

Catalyzing Local Action: Advancing the Localization of the SDGs through Innovative Financing

Date: 3 July 2025 – Tuesday | Time: 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Venue: Conference Venue – Room: Side Event 13

Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) – Sevilla, Spain

1. Concept Note

Background

As the 2030 Agenda deadline approaches, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demands more than national strategies — it requires bringing the SDGs to life with solutions emanating from the territorial level, where people’s needs, priorities, and ambitions take root and are best identified. Cities and territories are where sustainable development succeeds or fails.

The Government of Spain, host country of the FFD4 Conference, is championing multilateralism and the localization of SDGs both at the national and local levels and in global Fora. As such, it is hosting the Local2030 Coalition, the UN system-wide platform for the localization of the Agenda 2030, and supporting the Joint SDG Fund, which drives systemic transformation toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through integrated programming focused on identifying and supporting innovative policies and financing solutions. Spain is also supporting politically, technically, and financially efforts to localize development finance, through the elaboration and promotion of approaches and tools to support the localization of sustainable development at all levels.

Building on these joint efforts and the principles of the [Bilbao Blueprint](#)— jointly developed by the UN Joint SDG Fund, Local2030 Coalition and the Basque Government — this session, convened by the Spanish Cooperation, will showcase how a whole-of-UN work with innovative and inclusive financing approaches can be systematically channeled to empower local systems to deliver transformative, measurable impact.

The discussion will be situated within the global financing for development reform efforts under FfD4, and the growing call to facilitate and strengthen existing local capacities, governance, and access to finance to accelerate SDG implementation at the community level.

This session will also serve as a launching pad for continuing efforts on localization post a successful [Local Finance Design Sprint](#), that brought together in May a diverse

group of experts and stakeholders from eight countries to co-create financing solutions for subnational food systems and green economy transformation. It continues to build a roadmap of action for the co-creation of bankable and scalable financing solutions grounded in country needs and territorial multi-stakeholder participated ecosystems.

Event Purpose

1. Present the Bilbao Blueprint, offering practical pathways and tools to advance localizing finance for sustainable development.
2. Provide a platform to present the outcomes and lessons of the Design Sprint and announce the proposal for a Bilbao Blueprint Bootcamp.
3. Showcase prototypes from the Design Sprint and anchored on the Bilbao Blueprint (e.g., Colombia, Tanzania, Cabo Verde, Nepal) demonstrating how localization principles and systemic transformative solutions are being accompanied by concrete financing solutions at municipal and territorial levels.
4. Facilitate dialogue on next steps — how to move from co-created designs to implementation, identify catalytic partnerships, and embed the Localization Marker 2.0 into broader financing strategies, including in the lead-up to FfD4 and beyond.

Objectives

- Highlight the urgency of localizing development finance to more effectively close the SDG financing gap and drive systems transformation.
- Introduce the Bilbao Blueprint as a strategic framework for territorial sustainable development and to develop channel investments toward local impact.
- Showcase territorial-led experiences and innovations from the Bilbao Design Sprint illustrating localization in practice.
- Gather a community of stakeholders committed to scaling local finance solutions — linking development finance institutions (DFIs), national and local governments, UN agencies, private sector, civil society and academia actors and other.

Key Themes

- **Scaling Localized Finance:** How unlocking municipal finance, subnational bonds, local revenue mobilization, and blended finance supports SDG localization.
- **Capacities and Governance:** Strengthening multi-level public institutions, financial management systems, and multi-stakeholder governance to absorb and manage investments.
- **Data, Accountability, and Impact:** Using robust indicators, foresight models, and the Localization Marker 2.0 to track outcomes and attract sustainable financing.

- Partnerships for Territorial Transformation: Building strong ecosystems of public-private-civil society collaboration and local ownership at the territorial level.

Panelists

The event will feature high-level opening remarks, a keynote presentation, and a panel discussion representing key actors in the localization and development finance landscape.

