**UNODC’s inputs to OHCHR’s report on Local Government and Human Rights, pursuant to HRC resolution** [**45/7**](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G20/257/50/PDF/G2025750.pdf?OpenElement)

1. **Laws, policies and programmes that have been developed by local authorities explicitly to promote and protect human rights, including those related to the right to equality and non-discrimination and the protection of persons in vulnerable and marginalized situations**

***Local safety initiatives in Mexico***

UNODC implemented a [Local Safety Audit](https://auditoriadeseguridad-cdeunodc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/191008_ALS_Quer%C3%A9taro_Ingl%C3%A9s.pdf) in the Municipality of Queretaro, Mexico. The Audit enabled the improvement of data collection and monitoring on different types of violence against women in the context of the pandemic. Based on the data collected and analysed, the local authorities identified violence against women, girls and the elderly as a key priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results and recommendations of the Audit were used as input for the design of the “2019-2021 Municipal Development Programme”, the “Municipal Safety Programme” and the “Action to Prevent Programme”. These programmes establish strategies and actions to identify, address and reduce the risk factors that generate violence and crime, and the basis for coordination between public municipal agencies, the academic, and the non-governmental sectors. For example, with the support of UNODC, the Municipality designed and created a campaign to raise awareness on violence and abuse affecting women, girls and the elderly and to keep these vulnerable groups informed about government services and victim support regarding crime and violence.

To reduce violence against women, the Queretaro Municipality developed initiatives which work comprehensively with issues of emotional health, women's health, nutrition, physical conditioning, self-defence courses, workshops to generate empathy and family responsibility, rights and visibility of violence and care protocols.

Moreover, to address the vulnerability of the elderly to crime and violence, local authorities in Queretaro, jointly with UNODC through the Ministry of Security, developed the program “Hand by hand for your safety”. This initiative aims to improve the quality of life of the elderly reducing the risk situations that this population encounters in public spaces and may expose them to violence and abuse. The initiative promotes the use of an identification bracelet, through which the personal data of the elderly can be known, safeguarding the confidentiality of the information by scanning QR codes that can be read by electronic tablets. The bracelets have been quite instrumental in providing immediate assistance by caregivers and the police to the elderly in different communities.

***Trafficking in Persons***

Human trafficking is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. Smuggled people often can become the victims of human rights violations in the smuggling process. In response, UNODC works with national stakeholders, including local government structures, to support the implementation of the [UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf) and its supplementing protocols—[the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children](https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/Special/2000_Protocol_to_Prevent_2C_Suppress_and_Punish_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf) and the [Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air](https://www.unodc.org/documents/middleeastandnorthafrica/smuggling-migrants/SoM_Protocol_English.pdf). In most States, local government authorities are involved as part of national coordination teams, which include government departments, local government authorities and civil society organizations, among others.

In 2021, UNODC supported the local government of the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima Serenazgo in Peru to ensure the protection of the rights of trafficking victims by developing a manual of operating procedures for the identification and referral of cases of human trafficking.

1. **Challenges faced by local authorities and promising practices, to promote and protect human rights, including in relation to the right to equality and non-discrimination and the protection of persons in vulnerable and marginalized situations**

***Gender-sensitive strategies to prevent and counter corruption***

Corruption adversely impacts women’s ability to practice their rights and can also limit the public resources that should be available to them and other equity-seeking groups, in particular at a local level. UNODC’s publication “[The time is now: Addressing the gender dimensions of corruption](https://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/Publications/2020/THE_TIME_IS_NOW_2020_12_08.pdf)” gives an account of how anti-corruption and gender equality policies and programmes are mutually reinforcing, e.g. when adopting anti-corruption policies and a design that embraces inclusion and gender equality. Inclusion, gender equality and women’s empowerment are key to disrupting collusive networks that tend to cater to their own. However, where women are also represented in decision-making contexts, they work for more inclusive and accountable decisions that benefit a wider range of the population, most notably in sectors that are close to women’s realities, such as education and health care.

In health care, greater gender equality in local government is also associated with reduced bribery in accessing such services. Researchers have found that women in elected office may be more willing to install government auditing devices in order to stem leakage in public money that goes towards health care and other basic services.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Where local governments are responsible for public works and services, gender sensitive public procurement laws, policies and practices can also boost women’s economic empowerment and advance gender equality. Good practices include:

* Requiring any company that does business with the local government to pay male and female staff equally (provision under the 1996 Equality Act of Switzerland).[[2]](#footnote-3)
* Spain’s Public Procurement Law 2017193, which includes various gender equality clauses such as ensuring that companies with more than 250 employees implement gender equality plans. Violations and non-compliance result in prohibition from participating in future public procurement contracting.[[3]](#footnote-4)
* Privileging bids from businesses owned by women, youth, and disabled people, as it can create new markets by engaging outside the traditional business circles and thereby increase state revenue and boost the economy. This is implemented in public procurement processes in Kenya (30 per cent of contracts) and South Africa (40 per cent of contracts) where quotas are reserved for businesses owned by such equity-seeking groups. In Kenya, the engagement of the presidential directive reserving 30 percent of government procurement opportunities for companies owned by women, youth, and disabled people, while resulting in women business owners reporting greater economic opportunity, they also speak of more exposure to harassment from procurement officers. Shifting more of the law’s administration online, has since reduced this problem.[[4]](#footnote-5)

1. **Key principles that should guide local and national governments in the promotion and protection of human rights**

Good governance is a key enabler of the promotion and protection of human rights both at the local and national level. UNODC’s [Education for Justice](https://www.unodc.org/e4j/index.html)’s University Module on Corruption and Good governance, defines good governance as ”the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in a manner that promotes the rule of law and the realization of human rights”.[[5]](#footnote-6) Its core principles include integrity, transparency, lawfulness, sound policy, participation, accountability, responsiveness and accountability, all necessary elements for the creation of social, economic and political structures that promote inclusion, equality and human rights.

In the context of the promotion and protection of women’s rights, due diligence should be paid to the commitments in the [Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women](https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women) (CEDAW), and the [General Recommendations](https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/cedaw/general-recommendations) stemming from its Committee, as well as [Beijing Platform for Action](https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about) for which women’s access to justice has been an ongoing concern.  State Parties need to take measures to ensure that women form part of decision-making structures at the local, national, regional and international level, as well as have access to fair and effective remedies when their rights are affected.

Additionally, the principles laid out in the UNSC resolutions forming part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda need to be adhered to regarding ensuring that standards in the various stages of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction are inclusive of women and girls, including for justice reforms, law enforcement and when countering violent extremism and radicalization.

1. UNODC, 2020, The Time is Now – Addressing the gender dimensions of corruption, <https://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/Publications/2020/THE_TIME_IS_NOW_2020_12_08.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. UNODC’s E4J University Module Series: Anti-Corruption. [Module 2: Corruption and Good Governance](https://www.unodc.org/e4j/zh/anti-corruption/module-2/key-issues/what-is-good-governance.html#:~:text=Core%20elements%20of%20good%20governance,absence%20of%20corruption%20and%20wrongdoing.) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)