Local Africa in the Global Financing Ecosystem
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 2022. 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.

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Our Institutional Partners
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The year 2022 is above all the second year of implementation of UCLG Africa’s ten-year strategic plan 2021-2030, known as GADDEPA 2.0 (Governance, Advocacy & Decentralized Development Program for Africa).

Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi
Secretary general of UCLG Africa

This year was marked by the greatest success to the credit of UCLG Africa and its partners: the organization of the 9th edition of the Africities Summit from May 17 to May 21, 2022 in Kisumu, Kenya. For the first time, UCLG Africa took the gamble of organizing the Africities Summit in an intermediary city. The challenge was won beyond expectations since with more than 11,000 delegates, this event shattered the participation record held so far by Africities 8 held in 2018 in Marrakech (Morocco), with 8,500 delegates. This exceptional success was unanimously hailed.

Other noteworthy events in 2022 include the launch in Morocco of the Forum of African Regions (FORAF), in September in the city of Saidia, and of the Network of Young Local Elected Officials of Africa (YELO), in October in Tangiers. These two new networks of elected representatives join the Network of Local Elected Women of Africa (REFELA) which celebrated its 10th anniversary in October 2022 during the World Congress of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in Daejeon (South Korea). The reputation and dynamism of REFELA are such that the regional chapters) expressed the wish to draw inspiration from the REFELA network to, in turn, create a network of Locally Elected Women in their respective regions.

Also in 2022, UCLG Africa made a notable breakthrough in the global debate on climate change, with the organization of landmark events. First of all, co-organized with OECD, the Round Table of African Mayors for Water Security was held within the framework of the 9th World Water Forum, in March in Dakar (Senegal). Then, the Climate Day, organized as part of the Africities Summit from Kisumu, with the participation of the Egyptian Champion in charge of the preparation of COP27, was a day considered as an important milestone in the preparation of the COP27 held in Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt. Another decisive step is the fact that in August 2022 UCLG Africa acceded to the status of Delivery Partner and Implementing Partner of the Green Climate Fund, thus giving local authorities in Africa access to GCF resources. In September, the 18th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) integrated UCLG Africa as a partner representing the local governments of Africa within the platform of actors responsible for the implementation of AMCEN’s decisions. Thus, AMCEN officially and definitively anchors our organization within the ecosystem of institutional climate actors in Africa. AMCEN also accepted Egypt’s offer to host the Technical Support Unit (TSU) of the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI) within UCLG Africa’s Regional Office for North Africa (NARO). The presence of a UCLG Africa pavilion at COP27 confirmed that African local authorities were now accepted as key players in the fight against climate change. This positioning was reinforced...
by the election of the Secretary General of UCLG Africa to the Steering Committee of the OECD Initiative on Water Governance.

Finally, in December 2022, invited by the US State Department to participate in the United States / Africa Summit, the Secretary General of UCLG Africa proposed the establishment, with UCLG Africa, of a rapid financing facility intended to provide first aid to local authorities on the continent that have been affected by climatic disasters. This proposal must be formalized in order to possibly be considered within the framework of the Loss and Damage Fund, the creation of which was decided at COP27 and which will become operational at COP28 (Dubai, United Arab Emirates).

Another strategic progress to our credit in 2022 was the establishment of the Africa Territorial Trade and Investment Agency (ATIA), a special and innovative financial vehicle intended to facilitate access for local authorities in Africa to capital markets. The ATIA shareholding structure includes a cooperative society of local authorities (50.1%) and a bank branch (33.3%) which will be hosted by a renowned financial institution and which will cover all the countries of the continent, the rest of the capital being raised from African or international investors. With a view to reaching 100 members by December 2023, some sixty cities and local authorities have already subscribed to the ATIA cooperative society. In order to finalize the risk study and the institutional set-up of ATIA, UCLG Africa benefited in 2022 from the financial support of the General Secretariat of the United Nations, whose United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is leading this study. The entry into operation of the ATIA is scheduled for the end of 2025.

To prepare African cities to operate in the capital markets, the General Secretariat of UCLG Africa has developed and is implementing, in collaboration with GIZ and the African Development Bank, a training course on access for cities and territories of Africa to the financial market, intended for Chief Financial Officers of African cities and local governments that have joined the ATIA cooperative society. A first session of this training cycle was held in September 2022 in Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire), the second being scheduled for May 2023 in Johannesburg (South Africa).

UCLG Africa also initiated a dialogue in 2022 with the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Import-Export Bank (Afreximbank) to involve local authorities in the realization of the AfCFTA.

It is worth highlighting the essential contribution of the African delegation to the UCLG World Congress in Daejeon (South Korea). Under the enlightened leadership of the President of UCLG Africa, Ms. Fatimatou Abdel Malik, it was possible to reach a consensus in the appointment of the leadership of the world organization of cities and local authorities, UCLG, thus avoiding a crisis which otherwise would have been difficult to overcome. There is reason to thank for their collaboration and understanding, all the chapters of UCLG and their leaders, who agreed to put the unity of the global local government movement above all other considerations.

All these achievements with strong impacts for the continent are based on the diligent and continuous work of our teams at the General Secretariat and Regional Offices, at the service of our members. On behalf of our organization and on my own behalf, I would like to express our thanks and encouragement to them for raising the flag of UCLG Africa ever higher.
Understanding UCLG Africa

To promote the emergence of "Africa of Peoples" beyond "Africa of Nation-States", UCLG Africa, the representative organization of local authorities on the continent, pursues five main missions:

1. Promoting decentralization, local governance, and local development as priorities on the political agenda of African States and of the African Union.

2. Supporting the establishment and strengthening of national associations of local authorities to present the concerns and contributions of local authorities in their dialogue with the national Government and other actors.

3. Boosting decentralized cooperation through the exchange of experiences and best practices between local authorities in Africa, and with local authorities in other regions of the world, in particular through the Africities Summit.

4. Strengthening the capacities of leaders, elected officials, and staff of local authorities in the exercise of their powers.

5. Representing local governments of Africa within the world organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and bring their voice to all regional, continental, and international organizations.
The Presidents of UCLG Africa

Fatimetou abdel Malick
2022 - 2025
Regional Council of Nouakchott

Christine Ndutume Mba
July 2021 - May 2022
Libreville

Eugène Mba
December 2020 - May 2021
Libreville

Léandre Nzué
March 2019 - September 2020
Libreville

Rose Christine Ossouka Raponda
December 2018 - February 2019
Libreville

Soham El Wardini
2015 à 2018
Dakar

Khalifa Sall
2012 - 2015
Dakar

Taraya Ole Kores
2009 - 2012
Algjak

Hugues Nguefungale
2007 - 2009
Brazzaville

Father Smangaliso Mkhatshwa
2003 - 2007
Tshwane

Not designated
2000 - 2003

Not designated
1998 - 2000
Brief history

1975
- Creation of the Union of African Cities (UVA) with its headquarters in Dakar (Senegal)

1988
- Transfer of the UVA headquarters from Dakar to Rabat (Morocco)

1996
- Creation of the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) at the Habitat II Summit in Istanbul (Turkey)

1998
- Establishment of the Council of African Municipalities and Regions (CCRA) at the Africities 3 Summit in Yaoundé (Cameroon), later renamed United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA)

2000
- Creation of the Council of African Municipalities and Regions (CCRA), bringing together the three groupings of local governments according to the official language of the countries of origin (English-speaking, French-speaking, and Portuguese-speaking)

2013
- Adoption by the African Union’s Heads of State and Government of the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development

2014
- Establishment of UCLG Africa’s Regional Offices

2015
- Launch of the Territorial Coaching Programme
- Creation of the African Observatory on Local Finance
- Creation of the Africa MAGNET and Africa FINET professional networks

2016
- Adoption of the new statutes of UCLG Africa at the Extraordinary General Assembly: the acronym adopted is UCLG Africa instead of UCLGA
- Launch of the Observatory of Local Governments’ Human Resources in Africa

2017
- First African Forum of Territorial Managers and Training Institutes targeting Local Governments (FAMI)
- Establishment of the Resource Centre at the UCLG Africa’s General Secretariat (Knowledge Hub)
- Adoption of the Charter of African Local Governments on Migration
- Official launch of the “African Cities without Street Children” Campaign by its Sponsor, Princess Lalla Meryem of Morocco

2018
- 8th Edition of the Africities Summit in Marrakech (Morocco), coinciding with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Africities
- Launch of the Climate Task Force
- The African Forum of Regions
- Official launch of the “African Cities without Street Children” Campaign by its Sponsor, Princess Lalla Meryem of Morocco
UCLGA Founding Congress in Tshwane (South Africa)

Launch of LEDNA

2003

2006

2008

First UCLG Africa Extraordinary General Assembly in Abuja (Nigeria)

Adoption of GADDEPA, UCLG Africa’s 2008-2020 strategic plan

2005

2009

Launch of Rabat African Capital of Culture in Rabat (Morocco)

Creation of the Network of Young Elected Officials of Africa (YELO) in Tangier (Morocco)

Creation of the Forum of Regions of Africa (FORAF) in Saidia (Morocco)

Meeting of UCLG Africa’s Pan-African Council in Cairo (Egypt)

Participation of UCLG Africa in the 2nd UCLG World Congress in Mexico City (Mexico)

Ordinary General Assembly of UCLG Africa in Dakar (Senegal), ending the crisis that started in 2006 and marking a return to unity within the UCLG Africa family

Launch of the Peer Review Programme

Launch of REFELA in Tangier (Morocco)

2010

2011

2012

2019

2020

2021

2022

Proposal for the territorialisation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to accelerate the achievement of the Paris Agreement objectives

Adoption of GADDEPA 2.0, UCLG Africa’s 2021-2030 strategic plan

Inception of the African Local Governments Academy (ALGA)

Establishment of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), whose declaration lists UCLG Africa among the organisations responsible for supporting the implementation of the Climate Agenda in the African continent

Africities Summit 9 in Kisumu (Kenya)

Launching of the GADDEPA 2.0

VOTE

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2022
Highlights of 2022

January

• Celebration of the World Day for African and Afro-descendant Culture

February

• UCLG Africa West Africa Regional Caucus (Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire)
• Africa – Europe Forum of Local and Regional Governments (Brussels, Belgium)

March

• UCLG Africa Southern Africa Regional Caucus (Pretoria, South Africa)
• UCLG Africa East Africa Regional Caucus (Nairobi, Kenya)
• Round Table of Mayors on Water Security and Governance, as part of the 9th World Water Forum (Dakar, Senegal)
• Celebrating International Women’s Days

April

• 3rd World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments (New York, United States)

May

• Africities 9 Summit (Kisumu, Kenya)
• UCLG Africa General Assembly: election of members of UCLG Africa and REFELA governing bodies (Kisumu, Kenya)

June

• Official launch of the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture (Rabat, Morocco)
• 11th edition of the World Urban Forum organized by UN-Habitat (Katowice, Poland).
• 21st Annual Conference of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (Rabat, Morocco)

• Signing of Framework Partnership Agreements between the European Commission and Associations of Local Authorities, including UCLG Africa (Brussels, Belgium).

• Establishment of the Forum of African Regions, FORAF (Saidia, Morocco).

• Africa Adaptation Summit (Rotterdam, The Netherlands).

• 18th Session of the Conference of African Ministers of the Environment (Dakar, Senegal).

• First session of the training cycle for Chief Financial Officers of African cities and regions on access of African cities and local authorities to the capital market, in collaboration with the African Development Bank (Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire)


• 14th edition of the International Fashion Festival in Africa (FIMA), in the framework of the celebration of Rabat, African Capital of Culture.

• United States/Africa Summit of Heads of State and Government (Washington, United States)
Highlights in preparation for 2023

**World Day for African and Afro-descendant Culture, Official commemoration ceremony**
Organized in the framework of the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
January 24, 2023

**African Design Meeting**
Organized in the framework of the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
May 8 - 14, 2023

**MOCA (Movement of Creative Africas), meeting of arts, culture and creative industries professionals**
Organized in the framework of the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
May 18 - 21, 2023

**Forum of African Mayors for the promotion of culture at the level of cities and territories of Africa**
Organized in the framework of the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
May 23 - 24, 2023

**Conference of African Ministers of Culture on the Renewal of African Culture**
Organized in the framework of the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture
Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
May 25, 2023

**World Forum of Social and Solidarity Economy**
Dakar, Senegal
May 02 - 05, 2023

**28th Session of the Executive Committee of UCLG Africa**
Kisumu, Kenya
June 01 - 02, 2023

**UN-Habitat General Assembly**
Nairobi, Kenya
June 05 - 09, 2023
ATIA, a financial vehicle to facilitate access to capital markets for African local authorities

According to the World Bank, investments in infrastructure should represent 5.5% of GDP to maintain Africa’s economic growth at its current level, which represents an amount of about 140 billion US dollars. Two-thirds of this infrastructure are the responsibility of local governments, representing a total amount of 90 billion US dollars per year. According to the McKinsey firm, reducing under-investment in urban areas and bringing it to the level of India or Pakistan would bring an economic gain of around 2.2% growth for African countries.

To finance local public investments, local authorities need to resort to debt. Access to borrowing makes it possible to "smooth" capital expenditure over the long term, especially since Africa is a region with a growing population, which means that the debt taken out by local authorities will be paid for by a steadily increasing number of taxpayers.

Commitment of African States for the sustainable financing of development

The International Conference on Financing for Development held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in June 2015 concluded that sustainable financing for development can only be endogenous, but getting there requires a profound change in mechanisms for mobilizing public finance. The downward trend in customs duties in public finances must go hand in hand with the broadening of the base and of the performance of internal taxation. This change implies a real transition: local taxation is called upon to play an increasingly important role in the mobilization of resources to feed public finances. It also implies that local authorities have to be able to borrow on the capital markets or use public-private partnerships to finance the investments needed to meet the needs of populations and businesses.

