



UCLG
WOMEN

Standing Committee
on Gender Equality



THE EQUALITY AGENDA

OF UNITED CITIES AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



Governance



Violence



Human Rights



Education



Poverty



Health



Economy

Equality of Women and Men:

key to governance and development

Local and regional governments are in a unique position to contribute to the global struggle for gender equality and can have a great impact on the status of women around the world in their capacity as the level of governance closest to the citizens, as service providers and as employers.

Equality is a human right and it benefits the quality of our social systems. UCLG members the world round are convinced that the systematic integration of women augments the democratic basis, the efficiency and the quality of the activities of local and regional government.

If local government is to meet the needs of both women and men, it must build on the experiences of both women and men, through equal representation at all levels and in all fields of decision-making, covering the wide range of responsibilities of local governments.

In order to meet the challenges of sustainable human development, it is crucial that women be empowered and involved in local government as decision-makers, planners and managers.

The gender perspective must be mainstreamed into all areas of policy making and management in local government.



UCLG's Agenda

Based on the above convictions, the gender equality agenda of UCLG has built on longstanding work developed by our founding organizations on the advancement of the status of women, promoting in particular the participation of women in decision-making.

The World Organization has **promoted the creation of women elected networks** in the different continents and within UCLG Sections. This work is translated today in the existence and renewal of networks in Africa and Latin

America as well as a Metropolitan Network of Elected Women.

UCLG has further gathered **information on the participation of women at local level** throughout the world and has promoted the collaboration between grassroots women associations and elected women groups.

Throughout the process of the Millennium Development Goals Summit, UCLG and its members have highlighted the importance of women in decision making for

the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the development targets.

The European Section of UCLG, CEMR, has developed a **Charter on Equality of Women and Men in Public Life**, which has been ratified by thousands of European local governments and inspires the public policies promoted by UCLG.

UCLG recognition and Partnerships

UCLG is acknowledged as the voice of local elected women before the international institutions, both at UN level and before national agencies, and participates actively in the different UN Committees and mechanisms aimed at advancing the status of women. UCLG works closely with UN-Women, UN-Habitat and the Huairou Commission.



5,1%

6,1%

20%

Female leadership in the urban era

With the percentage of women Mayors below 5% and an average of 20% women Councilors worldwide, the participation of women in local decision-making has stagnated since the late eighties when many affirmative mechanisms (such as quotas) were put in place around the planet.

Many positive things have happened in countries the world round from Africa to Latin America and Asia. We have celebrated the appointment of some of the first women Presidents in Liberia, Chile, India and Brazil. The participation of women in local politics has certainly contributed greatly to building political frameworks and to cultivating new female political leaders that

will go from local to national and international politics.

There is however still much to be done. For reference it is worth noting that only 10 of the world's 195 capital cities are headed by women, accounting for 5.1 % of representation. The percentage is only slightly higher in the 493 cities with over 1 million inhabitants, where there are only 29 women Mayors.

Of the 27 megacities that account for more population than some national states, none are headed by women. In the current era of urbanization with half the population being female and living in cities, these statistics can provide us with a good idea of the representation gap that needs to be urgently addressed.

The creation of the UCLG Standing Committee on Gender Equality

The 2011 Rabat Executive Bureau, following the request by women representatives, decided to transform the UCLG Committee on Gender Equality into a permanent Committee that would not only ensure follow up of issues of relevance for the

international gender agenda but that would also ensure the mainstreaming of gender in the organization of UCLG. All regional networks of elected women integrate the Committee. Activities of the Committee are open to all members of UCLG.

Women in Local Decision Making – the missing link in development

The problems and challenges facing humanity are global but occur and have to be dealt with at the local level. Women have the equal right to freedom from poverty, discrimination, environmental degradation and insecurity. To fight these problems and to meet the challenges of sustainable human development, it is crucial that women be empowered and involved in local government as decision-makers, planners and managers.

The impact of local authorities on the lives of women is not reflected in the Beijing Platform for Action and ulterior international policy.

Promoting women's political participation is part of the MDGs but its catalytic role should be put further upfront in the Post-2015 agenda. Getting more women into politics at the local level should be an indicator of progress in implementation of the MDGs.

Supporting women's participation in local decision-making should be part of national and global strategies for the next ten years

Increasing the political participation of women will not only make a difference to the decisions that are taken, but will enable the necessary change in perception and mentality.

Focus areas of the Standing Committee:

Political advocacy

- ✓ Promoting participation of women in decision making
- ✓ The mainstreaming of gender in UCLG work

Thematic action through programme development

- ✓ Women's access to public services
- ✓ Safer Cities for Women

UCLG Sections

Africa



Asia-Pacific



Eurasia



Europe



Latin America



Middle East-West Asia



North America



Metropolitan Section

metropolis ●



United Cities and Local Governments
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