decentralised development cooperation –
European perspectives

PLATFORMA
The European voice of **Local** and
Regional authorities for development

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EDITO

For a long time, diplomacy was a state prerogative, as national governments looked askance at relations between local and regional authorities. However, what with globalisation, municipalities and regions, with the support of their populations, have felt the need to develop exchanges so as to collaborate with their counterparts in developing countries. Today, public decentralised cooperation is considered as a useful and necessary complement to national and European Union development policies. Indeed, it offers efficient, concrete responses to help improve the daily lives of local communities, to support the development of basic services, and to establish the conditions needed for local development.

In 2007, the European Parliament adopted a report, which committed the European Union to recognising this form of cooperation. The European Commission has since created a thematic programme called *"Non-State Actors and Local Authorities"* and adopted a communication on the role of local authorities in development. Since March 2010, it has also undertaken an ambitious policy dialogue with the Parliament, the Council of the EU as well as civil society and local and regional authority representatives. Furthermore, the European Commission has lent its support to the Platform of local and regional authorities for development (PLATFORMA), launched in 2008, so as to ensure a strong partnership with the European institutions.

Two years after its creation, PLATFORMA benefits from true recognition and has become a key interlocutor vis-à-vis the European institutions, States and civil society organisations.

The present publication showcases a number of actions led by European local and regional governments in partnership with their counterparts, and will allow the reader to better comprehend the diversity and quality of the projects undertaken.

Confident that their actions offer new perspectives on globalisation, local and regional elected representatives in Europe wish to support the efforts of their counterparts in developing countries. Indeed, these elected officials support an increased participation of citizens and call on national governments to get involved in decentralisation policies, which respect the principles underlined within the European Charter on development cooperation in support of local governance.

We wish to thank the various European Commission departments involved for the quality of the work that has been conducted, particularly in the context of the structured dialogue on the involvement of local and regional authorities in the European development policy. We would also like to thank the members of the European Parliament Committee on Development as well as participants in PLATFORMA, and all local and regional actors engaged with their local communities.

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DECENTRALISED DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION – EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

This publication has two main aims, reflected in its two parts.

The first is to highlight the role played by many of Europe's local and regional governments in partnership work for development, with their counterparts in lower income countries around the world. This is often called "decentralised cooperation", or "municipal international cooperation". In Part 1, the reader will find examples of these partnerships involving local and regional governments – and see the remarkable diversity of themes and approaches.

The second aim is to inform readers about the work of PLATFORMA, the Europe-wide platform of local and regional government associations, and some of their most active members, which promotes greater awareness of this local and regional contribution to development, and dialogues with the European institutions on development issues.

PLATFORMA's activities started in 2008, and have received financial support from the European Commission as part of the Non State Actors and Local Authorities thematic programme, which will be detailed in a later chapter of the introduction.

In only two years of activity, PLATFORMA has gained a true recognition in Europe and among its partners, and proved its relevance in term of coordination and expression of common positions.

A fast-moving, decentralising world

Over the last 30 years the world has changed – sometimes almost beyond recognition. Profound political, social and environmental changes... but also demographic. Between 2009 and 2050, the world population is expected to increase by 2.3 billion, rising from 6.8 billion to 9.1 billion, while over the same period, the population living in urban areas is projected to rise from 3.4 billion to 6.3 billion. Thus, the urban areas of the world are expected to absorb all the population growth expected over the next four decades – and for a large part in the medium and smaller towns[1].

These demographic shifts have combined with changes in technology, politics and economics, which together create a logic of decentralisation – a shift of power, or at least of responsibilities, from central government to sub-national governments, both regional/provincial, and city/local. The reality is that central governments can no longer – if ever they could – successfully manage the complex, fast moving towns, cities and regions of today's and tomorrow's world.

Such changes have also shown greater expectations from the people for participation and democracy. Being the level of governance closest to the citizens, local and regional authorities are the first point of access to shared responsibilities.

Successful, sustainable local development requires effective local government and governance – including real public participation. While civil society and other actors can play a valuable role in development, only local governments can provide the institutional coherence, continuity and coordination – provided they have the necessary powers, resources and capacity.

[1] World Urbanization Prospects, The 2009 Revision. New York, 2010. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

Moreover, almost all the major challenges we face (think environment, climate, food security...) also have a territorial dimension whose logic calls for effective regional or provincial government. In particular, since no town or city is an economic island, and local economies are increasingly intertwined, social and economic development most often requires a territorial (regional) framework for planning and support.

At the same time, the shift to decentralisation is often uneven and difficult. Central governments – or specific ministries – are often loath to truly let go, and in particular to devolve adequate finances. Local governments may lack experience and capacity (as well as resources) which hinders them from delivering good services, collecting the necessary revenues, or from planning effectively for the future. In short, to succeed, decentralisation needs help. And peer-to-peer partnership working has proved its value, time and again, through the various modes of decentralised cooperation for development.

EU recognizes the new "actors for development"

Until the last decade, neither national governments – with a few positive exceptions – nor the European institutions really understood the value and potential of local and regional governments' contribution to international development. True, there was an EU funding programme for Decentralised Cooperation, but it was aimed largely at NGOs and was very little known or used by local authorities. The European Union also implemented a few programmes targeted at local and regional governments on a world regional basis, like Asia-Urbs and URB-AL aimed at supporting decentralised cooperation in Asia and Latin America respectively, but there was no general framework.

Since then, a lot has changed, not least in the approach of the European Union. The present general framework for the EU development policy is the European Consensus on Development dating 2006, which states in article 16 that "the EU encourages an increased involvement of national assemblies, parliaments and local authorities". This resulted in the EU launching several instruments in 2007, including the European Development Fund and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI).

It is worth noting that in its revised version of 2005, the Cotonou Agreement, which is the basis of the European Development Fund and relates to the ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific), recognised local governments as key development actors. It opened a range of new opportunities to support democratic decentralisation processes (Article 33) and decentralised cooperation (Articles 70-71).

The Development Cooperation Instrument offered a new framework for the EU's cooperation programmes, both regional and thematic. In particular the European Commission put forward its proposals for a new thematic funding programme, Non-State Actors and Local Authorities – shortened to NSA-LA. In the EU's vocabulary, the term "local authorities" is defined very widely – it includes all kinds of sub-national governments, from the powerful law-making regions (German Länder, or Spanish regions) to small towns and municipalities.

The European Parliament played an important and valuable role in changing the EU's approach. In March 2007, it overwhelmingly adopted a resolution on local authorities as actors for development, which set out the arguments in favour of local governments' role and actions in this field, and called on the European Commission to provide financial support. The Parliament's report was drafted by Member of Parliament Pierre Schapira, also a Deputy Mayor of Paris, and who is now a political-level representative of PLATFORMA.

This led to the adoption of the thematic strategy paper 2007-2010 of the NSA-LA programme which set out why local governments are so important to good quality local development:

> "While they are part of the state structure, local authorities are much closer to the citizen than other public institutions and may offer significant expertise not only in terms of service delivery (education, health, water, transport etc.), building democratic institutions and effective administrations, but also as catalysts for change and confidence building between different parties. They can provide a long-term, country-wide vision on how to build inclusive societies as actors with the necessary political legitimacy and the capacity to mobilise other actors."[2]

The NSA-LA programme came into effect in 2008. Under it, about €30 million a year is earmarked for local and regional authorities, which is only around 15% of the total, but it marks the first time that local authorities have had access to "their own" part of a programme. The NSA-LA programme, as we shall see, has limitations – but it is a great step forward.

In 2008 the Commission published a further Communication, entitled "Local Authorities: Actors for Development", which assessed in more depth the important contribution of local and regional governments:

> "While the involvement of local authorities in external cooperation and development policy, especially through town twinning, has a long history, the last decade has witnessed a radical change in its nature. Decentralised Cooperation has emerged as a new and important dimension of development cooperation. It has become more comprehensive and professionalised; relying on institutionalised networks with outreach into developing countries; utilising a diversity of tools in all the regions of the world and with an exponential increase in financial allocations."[3]

National governments give support

European local and regional governments in general terms have legal powers to enter into international partnerships agreements. Many national governments in Europe – through their development ministries or agencies – have also shown support for local governments' international partnerships for development, some dating back to the 1990s, others more recently. In most cases, this represents a co-financing, since the local or regional governments provide their own contribution, e.g. through their own budgets and/or the salaries of their staff engaged in the partnership.

Among the main programmes, the Netherlands government has provided around €9 million annually, through the LOGO-south programme, managed by VNG International, the international "wing" of the national local government association. Similar but smaller national programmes exist in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Belgium (where in Flanders there is also a regional government-funded programme). The French government and development agency provide significant financial support for decentralised cooperation. For

[2] Page 5, 2007-2010 strategy paper of the NSA-LA programme, European Commission. The document can be consulted at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/non_state_actors_en.htm
[3] Page 3, Communication from the Commission, "Local Authorities: actors for development", 2008

the period 2010-2012, the ministry of foreign affairs has pledged to support 173 projects undertaken by French local and regional governments, amounting to €16.6 million total cofinancing. In Spain, there is now the MUNICIPIA programme, jointly managed by the cooperation agency, AECID, and the national association of municipalities and provinces, the FEMP. The programme gives support to municipalities, with incentives to coordinate international actions whenever possible. In the UK a number of local authorities are co-financed by the government for their partnership work, under the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme.

In conclusion on this point, governments have shown some significant support for local government partnerships, but there are some important gaps – in Germany, there is no federal government programme, though through development agencies like GTZ (now GIZ), and through some Länder programmes, German local governments do receive some support.

The economic crisis has also had some effect. At the time of writing, for example, the future of the LOGO South programme in the Netherlands is in doubt – with some Parliamentarians arguing that municipalities should not get involved in international development issues at all.

PLATFORMA members disagree with this very narrow interpretation of local government's mission, which ignores both the reality of our inter-connected "globalised" world, the principle of local self-government, and the value of partnership work between sub-national governments. Moreover, this interpretation ignores how beneficial decentralised cooperation can be for European local and regional governments. Based on reciprocity, not only do international partnerships provide significant learning and development for the European staff involved, but often create opportunities to actively engage particular communities or community groups (e.g. of young people or migrants) in the project and in longer-term cooperation.

Actors and donors

In some countries, notably Spain, there is a strong commitment among local and regional governments to allocate 0.7% of their annual income towards international development activities (through a mix of methods), as a sign of commitment to the international Official Development Assistance "target" which national states signed up to at the United Nations in 2000. Although it is difficult to account for overall amounts contributed by sub-national governments, data are compiled in Spain and in France for instance where respectively €147.18 million[4] and €70 million[5] were allocated by local and regional governments to official development assistance in 2009.

In some countries, there are other legal powers enabling local and regional governments to finance international development activities. In France, for example, the Oudin-Santini law, approved in 2005, allows the municipalities, regions and public authorities responsible for water and sanitation services to allocate 1% of their budgets for these services to international development projects in these fields.

In other countries, in particular in northern Europe, the local governments are more constrained by law

[4] The statistics are compiled by the FEMP. For further information: http://cooperacion.femp.es/
[5] The statistics are compiled by the Delegation for the external action of local authorities, Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs. Further information: http://cncd.diplomatie.gouv.fr/frontoffice/

or political culture, and depend more on external funding, though often they are able to co-finance activities "in-kind" through their own staff or elected representatives' participation.

The role of European regions also varies from country to country. In some countries where the regions are large and powerful (Spain, Germany, Belgium, France), the regional governments may be a significant "donor" for development actions, financing the development activities of other actors, as well as a territorial "partner" involved directly in international partnerships.

Raising awareness in Europe

In providing financial support to local government international partnerships, ministries of foreign affairs may have a double motive. In addition to supporting good quality local development and capacity-building for its own sake, they also value the role that EU local governments play "back home" in generating support for international development policies (and funding).

This support is given by publicising the local or regional government's own project work (which often includes local groups and civil society organisations), by funding development awareness or education activities in their own area, or by financing some of the international project work of their NGOs. Responsible for primary and secondary education in many European countries, as well as being catalysts for civil, social and cultural life at the local level, sub-national governments play a key role in raising their citizens' awareness of global challenges and inequities – whether or not related to partnerships with local governments outside Europe. European local and regional governments have a wide experience of conducting awareness raising activities with their local civil society, e.g. through formal education, exhibitions, cultural events and public debates among others.

The European Commission's NSA-LA programme also includes a specific "strand" for development education actions inside Europe, forming around one-sixth of the programme.

Towards greater development effectiveness

What matters most, of course, is what happens in the real world – what are the results of partnership working for development. Since 2000, the "international community" has focused increasingly on what they call "aid effectiveness". In 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness[6] was endorsed by over one hundred Ministers. This international agreement sought to make faster progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the internationally-agreed set of development objectives and targets.