The Africa Territorial Agency Trade and Investment Agency (ATIA) was created in response to the need to resort to innovative methods of financing local authorities. As a financial vehicle aimed at acting as an interface between cities and local authorities on the one hand and the capital markets on the other, ATIA is a direct contribution of UCLG Africa to the execution of the provisions of the Agenda for Addis Ababa Action (AAAA) on Financing for Development.

60 subscriptions from 26 countries

ATIA comprises two compartments: a cooperative society and a bank branch. The cooperative society is formed by the first 100 local authorities who agree to contribute up to 100,000 Euros each, to raise 10 million Euros representing 50.1% of ATIA’s capital; 33% of the capital mobilized with an African development bank acting as a reference investor (African Development Bank, Afreximbank or BADEA), and the remainder being mobilized with the national or international financial sector.

In 2022, some sixty cities and local governments have subscribed to the ATIA cooperative society. These cities and communities come from the following 26 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, The Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Senegal, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Nigeria, Niger, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda.

It is understood that in its shareholders’ agreement, the primacy of decisions will always belong to the members of the cooperative society in order to keep the vehicle under the close leadership and control of the cities and territorial governments of Africa.

ATIA’s bank branch is designed to operate under strict banking requirements to avoid political interference in its operations. This is
why this second compartment of ATIA will be hosted by the reference investor. ATIA will promote a mechanism for pooling projects carried out by local authorities that would otherwise not be able to access the financial market for threshold or cost reasons.

**Boost in 2022**

Organized within the framework of the 9th edition of the Africities Summit in Kisumu (Kenya), the first edition of the African Local Authorities Trade and Investment Forum brought together local authorities in Africa and investors, and explored the opportunities available in African territories as well as the investment strategies best suited to the demographic, natural, and economic context of the continent. This matchmaking has filled a gap since cities and territories are the second largest public investor after the national government, which is not always well known to investors. The Forum has brought out innovative solutions in terms of setting up projects and institutional mechanisms or financing in response to the investment needs of African cities and territories, including intermediary cities.

Two important recommendations were adopted: to complete the awareness of African local authorities to ATIA and to obtain the subscription of the first 100 local authorities that are members of the cooperative society by December 2023; and to carry out all the preliminary studies, particularly the risk study, with the aim of ATIA becoming operational by 2025.

**Successful partnerships**

Following the Forum’s recommendations, UCLG Africa entered into a partnership with the United Nations General Secretariat, which agreed to award a grant of US$250,000 to conduct the ATIA risk study. This study was entrusted to the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF). UCLG Africa has also entered into a partnership with the African Development Bank to launch a training course on local authorities’ access to the capital market for the benefit of Chief Financial Officers of cities and local authorities who are members of the ATIA cooperative society.

The first session of this training cycle was held in September 2022 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), in collaboration with GIZ and the OECD Sahel and West Africa Club. The Chief Financial Officers of some forty African cities and local authorities from 26 African countries benefited from this training. This session explored questions that most CFOs were dealing with for the first time. What is a capital market? What are the institutions of this ecosystem? What does financial analysis bring? How to develop credible forecasts? What are the criteria taken into account by the rating agencies? How does a stock exchange and municipal bond issue work? What does the support for intermediation and management companies consist of? How to use securitization? How to access climate finance?

The training was delivered by experts from the Regional Council for Public Savings and Financial Markets (CREPMF), the Abidjan Regional Stock Exchange (BRVM), the Bloomfield rating agency, the Hudson intermediation company, the West African Development Bank (BOAD), the AfDB, and UCLG Africa. The second session is scheduled for Johannesburg (South Africa) in June 2023.

This session also offered the opportunity to renew the governance bodies of the Network of Directors and Chief Financial Officers of Local Governments in Africa (Africa-FiNET).
ATIA: What use for local and regional governments in Africa?
By Prof. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, Governor of Kisumu, Kenya

ATIA was created under the auspices of UCLG Africa. Its main goal is to mobilize financial resources on the capital market in the form of bond issues to invest them in local authorities in Africa, develop local economies and employment, and stimulate intra-African, intercontinental, and transcontinental trade. The ATIA actually fills a gap at a time when Africa badly needs to maximize the potential of its internal resources.

Our experience with the devolved government system in Kenya shows that the national government has a broad and stable revenue base in terms of taxes, while the tax base of the devolved units, i.e. counties, is very limited. The national government also has wide leeway to borrow locally and internationally. Counties do not have as much leeway and would benefit greatly from a pan-African entity such as ATIA, which would give them borrowing rights and access to continental trade.

However, acceptance of ATIA must be preceded by an awareness campaign aimed at informing potential members of its operation and its advantages. This is an urgent undertaking that requires a concerted effort from the founding leaders and executive committee of this very important initiative.

ATIA, a necessary response to urban growth
By Dr. Kayode Fayemi, President of FORAF

Due to rural exodus and natural population growth, African cities are growing at an alarming rate, with the fastest growth in 2022 being recorded in Accra (Ghana), as well as in Ibadan and Lagos (Nigeria). It is thus expected that African cities will be home to 450 million additional inhabitants by 2030 and already represent some 60% of the GDP of the African continent. New strategic funding channels and instruments are needed to support their growth.

The creation of an institution dedicated to trade and to the development of urban infrastructure comes at a crucial moment when access to capital comes up against a counterproductive bureaucracy. This cooperative institution, in which cities and territories are shareholders, alongside development banks and institutions specializing in community financing, will offer various opportunities and advantages such as a guarantee system reassuring investors, allowing all cities, regardless of their size, to access the financial market on favorable terms.

ATIA will ensure the territorialization of development in strategic sectors (health, energy, transport) and produce a mapping of projects at the regional level. The agency will establish guarantee schemes allowing stock exchanges and investors to get involved in underwriting bonds.

Strategic engagements with development partners (Afreximbank, AfDB, and World Bank) are underway to explore local government financing opportunities, with or without recourse to national sovereign wealth funds. In November 2022, during the 26th ordinary session of the Pan-African Council of UCLG Africa in Tangiers (Morocco), Afreximbank presented several financial instruments to facilitate trade and investment. At FORAF, we are pleased to see that the ongoing collaboration with Afreximbank is part and parcel of its roadmap, as the bank is expected to play a key role in the operationalization of ATIA.
ATIA, a relevant solution for financing municipal projects
By Augustin TAMBA, President of the United Councils and Cities of Cameroon (UCCC)

It is unanimously recognized that the development of Africa rests on its territories and that the wave of decentralization that the continent is experiencing is irreversible. The processes, methods and mechanisms vary from one country to another, but the objective remains the same: to create favorable conditions for economic development, the preservation of the environment and the well-being of populations. To achieve this goal, it is imperative to combine strategies and engineering, both institutional and social; it is also necessary to pool efforts and forces.

ATIA is an innovative mechanism, set up to meet the financing and support needs of African local and subnational governments. The Agency thus places the municipality as a strategic player in the productive system, by creating the conditions necessary for local economic development.

The vision of the National Executive Bureau that I chair is in line with the Agency’s orientations. Indeed, our strategic vision is based on the concept of “Co-Production” which aims at the creation of local wealth, economic co-production between SMEs and Municipalities, the improvement of the local business climate, the promotion of local jobs and business opportunities accessible to the inhabitants of the territory, as well as the financing of infrastructure.

To operationalize this vision, we have launched the International Economic Days of Municipalities (Jeicom) which connects municipalities with value-added projects and investors, investment funds, national and foreign companies, banks, technical and financial partners, as well as the agencies that fund decentralization. The second edition of this forum will take place from June 1 to 03, 2023 in Yaoundé, under the theme: of “Territories facing the imperative of food security”. It would be desirable for ATIA to make the most of this initiative to make it part of best practices in Africa.
Status of Local Borrowing in Africa

Local authorities in Africa have three solutions for accessing loans: generalist banks, Specialized Financial Institutions (IFS) dedicated to local authorities, and issuing bonds on the capital market.

In most African countries, local authorities take out short-term loans from full-service (universal) banks to resolve the cash flow problems aggravated by the public finance crisis. While the various institutional frameworks for decentralization provide for access by local authorities to this type of loan, the practice remains marginal, except in South Africa.

For assistance to local authorities, universal banks align themselves with the conditions granted to the private sector. The cost of borrowing remains very high, often higher than the opportunity cost of capital, with interest rates fluctuating between 15% and 17%. As a result, while universal banks are mostly over-liquid, local governments continue to suffer from the lack of long-term financing for their local public investments. This lack of commitment from universal banks stems from a lack of knowledge of the reality of how local authorities operate and from an inappropriate implementation of risk assessment criteria. It is for this reason that the use of universal banks to finance the investments of local governments is not recommended.

Specialized Financial Institutions in Africa

Faced with the inadequacy of the banking offering in relation to the demand of local governments, some African countries have created specialized financial institutions (SFIs) in the financing of local governments. They are generally parastatal entities with financial autonomy. The resources of these SFIs come from grants from the central Government and from the services that these SFIs provide to local authorities in the form of collection of taxes and duties, or loans. Funds mobilized from international cooperation agencies, bilateral or multilateral, have gradually been added to these basic resources.

By granting loans to municipalities and strengthening their financial management capacity, these SFIs have contributed to expanding the local borrowing market and improving the solvency of municipalities.

The first one of these SFIs, the Caisse de Prêts et de Support aux Collectivités Locales (CPSCL) was created in 1902 in Tunisia, then endowed with civil personality and financial autonomy in May 1975. In addition to its calling consisting in lending and allocating subsidies for municipal investment programs, the CPSCL grants interest subsidies for local authority loans take out with other bodies. CPSCL also provides technical, economic, and financial assistance for the investment projects it finances.

Created in 1959, the Municipal Equipment Fund (FEC) of Morocco finances the local public sector, and ensures the strengthening of local expertise and the promotion of local investments that foster development. FEC offers to municipalities products and services tailored to their needs and strives to provide them with the technical assistance necessary for setting up and implementing their investment programs. FEC covers all the sectors within the remit of local authorities: basic networks and services (roads, sanitation, management of household waste, water, electricity, and other services), social and collective facilities, as well as urban development (housing areas, industrial areas, rehabilitation of neighborhoods ...). Converted in November 1996 into a banking institution, FEC supports local authorities in the programming and planning of local development strategies within the framework of the National Human Development Initiative (INDH), initiated by King Mohammed VI.
Created in 1977, the Communal Development Fund (FDC) of Rwanda, endowed with legal personality and financial autonomy, is funded up to 40% by contributions from local authorities, 50% by budgetary allocations from the central Government, and finally 10% by resources from various donors. Until 1987, Rwandan urban communes could borrow from the FDC but also resort to borrowing from Popular Banks (Banques Populaires) with its guarantee. Faced with the low borrowing capacity of local authorities and repayment problems, the FDC was reformed to become the Community Development Fund, granting only grants to local authorities.

In South Africa, the Local Authorities Loans Fund (LALF), established in 1984, approved loans primarily to former white local authorities. With the advent of the first post-apartheid constitution, the activities of this Fund could no longer be managed by the Ministry of Finance. The LALF Board therefore decided to contract the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) to fulfill these functions. DBSA was transformed to fulfill a regional development role based on financing economic, institutional, and social infrastructure. Regional, national, provincial, and local government entities and other public service providers are the main customers of DBSA, which provides concessional finance to local authorities. The project evaluation system used by DBSA is geared towards a development approach and takes into account not only the financial aspects of applications, but also risks, construction standards, and environmental, social, and institutional impacts.

In West Africa, Mali’s National Local Government Investment Agency (ANICT) and Niger’s National Local Government Financing Agency (ANFICT) are the latest generation of Specialized Financial Institutions (SFIs). They favor the redistribution of financial transfers to local authorities more than the granting of loans. In Central Africa, the Special Fund for Equipment and Intermunicipal Intervention (FEICOM) was created in 1974 with the main mission of technically and financially supporting the decentralized local authorities of Cameroon. A privileged instrument of local development, FEICOM inherited a financial intermediation function in 2006. In addition to training local elected officials, FEICOM provides financing for municipal or inter-municipal investment works as well as centralizes and redistributes taxes and levies.

Limited access to the capital market

Experiences of access to the capital market for local authorities are rare despite the fact that bonds are adapted to the need for long-term financing, particularly in a period of high demand for infrastructure.

In Zimbabwe, a trailblazer in Africa, the financial market, banks, and financial institutions, as well as expertise, are relatively developed, with one particularity, namely that bonds were exclusively issued by the central government. At the time when Zimbabwe was a Marxist country, with a centralized and planned economy, the offering came mainly from insurance companies, pension funds, and the reserves of the Post Office. The almost compulsory purchase of bonds by these financing institutions meant that interest rates were low, which was a real boon for all bond issuers.

From independence until the end of the 1990s, a total of 200 million dollars was raised thanks to 22 municipal bonds issued by 4 local authorities: Harare (14 bonds for a total of 150 million US$), Bulawayo (6 bonds for a total of 44 million US$), Gweru (3 million US$) and Kwekwe (1 million US$).
Several features characterize municipal bond issuance in Zimbabwe. The ministry in charge of local governments can, without the agreement of the municipal council, create a special levy on the populations to repay the loan. Under these conditions, the risk linked to a bond loan from a municipality remains very low and is similar to a central Government guarantee. The tenor of bonds range from 5 to 25 years and interest rates vary between 10 and 15%, fluctuating between 20 and 30% in the late 1990s.

