INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Good Practice Example:
VNG International

Connective Cities virtual Dialogue Event: Local Government Associations and their role in localising the SDGs / September 2020

1

Project overview/Pitch

- LGA or organisation: **VNG International**

- Project title: **Annual Global Goals Awards**

- Name/s of the involved institution/s: **Dutch Municipalities**
  Three-line project description: **Annual awards for the best Global Goals implementation practices at the local level on these three different categories:**

  1. Visionary; 2. Connector; 3. Pioneer

Connective Cities virtual Dialogue Event: Local Government Associations and their role in localising the SDGs / September 2020

2

1. Institutional setting

What were the framework conditions for the project that will be presented (e.g. policy, legal regulation, instrument, reform approach, demand by people etc.; which actors/stakeholders were involved)?

- The **institutional setting** was not that complicated – although we included the award ceremony in the program of our New Year's Reception event in January. This ensured a **rather large audience/event** including many Mayors and Aldermen, Ambassadors, the National SDG coordinator, the VNG Chair, the Netherlands Minister of DevCo and Foreign Trade and different others

- This put a certain glance to the award ceremony and overall initiative

- The project also created a podium to further **advocate** the Global Goals (efforts) internally towards **other VNG departments and colleagues**

2. Starting point/Project goal

- We wanted to create more **explicit momentum/podium** for the municipalities (and the particular staff involved with the SDGs) who had been working hard on localizing and implementing the SDGs throughout the year - also to boost the coming/future efforts

- We furthermore looked for an additional positive incentive for the municipalities to submit their **best practices** – so we could further disseminate these among the Netherlands municipalities and international partners later on

- As we are trying to create (more) **different linkages** between the Global Goals and other VNG departments/colleagues/projects we are always looking for ways to **showcase** the added value and +'s.

Connective Cities virtual Dialogue Event: Local Government Associations and their role in localising the SDGs / September 2020

4

3. Approach

- We developed different **award categories** – more or less with the "Oscars" set-up in mind. In this way all the municipalities could join the competition (small and large, beginners and experienced, etc.)

- The categories were: **1. Visionary 2. Connector 3. Pioneer**

- We printed different **prize cheques** which could be displayd somewhere in the city hall or municipality

Connective Cities virtual Dialogue Event: Local Government Associations and their role in localising the SDGs / September 2020

5

4. Outputs

Which were the concrete tangible results, outcomes and/or impacts of the project? How do you ensure the sustainability of the project?

- The participating municipalities felt recognized and empowered – as they **became active partners** in different events after the awards (not only the winning municipalities)

- It helped the responsible staff (and Alderman/Mayor) to showcase the "formal" appreciation and recognition of their efforts – this created some **more backing** for them **to continue** and enhance their work

- Other municipalities took note of the awards because quite some relevant Global Goals networks or organizations **published or shared** articles on the event

- It was a great **networking** opportunity between Global Goals focal points of different municipalities, also with other attending partners

- A number of collected best practices which we could **further distribute** in our municipal and international network

5. Lessons learnt

- The **paper prize cheque** is really of added value – almost all the winners gave the cheque a prominent place in their city hall or municipal office. Many other guests (also other municipalities) and employees then noticed the award which also creates a positive side effect

- A lot of staff working on SDGs in municipalities encounter challenges to advocate for the SDGs in their organizations during the year. This moment of celebration is not to be underestimated in terms of **empowerment, recognition and motivation** to start the new year with

- Distribute information on the upcoming award series a long time before the actual application deadline – in that case there is even enough time for a municipality **to start a new initiative** and submit that same case for one of the awards

Connective Cities virtual Dialogue Event: Local Government Associations and their role in localising the SDGs / September 2020

7

6. Follow up

Are there any open questions that need to be dealt with? Are there any further plans for the project?

- We would like to **make videos** of the submitted practices for the coming award series - this provides us with additional materials which can be distributed easily among other municipalities and international partners

- It **remains a challenge** to involve municipalities who are not yet (that) active with SDGs – to look beyond the "usual suspects" of active LGs. We will be looking for other ways to counter this challenge for the upcoming awards

- We will most likely **continue** the award series the coming years

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8