ANNUAL REPORT 2020

A Transition Year for Local Africa
Who we are

UCLG Africa is the umbrella organisation and the united voice representing subnational and local governments in the African continent.

How to use the report

This report presents the activities carried out by UCLG Africa in 2020. It starts off with the message of the Secretary General, then gives an overview of the actions performed by UCLG Africa and by the different programmes throughout the past year.

It provides the elements to appreciate what UCLG Africa has done and what needs to be improved, which UCLG Africa’s team would be grateful to receive from readers.

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It is my honour and pleasure to present you with the 2020 Activity Report of United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa).

I know how gruelling 2020 has been for all of us and for humanity at large due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I would like here to extend our organisation’s heartfelt condolences to all afflicted families. UCLG Africa joins the call by the global movement of local governments for more justice and solidarity in access to medicines, vaccines, and other means of fighting Covid-19.

Despite the impact of this dreadful health crisis, which has virtually brought the majority of organisations and societies to a standstill, UCLG Africa has continued to deliver services to its members, thanks to its accelerated digital transition. UCLG Africa, the voice of local Africa, has maintained its member-oriented activities and services in 2020, thanks to its accelerated digital transition.

UCLG Africa joins the call by the global movement of local governments for more justice and solidarity in access to medicines, vaccines, and other means of fighting Covid-19.

As such, 2020 is considered a transition year from GADDEPA 1.0 to GADDEPA 2.0. During this year, UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat has adopted a new organisational chart and developed new tools to improve the organisation’s governance.

Now, the ambition behind GADDEPA 2.0 is to definitively cement UCLG Africa’s position as the go-to interlocutor and spokesperson for local Africa. It intends to ensure that Subnational and local governments are key players in the fight against poverty, in the promotion of sustainable development, and in the integration of Africa, all while consolidating the role of UCLG Africa as the representative voice of Subnational and local governments across the African continent.

The Annual Report 2020, present, a roadmap tracing back the path that our organisation has taken since the genesis of the idea for its creation all the way to its actual deployment and roll-out of actions, taking into account the evolution of its institutional environment.

As of 2021, the new trajectory that our organisation is embarking on will be accomplished through the mobilisation of all UCLG Africa members and staff, through constructive dialogue with States, and through the support and backing of UCLG Africa’s partners.

I would like to pay tribute to the members of UCLG Africa and of its Executive Committee for their unflagging commitment and support to our organisation’s vigour and dynamism. I would also like to thank UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat team for the remarkable work they do in serving the members and more. Their competence and commitment have tremendously contributed to our organisation’s stature and appeal.

I am sure that, together, we will make UCLG Africa an ever stronger, ever more representative, and ever more recognised organisation at the service of Africa’s subnational and local governments.
At the forefront of the fight against Covid-19, local governments in Africa have adopted multiple initiatives to fight the spread of the virus and the collapse of local economies. What are the impacts of the pandemic on local governments, particularly on their financial resources and investments?

Local Africa is particularly vulnerable to Covid-19 and its devastating effects. The continent has the highest population growth rate in the world. Its urban population has increased tenfold in 60 years, from 53 million in 1960 to 588 million today. Cities are the epicentre of the pandemic, accounting for 95% of Covid-19 confirmed cases. High urban density, prevalence of informal settlements, lack of infrastructure, predominance of slums and informal housing, unsuitable modes of transport and consumption... The specific features of the continent’s urbanisation exacerbate the risks of contamination, impoverishment, and growing inequalities.

Cities, the epicentres of the pandemic

In 2019, 47% of urban dwellers lived in slums or informal settlements. Only 55% had access to basic sanitation services and 47% to handwashing facilities. 71% of urban dwellers work in the informal sector. Protective measures are impossible to observe for most. Difficulties in accessing health services and products have increased, and so have the risks of unemployment, exclusion, food insecurity, and loss of housing and income.

As the first responders to the impacts of Covid-19, subnational and local governments are key players in decision-making and implementation of measures to address the health crisis. Subnational and local governments in Africa have intensified their efforts to prevent the spread of the virus and to help the poorer populations: awareness raising and implementation of protective measures; provision of sanitary materials and establishment of production structures; sterilisation of public spaces; lockdown options; acceleration of the digitisation of services; contact tracing; improvement of access to drinking water and installation of public hand-washing stations; creation of solidarity funds; protection of the homeless and migrants.

Drastic drop in revenue

However, the IMF fears that Covid-19 will have some of the worst economic consequences. In addition to the decline in activity, many SMEs are closing down. The informal sector, which employs two-thirds of the workforce in African cities and accounts for between 30% and 50% of value added, has been hit hard by the lockdown and is experiencing massive unemployment, and a drastic fall in income. Around 25 million Africans are at risk of extreme poverty.

The study conducted by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), together with UN-Habitat, UCLG Africa, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, and Shelter Afrique, shows that subnational and local governments risk losing between one-third and two-thirds of their budgetary resources, which would jeopardise their ability to provide basic local public services to the population and businesses.

The impact of the pandemic on the finances and investments of African subnational and local governments has led to two main developments. The first one involves the need to deepen the decentralisation process in Africa, especially in public health. The initiatives taken by local public institutions in all African countries have proved to be decisive against the spread of the disease. They are faster, closer to the ground, with better targeting in awareness actions. The impact on the resources of subnational and local governments and on investments shows that the financial aspect of the decentralisation process is just as important. In order to benefit local populations more effectively, the measures taken by international financial institutions (World Bank, African Development Bank, regional integration institutions, etc.) should be accompanied by the requisite of their territorialisation in compliance with the legislative and regulatory texts adopted by African countries with regard to decentralisation matters. Most African States support the budgets of subnational and local governments and have budgetary and accounting procedures for this purpose. There is nothing to prevent these procedures from being implemented in the context of this health crisis as part of the budgetary support provided by development partners to the health sector.

Priority to local development

The second development is the reassessment of the financial relations between the state and subnational and local governments. Covid-19 has shown that it is important to rehabilitate the function of stabilising and redistributing public finance transfers between the state and subnational and local governments. Part of the taxes and levies that have been centralised until now can be used to cushion natural or external shocks. Transfers of public resources from the state to subnational and local governments must support wealth creation, the acceleration of local economic development, and the redistribution of growth at the national level.

Policies to support economic activities, which have been designed to respond to the economic consequences of the pandemic, must therefore take into account the impact of this crisis on local budgets and on the informal ecosystem. Strengthening local economies is one of the most effective responses to reduce the exposure of national economies to the cycles of this globalised economy. From this standpoint, the Covid-19 health crisis opens up the possibility of casting a different look at the contribution of subnational and local governments to the structural transformation and development of Africa.
Six recommendations to get out of the crisis

To address the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic in Africa, six recommendations are put forward to national and subnational and local governments by the United Nations and the African Union:

1. Implement local communication and community engagement strategies
2. Support SMEs and actors in the popular economy
3. Deepen decentralised responses to Covid-19 by building the capacity of local governments
4. Target popular economy structures with context-specific, data-driven measures
5. Establish mechanisms to promote rapid access to housing and prevent forced evictions
6. Integrate urban planning and management as priorities for recovery and reconstruction strategies with a view to ensuring long-term resilience

Measuring Covid-19 impacts
Simulations by the UCLG Africa Observatory on Local Finance

Simulation 1: 8 months of lockdown and protective measures
Simulation 2: 4 months of lockdown and protective measures
The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a redeployment of assistance endeavours in favour of subnational and local governments on the ground. Living up to its commitments to its members and partners, UCLG Africa has focused its efforts on the digital transition and the engagement of African local governments in climate action.