The Paris Declaration stressed five key principles for aid donors to commit to. These are as follows:

• *Ownership* of the development strategy and process – which should rest with the "partner country" and be respected by the "donor"
• *Alignment* – so that donors base their support on partner countries' national development strategies, systems and procedures
• *Harmonisation* – under which donors work together in partner countries in a more coordinated way and share information to avoid duplication

[6] Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness - Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, endorsed in Paris in March 2005

- *Managing for Results* – rather than looking mainly at inputs and processes, and
- *Mutual accountability* – so that donors and partners are jointly accountable for development results.

Local and regional governments are not mentioned in the Paris Declaration, and they do not usually see themselves as "donors" but rather as partners for development. And that is why local and regional governments – like many development NGOs – prefer to speak of *development effectiveness* rather than *aid effectiveness*. But each of the Paris principles is capable of applying to their international partnership work, provided that they are "adapted" to the context. Thus, for example, it is the partner *local government* which should take full ownership of the project, defining the need for and scope of the partnership work, which should be aligned to that partner's local development strategy.

In 2008, these principles were taken further through the Accra Agenda for Action[7], in a later intergovernmental meeting. On this occasion, the role of local authorities as "actors for development" was affirmed, and their ability to strengthen demand-driven "capacity development" was recognized. The ministers also gave support to "the provision of technical cooperation by local and regional resources, including South-South cooperation."

The Accra Agenda for Action again re-emphasized the need to avoid fragmentation and duplication. This raises an important issue for local and regional governments. In recent years, and in the interest of increased impact and effectiveness, we have seen more and more local and regional governments coordinating their contributions – coordinating sometimes in "the north", and sometimes (or also) in the partner country or countries. But as we can see from the case studies in Part 1 below, many of the most successful local and regional partnerships for development had their origins in one-to-one twinnings, or have been created where there are strong cultural or family links between communities resulting from migration. There is a fine balance to strike between the need to coordinate activities and avoid duplication, whilst recognizing the importance of individual initiatives by local authorities which can lead to positive long-term relationships and benefits.

Vertical and horizontal strategies and partnerships

Whilst local and regional governments rightly focus on the development needs and strategies of the sub-national partner, there will also normally be a national poverty alleviation strategy, as well as a national decentralisation policy, which is supported by donors. So to maximise impact, resources and benefits, the substance of local and regional international partnerships should wherever possible be located within these strategies. Sometimes, the whole purpose of the partnership is directly geared to implementing the national strategy for decentralisation. So the opportunities for "vertical" partnerships between the "levels" of government are worth exploring from the outset.

Whether or not other levels of government are involved, many or most local and regional governments' in-

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[7] The Accra Agenda for Action was endorsed in September 2008. Further information: http://www.accrahlf.net

ternational partnerships will involve other local community organisations, NGOs and public or private sector partners. Of course, this depends on the content of the partnership work – in some cases, there may be a simple peer-to-peer technical cooperation between local government professionals. But more often, the work of the partnership covers issues where the local community have a direct interest, and so creating a "horizontal" partnership which includes the main community "actors" is essential.

The national associations of local and regional government

National associations should play at least three key roles. First, they represent and act as advocate for their members towards national government, on issues of decentralisation and thematic policy, legislation, and the attraction and allocation of resources. Second, they are the place for their members to meet and define their own policies, needs and priorities. Third, they help to develop the knowledge and capacity of their members, both elected representatives and staff, through information and forms of training and organisational or individual development.

Therefore, where there is an effective national association, it is often important to involve it in any broad programme of decentralised cooperation, since it can help to provide a "multiplier" for spreading lessons and learning from partnerships, and may also be able to influence national government.

But in many countries, national associations of local and regional government are relatively new, and relatively weak, and like many individual sub-national governments, can themselves benefit from peer-to-peer capacity-building cooperation. For this, Association Capacity-Building (ACB) has been developed as a distinct form of international partnership, and many European national associations have worked with the associations in lower income countries.

North, south, east and west

When we talk of "international development" or "decentralised cooperation", we tend to think of very poor countries outside Europe. And this is – and will continue to be – undoubtedly the main focus for international development policies and work, among donors and "development actors", including local and regional governments.

But in addition, and especially since 1989, EU local and regional authorities have been working in partnerships with non-EU European partners. At first this was mainly with central European countries which have since joined the EU, but now there is a good deal of partnership working with local governments in south-east Europe and the Caucasus, and more largely in the Neighbourhood region of the European Union[8]. So in this publication, we therefore include some positive examples of this inter-European and "EU neighbourhood" decentralised cooperation.

Therefore, to talk only of a "northern partner" and a "southern" partner is often misleading, since the reality of local and regional international partnerships for development transcends the north-south logic. Moreover, in recent years there has been a greater focus on "south-south" partnerships, which may take place across continents (South Africa – Brazil, for example), or within a continent or part-continent.

[8] The EU neighbourhood policy covers the 16 of EU's closest neighbours : Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

It is obvious why this is favoured – learning from those facing similar challenges, or who quite recently faced those problems, may be the most useful form of learning, especially if there are similar systems of government and a common language. In general, as part of the move to seek greater effectiveness, there is an increased use of the network partnership, involving a range of local and regional government partners, e.g. north-south-south, or west-east-east.

This leads to one final, wider point – irrespective of geography, one of the values (in both senses of the word) of local and regional governments' decentralised cooperation is that it is based on mutuality, with colleagues – whether elected representatives or profession and technical staff - working together as equal partners for development, and learning together in the process. The relationship is not seen, on any side, as one of 'donor' and 'aid recipient', but as a partnership between peers who face, if with different intensity, many of the same problems and challenges, and who come together to tackle them.

PART 1 CASE STUDIES

Rajkot, India – Leicester, United Kingdom

A sustained partnership for sustainable local development

Rajkot is one of the largest cities in Gujarat state – in India's north-west – with a population today of over 1.4 million, and estimated to be one of the world's 25 fastest growing cities. Since 1996, it has had an active twinning link with the UK east midlands city of Leicester, over 30,000 of whose citizens have their family origins in Rajkot or wider Gujarat.

And from 2004, the two city governments decided to take the partnership forward by working together on practical issues of service delivery, for which they have obtained funding support for two projects from the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme.

Water – both for drinking and for sanitation – was identified by Rajkot Municipal Corporation as a major priority, since under the municipal supply service, households had water only for around 30 minutes a day maximum, dropping to 20 minutes every two days. The first project, from 2004–2008, was therefore on the provision of a clean, regular water supply. At the outset, Rajkot had wanted to explore purely technical private sector solutions to the problem.

Based on the experience of Leicester the partnership explored an approach to the problem based more on community involvement and development. Two "wards" (areas) in Rajkot were selected as a pilot, and consultation forums were set up where citizens could discuss their problems over water supply, and ideas for how to meet their needs. New water services were implemented, and a further consultation then held. According to the Rajkot Commissioner's technical assistant, Ms Alpana Mitra, "Since the project, officers from Rajkot local government have gone to the public to listen to their problems directly... We were successful in convincing the people that some of their problems can be solved within the community itself. This has been assisted by a decentralisation of services during the project period, with an increase in civic facilities and easier access to local residents."

The project has therefore helped to bring about a more fundamental shift in the approach of the Indian local authority, which saw the practical benefit of a more participatory approach to delivering services on a more targeted, sustainable basis.

The emphasis on cooperation based on community involvement and development continued beyond this first project. Using the methodology, Rajkot has developed a solid waste management system to include community participation, which has a strong recycling aspect with commercial end-products, and which – uniquely in south Asia – is profitable. The two cities have also worked together on solar power issues, with Rajkot winning national government support for its Solar City project.

From 2010, the two cities are now working together on another issue identified by Rajkot as its priority, and which fits Leicester's interest in community development and the "social economy". The question posed is this – "how do we work with residents in illegal slums to fit the needs of our city and those of the community?"

The issue relates to a community of around 3000 urban poor squatters, who occupy land between a highway, two reservoirs, a wholesale market, and what is now the Zoological Garden. Rajkot's city government have decided to work with this community (rather than using evictions) in a slum upgrading project – with the emphasis as much on economic and social development as on physical infrastructure improvement. One aim is that the local people should be helped to develop skills so that they can benefit from tourism to the new Zoo, use of the reservoirs for leisure purposes, and other local work opportunities.

The project has received support from the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme, and to date a community audit has taken place, including an assessment of local skills. The aim is to see how to fit this community's needs and capacities into the City's development strategy. The project also covers a set of peer exchanges between the cities, to continue the mutual learning and support.

The Leicester Rajkot partnership has recently been extended to include another Indian city, Ludhiana, which is in the Punjab, and which also has close family and historic links with an important local community in Leicester, thus adding a "south-south" learning dimension to the work.

The Good Practice Scheme grants are relatively modest; the new project – including the new Ludhiana component – amounts to £55,000 or around €70,000.

In terms of continuity, we may note that there were several political changes in administration on both sides during the project, but the commitment was maintained; having two experienced officers consistently engaged was an important factor.

Both Leicester and Rajkot have received benefits from their long-term partnership. For Rajkot, new ways of improving service delivery by working with their local communities have been tested and proved their value. The city's staff have learnt new skills and new approaches to urban management. Partly as a result, the city has been added to a relatively short list of Indian cities eligible for significant national funding for urban renewal projects from the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. For Leicester, the benefits have included a stronger engagement with their own communities, which are now playing a greater role in the city's civic life. Moreover, Leicester staff have also learnt lessons and added new skills in cross-cultural working and understanding.

Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova – Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments

CALM cooperation to help build Moldova's local democracy

Since Latvia joined the European Union in 2004, its government has increasingly developed a programme of international development cooperation, and this is mainly directed towards Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus. Spending on Official Development Assistance is now nearly 0.1% of Gross National Income. Latvian local governments, through their association, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG), have since 2005 taken part in some important aspects of development cooperation.

Moldova, situated between Romania and Ukraine, is Europe's poorest country – it is number 132 (out of 182 states) in the International Monetary Fund's 2010 table of Gross Domestic Product per head, or under $3,000 per year per head. It has a population of around 3.5 million, of which 60% live in rural areas. Its administrative capacity – at national and local levels – needs a lot of support and strengthening. At local level, Moldova has 65 towns / cities, including five larger cities with the status of Municipality. There are also more than 600 mainly rural communes.

Cooperation between the Latvian Association and Moldovan local governments started in 2005, but more intensive work took place from 2007 onwards. After preliminary meetings had taken place to assess the situation, a number of activities for 2008 were agreed:

- Study visits to Latvia for Moldovan representatives of central government ministries and Parliament, representatives of the Moldovan Association of Mayors, and of Chisinau city government, on a wide range of issues – including local government reform, the role of local government associations, local budgets and financial equalization systems, local-central government dialogue; public private partnerships,
- Participation of local government experts, through the LALRG, in training sessions and conferences in Moldova,
- Preparation of handbooks on subjects such as the system of public governance in Latvia, provision of municipal services, establishment of a local government association, how to lobby effectively towards the Parliament on behalf of local government.

These project proposals were taken forward in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute, a US-based non-profit association working in Moldova. Over 60 Moldovan local government-related participants took part in the activities, which costs around €80,000.

For many years, Moldova had had a large number of local government and mayors' associations, for such a relatively small country. In promoting understanding of the role of effective local government associations, the LALRG – with others like the south-east Europe association, NALAS – has had the implicit objective of encouraging their Moldovan counterparts to create a single association to promote their interests.

This has borne some fruit; on 21st March 2010, a General Assembly to establish the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM) was held in Chisinau. CALM has been set up to provide a united, non-party political platform to represent the totality of local governments in Moldova.

During a visit of CALM's Board members to LALRG and several Latvian municipalities in June 2010, a cooperation agreement between CALM and LALRG was signed, and project concepts developed.

Therefore, in the space of a very few years since joining the EU, Latvian local governments have started to play an important positive role in support of effective local government in Moldova. As a country which has undergone profound political and administrative changes over the last 20 years, Latvia is perhaps better placed than many EU countries to provide relevant advice and assistance to countries like Moldova, on the cusp of big changes. And likewise, LALRG has had to develop and change its own role rapidly, and is thus well able to understand the needs of a new association like CALM.
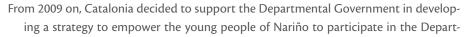
Nariño, Colombia – Catalonia, Spain

Engaging the young for a peaceful future

The Department of Nariño is situated on the Pacific coast, in the far south-west of Colombia. It is named after Antonio Nariño, a hero of Colombian independence movement. But in recent times, the Department has had major problems, with high un- and under-employment and social problems – but above all, it has been one of the worst affected areas in terms of armed conflict and infringements of human rights.

