LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' REPORT TO THE 2023 HLPF

PAPER 4

A CULTURAL BOOST IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGs:

How local and regional governments are promoting cultural heritage and sustainable cities and territories

GLOBAL TASKFORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Facilitated by:

UCLG United Cities and Local Governments

#SDG11
#HLPF2023
#Listen2Cities

2023 UCLG

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1. Background. Localizing SDG 11 to empower communities for sustainable transformation

The current context of multiple and intersecting local-global crises makes accelerating progress towards the urban Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) – SDG 11 – an even more difficult, yet necessary agenda. Most notably, these crises include the climate emergency, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global cost of living and multiple armed conflicts, all of which contribute to deepening inequalities. Nevertheless, the past few years have also seen a re-energized global municipalist movement with ambitious commitments, alternative visions and bold strategies to spearhead efforts for more just and equal cities and territories.

In an increasingly urbanizing world, local and regional governments (LRGs) – with different degrees of autonomy and decentralized resources and responsibilities – are the bedrock of achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 11. LRGs play a pivotal role based on their deep understanding of challenges for SDG localization. They provide access to adequate housing and basic services; ground their planning strategies in feminism, accessibility and participation; reduce disaster risk; and protect natural and cultural heritage. Moreover, they serve as key nodes and drivers for advancing a rights-based approach, as well as building and strengthening multistakeholder and multilevel partnerships. The latter involves forming coalitions of actors across levels of government, civil society, local communities, the private sector and international organizations, aiming to leverage resources and capacities towards "Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."

Table 1 List of cities, regions, LGAs, GTF networks and partners contributing to the papers

Paper	Contributors
Paper 1. Housing and basic services from below: How LRGs are advancing the right to adequate housing Drafted by Camila Cociña, Researcher, and Alexandre Apsan Frediani, Principal Researcher, at the International Institute for Environment and Development	**LRGs:** Afadzato South District (Ghana), Barcelona (Spain), Bilbao (Spain), Esteban Echeverría (Argentina), Iztapalapa (Mexico), Montevideo (Uruguay), Montréal (Canada), Municipio B (Uruguay) **GTF networks:** Euro-Latin American Cities Cooperation Alliance (AL-LAs), Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Mercociudades, UCLG, UCLG Africa **Partners:** Habitat International Coalition, World Blind Union
Paper 2. Integrated and participatory urban planning: How LRGs enable equality through feminism, accessibility and proximity Drafted by Daniel Oviedo, Associate Professor at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL, with support from Julia Wesley, María José Arbeláez and Caren Levy, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL	**LRGs and LGAs:** Federation of Municipalities of the Dominican Republic (Dominican Republic), Lisbon (Portugal), New York (USA), Quilmes (Argentina), Santa Fe (Argentina), Villa Carlos Paz (Argentina), VNG International (the Netherlands) **GTF networks:** C40, CEMR, Metropolis, UCLG, UCLG Africa **Partners:** Entrepreneurship Territory Innovation (ETI) Chair at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, General Assembly of Partners – Older Persons, Global Disability Innovation Hub, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, World Blind Union, World Enabled
Paper 3. Forefronting transformative action: How local and regional governments are crafting social and environmental justice and sustainability Drafted by Adriana Allen, Professor of Development Planning and Urban Sustainability, and Julia Wesely, Researcher, at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL	**LRGs and LGAs:** Afadzato South District (Ghana), Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI), Azambuja (Portugal), Bandar Lampung (Indonesia), Barcelona (Spain), Basse Area Council (the Gambia), Barcarena (Brazil), Bogotá (Colombia), Canelones (Uruguay), Commune Haho 1 (Togo), Esteban Echeverría (Argentina), Góis (Portugal), Granollers (Spain), Johannesburg (South Africa), Nancy (France), Peñalolén (Chile), Pombal (Portugal), Rosario (Argentina), Rotterdam (the Netherlands), Terrassa (Spain), Villa María (Argentina), Viña del Mar (Chile) **GTF networks:** CEMR, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Local Governments Associations (FLACMA), UCLG, UCLG Africa **Partners:** World Blind Union
Paper 4. A cultural boost in the achievement of the SDGs: How LRGs are promoting cultural heritage and sustainable cities and territories Drafted by Marta Llobet, Agnès Ruiz, Sarah Vieux and Jordi Pascual, Secretariat of the UCLG Committee on Culture	**LRGs:** Barcelona (Spain), Bogotá (Colombia), Buenos Aires (Argentina), California (USA), Dublin (Ireland), Durban (South Africa), Lisbon (Portugal), Malmö (Sweden), Mexico City (Mexico), Montevideo (Uruguay), Montréal (Canada), Morelia (Mexico), Pombal (Portugal), Saint-Louis (Senegal), San Antonio (USA), Taipei, València (Spain), Xi'an (People's Republic of China) **GTF networks:** Global Parliament of Mayors, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Resilient Cities Network, UCLG, Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UCCI) **Partners:** World Blind Union, Serhan Ada, Sylvia Amann, Enrique Avogadro, Jordi Baltà, John Crowley, Beatriz García, Enrique Glockner, Antoine Guibert, Lucina Jiménez, Tita Larasati, Alfons Martinell, Marie-Odile Melançon, Justin O'Connor, Jose Oliveira Junior, Jainité Rueda, John Smithies, Magdalena Suárez, Alison Tickell
Paper 5. Multilevel governance and finance: How LRGs advocate for balanced urban systems Drafted by Caren Levy, Professor of Transformative Urban Planning at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL	**LRGs:** Basque Country (Spain) **GTF networks:** Metropolis, UCLG **Partners:** World Blind Union

Source: own compilation

This paper, together with the other four papers included in the 7th *Towards the localization of the SDGs* report, produced by the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF) in 2023, builds on extensive desk research. In particular, they draw on experiences and policies reported by cities, regions, local government associations (LGAs), GTF networks and partners via the GTF/United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) 2023 survey, several written consultation processes and interviews (see Table 1).

The five papers provide a complementary and integrated vision of the pathways LRGs are taking to achieve SDG 11 and closely related SDGs. In other words, they highlight trajectories for change, illustrated through innovative case studies, in which LRGs take an active role and forward-looking approach to promote more equitable and sustainable futures. LRGs do so through strategic decisions and concerted practices in collaboration with different urban stakeholders.* The papers further outline enabling environments for those pathways as well as persistent challenges and deep inequalities that slow down and, in some cases, halt progress towards achieving SDG 11 and the full 2030 Agenda.

Each paper delves into a specific topic related to the localization of SDG 11:

Paper 1 shows how LRGs, five years after the Municipalist Declaration of Local Governments for the Right to Housing and the Right to the City, are using a range of housing actions to recognize, protect and fulfil the right to adequate housing and basic services. These actions accelerate progress towards **SDG target 11.1**.

Paper 2 builds upon feminist approaches to the design and implementation of planning policies, as an entry point to foster accessibility, proximity and participation – crucial conditions for sustainable and inclusive communities – thereby working towards **SDG targets 11.2, 11.3 and 11.7**.

Paper 3 focuses on LRGs' role in pursuing environmental justice and integrated and circular approaches that address the overlapping crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and ecological overshoot, reflecting **SDG targets 11.5, 11.6, 11.7 and 11.b**.

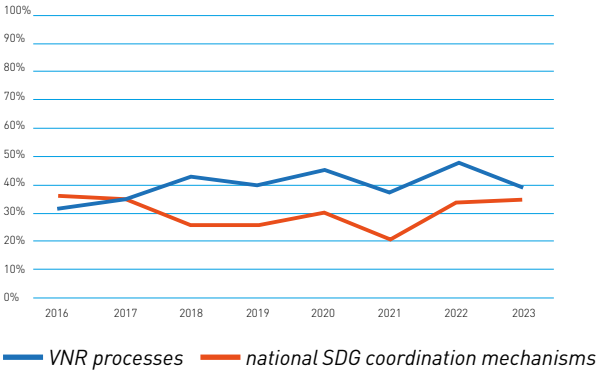
Paper 4 argues that while culture and heritage are hardly visible across the SDGs (and, indeed, should be addressed explicitly through a proposed SDG 18), they are fundamental dimensions of localizing sustainability agendas. This paper speaks particularly to achieving **SDG target 11.4**.

Paper 5 outlines how, to achieve more balanced and equal urban and territorial systems, multilevel governance at all levels should be strengthened, based on the principle of subsidiarity and enhanced coherence of territorial and sectoral policies. National governments can open space for LRGs to work towards **SDG target 11.a** through genuine fiscal, administrative and political decentralization.

The next two pages present the highlights of the *Towards the localization of the SDGs* report, including the cities', regions' and associations' best practices mentioned in the five papers as well as the contribution of LRGs to the SDG 11 targets and the rest of the SDGs, as analyzed by the five papers.