On the occasion of the International Women’s Day, REFELA calls on African cities to actively participate in the UN Women’s “Generation Equality” campaign

- Multi-stakeholder learning experience: African migrants and refugees in Rabat during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond?
- REFAELA awarded the IDEALKENT Prize for “Women Friends of the City” at the UNESCO (Paris, France)
- Multi-stakeholder learning experience: African migrants and refugees in Rabat during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond?
- Meeting with the Chairman of Morocco’s Special Commission on the New Development Model
- Rabat named the African Capital of Culture
- Forum of Local Authorities (Cotonou, Benin) in preparation for COP25 (Madrid, Spain), on the theme: “The Contribution of African Local Authorities’ Associations in Mobilising Cities for Climate Action”
- Organisation of a round table on the theme: “Towards Africities: Achieving the SDGs through Resilient Intermediary Cities in Africa” within the framework of the Virtual Campus “Promoting Local Government and Citizen Engagement for the City We Need in Africa, in Times of Covid-19 and Beyond”

- Virtual Forum on the theme of “Reopening African Public Administrations: Leading, Managing, and Delivering Public Services in Times of Covid-19 and Beyond”, marking the International Public Service Day
- Co-organisation with the Global Solidarity and Social Economy Forum of a webinar on the theme of “The solidarity and social Economy at the Heart of the REFELA Agenda, a Lever for the Empowerment of Women in Africa”
- Co-organisation with the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition, the World Bank, and CoM SSA, of a webinar on the theme of “Carbon Pricing in Africa: Opportunities for Action at the Territorial Level”
- Meeting with the Chairman of Morocco’s Special Commission on the New Development Model
- Co-organisation with Metropolis of a webinar marking the World Metropolitan Day, on the theme of “Covid-19 and Metropolitan Management: Lessons Learned from the Global Health Crisis”
- Co-organisation with the Global Solidarity and Social Economy Forum of a webinar on the theme of “The solidarity and social Economy at the Heart of the REFELA Agenda, a Lever for the Empowerment of Women in Africa”

2020 Highlights

January
- Training seminar on the Territorial Approach to Local Development (TALD) for UCLG Africa staff
- REFELA awarded the IDEALKENT Prize for “Women Friends of the City” at the UNESCO (Paris, France)

February
- Participation in the 10th World Urban Forum (Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- Rabat named the African Capital of Culture
- Forum of Local Authorities (Cotonou, Benin) in preparation for COP25 (Madrid, Spain), on the theme: “The Contribution of African Local Authorities’ Associations in Mobilising Cities for Climate Action”
- Launch of the support programme for national associations of Subnational and local governments in Africa ahead of their participation in the programming of the 2021-2027 cycle of European Union cooperation with African countries

March
- REFAELA awarded the IDEALKENT Prize for “Women Friends of the City” at the UNESCO (Paris, France)

May
- Launch of the support programme for national associations of Subnational and local governments in Africa ahead of their participation in the programming of the 2021-2027 cycle of European Union cooperation with African countries
- Multi-stakeholder learning experience: African migrants and refugees in Rabat during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond? With the participation of IOM, UNHCR, and the City of Rabat (Morocco)
- Participation in the 10th World Urban Forum (Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- Rabat named the African Capital of Culture
- Forum of Local Authorities (Cotonou, Benin) in preparation for COP25 (Madrid, Spain), on the theme: “The Contribution of African Local Authorities’ Associations in Mobilising Cities for Climate Action”

June
- Virtual Forum on the theme of “Reopening African Public Administrations: Leading, Managing, and Delivering Public Services in Times of Covid-19 and Beyond”, marking the International Public Service Day

July

August
- Co-organisation with the Global Solidarity and Social Economy Forum of a webinar on the theme of “The solidarity and social Economy at the Heart of the REFELA Agenda, a Lever for the Empowerment of Women in Africa”

September
- Co-organisation with the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition, the World Bank, and CoM SSA, of a webinar on the theme of “Carbon Pricing in Africa: Opportunities for Action at the Territorial Level”

October
- Co-organisation with the Global Solidarity and Social Economy Forum of a webinar on the theme of “The solidarity and social Economy at the Heart of the REFELA Agenda, a Lever for the Empowerment of Women in Africa”

November
- Co-organisation with the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition, the World Bank, and CoM SSA, of a webinar on the theme of “Carbon Pricing in Africa: Opportunities for Action at the Territorial Level”

December
- 4th edition of the African Forum of Territorial Managers and Training Institutes (FAMI 4) on the theme of “Promoting Responsible, Transparent, Ethical, Effective, and Accountable Local Public Institutions in Africa to Act and Impact the Decade of Action”
- Message from the Secretary General of UCLG Africa to the international community on the occasion of the International Migrants Day
UCLG Africa, a UCLG branch

As the African branch of UCLG, the global organisation of local and regional governments, UCLG Africa supports cooperation between cities and territories, defends the interests of local and regional governments, and facilitates the implementation of development programmes for cities and territories across the African continent.

Building African unity and contributing to Africa’s development from the bottom up is the vision set out by the members at UCLG Africa’s founding congress in May 2005 in Tshwane, South Africa.

The mission statement sets the following objectives for the organisation:

1. **Promote decentralisation in Africa** and foster local government as an autonomous sphere of governance, distinct from – but complementary to – national government.

2. **Assist in the establishment of national associations of local governments**, represent them and channel their voice in their dialogue with the central state and other actors, and support them in fulfilling their mandate.

3. **Foster the exchange of experiences** and good practices among African local governments and with local governments from other regions of the world, namely through the Africities Summit.

4. **Contribute to the unity of the African continent**, via the dynamism of subnational and local governments, and to the emergence of "Africa of the Peoples" beyond "Nation-States Africa".

● Commitments & Fundamental Principles

- **Decentralisation and Local Democracy**
- **Decentralised Cooperation**
- **Peer Learning and Experience Exchange**

- **Economic, Social, and Territorial Cohesion**
- **Financial and Public Service Management**
UCLG Africa is the result of an encounter between a genius idea and a set of circumstances that have been particularly favourable to the unification of the local government movement.

The Africities Summit, the largest African gathering dedicated to decentralisation and the governance of cities and territories, was a genius idea born out of the observation that too little attention was paid to local governments 10 years after their establishment. Thus, the Green Paper published by the European Commission in 1997, organising relations between Europe and the ACP countries for the next 20 years, did not take into account the emergence of local governments with democratically elected councils and executives. This was a major political innovation in the continent’s institutional landscape at the end of the 1980s.

The decision to create the Africities Summit was taken in order to celebrate this renewal of governance in African cities and territories. It was taken at the meeting of mayors convened in 1997 in Dakar (Senegal) by the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP). Set up with the support of the World Bank, the MDP’s mission was to assist States in defining and implementing a decentralisation policy, to contribute to the creation and structuring of national associations of local governments, with a view to strengthening their capacity to exercise their mandate in the service of the population and to become involved in Africa’s development and integration efforts. At the time, I was President of the MDP, and Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi was its Secretary General.

The need to unify the municipal movement at the global level emerged at the Earth Summit (1992, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). Mayors and leaders of local governments were surprised to see themselves classified as non-governmental organisations, whereas they were leaders of local governments and expected to be considered as state actors. Indeed, they had to fight for the Rio Conference to adopt a local Agenda 21.

In order to obtain a specific status at the United Nations, the international associations of local governments decided to join forces. The most representative associations of local governments have formed the Group of 4 (G4) comprising IULA (International Union of Local Authorities), FMCU-UTO (Fédération Mondiale des Cités Unies, a.k.a. United Towns Organisation), SUMMIT (the World Association of Capital Cities) and METROPOLIS (the world association of major metropolises).

This group expanded to form the G4+ by integrating continental associations of local governments, including the Union of African Cities (UVA). A series of negotiations then began with the aim of creating a unified world organisation representing local governments at the United Nations.

Following the World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities, organised within the framework of the 2nd United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II, September 1996, Istanbul, Turkey), the members of the G4+ decided to create the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) and to appoint Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi as Secretary General, concurrently with his role as Secretary General of the MDP. WACLAC was mandated to accelerate the discussions between the G4+ member associations with a view to creating a single world organisation for local governments. I had the honour of being the first mayor to address the United Nations General Assembly in September 1997 at a representative of WACLAC.

