

Plenary Session

Human Rights Cities Responding to Poverty and Inequalities

Date & Time: October 5, 16:00-18:30 KST / 9:00-11:30 CEST

Organizers: WHRCF International Steering Committee

Background

In a global context **increasing inequalities** exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the commitment to social justice, climate action, peace and Human Rights matters more than ever.

The commemoration of the [75 anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#) promoted this year by the United Nations; as well as the UN Secretary General's [Our Common Agenda](#), reminds us that reducing **poverty and inequalities has been a key priority and challenge over time. This is particularly evident at the local level, within our cities and territories, but also between them.**

Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) have showcased a growing commitment to Human Rights. This commitment was reflected and further expanded through the Global Campaign "[10, 100, 1000 Human Rights Cities and Territories by 2030](#)", launched by the UCLG-CSIPDHR in 2022. The initiative gathered more than 100 Local and Regional Governments worldwide which explicitly committed to the promotion, protection and fulfillment of Human Rights. **The first results of the Campaign highlighted the fight against inequalities and poverty as a main priority for the future of the Human Rights Cities movement.**

In this sense, several LRGs are already acting to link the promotion of Human Rights to different dimensions of poverty and inequalities through an intersectional approach to local action. This translates into Human-Rights-based public policies, for instance to ensure access to labor to women victims of violence; to provide housing to migrants and refugees; to improve access to education through technologies and digital innovation; as well as to improve mobility and accessibility between and within territories through public service provision.



As the closest level of governments to their inhabitants, LRGs have proved that integration of Human Rights into local policies can be a source of inspiration for social inclusion and caring, **driving transformations while dealing with some of the underlying causes of inequalities.**

This has allowed LRGs to build “pathways towards equality”, which can be understood as trajectories of change, capable of supporting decision-making processes, policies, actions and planning systems that actively seek to improve urban and territorial equality.

Taking a further step and scaling up local efforts is thus essential so that the initiatives of some can echo the initiatives of others, inspiring each other and fostering solidarity.

Objectives

1. Examine the wide and complex **impact of poverty and inequalities in cities and territories** from a Human Rights perspective.
2. Explore **innovative Human Rights-based initiatives** toward equality at the local level.
3. Kick off a collective exchange to leverage Human Rights to **co-create local pathways toward equality.**