Keynote Address:

- **Hon. Eva Granados Galiano**, State Secretary for International Cooperation, Government of Spain

Opening Segment: Contextualizing Localization as Critical for SDG Financing

- **Ms. Anaclaudia Rossbach**, Executive Director of UN-Habitat
- **Mr. Ander Caballero**, Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Basque Government

Presentation of the Bilbao Blueprint and Outcomes from the Design Sprint

- **Mr. Sebastien Vauzelle**, Head of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat
- **Mr. Steven Stone**, Deputy Director of Industry and Economy Division of UNEP

Roundtable: Scaling Local Finance – Challenges, Innovations, and Next Steps

Moderator: Javier Cortés Fernández, Director of eLankidetzta, Basque Government

- **Nepal - Ms. Hanaa Singer**, United Nations Resident Coordinator
- **Cabo Verde- Mr. Gilson Pina**, National Director of Planning, Ministry of Finance
- **Basque Country - Mr. Asier Aranbarri**, Director of the 2030 Agenda of the Presidency Bureau
- **Colombia – Ms. Eleonora Betancur González**, Director of the Presidential Agency of International Cooperation
- **Zanzibar – Mr. Aboud Hassan Mwinyi**, Deputy Permanent Secretary, President's Office Finance and Planning

Closing Reflections Toward a Localized Financing Future

- **Hon. Nialé Kaba**, Minister of Economy, Planning, and Development of Ivory Coast

Expected Outcomes

- Amplification of visibility of the Bilbao Blueprint for broader awareness and application.



- Recognition of the Bilbao Design Sprint as a replicable model for inclusive program design, with potential to inform future UN programming and financing dialogues.
- Strengthened momentum toward positioning localized finance as a pillar of FfD4 and post-2025 SDG financing discussions.
- Announcement of the Bilbao Blueprint Bootcamp.

Conclusion

This session will connect global financing reforms to real transformations on the ground — making the case that localizing development finance is not a side conversation but a core strategy for achieving the SDGs.

The Joint SDG Fund and Local2030 Coalition stand ready to work with partners to turn ambition into action, ensuring that every dollar invested delivers real, lasting impact in communities across the world.

2. Run of Show

10:30 – 10:33 | Opening Remarks by Moderator (3 mins)

Mr. Javier Cortés Fernández

- Welcome participants and introduce the session's purpose: to explore how innovative financing mechanisms can localize the SDGs and scale territorial transformation.
- Emphasize the urgency of localizing finance and introduce the opening speakers.

10:33 – 10:38 | Keynote Address (5 mins)

Hon. Eva Granados Galiano, State Secretary for International Cooperation, Government of Spain

- Emphasize Spain's commitment to strengthening localization and multi-level governance as a foundation for development financing.
- Highlight the importance of aligning global and national financial strategies with territorial priorities to foster ownership and long-term impact.
- Reflect on Spain's role in supporting multilateralism for local SDG financing, through its strong commitment to both the Joint SDG Fund and Local2030 Coalition.

10:38 – 10:50 | High-Level Opening Segment (5 mins each)

Ms. Anaclaudia Rossbach, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

- Underscore UN-Habitat's role in supporting cities and regions, stressing that localization is a key strategy for implementing its 2026–2029 Strategic Plan, which focuses on housing, land, and basic services as the foundation for inclusive, safe, and sustainable urban development.
- Advocate for mission-oriented and scalable initiatives, such as those developed in the Bilbao Design Sprint.
- Emphasize the need for multilevel governance and multi-stakeholder collaboration to promote systemic change and unlock financing flow to the local level.

Mr. Ander Caballero, Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Basque Government

- Share the Basque Government's experience that inspired the Bilbao Blueprint and its vision for embedding this model into future initiatives.
- Highlight the importance of building catalytic alliances and roadmaps that distribute responsibilities and resources across actors.
- Announcement of the Bilbao Blueprint Bootcamp and next steps for engagement.

10:50 – 11:05 | Presentation of the Bilbao Blueprint & Design Sprint Outcomes (15 mins)

Mr. Sebastien Vauzelle, Head of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat (10 minutes)

Presentation of the Bilbao Blueprint and the Localization Marker 2.0, followed by lessons from the Local Finance Design Sprint.

Mr. Steven Stone, Deputy Director, Industry and Economy Division, UNEP (5 minutes)

Showcase how UNEP's work on integrated policy levers and sustainable value chains, as well as the work of the Local2030 Coalition's Working Group on financing the SDGs at the local level, supports the implementation of the Bilbao Blueprint's vision, particularly in transforming local systems through strategic investments.

11:05 – 11:50 | Roundtable: Scaling Local Finance – Challenges, Innovations, and Next Steps

Moderator: Mr. Javier Cortés Fernández

Format: Each speaker has 6–7 minutes to respond to a tailored question.