It took another 8 years of negotiations and the advent of two African presidents at the helm of the two main global organisations – Max Ngand’we, Mayor of Kitwe (Zambia), President of IULA, and Daby Diagne, Mayor of Louga (Senegal), President of FMCU-UTO – for an agreement to be reached in 2002, paving the way for the founding congress of the world organisation of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) to be held in May 2004 in Paris (France).

The said congress established the headquarters of UCLG in Barcelona (Spain) and elected its leadership: Marta Suplicy, Mayor of São Paulo (Brazil), President; Bertrand Delanoë, Mayor of Paris (France), First Vice-President; Father Smangaliso Mkhathwa, Mayor of Tshwane and President of SALGA, the Local Government Association of South Africa, Second Vice-President; Elisabeth Gateau, Secretary General.

Being involved in the process of unifying the municipal movement worldwide, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi and myself set about implementing the local government movement’s dynamics of unity within the African continent, relying on the Africities Summits platform.

Held in January 1998 in Abidjan, under the presidency of Mr. Henri
Konan Bédié, then President of the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire, the first edition of the Africities Summit marked a historic milestone: the first meeting between the leaders of the local governments of all the regions of Africa, who then realised the futility of groupings set on the basis of the colonial past.

The leaders of the three groupings that were inherited from the colonial era decided to set up a coordination body to unify the African local government movement within five years. This would be done during the 3rd edition of the Africities Summit (December 2003, Yaoundé, Cameroon), under the honorary chairmanship of Joaquim Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique and then Chairman of the African Union.

The unified organisation of local governments in Africa would come to be known as the Council of African Municipalities and Regions (CCRA), with the following elected leadership: President, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Mayor of Tshwane (South Africa), President of SALGA (South Africa). The executive committee appointed Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi as Secretary General of UCLG Africa.

Pending the finalisation of the headquarters agreement between the Government of Morocco and UCLG Africa, the Executive Committee decided to temporarily set up the UCLG Africa Secretariat in Pretoria (South Africa).

That temporary status was contested by the President when the headquarters agreement with the Government of Morocco was signed in January 2008 and the permanent headquarters of the organisation had to be established in Rabat, Morocco.

This led to a serious crisis, threatening to drive a wedge within the organisation. However, thanks to the mediation team set up by UCLG, including the then Mayor of Lisbon, Alberto Guimaraes, the worst was averted. The return to unity was mainly owed to the personal commitment of the honorary members of UCLG Africa, notably Presidents Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, and Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. The unity was sealed at the sixth edition of the Africities Summit (December 2012, Dakar, Senegal).

For the first time, a roundtable was held between the honorary members of UCLG Africa, represented by former Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Pedro Pires of Cape Verde, Nicophère Soglo of Benin, and the organised youth of the continent. At the Dakar Summit, the meeting of ministers endorsed the proposed African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Development, which had been put forward by UCLG Africa, and which would be adopted by the African Union’s Heads of State and Government at their conference in Malabo (Equatorial Guinea) in June 2014.

UCLG Africa has faced many challenges along the way, but it has shown resilience, largely due to the commitment of its members. I remain confident that future challenges will also be overcome.

I predict a serene and remarkable future for UCLG Africa because it is a useful institution that has demonstrated its effectiveness in the service of local Africa. The future of the continent, its sustainable development, unity, and peacekeeping are increasingly playing out in its cities and territories.
Coming up Highlights

**Africa Climate Week**
Organised by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
Kampala, Ouganda
August 2021

**Climate Chance Africa Summit**
Dakar, Senegal
September 2021

**COP 26**
Mayors and Local Government Leaders Day
Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom
November 2021

**Rabat, African Capital of Culture**
Official opening on the occasion of UNESCO’s World Day for African and Afro-descendant Culture
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
January 24, 2022

**The African Union and European Union Heads of State and Government Summit**
AU-EU Forum of Local Government Leaders, co-organised by UCLG Africa
Brussels, Belgium
First quarter 2022

**9th World Water Forum**
Mayors and Local Elected Officials Roundtable, co-organised with the OECD
Diamniadio, Senegal
March 21-26, 2022

**Africities Summit 9**
UCLG Africa Elective General Assembly
Kisumu, Kenya
17 to 21 May, 2022

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**New Cycle of Cooperation with the European Union**
Following the political agreement between the European Parliament and EU member countries on the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), the European Commission is starting a new cycle for the 2021-2027 period. With an overall budget of 79.6 billion euros, the new instrument will cover EU’s cooperation with all third countries. UCLG Africa has invested a great deal of effort in preparing its members to play an active role in the programming process of the new European cooperation. Forty-four (44) members have received support, with the provision of a consultant, to produce three reports: a compendium, an analytical report, and a roadmap. UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat also provided support in the preparation for the dialogue between national governments and the European Union delegations.

**New African Union Commission**
At the pan-African level, 2021 is the year when the new African Union Commission and its members will come into play. This will require UCLG Africa to make a renewed effort to raise awareness and advise the new Commission on issues related to decentralisation and the role of subnational and local governments in the development, integration, and unity of Africa. UCLG Africa has also provided technical assistance to the African Union’s Specialised Technical Committee 8 (STCB) for the promotion of the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development, as well as for the establishment of the High Council for Local Governments.

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**Photo Caption:** Official opening ceremony of the ministerial meeting of the STC8 Bureau, Rabat, March 28, 2018

**Title:** Integration, development and urban governance in the 21st century

**Author:** Andreas Korn, Head of the Division for Public Administration and Regional and Urban Development (DIA/DRD)

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The 9th edition of the Africities Summit will be held in Kisumu, Kenya, from April 26 to 30, 2022, on the following theme: “The Role of Africa’s Intermediary Cities in the Implementation of the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 and the African Union’s Agenda 2063”.

Unanimously recognised as the go-to setting for training and information exchange, the Africities Summit aims to improve coordination between States, subnational and local governments, and their partners, with two primary objectives: 1) defining relevant shared strategies to improve the living conditions of populations at the local level, and 2) contributing to peace, integration, and unity in Africa starting from its local territories. Africities Summits address the fundamental issues raised by the African Union's Agenda 2063 and, as such, contribute to the debate initiated by the African Union Commission regarding its implementation. For the first time, the Summit will be held in an intermediary city, strongly signalling the attention that must be paid to intermediary cities, which are home to almost a third of the continent’s urban population and whose growth rates are generally higher than those of larger and smaller cities.

The Africities Exhibition Fair, a showcase of expertise and innovation in the pool of occupations pertaining to cities and local territories, the Africities Exhibition Fair, an international trade fair for African cities and territories, is held on the sidelines of the Summit. About 300 exhibitors present their experience, know-how, products, and tools for the sustainable development of cities and local territories.

Recap of the Africities Summits

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<td>Recognising the Essential Role of Local Governments in Africa's Development</td>
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Africities Summit 8 in Numbers

- **8,300** Participants
- **77** Countries
- **20** Ministers
- **3,000** Locally elected officials and mayors
- **+40** Partners
- **+150** Sessions
- **84** Exhibitors
- **150** B2B meetings
African Capitals of Culture
A lever for the sustainable development of territories

The African Capitals of Culture (ACC) programme aims to make culture the fourth pillar of sustainable development for local governments in Africa.

The programme aims to support the development and implementation of cultural and artistic policies in African cities and territories; sustain and give structure to cultural and creative professionals and enterprises across the continent; and point subnational and local governments to the employment potential that exists for young people in cultural and creative activities.

The ACC programme seeks to draw the attention of African local populations and decision-makers to the urgent need to take an interest in the tangible and intangible heritage of their territories, as a source of the building blocks of their identity and sense of belonging, as well as a repository of elements of pride and dignity. Similarly, the ACC programme seeks to help with the emergence of African cultural spots that would have international reach and influence, and around which the development of the capacities of competent professionals in the cultural and artistic spheres could be reinforced.

With the ACCs, culture returns to the heart of the continent’s structural transformation, offering a new development model based on originality, authenticity, and creativity.

