# UCLG COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION, PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN UCLG ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY







### ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (UCLG-CSIPDHR) brings together local and regional governments committed – through their local actions and their shared international initiatives – to the global advance of human rights and the right to the city. In the framework of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), it offers a platform to shape the global agenda of the world organization of local governments on social inclusion, participatory democracy and human rights.

The Committee is formed by more than one hundred member-local governments, actively collaborating with civil society, researchers and other city networks. Throughout two decades, multiple local leaders have taken part in building the Committee's narrative, configuring a lasting legacy linked to the values of municipalism and the idea that:

"ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE AND IT STARTS IN THE CITY"

### **OVERVIEW OF 2020**

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The COVID-19 pandemic has altered the development of the UCLG-CSIPDHR 2020 Work Plan, as much as it altered the local and international priorities of many of its member local governments. Social inclusion and human rights agendas have been put under strain, with amplified needs and challenges for public action. This, in turn, required local governments to take a more active role not only regarding public service delivery, but also political leadership.

In the face of this situation, the UCLG-CSIPDHR focused on providing a platform for local government networking aimed at addressing the impacts of COVID-19 over key thematic issues for municipal governments', such as care provision, access to housing, discrimination, inequalities or violence against women. This platform equally aimed at **promoting human rights and the right to the city as guiding visions** not only for the immediate responses to the crisis, but also to support structural transformations towards more inclusive cities beyond the outbreak.

Accordingly, the Committee focused most of its efforts to **showcasing and connecting emerging priorities and policy initiatives**. It did so by organizing several political and learning events, as well by creating new communication tools, such as a monthly newsletter or public interviews to local practitioners and elected officials. The UCLG-CSIPDHR developed these activities in articulation with UCLG's #BeyondTheOutbreak global strategy around COVID-19 recovery.

Beyond its COVID-19 oriented strategy, the UCLG-CSIPDHR also managed to develop other key activities that were already included in the 2020 Work Plan (defined before the pandemic's outbreak). This includes following up on the dialogue with the UN Human Rights system and launching the GOLD VI drafting process, the international observatory on local governments fight of violence against women initiative and the renovation process of the Committee's website.







By Raval KMO @Betevé

By Victoria Coeln @PID/Fürthner

Last but not least, the Committee also welcomed this year **two new members to its co-presidency**: Linda Voortman, Alderman of Utrecht (The Netherlands), and Philippe Rio, Mayor of Grigny (France). The renewal of the Committee's co-presidency allowed to reinforce the CSIPDHR's role within UCLG's leadership, as Philippe Rio and Linda Voortman have also become, respectively, co-chair and member of the UCLG Policy Council on the Right to the City.





Read an
interview to
Deputy Mayor
Linda Voortman
(Utrecht)





Read an interview to Mayor Philippe Rio (Grigny)

### ACTIVITIES DEVELOPED

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### 3.1 THEMATIC FOCUS: HUMAN RIGHTS

3.1.1 Promoting the human rights-based approach as a transformative framework to address the COVID-19 crisis

### Cities strengthen global sharing and solidarity on human rights at the occasion of the 10th World Human Rights Cities Forum (WHRCF)

7 - 10 October | Gwangju (South Korea) and online

The 10th edition of the WHRCF was held in an integrated setting, with sessions taking place both in Gwangju as well as online. In pioneering the use of digital methodologies, the Forum managed to maintain its spirit and meaningful impact both in Korea as well as abroad - in spite of the current context, marked by physical distancing and travel restrictions.

On one hand, the Forum devoted a specific focus to how human rights cities addressed **historical** memory through transformative approaches, including civic education programmes and the strengthening of democratic values. This was due to remembrance events held in the same city of Gwangju around the 40th anniversary of its May 18 Democratic Uprising (1980).















The Forum also focused on the **social crisis caused by COVID-19** and how were local governments enshrining the rights-based approach to provide more inclusive and effective answers to the needs of their populations. A Plenary Session co-organized by the UCLG-CSIPDHR and UCLG-ASPAC shed light on challenges experienced by local governments in the Asia Pacific region.