The Departmental government has been taking steps to overcome the problems, and has conducted a huge public consultation and planning process on its draft Development Plan, in order to rebuild democratic legitimacy and social cohesion. Over 8000 people attended the public dialogue meetings, from every part of society.

In this, the Department of Nariño has been joined by the Government of Catalonia, through its Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation, ACCD, alongside international agencies such as UNDP, and civil society and professional organisations. International donors are asked to contribute to the priorities identified by citizens and the Department's government. For Catalonia, this cooperation, which has continued now for several years, fits nicely into its own "master plan" which gives priority to peace-building, human rights, democratic governance, and strengthening the social fabric – especially by empowering those who are usually excluded to participate in local development and public policy-making.

From 2009 on, Catalonia decided to support the Departmental Government in developing a strategy to empower the young people of Nariño to participate in the Department's democratic governance, and in "social construction of peace". To that end, an agreement was signed between the ACCD and the Government of Nariño to define and promote joint actions in this area. The agreement also involved the organisation *Arca de Noé Fundación Social y Formativa (Noah's Ark Social and Training Foundation)*, which since 2004 has worked in Nariño for children and young people of both genders who face severe social exclusion or exploitation.

The programme aims:

- To strengthen the political education and organisation of young people, to empower them to participate in developing and implementing the Department's youth policy.
- To strengthen local and Departmental institutional capacity and commitment to respond to the needs of young people.
- To construct strategic alliances at local and regional level to implement policy commitments in support of young people.

The programme plan defines 34 activities to be undertaken in order to achieve these results. They include the development of training modules in relation to youth policy (policy development, management, communication...) in 10 municipalities; creation of a Youth Leadership School in 15 municipalities, design and

publication of educational materials for the school, training of facilitators and trainers, creation of a web portal with educational content; organisation of meetings of young people in 15 municipalities to help implement youth policy; organisation of exchanges of young people at national and international levels.

By late 2010, the School – a Virtual School – had been established, with an emphasis on education for peace and active citizenship, and life skills. Nine training modules have been designed, and a Teaching Committee is in place. The School's methodology and schedule have been established, and 19 coordinators have been trained. Over 1000 young people are enrolled in the school. Moreover, 10 municipalities have been identified and linked into a network, with three meetings held in each. Various steps towards closer coordination, communication and training have also taken place. A media strategy is being implemented, including a blog, Facebook presence, and four commercials for the School have been made.

Therefore, whilst this ambitious programme is still young, many steps have been implemented towards achieving its ambition.

Several partners have contributed in a significant way towards the programme's budget. The 2009 budget was around €250,000, with ACCD (Catalonia) paying half, UNDP €100,000, the Department €7,000, and the municipalities €17,000. For 2010, the budget was around €440,000, of which ACCD contributed €200,000, UNDP €137,000, Nariño €71,000 and the municipalities €37,000.

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso – Lyon, France

Two decades of city-to-city close cooperation

Ouagadougou, the capital city of Burkina Faso, has a rapidly growing population of almost 1.5 million, and benefits from an elected city government with a positive vision for its future. It has had a cooperation partnership with Greater Lyon (i.e. the Urban Community of Lyon) since 1993, focusing on the development of urban services and capacity building. This cooperation has now proved its value over a period of almost 20 years, and has constantly evolved and been adapted to meet new challenges as they arise.

This evolving partnership has helped the city of Ouagadougou to strengthen its capacity for self-government, and to gain bilateral financial support from funding partners such as the French development Agency (AFD) and the European Commission. The city is in fact the first city in Burkina Faso to obtain a direct grant from the AFD, and to submit a one-million euro project to the European Commission, with Greater Lyon simply providing technical assistance.

From 1999, the cooperation became more structured through a three-year planning process, set out in a cooperation agreement between the cities. A wide range of services was covered including urban cleaning, highways, luminous road signage, ICT, and municipal garages and workshops. Three further services were later targeted – municipal police, public lighting, and green spaces. These activities benefited from a grant from the French government, covering 50% of the financial and technical means provided by Greater Lyon and the city of Lyon.

Close working between the cities' technical service teams, enhanced skills through training and sharing of expertise, plus regular provision of equipment and material to Ouagadougou's services, especially for maintenance purposes – these were highlighted as major benefits of the partnership by an independent evaluation carried out in 2004.

In 2006, the AFD awarded a grant of €15 million to Ouagadougou for a programme to bring water to the outermost urban districts of the city – the first such grant to a municipality in Burkina Faso. In parallel, Lyon provided technical assistance to Ouagadougou (including secondment of an engineer for 3 years) as the owner-commissioner of the works programme, responsible financially and technically for its implementation.

Ouagadougou also became home to a francophone West African training centre, CIFAL Ouagadougou, with the help of international organisations and foundations, as well as from Lyon. Every year, the centre proposes four to five training sessions on urban planning and management, and has become a reference in all Francophone Africa.

In late 2009, the city council of Ouagadougou adopted the city's Local Agenda 21 plan for sustainable development, which made Ouagadougou one of the very first sub-Saharan cities to have done so. This was one of the main results of the dynamic partnership on urban planning issues between the city services and the Lyon City Planning Agency. For Lyon, this work on Local Agenda 21 helped to frame the cooperation, and Lyon's support, in a more coherent context.

In 2008, Ouagadougou applied - with Lyon as its technical partner - for EU funding under the new Non-State Actors and Local Authorities Programme (NSA-LA) to enable it to achieve a more cost-effective means of disposing of and treating waste, by opening up new economic channels for dealing with the city's household garbage. The project – which was approved by the EU – brought together a strong team of European and African partner organisations, in addition to the two cities. The total project financing is a little over €1 million, with the EU programme providing over 85%.

The most recent 3 year agreement between Lyon and Ouagadougou was signed in 2010, with the strategic aim of assisting Ouagadougou to enhance and better control its territorial development. It combines the themes of urban planning, economic development and culture. Lyon's city planning agency, in partnership also with the French development agency, is helping Ouagadougou with its "land occupation plan" and on urban mobility issues. Lyon's business community has also formed an Enterprise Club, which will work with Greater Lyon in its economic cooperation activities with Ouagadougou.

León, Nicaragua – Utrecht, Netherlands

León is building according to plan

León is Nicaragua's second-largest city, with a population of around 200,000, some 90 kilometres north-west of the capital, Managua, and less than 20 km from the Pacific coast. It has been described as the intellectual centre of the country, with an important university which is almost 200 years old; it is also a major industrial, agricultural and commercial centre.

Ten years ago, León suffered from a major shortage of affordable housing. The population was growing rapidly, but the economy was stagnating and there was little or no housing construction. Poor inhabitants were squatting pieces of land and erecting provisional shacks. The municipality was only able to set up a few small-scale housing projects on an incidental basis. A structural solution was needed – and it came in the shape of León Southeast.

What's new about the suburb of León Southeast is that the urban development is carefully planned. Houses are no longer erected haphazardly and illegally but according to a street grid with the necessary infrastructure and due regard for the financing of the land for construction. The project is making such smooth progress that the United Nations has designated it an example of best practice. Since the start of this development hardly any areas in León are still illegally squatted.

The Dutch municipality of Utrecht, whose ties with León go back more than 25 years, has been instrumental in the Nicaraguan city's expansion. "What we do is help create the necessary conditions for public housing – one of the municipality's key tasks – in order to kick-start housing production,' explains Desirée van de Ven, International Affairs Coordinator for Utrecht city council. 'The most important thing we've learned is to start on the basis of a sound policy for land development and use. That means you plan things carefully instead of discovering along the way that something still needs to be done – like constructing a system of street lighting."

The project is part of the LOGO South programme for municipal international cooperation, financed by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and managed by VNG International, the international arm of the Dutch national local government association. This project received €90,000 from the programme.

León acts as a magnet for rural migrants leaving the countryside in search of a better future. For the most part, these rural incomers settled in illegally squatted areas that went on to mushroom into slums. To remedy the situation, the city authorities would buy up the land, and utility companies would move in to provide public amenities. In this way city and suburban neighbourhoods in León and other cities tended to spring up more or less spontaneously. The lack of urban design and planning yielded at best a suboptimal result, with all the problems of "retrofitting" amenities and services. But times have changed since Utrecht helped introduce a well-coordinated approach for tackling this urban sprawl.

In an area designated for urban expansion to the south east of the city, from 1998 the council adopted a new approach. After intensive consultation with its sister city of Utrecht, and subsequently with the local

population and community players, León developed a land policy whereby the council buys up un-developed land, develops a street grid and ensures the provision of public amenities such as sewage, electricity and water. Subsequently it sells reasonably priced plots of land to inhabitants, who then go on to build their own homes. The proceeds of the land sales are used by the council to buy new ground. In this way, it created a self-sustaining financial system in the shape of a rotating fund which currently amounts to around $1 million.

But for León's poorest inhabitants the new land policy is of no direct help. They have no money to buy a plot of land or building materials. As a way of helping them too, a number of social housing corporations based in Utrecht decided to underwrite loans totalling $1 million to the city's poorest people via a local organisation.

In addition, a building materials bank was set up with Utrecht's help, to which inhabitants can apply for a loan to buy materials and for technical assistance during building. After ten years more than 3,000 building plots have been produced and 2,000 houses built. Home ownership stimulates economic development: for the banks a home represents a key form of collateral for granting loans, so giving people the possibility to make key investments. In this way, León Southeast effectively combines city planning with fighting poverty.

The cooperation between Utrecht and León has resulted in a situation where León city council no longer seeks to do everything itself. In Ms Van de Ven's words: "we advised them to limit themselves to the tasks a municipality has: land purchase, road construction, rainwater management. For drinking water and electricity you have utility companies. As a council you shouldn't want to provide these yourself and consequently you don't have to invest your own funds in them. It's been a steep learning curve [for León] to realise that as a council you can be in control without doing everything yourself".

León is proud of what has been achieved and is increasingly asked to share the lessons learned about urban development with other Nicaraguan municipal authorities. And most importantly, the lessons learnt have been "institutionalised" within León, so that progress can continue, even if the individuals change. That is what capacity-building for the long term is about.

Phnom Penh, Cambodia – Paris, France

Two decades of cooperation on urban management

There has always been a special bond between the world's capital cities, and this is typified by the link between Paris and Phnom Penh. The two cities have a track record of active cooperation for almost 20 years, on all the main themes of urban management, throughout a period of extraordinarily rapid urbanisation and population growth.

The partnership between Phnom Penh and Paris started in 1993, with a seminar in the Cambodian capital on urban policy and services, and this was followed the next year by a visit from Jacques Chirac, at that time Mayor of Paris. It has been cemented by later top-level visits – by Bertrand Delanöe in 2003, and a return visit to Paris that year by Phnom Pen Governor Se Kep Chuk Tema.

But the cooperation has been far more than just a few high-level exchanges – it has involved an intense collaboration in a whole range of urban issues. During these almost 20 years, Phnom Penh has changed dramatically – and the city government has had to work very hard to keep up.

The Khmer Rouge, let us not forget, were only driven out of Phnom Penh in 1979, when people began to return to the city, which had been emptied of its population since 1975. A period of reconstruction began, spurred by the continuing stability of government, attracting new foreign investment and aid, together with loans from the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank to reinstate a clean water supply, roads and other infrastructure. The 1998 Census put Phnom Penh's population at 862,000, and the 2008 census was 1.3 million – a 50% increase in a decade.

There have been three pillars to the cooperation with Paris: urban planning and development, transport, and access to water and sanitation.

Urban planning and development

The first step, between 1994 and 1996, was to carry out a study of Phnom Penh's heritage. This project formed part of a bigger initiative, supported by the European Commission, of reconstituting documentation on urbanism for the city, and the training of a technical team to plan for its urban development, and propose development concepts. This programme continued till the end of the 1990s.

In 2000, a new project was undertaken, on "urban management, development and rehabilitation policies in Phnom Penh", financed by the EU under the Asia-Urbs city programme. The two capitals were, for this project, joined by the city of Venice. Through this project, the partners were able to

- Develop urban management tools, including land property management and the outline of a cadastre (land register).
- Carry out a pilot project on rehabilitation of the Boeng Salang District.
- Draw up a policy of rehabilitation for the old city centre.

This phase also saw work done to define new projects, such as that of rehabilitation of the old central market, financed by the French development agency AFD. It concluded with a new publication, "Phnom Penh at the dawn of the 21st century".

The most recent programme, 2007-2009, has focused on Phnom Penh's development requirements in terms of rights of way and public infrastructure and equipment in the context of very rapid urbanisation.

Access to water and sanitation

Since 2007, Paris has supported Phnom Penh's water utility company in its policy of connecting poorer households to the main water supply, thus giving access to good quality water; by 2010, this support has led to 3,800 households being connected. This is particularly aimed at meeting the needs of poorer communities in the outer suburbs which had not previously been linked to the network. The poorest families receive a subvention of between 30 and 100%, depending on income, towards the cost ($100) of connection. For the 3 year period to 2012, a further 3,700 households are due to be connected.