Designated as the first African Capital of Culture, Rabat is set to host a series of artistic and cultural functions in 2021-2022, including trend-setting and one-off events, alongside labelled and ad-hoc projects. The capital of the Kingdom of Morocco will be the convergence point for the cultural expression and creativity of the entire continent, its territories, and its cities, as well as a moment and place to take stock of public cultural policies.

Indeed, Rabat will present the richness of Morocco’s cultural heritage during fortnights held in cities in other regions of Africa, which are candidates to become African Capitals of Culture in the coming years. The next African Capital of Culture for 2023-2024 will be officially announced during the 9th edition of the Africities Summit.

An event to celebrate African cultures in Morocco, Africa, and the rest of the world.

- DIGITAL ARTS
- MUSIC AND SINGING
- PAINTING AND SCULPTURE
- LITERATURE AND STORYTELLING
- CINEMA AND THEATRE
- DESIGN, FASHION, CRAFTS, AND DECORATIVE ARTS
- ARTS OF LIVING AND GASTRONOMY
- STREET ART
- DANCE
- CIRCUS
Transformative Programmes
Making UCLG Africa the gateway to local Africa by 2030

GADDEPA identifies priority areas of intervention to promote and strengthen decentralised governance and development in Africa. The second strategic plan 2021-2030 (GADDEPA 2.0) was adopted by the Executive Committee at its session of 7 December 2020. It will be ratified by UCLG Africa’s Elective General Assembly in 2022 in Kisumu, Kenya.

The Governance, Advocacy, and Decentralised Development Programme for Africa (GADDEPA 1.0), adopted by the UCLG Africa Executive Committee in October 2007, was the strategic vision of the organisation for the 2008-2020 period, aiming to contribute to building Africa from its cities and territories.

On the other hand, GADDEPA 2.0 identifies seven priority areas of action for the 2021-2030 period with interventions centred on three pillars:

- Advocacy and mobilisation for decentralisation and subnational and local governments
- Capacity building for elected officials, subnational and local government staff, and national associations of subnational and local governments
- Technical assistance to national associations of subnational and local governments and their members in the preparation of projects and the search for funding.

The seven priority action areas in the 2021-2030 strategy

- Local economy and finance
- Climate, biodiversity and food security
- Gender and youth
- Basic services and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Migration
- Culture
- Peace and security

UCLG Africa
Prioritising institutional development

Statutory Meetings
Virtual Organisation

REFELA
A network for the promotion of gender equality

Created in 2011 with the support of the Kingdom of Morocco, the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA) is the Standing Commission for Gender Equality of UCLG Africa and represents the African continent in the UCLG Gender Equality Commission, a body recognised as the voice of locally elected women by the United Nations.

REFELA carries out its 2019-2021 Strategic Action Plan, based on the principles of the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 of the United Nations, around five themes:

- REFELA Outreach, mobilisation of partners and funding to support the network’s activities.
- Implementation and monitoring-evaluation of the 3 REFELA campaigns: The “African Cities without Street Children” Campaign, sponsored by HRH Princess Lalla Meryem of Morocco; the “African Cities with Zero Tolerance to Violence against Women and Girls” Campaign, rewarded the UNESCO IDEALKENT Prize, celebrating Women Friends of the City; and the “African Cities for Women’s Economic Empowerment” Campaign, carried out in partnership with the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI).
- Development of the Local Authorities Charter for Gender Equality in Africa, in partnership with UCLG World and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions.
- Promotion of women’s leadership in African local governments.
- Mobilisation of locally elected women for climate action in African cities and territories.

Mobilising funding, launching continental campaigns, promoting parity and women’s leadership... With REFELA, locally elected women and leaders in Africa are making their voices heard.
Throughout 2020, REFELA carried out about 40 activities whose format was adapted to the constraints of Covid-19. As part of the network strengthening, REFELA held its 3rd Bureau Meeting, and participated in the 23rd and 24th Session of the UCLG Africa Executive Committee. REFELA also took part in the 4th ANMAR Forum (Forum of Local Authorities of Northern Morocco and Andalusia) in Seville, the 10th World Urban Forum organised by UN-Habitat in Abu Dhabi in February 2020, and co-organised an online Forum on Social and Solidarity Economy in partnership with the Global Solidarity Economy Forum (GSEF). In addition, REFELA registered the creation of 4 new national chapters, respectively in Ghana, Chad, Tunisia, and Côte d’Ivoire, bringing the number of REFELA-Countries to 30.

As part of the implementation of its campaigns, REFELA has re-launched the call to African cities to join the “African Cities without Street Children” Campaign with compelling results. During the 4th ANMAR Forum in Seville, REFELA signed a Memorandum of Partnership with FAMSI for the implementation of the “African Cities for Women’s Economic Empowerment” Campaign. The call for expressions of interest in joining this campaign was launched for African cities in August 2020, together with the publication of the “Analytical Report on the Status of Women’s Economic Empowerment in Africa” and the “Report on Women’s Economic Inclusion in Local Governments”.

In June 2020, the 2nd meeting of the working group on the drafting of the “Local Authorities Charter for Gender Equality in Africa” was held. Finally, REFELA has made available to its members the 2nd edition of the “Guide for the creation of REFELA National Chapters”, with the aim of boosting the creation of those chapters and, thus, contributing to the promotion of gender equality and the development of women’s leadership within African cities and territories.

• A governance that reflects the diversity of cities and territories

YELO’s first General Assembly, a high point of the upcoming Africities Summit in Kisumu

The creation of this network paves the way for greater involvement of young people in the public life in African cities and territories, and for their greater mobilisation for the economic, social, and cultural growth of their communities.

The decision to set up the Network of Young Elected Officials of African Subnational and Local Authorities was made by UCLG Africa’s Executive Committee. Three representatives from each of the five African regions were appointed to constitute the provisional bureau in charge of preparing the first assembly of YELO, which will take place during the next Africities Summit in Kisumu (Kenya), in April 2022. UCLG Africa’s Secretariat has been tasked with building a database of young elected representatives of subnational and local authorities in Africa, organising their mobilisation to participate in the constitutive General Assembly in April 2022, and preparing the working documents for the General Assembly.

YELO A network to mobilise young elected local officials in Africa

The Network of Young Elected Local Officials of Africa (YELO) was launched in Durban in November 2019, at the UCLG World Congress.

The creation of this network paves the way for greater involvement of young people in the public life in African cities and territories, and for their greater mobilisation for the economic, social, and cultural growth of their communities.

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Professional Networks
Promoting the performances of subnational and local administrations

UCLG Africa has created four networks of senior officials of subnational and local governments’ administrations in Africa.

Africa-FINET, established in 2013, brings together financial services managers.
Africa-MAGNET, launched in 2015, brings together general secretaries or chief executive officers of subnational and local governments administrations.

In 2020, professional networks collected the financial accounts of a hundred African cities; data on the access of populations, including the poorest, to basic local public services and on the human resources situation of subnational and local governments; as well as new legislative and regulatory texts on decentralisation and local finance. They have also contributed to the African Review of Local Finances, and to “The Voice of the Local African Manager”, a quarterly review on the management of human resources of subnational and local administrations in Africa.

These networks contribute to the collection of data to feed the four observatories developed by UCLG Africa, the first two of which have already been launched.

1. The Observatory on Local Finance
In 2020, UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat launched the groundwork for the 4th edition of “The State of Local Finances in Africa”, aiming to compare the key numbers and ratios pertaining to financial management in African cities. The 2017 accounts of 62 cities from 24 African countries – from Africa’s 5 regions – have been collected, processed, and analysed.

2. The Observatory of Human Resources in Local Governments
“In 2020, the activities focused on several projects: defining the standards of excellence for the professionalisation of human resource management at the local level, updating databases of local government personnel, the publication of two issues of “The Voice of the Local African Manager”, and establishing a national chapter of the HR network in Burkina Faso.”

3. The Observatory of Local Economies
This observatory aims to monitor, document, and assess the policies, strategies, projects, approaches, methods, and tools of local economic development implemented by States and local governments in Africa, as well as their benchmarking against international standards. It will also produce every three years on the occasion of the Africities Summits, a “State of Local Economic Development in Africa” report, leveraging in particular the LEDNA membership.

