

Getting women involved in managing cities: the experiences of Dortmund and Kumasi

14 March 2024
9 am New York time



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Register here

https://undp.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IbUYNJO-TEiUigN2JNWxRw

The topic

Women make up half of the world's population. It would then be expected that their participation in politics and decision making would reflect the same percentage. However, this is not yet the case. Data show that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision-making worldwide and that achieving gender parity is still an enormous challenge.

Women serve as Heads of State or Government in only 31 countries and make up 26.5% of members of parliament. **Women's representation in local positions varies from 1% to 67%, with a global average of 35.5%.** In January 2023, representation of women in local bodies is as follows: Central and Southern Asia: 41%; Europe and North America: 37%; Oceania: 32%; East and Southeast Asia: 31%; Latin America and the Caribbean: 27%; Sub-Saharan Africa: 25%; North Africa and West Asia: 20%. (Source UN-Women, 2023).

Evidence shows that the presence of women in political decision-making helps leaving no one behind. For example, research on panchayats (local councils) in India found that the number of drinking water supply projects in areas where such councils are led by women was 62 percent higher than in areas where such councils are led by men. In Norway, a direct causal relationship was found between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage (R.

Chattopadhyay y E. Duflo (2004) in UN Women, 2023).

At the current rate, it is estimated that gender equality in the highest decision-making positions will not be achieved for another 130 years (UN-Women, 2023). There is an urgent need to accelerate and achieve the goal of equal political participation and balanced power between men and women (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action), which is also a fundamental step towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

To this end, it is crucial to identify and replicate good practices and actions that work at the local level not only to get more women elected, but also to get them in the position to take decisions and effectively being able to manage their cities.

The webinar objective

We want to generate a conversation around successful experiences that have make a bet to promote a greater participation of women in managing and taking decisions in cities. Additionally, this webinar supports the already existing collaboration between Dortmund and Kumasi to strengthen capacities of women in city management, especially the women that have been newly elected to their city councils.

The "SDG local solutions" Series of UNDP seeks to establish networks and share knowledge to identify solutions, good practices and strengthen the capacities of local governments in their efforts to implement Agenda 2030. To this end, we have invited the cities of Kumasi, Ghana; and Dortmund Germany to identify the keys to ensure that women are elected and govern cities.

The methodology

Virtual webinar where cities will share their experiences. This space will have three moments: (i) the first half hour will be dedicated to learning about the experiences of each city; (ii) followed by a space for discussion and questions from participants; and (iii) a closing with conclusions and lessons learned.

The cities and their projects

1. Dortmund, Germany

The Equality Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia requires the City Council to implement gender equality in the municipal administration. Although many steps towards equality have been taken, challenges remain and have led the City of Dortmund to formulate strategies to make the law a reality.

With the program "She for Democracy", the Office for Equal Opportunities of the TU University of Dortmund and the Office for Equal Opportunities of the City of Dortmund want to motivate women to become active in politics. Within the framework of this program, the participants get

to know the political structures in Dortmund over a period of seven months, accompany active female city councilors from various political groups to local political events and strengthen their personal skills in various workshops and visits (<https://gleichstellung.tu-dortmund.de/projekte/she-for-democracy/>).

In particular, the program aims to motivate young women with different experiences and backgrounds to participate in politics in Dortmund, thus promoting the participation of women of different nationalities, ethnic and social backgrounds, religions and ideologies, with disabilities, of different ages, and with different sexual orientations and identities.

2. Kumasi, Ghana

The city conducted a SWAT analysis on the needs of women to become actively involved in local government, especially to strengthen the women who were elected in the last elections. The city has manifested its interests in deepening the learning of good practices to implement in its current political processes.

Dortmund and Kumasi have been exchanging experiences since 2011, and in 2024 the two cities will enter into a sister city relationship in order to maintain the exchange not only at city administration level, but also at a city-wide level - involving all city stakeholders, especially civil society.

3. United Cities and Local Governments - UCLG

The major network of local, regional governments and their associations, UCLG represents approximately 250.000 local institutions in 175 countries. It is organized around regional sections (Africa, Europe, etc.) as well as at national level, most of the national associations of local governments are also active participants. More info at www.uclg.org

Questions for the speakers

1. How has the implementation of strategies to involve women in local politics worked?
2. What are the main obstacles to the effective election of women to manage cities?
3. What are the opportunities for local governments to improve women's political participation?
4. What is the role of the municipality in the implementation of these types of projects?
5. What is the role of men in these processes?
6. Which other actors were relevant to achieve the results?