Transport

In 2005 – 2006, Paris financed a pilot project on city-centre journeys, alongside the projects for rehabilitation of the central market and city centre. This pilot was based on 'in situ' action learning for Cambodian technical staff. From 2007 onward, the cooperation in the field of transport has focused on sustainable transport options for ell, in the context of a large increase in traffic circulating in the city.

Bojanala Platinum, South Africa – Ho, Ghana – Lahti, Finland

Working together for the environment

The Finnish city of Lahti has since 1996 had an active partnership with the South African District Municipality of Bojanala Platinum (BPDM), which has a population of 1.2 million, and forms part of North-West Province. More recently, it has developed a new partnership with the Ghanaian city of Ho, the capital of the Volta region, in the south-east of the country. The three municipalities are embarking on a trilateral north-south-south cooperation, in addition to the bilateral working.

Lahti – BPDM

The District BPDM covers the municipalities of Kgetlengrivier, Madibeng, Moretele, Moses Kotane and Rustenburg, and has a mandate to provide support to these five municipalities, which face big challenges in environmental service delivery due to lack of qualified staff.

In 2002, Lahti and BPDM embarked on the 3 year pilot phase of North South Local Government Co-operation Programme, funded by the Finnish government, and coordinated by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (AFLRA).

The partner municipalities first focused on strengthening environmental administration in both municipalities, through capacity building on water and environmental management sectors, and in the field of environmental education. From 2005, a second stage focused on advanced environmental management systems, and on ensuring the sustainability of existing activities of water management and awareness-raising. Waste management was also introduced as a theme. During the third term, 2008 to 2010, more efforts were directed to waste management development, while water protection and lake remediation remained key activities. The cooperation has now entered its fourth phase, which now includes Ho.

A first priority was to help BPDM develop a functional environmental administration. To achieve this, an environmental management system was built with support from Lahti, both to strengthen its own organisational work, and to help in its dialogue with the mining industry, as well as in preparing to attract tourism.

The long-term cooperation on the theme of environmental management has increased the effectiveness of the partnership between Lahti and BPDM, through common understanding of the issues and with long-term personal contacts. This decreases cultural miscommunication and helps in planning and implementing activities. Another key lesson learned is the importance of getting the involvement of the top-level management. Due to the strategic importance placed on local municipal involvement, partners have emphasized participatory approaches to co-operation.

One participatory tool used has been the peer review, where officials from the southern partner municipalities have had the opportunity to be a "critical friend" when conducting evaluations on Lahti's environ-

mental administrations and vice versa. It has been a mutual learning experience which gives new perspectives and un-covers overlooked aspects of daily environmental work. An important part of the co-operation strategy has also been to build capacity and support the local administrations to plan and implement the new environmental policies, based on local needs, not on importing ready-made solutions and technologies.

Cooperation in water monitoring has improved accountability for water management while empowering the local administration. With technical upgrading in BPDM through transfer of portable water monitoring devices and staff training, Moses Kotane, Moretele and Kgetlengrivier have developed the capacity to test water sources, e.g., for quality of ground water.

Progress has also been made in increasing awareness about environmental issues and sustainable development, among both decision makers and inhabitants, e.g. the successful implementation of Environmental Awareness Week in BPDM since 2003. The cooperation also supported the Greening Programme of the Rustenburg 2010 World Cup by training of Eco-guides (personnel to guide waste sorting and collection) and creating educational tool kits on energy and waste management.

The work done in transferring and exchanging technical expertise, has had important results in water manage-ment and monitoring, air quality, climate protection assessment and waste management. For example, Lahti has brought its experience in rehabilitating its own lakes to the problem of the Bospoort and Hartbeespoort Dams. Both dams suffer from severe pollution, but are targeted in the development strategies for recreation and tourism. The Hartbeespoort Dam's biological remediation programme, Harties Metsi a Me, is the first of its kind in South Africa and the lessons learned can have wide effects and benefits in the whole country. Similarly, the Northern experiences have been helpful in the development of waste management activities in BPDM. Lessons learned from Lahti have been incorporated into the new waste depot of Rustenburg and the new regional site and transfer stations.

Lahti - Ho

In 2010, the municipality of Ho from Ghana started an environmental cooperation with the City of Lahti, also financed through the Finnish North-South Local Government Cooperation programme. Waste collection and disposal are really serious problems for the city, as is the provision of decent quality sanitation facilities. Dry toilet technology has therefore been introduced to Ho by building dry toilets in two schools that were formerly without sanitation facilities. The dry toilet pilot includes the promotion of agricultural use of the organic fertilizers; the Agricultural Department of Ho Polytechnic, with the municipal agricultural officers, will conduct field testing with the organic fertilizers to measure the yield results.

From 2011 onwards, the plan is to include environmental management and awareness-raising activities. Having two African partners has opened up the potential for South-South interaction and joint activities. Ho is just starting out with its environmental management development, and can benefit notably from the expertise of BPDM's environmental administration. Ho and especially the more rural areas of BPDM face many similar challenges in developing their environmental administration, e.g. the provision of solid waste management services. There is thus great potential for mutual learning.

Under the North South Local Government Cooperation Programme, for the 2008-2010 period the Lah-ti-BPDM partnership received €320,000. In addition, there is an in-kind contribution from the local gov-ernments, of €117,000. In 2010, the Lahti-Ho cooperation received around €87,000 from the Programme.

Bembereke, Savalou, Natitingou, Bohicon, Djidja, Tchaourou, Benin – Arlon, Bouillon, Huy, La Roche-en-Ardenne, Tintigny, Virton, Belgium

Raising finance, raising effectiveness

The local elections of December 2002 and January 2003 were a true turning-point in the life and governance of the west African State of Benin (population 9 million), with the 77 local authorities taking their place, with their new public responsibilities and competences, at the heart of the national development process. This concluded a twelve-year long period of preparing for decentralisation.

April 2008 saw another set of municipal elections, which represented a further step towards a stable democracy. However, these are still early days for local democracy in the country, and Benin's local governments have shown themselves keen to work with international partners in developing their capacities.

In Belgium, local authorities have formed associations based on each of the three regions, and two of these – in Wallonia and Brussels-Capital – work with the federal (national) government in managing the CIC programme – the Programme of municipal international cooperation. The associations assist their member towns in relation to the Programme.

The Benin CIC programme is rooted squarely in one of the main national development priority areas identified by the Benin government. Since 2001, the government had identified the consolidation of democracy and good governance in its Action Programme, and expressly referred to the need to make decentralisation effective. And the National Poverty Reduction Strategy of 2003 stated that the "acceleration of decentralisation" was a firm priority.

Under the CIC Benin programme, for the period 2009-2012 a group of 6 Belgian communes are working with 6 municipalities from Benin. The objective is to assist the Benin partners to carry out their tasks effectively, through strengthening their capacity to mobilise and generate their own resources – a precondition to effective governance and service provision. The aim is to create practical tools, geared towards generating both internal resources (mainly fiscal) and external resources.

The Belgian and Benin partners are as follows:

- Arlon and Bembereke
- Bouillon and Savalou
- Huy and Natitingou
- La Roche-en-Ardenne and Bohicon
- Tintigny and Djidja
- Virton and Tchaourou

The partners work in bilateral cooperation, but on each side, they have also formed themselves into Working Groups. On the Belgian side, this is to enhance coordination and training; they meet together every 3 months. On the Benin side, the aim is to ensure good information sharing and promotion of activities and

learning. There is then an annual joint meeting of the whole partnership.

This working method enables synergies to be found, for training and other initiatives. For example, a single management software system is being developed for use by all the Benin municipalities.

The Benin programme aims to deliver 5 specific outcomes for each partner:

• Development of an urban land register.
• Establishment of a functioning census and civil registry office.
• Development of an efficient finance service.
• Development of a lobbying and advocacy strategy, aimed at mobilising external resources.
• Creation by the Benin partners of a regular forum for coordination and exchange of experiences.

The results after 2 years of operation are encouraging. For the Virton – Tchaourou partnership, the fiscal receipts for Tchaourou have risen almost fourfold between 2006 and 2009, with the 2010 results appearing to maintain this trend. Regarding attraction of external financing, the Arlon-Bembereke partnership is proving successful. They have together made several project submissions to different donors, so far attracting over €100,000 for socio-economic investments within Bembereke's local development plan – but which it could not have afforded itself. These include a new cattle market – which should attract further income for the commune – , a solid waste management centre, and a water retainer, for the benefit of local farmers and livestock breeders.

The CIC programme has provided €960,000 for the 2009–2012 period. No specific co-financing is required, but the costs of staff from the northern partners are not covered by the programme.

Atsinanana, Madagascar – Basse Normandie, France

Working together for territorial development

In the past 2 years, Madagascar has been going through an acute national political crisis, but that has not stopped a major new programme of cooperation at regional level going ahead, linking up the Madagascan region of Atsinanana with two French regions, Basse Normandie (Lower Normandy) and Rhône-Alpes. The message is clear – local and regional governments are capable of working together effectively across boundaries, even if the national level is 'blocked'.

Atsinanana lies on the east coast of the island, and has a population of around 1.2 million. It is one of 22 Madagascan regions (faritra), which since 2009 have become the first decentralized (territorial) level of government. The region has a large port in Toamasina, and a wonderful natural habitat including rain forests.

The programme's objective, put simply, is to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Atsinanana region to deliver effective regional and local development outcomes, assisting it to co-ordinate all the different projects, and to implement its regional development strategy. The programme is therefore based squarely on local "ownership" of the territorial approach to development. It aims at joint learning via an inter-cultural "apprenticeship", with all partners having the obligation to work together in a concerted and cooperative way.

The current programme covers the three year period 2010 to 2012, though the French and Madagascan partners have worked together previously in decentralised cooperation programmes. It also responds to the request of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs that all of the French and Atsinanana partners should harmonise and coordinate their strategies and actions.

The programme's strategy has territorial development as its organising principle, and takes a multi-sector, multi-actor approach. It is built around 5 broad themes, which set out 16 main activities:

- Institutional support for the implementation of the regional development plan (including staff training, and support for the region's communes).
- Support for rural, agricultural and fisheries development (e.g. increasing production and diversity in fishing; training in farming; fair trade markets for smaller producers).
- Support for the integrated territorial development plan.
- Support for development policy (including training) for heritage-based tourism and eco-tourism.
- Support for all stages of the current decentralised cooperation programme, including communication throughout.

The programme brings together not just the French and Madagascan regions, but all the "actors" who play a key role in the territory. These include the "deconcentrated" technical services of central government, other public institutions including the local governments, University, education and training estab-

lishments, as well as businesses and producers... and of course, local civil society in the areas affected by activities under the programme.

The total budget for the three years is €1,670,000, of which the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributes €315,000, the two French regions almost €1.3 million between them, and the Atsinanana Region €85,000 (of which €30,000 in money, the balance in kind).

By bringing together the French actors involved in decentralised cooperation with the Atsinanana region, by bringing together (harmonising) all of the different actors from the Atsinanana region itself, and through its emphasis on local "ownership" and "alignment" to the regional development plan, the programme can be seen as offering an excellent example of adapting the Paris Declaration principles to the sub-national context.

The programme was prepared through a 5 month long cooperation in which the Atsinanana region was fully involved, and it very much corresponds to the region's own defined priorities. This lead-in period of work also increased mutual understanding and cooperation. The two French regions each have 2 coordinators working in-country with the Atsinanana region co-ordinator, thus providing a strong capacity to ensure that the programme is delivered.

At the same time, it is important to recall that the decentralisation process in Madagascar, and in particular the regionalisation process, is still very much in its early stage, while work on local development focuses still on the very basic questions such as food security and access to water. The cooperation therefore needs to have a long-term perspective, and be able to adapt, as the local partners' needs and capacities evolve.

Chisinau, Moldova – Iaşi, Romania

Caring for 'home alone' children

The city of Iaşi, with a population of 315,000, is Romania's second largest city, situated close to its eastern border with the Republic of Moldova. In January 2008, it signed a twinning protocol with Moldova's capital city, Chişinău, though the cooperation between them dates back a long time. The protocol aims to strengthen friendship relations between the two local communities, and promote the values of the European Union. The areas of cooperation cover economic, social, and cultural activities.

Moldova is Europe's poorest country, with a GDP per head of population of less than US $3,000, and has experienced serious economic difficulties since it became independent in 1991. It was hard hit by the 2008-09 financial crisis, and though it has staged a modest recovery, still faces many difficulties.

