strengthening: transformative research and capacity-building for innovation in policy and planning to promote urban equality.
- Mechanisms for cooperation: context of strong South-South cooperation, including the articulation of new positions beyond the donor-recipient relationships; the induction of new modes of development cooperation; and the transformation of institutional architectures and governance mechanisms, including the role of e-Governance and digital participation
- Planning as complex socio-technical systems: simultaneous focus on quality of life, infrastructure efficiency and city futures in ways that cut across and within socio-technical systems. i.e. multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary, equitable ways.

Guiding questions

- How has the reality of development cooperation at all levels changed in the last decade?
- How has the relation with donors evolved in the past decade?
- What are the main characteristics of current development cooperation from your local point of view, and from the global perspective?
- What are the main challenges and obstacles for development and cooperation to gain strength?
- How has the crisis impacted development cooperation in the past months?