**Repayment difficulties and inflation**

It is understandable that rating agencies are excluded from the municipal bond market in Zimbabwe: with the guarantee of the central government, it did not appear necessary to verify the financial information of local authorities. In the early 2000s, a rating from the Duff and Phelps agency concluded that most small municipalities were well managed.

Due to the central government guarantee, one would have expected a greater use of municipal bonds, but they have become increasingly scarce due to the economic and financial crisis. From the 2000s onwards, central Government subsidies gradually declined, as did international cooperation interventions in favor of local authorities. At the same time, there is an increasing number of repayment difficulties. The inability of the capital city Harare to repay municipal bonds spelt the death knell for the almost automatic acceptance of issues.

Another factor that dealt a major blow to local authority emissions was inflation. Professor Rémy Prud’homme (1999) calculates that a 15-year issue worth US$100 is redeemed at US$6 in real terms, which cannot be acceptable for the financial market. Prud’homme describes the local government bond market in Zimbabwe as a “false market”.

Consequently, the financial market showed reluctance to honor the issues of local authorities.

A quick overview of Zimbabwe’s total local government debt and its components shows surprising results. Municipal bonds constitute only 40% of the total indebtedness of local authorities, the rest of the debt coming from the central Government and from the on-lent loans obtained from international cooperation agencies. The private sector grants short-term loans to local authorities to cover their overdrafts or cash advances. It should be remembered that municipal bonds weigh only about 3% of the financial market supply, which is to say not much.

Unlike Zimbabwe, **South Africa** meets all the conditions for the emergence and development of municipal bonds: a favorable macroeconomic framework; a solid financial market with solvent pension funds and insurance companies; powerful and stable local governments with significant resources coming from the property tax and surcharges on water and electricity; as well as a clear division of responsibilities between the different spheres of the State.

In the mid-1990s, local governments in South Africa resorted to long-term borrowing for investments in utilities such as water, electricity, roads, education, and other municipal services. Their relatively good financial health, as well as the commonly held idea of automatic central Government support for any local authority in financial difficulties, have facilitated access to loans from banks and through the issue of municipal bonds.

In truth, borrowing from banks remains predominant, while only the wealthiest local authorities (mainly those which today make up the metropolises of Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, and Durban) have access to
resources from municipal bonds. The place of municipal bonds remains low in the total indebtedness of the richest local governments, representing no more than one third. Finally, these municipal bonds hardly represent more than 1% of central government bonds.

Despite favorable conditions, the municipal bond market stagnated or even declined in South Africa. Several factors explain this fact, starting with the drop in demand. Only a few local authorities can access bond issues. Indeed, apart from a dozen large South African cities such as Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, or Pretoria, the vast majority of local authorities in South Africa cannot issue municipal bonds because they cannot pay the cost of access. The second factor is related to supply. Why was the financial market not interested in municipal bonds? This question arises all the more since, according to the new framework in force today, the central Government can no longer hasten to help a local authority in default of payment. The third factor relates to the diversity of the offering. Why would local authorities resort to borrowing with a subsidy system as predictable, regular, and consistent as that of South Africa? It also appears that DBSA loans are cheaper than municipal issues.

Commissioned by USAID in 1998, a first study on the development of municipal bonds in South Africa made several recommendations: to strengthen systems of guarantees to local authorities by pledging the proceeds of certain taxes; restrict the use of borrowing for investment; and raise the non-reimbursement of loan installments to the level of a crime.

It was only until 2005 when Johannesburg carried out a bond issue in two tranches: the first, carried out in April 2004, of one billion rand at 6 years, with a rate of 2.3% above government rates; the second in June 2004 for an amount of 1 billion rand over 12 years with a joint guarantee from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and DBSA on 40% of the amount. This is what allowed the city of Johannesburg to have an AA rating by Fitch Rating.

Unprecedented experience but without a future

An experiment in recourse to the capital market was carried out in Cameroon in 2005. Following the authorization of the Ministry in charge of local authorities and of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, officials of the city of Douala conducted bond issues on the new stock exchange, Douala Stock Exchange. The rating given by investors assigning to the city a BBB rating led to the signing of more than 27 agreements to govern this bond issue, which requires a significant level of institutional development. Made in two stages, the issues amounted to 13.5 million dollars for the first stage, and 5.5 million dollars for the second stage, with a double characteristic: without a central Government guarantee, they were honored by institutional investors, namely private banks, insurance companies, and financial companies. 62% of securities are held by foreign investors, particularly investment funds based in London.

What distinguishes the issue carried out by Douala from a traditional bond issue is the refusal of potential institutional investors to work directly with the city, giving rise to a particular financial engineering. A financing vehicle called CUD Finances was set up, with the status of a public limited company under OHADA law, to which the Urban Community of Douala delegates all its revenues. CUD Finances launches issues, collects subscriptions from investors, instantly lends to the city of Douala on the same conditions obtained from the market, receives the city's receipts, collects the payment of maturities, and finally transfers the surplus to the city for its day-to-day operation. It is therefore this shell company whose accounts can be seized if necessary (which cannot be the case for the city) which is the interlocutor of the financial markets. However, this experience was not completed due to internal political difficulties not attributable to the operation (political risk).

Insufficient repayment guarantees

In West Africa, the Regional Stock Exchange (BRVM) in Abidjan theoretically presents an opportunity for local authorities to access financial markets. Established within the
framework of WAEMU and operational since 1988, the BRVM is in principle accessible to any public or private entity, access being conditioned by the sign-off of the Regional Council for Public Savings and Financial Markets (CREPMF), only for private companies, listed or not on the stock exchange. The central Governments and its subdivisions, the local authorities, are not subject to those requirements.

No local authority in the area has yet accessed the financial market, due to the reluctance of national Governments, which invoke budgetary discipline and the monitoring of national debt. The issuer's credibility is also in question. The absence of a rating and the simple recourse to management and intermediation companies is not such as to provide sufficient guarantees of reimbursement.

In Nigeria, bonds issued by state governments are more prominent while local government bond issues remain rare. According to the Nigerian Securities Exchange Commission (NSEC), which regulates the capital market, 20 federal states issued bonds between 1986 and 2012 to finance development projects. During this period, some states issued more than one bond. In 2011, the state government of Nigeria issued a seven-year bond worth $54 million for road construction. The interest rate was set at 14%. Also in 2011, the state of Gombe issued a seven-year, $12 million bond, with an interest rate of 15.5%, for the construction of cantonal and regional roads. In 2012, the Lagos state government issued a seven-year NGN 8 billion (approximately $17 million) bond with an interest rate set at 14.5%, while in the same year the government of Osun State issued a bond of NGN 3 billion (about $6.5 million) for the construction of water and transport infrastructure. Nigerian state and local government bonds are tax deductible but not guaranteed by the federal government. In practice, the bonds are supported by the ability of state and local governments to raise taxes, and by revenue from completed projects, such as highway tolls and railroad revenue.

**Tightness of supply and demand**

The retrospective analysis of borrowing by cities and subnational governments shows the narrowness of supply and demand, with only a handful of cities and subnational governments having had access to the financial market. One needs to innovate to allow a greater number of cities of all sizes to finance their enormous demand for investment in infrastructure, equipment, and housing. It is to meet this demand that UCLG Africa initiated the establishment of ATiA. A growing number of cities and subnational governments will thus be able to access the financial market by overcoming the constraint of the minimum threshold of resources and the constraint of high intermediation costs which will be pooled.

Through pooling, it will be possible to tap the unsuspected borrowing capacities of African local authorities. An estimate shows that in the member countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), access to the region’s financial market is only possible for 73 local authorities capable of paying the minimum entry ticket of 800 000 dollars, for a total capacity of bond issues estimated at 50 million dollars, or 31 billion CFA francs. The establishment of a pooling system as proposed by ATiA would make it possible to increase tenfold the amount of financial resources mobilized from the financial market, to reach a minimum of 500 million dollars for the benefit of 1,000 local authorities in the region.

**“**

**Exploit borrowing capacities through the mutualization of intermediation costs.**
Yves Millardet: "A financial tool to multiply interventions at the best price"

How does ATIA meet the needs of African local governments?

Effective financing of towns, cities, villages, as well as regions, responds to the need to provide populations with quality public services. This question cannot be resolved without the active participation of the central Governments, which are masters of the organization of their territory, of the degree of decentralization they recognize to it, and of the governance attached to it.

Based on the fact that I participated in many reflections on these subjects for Africa, I can say that the constitution of a dedicated financial institution, owned by local communities and supported by the major African public development banks, first and foremost the African Development Bank (AfDB), would be of great use in professionalizing the sector, reaching institutional investors in the best way and, ultimately, offering financing at an affordable cost for projects carried out by African local authorities.

Such an institution, modeled on the European Local Governments Funding Agencies, can usefully establish a link between African and international investors on the one hand, and between project financing needs and budgets on the other.

What will ATIA bring to local governments on the continent?

By having a dedicated vehicle to access financial resources, local authorities whose finances allow to do so will be able to obtain relatively inexpensive and longer-term financing than the one allocated by private financial institutions.

These two characteristics are essential to the assets we are talking about: roads, public transport, waste, water, sanitation, and public buildings. ATIA may decide to implement ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) rules to ensure that the projects financed are properly in line with climate and social transitions.

Thanks to its public shareholding, ATIA will inspire confidence in investors and will raise resources at preferential conditions compared to the local banking market. In Europe, the countries that have instituted these tools finance their local governments on more competitive terms than the banks, which are obliged to securitize the debt of local governments through covered bond vehicles. These tools, which were not lacking during the financial crisis of 2008, did not protect local governments against very high financing costs. The establishment of a public institution is the best formula. Moreover, both the
AfDB and the European Investment Bank are nothing but Central Government Funding Agencies: by pooling a certain financial capital and a certain technicality, national Governments create financial institutions capable of multiplying their interventions, at the best price.

What types of projects should be funded as a priority?

It depends on each country. If ATIA really has a continental footprint in Africa, it will finance local governments whose solvency allows it, whatever their projects, and these projects are not necessarily the same everywhere, even if one still finds the abovementioned main competencies provided by local governments: public buildings, water, electricity, sanitation, transport, waste, schools, and other competencies.

Why has the municipal bond market in Africa remained so limited?

This is a question to ask Africans. My experience tells me that everything depends on the degree of maturity of financial institutions on the one hand, and local financial autonomy on the other. In Europe, the notion of local authority management autonomy is crucial. Of course, first of all in federal countries. But not only these countries. France, a country reputed to be very centralized, offers a relatively broad framework of autonomy to local authorities. The central state constrains the operating mode, but within the framework, one is free to act alone. It seems to me that African countries are far from equal in this double maturity. This is the reason why more transactions have been seen in South Africa than in West Africa, for example. Things are changing, as shown by these two examples: the arrival of Serge Ekué at the West African Development Bank (BOAD) and the mode of access to the debt of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) which has become considerably more professional on the other hand. These two examples indicate that the public financial sector is on the move; there is no doubt that this precedes a professionalization of access to the resource for local authorities.

What are your tips for making ATIA operational and sustainable?

In order to be implemented on a continental scale, this project cannot do without the participation of major players in its capital, of AfDB at a minimum, and why not of all the others. They must participate in the management of capital with interested and solvent large and small cities. History shows that it takes very tight, very combative teams, to successfully and powerfully implement the project. The teams must have the full support of shareholders. Finally, it seems essential to me that each national Government represented in the capital by a local authority should be a stakeholder and support the operation. The link with national public treasuries is essential for the acceptability of the new bank. Otherwise, it will take much longer.
Local authorities, legitimate partners in the implementation of the Climate Agenda

Marked by worrying geopolitical upheavals, particularly in terms of energy and food security, 2022 is undoubtedly the year of the climate emergency. Particularly alarming, the latest report from the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has delivered indisputable evidence of global warming and its dramatic repercussions in Africa. Without concrete and immediate measures, without adequate ambition and funding for adaptation to climate change, the threshold of no return would be reached in the next few years.

**UCLG Africa at the 9th World Water Forum, a key factor in adaptation and resilience**

Being essential for local communities in Africa, water is at the heart of adaptation to climate change. 80% of the measures of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) implementation program for the implementation of the Paris Agreement concern this precious resource. A survey conducted by UCLG Africa in partnership with the OECD in 36 cities highlighted the low involvement of local authorities in Africa in water security and governance. The 9th World Water Forum, held in Dakar (Senegal) from March 21 to March 26, 2022, was the perfect opportunity to launch the "OECD – UCLG Africa Round Table of African Mayors for Water Security" initiative, prefiguring an operational framework for implementing the results of the survey, fitting perfectly into the process of accelerating adaptation.

As a continuation of these efforts, UCLG Africa has positioned itself as a leader in advancing the participation of local and regional authorities in Africa in water security and governance on the continent. This effort was recognized through the appointment of the Secretary General of UCLG Africa to the Strategic Council of the OECD Initiative on Water Governance, as spokesperson for local and regional authorities in Africa.

**UCLG Africa at the heart of the Climate Finance Agenda**

During 2022, UCLG Africa continued the process of registering as an entity accredited to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), with a view to bringing it to fruition at COP28 scheduled for Dubai. Important actions have been carried out: bringing the administrative and financial procedures and conditions of UCLG Africa into compliance with the requirements of the GCF; the upgrading of the environmental, social, and gender policy of UCLG Africa; the adoption of a code of ethics; the preparation of a portfolio of projects structured around the territorialization of NDCs; the organization in September 2022 in Agadir of the start-up workshop of the pilot program for the territorialization of Morocco's NDCs as part of the Readiness program, and the establishment of a steering committee bringing together key players in the region.