As consequence of the economic situation, with very high unemployment, large numbers of Moldovan citizens have emigrated to the countries of western Europe and the United States to find jobs, in many cases without reuniting the family. Consequently, a major social problem was generated – there are many young children whose parents work abroad, and who are deprived of emotional and parental care. To respond to this social situation, to reduce the children's vulnerability and exposure to risk, the two city authorities decided to work together in a transnational partnership.

This is how the project DIFAIN CSA was born – in Romanian the letters stand for "Diminuarea iniţială a fenomenelor actuale întâmpinate în nesupravegherea copiilor singuri acasă" – roughly translated as "Initial decrease of the current phenomenon of the non-supervision of children at home alone".

The project objectives were to develop and organise community social services in Moldova, to offer counselling to children's with emotional, intellectual, communication and behavioural problems caused by the situation where both parents are working abroad, to identify rapid solutions, and to improve school records in relation to these children.

The project has been mainly financed by the EU Phare Cross Border Cooperation Programme, the Romanian Government and Iaşi City Council. The total budget of the project was €126,000, of which the co-financing was €15,000. The partners included COMUNITAS, a community development NGO, as well as the two city governments.

A team of special counsellors was created, composed of social assistants, psychologists, social experts and more than 30 volunteers to work in the new children's educational day centre. Next, with professional support, the partners indentified children in need of assistance who could benefit from the services offered by the centre, in total more than 100. The building housing the centre was then renovated entirely and properly equipped. A social internet forum was also created to enable children to communicate with their parents and to seek advice.

Working sessions were organised with specialists from both countries, Romania and Moldova, in order to identify solutions, share practices and decrease the negative impact of parental migration on children. A guide for children was produced, to help them better face the situation and diminish the risks they face. The project was implemented in the two years 2008-2009, and is fully operational.

The centre currently assists over 100 children with both parents working abroad, offering social assistance and after school education services. A friendly and safe environment has been created, where children benefit from care, information, education, and entertaining activities. The centre has a library and internet communication facilities.

The project raised a lot of media and Government attention to the problem of work-related migration and the situation of children left alone. The European Parliament adopted also in March 2009 a resolution on the situation of emigrants' children.

Goris, Sevan, Vardenis and the province of Guegharkunik, Armenia – Vienne, Grenoble, Romans sur Isère and the Department of Isère, France

Harmonising in Armenia for sustainable tourism

The province of Guegharkunik, with a population of 240,000, is situated in eastern Armenia, bordering Azerbaijan; its main towns include Sevan and Vardenis. The historic town of Goris lies further to the south, in the province of Syunik. The province and the three towns are the long-term cooperation partners of the French towns of Vienne, Grenoble and Romans sur Isère, together with the Department of Isère.

In 2009, the large French region of Rhône-Alpes signed a cooperation agreement with the government of Armenia (population around 3 million), allowing the region to assist in any part of the country with local sustainable development initiatives. The Department and the three French towns have created a platform between them, now known as IRAPA – Intercollectivités de Rhône-Alpes pour l'Arménie, and have obtained the Region's financial and practical support. Through this enhanced coordination, the political and practical coherence of their activities has been enhanced, and a greater impact on the development of the partners' territories has been achieved.

Since 2007, the IRAPA authorities and their Armenian partners had fixed on sustainable local tourism as the key theme for their future cooperation. This theme does make sense, since the Armenian territories are mountainous and beautiful, but tourism is extremely under-developed. Moreover, the Armenian partner towns have experienced a declining population in recent years, as many of the brightest young people migrate away from the region looking for work – many into the capital city Yerevan.

The partners have agreed to work on three themes:

- Development and professionalisation of the local tourist industries, to achieve a fairer outcome
- Strengthening of the local authorities, with a view to maintaining high quality local public services
- Promotion of the cultural, linguistic and environmental heritage

Development of sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism involves the creation of new sources of income for local people, based on valuing local natural and cultural resources, in order to attract a high quality of tourism, with respect for the environment and a strong interest in local culture, leading to a positive multiplier effect in other industries like transport and crafts.

In order to ensure that the local population as a whole benefits from tourism, it is vital to involve the local community, and to make use of local assets and resources.

A number of training courses have been held. One key aim has been to instil an ethos of working together

in networks, and between the different territories, to create a more complete touristic offer, on the model of the "tourist route".

Common tools have been developed – tourism information offices, production of tourism publications which are then shared across the different areas, and a common web portal. Those who have been trained are then expected to work with and train others involved in the industry (hotels, restaurants, taxis, museums...). Another point is to look at the tourist offer to respond to the needs of local, national and international visitors. One example is the creation of a ramblers' circuit, with information panels on local wild life and features of local interest.

Strengthening local government

Armenia has only recently embarked on a process of decentralisation, so the local authorities have little experience in local management, and in providing good local public services. The cooperation with the Rhône-Alpes partners has therefore concentrated on exchanging experience in the field of local government management, governance, territorial economic development and service delivery. Particular focus was given to health services, street lighting and support to local civil society associations. In order to share experience and expertise in these areas, training of Armenian local civil servants and their French partners were held in both countries.

Promotion of cultural heritage

There is a lively practice of cultural exchange and cooperation between the two countries, including exhibitions and restoration of cultural heritage sites. The French region has a sizeable population belonging to the Armenian diaspora, and there are frequent two-way cultural exchanges. These exchanges have proved highly beneficial for the French towns, since they lead to a stronger engagement with their own communities. Together with Armenian actors, the Association of Armenians from Romans (France) has for instance created a play reflecting on identity and exile, entitled "If you want to live, move forward" (Si tu veux vivre, avances). In 2010 a new 3-year cooperation was agreed between the partners, largely financed by the French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs, which continues with the theme of sustainable tourism, and also includes health as a focus.

Banda Aceh, Indonesia – Apeldoorn, Netherlands

Fast forward in Banda Aceh

Reconstruction after a natural disaster provides an opportunity not simply to restore what existed before, but also to improve things. Take the example of the Indonesian province of Aceh, on the island Sumatra. The devastating tsunami of 2004 not only caused immense human misery, it also led to administrative chaos. Three years later, the newly elected mayor of the capital Banda Aceh undertook a fundamental reorganisation of the local government and its administration. The mayor sought support for this ambitious project from the Dutch municipality of Apeldoorn, which has been a partner of Banda Aceh since the tsunami. "You Dutch people are good at planning and organisation, we can learn from that", says Muhammad Ridha, who works at the Mayor's Office in Banda Aceh. "But", he smiled, "we are much better at improvising." After spending more than a year in Aceh, management and communications adviser Herman Meijer agrees wholeheartedly. 'Streamlining the city's policy and decision-making process, transparency: there's not much experience here with this. But if the need is there, a lot can be achieved in a very short time.'

In the chaotic post-tsunami period, the talent for improvisation proved one of the Aceh people's most valuable assets. In a remarkably short period, the heavily damaged region was back on its feet. The tsunami created a window of opportunity for resolution of the armed struggle that had frustrated progress for so many years. The massive foreign support also helped ensure that the area could be rapidly rebuilt. But when the international organisations leave, local government has to take full control.

The link between Apeldoorn and Banda Aceh has, however, been strengthened. This is partly due to the fact that many inhabitants of the Dutch municipality have Indonesian roots. When, after the tsunami, the people of Apeldoorn wanted to help, it was only natural that they looked to Indonesia. The most heavily damaged area was the province of Aceh.

The first donation from the citizens of Apeldoorn was a fully equipped fire engine. Soon however the emphasis shifted to technical assistance and capacity building, with both mayors signing a five year agreement for this in December 2005. A central element was the establishment of an effective waste collection process (see below).

Because of the fruitful cooperation and results in this project, in 2007 the mayor of Banda Aceh asked his colleague in Apeldoorn for long-term support in his reorganisation project. In the new support programme, the focus was on capacity building for the civil servants. Policy development and decision-making were targeted, along with budgeting and communication - both internally and with the local community.

The existing bureaucracy was completely incapable of steering the new developments, Muhammad Ridha says. With an abundance of municipal departments and too many civil servants getting in each other's way, coordination at the top was almost completely lacking. It was a web without a spider.

After several exchange visits and extensive discussions with colleagues in Apeldoorn, Banda Aceh decided to create a separate staff unit, independent of the rest of the organisation, to take the lead on behalf of the city council. The main results included clear structures, instructions, job descriptions, additional training and education. What's more, the number of civil servants has been drastically reduced: from 9,000 towards a final figure of 3,000.

In addition, it was clear that communications between the municipality and the citizens needed to be greatly improved. In December 2008, Apeldoorn sent management and communications consultant Herman Meijer to Banda Aceh for a period of two years, and this helped things to run more smoothly. Not only did it result in good preparations for visits by both sides, but it also ensured rapid implementation of what had been agreed, at all levels of the municipality.

The problem posed by many civil servants' lack of expertise and experience is being tackled by a local training institute, the Banda Aceh Academy, set up with Apeldoorn's support. The training method, based on civil servants training their colleagues, is inspired by Apeldoorn's own practice. The academy is seen as a model for other Indonesian local authorities.

During the first phase of the cooperation between Apeldoorn and Banda Aceh, the Dutch local government helped draw up a municipality-wide refuse plan, together with the Rotterdam-based refuse collection company Roteb. After approval of the Waste Management Master plan, a pilot project was launched, focusing on communications and financing as well as the waste process itself. Finance was a major problem, for just 10 % of the costs of refuse collection were covered by a waste levy. The council knew it had to increase this, and Apeldoorn advised on how to achieve this. Following the pilot, a broad-based waste management system was introduced, which is now functioning well. In addition the council has started recycling, with the collection of plastic bottles and composting of household waste.

In June 2009 Banda Aceh won the prize for the cleanest city in Indonesia, the Adipura. The prize shows that the local council has succeeded in implementing its 'Banda Aceh - Clean and Green' slogan. Apeldoorn's contribution was specifically mentioned at the award ceremony.

The cooperation has received praise from others:

• VNG, the association of Dutch municipalities, sees the reinforcement of local government in Aceh as a good example of the new approach that is being looked for in development aid – more geared to creating the necessary preconditions for self-help.
• The German development agency GTZ cited the cooperation as an example for other organisations.
• Dutch development NGO Cordaid decided to make a grant, seeing the programme as an opportunity to improve relations between NGOs and local authorities in Aceh.

The programme was largely financed via the VNG LOGO South programme, which contributed €140,000, and CORDAID provided a grant of €40,000.

Regions of Burkina Faso and Senegal – Regions of Italy

Learning lessons to enhance cooperation with all development actors

The Italian region of Tuscany has for many years played a role in decentralised cooperation with partners in Burkina Faso. In 2009, this gave rise to a process of reflection on how to improve the quality and effectiveness of such cooperation, which was discussed with their African partners. This included a survey of those involved in 19 projects which linked Tuscany, Piedmont and the autonomous province of Bolzano with 9 provinces of Burkina Faso.

This in turn has led to a new project, financed by the European Commission under the Non-State Actors and Local Authorities programme, for cooperation with regions in Senegal as well as Burkina Faso. At the European end, Tuscany is joined in this initiative by Piedmont, and also by the French region of Rhône-Alpes.

The results of the reflection process merit a wider circulation; only a few points can be summarised here. First point made, is that – for the Italian partners – decentralised cooperation is not limited to the local and regional governments but includes all the local actors at both ends, and with a broad and inclusive concept of territorial cooperation.

Second, decentralised cooperation can and should play a key role in the processes of decentralisation and local democratic development – precisely because of the ability to join up and work with both local authorities and civil society.

Third, the quality and effectiveness of decentralised cooperation can and should be improved, and should take on board the key principles of aid effectiveness – coherence, coordination of the many actors working in the same territory, overcoming fragmentation, and building long-term strategic partnerships.

Form the survey and debates, specific strengths and weaknesses of the cooperation with Burkina Faso were identified – which are perhaps of wider interest and pertinence:

- The cooperation has promoted collaboration and participation between local authorities and local civil society, though this is more difficult in larger territories.
- Relations between the partners and local institutions tend to be closer in smaller centres, where the mayor is more in contact with citizens, and where the relationship is longer term.
- Knowledge of the territory and alignment to the local development strategies need to be improved and deepened, and also alignment to the central institutions and national plans.
- In some cases NGOs play a key intermediation role between local authorities and marginalised groups, but more emphasis on social inclusion is needed.
- The Burkina Faso partners gave a positive assessment of the decentralised cooperation, notably thanks to efficient results in building capacity and improving basic public services.

- The level of harmonisation between different cooperation initiatives was considered to be generally weak, though there were some good examples of French and Italian coordination.
- Training and technical exchanges need to be improved, especially the content should be better adapted to the needs of Burkina Faso, rather than assuming that northern "good practice" is transferable and relevant to the local situation or needs.
- In general, the level of "ownership" of projects by local civil society and population is rather weak, so a greater effort is needed to ensure that activities give more role and responsibility to the local partners.