Highlights

% of countries with LRGs' high and medium participation in VNR processes and in the national SDG coordination mechanisms

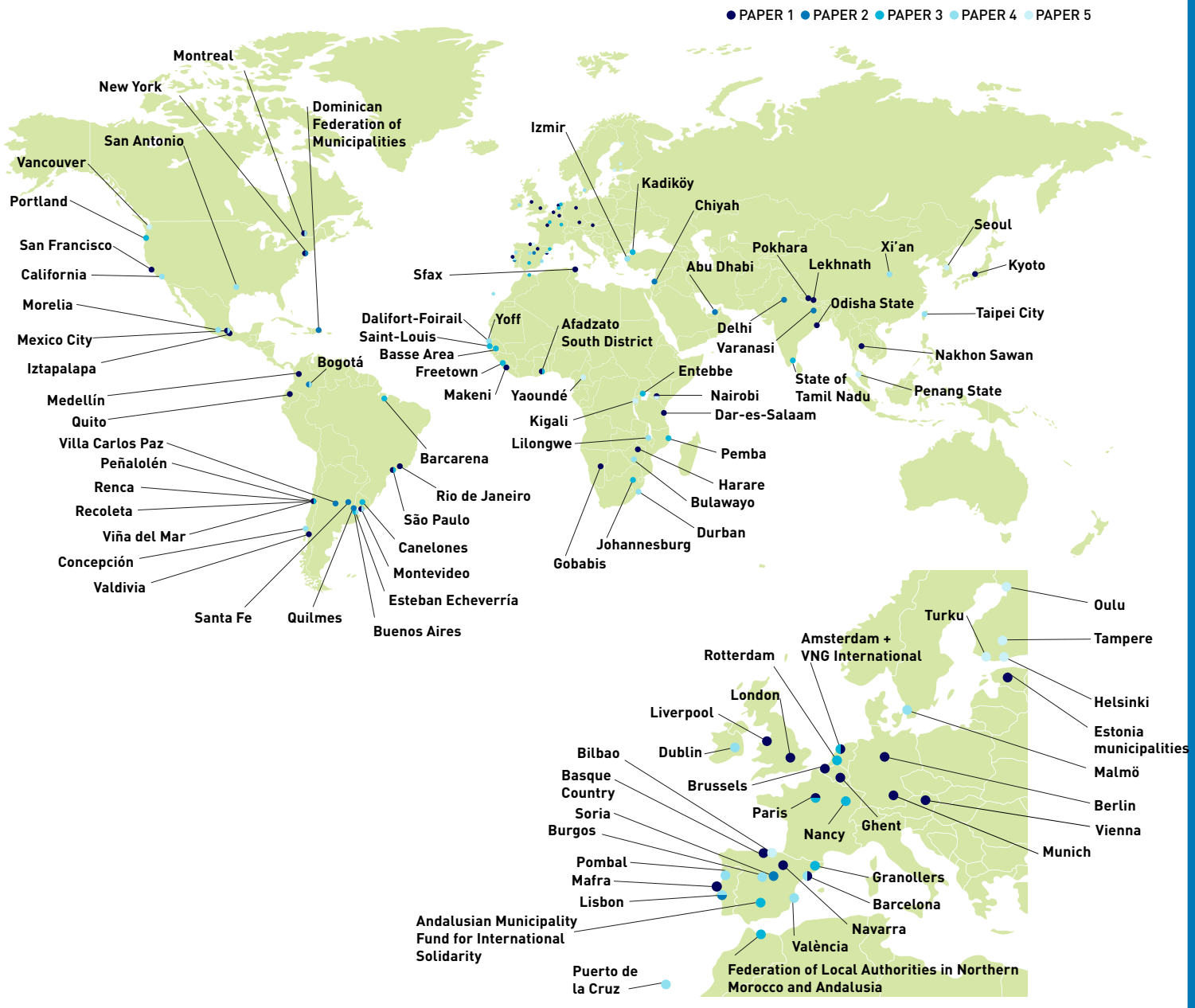


Since 2018, LRGs and their associations have produced over 240 VLRs and 37 VSRs

representing

1.4 bn people
170,000 LRGs

Cities', regions' and associations' best practices mentioned in the five papers



Contribution of LRGs to the SDG 11 targets and related SDGs, as analyzed by the five papers

PAPER 1
Housing and basic services from below: How local and regional governments are advancing the right to adequate housing

SDG 11 — 11.1

PAPER 2
Integrated and participatory urban planning: How local and regional governments enable equality through feminism, accessibility and proximity

SDG 11 — 11.2, 11.3, 11.7

PAPER 3
Forefronting transformative action: How local and regional governments are crafting social and environmental justice and sustainability

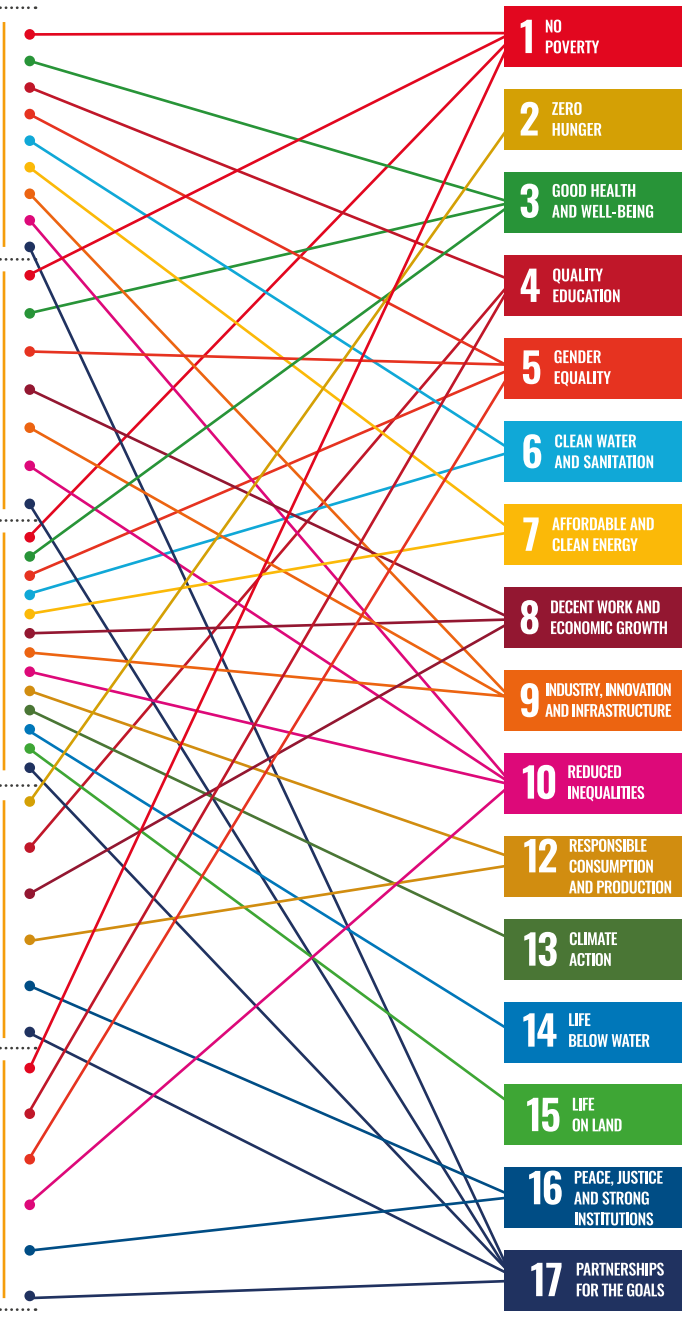
SDG 11 — 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 11.b

PAPER 4
A cultural boost in the achievement of the SDGs: How local and regional governments are promoting cultural heritage and sustainable cities and territories

SDG 11 — 11.4

PAPER 5
Multilevel governance and finance: How local and regional governments advocate for balanced urban systems

SDG 11 — 11.a



Ways forward for SDG localization

Enhancing awareness and incentivizing action among local stakeholders and populations regarding the climate emergency and worsening inequalities

Strengthening decentralization and multilevel governance for greater LRG involvement in national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation

Systematizing LRGs' involvement in national reporting processes and supporting LRGs' reporting efforts, particularly through VLRs and VSRs

Mainstreaming localization in all efforts towards the global agendas with a renewed multilateral system that is more inclusive and accountable

Promoting feminism as an overarching vision for urban planning and sustainable development that places human rights and care at the centre

2. Introduction: Global and local trends in the localization of Sustainable Development Goal target 11.4

Culture (and heritage) in the localization of sustainable development

This paper recalls and explores the important links between culture and sustainable development, and the crucial role of culture in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 11, "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." It also examines projects, programmes and policies developed by local and regional governments (LRGs), civil society organizations (CSOs), informal groups, heritage professionals and other relevant stakeholders.

SDG 11 includes the most important entry point for heritage and culture in the SDGs, with target 11.4 devoted to "strengthen[ing] efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage."[1] In a generous reading, this target seeks to enhance the role of cultural heritage in society; promote sustainable development; support cultural heritage approaches that place people at the core of public policies in a more forward-looking, inclusive, integrated and intersectoral way; and encourage the emergence of new models of cultural heritage management and participatory governance.[2] Other SDG targets that are seen as entry points for heritage and culture are target 2.5 (genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge), target 4.7 (education to promote a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development), target 8.3 (creativity and innovation in job creation and entrepreneurship), targets 8.9 and 12.b (local culture and products in sustainable tourism), target 16.4 (recovery and return of stolen assets) and target 16.10 (public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms).

This logic on entry points (and the instrumental use of culture it entails), in fact, can be seen as contradictory to the words in the Preamble of the 2030 Agenda:

> *"We pledge to foster intercultural understanding, tolerance, mutual respect and an ethic of global citizenship and shared responsibility. We acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development."*
>
> (paragraph 36)

This cultural vision of the Preamble was not duly unfolded, and the negative, yet logical consequences are that cultural policies are almost forgotten in both goals and targets and that cultural actors play a marginal role in national plans for their achievement. With these key cultural aspects absent from its 2015 development, the Agenda was not suited to "leave no one behind."

Reality is stubborn. The 2016–2023 period has witnessed the impacts of interrelated crises, complex emergencies and pressures threatening the protection of cultural and natural heritage, as well as the free exercise of cultural rights and freedoms. Such crises have included the COVID-19 pandemic, which demonstrated how cultural practices are fundamental to individuals and communities. **Culture is an intrinsic dimension of human dignity and, therefore, of development.** Research shows that culture is both a driver and an enabler of sustainability.[3] Global cultural networks represent "the richness and diversity in all manifestations of culture – from heritage sites, museums, libraries and archives to traditional practices and contemporary cultural expressions."[4] Yet, even if fully committed to deliver the SDGs, these networks confirm the impossibility of achieving sustainable development (in its current framing) unless the cultural dimension is explicitly acknowledged and becomes truly operational.[5] LRGs, also committed to delivering the 2030 Agenda, witness daily that cultural aspects inform and are fundamental to the achievement of objectives in all areas of sustainable development.[6]

Cultural policies are needed to localize the SDGs, enable sustainable development and embody people-centred development. In the words of the UN Secretary-General in his most recent progress report on the SDGs, dated May 2023:

> *"Culture and respect for cultural diversity [...] remain undervalued and underutilized in the push for SDG progress. Greater consideration of culture's role in supporting SDG achievement – including within relevant SDG indicators – would generate an important boost for SDG implementation between now and 2030."* [7]

Building on this affirmation, this paper is a push for SDG progress. It combines a focus on cultural heritage, as formulated in target 11.4, and the broader scope of culture and its relation to the achievement of the SDGs, with an analysis of key challenges and illustrative examples addressing this relation. Its final section uses the "analysis of the interaction" technique to show in synthesis and eloquently how strongly cultural actions and policies influence the achievement of the SDGs. **This paper summarizes the cultural boost needed to achieve the SDGs between now and 2030.**

Upcoming UN events will discuss the current stage of SDG implementation. Namely, these include the High-Level Political Forum (July 2023), the UN SDG Summit (September 2023) and the UN Summit of the Future (2024). These constitute opportunities to discuss a new generation of global policies for the future of humankind, with a better understanding of the role of culture and heritage and valid indicators to track progress or setbacks in cities and territories.