**Adaptation Fund Accreditation Project**

During COP27, UCLG Africa began the process for its accreditation to the Adaptation Fund, with a view to consolidating its strategic position in accelerating adaptation, initiated with the African Adaptation Initiative (AII) and the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA). UCLG Africa also called for the new Loss and Damage Fund, the establishment of which was decided at COP27, to include in its mechanisms the establishment of a rapid financing facility intended to provide first aid to local and regional authorities in Africa that are victims of climatic disasters. This facility would be mobilized under the responsibility of UCLG Africa as the representative organization of local authorities on the African continent.
A major effort has been made for rapid implementation of the partnership with the GCA, with the launch of an initial pilot project for an amount of $300,000 targeting two local authorities to equip them and prepare them to face climatic disasters.

A partnership has been signed with IRENA (International Renewable Energy Agency) to conduct energy efficiency actions within African cities and territories and speed up access to renewable energies.

In order to place it in an operational trajectory, the partnership with the West African Development Bank (BOAD) has been renewed. Cooperation with UCLG World, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, and the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CoM SSA) has been strengthened. The partnership with the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) was also consolidated. UCLG Africa has proposed to the European Union to renew and revise its involvement in the framework of the CoM SSA. Finally, talks were held with the Italian Cooperation with a view to establishing cooperation with UCLG Africa around the management of climate risks, the definition of relief organization plans in the event of climate disasters (ORSEC Plan), and the development or strengthening of territorial civil protection services.
COP27 offered leaders from African countries, particularly those from local and regional governments, an unprecedented opportunity to influence decisions made on climate change. The legitimacy of local authorities as partners in the territorialization of the implementation of the Climate Agenda has been consolidated.

Adaptation, food security, just transition, and the mobilization of funding were at the heart of the debates at COP27. UCLG Africa marked its presence by a pavilion in the Blue Zone of the conference - a first at the COP - and by the participation of a large delegation of local authorities from Africa, led by its President, Mrs. Fatimatou Abdel Malik, President of the Regional Council of Nouakchott, accompanied by members of the Executive Committee, as well as by the team from the General Secretariat and from the North Africa Regional Office mobilized around the Secretary General, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi. This strong participation illustrates the commitment of local governments in Africa to a just, sustainable, and inclusive transition towards a resilient and low-carbon economy.

**How UCLG Africa prepared COP27**

Thanks to the Glasgow Climate Pact (COP26), important steps have been taken in the International Climate Agenda: the urgency to act is now unanimous, as well as the strategic role of the territorial link in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

To achieve significant breakthroughs, the intervention of local governments has taken place at different levels of the Climate Agenda:

- Their active participation in vertical dialogue within the framework of multi-level governance, by strengthening advocacy in favor of the adoption of a bottom-up approach for the revision of NDCs, taking into account the Regionally and Locally Determined Contributions (RLDCs);
- Their decisive involvement in adapting to climate change and in strengthening the resilience of territories, as frontline actors in the implementation of climate actions on the ground;
- Their advocacy for climate justice to ensure a transition in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility;
- Their direct access to climate finance, a necessary condition to promote and accelerate the territorialization of NDCs and the resilience of cities and territories in Africa;
- Strengthening their capacity to set up climate projects and raise funds to implement them.

Significant progress has been made in 2022. A roadmap has been established to include the challenges of cities and territories in the COP27 negotiation process and in the Marrakech Partnership for Action, through various initiatives (Roundtable of African Mayors on water security, survey on waste, Race to Zero Emission/Race to Resilience, Initiative on the resilience of vulnerable urban areas, access of local authorities to climate finance). Extensive consultation with local authorities and key partners of UCLG Africa made it possible to identify priorities and define a common position.

The Climate Day organized within the framework of the 9th edition of the Africities Summit recorded the common position of local and regional authorities in Africa on the priorities to be presented and defended at COP27, a position summarized in the Final Declaration adopted in Kisumu. This Declaration highlighted the need to strengthen advocacy for direct access of local authorities to climate finance, and to further

"A broad consultation has made it possible to define a common position"
structure partnerships between UCLG Africa and the African Adaptation Initiative, the Green Climate Fund, and the Adaptation Fund.

During the two UN preparatory stages for COP27 (Africa Climate Week and MENA Climate Week), discussions were initiated with the African Group of Negotiators and the Egyptian Champion of COP27 to take into account the position of territorial Africa in the climate negotiations.

In order to unify and strengthen the voice of local and regional authorities in the global climate agenda, a session was organized with different regional chapters of UCLG during its 7th World Congress. This session provided the opportunity to align the climate position of local authorities with the Pact for the Future adopted at the UCLG World Congress.

**UCLG Africa at COP27: Local authorities, a legitimate partner**

COP27 was particularly dense for the UCLG Africa delegation, with the aim of achieving significant breakthroughs in 4 priority areas: institutional issues; partnership; financing; and Implementation. The delegation's program was structured around 5 components: animation of the UCLG Africa Pavilion, a privileged meeting place, with the organization of side-events and working meetings; the participation in high-level segments organized by the COP Presidency; the contribution to numerous side events organized by partners and launching various initiatives; the signing of partnership agreements; and the participation in the work of negotiations with the various groups, in particular the African Group of Negotiators.

The institutional positioning of African local authorities in the institutional climate ecosystem in Africa and the advocacy for the territorialization of climate action in Africa guided the actions of UCLG Africa at COP27. Thus, COP27 made it possible to consolidate the relationship between UCLG Africa and the Committee of Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), as well as the insertion of UCLG Africa in the platform for implementing the decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and consultation with the African Group of Negotiators (AGN).

With a view to formalizing the position of local authorities in the face of the climate emergency and strengthening the bottom-up approach, the President and the Secretary General of UCLG Africa argued before the African Group of Negotiators that, as a challenge of an essentially territorial nature, adaptation to climate change puts local authorities in the front line to deal with the negative consequences on populations. As a result, local authorities must be considered as a legitimate partner in the implementation of adaptation and resilience measures to climate change. Advocacy also focused on the proposal to start the NDC revision process by defining Regionally and Locally Determined Contributions (RLDCs), and their harmonization at the national level through a dialogue between the national level and the territorial level of public governance. This approach is favorable to a better territorialization of the NDCs. Advocacy focused on the organization of a Forum of local authorities in Africa during the next COP conferences.

As a reminder, the African Group of Negotiators is the formal way to register local authorities as legitimate partners in the decision-making mechanism of the COP. In summary, UCLG Africa presented to the plenary session of the African Group of Negotiators the priorities identified by local authorities: the need to territorialize the NDCs; the need to take a bottom-up approach to reviewing NDCs, starting with the definition of Regionally and Locally Determined Contributions (RLDCs); the recognition of the essentially territorial nature of adaptation to climate change, which makes
local authorities key players in actions to adapt to climate change; and the acceleration of climate action by local authorities thanks to easier access to climate finance, in particular to the Green Climate Fund.

At the same time, advocacy was made with key players in the international climate ecosystem (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, World Bank, Green Climate Fund, African Development Bank, etc.), in favor of the creation of an African Fund for first aid and assistance to populations in the event of climatic disasters decreed by the public authorities. This fund should be easily and quickly mobilized, which is why it must be placed under the responsibility of local authorities in Africa through their continental organization, UCLG Africa. This proposal received a favorable reception from the African Group of Negotiators who undertook to present it to the other groups with a view to its adoption.

- Initiatives joined by UCLG Africa at COP27

COP27 contributed to anchoring the legitimacy of local authorities in the implementation of the Marrakech Partnership for Action. Transformational actions, in line with the decisions made at the last meeting of AMCEN, were formalized, and involved the following initiatives:

- The Africa Waste Initiative, piloted with the UN Climate Change High-Level Champions (UNHLC) Alliance of experts on climate change, in partnership with AMCEN
- The Roundtable of African Mayors on Water Security, led by the OECD and UCLG Africa
- The Resilient Blue Cities Network, in partnership with Future Ocean Alliance (FOA)
- The Network of GCF national focal points
- Decent Life Africa Initiative (Hayat Karima Africa), whose domiciliation at the North Africa Regional Office of UCLG Africa (NARO) has been considered
- The domiciliation within NARO, of the Technical Support Unit of the African Adaptation Initiative
- The appointment of the Secretary General as a member of the steering committee of the African Adaptation Initiative and the participation of UCLG Africa in the first meeting of this committee
- The start of the partnership with UN-Habitat and the Government of Kenya for the implementation of the Building City Resilience for the Urban Poor (BCRUP) initiative
- The launch of the Africa Green Climate Finance Network (AFDAN), in partnership with the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), aimed at facilitating the access of cities and civil society organizations to climate finance
- The Network of African Experts on Climate Change (REACC).
**UCLG Africa at the 18th African Ministers of the Environment Conference:**

*First steps for sustainable waste management*

The 18th session of the African Ministers of the Environment Conference (AMCEN) was held in Dakar (Senegal) from September 12 to September 16, 2022 in a context marked by a triple crisis: climate crisis; biodiversity crisis; and the socio-economic crisis due to COVID-19. With a view to strengthening the mechanisms and instruments for implementing the decisions of African Ministers of the Environment, the Presidency of AMCEN invited UCLG Africa to join the work, in its capacity as representative of local and regional governments in Africa.

This 18th session of AMCEN was an important milestone for local authorities who have found their rightful place in the decision-making mechanism of the African Union. The final declaration recognizes their strategic role in accelerating the implementation of AMCEN decisions and invites UCLG Africa to be part of the platform for operationalizing these decisions. The Declaration also recalls the essential mission of local authorities in waste management. Finally, The Declaration recognizes that adaptation to climate change is a largely territorial issue and designates local authorities and their continental organization, UCLG Africa, as legitimate partners in the implementation of adaptation and resilience measures. The last decision made by AMCEN in Dakar was to integrate UCLG Africa into the Steering Committee of the African Adaptation Initiative, whose Technical Support Unit is located at the North Africa Regional Office of UCLG Africa, NARO.

Following the 18th Session of AMCEN, it was also decided to put local governments at the forefront to find solutions for sustainable waste management in Africa. Dumping and open burning of waste is widespread, with adverse effects on health and the environment. In the absence of an adequate legislative, regulatory, and governance framework, it was deemed necessary to find a solution to this problem. A coalition capable of driving a collaborative momentum around the sustainable management of waste has been created and an action plan put in place, constituting the operational framework of the initiative called "Multi-stakeholder partnership to end the open burning of waste in Africa by 2040 ", launched at COP27 in coordination with AMCEN and the technical support of the United Nations High Level Champion (UNHLC).

On the sidelines of the 18th session of AMCEN, a working session took place between the Special Envoy for Climate of the President of the United States, His Excellency Mr. John Kerry, and the Secretary General of UCLG Africa, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi. The latter requested the support of the United States for the establishment of a strategic partnership framework agreement between the United States government and UCLG Africa, similar to the framework agreement that exists between European Union and UCLG Africa. The Secretary General of UCLG Africa also pleaded for the establishment of the African Fund for first aid and assistance to the populations that are the victims of the state of natural disaster declared by the public authorities. H.E. Mr. John Kerry took good note of the proposals presented by UCLG Africa and invited Mr. Elong Mbassi to take part in the United States-Africa Summit scheduled for December 15, 2022 in Washington DC (United States).

**UCLG Africa at the 1st Summit on Africa's Adaptation to Climate Change:**

*Advocacy for a balanced allocation of funds between mitigation and adaptation*

Representing the African territories, UCLG Africa was invited to the 1st Summit on Africa’s Adaptation to Climate Change, held in September 2022 in Rotterdam by the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) in collaboration with the African Union, the African Development Bank, the African Adaptation Initiative, the International Monetary Fund, and the Climate Vulnerable Forum.

This Summit aimed to increase support and resources for accelerating the implementation of adaptation measures in Africa, and to ensure significant progress in the decisions expected from COP27 on adaptation. The UCLG Africa delegation insisted that adaptation to climate change should receive equal attention and means to those given to the mitigation of natural disasters.

"Advocacy for the African fund for first aid and assistance to populations affected by natural disasters"
greenhouse gas emissions. So far, adaptation to climate change has received only 25% of funds allocated to climate action. UCLG Africa wanted the goal of a balanced allocation of funds between mitigation and adaptation to be one of the results of COP27 and that this Summit on adaptation to climate change in Africa confirms this commitment.

**UCLG Africa at the 2nd United States-Africa Summit: Advocacy to mobilize more funding**

Following the contacts initiated at COP26 with the U.S. delegation led by Special Envoy Mr. John Kerry, and the commitment he made at the 18th session of AMCEN to support the position of local governments, UCLG Africa received an official invitation as a representative of local and regional authorities in Africa to participate in the 2nd United States-Africa Summit, held in Washington in December 2022. This Summit was aimed in particular at defining a new partnership framework to support Africa in the establishment of sustainable transition and transformation trajectories at the economic, social, technological, and institutional level.

During the official session on support for conservation, adaptation to climate change, and energy transition, the Secretary General, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, pleaded for increased support for the resilience and adaptation components, by placing local authorities at the heart of the implementation mechanism, since they are the first ones to be impacted by climate change. The Secretary-General called for more funding to be mobilized for the Africa Adaptation Initiative, and support for the establishment of ATIA, with a view to aligning funding instruments with the needs and capacities of local authorities. The Secretary-General of UCLG Africa also requested support for the Fund for first aid and assistance to local authorities affected by climatic disasters, using decentralized cooperation mechanisms for rapid and effective interventions for the benefit of affected cities.

