

4th World Forum on Local Economic Development

Praia, Cabo Verde – 17-20 October 2017

Final Declaration

The **IV World Forum on LED** was celebrated in Praia, Cabo Verde, from 17 to 20 October 2017 as part of a long-standing process aimed at enhancing policy dialogue and a transversal alliance on Local Economic Development (LED) as a strategic and operational framework for sustainable development.

The **2030 Agenda for sustainable development** provides a comprehensive reference for a people-centred, transformative vision and action on achieving sustainable development through the establishment of inclusive, cohesive, peaceful, and resilient societies. In this context, an **enhanced reflection and commitment to Local Economic Development is of outmost relevance**, on grounds of and with particular relation to:

(i) The challenge of establishing solid and well tested frameworks for enabling a **universal yet locally-driven implementation of the SDGs**, ‘landing’ global partnerships through dialogue and synergies with and between territorial actors, and in the respect of social, cultural, economic and environmental human rights.

(ii) The imperative to **rethink our current development paradigm** in front of a reinforcing path of uneven growth, marked by rising inequalities between people and territories, inadequate supply of decent and secure jobs, and often indiscriminate pressure on natural resources.

(iii) The urgent need for **integrated models for resilience** to deal with growing uncertainty, widespread fragility and threats to security and stability across global and local levels, alongside the complex consequences of increasing urbanization, rural exoduses, and migration flows.

(iv) The growing interconnection of local, national and regional economies that calls for **patterns of economic integration and cooperation** between territories and regions to balance the effects of uneven competition, including reference to specific geographical contexts and dynamics like those of Small Island Developing States.



The 3rd World Forum on LED had placed the potential of LED at centre stage as ‘*a framework for localizing the SDGs, leveraging and materializing the new global partnership in the form of organized communities joining forces to find local solutions for global challenges...*’.

Following thorough debates, and considering current global scenarios and trends, **the delegates of the 4th World Forum reaffirm the distinct role of LED in turning global dialogue into concrete development opportunities at the local level, driving an alternative - more equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic development model from and through territories as means to achieving universal goals.**

The delegates recognize and agree to promote:

- 1. The relevance of integrated LED systems as means for localising the SDGs** – through policy coherence, accountable institutions, effective social dialogue, inclusive governance and integrated planning, effective services' delivery, transparent management and monitoring.
- 2. The potential of LED as a vector of socio-economic and territorial cohesion**, enabling synergies and reducing disparities through **territorial cooperation and partnerships**, and taking special advantage of the alternative dynamic of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC).
- 3. The key leading role of local and regional governments and their associations**, and city-to city dialogue for mutual learning, in enabling effective and inclusive LED processes, in articulation with national governments and policies; and in particular, the crucial role of intermediate cities in fostering urban-rural linkages and integration through sustainable production and consumption patterns.
- 4. The key transformative role of the private sector – and specifically SMEs and their networks** – in enabling partnerships and synergies for the implementation of the SDGs at the territorial level, through the creation of decent jobs, shared and inclusive innovation practices.
- 5. The need for stronger coalitions with actors and associations of the civil society** to enable fully participatory governance processes and co-responsibility in the elaboration of public policies for sustainable local development. This includes the recognition and promotion of **volunteerism** as an expression of civic engagement, and of the individuals' choice to be involved in their community and leverage its knowledge and resources.
- 6. The potential of LED in conveying an integrated, developmental perspective in growingly complex crisis situations**, bridging prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable development through stronger inclusive institutions and a renewed social contract between local actors.
- 7. The potential of integrated LED and Social and Solidarity Economy and Finance (SSEF) models and strategies**, and the value of other practices such as collaborative, community and circular economies, in promoting more fair, sustainable

and inclusive economic activities whilst empowering communities to engage and enhance the value of their assets.

8. The key value of research and accessible, evidence-based knowledge systems to channel innovation and foster and display the contribution of LED to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

9. The pivotal role of LED in shaping local resilience against climate change, and renewed patterns for the sustainable use of local resources and provision of services, especially in areas that are primarily exposed to global environmental challenges like Small Islands Development States.

10. The potential of LED in further unlocking and 'localizing' the development potential of Small Island Developing States, whilst furthering their integration within global and regional economic areas.

11. The need for better designed and adapted international financing strategies, including innovative instruments to leverage domestic finance in support to the capacities of local and regional government as driver of sustainable LED.

12. The urgent need to include and mainstream a gender perspective in policies and strategies, as means to empower and realize the economic potential of women and girls as basis of inclusive and sustainable local economic development.



The IV WFLED has allowed a rich discussion and the exchange of knowledge and best practices among a broad range of actors from different countries, territories, and with different roles and functions. This brought substantive advances in the reflection and the potential for joint action.

To ensure a proper follow-up of the results and conclusions of the Forum, the delegates express their **renewed commitment to continue working together for advancing in the construction of a shared perspective and a roadmap for enhanced cooperation**, and in particular:

- Continue democratic dialogue, joint advocacy and partnership building efforts to promote LED as means for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and its implementation at the local level.
- Establish and/or strengthen dedicated networking mechanisms as means to promote agendas for regional cooperation through LED.
- Facilitate agreements for joint initiatives to support LED processes in territories as well as between territories, including decentralized, south-south and

triangular cooperation networks, platforms, and other institutional coordination mechanisms.

- Promote and support shared initiatives for further systematization and dissemination of knowledge about LED as means for the localization of the SDGs, to raise awareness and strengthen capacities of key actors and institutions at different levels.
- Encourage further reflection and initiative on the potential of LED in SIDS.
- Conduct a joint assessment of the World Forum process some ten years after its inception, to draw lessons on what has been achieved and agree on a strategy for its evolution and consolidation.



The members and Associates of the International Executive Committee of the World Forum on LED, recognizing the complexity and the challenges associated to the organization of the Forum, wish to express their deepest gratitude to the government and all the people and territories of Cabo Verde, as well as to all the partners involved in the organization, for their commitment and dedication in hosting the first African edition of the Forum and making it a fruitful and successful undertaking.

Praia, 20 October 2017