A rights-based approach

The right to take part in cultural life, recognized as a human right in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, has several implications related to cultural heritage. In recent years, the successive UN Special Rapporteurs in the field of cultural rights have described the specific implications of a human rights-based approach to cultural heritage. Farida Shaheed stressed that cultural heritage is dynamic, diverse and people-centred.[8] Subsequently, Karima Bennoune placed particular emphasis on the impact of the intentional destruction of cultural heritage on a range of human rights, including the right to take part in cultural life.[9] Moreover, Alexandra Xanthaki addressed the role of cultural resources and cultural rights in the pursuit of more sustainable development, and the potential contribution of cultural awareness to achieve the SDGs in the second half of the timeline to implement the 2030 Agenda.[10]

Since the 2004 adoption of the Agenda 21 for Culture, a solid narrative that affirms cultural rights as part and parcel of sustainable development has been developed at local and global levels. This has been detailed in the Rome Charter[11] and in the toolkit Culture 21: Actions,[12] which provides a detailed and concrete framework that systematically addresses (in 100 actions) the importance of the relationship between culture, citizenship and sustainability. Culture 21: Actions also advocates for an understanding of sustainability that includes a wide range of cultural, ecological, social and economic factors that are closely interconnected. Their interdependence should be recognized in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, which need to take into account everyone's rights and responsibilities, paying particular attention to disadvantaged and structurally discriminated groups.[13] Moreover, addressing inequalities in the right to participate in cultural life is important to ensure democracy and sustainable development. **Without ensuring the right to access, participate in and contribute to cultural life, any development process runs the risk of not being fully sustainable.**[14] This needs to be added, firstly, to the role of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development[15] and, secondly, to innovative approaches such as the concept of "circular culture", presented in the final declaration of the 4th UCLG Culture Summit in Izmir, which unfolds as "Harmony with nature, Harmony with the past, Harmony with each other and, last but not least, Harmony with change." Put together, this global vision strengthens the potential of cultural rights to meet the challenges of humankind, and makes a stand-alone Culture Goal indispensable for moving forward.

LRGs and other stakeholders active at the local level are particularly well-positioned to identify obstacles to the exercise of cultural rights and to build the necessary capacities to fulfil such rights. This is particularly significant in the Pact for the Future of Humanity: The Daejeon Political Declaration for people, the planet and government, adopted by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in October 2022 at the UCLG World Congress in Daejeon. This pact, mandated and inspired by LRG leaders from around the world, states that LRGs must guarantee the right to discover, create, share, enjoy and protect the local community's cultural roots, expressions and resources as a building block of peace and wellbeing in all cities and regions. A multidimensional rights-based perspective, including an intersectional approach, is acknowledged as indispensable to boost a cultural transformation that helps address actions, beliefs, traditions, customs and rituals which can legitimize exclusion, discrimination, marginalization and violence, preventing effective consideration of all experiences, needs and aspirations, and which also can curtail and limit meaningful engagement in cultural life, climate action and urban planning, among other areas.

The following examples in Box 1 illustrate how cities around the world align with this approach.

BOX 1

The rights-based approach in Barcelona (Spain) and Bogotá (Colombia)

In Catalonia (Spain), the Survey of Cultural Participation and Cultural Needs of **Barcelona** included the right to participate in the cultural life of the city, examining existing inequalities and focusing on cultural practices beyond product consumption and events attendance.[16] The survey was a key component of the municipal Cultural Rights Plan.

In **Bogotá** (Colombia), the Inhabiting Community Culture project operates through small-scale interventions related to public spaces and community relations. It targets the outskirts of the city, where access to culture and cultural infrastructure is considerably limited.

The COVID-19 pandemic and growing inequalities

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought mobility and physical distancing restrictions, provoked the massive closure of museums and heritage sites and the general breakdown of urban daily activity, including tourism. LRGs around the world led efforts to overcome these unprecedented and universal challenges, working together with other spheres of government while strengthening collaboration with civil society.

In this global situation, the impossibility of taking part in heritage and cultural activities in conventional ways drove the emergence of new policies and programmes focusing on people's cultural needs. Many municipal, national or international institutions designed and facilitated platforms and communication tools to make cultural content accessible online despite lockdowns. **LRGs have been at the forefront of guaranteeing access to and participation in cultural life for all citizens**,[17] with initiatives such as the facilitation of digital library resources; virtual visits to museums and visual arts exhibitions; and online

performances, namely concerts, theatre, dance and opera. Through a wide range of online resources dedicated to culture, heritage and education, these actions were aligned with target 4.7 in terms of offering knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development, including through education for sustainable development and lifestyles. Also, this context of a global pandemic presented new opportunities to design forward-looking ways of building resilient infrastructure and fostering innovation (target 9.1), as well as to address the need to ensure access to basic services for all, specified in target 1.4, especially for structurally discriminated groups.

The following cities in Box 2 were awardees in the 5th edition of the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21. This award recognizes cities and individuals who excelled in the promotion of cultural rights during the COVID-19 crisis and post-pandemic recovery or who have promoted culture in innovative ways as an important part of the caring system.

BOX 2

Culture, engagement and reduction of inequalities in Dublin (Ireland) and Buenos Aires (Argentina)

In **Dublin** (Ireland), AWE is a cultural engagement project based on accessibility, wellbeing and evidencing of outcomes. It was initiated as a sustainable response to the challenges of COVID-19. With the aim to protect and promote the cultural rights of Dublin's citizens, the project actively engages with them and responds culturally to their needs.

In **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), the Abasto Barrio Cultural programme focuses on comprehensive urban regeneration based on the transformation of public space. It draws on a model of participatory governance of culture that effectively promotes the collective creation of identity and social integration, enhancing the activity of local independent cultural spaces.

3. Challenges and pathways

Cultural rights are a key element for an enhanced response to global and local crises, namely those related to the areas of diversity and inclusion, gender equality, local economic development and tourism, and climate change. From a cultural rights perspective, this section will offer an overview of critical trends, showing how current interrelated crises and pressures intersect with the aforementioned areas, protection of cultural and natural heritage, and processes of urbanization and urban development. It will also provide pathways to further advance towards sustainable cities and territories, seen through a cultural lens and guided by local actions and responses from LRGs.

Diversity and inclusion

Global debates in the 21st century have recognized the importance of cultural diversity in shaping our world. **Culture and heritage constitute enabling factors to construct and redefine human identities and differences, as well as a key factor for social harmony and peace.**

To achieve local sustainable development, it is crucial that local cultural policies consider heritage, diversity and creativity.[18] More specifically, the integration of multicultural, intercultural and intergenerational strategies – with special attention to Indigenous peoples, minorities and migrant communities – contributes to creating an enhanced social fabric that is more diverse and bonded, in which communities and individuals can freely construct their own selves.

In order to develop a more pluralistic and multisided understanding of the past free from prejudices and to collectively construct the present and the future, **heritage needs to foster and bring to light all the different voices and stories of citizens and residents.** In this regard, collaborations between countries of origin and migrant communities could contribute to interpreting heritage and museum collections under the light of diversity, thus offering space for fostering the narratives of migrant voices, as well as increasing their care and ownership of this heritage.[19]

Heritage and cultural valorization processes are often permeated by a colonial perspective. In light of this, addressing the legacy of colonialism in contemporary times is also key, including its ramifications in economic and political spheres. The imperative of equity will play an undeniable role in the future. It will require cities and regions to make sacrifices and to review their current values as they are not departing from the same starting line. Many cities bear the imprint of coloniality in urban planning, public art, museums and socio-cultural programming, as well as in economic and governance structures inherited from the past.

Therefore, in order to fully encompass cultural heritage, an intersectional approach with a cultural rights-based perspective is emerging around the world. Reconsidering collectively the hegemonic narratives and imaginaries of colonial times; taking into account the different perspec-

tives constructed on the margins of official cultural discourses; and acknowledging and valuing lesser-known stories, often marked by conflicts, terror, genocide and oppression, are key components of achieving multiple SDG targets. Namely, these include promoting equity and non-discrimination of disadvantaged and traditionally excluded individuals and groups (target 10.3) and protecting fundamental freedoms and ensuring public access to information for all (target 16.10). Therefore, necessary measures in legal, social, economic and cultural spheres should be adopted as appropriate. The following Box 3 illustrates some examples of relevant actions by LRGs.

BOX 3

Promoting diversity and inclusion in Malmö (Sweden) and Mexico City (Mexico)

In **Malmö** (Sweden), the Malmö City Archive and the Malmö Art Museum constitute solid examples of the shift of local cultural policies towards full inclusion and diversity. They exemplify the role of city cultural facilities, together with citizens, in co-creating cultural heritage and combating racism.

In **Mexico City** (Mexico), the Innovation, Freedom, Art, Education and Knowledge Points (PILARES) programme seeks to reduce social, cultural and economic inequalities in each of the city's districts. Its main objectives are to promote peace, rebuild the social fabric and keep marginalized populations and young people away from violence through education, art, sports and job training.