**The strategic pillars of the 2023 roadmap**

These strategic pillars are unpacked and structured around the priorities of the COP28. The year 2023 will be devoted to the major projects started in the field of climate finance, the acceleration of the Readiness Program, as well as the implementation of the adaptation programs and initiatives launched at COP27.
TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMS
The 9th edition of the Africities Summit marks the arrival of the third generation of local African elected representatives. The first generation of Africities Summits (Abidjan in 1998; Windhoek in 2000; and Yaoundé in 2003) launched and imposed local governments in the institutional landscape of Africa. The second generation (Nairobi in 2006; Marrakech in 2009; and Dakar in 2012) laid the foundations for the structuring of the national and African movement of decentralization and local governments. The third generation (Marrakesh in 2018; Kisumu in 2022; and Cairo, planned for 2025) testifies to the ongoing renewal, with the active presence of women and young local elected officials, and the support of global agendas by local and regional governments of Africa.

The Summit reaffirmed the role of local authorities in the future of the continent, by including their actions in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in the Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The Africities 9 Summit underlined the imperative need for a united Africa which can only be built from its territories.

**Intermediary cities, a strategic link for the management of urbanization in Africa**

Africities 9 highlighted the importance of intermediary cities, located at the junction between the urban and the rural, including on both sides of borders. Due to their growing importance in the urban framework and in the national demography, intermediary cities are the main vector for the territorialization of public policies. Through the daily experience of the populations living in cross-border areas, as well as through the sharing of local public services, intermediary cities can contribute to making border areas no longer breaking points, but on the contrary stitches between African countries, thus showing the potential of local integration by the peoples, beyond integration by the national Governments.

Having long remained the weak or even missing link in the urban framework, intermediary cities must now be strengthened in their role as centers of development, economic activity, and employment, as a link between the rural world and the metropolises. The search for this balance involves providing them with essential services, in the water, energy, education and health sectors, but also providing intermediary cities with commercial, cultural, and social facilities. To avoid an anarchic explosion, their development must be supported with democratic reinforcement and adequate financial means.

**Revising development strategies to meet the climate challenge**

"Mobilizing intermediary cities to win the race towards carbon neutrality and the race towards resilience": the theme chosen for the Climate Day of the Africities 9 Summit is indicative of its main goal: to develop a clear roadmap for COP27 and place the challenges of African cities and territories at the heart of the climate agenda.

The Day was marked by the adoption of the Kisumu Climate Declaration, which calls for local and regional governments to be placed at the heart of the system aimed at responding to the climate emergency and strengthening dialogue between stakeholders, in particular the national Government and development partners, with a view to directing access of local authorities to climate finance.
Strengthening food self-sufficiency by relying on relations between intermediary cities and their hinterland

As a lever for agricultural production and food self-sufficiency, intermediate cities are turned towards their hinterland. It is therefore essential that the connection between rural municipalities and intermediary cities be a priority in the planning and equipment policies of the territories, and to continue improving access to energy, water, mobility and digital services in rural areas in order to increase productivity.

The health crisis and the persistence of socio-political crisis situations, even wars, highlight the need to bring together places of production and places of consumption. The disruption of supply chains demonstrates the virtues of local production and trade.

Improving governance to attract public and private investment

At the center of the work of the Africities 9 Summit, the financing of investments within local authorities fed the discussions of the Africities Trade and Investment Forum (ATIF). The investment needs of local and regional governments in Africa are rising to unprecedented levels, far exceeding the savings capacities of national, local, and regional governments, and cities. For this reason, innovative financing mechanisms such as the issuance of municipal bonds on the capital market and the use of public-private partnerships should be explored. These mechanisms have shown their effectiveness in other regions of the world, the prerequisite being to create a favorable, attractive, mobilizing, and sustainable environment.

In this regard, the participants in the Summit called for the implementation and respect of the provisions of the African Charter of Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance, and Local Development. The participants in the Summit encouraged national Governments that have not yet done so to sign and ratify this Charter, and to file the instruments of such Charter with the African Union Commission.

The Summit showed that in Africa, the challenge of planning remains totally posed, in the face of the accelerated pace of population and urban growth. Some cities will double in size and population every 10 to 15 years. Despite their adherence to the New World Urban Agenda (2016), most African states have not adopted a national urban policy. Participants agreed that national Governments must fill this gap by adopting land-use planning policies that will make intermediary cities the engines of the structural transformation of the continent.

Intermediate cities show the emergence of a new form of citizenship that is more concerned with having its priorities taken into account in the choices of local public policies, a form of citizenship more attentive to the allocation of local public resources through the requirement
of transparency, accountability, and compliance with political commitments. Intermediary cities are the place par excellence for the practice of participatory democracy, thanks to the proximity between elected officials and the populations due to the small size of the city, as well as the community mobilization that is favorable to the establishment of advisory bodies.

**Local elected officials of Africa in the spotlight**

The Africities 9 Summit demonstrated the importance of locally elected women in Africa and their role in defending women's rights. Women's Day, organized by the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA), focused on solutions to overcome constraints and ensure the full contribution of women to the development of African cities in general, and intermediary cities in particular.

At least 150 countries have laws and regulations that promote women's access to land ownership. However, there are still significant barriers that can limit this access, such as inheritance issues that often deny women the right to inherit land upon the death of their spouses. However, land ownership is a basic element essential to all human activity and to the aspiration to a decent life. Members of REFELA agreed to work in partnership with members of the Huairou Commission to advance the issue of women's access to land ownership in Africa.

**What place for African youth?**

The Day themed "Intermediary and inclusive cities: what places for young Africans?" was aimed at exchange with young elected officials and young entrepreneurs, with a view to producing recommendations for better policies dedicated to youth. This day was used to organize a dialogue between former Heads of State and members of the YELO network. This was a first at Africities. The dialogue allowed young local elected officials to interact directly with two former Heads of State: Joaquim Chissano, former President of Mozambique, and Dany Faure, former President of the Seychelles. The youth prepared their questions on five themes: the exercise of power; climate change; the transfer of resources to local governments; the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA); and the contribution of local diplomacy to the construction of African unity.

UCLG Africa has taken the initiative to set up the Network of Young Elected Local Officials of Africa (YELO). Based on the model of the REFELA network, YELO aims to encourage young people to get involved in the management of public affairs at the territorial level, so that their concerns and needs are taken into account in territorial policies.

The creation of an Erasmus-type exchange program (already included in Agenda 2063) was proposed to strengthen the possibilities for exchanges between young elected officials. The goal is to prepare them to take on responsibilities and identify with a common pan-African future, with a view to the emergence of an Africa of Peoples beyond the Africa of Nation-States.

At the local level, the proposal was made to encourage local authorities to create youth committees to respond to the need for the emancipation of young people through the development and implementation of public
policies dedicated to youth issues (need for housing, social support, fight against isolation and precariousness, professional training), and in particular for young people in dire straits.

The African diaspora, the sixth region of the continent

The African Union has adopted a broad definition of the African Diaspora as individuals of African descent living outside the continent, and decided to grant to the Diaspora the status of the sixth region of the continent.

African Union estimates put the figure at 150 million people, with the five largest cohorts being in Brazil (60 million people), the United States (45 million), Haiti (10 million), the Dominican Republic (9.5 million), and Colombia (5 million). The other countries with a large African diaspora are, in order of importance: France (3.8 million), Venezuela (3.2 million), Jamaica (2.8 million), the United Kingdom (2.5 million), and Mexico (1.4 million people).

The participants in the Africities 9 summit agreed that this under-exploited potential must be activated as advocated by the African Union’s Agenda 2063. Africans of the diaspora have participated in building the cities where they live and have accumulated a wide range of skills and knowledge. According to experts, their purchasing power is around 4 trillion US dollars. The diaspora is an important lever that could be mobilized for the development of African cities, intermediary cities in particular. The participants in the 9th edition of the Africities Summit reflected about the means of making this massive potential contribute to the economic development and structural transformation of the continent. They exchanged on the contribution of the diaspora to cutting-edge research, innovations, technology, and culture as well as positive repercussions for Africa.

Digital technologies at the service of good governance

African local governments, and in particular intermediary cities, must make of digital technologies an important instrument of governance, wealth creation, and income generation. Despite the lack of access to energy, the number of users of mobile services is growing twice as fast in Africa as the world average. 70% of the African population uses mobile services (versus 93% in Europe). African countries have chosen the development of high-speed mobile Internet as a strategic pillar of the continent’s connectivity.

The Covid-19 health crisis has accelerated the need for digital transformation. Increasingly, digital technologies are at the service of governance, local economic development, and job creation, especially for young people. Unlike populations in developed countries, who favor the use of mobile technologies for trade and entertainment, African populations use mobile technologies to solve everyday problems. Digital solutions are developing rapidly in agriculture, in the agricultural economy, health, and education, but also in planning systems, transport, and the issuance of administrative documents.

At the Africities 9 Summit, digital technologies were identified as a mechanism for the proper mobilization of financial resources of local governments, and of intermediary cities in particular. The Digital Day resulted in the establishment of a network of smart intermediary cities, the presidency of which was entrusted to the Municipality of Benguerir (Morocco).

Arts, culture and heritage, a solution to the challenges of Mankind

The African Union Vision 2063 has defined seven key priorities in line with “an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its
own citizens and representing a dynamic force on the world stage”, “an Africa with a strong cultural identity, a common heritage, values and ethics”, where the African cultural renaissance is preeminent.

The participants in the Africities 9 Summit unequivocally identified culture as part of the solution to the current challenges of Mankind. During Culture Day, the issues addressed helped lay the foundations for a long-term, strong, explicit, and operational program for the success of cultural policies of African cities.

The Africities 9 Summit, a privileged moment of political dialogue

The tripartite dialogue organized on May 21, 2022 between ministers, mayors and development partners is the highlight of the Political Days. This dialogue is a privileged moment for the mayors and their partners to discuss the state of decentralization but also to allow everyone to make commitments for a better consideration of expectations, and to strengthen partnerships and decentralization with a view to improving the living conditions of the population.

Record attendance at the Africities Exhibition

The Africities Exhibition shattered all participation records since the creation of the event in Abidjan in 1998: 174 exhibitors representing 23 countries, including 15 African countries, 6 European countries and 2 North American countries. As a reminder, the previous edition in Marrakech in 2018 brought together 84 exhibitors from 20 countries. The Project Exchange area served for the matchmaking of exhibitors and cities and local governments of Africa having projects to implement.
• A program focused on the primary functions and potential of intermediary cities

The sessions on local policies and strategies dealt with the five basic functions of cities and local authorities:

1. Feeding the city, which involves organizing and planning food systems in relation to its hinterland;
2. Building the city, which requires dealing with urban planning, land use, and access to housing;
3. Providing the city with basic services, which leads to planning and developing equipment and infrastructure for access to services such as water, drainage and sanitation, waste management, energy, transport, education, and health;
4. Maintaining the city, which requires ensuring the maintenance of infrastructure and basic services and their proper operation;
5. Administering and managing the city through appropriate governance arrangements to ensure citizen participation and mutual accountability.

• The Thematic Sessions focused on:

1. The state and dynamics of intermediary cities in the urbanization of Africa;
2. The role of intermediary cities in Africa’s structural transformation;
3. African intermediary cities in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic and the climate and biodiversity crisis;
4. African intermediary cities in the social and cultural dynamics of Africa.

• ATIF, a platform to bring together local authorities and investors

Held within the framework of the Africities 9 Summit, the Africities Trade and Investment Forum (ATIF) brought together leaders of African cities and territories, investors from the public and private sectors, as well as service providers that help build bankable projects likely to attract investors.

The participants in the Forum proposed that a permanent platform be created to connect African local authorities and investors interested in local Africa to explore business opportunities, discuss investment strategies best suited to the context and potential of Africa, and to enter into partnership contracts leading to investments in local and sub-national governments of Africa.

The African Development Bank presented its instruments: the non-sovereign operations policy and the guidelines for lending to local authorities; the strategic framework for public-private partnerships, which helps countries find innovative ways to manage infrastructure deficits and debt rescheduling; and the multi-donor trust funds for municipalities.

The Forum provided a clear vision of the investment demand of African cities and territories as well as of the ecosystem of interested investors. The panels focused on the role of specialist service providers in structuring projects to move from idea to structuring a portfolio of bankable projects. During the Forum, participants confirmed the need for local and regional authorities in Africa to equip themselves with their own financial vehicle to issue bonds on the national or international capital market, the ATIA.
FIMA, first event of the pan-African program of the celebration of Rabat, African Capital of Culture

Placed under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, the 14th edition of the International Fashion Festival in Africa (FIMA) was held from December 07 to December 10, 2022 in Rabat, under the theme of “The Synergy of cultures for the development of Africa”. This edition of FIMA was organized as part of the pan-African program “Rabat, African Capital of Culture” (June 01, 2022 - June 30, 2023).

Rabat, African Capital of Culture, is driven by a triple ambition: to promote the cultural heritage and creativity of Africa, so that it regains its full place in the cultural heritage of Humanity; to promote the adoption of cultural policies within local authorities in Africa to make culture the fourth pillar of sustainable development, and relay national cultural policies at the territorial level; to contribute to the emergence of a network of cultural places in Africa likely to stimulate the production of cultural works and creative activities, and place Africa within the world market of arts, culture and creative industries, whose value is currently estimated at 2,500 billion dollars per year but of which Africa represents only 1%.

Alongside the activities and events scheduled in Rabat, are also associated with the celebration of Rabat African Capital of Culture, five African cities (one for each of the five regions of Africa), which will host a Week of Morocco and Rabat.

Organized in Rabat, on the picturesque site of Chellah, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the 14th edition of FIMA was sponsored by Mrs. Débora Katisa Morais Brazão Carvalho, First Lady of the Republic of Cabo Verde. This is the second time that FIMA has been held in Morocco, the city of Dakhla having hosted the 2018 edition.