4. The Observatory on Accessing Basic Services and Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
This observatory will track and document the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in African local governments. Triennially, it will produce a report on the level of access to basic services within subnational and local governments in Africa. It will contribute to the Voluntary Local Reviews that local governments must develop in order to present their contributions to the achievement of the SDGs to their respective States and to the High-Level Political Forum of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Transformative Programmes
LEDNA
A network at the service of local economic development

Set up at the request of African mayors and leaders of subnational and local governments at the 4th edition of the Africities Summit in Nairobi in 2006, LEDNA (Local Economic Development Network of Africa) aims to strengthen the capacities of local governments in Africa. LEDNA aims to promote and support local economic development, exchange expertise and good practices, and contribute to the emergence of a community of local economic development (LED) practitioners. In 2020, members of this LED community participated in the development of six bi-monthly newsletters to share experiences and information on local economic development in Africa. The LEDNA network operates on two fronts: first, the dedicated website (www.ledna.org) which allows the sharing of information and experiences as well as knowledge about LED among African subnational and local governments; second, the provision of operational support to African countries to make the national institutional environment more conducive to LED, and to build the capacity of subnational and local governments to carry out local LED processes. The development of the LEDNA network has been supported by USAID, AFD, the Swiss Confederation, and GIZ.

Peer Review
A mutual assessment and learning approach

Launched in 2017, UCLG Africa’s Peer Review programme is a mechanism for mutual learning and performance assessment between subnational and local governments and their national associations.

This mechanism is based on four criteria: achievements; leadership; engagement with populations, businesses and partners; and resources and performance management. The assessments are conducted at the request of candidate subnational and local governments or their associations, by a review team comprising one or two African elected officials, two senior officials from subnational or local government administrations in Africa, one or two experts, and two representatives of UCLG Africa. The review process includes the following: a diagnosis; a series of consultations with the members of the deliberative and executive bodies, with representatives of the administrations of the entity under review, as well as with other relevant actors in civil society and in the community of economic operators, both public and private; the report-back and discussion of the outcomes of the consultations before the deliberative and executive bodies of the entity under review, and the production of a final report featuring the recommendations of the review mission.

Due to the pandemic, the reviews planned for 2020 could not be carried out. The programme has issued calls for applications to build review teams, who will undergo a series of trainings during the course of 2021.

Advocacy and Mobilisation
Decentralised governance and capacity strengthening

As the leading proponent of decentralisation in Africa, UCLG Africa is committed to its mission of dialogue, advocacy, and mobilisation. To this end, the General Secretariat develops methods and reference tools to foster an environment that is favourable to decentralised governance and to the strengthening of local governments’ capacity to fulfil their mandates in serving their populations.

CEE Rating
The ranking of the institutional environment of 53 African countries

Each triennium since 2012, UCLG Africa has published, with the support of Cities Alliance, the CEE Rating, which is an institutional environment barometer set in place by national authorities to be used by subnational and local governments.

This reference document is used during the political dialogue that takes place during the Africities Summit between mayors and presidents of subnational and local governments, ministers, and development partners. To date, three editions of the CEE Rating have been published (2012; 2015; 2018). The fourth edition (2021) will be issued at the Africities Summit in 2022 in Kisumu, Kenya.

The first two editions of the report covered 50 countries. With the third edition, the report started ranking 53 African countries in four categories: countries whose institutional environment is favourable to local governments; countries whose institutional environment can be favourable to local governments with the adoption of minor reforms; countries whose institutional environment requires serious reforms to become favourable to local governments; and countries whose institutional environment is unfavourable to local governments.

Reform suggestions

The evaluation is based on 12 criteria: constitutional framework; legislative framework; governance; financial transfers from the State to subnational and local governments; subnational and local governments’ own resources; capacity building of subnational and local governments; transparency in the functioning and management of subnational and local governments; citizen participation; performance of local governments; existence or non-existence of a national policy or strategy for the management of urbanisation; taking women into account in national and local governance; involvement of local governments in climate action. Each criterion is given a score, and the different countries obtain an overall score by aggregating the scores received for each criterion. The report concludes with reform suggestions to improve the institutional environment of local governments.

The CEE Rating is used by several partners – most notably the African Development Bank – to define their governance programmes in Africa. The AfDB and Cities Alliance are co-financing the production of the 2021 edition of the CEE Rating.
Over the course of 2020, UCLG Africa has also been heavily involved in raising the awareness of African Union bodies about the need to include local governments in the early warning mechanism of conflicts in Africa, as well as in the implementation of cross-border decentralised cooperation programmes.

In 2020, UCLG Africa worked with the STC8's Bureau and the African Union Commission in the preparation of the new partnership agreement between the European Union and the African Union (post-Cotonou agreement) and of the next African Union-European Union Summit of Heads of State and Government, which has been postponed to the first quarter of 2022. As part of this Summit, the second AU/EU Forum of Local and Regional Government Leaders will also be held. Forum preparations rest with UCLG Africa, on one side, and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), on the other.


Finally, UCLG Africa has continued its advocacy efforts to get the African Union’s Heads of State to adopt “the role of cities in the structural transformation of Africa” as a theme for a near-future conference.


The objectives of the African Charter are as follows:

1. Promote, protect, and act as a catalyst for decentralisation, local governance, and local development in Africa
2. Foster and defend local governance and local democracy as cornerstones of decentralisation in Africa
3. Promote resource mobilisation and local economic development with a view to eradicating poverty in Africa
4. Promote a common understanding and vision of member states on decentralisation, local governance, and local development
5. Promote the values and fundamental principles of decentralisation, local governance, and local development
6. Guide the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies on decentralisation, local governance, and local development at the continental, regional, state, and sub-national levels
7. Foster effective coordination, harmonisation, and knowledge-sharing within member states and among regional economic communities on decentralisation, local governance, and local development
8. Promote the association and cooperation of local governments or local authorities at the local, national, regional, and continental levels
9. Foster the participation of civil society, the private sector, and populations in decentralisation, local governance and local development initiatives

UCLG Africa provides technical assistance to the African Union’s Specialised Technical Committee No. 8, which brings together the Ministers of Public Service, Urban Development and Housing, Local Governments, and Decentralisation (STCB).

The STCB, a body whose secretariat work is operated by the Political Affairs Department of the African Union Commission, has been mandated to develop three reference instruments: the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service; the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development; and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Urbanisation and Housing Management.

As part of its technical assistance to the African Union Commission, UCLG Africa initiated the draft African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development, as well as the draft for the establishment of the High Council of Local Governments as an advisory body of the African Union. Both documents were adopted by the African Union’s Heads of State and Government at their conference in June 2014 in Malabo (Equatorial Guinea). In recognition of UCLG Africa’s contribution, the STCB’s Bureau has recommended that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) be concluded between the African Union Commission and UCLG Africa. The draft MoU has been submitted by UCLG Africa to the African Union Commission, where it is under consideration. The signing is expected to take place in 2021.

MoU between the AU Commission and UCLG Africa

In 2020, UCLG Africa undertook a major advocacy effort with the Member States of the African Union to accelerate the signing and ratification of the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development. UCLG Africa also carried out a series of consultations, notably with the African Union Commission, UN-Habitat, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, with a view to developing and adopting the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Urbanisation and Habitat Management.
Transformative Programmes

For a renewed cooperation with local and regional governments

Advocacy before the European Union

The EU/Africa dialogue remains crucial at a time when both continents face common threats of destabilisation due to extremism, terrorism, and the pressure of international migration, threats that are aggravated by the health crisis.

UCLG Africa’s interventions highlight the major role of local and regional governments in the implementation of global agendas, crisis resolution, and the maintenance of peace and security.

In 2020, UCLG Africa began mobilising and upgrading national associations of local and regional governments ahead of their participation in the programming of the next cycle of European cooperation (2021-2027). This is the first time that subnational and local governments are invited to participate in this process as public or state actors.

