

INTRODUCTION

The African Local Manager Voice is a periodical publication produced by the African Local Government Academy (ALGA) of UCLG-Africa, the Network of HR Managers of African Local Governments, and the Observatory of Human Resources of Local Governments of UCLG-Africa, within the framework of the enhancement, motivation and development of Human Resources of Local and Subnational Governments in Africa, as well as within the framework of regional and local initiatives.

It is a forum offered to Territorial Managers as a space for exchange, communication, debate and networking, making it possible to give visibility to Territorial Managers, to hear their voices, opinions and concerns, to exchange their experiences, success stories, and best practices. It is also a window where they can present and promote their missions, their jobs, their challenges, their innovations, and their creativity. Finally, it is an opportunity for them to discuss the various issues related to Human Resources Management at the local level.

Taking due account of the cultural diversity which characterizes our continent, the Bulletin can welcome contributions in the different languages used at UCLG-Africa, in particular English, French, Portuguese, and Arabic.

The first issue of the newsletter focused on "***The main functions of Human Resources Management at the level of African Territorial Administrations: sharing of experience***". The goal in choosing this theme was to take stock of the main HR functions and the way they are managed within African Territorial Administrations.

As far as the second issue is concerned, which made it possible to exchange and deepen the reflection on "***Creating an enabling and attractive environment for the Development of Human Resources of Local and Subnational Governments in Africa: sharing of best practices***", it was published electronically, in January 2020, thanks to contributions from both Territorial Managers from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Ghana as well as their "friends" (Expert from Belgium, University Professors from South Africa, and a student from Senegal).

The 3rd issue of this Bulletin which focused on the theme "***From Diversity to Inclusion: what is the situation within Local and Subnational Governments in Africa?***" was disseminated, including electronically, in July 2020 during the period of the health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This edition has been marked by contributions from South Africa, from Belgium, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo.

The 4th issue of this Bulletin which focused on the theme of "***Managing the Human Resources of Local and Subnational Governments in Africa in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic and after: between the closure and the continuity of Local Public Services, Lockdown, and Teleworking***" was marked by ten (10) contributions.

These different issues can be consulted and downloaded on the ALGA website of UCLG-Africa: www.uclgafrica-alga.org. They represent some **40 contributions** since the establishment of this publication. We take this opportunity to express to the contributors our deep gratitude and our most sincere thanks for their trust, commitment, and contributions.

I- THEME OF THE 5th ISSUE OF THE AFRICAN LOCAL MANAGER VOICE

Faced with galloping urbanization, cities are moving, transforming, and innovating, imbalances are increasing, problems are growing in complexity, especially with regard to local governance, local management, and the provision of local public services. All over the world, in the era of the Digital Revolution, we are also fully immersed in the knowledge and artificial intelligence society. Cities across the world are now adopting, in their strategic vision, e- Governance, digitization, the development of smart cities, and even smart specialization, for the simple reason that these are irreversible choices and strategic orientations which play a central role in the dynamics of sustainable development at the local and territorial level (see the proceedings of the Webinar held on June 08, 2020 in partnership with the City of Rabat, Morocco, on " *The place and the advantages of Digital Technologies in the Governance of African Local and Subnational Governments* ").

In this regard, it is also worth recalling Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) which calls for the advent of peaceful and inclusive societies for the purposes of sustainable development, to ensure access for all to justice and to put in place, at all levels, efficient and responsible institutions that are open to all, in particular through investment in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as well as in digital technology.

The same applies to the African Agenda 2063, representing the African vision to transform the African continent as a world power in the future, following a strategic plan to achieve its goal of inclusive and sustainable development.

Suction 1 of Agenda 2063: A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. We are determined to eradicate poverty within a generation, by sharing prosperity through the social and economic transformation of the continent.

Goals:

- ***A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all***

Ending poverty, inequalities of income and opportunity; job creation, especially addressing youth unemployment; facing up to the challenges of rapid population growth and urbanization, improvement of housing and access to basic necessities of life – water, sanitation, electricity; providing social security and protection.

Well-trained and sufficiently qualified citizens supported by science, technology and innovation

*Developing Africa's human and social capital (through a revolution in the field of education and skills placing the emphasis on science and **science and technology**).*

In addition, the development of Human Resources is closely linked to investment in science and technology, as underlined in the Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2017 (Development of human resources A / RES / 72/235) of which here is an excerpt:

“13. Emphasizes that, when science, technological knowledge and innovation and human resources development approaches are mutually reinforcing, they can lead to a virtuous circle of economic growth, human progress and sustainable development;

20. Encourages Member States to facilitate access to and apply environmentally sound technologies, and welcomes the launch of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism established in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, 3 based on a multi-stakeholder collaboration among States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders, in order to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; ”

Information and communication technologies (ICT) as well as digital technology are now considered as strategic levers for the global transformation of society, public action, and public governance. These technologies represent a universal tool and a real strategic development issue, which transforms societies and economies, allowing territories to be more and more competitive and attractive in terms of improving the business climate, simplifying procedures, promoting investment and improving the conditions and lifestyles of citizens, while offering digital connectivity, and e-inclusion.