After the official opening ceremony, participants enjoyed exhibitions of paintings, textiles, fashion designers, and accessories as well as three round tables: Culture and Education; Culture, Economy, and Funding; and Protection of Works and Intellectual Property. Competitions rewarded the best fashion designer, the best male and female top model, as well as the best designers of leather goods, jewelry, and fashion accessories. Finally, two fashion shows presented the “Pan-African Night” and “Night of the Five Continents” collections.

Nearly 300 delegates from 42 countries and 2,000 visitors and spectators took part in this 14th edition of FIMA, and around 10,000 people followed it online on YouTube and on social media.

“We are here to promote interactions, union, and love between African creators. I think fashion can be the lever for the sustainable development we are looking for. Fashion is not just about clothes or accessories. It creates jobs and promotes entrepreneurship, especially that of women.” HE Mrs. Débora Katisa Carvalho, First Lady of the Republic of Cabo Verde.

“We want to show that fashion is an industry that will take Africa very far. The fashion industry needs to be recognized in Africa as it is in other parts of the world. Our politicians, our Kings, and our businessmen, must put money into African fashion.” Alphadi, Founding President of FIMA

“The organization of FIMA within the framework of the celebration of Rabat, African Capital of Culture would like to send a strong signal as to the importance of the professions of fashion, design, and creation to affirm the place of Africa in a world where its market share in the creative industries remains to be conquered. We invite the people and decision-makers of the continent to take stock of the potential of this sector for the creation of wealth and jobs” Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General of UCLG Africa
Several studies and publications have highlighted the complexity of the climate system, involving a multitude of actors and stakeholders. To bring about a fairer economic, social, and cultural model that is more environmentally conscious, several questions remain to be resolved.

How to deal with global warming and its consequences, how to stop the decline of biodiversity, how to curb the rise in social inequalities, how to deal with technological developments, and other questions. Climate change calls on countries to adapt and transform ancestral practices. Climate change requires relearning how to produce, consume and organize collectively. The 6th edition of the African Forum of Territorial Managers and Training Institutes targeting Local Authorities (FAMI 6) focused on “The challenge of training and capacity building of local elected officials and local government staff in Africa in terms of climate action”. Held in Agadir (Morocco) from November 28 to December 03, 2022, FAMI 6 brought together some 300 participants from 40 countries in person, as well as 4,000 participants in virtual mode.

What is climate action?

What is the situation in terms of localization and territorialization of SDG 13 and of the Climate Agenda, particularly in Africa? Who are the stakeholders and target audiences involved in the process of training and capacity building in the field of climate change? How to mobilize them? What training prepares for ecological and social transformation, how to access it and how to evaluate it? What are good practices and successful experiences? How to ensure the development of trainers on climate action? How to implement the progress made at COP27? What funding is available for training and capacity building, and what are the eligibility criteria? How to take advantage of digital transformation? How to ensure information, awareness raising, learning, training, capacity building and peer learning, coaching and networking? Four plenary sessions, around fifteen workshops and master classes, as well as field visits were held to answer these questions.

Stock-taking and new strategic orientations for ALGA

FAMI 6 was an opportunity to present ALGA’s results and to agree on strategic orientations. The Forum also served as a framework for meetings of the following professional networks of UCLG Africa: the African Network of Human Resource Managers of Local Authorities (HR-NET) and the Network of ALGA Partners; the African Network of Permanent Secretaries/Executive Directors of National Associations of Local Governments; and the African Network of Territorial Directors in charge of International Relations and Decentralized Cooperation (RAMCD).

UCLG Africa remains committed to accompanying and supporting its members and networks in the implementation of NDCs, in access to climate finance and more particularly to the Green Climate Fund, as well as in the establishment of an awareness-raising, training and capacity-building and technical assistance program for them, in order to enable them to develop climate plans and prepare funding requests that are eligible for the Green Climate Fund.”

Mrs Fatimatou Abdel Malick, President of UCLG Africa
UCLG Africa celebrated the World Day for African and Afro-descendant Culture (JMCA) on January 24, 2022. An online exchange workshop was organized on the theme chosen by UNESCO: “Culture, element of expression of African identity”. The recommendations from this workshop were presented to the current Chairperson of the African Union, His Excellency Félix Tshisekedi.

The different speakers highlighted four issues: the continent’s contribution to universal culture, given that Africa has significant cultural depth but is insufficiently represented in UNESCO’s universal heritage register; the loss of African cultural identity, materialized by young people’s ignorance of their origins and traditions; the under-exploitation of creative and cultural industries, a blind spot in the development of African countries; and the recognition and revitalization of a common African cultural heritage through South-South cooperation.

The following recommendations were formulated for local authorities in Africa: to integrate culture as a component of economic development; to promote new professions in the arts, culture and creative industries; to identify and classify cultural sites first at the local and national scale, then at the pan-African scale; promote the establishment of an African virtual museum that allows Africans to access works of art from the continent while awaiting their return to African soil; to support the production of cultural works between each World Day of African and Afro-Descendent Culture (JMCA) celebration to reveal talents, including from the diaspora; and to develop and disseminate the culinary arts and gastronomy of the African continent.

The Secretary General of UCLG Africa reiterated the desire to integrate culture into the daily life of Africans: “We want this project to be carried out by local authorities, because most of the creators live there and because until now, local authorities have not been very concerned about young people working in the arts, culture, and creative industries. We want that, thanks to the action of local authorities, culture leaves the sphere of declarations and petitions of principle to become a practice and a policy implemented at the level of cities and local authorities. In all the Africités summits, we have a Culture Day, a Diaspora Day, and also a Digital Day, because the major project which is being opened must not stop any more until Africans recognize themselves in their culture and the world recognizes the contribution of the African culture to the universal culture.”

Ms. Asmaa Rhlalou, President of the Municipal Council of the City of Rabat; Mr. Abdelilah Aifi, Secretary General of the Moroccan Ministry of Culture; Mr. Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General of UCLG Africa; Mr. John Ayité Dossavi, President of the African Network of Cultural Promoters and Entrepreneurs (RAPEC); Mr. Alain Bidjeck, Director of the Movement Of Creative Africas (MOCA); forum of African cultures and Diasporas in France; Mr. Raoul Rugamba, CEO of “Africa in Colors”, Creative and Digital Cultural Industries Sector of Rwanda and of the Great Lakes Region; Mr. Moncef Fadili, Essayist, author of the book “Rabat, un printemps confiné” (“Rabat, springtime under lockdown”); His Majesty Ness Essombe, Secretary General of the Union of Traditional Authorities of Africa; and Mr. Mustapha Mouflid, former Director of the Culture, Migration, Peace, and Security Department of UCLG Africa.
One of REFELA’s strategic goals is to get as many African local authorities as possible to adhere to the African Local Authorities Charter on Gender Equality, and to ensure that its recommendations are effectively implemented.

With the support of UCLG World, UCLG Africa continued cooperation with the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) for the finalization and adoption of the African Charter of Local Authorities on Gender Equality in Africa. After drafting the Charter and its Ownership Guide, the next step is to adopt it and promote it to local governments. REFELA was responsible for organizing a presentation session during the Africities 9 Summit to have this Charter adopted and launch the membership campaign among African cities and local governments.
All the analyses do converge concerning the fact that African cities are levers for economic and social development, and the leverage effect would be greater if they had the right institutional environment. Based on this observation, the CEE Rating Report (Cities Enabling Environment Rating) assesses the institutional environment created by African States in favor of cities and territories, on the basis of commonly recognized criteria, with a reference to the African Charter of Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Democracy, and Local Development.

Considered as a reference document for the use of national governments, development partners and local authorities, the CEE Rating Report measures the progress made in the definition and implementation of institutional and legal frameworks aimed at increasing the contribution and the effectiveness of cities and local authorities in the management of urbanization, in the promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic, social, and cultural development, as well as in the improvement of the governance of public affairs, the implementation of SDGs and the achievement of the objectives of the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

**Reference document for elected officials, governments and development partners**

In collaboration with Cities Alliance, four editions of this report have been published (2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021) which make it possible to carry out a cross-sectional analysis of the changes in the institutional and legal framework of decentralization and its implementation in around fifty of African countries. Published on the occasion of the Africities Summits, the CEE Rating Report serves as a basic document for the Tripartite Dialogue between ministers, mayors, and development partners concerning the conduct of decentralization and cooperation policies.

The CEE Rating Report is also used by AfDB in its dialogue with African States wishing to improve their governance systems, to identify the priority reforms to be carried out, as well as the nature and modalities of AfDB assistance. Taking decentralization into account in the AfDB's new governance program support strategy gives the CEE Rating renewed relevance.

The publication of the CEE Rating is based on the work of the Observatory of Decentralization, which collects the laws and regulations governing the life of local authorities in African countries. These are laws and regulations concerning the following six areas: local governance, local capacities, financial autonomy, local efficiency, national institutional environment, and global agendas.

These areas are broken down into 12 indicators: the constitutional framework; the legislative framework; territorial governance; financial transfers from the central Government to local governments; local authorities’ own resources; strengthening the capacities of local governments; transparency in the operation and management of local governments; citizen participation; the performance of local governments; the existence or not of a national urbanization strategy; taking women into account in local governance; the involvement or not of local governments in the fight against climate change.

**Ranking of African countries**

The fourth edition published in 2021 contains a detailed analysis of the major changes that occurred during the 2012-2021 period in the institutional environment created by the central Government in favor of the initiatives and action of cities and local authorities.

“Only 4 African countries have an institutional environment favorable to cities and Local Governments”
In most African countries, the institutional environment created by the central Government remains unfavorable or rather unfavorable to the actions of cities and local authorities: in 86% of countries in 2012, in 74% of countries in 2015, in 68% of countries in 2018, and in 62% of countries in 2021.

The increase in the percentage of African countries with a favorable, or rather favorable, institutional environment, for local authorities appears incremental over the period: 6% in 2012, 8% in 2015 and 2018, and then 12% in 2021. The countries for which serious reforms are necessary so that the institutional environment created by the central Government is favorable to local authorities numbered 25 in 2012, 20 in 2015, 21 in 2018, and 22 in 2021. The countries whose institutional environment created by the State is unfavorable to local authorities numbered 18 in 2012, 17 in 2015, 13 in 2018, and 19 in 2021.

In 2021, only four African countries have an institutional environment favorable to cities and local authorities, eight do offer a rather favorable environment, 22 must undertake major reforms for this environment to become favorable, and 19 have an unfavorable environment for the action of cities and local Governments.

**Analysis of the financial management of local and regional governments**

Despite decades of experience in implementing decentralization policies in African countries, the issue of financing remains a concern for practically all local authorities on the continent, starting with the very knowledge of the state of local finances, the data on which are not collected on a regular basis.

The use of different accounting classifications, linked in particular to administrative practices inherited from colonization, makes it particularly difficult to compare the performance of the financial management of local authorities between countries and between local governments.

In order to overcome these difficulties, UCLG Africa has undertaken since 2013 to develop the African Observatory of Local Finances, the main product of which is the publication every three years of the report on "The State of Local Finances in Africa". This publication compares the main financial management ratios of cities on a pan-African scale from the executed and approved accounts of nearly a hundred cities and local authorities in 26 African countries from the five regions of Africa.
Despite the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, UCLG Africa has maintained its effort to promote investment in human capital within local governments in Africa thanks to the interventions of the African Local Government Academy (ALGA). About twenty projects were initiated and carried out, which gave rise to about a hundred activities. Nearly 20,000 people have benefited from face-to-face, virtual, or hybrid training.

**Official launch of the UCLG Africa E-Learning Platform**

The UCLG Africa e-learning Platform was launched in May 2022, during the Africities 9 Summit, with two online training modules: Participatory Budgeting and Territorial Coaching. Fifteen other modules are being developed, including one on Digital Transformation in partnership with the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

A model membership contract for the UCLG Africa's E-Academy was submitted to nine national and regional associations of local authorities in Africa. The call for expressions of interest for the digitization of training courses has been launched for four modules relating to decentralized cooperation and the international action of local authorities, the promotion of energy efficiency, local finance and the mobilization of resources, and local economic development.

As part of the "African Cities Lab" initiative led in particular by the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), UCLG Africa has undertaken to collaborate in the design and deployment of a MOOC on "Urban Development and African Cities for Professionals", in partnership with the Research and Technological Exchange Group (GRET)-Senegal, Cheikh Anta Diop University, UCAD of Dakar, Campus France, Le Mans University, and CAHF.

**Training and experience sharing**

In 2022, around a hundred capacity-building and experience-sharing activities were organized in-person or in hybrid mode. The activities focused on transformational leadership at the local level, effective governance, metropolitan governance, governance and local development, localization of the SDGs, integration of human rights in local governance, promotion of diversity, inclusion and gender, promotion of culture at the local level, climate action, upgrading of human resources management and the promotion of decent work at the local level, management of conflicts, and mobilization of resources at the local level.

In partnership with the French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME), a training of trainers was organized in the field of climate action of local authorities of Africa.

In April 2022, ALGA launched the first training promotion of the Executive Master's cycle in African Cities Management (MEMVA), in partnership with Al Akhawayn University of Ifrane. The 20 beneficiaries come from eight French-speaking African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal), and 16 of them benefit from a scholarship from the Moroccan government.
The preparation of files for the opening of the first promotion of the MEMVA cycle for beneficiaries from Anglophone countries was made during the year 2022, with a launch of the English-speaking cycle planned for 2023.