Know more about this event



Prollow the WHRCF on social media and stay tuned for further announcements

Human rights as a transformative framework #BeyondTheOutbreak: An online seminar promotes the human rights city vision in Equator

14 - 19 June | Ecuador and online

The one-week conference "Cities and Territories beyond COVID-19: A human rights-based resurgence" aimed at promoting the human rights city vision among local governments in Ecuador. It was attended by hundreds of local representatives - many of which are already developing innovative policies inspired by human rights.

The event was co-organized by the UCLG-CSIPDHR altogether with several Ecuadorian and international institutions, like the Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities, the Ombudsman's Office, the German cooperation agency GIZ and the Global Platform for the Right to the City.

Local governments and partners from the UCLG-CSIPDHR were invited to participate in various sessions of the meeting, in order to provide practical expertise and a suggestive international perspective to the topic at hand. This included participations by representatives of Barcelona, Bogotá, Mexico City, the LAC Coalition and the urban commons movement of Naples.



## 3.1.2 Advancing dialogue and partnership between local governments and the UN Human Rights system

## Adoption of a new resolution on the "Local Governments and Human Rights" agenda by the Human Rights Council

6 October | Geneva

The Human Rights Council unanimously adopted a new resolution this year aimed at advancing the UN's agenda on "Local Government and Human Rights". **Resolution A/HRC/RES/45/7** called to strengthen local government participation in national and United Nations human rights monitoring and implementation mechanisms. The Human Rights Council also urged to further articulate human rights cities' policy initiatives with the 2030 Agenda and Localizing SDGs efforts to scale up the shared "leave no one behind" effort across the world.

The Human Rights Council finally asked the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to develop **a new report** focusing on local governments' role in advancing the right to equality and non-discrimination, with a view to potentially elaborate guiding principles on this matter. This process would take place in coming months after the OHCHR's leadership.



A Know more about the UN "Local Government and Human Rights" agenda

### High-Level Debate on the Future of the Human Rights Cities Movement held within the WHRCF 2020: Advancing the human rights conversation between local governments and the UN

7 October | Gwangju and online

The UCLG-CSIPDHR organized a High-Level Dialogue on the Future of the International Human Rights Cities Movement on the occasion of the WHRCF 2020. The meeting gathered a delegation of fifteen local governments to discuss with representatives of the OHCHR and the Human Rights Council on ways forward to strengthening partnership and the participation of local governments within the UN Human Rights system. This meeting gave direct follow-up to last year's (2019) landmark meeting held in Geneva on this same issue.

The 2020 local governments and UN meeting on human rights was a good opportunity for local governments to touch base and explore synergies with the OHCHR's new Deputy High Commissioner, Ms. **Nada al Nashif**. Lim Sang-beom (Republic of Korea Permanent Mission in Geneva) also shared with participants the main contents of the new resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council regarding the "Local Governments and Human Rights" agenda.



« Local authorities have been at the frontline in protecting lives and livelihoods over these last months. I pay tribute to the leadership of mayors and local governments for their courage and resourcefulness in responding to the pandemic while making sure no one was left behind »

**Nada al Nashif**OHCHR Deputy High Commissioner

Stay tuned for this session's report (coming soon)

Read the report of the 2019 meeting between local governments and the UN

### 3.1.3 Also in the human rights agenda

The Committee has participated in other events expanding the human rights cities agenda further. This includes the **NOW Conference**, held in Vienna from 16 to 18 February under the title "Space for Encounter - Overcoming Division". NOW brought together mayors, practitioners, human rights defenders and social entrepreneurs to explore innovative, local methodologies aimed at strengthening social cohesion and youth participation. A representative of the UCLG-CSIPDHR Secretariat attended the Conference to participate in various of its sessions.

The UCLG-CSIPDHR also participated in various events and initiatives organized by the **Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)** throughout the year. Over the last period, the FRA Agency has been promoting a relevant human rights city agenda within the European context, bringing together to this end local governments and relevant stakeholders. 2020 has allowed to advance a shared understanding of the human rights city vision and a potential framework of commitments.

Finally, the Committee continued to support the growing Indonesian human rights cities movement by actively participating in the Festival Ham held this year in Banjarmasin under the title "Upholding Human Rights during the Covid-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Solutions". A representative of the Secretariat participated in various events, including the conclusion of the Blended Learning Course on Human Rights Cities organized by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in partnership with the UCLG ASPAC.