A gender lens

Culture is not to be understood merely as hermetically sealed manifestations of recognized artistic or architectural achievements. Rather:

> *"[C]ulture is a prism through which we perceive – and are perceived – understand, respond to, and engage with our human, natural and manufactured environment. It is how we assign meaning to our lives and, importantly, what we think progress means, and what constitutes development."*[20]

In this view, **a gender lens inspired by intersectional feminism is also strongly linked to the effective promotion, protection and preservation of heritage based on human rights, including cultural rights**. Heritage is at the core of every city's narrative, which is understood as "a lexicon conveyed in the names of streets, plazas, buildings, in who is reflected/included and [...] excluded in public imagery and events, museums, cultural venues, guidebooks, and teaching materials; in how public spaces are designed."[21] Municipalities and local bodies in charge of cultural policy are already transforming gender roles and urban lexicons, often in partnership with civil society, cultural actors, academics, gender experts and the private sector. They are thus acknowledging that **women play an essential role in the intergenerational transmission and renewal of many forms of intangible cultural heritage in local contexts, as well as in the promotion of cultural diversity**.

Worldwide, in partnership with LRGs, cultural heritage institutions are actively catalyzing a revision of gender perceptions and relations, thus contributing to achieving SDG 5 and particularly target 5.1 on ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. Heritage may be harnessed "to achieve gender equality, eradicate bias and violence based on sexual orientation, and empower all genders, recognising that heritage is constantly changing and evolving."[22] In particular, **libraries and museums have a crucial role in transforming narratives of gender inequality and exclusion in support of the realization of rights for everyone without exception, creating new shared knowledge**.[23] Within local governance, and through a feminist perspective that goes beyond a gender-responsive approach, care needs to be understood as a key responsibility for LRGs. Placing care at the centre leads to the inclusive and equitable provision of social protection, education and health services; accessible urban infrastructure and spaces for all; and, ultimately, urban and territorial equality.[24] This is coherent with the recent shift of the notion of care, first analyzed by feminist theoretical frameworks in the domestic and reproductive spheres, to being a public responsibility. The following Box 4 includes some examples of the connection between gender equality and the radical cultural transformation that LRGs, together with CSOs, are undertaking.

BOX 4

Radical cultural transformation and gender equality from the bottom-up in Montevideo (Uruguay), Taipei and Durban (South Africa)

Montevideo (Uruguay) is promoting a cultural shift through cultural policies with a gender perspective. Shaped by in-depth discussions with cultural actors, specific programmes and projects include capacity-building workshops for the culture department on gender-related issues, the use of gender-neutral language and sexual harassment on the workplace.

The Gender Equality Office of **Taipei City** is acting to alter the cultural landscape to be more gender-equal and inclusive. For example, it has promoted innovations in terms of religious/cultural rituals, encouraged the participation of women and girls in sports and science, and promoted and financially supported LGBTQIA+ rights and visibility.

In **Durban** (South Africa), Empatheatre is an artistic project that sculpts new social spaces as amphitheatres for reflexive deep listening and empathy around issues of public concern.

Local economic development and tourism

In recent decades, one of the main factors that has driven attention towards cultural heritage is its potential contribution to local economic development. Culture allows building the future of societies based on values, knowledge, diversity and creativity, and it is one of the main sources of a territory's attractiveness. Tangible cultural heritage sites and monuments, as well as cultural expressions related to intangible heritage such as crafts, festivals and traditions, can attract tourism and investment and may provide new sources of income and employment generation.[25] For this reason, successful and innovative governance instruments have been created to effectively manage the sustainable safeguarding and development of historic urban areas and their cultural heritage. Many of these instruments rely on participatory approaches, thus enabling the construction of attractive, competitive and multifunctional places that are meaningful to all.[26]

Yet, as a result of implementing unsustainable narratives of progress, **many cities worldwide have experienced an increase in tourism flows and have called into question previous growth-oriented models and the management of heritage sites and tourism attractions**. In this regard, the pandemic offered a much-needed opportunity for reflection, in terms of both avoiding the instrumentalization of heritage through tourism and advocating for inclusion of communities. Overcrowding, pressure on public services and infrastructure, uneven access to public spaces and income-generating activity and fair working conditions, as well as the increase of centre-periphery and urban-rural gaps, are some of the negative impacts of tourism that especially affect the most marginalized people.[27] In addition, the utilization of cultural facilities and narratives to connect cities with global markets has increased the hollowing out of cultural meaning and the fragmentation of culture.[28]

Other challenges for the preservation of cultural heritage and its place in sustainable development include the neglect or destruction of tangible and intangible heritage elements in the context of urban regeneration, infrastructure development and other economic development initiatives, as well as armed conflicts and natural disasters. In order to avoid this, **local urban planning instruments should explicitly recognize the importance of cultural issues and resources, and cultural impact assessment tools should be established and used in all relevant contexts**. In addition, the inclusion of cultural heritage in disaster risk reduction policies and existing mechanisms is advised, as is the inclusion of cultural aspects in conflict management and peacebuilding efforts to contribute to the preservation of heritage in risk contexts.

The following examples in Box 5 address the survival and revitalization of heritage spaces. These actions further enable the achievement of target 8.3 on supporting creativity and innovation; target 8.9 on promoting sustainable tourism, local culture and products; and target 12.b on monitoring the impacts of sustainable tourism on sustainable development.

BOX 5

Preservation, promotion and revitalization of heritage spaces in Lisbon (Portugal), San Antonio (USA) and Pombal (Portugal)

In **Lisbon** (Portugal), Lojas com História is a project that addresses the conservation and revitalization of urban heritage spaces that significantly contribute to the cultural and economic development of the city.

In **San Antonio** (USA), the city has endeavoured to protect the quality of life, pride of place and sense of community by preserving local cultural landmarks.

The Limestone Villages Network in **Pombal** (Portugal) values, develops and promotes local populations and resources (primarily limestone). It focuses on tourist areas, global marketing, the study and optimization of various cultural and heritage dimensions, creation of market opportunities and small investments.

Addressing the climate crisis

In recent years, climate change has become central to global agendas, which aim to address its long-lasting and irreversible effects on people and the planet. Climate change has also been present in relevant policy discussions, programmes and specific measures at local, regional and national levels. These spaces have been marked by the urgency for cross-cutting and coordinated efforts across different areas and spheres of government, as well as the involvement of other actors and civil society.[29]

Heritage is at the core of the debate on culture and the climate crisis. The inclusion of creative, cultural and heritage voices is critical to imagine new futures neither wedded to the carbon economy nor dependent on unsustainable narratives of progress.[30] Culture has been so far defined as "everything besides nature." From now on, it is necessary to consider nature-and-culture as an entanglement ("natureculture"), and to address this in the activities towards cultural heritage in response to the climate emergency. However, the immense potential of cultural heritage to drive climate action and support communities' just transitions towards low-carbon, climate-resilient futures often goes untapped.[31] The cultural and cultural rights dimensions of the climate emergency have also been frequently overlooked, despite their potential as crucial tools for addressing the climate emergency.[32] That notwithstanding, culture and heritage are the great missing force, an omission the world cannot afford. **Heritage safeguarding, building reuse and the protection of traditional knowledge (e.g. knowledge related to the sustainable preservation and management of natural and cultural heritage by Indigenous peoples) are crucial for addressing climate change and building more resilient cities and human settlements.[33]**

LRGs are particularly well-positioned to support reconciling trade-offs across sectors and spatial scales; trans-

forming "petrocultures" and related "carbonscapes" through cultural policies; connecting culture, climate and disaster risk reduction; planning to prevent the loss and damage of Indigenous and local knowledge systems; and centring cultural rights.[34]

The following Box 6 includes concrete examples of local culture-based strategies that address the dual goals of transformative climate action and strengthened sustainable development. They contribute to addressing the challenges that climate change poses to the protection of cultural and natural heritage (target 11.4). Furthermore, they focus on reaching target 13.3 to "improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning," as well as target 12.8 to ensure all people have relevant "information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature."

BOX 6

Local culture-based strategies for transformative climate action in Morelia (Mexico), California (USA), València (Spain) and Montréal (Canada)

In the Historic Centre of **Morelia** (Mexico), a project has focused on enhancing the circular economy of the region by promoting the reuse of existing buildings, urban landscapes and monuments for new purposes, without losing their heritage values.

In **California** (USA), the state conducted a cultural heritage and climate action integration analysis as part of a comprehensive effort to understand how culture intersects with the climate change-related work of its boards, departments and agencies. The initiative analyzed areas where culture or heritage was already playing a role and areas where it could add new value.

The Tourism Sustainability Strategy of **València** (Spain) is focused on implementing an environmental strategy focused on decarbonization, reduction of the city's water footprint and circularity. To this end, a digital system allows footprints to be calculated and certified in real time, interacting with managers and users to drive reduction and off-setting.

In Quebec (Canada), the **Montréal** culturelle, verte et résiliente project aims to mobilize the cultural community and residents in an effort to promote community resilience in the context of the climate emergency through a call for projects.

4. Actual and potential contributions of culture to meet the challenges of humankind

The localization of the SDGs related to culture has been thoroughly analyzed (despite – or because of – the non-existence of a stand-alone Culture Goal). Reports that follow SDG implementation at local, regional and national levels, such as the Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) and Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), have also analyzed the presence of culture.

To measure progress on culture in the 2030 Agenda, some indicators have been proposed to connect culture and heritage to sustainable development challenges and their localization.[35] It is widely accepted that these indicators should not be only quantitative. The approach taken by the *SDG 11 Synthesis Report 2023*[36] – which will inform analysis of the SDG 11 targets, particularly target 11.4, at the 2023 High-Level Political Forum – reflects the evolving discussion on indicators. **A more qualitative perspective could better reflect the extent to which a focus on heritage and cultural rights within local policies is important, and it could enable the urban shifts and far-reaching, human rights-based impacts needed.** Indicators on heritage cannot refer only to public expenditure since, for example, urban, economic, environmental and social policies cannot be effective without the explicit consideration of cultural policies and cultural rights.