UCLG Africa contributed to the production of compendiums and analytical reports on economic, decentralisation, and cooperation policies, focusing on the role of local and regional governments and relations with the European Union. Thirty (30) countries have a roadmap identifying the priority expectations of local and regional governments in cooperation with the European Union.

30 Country Roadmaps

This is a unique opportunity to elevate national associations of subnational and local governments to an unprecedented level of responsibility in the implementation of the European Union’s public policies and cooperation programmes.

In return, the national associations of subnational and local governments must live up to the hopes and responsibilities pinned on them, which will require a major effort to upgrade their institutions and strengthen their capacities. Such an effort will entail the provision of technical assistance options to members, namely by UCLG Africa’s Regional Offices and other partners.

UCLG Africa continues its advocacy before the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) to institutionalise the AU-EU Forum of Local and Regional Government Leaders, on the sidelines of the AU-EU Summit of Heads of State and Government. This Forum aims to provide subnational and local governments with an insight into the issues discussed by the Heads of Government. This Forum aims to provide subnational and local governments with an insight into the issues discussed by the Heads of Government. This Forum aims to provide subnational and local governments with an insight into the issues discussed by the Heads of Government.

For the upcoming AU-EU Summit of Heads of State and Government, the UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat worked with its European partner CEMR-Platfoma and obtained from both unions the institutionalisation of the Forum of Local and Regional Government Leaders as an official meeting considered an integral part of the Summit’s activities.

UCLG Africa works with all the international and regional associations of local and regional governments that have a framework partnership agreement with the European Commission (UCLG, AIMF, CEMR, CLGF) with a view to proposing a roadmap for the preparation of the Forum. UCLG Africa was asked to propose a draft declaration to be adopted at the end of the Forum’s proceedings, and which could be presented to the Summit of Heads of State and Government.

Capacity Building

Knowledge Management and Good Governance

It is one thing to demand that local and regional governments have the right to speak. It is another to guarantee that the resulting speech be competent and respected and, indeed, be respected because it is competent. This is why capacity building and knowledge management are paramount in UCLG Africa’s action.

UCLG Africa offers training and capacity building activities in order to:

- Ensure the regular and efficient provision of basic services to the population
- Contribute to sustainable economic, social, and local development
- Promote the development of healthy, safe, and prosperous territories
- Improve local governance, particularly through the involvement of the population in political life and the management of local public affairs.

ALGA

African Local Government Academy

To build a thriving local Africa, UCLG Africa recommended in 2009, during the Africities V Summit in Marrakesh, the creation of the African Local Government Academy. A strategic tool for investing in human capital and sharing knowledge.

ALGA has four missions: supporting UCLG Africa members and networks in learning, training, and capacity building; promoting standards of excellence and quality in training institutes and programmes aimed at African subnational and local governments; upgrading local public administration through the professionalisation and modernisation of human resources management; and developing and deploying a diversified training offer.

To carry out these missions, ALGA has since 2016 developed a network of some 30 African Anchoring Institutes and some 20 partners around the world.

In 2020, this network was expanded to include the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), the University of Stellenbosch and the School of Public Leadership (South Africa), to the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD, South Africa) for the prevention and constructive resolution of conflicts; finally, to the international network PROFADEL, which is composed of seven higher education institutes from different parts of the world, specialising in territorial development and decentralisation. A financing and support agreement was signed with the French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME) for the mobilisation and training of local elected officials and territorial managers of African subnational and local governments.

Confidence of international partners

With the commitment and trust it has anchored with its network of partners, UCLG Africa has earned, through ALGA, the election in 2019 as a member of the Management Board of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA), and, in 2020, the chairmanship of the Steering Committee of the International Commission on Accreditation of Education and Training in Public Administration (ICAPA).

Drawing lessons from the pandemic and following the strategic orientations of UCLG Africa, ALGA has issued 1,044 training certificates since its creation in 2010.
ALGA has set up an e-learning platform consisting of three training courses.
The enrolment of African subnational and local governments in climate action is a fundamental gain of UCLG Africa’s advocacy work.

This vision has been reinforced by the Declaration of the United Nations Secretary-General, underlining the state of climate emergency at COP 25 in 2019. The health crisis has underscored the importance of integrating climate objectives into the economic recovery plans of African cities and territories.

Launched in 2017 at COP 23, UCLG Africa’s Climate Task Force has been working to develop strategic partnerships between the various actors implementing the Climate Agenda in Africa, including UN agencies, the African Union, donors, technical support organisations, national associations of local governments, the private sector, and academic and research institutions.

Accredited to the Green Climate Fund

In January 2020, with the support of four countries (Morocco, Benin, Togo and Burkina Faso), UCLG Africa initiated the procedure to become an Accredited Regional Entity of the Green Climate Fund, and to be able to submit climate-energy projects put forward by subnational and local governments in Africa.

In February 2020, UCLG Africa organised the Cotonou Forum on “the contribution of national associations of local governments in the mobilisation of African cities for climate action”, as part of the steps to include the subnational and local governments of Africa in the United Nations Climate Agenda. Capitalising on the experience of the CoM SSA in Benin, the work of the Forum conducted to defining the approach to – and process of – territorialising the NDCs.

In July 2020, UCLG Africa organised the Cotonou Forum on “the contribution of national associations of local governments in the mobilisation of African cities for climate action”, as part of the steps to include the subnational and local governments of Africa in the United Nations Climate Agenda. Capitalising on the experience of the CoM SSA in Benin, the work of the Forum conducted to defining the approach to – and process of – territorialising the NDCs.

In July 2020, UCLG Africa partnered with the OECD to conduct a survey on the participation of local governments in water governance in Africa, ahead of the 9th World Water Forum slated for March 2022. Thirty-six (36) African cities have responded to the survey.

The survey’s findings highlighted critical gaps that need to be addressed to strengthen African local governments’ capabilities to intervene more effectively in the field of water governance. In order to sustain the localised reporting approach, it was recommended that an Observatory on Water Governance be established and that SDG 6 be implemented at the level of subnational and local governments in Africa. It was also proposed that a mayors’ roundtable be held to discuss the role of subnational and local governments in water governance and resilience ahead of the 9th World Water Forum, scheduled for March 2022.

Towards the end of 2020, UCLG Africa entered the final phase of the accreditation process as a Delivery Partner of the Green Climate Fund in the implementation of the Moroccan Readiness Programme, linked to the NDCs territorialisation pilot in the Souss-Massa Region.

In addition, UCLG Africa has been selected by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to participate in the organisation of the Africa Climate Week, scheduled for the second half of 2021, and of the Mayors’ Forum during the COP 26 in Glasgow, Scotland, in November 2021.

Access to sustainable energy

In collaboration with its international partners, notably ICLEI (Local Government for Sustainability) and CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions), UCLG Africa continues to implement the CoM SSA, which aims to provide technical support for access to sustainable energy and the development of local climate plans (SEACAP).

The initiative’s main objectives in Phase III are to facilitate access to funding for signatory cities, to build synergies between CoM SSA stakeholders, to support the action of national authorities through the establishment of a Structured Dialogue between the two levels of national and local government, and to strengthen the capacities and role of Local Governments Associations.

A strategic partnership has been established with the Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) to access UNFCCC capacity-building programmes on Adaptation, Mitigation, and Climate Finance. With the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC), UCLG Africa is developing a capacity-building programme on financial instruments to engage African cities in the carbon market.
Initiated by UCLG Africa in 2013, the Territorial Coaching Programme aims to support States, subnational and local governments, and civil societies in African countries in steering their governance system towards a decentralised management of public affairs.

Territorial coaching proposes to focus local government action on the human factor and to create new relationships between public authorities and civil societies, for a better mobilisation of the active forces that serve the development of the local territory. Such an evolution needs to be accompanied by an expertise that combines knowledge of territorial development issues and acquaintance with coaching tools.