### 3.2 THEMATIC FOCUS: RIGHT TO THE CITY

### 3.2.1 Advancing the urban equality discussion within UCLG

Addressing urban inequalities in India and the rest of the world: Bangalore hosts the Urban ARC Conference (Indian Institute of Human Settlements) and the 2020 meeting of the KNOW project

16 - 18 January | Bangalore

Last January, the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) hosted a new edition of the Urban ARC Conference, gathering leading research initiatives on urban issues in India and its regional environment. This year's Urban ARC Conference was held in conjunction with a meeting of the KNOW project: An action-research project facilitated by the Development Planning Unit (DPU) of the University College of London focused on urban inequalities. Attending this Conference allowed the Committee to envisage new ways for strengthening cooperation between local governments and academia on urban inequalities, especially within the framework of UCLG.

### Know more about this event







### Launch of the GOLD VI process on urban equality

The UCLG-CSIPDHR has taken an active role in the launch of the GOLD VI process this 2020, which will be focusing on **local governments' role in addressing urban inequalities**. As a member of the report's steering committee, the UCLG-CSIPDHR participated in the process of defining the main contents it will be addressing. A public event held in Tangier's UCLG Retreat allowed members to have a say in the initial phase of the process. The process to develop this report will last until 2022 (when it is set to be presented on the occasion of UCLG's World Congress) and is expected to welcome the active participation of UCLG-CSIPDHR members.

## 3.2.2 Preparing the launch of an International Observatory by Local Governments to Fight Violence Against Women

The Seine-Saint-Denis UCLG-CSIPDHR co-presidency will be launching a new project next year aimed at harnessing local government leadership to fight violence against women across the world. The project will encompass the holding of various capacity building and networking events, the production of learning materials and the development of knowledge sharing methodologies. Throughout 2020, the Committee Secretariat has worked with the Seine-Saint-Denis in preparing the project's roadmap and defining its expected outcomes.

## 3.2.3 Participating in the International Jury of the IOPD Distinction

The UCLG-CSIPDHR Secretariat has participated in the International Jury of the IOPD Award "Best Practices in Citizen participation". Buenos Aires' policy "Playing and participating: When children are the protagonists of urban planning" was awarded with this year's distinction. The jury recognized the initiative's focus on **enabling inclusion**, **empowerment and widespread participation among young city residents** through the use of different methodologies linked to urban space. The IOPD also awarded several special mentions: one related to climate change for Cuenca (Ecuador); one to gender mainstreaming for Catalonia (Spain); and three other special mentions for participatory democracy practices by Chihuahua (Mexico), Esplugues de Llobregat (Spain) and Durham (United States).



### 3.3 THEMATIC FOCUS: RIGHT TO HOUSING

3.3.1 Addressing COVID-19 impact over local housing systems and the right to housing quarantee by local governments

### Live Learning Experience #BeyondTheOutbreak on Housing

### 1 April | Online

The UCLG-CSIPDHR organized a #BeyondTheOutbreak session focused on how the COVID-19 crisis affected local housing systems and the right to housing guarantee by local governments. This session gave voice to members to address emerging challenges and to shed light on some of the practices they were already developing in this regard.

The session allowed members to identify key priorities, including the implementation of emergency solutions to house those sleeping rough or to raise awareness on the situation of those who were no longer available to pay their rents or mortgages. Putting an end to evictions, whatever reason, was stressed as a key political message shared by all participants.

### Rnow more about this event





### Meeting of the UCLG Community of Practice on Housing: Assessing ways to advance the right to housing face to COVID-19

### 22 May | Online

The UCLG Community of Practice on Housing met in May to showcase the latest policy developments put in place by signatory cities of the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration to address the COVID-19 crisis. The meeting offered an opportunity to explore shared challenges and emerging policies, as well as a platform for reflecting on housing's role in the pandemic aftermath, including ways to assert its social function and advance rights-based strategies.

Participants agreed on identifying housing-related issues as key factors to consider when addressing the social crisis caused by COVID-19. Cities for Housing priorities have focused on protecting residents at larger risk of housing vulnerability, putting in place emergency solutions to house people who are homeless or help residents pay their rents.