The new 3-year project from 2010, supported by the EU, aims to put these lessons into practice. At the African end, it covers 6 regions in two countries – Senegal and Burkina Faso, both of which are low income countries, but implementing decentralisation policies. At the European end, it includes three regions, two Italian and one French. It therefore offers a combination of north-south and south-south cooperation. The partners include local and regional government representatives, and also civil society. It has four main objectives:

- To showcase good practice in systems of regional and multi-level governance, in dealing in particular with information flows and participation.
- To strengthen the capacities of the African partner regions in these fields.
- Jointly to draw up and implement local development projects with a strong impact, in accordance with the guidelines set out in regional strategies.
- To draw up guidelines for international decentralised cooperation in support of regional strategies for local development and the struggle against poverty, in concert with local authorities and civil society.

In terms of methodology, the project involves setting up a "cell" to analyse and capture the positive experiences of cooperation between the partners and take forward the activities; it is made up of one representative of each region plus one representative of the national association of regions from each country.

The project cost is around €1.1 million, with 75% of this to be contributed by the European Union.

Local government associations of South Africa, Namibia and Botswana – Swedish association of local authorities and regions

The P3 programme – building citizen trust through transparent services

The P3 programme, which got fully underway in 2010, is a new type of local government cooperation, bringing together three southern African local government associations, from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, in partnership with the Swedish association of local authorities and regions (SALAR). In addition, each African association (respectively BALA, ALAN and SALGA) is accompanied by a group of their local authorities, a total in all of 25 municipalities (13 South African, 6 from Botswana and Namibia respectively). The further aim is that the lessons learnt will then be passed on to all the local governments in those countries, with the support of the associations, and thus providing a very strong multiplier effect[9].

The three-year programme (2009-2012), which is funded by the EU and the Swedish development agency (SIDA) to the tune of €2.8 million, has two distinct but linked strands (or projects):

- Transparent Local Governance.
- Local Leadership for Growth.

The Transparent Local governance project has four work packages within it:

- Transparent budgeting – tariff modelling, policy development including objectives, strategic choices, performance indicators).
- Service improvement – service standards, process improvement, citizen feedback methods, communication of service standards.
- Budget communication – guide to municipal budgeting, citizen's annual report, report on tenders.
- Capital investment planning – in consultation with each participating municipality.

The approach links issues of cost, service standards and openness. On tariff modelling, to take an example, the approach is based on calculating the actual cost of each "unit" of service, making sure that council staff and users are aware of the cost, and developing a charging policy which is based on the cost concerned – and possibly with a view to recouping 100% of the cost. This is seen to help municipalities achieve financial sustainability, in a context of relative financial fragility.

The support from the P3 project consists of each national association testing a toolkit in their respective pilot municipalities; the toolkit focuses on Tariff Setting, Process Improvement, Capital Investment Planning, and Communication.

The second project under the P3 umbrella is Local Leadership for Growth, aiming at enhancing local economic development capacities. There is a "toolkit" which is being tested in the pilot municipalities, which

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[9] For the project partners, information is shared on the project website at www.projectp3.org.

has four components, with local economic development roundtables as the connecting tool. These are: Red Tape Reduction, Plugging the Leaks in the Local Economy, Business Retention and Expansion, and Competitive Advantage Analysis.

The kinds of problem faced are diverse. To take one example, the town of Mariental, 274 km south-east of Windhoek, is next to the Fish River which, in February 2006, flooded much of the town and caused huge losses, plus the cancellation of flood insurance policies; the threat of flooding remains real. Therefore, Mariental Municipality has been working together with the Namibian P3 Team, looking at ways of engaging with the business community to find a permanent solution. After discussion and workshops, the council decided to use the P3 Project's Business Retention and Expansion Tool, which provides a structured approach to economic development.

The 6 Botswanan local authorities are working on the results of a Business Enabling Environment Survey, which highlighted some critical and interconnected issues:

• the first interface for enterprises with governing institutions should be at local authority level,
• constant interaction between councils and private sector is vital for collaborative growth,
• much better information is needed to facilitate strategic local economic decisions and broader understanding
  of the local business environment.

Thus, the south-east Botswanan municipality of Kgatleng is working on the theme of "plugging the leaks" in the local economy – i.e. how to retain spending in the local economy from local businesses and residents. The underlying purpose is to get elected councillors and municipal staff to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of their local economy – and engage with the local business community in formulating and implementing their development strategy.

Niamey, Niger – International Association of Francophone Mayors

Signing up to Urban Development

Niamey is the capital city of the land-locked state of Niger, situated in its far south-west, on the river Niger not so far from the borders of Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin and Nigeria. The city's population has grown rapidly in recent decades, and is now more than 800,000 – by far the largest in the country. Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world, and close to the bottom of the International Monetary Fund's "league table" of states' Gross Domestic Product per head of population (at US $700).

As with so many cities in low income countries faced with a rapid, unplanned urbanisation, Niamey had grave problems in responding to the needs of its people. The city government of Niamey – from 1999, the Urban Community of Niamey - had no system of signage and addresses, which however form the basis of land use and demographic planning, provision of services, and collection of taxes.

By the late 1990s, Niamey was one of the only capital cities of the region not to possess a proper addressing and signage system. The practical disadvantages became increasingly obvious to city managers– lack of knowledge of land ownership, or even of the city government's assets (highways and equipment), together with weak income collection due to lack of data on potential taxpayers' location. And all leading to problems in serving the city's growing population.

Therefore, in 2000-01, the Minister of Equipment and Habitat initiated a feasibility study, to be paid for by the World Bank; but when the Bank was unable to take this forward in due time, the Urban Community of Niamey proposed to undertake this work with the support of the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF) and to include this signage project within their partnership.

The Urban Community was itself mainly responsible for undertaking the work, which was carried out as planned in 15 months from 2001 – 2002, in a way that is seen as something of a model in its speed, efficiency and cost. The AIMF and its members provided finance and technical advice and support through regular missions of experts to the city.

The general objectives of the project were three:

- To enable people and premises to be located in the city, through street signage and the numbering of each door or entrance.
- To put in place systems of urban management through collection of data about the city.
- To improve the Urban Community's resources through compilation of a register of households.

A wide ranging public education campaign was carried out during the planning stages of the project, an essential element in its success. In the course of the project, tax assessment and urban planning authorities collaborated in the block by block assessment of the city. The street address database was compiled with

this data, with the name of inhabitants or business for every doorway. It came to over 50,000 addresses. Some 10,000 street signs were installed, and over 2,300 streets or highways were registered in the database.

The address system divides the city into 44 formal districts, based on pre-existing neighbourhoods. Each district was given a two letter prefix ("Grand Marché", for instance, is "GM"). Streets roughly parallel to the river were given even numbers, and cross streets odd numbers. Doorway numberings begin at the river and increase as they move away, with alternating even-odd address numbers on opposite sides of the street. Thus a street address in "Grand Marché" district might be given as *"4735, Rue GM 12, Niamey".*

The Urban Community of Niamey had to overcome many challenges. Due to the scale of informal settlements and irregular streets, lack of local agreement on district boundaries or even names, subdivisions of land parcels, and ongoing transformation of the city centre, mapping the whole city took longer than planned. Since most of the population was illiterate, the public education work – to get people to understand and accept the future value of the project - was more difficult than had been assumed.

But as a result of this ambitious initiative, the city's capacity to plan and provide services was much enhanced due to the solid, reliable data. The Urban Community's finances were improved, via increased collection of local property and waste collection taxes.

In the words of a World Bank report on the experience of African cities in such urban addressing projects: "Niger (2001) instituted a remarkably effective street addressing system in Niamey with support from the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF). [...] What is remarkable about this project is the fact that all of the various parts of the project were completed successfully, in a short period of time, under unusual conditions that could be considered "risky."[10]

The report underlined that the Niamey operation, the first in Niger:

• was not part of, nor benefited from, a broader project;
• was carried out within a municipal framework, where the responsible services had only modest means at their disposal;
• did not have the benefit of a permanent technical assistance team, but only received relatively limited support for a duration of several weeks;
• was financed by a donor (the AIMF) new to the field of urban addressing.

And yet within 15 months, the project had been to a very large extent implemented across the whole city.

[10] Page 86, Street Addressing and the Management of Cities, Catherine Farvacque-Vitkovic, Lucien Godin, Hugues Leroux, Florence Verdet, and Roberto Chavez, World Bank, 2005.

Mbale, Uganda – Wales, United-Kingdom

A territorial approach to climate change

When the Government of Wales decided to create its own Wales for Africa programme, it was natural that it should focus in particular on the large, partly mountainous eastern Uganda region (population around 750,000), and which includes the district of Mbale. There has long been one of the UK's most active community-based links, known as PONT, between the south Wales borough of 'Rhondda Cynon Taf' and Mbale. The link covers 13 different kinds of connection – including health, schools, churches, university, engineering... and has won international awards for its work.

For Wales, like many regions and provinces around the world, climate change is high up the list of policy priorities, and it has made a commitment (in its own region) to reduce carbon emissions by at least 40% by 2020.

Wales is a member of the international network of regions, nrg4SD, "energy for sustainable development", launched at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. So a territorial approach to climate change, backed up by strong community-based links, made a lot of sense. A Coalition against Poverty in Mbale had already been formed by the PONT-Mbale partnership and the issue of climate change is clearly linked to poverty in the Mbale region, where coffee growing for export is its major industry, and a 2 degree centigrade increase in average temperature could destroy its viability.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) encouraged Wales to work at territorial level on climate change, given that national governments were not alone going to deliver sufficient results, and also since sub-national governments can play a big role in the transition to a lower-carbon use world. But Africa in particular was missing out in getting help and a fair share of the available financing for this work – in the words of Mbale District Chief Executive Andrew Makejje, "we have done little or nothing to cause climate change yet we are the first to suffer from its consequences." So working with Mbale and two other eastern Uganda districts, the Territorial Approach to Climate Change project was born, and launched at the Copenhagen international climate conference in December 2009.

The pilot project, part of the Wales for Africa programme, has also won financial support from the British development ministry (DfID) and the Danish government agency DANIDA as well as UNDP, totalling US $1 million for the 2010-2012 period. It has four main points:

- Forming a coordination platform for programming work on climate change in the region.
- Building capacity to design the integrated territorial climate plan, identifying current and future threats.
- Planting one million trees, starting September 2010.
- Using the climate plan to attract funding.

An early action is to establish a system of weather monitoring for the region, with weather stations and using satellite technology. As another visible and practical start to the project's work, several hundred

thousand tree seedlings had already been planted by the end of 2010.

It is also intended to scale up the climate change programme, in the light of the pilot's experience, to extend it to other Ugandan regions, in cooperation with the Ugandan government, and also in future – it is hoped – to regions in other sub-Saharan African countries.

The Welsh government has also mobilised in-kind contributions to the programme, including the contribution of staff from the Welsh Environment Agency, forestry service and universities. The project also aims to provide benefits for Wales – including the project management skills development of staff who take part, and who win management development certificates.

The wider Wales for Africa programme gives support to many other Welsh actions for international development – there are for example 120 community links between Wales and Africa. The Government of Wales provides £750,000 (€900,000) per year to these (which also acts as leverage for other expertise drawn in), of which £75,000 (€90,000) per year for the Mbale climate project.

PART 2 PLATFORMA –
the European platform for local and regional governments for development

Why PLATFORMA?

Until 2008, when PLATFORMA was formally launched, Europe's local and regional governments did not have a strong – let alone united – voice towards the European Union and institutions on issues of international development and decentralised cooperation. Individual European associations had advocated for the recognition of the role of local and regional governments in development towards the European Commission and Parliament, and some were consulted by the European Commission as it developed ideas that would culminate in the Non State Actors and Local Authorities thematic Programme (NSA-LA), but their contribution was not coordinated.

This was in sharp contrast to the world of development NGOs, who for many years have had an effective representative voice and organisation in CONCORD, which has members in every EU country.

In 2006, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions took the initiative in bringing together the major European, international and national associations of local and regional government, to discuss how to work together more effectively, and in particular how to inform and influence the European institutions on development issues. It was urgent to ensure that forthcoming European programmes for development cooperation were open to local and regional authorities, and took into account their role in development.

In March 2007, as we have already seen, the European Parliament adopted its resolution on local authorities and development, based on an own-initiative report by Pierre Schapira, Deputy Mayor of Paris. The resolution includes the following points:

"19. Stresses the importance of a structured dialogue between European local authorities and Community institutions, as defined by the DCI, so that European local authorities are provided with a framework in which they can effectively cooperate and dialogue with development institutions and other stakeholders;

20. Calls on the Commission to establish a partnership with a platform of associations representing local authorities active in the field of cooperation, modelled on Concord (European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development) for NGOs, to facilitate dialogue and cooperation with Community institutions, coordinate cooperation between local authorities and assist local authorities in implementing development policies, and in particular strengthen the capacities of its members".