The profession of "territorial coach" was developed for this purpose and was tested – for the first time in the world – in the Oriental Region of Morocco. Based on this experience, the African Local Governments Academy of UCLG Africa (ALGA) has established the College of Territorial Coaching, which offers a training course leading to certification as a Territorial Coach. To date, this College has trained 63 graduates from 13 African countries. In 2020, the Territorial Coaching Programme conducted several trainings, and experience-sharing workshops, and produced a video report on the actions taken against Covid-19 by the beneficiary organisations in Oujda. In the city of Oujda, the programme organised six citizen debates in 2020 and several training workshops on coping with the health crisis and preparing for the post-pandemic.

The Territorial Coaching Programme also worked on the drafting of the terms of reference for the missions of its different bodies, as well as on the production of a strategic note on the programme’s Communication and Marketing.

2.0. Through the Territorial Coaching programme, UCLG Africa has provided technical assistance to the Regional Council of the Oriental Region and the Department of Kaoalack in Senegal, to help with the preparation of a €400,000 request for funding from Morocco’s Interior Ministry’s African Fund for the Support of International Decentralised Cooperation. This project aims to strengthen the Territorial Coaching Centres of Oujda and Kaoalack, as well as incorporate entrepreneurship incubators for young students from Senegal, who are on scholarships at the training institutions of the Oriental Region.

As part of the support programme for civil society organisations in the Oriental Region, the Centre of Excellence for Territorial Coaching in Oujda conducted several trainings, and experience-sharing workshops, and produced a video report on the actions taken against Covid-19 by the beneficiary organisations in Oujda. In the city of Oujda, the programme organised six citizen debates in 2020 and several training workshops on coping with the health crisis and preparing for the post-pandemic.

The Territorial Coaching and Marketing Programme carried out a diagnostic mission, followed by training workshops. Elsewhere, as part of the support programme for the Rabat-Salé- Kenitra Region, several workshops were organised, with major projects launched on the economic integration of migrants in Rabat, on the shared governance of migration, and on the professionalisation of domestic workers.

This session focused on the reality of migration flows in African cities, the effects of “hotspots”, and the denial of migrants’ rights.

Following this initial participation, UCLG Africa has been selected to coordinate the participation of African mayors in the Regional Consultations initiated by the UAE Presidency of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, slated for January 2021 (GFMD-2021). It should be noted that since the inclusion of mayors in the follow-up mechanism of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration, adopted in Marrakesh (Morocco) in December 2018, UCLG Africa has been regularly involved in international multi-stakeholder discussions on migration.

Protection and rights of migrants

The African consultations for the 2021 GFMD were held in May and June 2020 under the auspices of the African Union, covering three themes: governance of labour migration in a changing employment context; developing migrants’ skills for employment; and closing the gaps in migrant protection. UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat then facilitated two panel discussions on migration data management and on decentralisation of migration governance. UCLG Africa and representatives of African cities proposed strengthening the legal underpinnings of decentralisation, creating an alliance to advocate for the role of subnational and local governments in migration management, and working in synergy with all stakeholders, including private actors.
Facing the agendas of the United Nations and the African Union

Africa is committed to implementing the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and its seven aspirations, the United Nations Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and other global agendas such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) on Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the New Urban Agenda.

As stated in the GOLD V regional report on the localisation of global agendas, published by UCLG and UCLG Africa in 2020, this commitment requires a growing recognition of the role that cities and territories play as key development actors. The rapid urbanisation of the African continent is one of the major challenges of our time. Managing this challenge successfully would be a key factor in achieving the SDGs in Africa (United Nations Agenda 2030) and in attaining the “Africa We Want” (the African Union Agenda 2063).

By 2050, Africa will be the most populous region in the world, with over two billion people. More than 12 billion Africans will live in cities, and 15 African cities will receive more than 10 million people.

200 million young people are about to enter the labour market, with little hope of finding a decent job.

This shift from a predominantly rural Africa 30 years ago to a predominantly urban Africa 30 years from now on is taking place against a backdrop of change risks, Africa, like other continents, is exposed to resistance from national governments that try to limit decentralisation in order to preserve centralised control over political decision-making and fiscal power. The changes proposed by ECA can help strengthen the State through local action.

Unattainable SDGs?

The 2019 Sustainable Development Report by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) already reported that the continent is, unfortunately, not on track to achieving most of the SDGs. The progress assessment shows that only three goals (SDGs 5, 13, and 15) are likely to hit the 2030 target. “Countries are not just underperforming on these goals, it is the achievement of these goals that seems virtually impossible,” the report explains.

Of course, Africa must find its own way to implement the SDGs. But, as is needed elsewhere in the world, the continent must first ensure that the SDGs are defined and implemented at the level of cities and local territories, with the active participation of subnational and local government leaders, capitalising on the energies and strength of the inhabitants of African cities, i.e. the young people who form the majority of the population.

The ECA report shows that significant efforts are underway in African countries to achieve the SDGs and to integrate local governments. It also shows the discrepancy between political commitments—made at the highest level of government—and the actual unlocking of the potential capacities of local governments at the national level, which would have helped in implementing the global and continental development agendas.

In addition to ongoing conflicts and climate change risks, Africa, like other continents, is exposed to resistance from national governments that try to limit decentralisation in order to preserve centralised control over political decision-making and fiscal power. The changes proposed by ECA can help strengthen the State through local action.

• Six key recommendations for catching up and accelerating the process of achieving the SDGs

1. Improve urban management, planning and land use, with more coherent and integrated city and housing systems, to connect villages, intermediate towns and large cities and metropolitan regions, in order to foster structural economic, social, political, and territorial transformations at local, national, and regional levels.

2. Promote an institutional environment favourable to local governments, in particular through the implementation of decentralisation policies.

3. Provide local governments with adequate financial resources, ensuring that the decentralisation of powers goes hand in hand with the decentralisation of public resources and greater budgetary autonomy for local governments.

4. Mobilise sufficient human resources within local governments, considering that the effective implementation of the SDGs, the sustainable delivery of public services, as well as the sound management of local governments’ financial resources all depend largely on the quality and capacity of human resources.

5. Improve multi-level governance and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships, ensuring the involvement of all layers of society and promoting a whole-of-government approach, in which national governments take action to support SDG localisation strategies, engaging all levels of government.

6. Launch a data management revolution, ensuring greater attention to the establishment of data production processes, including localised SDG data, as a tool for measuring, reporting, and verifying progress in the implementation of SDG targets at national, local, and regional levels.

Focus on the location of global agendas

UCLG and UCLG Africa conclude the GOLD V report with a roadmap to achieve, more rapidly, the 2030 Agenda and the localisation of the SDGs. At the local and regional levels, they recommend mobilizing the vital forces of subnational and local governments, protecting common goods, human rights, culture and peace, strengthening inclusive local policies, implementing sustainable and participatory urban and regional planning, improving access to public services, prioritizing employment and local economic development. At the international and national levels, they recommend promoting the local-global movement, placing localisation at the heart of national sustainable development strategies, accelerating the decentralisation process (including for financing), encouraging the involvement of all stakeholders, and supporting the production and dissemination of disaggregated data to assess the localisation of global agendas.

As stated in the GOLD V regional report on the localisation of global agendas, published by UCLG and UCLG Africa in 2020, this commitment requires a growing recognition of the role that cities and territories play as key development actors. The rapid urbanisation of the African continent is one of the major challenges of our time. Managing this challenge successfully would be a key factor in achieving the SDGs in Africa (United Nations Agenda 2030) and in attaining the “Africa We Want” (the African Union Agenda 2063).

By 2050, Africa will be the most populous region in the world, with over two billion people. More than 12 billion Africans will live in cities, and 15 African cities will receive more than 10 million people.

200 million young people are about to enter the labour market, with little hope of finding a decent job.

This shift from a predominantly rural Africa 30 years ago to a predominantly urban Africa 30 years from now on is taking place against a backdrop of change risks, Africa, like other continents, is exposed to resistance from national governments that try to limit decentralisation in order to preserve centralised control over political decision-making and fiscal power. The changes proposed by ECA can help strengthen the State through local action.

Unattainable SDGs?