### The UCLG-CSIPDHR contributed to the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing report on COVID-19 and the Right to Housing

### 1 April | Online

Building on the outcomes of various events organized throughout 2020 to address COVID-19 impacts over the right to housing quarantee, as well as the practical experience of memberlocal governments, the UCLG-CSIPDHR sent a formal contribution to the report the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing Balakrishnan Rajagopal devoted to COVID-19 and the right to housing. The UCLG-CSIPDHR contribution contained a compilation of practices and key messages delivered during the #BeyondTheOutbreak sessions on housing and informalities, as well as the meeting of the Community of Practice on Housing.



Read the UN Special Rapporteur Report



Read the UCLG-CSIPDHR contribution

The UCLG-CSIPDHR supports the "Decalogue for Participatory Slum Upgrading: Roadmap for Latin America and the Caribbean" presented at the MINURVI Conference



Know more about the Decalogue

3.3.2 Showcasing "Cities for Adequate Housing" policy innovations at an international level

### Valencia joins the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration: Strengthening affordable, adequate housing provision

Valencia has become the latest city to join the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration in 2020, as announced by the city's Social Services and Housing Councillor Isabel Lozano during June's meeting of the Community of Practice on Housing. Over the last years, the city government has carried out various innovative policies seeking to bring about more affordable and adequate housing in the city, both by expanding public housing provision, rehabilitation programs as well as cooperation initiatives with the private sector. This piece explores various features of its housing policy, including two initiatives carried out this year.



Know more about Valencia's housing policy



Read the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration

### Participation to the meeting "Community Land Trusts: Building Common Ground across Europe" with the FMDV

5 December | Online

This conference was organized by the Sustainable Housing for Inclusive and Cohesive Cities (SHICC) initiative (with the FMDV among its founding partners) with a view to take stock of the emergence of a European Community Land Trust (CLT) movement and its relevance to the EU policy agenda. A representative of the UCLG-CSIPDHR took part in the meeting's second panel, which addressed ways to foster public support for CLTs. Her intervention highlighted the rich policy experience by local governments around the Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration, with innovative practices spanning from Montevideo to Seoul.



**A** Know more about the SHICC initiative

### Supporting the mandate of the new UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Balakrishnan Rajagopal

The new holder of the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing mandate, Balakrishnan **Rajagopal**, assumed his position in the first half of 2020. Mr. Rajagopal already had the chance to introduce the priorities of his mandate to member local governments of UCLG during the WHRCF 2020 Forum and a dedicated "Cities Are Listening" consultation event held in December. Also this year, the UCLG-CSIPDHR Secretariat engaged with Mr. Rajagopal team to build avenues of cooperation on the right to housing in coming years, valuing the existing expertise and mobilization of member local governments within the Cities for Adequate Housing initiative.



### The UCLG-CSIPDHR contributed to define the UN Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Housing

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing Leilani Farha presented last 5 March her last report to the Human Rights Council, containing a set of guidelines for the implementation of the right to housing. This represented the culmination of Rapporteur Farha's 6 years' mandate, which was marked by her worldwide promotion of rights-inspired housing strategies aimed at addressing the financialization of housing and its impact over the rise of inequalities.

In order to bring a local government perspective to this landmark document, the UCLG-CSIPDHR and the Research Department of UCLG (UCLG GOLD) sent a joint contribution to UN Special Rapporteur Farha's Report: A document which contained a compilation of local government good practices showing their capacity to advance the implementation of the right to housing.



Read the UN Special Rapporteur Report



Read the UCLG-CSIPDHR contribution

### Two MA students address "Cities for Adequate Housing" implementation after a fellowship agreement between the UCLG-CSIPDHR and the Development Planning Unit of the UCL

Exploring rooms for maneuver at local governments' hands to implement the Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration and supporting young researchers in their academic projects on the right to housing and the right to the city. These were the main goals of the fellowship agreement between the UCLG-CSIPDHR and the Development Planning Unit (DPU) of the University College London (UCL) which allowed two MA students to develop their dissertations addressing housingrelated challenges and initiatives in Metro Cebu (Philippines) and Lagos (Nigeria).