**Expansion of the network of partners of UCLG Africa and its Academy**

During the year 2022, UCLG Africa signed two Memoranda of Understanding, the first one with ASAN (Azerbaijan) and AMPCC (Morocco), for the launch of the “UCLG-Africa -ASAN - AMPCC Local Africa Public Service Award”; and the second one with The Hague Academy for Local Governance, during the UCLG World Congress in October 2022 in Daejeon (South Korea).

**Background**

UCLG Africa has retained the Digital Transformation among its new Strategic Orientations, convinced that today, the Digital world is at the heart of any transformation process to achieve the Aspirations of the African Agenda 2063 and of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UCLG Africa has learned lessons from the Covid-19 Pandemic crisis during which this Organization was able to maintain its governance, its operations, its management, its activities and service offering thanks to the multiple opportunities offered by digital technologies. The Organization is committed to supporting and facilitating the Digital Dial selected by the European Commission as one of its main Drivers. Digital Transformation plays a fundamental role in the field of education, training, and capacity building, through e-Learning. UCLG Africa has also set up a database of local government human resources managers in Africa and launched the publication of the biannual newsletter “The Voice of the African Local Manager”. In 2022, ALCA published the 6th issue dealing with the question of recruitment within local Governments in Africa and the 7th issue themed " Decentralized Cooperation, a strategic lever for the promotion of solidarity, partnership and sustainable development: challenges, sharing of experiences and best practices”.

**Towards Digital Transformation in the field of Learning, Training and Capacity Building**

**The establishment of the E-Academy aims to:**

- Invest in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and take advantage of the many opportunities that ICTs can offer;
- Design and roll-out a training offer adapted to the expectations and needs of UCLG Africa Members and Networks;
- Lower the costs and better allocate the resources;
- Make gains in terms of Proximity and Performance;
- Become a “Smart” Pan-African International Organization.

**An e-Learning Platform at the Service of National/Regional Associations of African Local Governments**

The UCLG-Africa e-Academy is an innovative learning, training, and Capacity Building System at the service of Local Governments in Africa, represented by some 55 National and Regional Associations of Local and Regional Governments which will have a personalized space and suitable for their own context and responding to their own expectations and needs.

National and Regional Associations of Local and Regional Governments can acquire their own e-Learning Platforms, adapted to their own context to their graphic charter, to their particularities, and to their priorities and expectations, with a collection of personalized digital publications and books, a rich Catalog of MOOCs, and a first access to tailor-made courses designed by the UCLG Africa Academy.

**Several Benefits, a Multimodal Offer, and Diverse Content**

- **Educational Benefits:**
  - The multimodal system of the e-Academy of UCLG Africa has been designed to offer to National and Regional Associations of Local Governments as well as other target audiences, a unique learning, training, and capacity building experience integrating in particular:
    - The latest generation e-Learning in terms of technologies;
    - Educational content specific to the context of the African Local Governments;
    - Cross-functional modules developed by the largest international firms in the fields of Soft Skills and Capacity Building in the field of languages;
  - A rich digital Library of hundreds of thousands of works related to the process of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local and Territorial Development.

- **Economic Benefits:**
  - More than 100,000 books and periodicals, a rich digital library of books and magazines in different languages and in several languages.

- **Organizational Benefits:**
  - An innovative and reliable predictive assessment of potentialcombining state-of-the-art technology and scientific validity to facilitate the detection of talent.
  - MOOCs derived from large universities from around the world.
  - A rich digital library of 900,000 books and magazines in different fields and in several languages.

- **Learner Success Center:**
  - A team of tutors is available to help you, phone at 00 212 522 22 6003.
  - By email: support@uclga-e-academy.com
Implementation of the Territorial Coaching Program

*Designed to support public authorities, civil societies, and actors from the world of economy and academia in the transition to decentralized management of public affairs, Territorial Coaching tested for the first time in the world in the Oriental Region of Morocco, has established itself as an essential approach to promote participatory democracy within local authorities, to solve difficulties in terms of dialogue between actors involved in the implementation of decentralization, and to promote synergies between actors for the definition of a shared vision of territorial development.*

The implementation of this innovative approach is the result of a fruitful partnership initiated since 2014 between the Council of the Oriental Region, the Oriental Development Agency, the Mohammed 1st University of Oujda, the Belgian NGO Échos Communication, and UCLG Africa.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco adopted in 2011 emphasizes advanced regionalization as a major option for managing development in Morocco. In a context of change and crisis, local and regional governments are encouraged to revisit the foundations of their sustainable and inclusive development, to ensure convergence, consistency, and coordination of public action and private initiatives at the territorial level.

The Territorial Coaching approach was developed to support this shift from centralized management to decentralized management of public affairs through, in particular, the adoption of participatory governance. The Territorial Coaching approach relies on the Territorial Coach, a specialist in mediation and consensus building. Knowing the potential and the difficulties of a specific territory, the Territorial Coach arouses emulation and dialogue between actors; he or she identifies the divergences and assists the actors of the territory to build convergent visions, and he or she organizes citizens meetings to discuss the main issues, to collect as many proposals as possible, and to encourage everyone to commit to solving the issues at hand.

**Technical assistance to the Oriental Region in Morocco**

In 2022, the Territorial Coaching Department and the Oujda Territorial Coaching Center of Excellence participated in the organization of the Oriental Social and Solidarity Economy Fair, through exhibitions of cooperatives, a contribution to the scientific part, and coordination workshops with partners in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire.

The Territorial Coaching Department also carried out a survey of cooperatives in the Oriental Region to identify their needs in terms of training and capacity building, and to better target support actions.

As part of the strengthening of South-South cooperation, UCLG Africa through the Territorial Coaching Department contributed to the project entitled "Supporting the decentralized cooperation of the Oriental Region (Morocco) and the Kaolack Regional Department (Senegal )" by ensuring the drafting of the technical and financial file, the provision of resources for monitoring the implementation, the coordination, and the synergy between stakeholders.

Another project entitled "Supporting the decentralized cooperation of the Oriental Region (Morocco), the Regional Council of the Boucle de Mouhoun (Burkina Faso) and the Department of Kaolack (Senegal)" aims to promote gender equality and the economic empowerment of women in these three regions, thanks to the strengthening of the skills of civil society organizations and local governments. UCLG Africa provided support for the drafting of the funding file, the monitoring of the implementation, and the coordination between stakeholders.

**Excellent prospects for 2023**

During the year 2022, several awareness and training seminars were organized on “Territorial Coaching and its contributions to sustainable territorial development" for the benefit of elected officials and staff of local authorities in Africa. During these seminars, promising prospects were considered for the year 2023, in particular the creation of the International Association of Territorial Coaches.
• Outstanding results at the Africities Summit 9

During the 9th edition of the Africities Summit, five territorial coaches were mobilized to moderate workshops in the booth dedicated to Territorial Coaching in the Africities Exhibition. The results obtained are significant: the Honorable Baba Ndiaye, former President of the Department of Kaolack in Senegal, was appointed African Ambassador for Territorial Coaching; the Commune of Golf Sud in Senegal has adopted Territorial Coaching to engage citizens in the process of participatory democracy; several African delegations expressed their interest in this approach in their territories, notably the delegations of the DRC, Côte d’Ivoire, Mauritania, and Cameroon; more than 10 MoUs have been signed between the Oriental Regional Council and local authorities in other African countries for the sharing of experience of Territorial Coaching; a consortium for the promotion of Territorial Coaching and the establishment of a community of practice was signed between five local authorities from the following countries: Burundi, Mali, Morocco, and Senegal.

Four projects supported by Belgian cooperation, UCLG Africa, and Echos Communication, are under development. These projects use territorial coaches, reinforce the robustness of tools, and reinforce the interest of the approach.

1. KARAMATI project (2022/2024) carried out in the Region of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra in partnership with Brussels-Capital, supported by Brussels International.

2. Project on Awareness (2022/2025) of Territorial Coaching in the Provinces of Kinshasa and Central Congo, supported by Wallonie-Bruxelles Internationale (WBI).

3. Gender Equality Promotion Project (2022/2024) in the Boucle de Mouhoun Region (Burkina Faso), in the Kaolack Department (Senegal), and in the Oriental Region (Morocco), supported by Directorate General for Development of Belgium.

4. Decentralized cooperation project between the Province of Zagora and the City of Anderlecht.
Rise of decentralized inter-African cooperation

The African Support Fund for Decentralized International Cooperation (FACDI), set up at the General Directorate of Territorial Authorities of the Ministry of the Interior of Morocco, appears as an accelerator of cooperation between local and regional governments in Africa and as a first-rate support for African integration supported by the local and regional governments of the continent.

UCLG Africa provided technical support to Moroccan local authorities and to partner countries from other regions of Africa for the presentation of the funding request applications submitted to FACDI.

In 2022, UCLG Africa thus contributed to the launch of four decentralized cooperation projects in the field of health, with the financial support of FACDI, between the Municipality of Youssoufia (Morocco) and the Municipal Council of Kanifing (The Gambia), the Prefectural Council of Salé (Morocco) and the Commune of Mouanko (Cameroon), the Regional Council of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra and the County of Kisumu (Kenya), the Commune of Marrakech and the Commune of Atar (Mauritania).

As part of FACDI’s third call for projects, UCLG Africa has obtained 27 scholarships for the second promotion of the Executive master’s in management of African Cities (MEMVA) targeting English-speaking territorial managers which will take place face-to-face at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (Morocco). Local government recipients of these scholarships are located in The Gambia, Nigeria, Eswatini, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Madagascar, Uganda, Cameroon, Mauritania, Djibouti, and Kenya.

FACDI meeting as part of the Africities 9 summit in Kisumu
On September 12, 2022, the European Commission signed Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) with five international associations of local authorities: the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF), the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), the Council of Municipalities and Regions of Europe (CEMR), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa).

These agreements support the role of local authorities and their associations in formulating policies to promote sustainable development at the local, regional, and global level. These entities benefit from an allocation of 50 million Euros as part of the implementation of the NDICI-Global Europe instrument for the years 2021-2027.

“Local and regional authorities and their associations are key partners of the EU in its external action because of their role in driving sustainable and inclusive development in a way that creates more opportunities for all and does not leave no one behind. It is our collective responsibility to get the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals back on track. By 2027, the EU will support the work of local authorities in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals and the fight against inequalities with at least €500 million, in addition to the €50 million supporting their associations within the framework of these five agreements”, declared the Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen.

The agreements offer the opportunity to strengthen the commitment and capacities of local and regional authorities and their associations in the EU’s development policy and global agendas, as well as in decentralized cooperation with partner countries, with more efficiency and innovation. Local government associations will be supported to coordinate the voices of all partners, create synergies, and add value as a network, ensuring good governance and sustainable partnerships.
NEW BODIES
OF UCLG AFRICA
The newly elected members of the Executive Committee met for the first time in Nouakchott on August 2, 2022, for their 27th Ordinary Session. The Executive Committee approved the financial statements for the 2021 financial year and gave discharge to the Secretary General for his management. The Executive Committee assessed the results of the Africities 9 Summit, and discussed the strategic orientations of the new management team of UCLG Africa as well as the continent’s participation in the bodies and commissions of UCLG World. The new management team divided up the various sessions of the Executive Committee and of the Pan-African Council until the end of their term in office in 2025. The new team also focused on the organization of Rabat, African Capital of Culture, on the signing of the Strategic Partnership Agreement with the European Commission, as well as on the participation of local authorities in COP27 in Egypt.

On November 01 and 02, 2022, the city of Tangiers hosted the 28th ordinary session of the Executive Committee, as well as the 26th ordinary session of the Pan-African Council of UCLG Africa. "I would like to express the gratitude of UCLG Africa to His Majesty King Mohammed VI, for the constant support our organization has received since the installation of its headquarters in Rabat, in January 2008. I also would like to thank the Government of Kingdom of Morocco for the multifaceted support provided to our organization. We are preparing to participate in COP27 to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh on African soil in Egypt. We must together during this Adaptation COP plead for the materialization of the commitments of the Paris Agreement. Adaptation is above all a territorial affair. We invite you to participate massively in COP27. We would like to thank the partners who support us in our efforts and especially the European Union with whom we signed a new framework partnership agreement in Brussels on September 12, 2022,” said the President of UCLG Africa.
During the 28th session of the Executive Committee, the 2023-2024 work plan and the 2023 budget of UCLG Africa were adopted. The 28th session of the Executive Committee also received a report on the activities carried out since the beginning of the year, in particular the World Congress of UCLG (Daejeon, South Korea, October 10-14, 2022) and AMCEN (Dakar, Senegal, September 12-16), as well as on the events being prepared, in particular COP27.

During the UCLG World Congress in Daejeon, South Korea, five members of UCLG Africa were promoted to positions of responsibility within the world organization, UCLG. Taking into account this strong presence of Africa within the governing bodies of UCLG, the members of UCLG Africa are encouraged to take a greater part in the commissions and working groups of UCLG, including by seeking the functions of president or vice-chair of said committees.

The Executive Committee was informed of the progress made in the operationalization of the Africa Territorial Trade and Investment Agency (ATIA), a financial vehicle intended to facilitate the access of local authorities in Africa to the capital market, and to accelerate their contribution to the development of intra-African trade and the realization of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The new management team also took note of the deployment of the e-learning platform, developed within the African Local Government Academy (ALGA) to strengthen the capacities and professionalism of elected officials and staff of local governments in Africa.

**Tribute to honorary members of UCLG Africa**

Several other achievements were presented: the launch of the Forum of African Regions (FORAF) in September 2022 in the city of Saidia, Morocco; the establishment of the network of Young Local Elected Officials in Africa (YELO) in October 2022; Berkane’s Smart City experience; the “Building Climate Resilience for the Urban Poor Globally and Regionally” (BCRUP) initiative; the partnership between UCLG Africa and the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA); innovation in political dialogue based on the case of Mauritania; information on Afreximbank’s support tools; the presentation of the African Network of Urban Agencies; and the Trombino Platform of UCLG Africa.