The 2019 Sustainable Development Report by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) already reported that the continent is, unfortunately, not on track to achieving most of the SDGs. The progress assessment shows that only three goals (SDGs 5, 13, and 15) are likely to hit the 2030 target. “Countries are not just underperforming on these goals, it is the achievement of these goals that seems virtually impossible,” the report explains.

Of course, Africa must find its own way to implement the SDGs. But, as is needed elsewhere in the world, the continent must first ensure that the SDGs are defined and implemented at the level of cities and local territories, with the active participation of subnational and local government leaders, capitalising on the energies and strength of the inhabitants of African cities, i.e. the young people who form the majority of the population.

The ECA report shows that significant efforts are underway in African countries to achieve the SDGs and to integrate local governments. It also shows the discrepancy between political commitments—made at the highest level of government—and the actual unlocking of the potential capacities of local governments at the national level, which would have helped in implementing the global and continental development agendas.

In addition to ongoing conflicts and climate change risks, Africa, like other continents, is exposed to resistance from national governments that try to limit decentralisation in order to preserve centralised control over political decision-making and fiscal power. The changes proposed by ECA can help strengthen the State through local action.

• Six key recommendations for catching up and accelerating the process of achieving the SDGs

1. Improve urban management, planning and land use, with more coherent and integrated city and housing systems, to connect villages, intermediate towns and large cities and metropolitan regions, in order to foster structural economic, social, political, and territorial transformations at local, national, and regional levels.

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The Organisation of UCLG Africa

In almost all African countries, at least 65% of SDG targets fall under the responsibilities devolved to subnational and local governments (LGs).

Strategic planning for an accelerated urban transition, the creation of an enabling institutional environment and the training of human resources are key elements for LGs to transform their planning and decision-making processes.

For subnational and local governments and their national and regional associations, it is essential to link the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, and the African Agenda 2063 more closely in order to apply a more coherent and integrated approach to urban and territorial development, thus preventing overlaps and contradictions between different policies and averting the ensuing negative impacts on budgets.

The expansion of local and regional investments is urgent given the social, financial, and environmental costs of inaction, the pressing need to redress infrastructure deficits and to modernise the growing urban fabric, and the urgency of responding to the climate emergency and the impacts of disasters. With the localisation of the SDGs as a priority, it is essential that international partners adapt their funding mechanisms to further support local development and subnational and local governments and investments.

Aspirations and progress in the implementation of Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063 is the African Union’s long-term development framework, which was designed with input from key development stakeholders, including academics, policy makers, governments, and civil society, including the diaspora and the private sector. In the first six years, remarkable progress has been made towards achieving the goals set out in the first Ten-Year Implementation Plan. For the continent to achieve all the targets and goals set out in Agenda 2063, there is now a need to redouble efforts and address key challenges, such as lack of data and inadequacy of resources—both human and financial—which slow down sustainable and inclusive economic, social, and cultural development. Diligent and coordinated efforts at the sub-national, national, regional, and continental levels are needed to comprehensively address the identified challenges and seize the opportunities.

Transformative Programmes

- Further support for subnational and local development

Source: First continental report on the status of implementation of Agenda 2063, published by the African Union and AUDA-NEPAD in February 2020
The statutes of UCLG Africa provide for the General Secretariat to open regional offices to be closer to local contexts. The regional offices offer tailor-made solutions for the promotion of national associations of local governments, capacity building and the adoption of best practices for an inclusive and sustainable development. They accompany local governments in assessing their needs in implementing development and cooperation agendas, and in becoming credible partners for national authorities, civil society, the business community and development partners. The regional offices are located in Cairo, Egypt, for North Africa (NARO); in Accra, Ghana, for West Africa (WARO); in Libreville, Gabon, for Central Africa (CARO); in Nairobi, Kenya, for East Africa (EARO); and in Pretoria, South Africa, for Southern Africa (SARO). The headquarters agreements are being finalised between UCLG Africa and the respective governments concerned.
The Organisation of UCLG Africa

- Partnership and cooperation for strong local governments

Following the retreat held in February 2019, team building was identified as a priority to improve UCLG Africa's performance in serving its members.

General Secretariat Budget

Breakdown of expenditures

- Expenditures 2020 vs. 2019

Comparison of expenditures between 2019 and 2020:
- Budget: 3,761,418 € in 2020 vs. 3,501,732 € in 2019
- Operating expenditures 2,559,135 € in 2020 vs. 2,578,011 € in 2019
- Activity expenditures 1,202,283 € in 2020 vs. 1,123,327 € in 2019

Breakdown of expenditures by category:
- Salaries: 2,096,461 € (56%)
- Income tax: 210,091 € (6%)
- Social security and insurance: 85,855 € (2%)
- Travel, accommodation, and daily allowances: 201,729 € (5%)
- Consultants’ fees: 558,842 € (15%)
- Seminars: 99,900 € (3%)
- Communication: 191,555 € (5%)
- UCLG’s annual contributions: 501,911 € (13%)
- Other operating and overhead costs of the General Secretariat and Regional Offices: 183,077 € (5%)
- Expenditure on territorial coaching: 50,191 € (1%)

Breakdown of expenditure by pillar:

- Operating expenditures
  - Activity expenditures: 2,559,135 € (68%)
  - Pillar 1 – Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development: 690,034 € (27%)
  - Pillar 2 – Advocacy and Mobilisation: 84,053 € (3%)
  - Pillar 3 – Corporate Learning and Knowledge Management: 428,196 € (17%)

- Activity expenditures: 1,202,283 € (32%)
  - Pillar 1 – Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development: 690,034 € (57%)
  - Pillar 2 – Advocacy and Mobilisation: 84,053 € (7%)
  - Pillar 3 – Corporate Learning and Knowledge Management: 428,196 € (36%)

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Strengthening Communication Tools
To make UCLG Africa the Voice of Local Africa

Information and awareness campaigns

Via its portal
www.uclga.org
UCLG Africa is increasingly asserting itself as the voice of local Africa. This portal, which recorded 18,000 visitors in 2020, contains links to the various programme-dedicated websites.

Active websites

www.uclgafrica-alga.org
www.knowledge.uclga.org
www.uclga.org

Twelve monthly newsletters were sent to the 8,000 subscribers registered in UCLG Africa’s members and partners database.

These newsletters include information relevant to local governments and collected by UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat, its branches, commissions, working groups, as well as by its members. LEDNA issued six newsletters and ALGA three. UCLG Africa actively collaborates with the media through the dissemination of press releases (15 in 2020) and specialised press reviews (48).
The survey’s findings highlighted critical gaps that need to be addressed to strengthen African local governments’ capability to intervene more effectively in the field of water governance. In order to sustain the localised reporting approach, it was recommended that an Observatory on Water Governance be established and that SDG 6 be implemented at the level of subnational and local governments in Africa. It was also proposed that a mayors’ roundtable be held to discuss the role of subnational and local governments in water governance and resilience ahead of the 9th World Water Forum, scheduled for March 2022.

Towards the end of 2020, UCLG Africa entered the final phase of the accreditation process as a Delivery Partner of the Green Climate Fund in the implementation of the Moroccan Readiness Programme, linked to the NDCs territorialisation pilot in the Souss-Massa Region.

In addition, UCLG Africa has been selected by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to participate in the organisation of the Africa Climate Week, scheduled for the second half of 2021, and of the Mayors’ Forum during the COP 26 in Glasgow, Scotland, in November 2021.

Access to sustainable energy
In collaboration with its international partners, notably ICLEI (Local Government for Sustainability) and CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions), UCLG Africa continues to implement the CoM SSA, which aims to provide technical support for access to sustainable energy and the development of local climate plans (SEACAP). The initiative’s main objectives in Phase III are to facilitate access to funding for signatory cities, to build synergies between CoM SSA stakeholders, to support the action of national authorities through the establishment of a Structured Dialogue between the two levels of national and local government, and to strengthen the capacities and role of Local Governments Associations.

A strategic partnership has been established with the Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) to access UNFCCC capacity-building programmes on Adaptation, Mitigation, and Climate Finance. With the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC), UCLG Africa is developing a capacity-building programme on financial instruments to engage African cities in the carbon market.
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