Read "(Re)thinking housing provision by local governments for informal settler families in Metro Cebu, Philippines" by Yuka Aota



Read "Forced Evictions and the Creation of the Lagos Mega-City: Estimating the Room for Maneuver" by Aderoju John-Williams

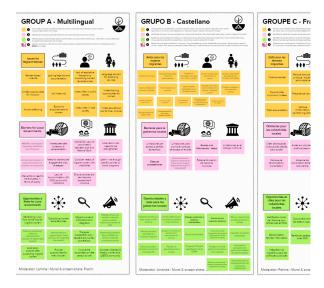


## 3.4 THEMATIC FOCUS: MIGRATION AND URBAN CITIZENSHIP

## First working meeting held to address local governments' role in advancing migrant women's right to the city

10 September | Online

Last September, the UCLG-CSIPDHR and the MC2CM project co-organized a first "Dialogue on Migrant Women in Cities" gathering local governments and other key stakeholders working on this issue in the Mediterranean region and beyond. The online gathering produced a relevant mapping of both the most pressing challenges faced by migrant women in cities, as well as barriers and opportunities for local government action on the subject. This event contributed to **expand UCLG's right to the city and women agenda**, addressing an emerging policy priority which is receiving an increasing level of attention within the agendas of many members.



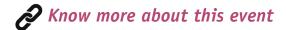
The event hosted an interactive mapping exercise which allowed participants to collectively identify migrant women's needs and related barriers and opportunities of local action. Issues related to migrant women protection and inclusion received a great deal of attention by participants. Piority areas include access to health and basic services, public space, psychosocial assistance or mainstreaming gender and intersectional approaches in local policy-making.



## Guaranteeing migrants' rights in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and answering to their needs: #BeyondTheOutbreak session

16 April | Online

Taking special attention to migrants' increased vulnerability face to the COVID-19 crisis has become a key priority to many local authorities these last months. One of the last Learning Experiences co-organized by the MC2CM project and UCLG-CSIPDHR addressed many issues related to this scenario, highlighting the answers and difficulties experienced by local governments on this matter as well as the emergence of unprecedented logics of solidarity.



### 3.5 KNOWLEDGE HUB AND COMMUNICATION FOCUS

The Committee Secretariat focused on renovating its communication face to the COVID-19 crisis, with a view to find more effective ways to share knowledge among members and support their implementation of new policies and launch of networking initiatives.

The **Committee's website renovation process** has been launched this 2020, aiming mainly at enhancing the website visual appearance, but also improve the capacity to describe the Committee's work, count with more meaningful tools to showcase members' local policies and initiatives and build a knowledge and learning hub on human rights cities and the right to the city that is useful to both members, partners and interested users.

A **fully renovated newsletter** has allowed the Committee to maintain its members updated on relevant news and events, as well as to disseminate proposals brought by members and partners throughout the year. The COVID-19 newsletter by the UCLG-CSIPDHR has explored pressing challenges and emerging policies by the following members:



The initial challenges to the social inclusion agendas of **Renca** and **Valencia** brought by the initial stage of the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine measures





Innovative measures implemented by **Sfax** and **Douala** to address the needs of the most vulnerable during the crisis, particularly migrants and informal residents





The transformation of **Mexico City**'s social inclusion agenda inspired by the rights-based approach to address the exacerbated vulnerability of certain groups





The role of the rights-based approach in **Vienna's** response to COVID-19, including mainstreaming transparency, accountability and non-discrimination





An overview of **rent reliefs programs** put in place by local governments to prevent a rise of evictions and homelessness in the context of the COVID-19 crisis



Know more



Pichincha measures to promote an inclusive economic development model and protect women victims of domestic violence in the context of quarantine measures



Know more



The transformation of local government public service delivery and their increasing advocacy role at a national level as shown by the case of Rivas Vaciamadrid



Know more



**Barcelona's** human rights office and civil society reporting efforts to address COVID-19 impact over social vulnerability and discriminatory events



Know more



Three years after the Call of **Grigny**, 180 French mayors rally to demand solutions for working-class urban territories #Appeldu14Novembre



Know more

The UCLG-CSIPDHR also nourished the newsletter of the WHRCF with articles showcasing policies implemented by members to guarantee human rights during the COVID-19 crisis:



Procus on the right to equality and non-discrimination and to fight racism



Focus on the rights of the child and the right to education



Procus on the right to housing

### **UCLG CSIPDHR CO-CHAIRS AND PARTNERS**