Therefore, the rationale for creating a good coordination came both from the positive

motivation of local and regional governments themselves, determined to play a more substantial role in European development cooperation policy and practice, but also in response to developments within the EU's institutions.

This local and regional coordination – at the outset highly informal – soon became known among its members simply as "the platform" – and when described to the world beyond, as "the European platform of local and regional authorities for development cooperation". And so, when it came to choosing a short, distinctive and easy-to-remember name (recognisable in different languages) for this co-ordinating platform, PLATFORMA was chosen!

The formal launch of PLATFORMA took place in Strasbourg in November 2008, on the occasion of the European Development Days, which were specifically dedicated that year to the role of local and regional authorities and the local dimension to development. This high-level forum, with many parallel events dedicated to local governance issues, represented an important step forward in raising European awareness of the actions of local and regional governments in development.

Members of PLATFORMA

The members of PLATFORMA are mainly associations of local and regional government; between them the member associations represent, directly or indirectly, the large majority of Europe's local and regional governments.

Each of the members provides a contribution towards the co-financing needed, alongside the European Commission's grant. More information on the work and role of the different types of member is given in a later section.

Mission and objectives

In a previous section, the main reasons for PLATFORMA's creation have been referred to, and these are naturally included in its mission statement and objectives.

As to its *mission*, PLATFORMA is committed to

• Gaining increased political recognition of the contribution of local and regional authorities for development cooperation.
• Promoting effective decentralised cooperation for the development of partner territories.
• Ensuring a real dialogue between local and regional authorities and the European Institutions.

And PLATFORMA's *objectives* are these:

• To coordinate the voice of local and regional authorities toward the European Institutions, in particular for the definition and implementation of European development policies.
• To facilitate networking of information and sharing of experiences.
• To strengthen the participation of local and regional authorities in European development programmes.
• To strengthen links with civil society, in particular with CONCORD, the European confederation of development NGOs.

It is worth adding a few words of explanation about each of these objectives.

Coordination towards the EU institutions

We have seen that the fragmentation of the local and regional government sector was the key weakness that the members of PLATFORMA have wanted to remedy. They wish, in general terms, to ensure through PLATFORMA that the contribution of their members to development is recognized, valued and taken into account by the European institutions. And PLATFORMA's members also wish, in particular, to influence the EU's development policies and funding mechanisms, notably in relation to decentralised cooperation.

This role is of even greater importance, perhaps, at the time of writing (2011) when the EU and its Member States are debating the size and shape of its future finances after the current budget period expires at the end of 2013, and the future of its policies and programmes for development is also in the melting-pot as part of this process. Advocacy for strong linkages between the EU's development policy and its foreign policy is also of crucial importance at this time, when the new European external action service has just been set up.

This is not a one-way process, however. It is useful for the European Commission in particular to have a representative network such as PLATFORMA available to it – which it can consult, confident that the views expressed will be broadly representative of the local and regional government sector. To assist in this, PLATFORMA's members agreed at the outset to set up a steering committee in order to facilitate leadership and coordination of the network and ensure that all types of members were closely involved in the work of PLATFORMA.

Networking and sharing of experiences

Although several thousands of Europe's local and regional government have direct experience of development cooperation activities, there are always new ones wishing to take part. In central Europe, for example, it is only now that many towns and regions, with their national associations, are starting to play a role in international development – often with their near neighbours within Europe, such as the Ukraine, Moldova or the countries of the Caucasus. Their recent experience in changing political and economic systems, and in joining the EU, is extremely valuable and relevant.

There is also a need to share experience with a view to improving the overall quality and success of local and regional government's international partnership work – especially to take on board more fully some of the aid / development effectiveness agenda (e.g. greater coordination), and to translate it to the sub-national context (local 'ownership', alignment to local development policies, etc.).

Strengthening participation in European development programmes

Then there is a continuing need to help local and regional governments – in Europe and beyond – to have success in applying for available EU financing. For although, as we see below, PLATFORMA has helped to improve the application process for local governments, the system is not easily mastered by those who have little or no experience in applying to the EU. Moreover, it is essential to demonstrate that local and regional governments really wish to benefit from EU financing, and use it effectively, if the range

of programmes and finance is to be maintained or increased in future.

Strengthening links with civil society, in particular with CONCORD

As the case studies in this publication show, a large proportion of local and regional governments' international partnership work also involves local NGOs and civil society. The creation of PLATFORMA has given the opportunity to develop cooperation also at European level.

Work and achievements

During its first two full years of life, 2009 and 2010, PLATFORMA has been highly active in three related domains – (1) exchanges of experience, (2) contributions to EU policy-making and programme planning, and (3) provision of information to members, and through them to the wider family of local and regional government.

Exchanges of experience

PLATFORMA has in the two years organised 5 important seminars (with an average attendance of over 100), as well as meetings during events organised by European institutions, such as the annual European Development Days and the "Assizes of Decentralised Cooperation", organised by the European Commission, and also, in the case of the Assizes, with the Committee of the Regions. These helped to raise awareness among local and regional government themselves of the depth and diversity of the local and regional contribution, and also to dialogue with the EU and civil society organisations on specific themes.[11]

March 2009, Brussels: Conditions for effective action for development
The aim of this seminar, with participation from the European Commission and Parliament, Committee of the Regions and CONCORD, was to demonstrate the range of local and regional partnerships for development, setting out their strengths and also the challenges they face, and in particular to show how they contribute to the fight against poverty and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

May 2009, Marseille: Territorial approach to development
The purpose in Marseille was to showcase in particular the role of regions in international cooperation, and the advantages of working for development from a territorial perspective. The conference benefited also from contributions from Senegal, Morocco and Zimbabwe.

October 2009, Lyon: Evaluating our effectiveness in development cooperation
Again, the meeting had the benefit of several African representatives, as well as the European Commission and CONCORD. The seminar raised important questions about how local and regional government should respond to and 'localise' the "aid effectiveness" principles, set out in the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action.

March 2010, Bucharest: Development education in Central and Eastern Europe
This seminar focused on the role of local and regional governments in the more recent EU Member States. Public awareness of development issues is generally lower than elsewhere in the EU, so development education is a priority and local and regional authorities need to work closely with civil society organisations in this objective. The value of working with counterparts in Ukraine, Moldova or Georgia among others was underlined.

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[11] The full reports of the seminars can be consulted on PLATFORMA's website: www.platforma-dev.eu

<u>May 2010, La Rabida, Spain: Climate change and development cooperation</u>

This event aimed to share experience on how to best incorporate environmental challenges in development partnerships. An increasing number of partnerships are focusing on the impact of climate change, on basic needs that are affected by it – food security, agricultural production, energy – and on natural disasters caused by more extreme weather events.

In addition to these events, the members of PLATFORMA actively participated in the first edition of the European Assizes of decentralised cooperation, co-organised by the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions in Brussels in 2009. This event was an opportunity to make both their individual and coordination work within PLATFORMA known.

Contribution to EU policy-making and programme planning

Recognised as a representative body for European local and regional governments, PLATFORMA is now regularly invited to take part in consultations organised by the European Commission, and has given its collective views and feedback on many questions. The following are some of the most important inputs made through these consultations.

<u>July 2009: Improving the NSA-LA programme for local and regional governments</u>

In 2009, PLATFORMA worked with the European Commission, at the end of the first year of operation of this new programme, with a view to improving the way it functioned. The points made included:

- The need for a better definition of priority themes, to relate them more to the practical competences of local and regional governments, and including strengthening national associations, to enhance their role in decentralization processes.
- For local government co-financing, the cost of staff time input should be accepted.
- More training is required for local and regional governments on EU programme applications.
- The timing of calls for proposals should be fixed in advance.
- The application forms should be better adapted to local governments.
- The time limit for submitting proposals should be extended.
- The required pre-registration form ("PADOR") is very ill-adapted to local and regional governments and should be amended.

The European Commission responded positively, with most of these points being taken on board in the December 2009 calls for proposals. This was followed up with a further response in December to a consultation on the draft NSA-LA annual action plan for 2010, in which PLATFORMA reiterated some of the above points (role of local government associations, need to extend priority country list).

<u>March 2010: Mid-term review of the NSA-LA programme</u>

The NSA-LA programme, established for the 2007-2013 funding period, was reviewed in 2010. While

emphasizing the interest of local and regional authorities in this programme, PLATFORMA indicated that both they and the European Commission were in a learning phase. Greater results were to be expected in the future years. Among the main recommendations made by PLATFORMA in this mid-term review, the main points were:

- to further promote multi-actor partnerships,
- to shift focus from fragile states to more stable and decentralised partner countries, where local governments can make a real difference; in general to extend the list of eligible countries,
- to give priority to the "in-country" budget line rather than the "multi-country" line,
- to further adapt procedures to local and regional authorities' nature and realities.

Spring 2010: Contribution to the Review of the Millennium Development Goals

In September 2010, the United Nations held a high-level event in New York, to review work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). PLATFORMA contributed to the EU's thinking and building up of a community position on this subject, focusing on the following points:

- The MDGs need to be localised and integrated into long-term national development structures and dialogues in which all stakeholders, including local and regional government, are involved.
- The 'urban explosion' in many developing countries underlines the essential role of local and regional governments in achieving the MDGs, but they need financial and other support to deal with the huge challenges, and should be eligible for direct budget support.
- Local and regional authorities should be integrated into development policies from design to evaluation, in both North and South.

December 2010: Response to the Green Paper 'Increasing the impact of EU development policy'

PLATFORMA noted the strategic points identified in the Green Paper – a fast growing demography in developing countries, with increasingly dense territories; climate change; and growing movements of population. These points called for an approach that identifies what each 'actor' can bring to bear, and a division of labour taking into account their competences. PLATFORMA regretted that the Green Paper did not reflect this, and recalled previous EU policy positions which had clearly highlighted the role of local and regional governments.

PLATFORMA proposed that decentralization and local governance be added as transversal (cross-cutting) priorities of European development policy, with financial support.

On aid effectiveness, the response proposed a review of the Paris and Accra principles, to include a 'local and regional' perspective to the principles of coordination, ownership and alignment. Local and regional governments are best placed to coordinate the other partners in their area, through a territorial approach to development.

Emphasis was also placed on the role of local and regional governments in sustainable development and tackling climate change, for which there are many good examples of decentralised cooperation.

Finally the response called for the role of local and regional authorities to be clearly set out in future EU development policy positions.

December 2010: Response to the Green Paper on EU budget support to third countries

PLATFORMA highlighted that direct budget support by the EU to national governments, whilst having some advantages, can have an adverse impact on decentralization unless national associations of local and regional governments are involved, both in drawing up national development strategies, and in negotiations between the European Commission and the central governments on EU budget support. It called for a reflection on how best to decentralise budget support.

2010-2011: Contributions to the European Structured Dialogue

In March 2010, and looking ahead to the next EU financial period starting 2014, the Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs launched a "structured dialogue" with Member States, the European Parliament, local and regional authorities, and non-state actors, on the role each should play in European development policy. PLATFORMA represents the local and regional government sector in these discussions, and, through its partners' representatives from the sector, has also contributed to the Regional seminars organised by the European Commission on each continent (Bamako, Asuncion, New Delhi, and Baku).

There are three working groups set up under the Dialogue, to which PLATFORMA has contributed.

1-The roles and added value of Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities in the European Commission's external cooperation

PLATFORMA highlighted the following key roles for local and regional governments:

- They bring democratic government and political accountability.
- They are involved in implementing decentralisation and delivering multilevel governance.
- They are best-placed to coordinate all the actors involved in local and regional development.
- They mobilise grass-roots communities.
- They have a long and strong track record as development 'actors' and 'donors', the precise role in this depending on their competences.

On links with civil society, the responsibility of local governments to ensure a positive enabling environment for civil society organisations was underlined. PLATFORMA also recommended the development of stronger exchanges in partner countries between the EU delegations and the representative associations of local governments.

PLATFORMA very much welcomed the positive dialogue on the territorial approach to development which was one of the main focuses of this working group. The discussions put the sub-national 'territory' at the heart of local development and governance efforts. The working group highlighted the need for stronger coordination between the different development actors, and the catalyst role that local and regional governments can play to achieve this.

The PLATFORMA response emphasized that local and regional governments supported the notion of 'development effectiveness' rather than 'aid effectiveness', with a move away from aid dependence toward self-sufficiency and greater autonomy for southern actors (not just States). It argued here too for a special study into ways of involving local and regional governments in new modalities, e.g. decentralised budget support, and active involvement of national associations.