At the local level, a practical example of SDG localization and implementation with a cultural perspective is the Seven Keys workshop, developed by the UCLG Committee on Culture. This participatory workshop connects cultural assets, activities, and local policies to municipal challenges and leads to the consensual identification of "seven keys." These keys are local-level actions for SDG localization through the implementation of cultural policies and programmes. The Seven Keys has been carried out in different cities across the world, namely **Bulawayo** (Zimbabwe), **Burgos** (Spain), **Concepción** (Chile), **Izmir** (Turkey), **Lilongwe** (Malawi), **Lisbon** (Portugal), **Puerto de la Cruz** (Spain), **Saint-Louis** (Senegal), **Xi'an** (People's Republic of China) and **Yoff** (Senegal). It demonstrates that a cultural perspective within SDG localization is indispensable in all countries and contexts (see Box 7).

BOX 7

The Seven Keys workshops in Saint-Louis (Senegal) and Xi'an (China)

The discussion held during the Seven Keys workshop in **Saint-Louis** (Senegal) led to a series of cultural actions agreed by consensus, which were considered key to localizing the SDGs. These actions mainly focused on environmental issues, capacity building and cultural governance. As an illustrative example, Key 3 was "Using cultural events to raise awareness on urgent local development challenges."

The Seven Keys workshop in **Xi'an** (People's Republic of China) presented concrete commitments made by local actors to localize the SDGs through culture policy-making. It highlighted the need to strengthen the understanding of and education on intangible cultural heritage and traditional culture as one of its seven keys.

The #Culture2030 Goal campaign: Towards SDG 18

The #Culture2030Goal campaign was developed by global cultural networks that advocate for the role of culture in sustainable development. The campaign has analyzed in depth the cultural elements in VLRs and VNRs. In September 2019, it published the report *Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda*, which examines the VNRs submitted to the High-Level Political Forum since 2016 and makes evident the (still marginal) presence of cultural factors and actors in implementing the SDGs. In 2021, the campaign published the report *Culture in the Localization of the SDGs: An Analysis of Voluntary Local Reviews*. This report finds that a good majority of VLRs, as shown by their substantive narratives, have included the cultural dimension in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Cultural topics can be found at any level: as part of high-level policy frameworks and practical examples of implementation, as separate sectoral headings under which LRGs have dedicated "cultural plans," or as supporting aspects of other policy headings throughout different goals and targets. In this regard, evidence from VLRs shows that LRGs identify **the need to strengthen cultural action to address the challenges related to the 2030 Agenda, as well as the need to mobilize the power of culture to place cities and human settlements on the path towards achieving sustainable development**.[37]

An interesting step forward was taken at the MONDIACULT 2022 conference, organized by UNESCO and the Government of Mexico. As a result of the conference, **the Declaration for Culture affirms the need "to firmly anchor culture as a global public good, and to integrate it as a specific goal in its own right in the development agenda beyond 2030."** It also features a set of cultural rights that must be at the core of public policies, including the social and economic rights of artists, artistic freedom, the right of Indigenous communities to safeguard and transmit ancestral knowledge, and the protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage.

At this conference, the #Culture2030Goal campaign presented the document *A Culture Goal Is Essential for Our Common Future*,[38] a "zero draft" of a stand-alone Goal to "ensure cultural sustainability for the wellbeing of all." The draft includes 10 specific cultural rights-based targets.

Evidencing the potential of culture: An analysis of the interactions between culture and the SDGs

As a contribution to the efforts towards the achievement of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, this paper presents research based on the "analysis of the interaction."[39] This work, carried out by the UCLG Committee on Culture, aims to obtain an exhaustive understanding of the contribution of cultural policies, programmes and actions to other dimensions of sustainable development, and to capture the results in a simple picture. The analysis includes both positive and negative aspects of cultural policies, programmes and actions and their relationship to each SDG. Thus, it provides a **holistic overview of the role of culture in sustainable development**, not just the positive interactions; in other words, the analysis also includes areas in which cultural actors need to be challenged in order to achieve the SDGs.

To begin its analysis work, the UCLG Committee on Culture first collected statements that illustrate real (existing) **interactions** (synergies and trade-offs) between cultural policies, programmes and actions and the achievement of the SDGs. This process was informed by an in-depth literature review to gather the statements,[40] as well as by further discussions among experts in the field. Statements, as discussed above, are short sentences that represent the impact of cultural policies, programmes and actions (explicit or implicit) on the achievement of the SDGs. Efforts have been made to ensure that all statements are unique and unequivocal.[41] A total of 147 statements were collected and synthesized. These were subsequently divided and linked to the SDG to which they primarily referred. Finally, an analysis was conducted using the framework developed by the International Council for Science[42] and Nilsson *et al.*[43] to classify the interactions between culture and the SDGs through a seven-point ordinal scale.[44] The values of the scale range from -3 to +3 to indicate the extent to which the relationship is negative or positive (see Table 1).[45] The evaluation was based on expert judgement and supported by the literature review.

Figure 1 synthesizes the research findings. It showcases the synergies and trade-offs of cultural policies, programmes and actions within each SDG, evidenced by each of the 147 statements that were included in the exercise. The graphic displays the statements layered over each other at different heights.

Table 1 Interaction scoring

Interaction scoring	
Score	Categories
+3	Indivisible
+2	Reinforcing
+1	Enabling
-1	Constraining
-2	Counteracting
-3	Cancelling

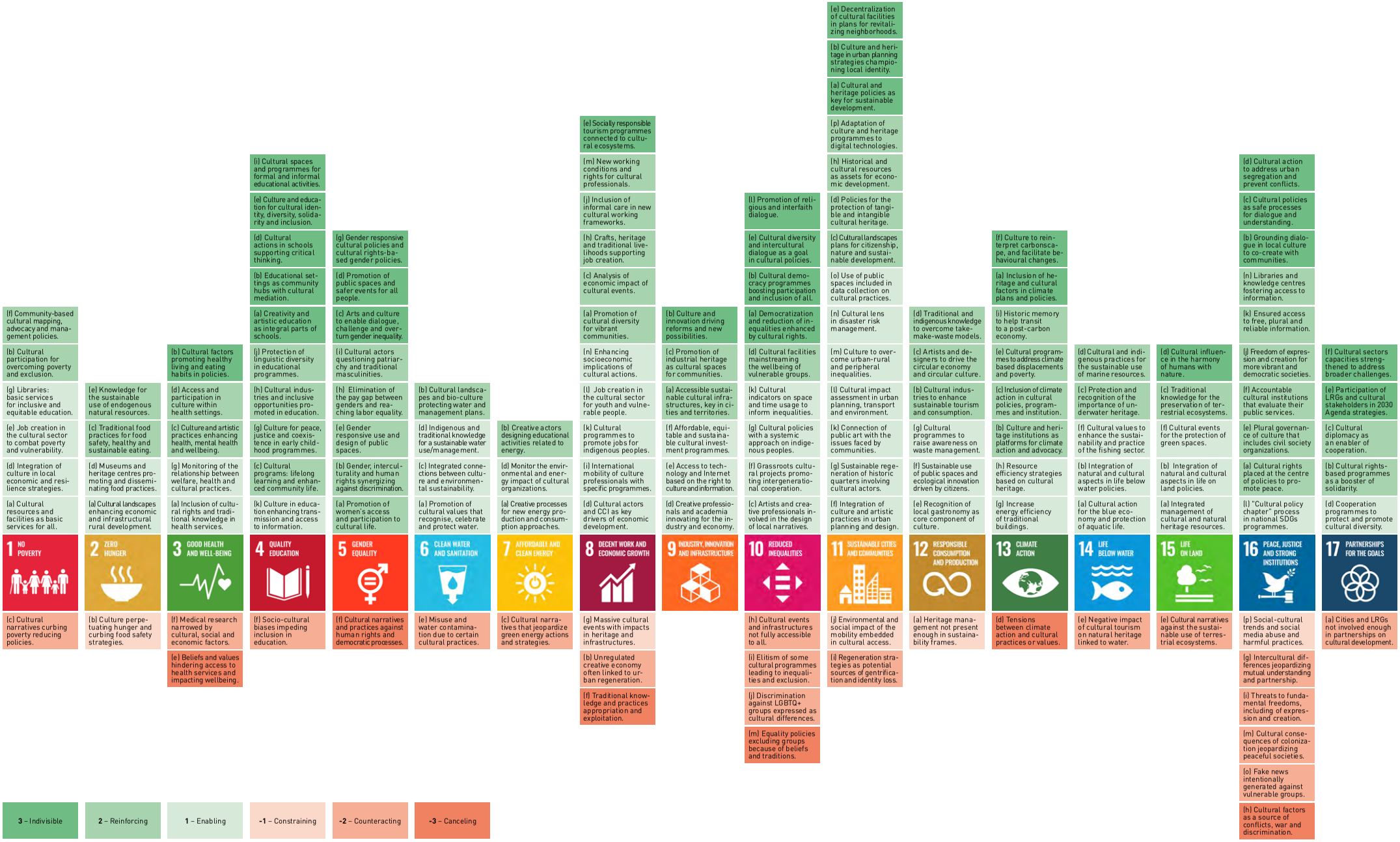


Figure 1 An analysis of the interactions between cultural policies, programmes and actions and achievement of the SDGs[46]

Source: own compilation

The following are examples of statements from the analysis:

> *"Recognition of cultural diversity as a goal in cultural policies, and integration of intercultural dialogue and active participation to address migration, refugee and internal displacement"* interacts with SDG 10 as "indivisible" (with a score of +3).
>
> *"Cultural tools to build early childhood programmes that help to promote peace and justice, non-violence, solidarity and human coexistence"* has a "reinforcing" interaction with SDG 4 (with a score of +2).
>
> *"Consideration of cultural rights and cultural contexts, as well as cultural and traditional knowledge related to health (especially from Indigenous peoples) in the provision of appropriate health services"* is considered "enabling" for the achievement of SDG 3 (with a score of +1).
>
> *"Massive cultural events (festivals, concerts, etc.) offered for economic development, with impacts on local heritage, the local cultural sector, and overuse of local infrastructure"* has a "constraining" interaction with SDG 8 (with a score of -1).
>
> *"Existence of cultural narratives by some social groups that argue against the use of clean energy and jeopardize green energy actions and strategies"* is assessed as "counteracting" the attainment of SDG 7 (with a score of -2).
>
> *"Cultural narratives and practices that go against human rights and democratic processes and that legitimize the violation of the rights of women, girls and other people for their sexual orientation and gender identity (e.g. LGBTQIA+ identities)"* interacts with SDG 5 as "cancelling" (with a score of -3).