7. Is it important to create incentives for women to participate in politics? Can you identify some of them?
8. What is the social and political impact of women leading local governments and actively participating in public decision-making?

AGENDA

5 min	Presentation of the initiative: "Local solutions for local SDG action", translation, recording, use of chat and introduction of the moderator.
2 min	Moderator's introduction to the session Amanda Fléty, Coordinator of the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of UCLG, United Cities and Local Governments
10 min	Kumasi's experience Joshua Tetteh Nortey, Project Supervisor, Kumasi Global Mayor's Challenge
10 min	Dortmund's experience: Lynn Berg, Katrin Kieseier and Cornelia Rempe, City of Dortmund Equal Opportunities Department
15 min	Questions and answers from the audience
8 min	Closing and conclusions

SPEAKERS BIOS

Amanda Fléty Martinez serves as the Executive Coordinator of the [Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy, and Human Rights \(CSIPDHR\)](#) at UCLG, the global network of local and regional governments, since 2018. In this role, she facilitates global advocacy, policy exchanges and peer learning, among cities worldwide and with international organizations, including the UN-level.

Since 2018, Amanda Fléty Martinez has been at the forefront of several international initiatives, notably leading the coordination of the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration in collaboration with the former UN Special Rapporteur on housing, Leilani Farha, and 40 cities. Engaging actively in the UCLG-MC2CM project with IOM, she contributed through the CSIPDHR in shaping human rights-based approaches to local migration policies, advocating for the social inclusion of migrants from a municipalist perspective.

Since 2022, she is in charge for UCLG of the international program "Building Caring Territories to

Protect Women Victims of Violence" in collaboration with the Department of the Seine-Saint-Denis (France). She also serves as the co-organizer of Gwangju's World Human Rights Cities Forum (Republic of Korea), working in partnership with OHCHR, UNESCO, and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute.

Currently, Amanda Fléty Martinez is spearheading the global campaign "10,100,1000 Cities and Territories of Human Rights by 2030" and oversees the updating process of the UCLG Charter Agenda on human rights in the city. Additionally, she serves as a jury member for the annual award of the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (OIDP) and contributes as a lecturer in the KOICA Fellowship Program at GIC (Republic of Korea).

Amanda Fléty Martinez holds a Dual Master Degree from the French Institute of Geopolitics (Paris 8), specializing in conflicts related to urban development, particularly gentrification and discrimination issues.

KUMASI

Joshua Nii Noye Tetteh - Nortey

Present position: Project Supervisor, Global Mayor's Challenge Project, Kumasi.

He is a professional Urban Planner with over 15 years of experience in localising UN global agenda such as MDGs and SDGs at the community level. Over the years Joshua has teamed up with the grassroot to promote access to potable safe water, hygienic and dignify sanitation services, raised awareness on circular economy, campaign for climate change adaptation and mitigation, empower the marginalised and socially excluded by engendering community ownership, fostering political leadership, mainstreaming gender, recognising and finetuning indigenous solutions to local problems.

Past experiences:

- Project Coordinator for HORESD, Kumasi Metro Assembly.
- Project Coordinator for Dortmund - Kumasi Exchange, Kumasi Metro Assembly.
- Project Coordinator for Millenium Cities Initiative, Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly.
- Project Coordinator for Local Economic Development, Kumasi Metro Assembly.

DORTMUND

Lynn Berg has been working in the Equal Opportunities Office at TU Dortmund University since 2020. Her work focuses on knowledge transfer for the topics of gender diversity, intersectionality, queer and LGBTI. She is also responsible for the "She for Democracy" project at TU Dortmund University's Equal Opportunities Office.

Katrin Kieseier has been working as a deputy equal opportunities officer in the equal opportunities office of the city of Dortmund since 2015.

Cornelia Rempe joined the equal opportunities office in 2017.

Through their previous collaboration on the development of an equal opportunities plan for the employment agency in Dortmund. One of their main priorities is promoting women in leadership positions through qualifications, mentoring programs, etc. They are also responsible for the events surrounding International Women's Day and Equal Pay Day. Together they are furthermore developing programs such as "She for Democracy" to increase the proportion of women in local politics.