3-EU aid delivery mechanisms

PLATFORMA welcomed the European Commission's initiative to review the present means for supporting the activities of local and regional governments and of civil society organisations. As we have seen earlier, these are often ill-adapted to local governments' nature and types of activity. PLATFORMA underlined the need to simplify the selection method, which is currently based on complex competitive calls for proposals, and in particular to make better use of cities and regions' practical expertise. PLATFORMA also proposed that longer-term support mechanisms be made available for local and regional governments in partner countries.

<u>European Charter on Development Cooperation in support of local governance</u>

PLATFORMA has also promoted this European Charter, which was drawn up during the French Presidency of the EU, and given support by the EU's Council of Ministers in 2008. The Charter sets out both principles and some guidelines for practical implementation of good practice in local development cooperation, and PLATFORMA has promoted these to its members and beyond.

Provision of information

The secretariat of PLATFORMA has ensured the dissemination of all information on EU development policies and funding programmes – especially the NSA-LA programme, and including calls for proposals, as well as the wide range of consultation and dialogue papers, referred to above. The increased, organised provision of information has led to a higher number of local and regional government responses to the calls for tenders, for example.

In 2010, the PLATFORMA website was created, and can be found at **www.platforma-dev.eu**. It is in English and French. It provides basic information about PLATFORMA, and includes the networks' full responses to consultations, as well as information on its activities.

Results

In brief, the results of PLATFORMA's work in its first 2 years include the following:

• Received full recognition from the European Commission as the coordinated voice of local and regional governments in international development, actively engaged and invited, and contributing to all consultations and institutional events. PLATFORMA contributed to the EU structured dialogue as the European representative of local and regional authorities;
• Provided a rapid flow of all relevant information to its members, resulting in wider awareness of the European Union's work and funding opportunities among local and regional government;
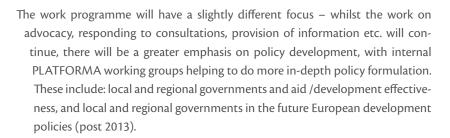
- Helped to publicize the work and roles of local and regional governments in relation to decentralised cooperation, within the EU's institutions, among civil society organisations, and among local and regional governments themselves;
- Helped to reinforce the dialogue between the European Commission through its in-country delegations and the local and regional governments in partner countries;
- Influenced the form and content of the annual action plans of the NSA-LA programme and the related calls for proposals. It is worth noting that the last call for proposals in December 2009 saw a much stronger participation from local and regional governments than in the first years of the programme.

A new phase

PLATFORMA as an informal network existed before it received funding support from the European Commission, and could continue to exist even if such support were to cease. But there is no doubt that receiving financial support has benefitted local and regional government as a whole – and also helped the European Commission by having a well-organised, representative network of local and regional governments to dialogue with.

The first 2 year period of activity for PLATFORMA expires in March 2011, with a final conference in Brussels, which coincides with the second Assizes of Decentralised Cooperation, organised by the European Commission with the Committee of the Regions, and with PLATFORMA as a partner.

The second phase starts in April 2011, for which PLATFORMA has received support, also for 2 years, from the European Commission.

The work programme will have a slightly different focus – whilst the work on advocacy, responding to consultations, provision of information etc. will continue, there will be a greater emphasis on policy development, with internal PLATFORMA working groups helping to do more in-depth policy formulation. These include: local and regional governments and aid /development effectiveness, and local and regional governments in the future European development policies (post 2013).

In contrast, as regards major meetings, PLATFORMA will organise a single annual forum, debating a topical theme, and including more representatives from partner countries, to give a better balance to the debates. It will however respond to invitations from members and others, to provide information and exchange ideas and interesting practices in cooperation.

More about PLATFORMA's members

As we have seen above, PLATFORMA's membership covers four main types of body:

- European associations of local and regional government;

- International associations of local and regional government;
- National associations of local and regional government;
- Individual cities or regions, actively engaged in development cooperation.

This section looks briefly at the role of each of these main groups.

European associations of local and regional government

Europe has a diverse range of organisations representing its 100,000 local and regional governments. There are four active associations which represent individual European regions, each with their own focus and mission.

The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)

The AEBR works on behalf of the European border and cross-border regions, in order to highlight their special problems and opportunities, represent their common interests to national and international parliaments and institutions, support and coordinate cooperation between the regions throughout Europe, and promote exchanges of experience and information in relation to cross-border issues.

While it deals with all types of infra-European cross-border cooperation, the AEBR is actively engaged in work with the regions at the EU's borders, including south-east Europe and the Ukraine and with regions in other continents, e.g. Latin America, to share experiences in cross-border cooperation.

Assembly of European Regions (AER)

The Assembly of European Regions, formed in 1985, is the largest independent network of regions in the wider Europe, bringing together over 270 regions from 33 countries and 16 interregional organisations. Its mission is to promote the principle of subsidiarity and regional democracy, increase the regions' political influence within the European institutions, support the regions in the process of European enlargement and globalisation, and facilitate interregional cooperation across wider Europe and beyond. Its General Secretariat is based in Strasbourg, and it has offices in Brussels and Alba Iulia, Romania.

In the international domain, AER has agreements with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to cooperate on territorial approaches to climate change. It also works with the new R20 grouping of regions on climate issues.

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)

The CPMR has a membership of 161 regions, based in 28 EU and non-EU countries of Europe. CPMR has since 1973 worked to ensure that its member regions' interests and needs are taken into account in all policies with a high territorial impact, including maritime policy. In particular, CPMR aims for a more balanced development of Europe's regions, and a strong EU regional policy targeted at all of Europe's regions. Much of CPMR's work is carried on through 6 geographical commissions.

In the wider international domain, CPMR works (including in PLATFORMA) to gain more recognition for the role of regions in development, and champions a truly territorial approach to development. CPMR and its members are also engaged in international work on sustainable development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, energy policies, biodiversity and environmental conservation.

Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

CEMR, formed in 1951, brings together over 50 national associations of local and regional government in 39 countries of Europe, themselves representing the large majority of Europe's sub-national governments. It works to promote a united Europe that is based on local and regional self government and democracy.

CEMR works in many fields such as public services, regional policy, transport, the environment, equal opportunities, governance etc. It seeks to influence EU legislation, by ensuring that the concerns of local and regional authorities are taken into account from the earliest stages of the EU legislative process. It promotes twinning and links within Europe, and internationally.

It is the European section of the world association United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and plays an active role in promoting the local and regional contribution to development in partner countries. It 'houses' the secretariat to PLATFORMA.

International associations of local and regional government

In 2009 and 2010, PLATFORMA had two international association members, United Cities and Local Governments, and the Association Internationale des Maires Francophones. These are joined, from 2011, by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and FOGAR, the Global Forum of Associations of Regions.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

UCLG, formed in 2004 following a political unification process of two older associations, represents and defends the interests of local governments on the world stage. With its seat in Barcelona, its mission is to be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local governments, and within the wider international community. It has members in 136 countries in seven world regions. These include over 1000 cities and local governments, and 112 local government associations.

Its work programme focuses on increasing the role and influence of local government in global governance, and supporting democratic, effective, innovative local government close to the citizen. UCLG supports international cooperation between cities and their associations, and works to obtain programmes, networks and partnerships to build the capacity of local governments.

International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF)

The AIMF is a network of francophone cities and city associations, which share a set of common values. It works to achieve a better urban and municipal management, promotes exchange of experience, mobilises expertise from the cities to provide services in other countries, and finances development projects. It has members in 48 countries.

The AIMF is committed to the promotion of exchanges between local governments and their networks from different world regions. Its work centres around two principal themes – decentralisation and local governance, and sustainable socio-economic development.

Since it was formed, the AIMF has lent support to almost 1000 projects in the fields of water and sanitation, sustainable development, economic development, health, education and heritage. It aims to mobilise governments at all levels, together with civil society and international partners.

Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)

CLGF was founded in 1995, and today has more than 160 members in 40 Commonwealth countries, including local government associations, individual local authorities, and ministries dealing with local government. It works to promote and strengthen democratic local government across the Commonwealth and to encourage the exchange of best practice.

Global Forum of Associations of Regions (FOGAR)

FOGAR was set up in 2007 by 17 networks of regions, to promote recognition of the role that regions can play to meet the challenges of development and respond to the key global issues. From 2011, FOGAR's membership is also open to individual regions, and its work programme focuses on territorial cohesion policy on a global scale.

National associations of local and regional governments

As we have noted above, the membership of PLATFORMA includes ten national associations, most of whom are members of CEMR. Their involvement – which is reflected also in a financial contribution to PLATFORMA – demonstrates the strong support of Europe's local and regional authorities for international cooperation work. In some associations, the international partnership work has been delegated to a daughter organisation – this is true for example in the Netherlands and in Sweden. In other countries, e.g. Spain, the international work is done by a team inside the main association, the FEMP.

The ten national associations are as follows:

• Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces
• French association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
• Central Union of Municipalities and Communities of Greece
• Italian association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
• Association of Netherlands Municipalities
• Romanian Municipalities Association
• Local Government Association of England and Wales
• Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
• Latvian association of local and regional governments
• Cités Unies France

Europe's national associations can play several roles in international cooperation for development. They can lobby their own governments, to obtain programmes and funding for this work. They can encourage their own members to participate in international development work, from development education at home, to

technical cooperation partnerships with overseas counterparts. They can also play a direct role in development cooperation, through partnerships with the nascent national local government associations in developing countries, often known as Association Capacity Building (ACB).
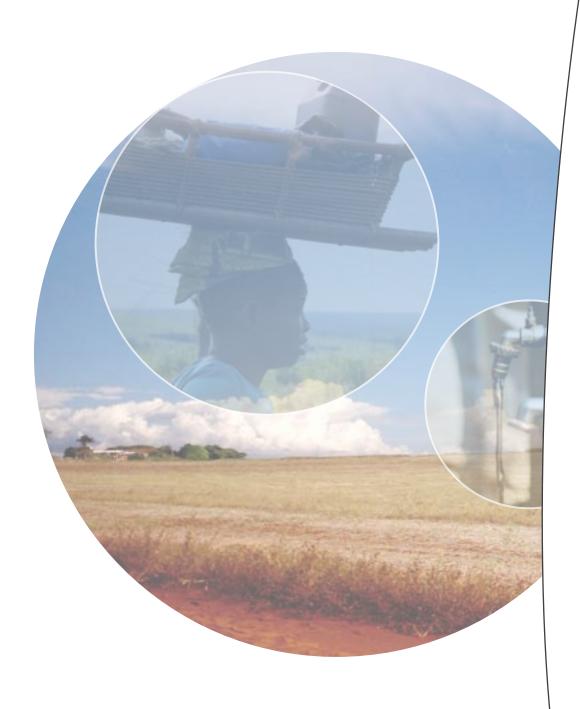
Individual cities and regions

As we have seen, PLATFORMA's membership, made up largely of associations, is leavened by a small number of individual cities or regions, which have a strong interest in and commitment to development cooperation. Paris, Lyon and Bucharest have given strong support from the early days of the platform – and Paris's Deputy Mayor, Pierre Schapira, has played a prominent role – he was the author of the European Parliament's important resolution on the role of local governments in development, as we have seen, and acts as political spokesman for PLATFORMA. Lyon has a very strong record in decentralised cooperation, and chairs UCLG's committee on the theme. Bucharest is an important partner, given the importance of raising public interest and awareness among more recent EU members.

The Province (Diputació) of Barcelona, the city of Stuttgart and the Italian region of Tuscany joined PLATFORMA in 2011– together bringing a breadth of experience in this field to the network.

CONTACTS

Further information on the work of PLATFORMA may be found on its website:
www.platforma-dev.eu

Further information on the members of PLATFORMA may be found on their websites :

Association of European Border Regions
www.aebr.eu

Assembly of European Regions
www.aer.eu

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions
www.crpm.org

Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.ccre.org

United Cities and Local Governments
www.cities-localgovernments.org

Association Internationale des Maires Francophones
www.aimf.asso.fr

Commonwealth Local Government Forum
www.clgf.org.uk

Forum of Global Associations of Regions
www.regionsunies-fogar.org

Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces
www.femp.es

French association of the Council of European Municipalities
and Regions
www.afccre.org/fr

Central Union of Municipalities and Communities of Greece
www.kedke.gr

Italian association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.aiccre.it

Association of Netherlands Municipalities
www.vng-international.nl

Romanian Municipalities Association
www.amr.ro

Local Government Association of England and Wales
www.lga.gov.uk

Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
www.skl.se

Latvian association of local and regional government
www.lps.lv

Cités Unies France
www.cites-unies-france.org

City of Paris, France
www.paris.fr

Greater Lyon, France
www.grandlyon.com

City of Bucharest (district 2), Romania
www.ps2.ro

Province of Barcelona, Spain
www.diba.es

City of Stuttgart, Germany
www.stuttgart.de

Region of Tuscany, Italy
www.regione.toscana.it

PLATFORMA

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