Finally, the total number of statements assigned to each SDG was counted, along with the highly positive and negative scores for each SDG. The results show, not surprisingly, that SDG 11 is the goal with the strongest interaction with culture. On the one hand, positive interactions include the role of culture and heritage as enablers and key conditions of sustainable development and the uniqueness of each city, the relevance of cultural landscapes to enhance the relationship between humans and nature, and the importance of cultural plans to revitalize neighbourhoods and promote decentralization. On the other hand, negative interactions include the need for both the cultural sector and cultural policies to better address issues related to gentrification and the resulting loss of identity in cities and territories, as well as the environmental impact of mobility for cultural purposes.

SDG 16 also has a high number of statements. Some of them reflect cultural policies or practices as factors limiting the achievement of this goal; the most representative example of this is how cultural factors may become a source of conflicts and war, misunderstandings, discrimination, exclusion and racism. It is crucial to emphasize that not taking cultural policies and practices into account undermines SDG 16 achievement in two ways: first, by missing an opportunity to address any identified culture-related constraints; and second, by failing to include cultural components that could enhance and boost the achievement of this goal. Examples of positive interactions in SDG 16 include the promotion of dialogue and mutual understanding through local cultural knowledge and cultural policies, or the recognition of differences and dissent as contributors to addressing conflict and crime.

The main conclusion drawn from this analysis lies in the consideration of **cultural policies, practices and actors as pivotal for the achievement of all SDGs**. Their specific positive and negative interactions with each of the 17 goals may be seen either as priority areas or as areas in which actors may be better prepared to include cultural considerations.

This research will be continued in the second half of 2023 and the first half of 2024, with the hypothesis that the best way to fully integrate culture into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is through **the creation of a stand-alone Culture Goal (SDG 18)**. This goal would provide coherence to the policies and programmes, empower all stakeholders, generate new partnerships and endeavours and, therefore, contribute to the achievement of all the other SDGs.

5. Conclusions

This paper has addressed the indispensable role of culture and heritage in the attainment of SDG 11 and, more specifically, target 11.4. It has also provided evidence on the interlinkages between cultural policies, actions and heritage and SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16 and 17. Taking a step further, an exhaustive analysis of the relationship between culture and all the SDGs, using the "analysis of the interaction" technique, has been presented. This analysis constitutes an interesting approach for the design and implementation of rights-based cultural policies, but also a way to show, in synthesis and eloquently, in just a figure, how strongly cultural actions, programmes and policies influence the achievement of the SDGs. The results, depicted in a single figure, summarize the "cultural boost for SDG implementation between now and 2030" called for by the UN Secretary-General in May 2023. It is important that this cultural boost is discussed at the upcoming UN events in 2023 and 2024 and that clear, operational guidelines are agreed.

6. Advancing progressive municipalism: LRGs' pathways to advance the localization of the SDGs

The five papers have presented **initiatives from over 100 local and regional governments (LRGs)** throughout the world, while analyzing how these initiatives contribute to accelerating progress towards the fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, and through it, the SDGs in general. These examples show how LRGs, in alliance with their communities, are contributing to the different dimensions of SDG 11 by focusing on fulfilling the right to adequate housing and basic services (SDG target 11.1); promoting feminist approaches to sustainable, inclusive and participatory planning (SDG targets 11.2, 11.3 and 11.7); pursuing environmental justice and integrated and circular approaches (SDG targets 11.5, 11.6, 11.7 and 11.b); protecting and safeguarding culture and heritage (SDG target 11.4); and promoting more balanced and equal urban and territorial systems (SDG target 11.a).

Innovative LRG experiences, drawing upon engagement across networks of LRGs and with diverse public, civil society and private institutions, have become the cornerstone of progress towards sustainable, inclusive and just cities and territories. LRGs' experiences further elicit why realizing SDG 11 requires a human rights-based approach that advances equality in full recognition of people's diversity, as well as a perspective that goes beyond urban boundaries and recognizes urban impacts at the regional, national and global levels. Rearticulating principles and practices based on a multilevel governance approach, which in itself serves as an enabling environment for SDG localization, becomes a pressing need.

Together, the papers propose different pathways – routes for transformative actions to advance and accelerate progress – towards SDG 11. However, as the assessment of trends in each paper demonstrates, the efforts that have been put into the implementation of SDG 11 to date remain insufficient to reverse the structural inequalities as well as social and environmental injustices exacerbated by multiple, intersecting crises.

The papers advance policies and practices that could accelerate progress towards SDG 11 and propel urban transformation, including:

- Policies that adopt an active approach to **acknowledge, protect and fulfil the right to housing and basic services**: These include policies that respond to evictions and address exclusion and discrimination by promoting and enforcing regulations of land and housing markets. They also support more inclusive and responsive forms of tenure security and universal access to basic services, including through the acknowledgement of and support for commoning practices.

- Policies that **foster urban planning to reduce fragmentation and segregation**: Mainstreaming an intersectional feminist approach to urban planning is key to foster more inclusive and equal cities. Emphasizing accessibility, proximity and care ensures that the exercise of rights and the use of public space are inclusive and accommodating for all, particularly structurally marginalized populations.

- Policies that emphasize the need to **prevent extractivist approaches to natural resources and the depletion of the public commons**: Such policies address the challenges of green gentrification and work towards rectifying historical deficits and their current manifestations in socio-spatial inequalities. Revitalizing and restoring urban ecological infrastructure through inclusive citizen engagement are crucial. The promotion of just re-naturing processes to ensure healthy cities and planet preservation hinges on the decoupling, restoring, localizing and commoning pathways. It also requires advocating for circular cities and regional initiatives to reduce pressure on natural resources.

- Policies that **acknowledge and resolutely act on cultural dimensions to accelerate SDG implementation**: Cultural rights-based actions, programmes and policies strongly influence the achievement of the SDGs. It is essential to link them with the promotion, protection and preservation of heritage, as well as cultural diversity, intersectional feminist perspectives and climate action. This approach should be at the core of effectively promoting local economic development, reimagining growth-oriented models and making a commitment to sustainable management of heritage sites and tourism attraction.

- Policies that seek to **advance effective multilevel governance**: Unbalanced and unequal urban systems require multilevel governance arrangements with respect for the principle of subsidiarity at the core. The redistribution of powers, responsibilities and resources, as well as enhanced democratic participation, transparency and accountability, can promote pluricentric and inclusive urban and territorial systems that leave no one and no territory behind.

The different papers also highlight four key cross-cutting elements that should be mainstreamed across LRG policies, practices and governance arrangements:

- **Addressing historical and contemporary structural inequalities from a feminist perspective**: This involves recognizing the diversity of entitlements, needs, experiences and capacities of people who disproportionately face discrimination and margin

alization, to ensure that no one and no place are left behind.

- **Strengthening meaningful, transparent and sustained citizen participation and inclusive engagement, while tackling deeply ingrained power asymmetries**: This entails informed and sustained citizen participation in decision-making processes and requires inclusive governance systems to co-create interventions with marginalized groups.

- **Developing institutional arrangements and regulatory frameworks that seek to decentralize powers, responsibilities and resources based on the subsidiarity principle**: Strengthened national, regional and local policy and planning can help to achieve balanced and equitable urban and territorial systems.

- **Adopting rights-based, intersectional and often explicitly feminist approaches to planning, policy and practice**: Such approaches expand the imagination of the roles LRGs can play, as well as their room for manoeuvre, in realizing SDG 11 to counter exclusion, marginalization and discrimination against people in light of their class, gender, age, ethnicity, race, religion, disabilities and sexual orientation. The advancement of concepts such as "human rights cities" has already manifested in the creation of human rights departments and offices for non-discrimination, in addition to the safeguarding of property's social function.

Finally, the five papers evidenced the call for stronger urban and regional roles in localizing the SDGs. Concerted actions propel community-led and LRG-supported initiatives that promote inclusiveness, address inequalities and exclusion and co-create more just and sustainable urban and territorial futures. Change is not only a matter of resources but also of fundamentally reshaping relationships and roles or, in other words, a governance approach. Embracing the synergies between human rights, intersectional feminism and multilevel governance, a progressive municipalist movement may drive forward the localization of the SDGs.

ANNEX

PAPER 4. FULL LIST OF STATEMENTS

SDG 1

a. Cultural resources and facilities as basic services that all members of the community have the right to access and participate in.

b. Promotion of cultural participation as a key element for human dignity, and for overcoming poverty and exclusion.

c. Cultural narratives that limit and constrain human capabilities implied in the multi-faceted nature of poverty, and curb poverty reducing policies.

d. Integration of cultural aspects, preservation of cultural resources, and promotion of cultural capabilities, in local economic and resilience strategies, while engaging with local communities.

e. Promotion of job creation within the cultural sector for people experiencing poverty and vulnerability.

f. Community-based cultural mapping, advocacy and management policies.

g. Libraries as basic services foster inclusive and equitable education through literacy programming, spaces for learning, etc.

SDG 2

a. Protection of cultural landscapes to enhance economic and infrastructural development of rural areas.

b. Cultural aspects related to poverty that perpetuate hunger and curb food safety strategies.

c. Traditional and heritage food and agriculture system, sustainable use of biocultural heritage, and gastronomy and traditional food practices to promote healthy eating, sustainable farming (such as organic farming) and food safety.

d. Strengthening of museums and heritage interpretation centers as assets for the conservation and dissemination of content related to food, agriculture and ecosystems.

e. Promotion of knowledge and practices on the relationship between the diversity of genetic resources (namely seeds, cultivated plants and animals), food and endogenous development which contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources.