During the opening ceremony of the Executive Committee, the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Communal Councils (AMPCC) and the Union of Cities and Communes of Côte d’Ivoire (UVICOCI) signed a memorandum of understanding. A vibrant tribute was also paid to the honorary members of UCLG Africa, during a presentation session in recognition of their contribution to the progress of the African community movement.
Regional offices for local technical assistance

UCLG Africa has an office in each of the African regions: the UCLG Africa Regional Office for North Africa (NARO) based in Cairo, Egypt; the UCLG Africa Regional Office for West Africa (WARO) based in Accra, Ghana; the UCLG Africa Regional Office for Central Africa (CARO) based in Libreville, Gabon; the UCLG Africa Regional Office for Eastern Africa (EARO) based in Nairobi, Kenya; and the UCLG Africa Regional Office for Southern Africa (SARO) based in Pretoria, South Africa.

These regional offices provide local support to the national associations of local authorities that are members of UCLG Africa and to their members. The Regional Offices are responsible for updating the membership file, recruiting new members, and monitoring the payment of subscriptions, relations with national authorities and with partners in their regions of competence. The activities reported below for each of the offices must therefore be understood as additional to the routine activities of each of the Regional Offices.

In 2022, NARO was involved in the preparation and organization of the meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee No. 8 (STC8) of the African Union which held its meeting from July 29 to July 31, 2022 in Cairo. The NARO office was particularly active during COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh. The NARO office mobilized to facilitate the reception of the UCLG Africa delegation, and in coordination with the Climate, Biodiversity, and Food Systems Department, organized the meetings of the UCLG Africa delegation, and in coordination with the Climate, Biodiversity, and Food Systems Department, organized the meetings of the delegation with various personalities, as well as participation in the various events and side events organized as part of COP27. NARO has been chosen by Egypt to host the Technical Support Unit of the African Adaptation Initiative. NARO was also chosen by the Egyptian Ministry of Planning to host the Decent Life Africa (Hayat Karima Africa) initiative launched by the Egyptian government. These new responsibilities imply an increase in the workspace available at NARO level. A request has been made to this effect to the Governor of Cairo. Regarding the memorandum of understanding between the UCLG Africa Secretariat and each association in the region, it was signed by Mauritania and Libya. NARO provides local assistance to members and associations of local authorities in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan, and Tunisia.

In 2022, WARO (West Africa Regional Office of UCLG Africa) worked to have the MoU signed between the General Secretariat of UCLG Africa and the national associations of local authorities in the region. The associations of the following countries have signed the MoU: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Benin, Cabo Verde, Mali, Niger, The Gambia, Guinea-Conakry, Ghana, and Côte d’Ivoire. WARO also provided support to NALAG (Ghana), for the 21st Biennial Conference of NALAG National Delegates held in June 2022 in Kumasi on the theme of "Building the future together; the new role of local authorities ". WARO also assisted the Gambian Association of Local Government Authorities (GALGA), Liberia (AMLOGAL), and Sierra Leone (LOCaSL) to structure themselves and develop an action plan. WARO continued to provide support to associations of local authorities in the region in their consultation with the national Government and with the Delegation of the European Union in their respective countries with a view to integrating the roadmap of local authorities into the Multiannual Program of Intervention (MIP) of the 2021-2027 cooperation program of the European Union. WARO has been mobilized for the participation of local authorities in the African Climate Week organized from August 29 to September 02, 2022 in Libreville. WARO provides local support to associations of local authorities in the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

In 2022, EARO was particularly mobilized by the preparation and organization of the 9th edition of the Africities Summit held from May 17 to May 21, 2022 in Kisumu. EARO also assisted the national associations of local governments in Comoros, Rwanda, and Tanzania to produce the Voluntary Subnational Reviews of the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (the Voluntary Subnational Reviews, or VSRs), prepared to be presented at the High-Level Political Forum of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). EARO also supported Kenya to
conduct a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) on the local implementation of the SDGs. EARO has also supported the national associations of local authorities in the Comoros and Madagascar to structure themselves. In addition, EARO has established relations with the East African Community (EAC) on the role of local governments in regional integration. EARO has engaged in a fruitful collaboration with UNESCO and UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) on local development and crime prevention among young people in the region, which opens the possibility of other projects with these two UN agencies. EARO has also initiated a dialogue with IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), to consider cooperation with UCLG Africa around the management of the migration issue in the region. The National Associations of Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, Djibouti, Uganda, Madagascar, Seychelles, Comoros, and Tanzania signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the General Secretariat of UCLG Africa. EARO provides local support to UCLG Africa members from the fourteen East African countries: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Uganda, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, and Tanzania.

In 2022, SARO hosted the regional caucus of UCLG Africa members for Southern Africa in March in Pretoria (South Africa), a caucus which enabled members to prepare for the Africities Summit and present their candidates to the governing bodies of UCLG Africa and UCLG. SARO was very active in signing the MoU between member associations and the General Secretariat of UCLG Africa. The national associations of local authorities of the following countries have signed the MoU: Botswana, Eswatini, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. SARO has also been relatively effective in supporting members in promoting their roadmap to national governments and European Union delegations. This has resulted in the progress observed particularly in Malawi.
Two networks of elected officials to respect diversity

Networking between peers is a strategic lever for action for UCLG Africa, which celebrated the 10th anniversary of REFELA in 2021 and launched YELO in 2022.

REFELA, women local elected officials on the front line

REFELA is positioned as an essential partner in the ecosystem of actors involved in gender equity issues and issues relating to children. REFELA must be credited for the adoption of the Charter of African Local Governments for Gender Equality in May 2022 within the framework of the Africities 9 Summit.

REFELA’s general assembly adopted the 2022-2025 strategic plan and elected the members of its governing bodies. It should be noted that the President of REFELA is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee and of the Presidency of UCLG Africa. The UCLG World Congress in Daejeon, South Korea also offered the opportunity to celebrate the 10th anniversary of REFELA. This celebration aroused the interest of the Asia Pacific chapter (UCLG ASPAC) and of one of the branches of the Latin American (Mercociudades), who wished to benefit from the experience of REFELA to create a network of local elected women.

REFELA has also entered into a partnership with the "Urgence Identité Afrique" association, which is concerned with giving an identity to children who do not have one (ghost children). The Cities Without Street Children Campaign was thus expanded to become the Cities Without Street Children and Ghost Children Campaign. Thanks to the dynamism of her President, REFELA touched base with the city of New York to consider partnership relations around the economic empowerment of women and the strengthening of female leadership. In 2022, REFELA also discussed cooperation with the Huairou Commission with a view to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to be signed in 2023.

Finally, REFELA held a meeting of its bureau on November 01, 2022 in Tangiers, Morocco, on the sidelines of meetings of UCLG Africa bodies.

YELO, a network to promote the commitment of young local elected officials in Africa

With a view to more effectively identifying the challenges of territorial governance, the idea of involving more young local elected officials by forming them into a network appears to be an opportunity to be seized. The participation of young people in advocacy on the burning issues addressed by local elected officials contributes to the preparation of the new generation for the challenges faced by cities.

The Constitutive Assembly of the Network of Young Local Elected Officials of Africa (YELO) was held in Tangiers on October 31, 2022. 32 young local elected officials, representing 24 countries from the five regions of the continent, took part in the work which had as main objective the election of the heads of the governing bodies.

“The city of Tangiers has always been a place marking the founding and major initiatives taken by UCLG Africa, with the aim of strengthening the participation of local elected officials in the development process of Africa,
and the development of mechanisms to improve communication, cooperation, and solidarity of local elected representatives in order to achieve the desired goals. Indeed, it is the Tangiers that witnessed the birth of the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA) in 2011. Today, we are meeting again in Tangiers for this Constitutive General Assembly of the Network of Young Local Elected Officials of Africa (YELO) ", recalled the President of the AMPCC, Mounir Laymouri.

The opening ceremony was followed by an exchange between the members of YELO and the Secretary General of UCLG who invited the new generation to do better than their elders, both on climate issues and on economic integration and the Elimination of borders to promote the emergence of a United Africa.

The proceedings then focused on the election of the heads of YELOs governing bodies: 45 members of the Pan-African Council of YELO (9 members for each of the 5 regions of Africa); 15 members of the YELO Bureau (3 for each of the 5 regions of Africa); and 5 members of the YELO Presidency (1 Vice-President for each of the 5 regions of Africa). The members unanimously appointed the city of Dakhla (Morocco) represented by its mayor, Hormatallah Erragheb, to the Presidency of YELO for a 3-year term.
FORAF, un réseau pour accélérer l'intégration du continent

Launched in September 2022 in the city of Saidaia (Morocco), the Forum of African Regions (FORAF) brought together some 500 delegates from 30 countries, including 21 African countries. More than 80 presidents of African regional governments participated in this event, which many people described as historic.

Placed under the theme of “The contribution of regional authorities to sustainable development and the dynamics of integration in Africa”, FORAF appeared as a materialization of the implementation of the decisions made by the General Assembly of UCLG Africa during the Africités 8 Summit (Marrakech, November 2018). The debates focused on the missions of regional governments at the territorial level: improving the institutional environment, meeting climate challenges, building territorial competitiveness, strengthening human and financial resources, ensuring good governance, and contributing to the integration of African continent.

The Saidaia Declaration stresses the need to make of the regions of Africa transformational clusters of sustainable development and important stages in the construction of "The Integrated Africa We Want". The Saidaia Declaration encourages national governments and development partners to provide regional governments with the financial means to implement national public policies and global agendas, including the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

How to build “The Integrated Africa We Want”

Being a key moment of the closing day, the FORAF roadmap invites the presidents of the regions of Africa to strengthen their regional governments, financially, technically, and democratically. In line with UCLG Africa’s ten-year plan, GADEPPA 2.0, the roadmap is based on three pillars: advocacy and commitment to decentralization; capacity building and knowledge management; and technical assistance for project preparation, financing, and implementation. The participants committed to collaborate with the AfCTA secretariat and Afreximbank, and encouraged the UCLG Africa secretariat to establish a memorandum of understanding with these two institutions. The roadmap translated into an action plan drawn up by a working group made up of five members, one per region, action plan presented at the Pan-African Council of UCLG Africa in Tangiers in November 2022.

In his speech of thanks, the president-elect of FORAF stressed that it is “high time that Africans stop dying and start to organize themselves”. The latter will represent the African continent at meetings of the Forum of the Regions of UCLG. Being a concrete step towards the emergence of the “Africa of the Peoples” desired by the Agenda 2063 of the African Union, FORAF appears as a major player in building the future of the continent.
General Secretariat Budget

Expenditures 2021 vs 2022

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<td>Communication</td>
<td>194,147 €</td>
<td>198,626 €</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCLG’s annual contributions</td>
<td>82,914 €</td>
<td>96,031 €</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating and overhead costs of the General Secretariat and Regional Offices</td>
<td>194,147 €</td>
<td>198,626 €</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other program and project expenditures</td>
<td>1,321,364 €</td>
<td>1,591,877 €</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Breakdown of expenditures by category

Operating expenditures: 3,036,190 € (52%)
Activity expenditures: 2,837,085 € (48%)
In 2022, UCLG Africa initiated an audit of the tools and impact of its communication, emphasizing the image and reputation of the organization, particularly on the Internet. The Communication Department worked on the roadmap which includes the overhaul of the graphic charter and communication media, the development of a procedure manual, the development of media relations, the establishment of the MADEL network (African media for local development), and the strengthening of internal communication.

**Information and awareness campaigns**

The [www.uclga.org](http://www.uclga.org) web portal brings together the various programs run by UCLG Africa. With 31,205 visitors in 2022, compared to 30,063 in 2021, this portal is asserting itself as the voice of local Africa.

**active sites**

[www.uclga.org](http://www.uclga.org) [www.refela.uclga.org](http://www.refela.uclga.org) [www.yelo.uclga.org](http://www.yelo.uclga.org) [www.climat.uclga.org](http://www.climat.uclga.org)

[www.africapitales.org](http://www.africapitales.org) [www.knowledge-uclga.org](http://www.knowledge-uclga.org) [www.uclgafrica-alga.org](http://www.uclgafrica-alga.org)

[www.africities.org](http://www.africities.org) [www.ledna.org](http://www.ledna.org) [www.coachingterritorial.org](http://www.coachingterritorial.org)

**sites in development**

[www.refela.uclga.org](http://www.refela.uclga.org) [www.yelo.uclga.org](http://www.yelo.uclga.org) [www.climat.uclga.org](http://www.climat.uclga.org)
Throughout 2022, UCLG Africa’s messages were disseminated to members as well as on social media.

**Followers on Facebook**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>20,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>15,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Followers on Twitter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>7,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Followers on LinkedIn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>2,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twelve monthly newsletters were sent to the 8,000 subscribers of the database of UCLG Africa members and partners.

These newsletters include information relevant to local and regional governments, collected by the General Secretariat of UCLG Africa, the chapters, the commissions, and the working groups, as well as by the members.

In 2022, UCLG Africa continued its active collaboration with the media, through the dissemination of press releases and 37 weekly press reviews.
THE FORUM OF MAYORS ON CULTURE

“MAKING CULTURE A PILLAR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CITIES AND TERRITORIES”

MAY 23 AND 24, 2023
RABAT, MOROCCO
AT THE LA TOUR HASSAN HOTEL

With the support of:
UCLG AFRICA E-ACADEMY
The Platform dedicated to the National and Regional Associations of Local Governments of Africa

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