From the urban standpoint, digital technology generally makes it possible to stimulate innovative approaches in order to think about and build smart / connected, efficient, and inclusive cities. The thinking conducted concerning their implementation presupposes a strong political will, a change of mentalities, the design and control, first and foremost, of the digital infrastructure and of the dematerialization process, as well as the preparation and empowerment of Human Capital. The development and urban digital must henceforth be thought of in an integrated manner under a participatory approach involving all actors and stakeholders, such as the government departments, the decentralized services, the private sector, the civil society, the members of the academia, and the citizens.

African Local Governments which are the front-line players fighting the COVID-19 crisis, have used ICTs and digital technology to manage, prevent, monitor, anticipate, and stem the spread of the pandemic, with the support of national and subnational governments, the private sector, and the various components of civil society. African Local Governments have also invested in these levers to ensure the continuity of local public services, particularly for key sectors, such as education, health, and access to basic services. It has also been observed the fact that many Local Governments have become used during the quarantine period to exchanges based on the use of digital platforms and consider this practice a door of no return to the practices of the past.

This is the case for several African cities and regions which take - or are beginning to - take a crucial interest in speeding up their digital transformation and the territorialization of national strategies for digitization and dematerialization of services in order to anticipate the management of this crisis and of the post-crisis era. These digital tools and services will certainly serve to bridge the socio-economic gap but above all to promote the transformation that is necessary to achieve the Global Agendas and the African Agenda 2063.

This 5th Issue of the “The Voice of the African Local Manager” bulletin will be a Special Issue dedicated to the following general theme:

“Digital Transformation at African Local Level in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond: Benchmark of regional and local experiences”.

The choice of theme is not accidental. The Covid-19 crisis has radically changed the forecasts, the order of priorities, public policies, the action plans, as well as the strategies and prospects at all levels of governance. ICTs have proven to be a strategic lever to allow people to stay connected, to continue to govern, manage and produce, and to meet the expectations and concerns of populations. The pandemic has also been an accelerator of digitization according to the Twilio Report 2020, Covid-19 Digital Engagement Report (quoted in <http://www.bsi-economics.org/images/Covid3.pdf>).

Pandemic and digitalization: a brief report

*"The Covid-19 crisis has caused an economic shock of demand and supply that is unprecedented in History. The production of businesses, the investments, the commercial trade, the consumption of households, the institutions ... everything has been affected by the sudden shutdown of economic activities. However, and despite the unprecedented situation, a strategic element has made it possible to continue most of the activities of certain sectors of activity, in particular the tertiary sector: that strategic element is the digital transformation, a recurring subject in the strategies of companies for more than two decades, a majority of which have embarked on their digital transformation, driven in particular by the increase in the penetration rate of the Internet in the world, new technologies, innovations in particular New ICTs and connected objects, without forgetting to mention that companies are also encouraged by the demand of increasingly tech-savvy consumers ... all of these reasons that have transformed the market. **Digital transformation has become an essential and permanent strategy to be developed over the long term in companies to ensure proper productive and organizational functioning, to meet new consumer demands but also to offer the best customer experience to build customer loyalty**".*

Source: Translated by UCLG-Africa from <http://www.bsi-economics.org/images/Covid3.pdf>

II- EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions to this Special Issue must therefore relate to any initiative undertaken at the level of Local Governments concerning digital transformation, whether in terms of public policy, strategy, governance, management / management, infrastructure, development, integration of new apps, public services, or public service provision.

III- WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE?

The Bulletin is mainly open to contributions from African Territorial Managers, whatever their fields of activity or their professional sector. However, in a spirit of openness to the environment of African Local Governments and with a view to a benchmarking, any other contribution with added value, in terms of relevance, information sharing, successful experiences and best practices, will be most welcome. This Bulletin considers these contributions to be those of "friends of African Territorial Managers" and who may be officials of Central Administrations and of Deconcentrated Services, University Professors, Experts, resource persons, or representatives of the private sector or civil society.

IV SOME PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE MADE

UCLG-Africa invites you to make contributions concerning any initiative aimed at digital transformation, according to the following framework:

1. The title of the initiative;
2. The date of its establishment;
3. The Institution / Organization conducting the project;
4. The main goal of the initiative;
5. The specific goals of the initiative;
6. Description of the initiative (1 page maximum);
7. Target audiences and beneficiaries;
8. The budget allocated to the initiative;
9. The funding source (s) for the initiative (own resources, loan, state subsidies, donors, decentralized cooperation, partnership, etc.);
10. The expected results;
11. Achievements obtained;
12. The impact of the initiative;
13. Photos relating to the initiative;
14. Any other **relevant information related to the initiative.**

The contribution must consist of four (4) pages maximum, **i.e. 1,500 words**, up to a maximum of **2,000 words**;

Font Type: **Times New Roman, and Font Size 12**;

Any quotation from another author must be put in brackets and include its source, namely the author of the quotation or the document from which it is extracted, the exact title of the document, the date of publication, and the place of publication, by respect for intellectual property rights.

You must provide **your photo and a short biography (100 words maximum)**, mentioning the name of your Local Authority / Institution, as well as your contact information (Mobile phone, home or office phone, Fax, e-mail or Website of the Local Government / Institution to which you belong).

Deadline for submitting contributions: November 15, 2021.

Contributions should be sent to:

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