

Implementing Sustainable Development: Proposals by Local Governments

1. Local governments and civic leaders are committed to playing a positive and meaningful role in the Johannesburg Summit and to working to create sustainable cities and communities. Significant movement towards sustainability has occurred at the local level in those places where local governments have acted on the goals and targets outlined in Agenda 21, the Rio Conventions, the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Declaration. It is of vital importance to recognize and tap this great potential for accelerated implementation of sustainable development.
2. The outcomes of the Johannesburg Summit must recognize the importance of
 - (a) Good local governance in creating sustainable communities;
 - (b) Urban dimension of sustainable development and the interdependence of urban and rural areas;
 - (c) Role of local governments in developing partnerships for sustainable development,
 - (d) Working with national governments, international agencies, and civil society; and
 - (e) Opportunities to promote and encourage diversified action at the local level.

I - Future Priorities and Recommendations for Action

Governance

3. The role of local governments in governance for sustainable development and good governance at the local level needs to be enhanced and promoted by:
 - (a) Further strengthening local authorities as agreed in the Habitat Agenda; empowering them to play a more effective role in local sustainable human settlements development through appropriate decentralization of responsibilities and resources, and increasing local participation, in conformity with the legal framework and policies of each country;
 - (b) Engaging and assisting local and sub-national authorities in action strategies for sustainable development and for the fulfilment of international commitments in order to build upon local sustainable development successes in the past decade;
 - (c) Providing international and national support for programs and partnerships to develop the capacity of cities and local authorities and their networks to deliver more effective sustainable development outcomes.

Poverty Eradication

4. Recommended actions:
 - (a) Promote local government's awareness of, and active commitment to, the international development targets set out in the General Assembly's Millennium Declaration through the organisation of a world-wide Millennium Towns and Cities Campaign in partnership with the appropriate UN agencies.
 - (b) Strengthen the capacity (both competencies and resources) of communities to ensure that urban and rural poverty is addressed through integrated local development strategies.
 - (c) Support local-level and community-based participatory planning processes (Local Agenda 21) which provide a voice for poor people, women, and other marginalized groups

and which develop viable local economies through the promotion of local production and marketing of local products and services so as to support community-based entrepreneurship and job creation.

Capacity Building

5. Recommended actions:

(a) Build the capacity of local government to foster good local governance and sustainable development at the local level, through demand-led international support programmes and a partnership and policy dialogue between donors and local government.

(b) National governments should work with local governments and their associations in order to strengthen local government's capacity, competencies and resources (including local leadership development).

(c) Develop and promote city to city / municipal international cooperation as an effective tool for exchange of good practice, learning, development, and capacity building.

Global Strategies for the Future

6. The *Local Government Dialogue Paper* endorsed by the local government sector and submitted to Summit PrepCom II describes progress achieved by local governments since 1992 (UNCED) and identifies barriers to sustainable development. Five strategies for joint action by all spheres of government to accelerate sustainable development were identified and elaborated:

(a) Strengthen local government.

(b) Strengthen inter-governmental and intra-governmental cooperation.

(c) Foster international solidarity and cooperation.

(d) Build a new culture of sustainability.

(e) Accelerate the transition to sustainable communities and cities.

7. A *Local Government Declaration* is currently under review to be endorsed by local government leaders around the world at the Johannesburg Summit. Building on the five strategies above, the Declaration sets out key principles, commitments from local governments, and requests to international associations of cities and local authorities, national governments, the UN and the international community.

II - Partnerships for Action at the Local, National, and International Level

8. Local governments contribute to partnerships with their unique ability to facilitate the participation of multiple local stakeholders and to implement policies and programs which are appropriate to local contexts.

9. Recommended Actions:

(a) Involve local governments as equal partners in action-oriented national sustainable development strategies.

(b) Involve local government as an equal partner in the UN system, and acknowledge its unique role as a sphere of government, through the enhancement of initiatives like the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities.

(c) Recognize and support international campaigns of local and sub-national governments aimed at building healthy, sustainable and resilient communities as effective mechanisms to meet commitments of international conventions and to protect global common goods, such as:

(i) Local Agenda 21: Establish long-term national campaigns to initiate and promote local-level sustainable development participatory planning processes (such as Local Agendas 21) with mechanisms to ensure action plan implementation such as formal linkages with annual municipal budgeting and statutory planning activities.

(ii) Local Action 21: Develop specific strategies to support expanded and accelerated implementation in the over 6000 communities who have already undertaken Local Agenda 21 processes. Introduce criteria for investment programs that consider the strategies and targets of action plans in the selection and design of projects for support.

(iii) Climate Protection: Support local government action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency, which will assist national governments' efforts to meet Kyoto Protocol targets, through the implementation and expansion of the international Cities for Climate Protection Campaign.

(iv) Sustainable Water Use: Support local government action towards integrated water resource management by launching an international program to facilitate the creation and implementation of national and local water management plans aimed at defining, monitoring and reporting on national and local targets to eliminate over use, pollution and water loss.

(v) Sustainable Patterns of Consumption and Production: Set up action plans for sound public procurement at all levels of government that factor into procurement decision-making the quality of goods and services, the costs and impacts over the lifecycle of a product, and the principles of equity and sustainability. Establish national collective procurement mechanisms in order to create more effective public demand for sustainable products.

(vi) Management and Prevention of Disasters (natural and other): Develop local management capacity to create more resilient communities and cities through delivery of training programs in every municipality. Undertake risk analysis and management of cities to identify risk-prone buildings and infrastructure, systematically reducing their vulnerability to create more resilient living environments.

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