SDG 3

a. Consideration of cultural rights and cultural contexts, as well as cultural and traditional knowledge related to health (especially from indigenous peoples) in the provision of appropriate health services.

b. Expanding local policies related to health and wellbeing with explicit references to cultural factors, which further promote behavioral changes towards healthy living and eating habits.

c. Culture and artistic practices to boost health and wellbeing, and promote mental health for all.

d. Access and participation in culture within health settings (hospitals, health centers, etc.).

e. Beliefs and values that negatively impact access to health services and wellbeing of vulnerable groups, especially women and girls; and/or prevent them from accessing certain types of health services.

f. Medical research is narrowed by cultural, social and economic factors (excluding women, traditional knowledges, needs of vulnerable groups...).

g. Regular monitoring of the relationship between personal welfare, health and active cultural practices at local level to further enhance its synergies.

SDG 4

a. Creativity and artistic education as integral parts of primary and secondary schools.

b. Schools, universities and any educational setting as community hubs, including cultural mediation with artists and cultural professionals.

c. Cultural programs as enablers of lifelong learning and enhanced community life.

d. Cultural actions in schools supporting critical thinking including ecological awareness, human rights and cultural rights, as well as gender, fundamental freedoms and the deconstruction of patriarchy.

e. Educational and cultural foundations acting for developing cultural identity, valuing cultural diversity, and promoting solidarity and inclusion.

f. Socio-cultural biases impeding inclusion in education systems and policies.

g. Cultural tools to build early childhood programmes

that help to promote peace and justice, non-violence, solidarity and human coexistence.

h. The synergy between culture and education facilitates the development of cultural industries and inclusive cultural opportunities.

i. Cultural facilities, sites and cultural programmes as formal and informal environments for educational activities.

j. Protection and promotion of linguistic diversity in educational programmes.

k. Cultural programmes in schools, universities and educational settings to enhance democratic transmission of, and access to, information and knowledge (media and social media).

SDG 5

a. Promotion of women's access, participation and contribution to cultural life: all cultural programmes and organizations guarantee gender equality.

b. Synergies between gender, interculturality and human rights to jointly address discrimination due to cultural, linguistic, gender and sexual diversity.

c. Arts and culture to enable dialogue, challenge and overturn gender inequality attitudes, promoting women's voices, perspectives, analyses and creativity, also through equal spaces and profiles in the media.

d. Promotion of public spaces and events safer for all people, regardless of sex, gender and sexual orientation.

e. Gender responsive use and design of public spaces that ensure women and girl's right to the city, including new imagery and lexicon in public spaces.

f. Cultural narratives and practices that go against human rights and democratic processes, and legitimize the violation of the rights of women, girls and other people for their sexual orientation and gender identity (e.g. LGBTQ+).

g. Gender responsive cultural policies, that also include specific measures; and the integration of cultural rights in policies that foster gender equality and address gender discrimination.

h. Elimination of the pay gap between genders within the cultural sector, and increase in the amount of women in cultural decision-making to reach labor equality.

i. Involvement of artists, culture and heritage actors towards new models that question and challenge patriarchy and traditional masculinities.

SDG 6

a. Promotion of cultural values that recognize, celebrate and protect water.

b. Interlinkages between cultural landscapes or bio-cultural environments and water protection and management plans.

c. Integration of the connection between culture and environmental sustainability in cultural policies, cultural facilities, events and activities, including the sustainable use of resources.

d. Promotion of an appropriate and sustainable use and management of water-related ecosystems drawn from the learnings taught by indigenous peoples and traditional knowledge and heritage.

e. Misuse and water contamination due to certain cultural practices (e.g. massive cultural events), curbing sustainable management of water.

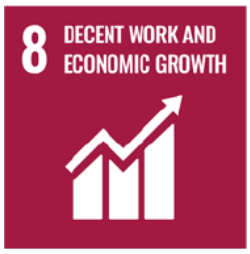
SDG 7

a. Potential of creative processes to foster new approaches to energy production and consumption.

b. Creative actors to design educational and awareness-raising activities on energy production and consumption.

c. Existence of cultural narratives by some social groups that argue against the use of clean energy and jeopardize green energy actions and strategies.

d. Evaluation of the environmental impact of cultural organizations, and their further contribution towards energy efficiency.



SDG 8

a. Promotion of local cultural diversity for vibrant cities and communities.

b. Unregulated creative economy as a source of unsustainable development, often linked to urban regeneration activities.

c. Accurate analysis of impact of cultural events with potential positive effects on the economy.

d. Cultural actors and industries as key drivers of economic development strategies.

e. Tourism programmes that are socially responsible, connected to local communities and interactive with the cultural ecosystems.

f. Traditional cultural knowledge and practices appropriation and exploitation for private economic profits and/or that can undermine the cultural identity of communities.

g. Massive cultural events (festivals, concerts, etc.) offered for economic development, with impacts in local heritage, local cultural sector, and the overuse of local infrastructures.

h. Promotion of crafts, heritage and traditional livelihoods to support contemporary re-skilling and economic diversification for job creation and enhanced resilience.

i. International mobility of artists and culture professionals with specific programmes.

j. Inclusion of informal care, as a type of work often unpaid and carried out by women, in new working frameworks within the cultural sector.

k. Cultural programmes to promote jobs for indigenous peoples.

l. Promotion of job creation within the cultural sector for the youth, as well as for people experiencing poverty and vulnerability.

m. Promotion of new frames of working conditions, rights protection and fair remuneration for cultural professionals.

n. Strengthening of cultural, social, and economic implications of existing and emerging forms of cultural creation, access and reproduction, such as copyright, copyleft, and open source.

SDG 9

a. Existence and generation of quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient cultural infrastructures (spaces and venues dedicated to training, creation, and production of culture, e.g. art schools, music schools, museums, heritage centers, cultural centers, festivals, dance houses, auditoriums, libraries, etc.) that are available and accessible to everyone as key component in the city/territory.

b. Strong connection between culture and innovation. Cultural action facilitating anticipation, and being a driving force of reform and imagining possibility.

c. Promotion of heritage value of industrial areas and their use as cultural spaces for the communities.

d. Creative professionals and academia partnering to research, develop and innovate for the industry and economy, thus facilitating knowledge transfer.

e. Promotion of the right to access culture and information, with a growing online presence, as a key motivation for providing access to technology and Internet to all people.

f. Cultural investment programmes, such as microcredits, venture capital and sponsorship programmes, to ensure affordable and equitable access for all and a sustainable industrialization.

SDG 10

a. Local programmes focused on the right of all to participate in cultural life lead to greater democratization and reduction of inequalities (sharing, confronting and understanding the differences, doing things between people and communities, promoting dialogue and tolerance).

b. Cultural democracy programmes as key for participation empowering and promoting the inclusion of all people, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

c. Involvement of artists and creative professionals in the evolving process of designing local narratives.

d. Cultural facilities mainstreaming the protection and wellbeing of vulnerable groups and accessible to all.

e. Recognition of cultural diversity as a goal in cultural policies, and integration of intercultural dialogue and active participation to address migration, refuge and internal displacement.

f. Grassroots cultural projects promoting intergenerational cooperation.

g. Cultural policies with a systemic approach on indigenous peoples.

h. Cultural events and infrastructure are not fully accessible to people in situations of functional diversity, marginalized communities, and disengaged audiences due to a wide range of barriers.

i. Elitism of some cultural programmes, which have vectors for reproducing inequalities and deepening exclusion.

j. Discrimination and repressive actions against LGBTQ+ collectives and other groups due to prejudices sometimes expressed as cultural differences.

k. Cultural indicators to monitor and make visible inequalities between groups in terms of space and time usage, and adoption of measures to address this.

l. Promotion of religious and interfaith dialogue.

m. Exclusion of certain groups in policies that address inequalities legitimated by beliefs, traditions or rituals.

SDG 11

a. Cultural and heritage policies as facilitators and key conditions of sustainable development (through appropriate capacity building, policy design, implementation, evaluation, etc.).

b. Culture and heritage are integrated in urban planning strategies, as the main contributors of living environments and quality of life, as well as to the uniqueness of each city, championing local identity and urban pride.

c. Protection and management plans of cultural landscapes to strengthen the relationship between citizenship and environment, nature and sustainable development.

d. Adoption of policies regarding the protection of cultural heritage in all its dimensions, both tangible and intangible.

e. Cultural plans for revitalizing neighborhoods, in parallel to the revitalization of other parts of the city, through the decentralization of cultural facilities and local cultural resources of communities.

f. Integration of culture and artistic practices in urban planning and design, as well as cross-cutting collaborations and community participation.

g. Sustainable reuse of buildings and regeneration of his-

toric quarters, adopting measures to include culture and cultural actors in this renovation works and in urban development plans.

h. Preservation and utilization of historical and cultural resources as assets for economic development.

i. Regeneration strategies in historic and artistic quarters, without the involvement of neighbors and communities, as a source of gentrification and loss of identity with irreversible impact.

j. Environmental and social impact of the mobility embedded in the access to culture, facilities and events offered by public and private actors.

k. Connection of public art with the issues faced by cities and territories, enabling the accumulation of knowledge provided by communities and actors of the civil society, while creating stronger links with inhabitants.

l. Cultural impact assessment in sustainable urban planning, transport and mobility, waste recycling and reduction, uses of the environment, and other related areas.

m. Increasing cultural opportunities to overcome inequalities between the city centers and the periphery, as well as the rural areas.

n. Cultural lens in disaster risk management (to address impacts on cultural heritage and the cultural sector).

o. Data collection on cultural practices and programmes, especially in terms of the use of public spaces, commuting, etc., for building more sustainable and resilient cities.

p. Adaptation of culture and heritage programmes to remote, digital technologies and enhanced connectivity.

SDG 12

a. Cultural and natural heritage management is not yet present enough in local and national frames and standards to achieve sustainability.

b. Contribution of culture and creative industries towards enhancing sustainable tourism and production of local and traditional products suited for sustainable consumption.

c. Artists and designers' voices to embrace environmental values, drive the circular economy and circular culture, and trial new, values led business models.

d. Promotion of the transcendence of modern take-make-waste approaches through traditional knowledge and the worldviews and endogenous interpretations of development of indigenous peoples and local communities.

e. Recognition of gastronomy, based on local production, as a constituent element of local culture.

f. Citizen initiatives for the sustainable use of public spaces, especially those linked to new gardening practices, and other examples of ecological innovation.

g. Cultural programmes that raise awareness on waste management throughout the life of the products (production, use, recycling, reuse, etc.).

