



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Good Practice Example: Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities



Standing Conference
of Towns and Municipalities

National Association of Local Authorities in Serbia



- LGA or organisation: Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities - SCTM
- Good practice in question: Piloting the approach for localisation of SDGs in Serbia, by combining national legislation and global framework (Agenda 2030) and by joining efforts of national institutions, national LSG (Local Self-Governments) Association and international development partners
- Name/s of the involved institution/s: National Coordinator for Agenda 2030 implementation in Serbia – Minister without portfolio in Serbia's Government; Public Policy Secretariat (PPS); Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS); SCTM and Network of associations of local authorities of South East Europe (NALAS), various development partners active on the topic in Serbia: GIZ, UNDP, SlovakAid, Swiss Cooperation (SDC), EU
- Three-line good practice description:
 - ❖ Fostering the role of LSGs in implementation of the Agenda 2030 in Serbia: continuous awareness-rising, educational, promotional activities (top-down) and ensuring the LSG input for the 1st Voluntary National Review (bottom-up)
 - ❖ Coordination among national stakeholders, streamlining various initiatives and available resources, cross-referencing national planning framework and Agenda 2030
 - ❖ Piloting the approach for localization of SDGs with 5 LSGs and issuing the general Guidance document on preparation of LSG Development Plans incorporating the SDGs

1. Institutional setting

- Policy, reform and regulatory setting:



- ❖ Commitment of Serbia to participate in Agenda 2030, early contribution to formulating SDGs via national campaign "*Serbia We Want*" and continuity with the work on MDGs
- ❖ Comprehensive scanning the national strategic framework for the compatibility with SDGs – document "*Serbia and Agenda 2030*"
- ❖ Understanding of the integrated implementation of SDGs and Serbia's commitments and obligations in the process of EU accession (1st VNR 2019)
- ❖ Regulatory package accompanying the 2018 Law on Planning System

STAKEHOLDERS:

State actors: Minister in charge – National Coordinator for Agenda 2030 and the Inter-sectoral WG (as of December 2015)

International actors – development partners active in Serbia

LSGs in Serbia and their National Association (SCTM) + also the Network of associations of local authorities of South East Europe (NALAS)

2. Starting point/Project goal

- Main challenge, issue to be addressed:
 - ❖ Taking decisions on nationalisation and localisation of SDGs
 - ❖ Explaining the new global framework to LSGs (Local Self-Governments) throughout Serbia and increasing their understanding of the role in localisation of SDGs and subsequent reporting upon their implementation
 - ❖ Building the monitoring framework relevant to SDGs – mapping of the nationally and locally available indicators and statistics (including disaggregation by gender where possible and consideration of gender responsible budgeting data)
 - ❖ Simultaneous and streamlined guidance to LSGs through changing environment and several reform processes: establishing of the new national planning system for the 1st time pursuant to the Law + incorporating the SDGs framework and the EU accession requirements
- Target: To build capacities of LSGs and provide them with a set of model documents and guidelines directly applicable in their work in a manner to integrate various planning, implementation and reporting processes to the extent possible

3. Approach - Methods, tools and instruments applied:

- ❖ Multiple national and regionally-based conferences on localisation of SDGs intended to LSGs carried out through 2019/2020 (joined performance by state stakeholders, SCTM and development partners)
 - ❖ Participation in regional projects/initiatives on localisation of SDGs and disseminating good practice to Serbian LSGs (e.g. manual on Agenda 2030 in LSGs)



- ❖ Regular workshops since 2018 with the Statistical Office on increasing the national database and availability of SDG-relevant indicators. Establishment of the LSG Analytical Service in 2019
- ❖ Implementing the pilot project in 2019 with 5 LSGs for elaboration of LSG Development Plans incorporating national planning system, SDGs and EU perspective
 - ❖ Formalising the approach by Government Decree in 2020, publishing and disseminating to all LSGs detailed Guidelines on Development Plans (with incorporation of SDGs)



4. Outputs

- Outcomes and impacts of the project:
 - ❖ Representatives of app. 60% of Serbian LSGs have directly participated at the conferences, their awareness of the Agenda 2030 and understanding of the approach in localising SDGs increased
 - ❖ Country-wide recognition achieved on the role of LSGs in implementing over 65% of SDGs
 - ❖ 5 pilot LSG Development Plans produced in broad participatory process, marking the successful integration of SDGs with LSG priority objectives including the level of indicators – e.g. for SDGs 4, 6, 8..
- Sustainability:
 - ❖ Increased availability of databases dedicated to LSG specific indicators
 - ❖ Spill-over effect to other projects – e.g. for greater enrolment of CSOs and cooperation with LSGs in implementing and monitoring the SDGs (establishing of the platform “SDGs for all”)



5. Lessons learnt

- ❖ Necessity of ensuring the understanding by the central-level Government of the role and realistic expectations by LSGs in localising and reporting upon SDGs
- ❖ Importance of capacity building and constant advisory support/tools to LSGs for localisation of SDGs and ensuring the adequate financial resources for such support
- ❖ Explaining and implementing the localisation of SDGs as integral part of local policy coordination, budgeting, working processes and competencies of LSGs, and not as separate agenda with its own lifecycle (rationalising the burden/workload of LSGs)
- ❖ Broad participation, coordination, inclusiveness and partnerships as cornerstones of local planning processes and Agenda 2030
- ❖ Necessity of constant improving of the availability of LSG-specific indicators and statistics as grounds for evidence-based decision making in LSGs and objective reporting upon SDGs

In other words, bringing to life notably SDGs 16-17:



6. Follow up

- ❖ Increasing the number of Serbian LSGs with elaborated Development Plans with localised SDGs (agreements on further cooperation with donor community in Serbia are ongoing) and adjusting the approach to fit also the less developed LSGs – ensuring sufficient expert support and other resources
- ❖ Organising annual sets of accredited trainings for LSGs on policy coordination, elaboration of Development Plans and SDGs localisation (already in the pipeline)
- ❖ Going forward with developing more elaborate approach for localising SDGs in sector-specific areas and respective local planning processes and documents (e.g. in social, environmental, urban planning, etc.). In particular, working with LSGs and associations on regional level to apply the „*leave no one behind*“ principle of 2030 Agenda
- ❖ Monitoring the process and assessing needs for improving the quality of reporting by LSGs upon integrated SDGs implementation (including the integration with local budget allocations and expenditures)