Nepal – Ms. Hanaa Singer, UN Resident Coordinator

Nepal is progressing toward graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, a transition that requires robust and resilient local systems. How is the UN system supporting local governments to access and manage SDG-aligned financing in this context? What role does localized finance play in ensuring a smooth and inclusive LDC graduation process, and how can frameworks like the Bilbao Blueprint help bridge the gap between national ambitions and local realities?

Cabo Verde – Mr. Gilson Pina, National Director of Planning

During the Bilbao Design Sprint, Cabo Verde finalized the design of a new Joint Programme centered on circular economy and integrated waste management on Boa Vista Island, closely tied to sustainable tourism. How can public-private partnerships be leveraged to finance and scale such initiatives? What lessons can be drawn from Cabo Verde's experience in aligning local investment strategies with national development goals and private sector engagement?

Basque Country – Mr. Asier Aranbarri, Director of the 2030 Agenda

The Basque Government has emerged as a regional role model in advancing SDG localization and co-developing the Bilbao Blueprint. Can you share a concrete example of a financing model that not only addresses local priorities but also aligns with national sustainable development pathways? How does this model reflect the

Blueprint's principles—such as enabling environments, systemic transformation, and catalytic alliances—and where do you see opportunities to further enhance its impact or replicability in other regions?

Colombia – Ms. Eleonora Betancur González, Director of the Presidential Agency of International Cooperation of Colombia

The emerging Joint Programme from Colombia, in partnership with Bancóldex, will develop a dedicated electronic waste circular economy credit line in major urban centers. How is Colombia fostering partnerships between public institutions, development banks, and the private sector to scale such innovative financing models? What role do local governments play in ensuring these initiatives are inclusive, impactful, and aligned with territorial priorities?

Zanzibar – Mr. Aboud Hassan Mwinyi, Deputy Permanent Secretary, President's Office Finance and Planning

Zanzibar's seaweed sector holds significant potential for value addition and local economic transformation. How is the government working to strengthen local ecosystems that support ownership, capacity building, product development, innovation, and market access? What financing mechanisms or partnerships are being explored to promote systemic transformation of Zanzibar that leaves no one behind?

11:50 – 11:57 | Closing Reflections: Toward a Localized Financing Future (7 mins)

Speaker: Hon. Nialé Kaba, Minister of Economy, Planning, and Development, Ivory Coast

- Reflections on the importance of embedding local finance in national development strategies.
- Call to action for governments, DFIs, and the UN system to scale territorial financing solutions inspired by the Bilbao Blueprint and the Localization Marker 2.0.

11:57 – 12:00 | Final Wrap-Up (3 mins)

Speaker: Mr. Javier Cortés Fernández

3. Speaker Bios

Hon. Eva Granados Galiano

Eva Granados Galiano is currently serving as the State Secretary for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spain. She was the spokesperson for the Socialist Parliamentary Group in the Senate from 2021 to 2023, and a member of the Catalan Parliament from 2010 to 2021. She also served on the National Secretariat of the UGT of Catalonia from 2002 to 2010, representing labor and social affairs councils. Her career includes work in corporate social responsibility at Alstom and advocacy for human rights through the Fundació Solidaritat-Universitat de Barcelona. She holds a degree in Political and Administrative Science from the University of Barcelona and an Executive Master's in Public Management from ESADE.

Ms. Anacláudia Rossbach

Anacláudia Rossbach is the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, appointed at the Under-Secretary-General level in 2024. She is an economist with over 20 years of experience in housing, informal settlements, and urban policy. She previously served as Director for Latin America and the Caribbean at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and as Regional Manager for Cities Alliance. Her career includes roles at the World Bank, the Municipality of São Paulo, and founding the NGO Interação. She has led high-impact projects in Brazil and globally, focusing on inclusive urban development and housing solutions.

Mr. Ander Caballero

Ander Caballero is the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs for the Basque Government. He has played a key role in advancing the Basque Country's international cooperation and SDG localization efforts. His work focuses on building strategic partnerships and promoting territorial approaches to sustainable development.