SDG 13

a. Expansion of climate plans by including heritage and cultural factors, and policies and traditional knowledge as a major strategy, while making climate action strategies culturally responsible.

b. Culture and heritage institutions as platforms for listening to communities and for providing open opportunities to inspire participation in advocacy and collective climate action.

c. Incorporation of climate action, resilience and sustainable use of resources into cultural policies, programmes, activities, infrastructures and institutions (i.e. libraries, museums, festivals, concerts and heritage sites).

d. Tensions between climate mitigation and adaptation measures, and certain cultural practices and heritage values.

e. Cultural programmes for solidarity towards forced displacements, hunger and poverty caused by climate change.

f. Cultural events and creative professionals involved in awareness-raising and educational activities on climate change, while also reinterpreting today's carbonscapes, and facilitating behavioral changes.

g. Adaptation of traditional buildings in terms of energy efficiency and increased sustainability to mitigate climate change.

h. Cultural heritage-based resource efficiency strategies (i.e. continued use and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, conserving embodied carbon and avoiding GHG emissions).

i. Historic contributions memorialized in order to use and move beyond them as part of transition to a post-carbon economy (revisiting history and practices through museums, archives, literature, etc.).

SDG 14

a. Cultural action to raise awareness on the blue economy and protection of aquatic life.

b. Explicit consideration of the notion of landscape in policies, integrating both natural and cultural aspects of development in the protection and recognition of life below water.

c. Protection and recognition of the importance of underwater heritage.

d. Recognition and preservation of cultural practices, traditions, stories, as well as customs of indigenous peoples, related to sustainable uses of oceans, seas and marine resources, including through the establishment of specialized institutions (e.g. ecomuseums, maritime museums, etc.) and other initiatives.

e. Potential negative impact of cultural tourism in the protection of natural heritage linked to water.

f. Cultural values to enhance the sustainability and practice of the fishing sector.

SDG 15

a. Integrated management, protection and use of cultural and natural heritage resources.

b. Explicit consideration of the notion of landscape in policies, integrating both natural and cultural aspects of development in the protection and recognition of life on land.

c. Promotion of initiatives to foster preservation and transfer of traditional knowledge and intangible heritage practices related to sustainable management, and for the preservation and use of terrestrial ecosystems.

d. Mobilization of cultural influence in the harmony of humans with nature and nature-based traditions.

e. Existence of cultural narratives by some social groups that argue against actions of protection, restoration and the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems.

f. Cultural events to raise awareness among citizens towards the protection of green spaces.

SDG 16

a. Cultural rights placed at the center of policies to promote peace.

b. Grounding dialogue in local cultural knowledge and tradition to help all stakeholders to listen, learn, cooperate and co-create with communities, rather than only aiming to 'transform' them.

c. Relevance of cultural policies as safe processes for dialogue and understanding, including the acknowledgement of differences and dissent.

d. Potential of cultural action to address complex urban segregation, prevent conflicts and crime, as well as to activate neighborhood hot spots through collective mobilization, reassigning meaning and promoting cultural diversity.

e. Plural governance of culture, including civil society organizations and networks, that also promote pioneer initiatives such as participatory budgeting.

f. Cultural institutions being transparent, accountable, creative and diverse, and that evaluate the public services that they provide.

g. Intercultural differences (including language) jeopardizing mutual understanding, dialogue, partnerships, and actions and strategies.

h. Cultural factors as a source of conflicts and war, misunderstandings, discrimination, exclusion and racism, and as an obstacle to peace and tolerance actions and strategies.

i. Threats to fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and creation.

j. Freedom of expression and creation, and the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions for societies more vibrant, powerful and democratic.

k. Ensured access to free, plural and reliable information through local and national media that also integrates the communities in the process of elaboration of information.

l. Relevance of a "cultural policy chapter" and a "cultural impact assessment" process in national programmes to implement SDGs.

m. Cultural consequences of colonization, including the restitution of cultural goods, jeopardizing the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.

n. Libraries and knowledge centers as key public facilities to foster access to information and knowledge, and safe spaces for all citizens.

o. Fake news against vulnerable groups intentionally generated by biased media.

p. Social-cultural trends leading to social media abuse and harmful practices to the construction of peaceful and inclusive societies.

SDG 17

a. Cities and local and regional governments are not often involved in multilateral partnerships on cultural development.

b. Cultural rights-based programmes as a booster of solidarity among people and places (e.g. in crisis, emergency situations, etc.).

c. Intrinsic role of cultural diplomacy as an enabler of cooperation between communities and territories.

d. National and international cooperation programmes with a particular emphasis on the protection and promotion of cultural diversity.

e. Participation of local government associations and cultural stakeholders in national strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as well as to address sustainable development more broadly.

f. Strengthened capacities of cultural stakeholders, enabling them to address other sustainable development challenges.

Notes

* For more information on the notion of pathways, see United Cities and Local Governments (2022) *GOLD VI. Pathways to urban and territorial equality: Addressing inequalities through local transformation strategies.* Global Observatory of Local Democracy and Decentralization, United Cities and Local Governments, Barcelona, October 2022.

1 United Nations General Assembly, 'Resolution A/RES/70/1. Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' (2015), https://bit.ly/42EmV7q.

2 Contemporary definitions of heritage have become increasingly comprehensive, including natural, social and cultural aspects as well as tangible and intangible elements. The recognition that heritage relates to the environment and to landscape, and that it is conveyed in knowledge, beliefs and values, places it in close connection with a broad range of practices and places and, indeed, with the policies and strategies related to sustainable development at local, national, regional and global levels. The approaches mentioned in this paper emphasize the connection between heritage protection and the promotion of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements. See the report ICOMOS, 'Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals: Policy Guidance for Heritage and Development Actors', 2021, https://bit.ly/43MZ0J4, an initiative of the Sustainable Development Goals Working Group of ICOMOS.

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7 United Nations General Assembly, 'Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet' (New York, 2023), https://bit.ly/3MNSpTP.

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13 In this view, Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities guarantees the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, among other rights.

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15 UCLG, 'Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development' (Barcelona, 2010), https://bit.ly/3MyJS5Z.

16 UCLG.

17 UCLG Culture Committee, 'Culture, Cities and the COVID-19 Pandemic. Part One: Documenting the Initial Measures and Drafting Challenges Ahead', UCLG Committee on Culture Reports, No 8 (Barcelona, 2020).

18 UCLG, 'Culture 21: Actions'.

19 Jordi Baltà Portolés, 'Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Cities. Key Themes and Examples in European Cities', UCLG Committee on Culture Reports, No 7 (Barcelona, 2018).

20 Farida Shaheed, 'Cultural Actions Supporting Gender Equality in Cities and Territories', UCLG Committee on Culture Reports, No 9 (Barcelona, 2021), https://bit.ly/3tp0Ue9.

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22 ICOMOS, 'Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals: Policy Guidance for Heritage and Development Actors', 45.

23 The report 'Beijing+25: How Libraries Help Deliver on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women' is a clear example of this responsibility: IFLA Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Advisory Committee, 'Beijing+25: How Libraries Help Deliver on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women', 2020.

24 UCLG, 'GOLD VI: Pathways to Urban and Territorial Equality. Addressing Inequalities through Local Transformation Strategies' (Barcelona, 2022), https://bit.ly/436ETAg.

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29 Climate Heritage Network et al., 'The Culture for Climate Agenda. Unleashing the Power of Culture as a Pillar of Climate Action', UCLG World Congress and Summit of World Leaders, 2022, 14, https://bit.ly/3orGamL.

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32 Karima Bennoune and United Nations General Assembly, 'A/75/298: Report on Climate Change, Culture and Cultural Rights' (New York, 2020).

33 More information on this can be found at the Climate Heritage Resource Library, which gathers tools and resources to integrate heritage, arts and culture in climate policy, planning and action: Climate Heritage Network, 'Resource Library', 2022.

34 Climate Heritage Network et al., 'The Culture for Climate Agenda. Unleashing the Power of Culture as a Pillar of Climate Action'.

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36 An Expert Group Meeting on SDG 11 and its interlinkages with other SDGs took place from 8–9 February 2023 in Bilbao, in preparation for the review of SDG 11 and its role in advancing sustainable development across the 2030 Agenda. The meeting was organized by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA/DSDG), UN-Habitat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). One of its main outcomes will be the aforementioned report: UNDESA, 'Expert Group Meeting on SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities) and Its Interlinkages with Other SDGs; 8 – 9 February 2023, Bilbao, Spain', Sustainable Development, 2023.

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39 This research was conducted by the UCLG Committee on Culture from February to May 2023.

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41This methodology presents some limitations, including (a) the potential that some statements may have a positive or negative counterpart and (b) global consistency. In the light of these perceived limitations, additional efforts have been made to ensure greater comprehensiveness in the wording of the statements. The authors of the analysis welcome comments and observations.

42 Måns Nilsson et al., 'A Draft Framework for Understanding SDG Interactions', 2016, https://bit.ly/3qgCVid.

43 Måns Nilsson, Dave Griggs, and Martin Visbeck, 'Map the Interactions between Sustainable Development Goals', *Nature* 534 (2016): 320–22.

44 International Council for Science, 'A Guide to SDG Interactions: From Science to Implementation', 2017, 23, https://bit.ly/3Hhq1oD.

45 This exercise required adapting the methodological framework applied by the International Council for Science, which cross-references elements of the same order (e.g. a goal to a goal, a target to a target). By contrast, the current exercise compares statements on cultural actions, programmes or policies with their actual (or potential) contribution to, or undermining of, SDG achievement. For this reason, the neutral score "0" has not been applicable throughout the evaluation process of this exercise. For a more detailed explanation with regard to each score, please refer to page 23 of the report cited above: International Council for Science, 'A Guide to SDG Interactions: From Science to Implementation'.

46 The statements shown in this figure have been summarized for layout purposes. The full statements can be found in the Annex.

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