Ms. Lisa Kurbiel

Lisa Kurbiel is the Head of the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat. Since joining in 2019, she has led the Fund's strategic development, currently capitalized at \$275 million. She has over 22 years of experience across the UN system, including in Somalia, South Sudan, Mozambique, and Kenya. Her expertise spans public policy, legislative reform, strategic communications, and innovative financing. She holds a Juris Doctor from Saint John's University Law School and a BA from Niagara University.

Mr. Sebastien Vauzelle

Sebastien Vauzelle is the Head of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat, hosted by UN-Habitat. He leads efforts to mainstream SDG localization across the UN system and

supports multi-stakeholder collaboration for territorial transformation. Under his leadership, the Coalition promotes trust and coordination between governments and sectors to accelerate local SDG progress.

Mr. Steven Stone

Steven Stone is the Deputy Director of the Industry and Economy Division at UNEP. He joined UNEP in 2010 and has served as Chief of both the Economics and Trade Branch and the Resources and Markets Branch. He has helped shape initiatives such as the Green Economy Initiative, TEEB, and PAGE. Previously, he worked at the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. He holds a PhD in Resource Economics from Cornell University and a BA from Swarthmore College.

Mr. Javier Cortés Fernández

Francisco Javier Cortés Fernández is the Director of eLankidetzta, the Basque Agency for Cooperation and Solidarity. Appointed in February 2025, he leads the agency's efforts in international solidarity and development cooperation. He previously was Head of UN Global Compact for Americas, Head of Local Engagement of UNGC Cities Programme and has proven instrumental in mobilizing multistakeholder collaboration for systemic territorial and bottom up transformations.

Ms. Hanaa Singer

Hanaa Singer-Hamdy is the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Nepal, with over 34 years of UN experience spanning development, humanitarian, and human rights fields. She has held senior leadership roles as RC in Sri Lanka, she led the UN's response to a severe economic crisis while navigating complex political transitions, as well as leading UNICEF teams in Syria, Nepal, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Haiti, and Burundi. She also served in regional roles supporting 22 country offices in Eastern Europe and Central Asia on emergency preparedness & response. She has led major UN responses in Syria and Chechnya, and led UNICEF cross-border humanitarian response operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, delivering large-scale aid and negotiating humanitarian access. She holds advanced degrees in Political science and policy management and is recognized for political engagement, crisis diplomacy, and forging strategic partnerships across complex environments.

Mr. Gilson Pina

Gilson Pina is the National Director of Planning at the Ministry of Finance of Cabo Verde. He plays a central role in integrating climate resilience and disaster risk management into national and municipal planning. He has represented Cabo Verde in international climate finance dialogues and led strategic reforms for sustainable development.

Mr. Asier Aranbarri

Asier Aranbarri Urzelai is the Director of Innovation and the 2030 Agenda at the Presidency Bureau of the Basque Government. He previously served as Mayor of Azkoitia and holds a Master's in EU Political Integration. He is a lecturer in International Relations at the University of Deusto and leads interdepartmental coordination on social transition and SDG priorities.

Ms. Eleonora Betancur González

Eleonora Betancur currently serves as the Director of the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia (APC Colombia). With a career dedicated to international cooperation and territorial development, she has held leadership positions in both the public and private sectors, including as Director of International Affairs for the Mayor's Office of Bogotá and Executive Director of the Cooperation and Investment Agency of Medellín, where she led strategies to attract foreign investment and promote international partnerships. Ms. Betancur holds degrees in Political Science and International Relations and has pursued postgraduate studies in international development and public policy.

Mr. Aboud Hassan Mwinyi, Deputy Permanent Secretary, President's Office Finance and Planning

Aboud Hassan Mwinyi is the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the President's Office for Finance and Planning of Zanzibar, appointed in 2021. In this critical role, he spearheads efforts to strengthen fiscal discipline by enhancing revenue collection systems, enforcing prudent expenditure practices, and combating financial mismanagement—a stance he emphasized by warning against embezzlement upon his oath-taking. Drawing on his extensive administrative experience, Mwinyi plays a pivotal part in shaping Zanzibar's financial strategy and sustainable development policies under the President's directive.

Hon. Nialé Kaba

Nialé Kaba is the Minister of Economy, Planning, and Development of Ivory Coast. She was the first woman to serve as Minister of Economy and Finance and currently chairs the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank. She holds degrees from the University of Abidjan-Cocody, CESD, and Paris-1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and has led key reforms in fiscal policy and development planning.