

BE PART OF THE NEXT WORLD FORUM OF LED

An open working process that promotes a global dialogue on Local Economic Development (LED), continues strengthening a global alliance among engaged stakeholders, promotes concrete cooperation at country and local level and stimulates policies towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at local level. This will ensure addressing key issues such as poverty eradication, employment and decent work, sustainable entrepreneurship and the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Background

The World Forum of Local Economic Development (LED) is a biennial event, each one a milestone of an open working process that aims to stimulate LED policies and to promote the global dialogue on LED by sharing experiences and promoting joint actions among a large variety of engaged stakeholders. The Forums' celebration also influences the global development agenda by addressing the challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the implementation of its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local level. In the last forum, the contribution of LED to the SDGs has been acknowledged, including for SDG1, on poverty eradication, SDG8, on sustainable growth and decent work and SDG11, on sustainable urbanization.

Who is promoting?

The World Forum of LED is promoted by the global networks of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and Regions United (ORU FOGAR), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), counting also on the support and expertise of key partners such as the Andalusian Fund for International Solidarity (FAMSI), the Brazilian Service of Support for Micro and Small Enterprises (SEBRAE) and the City and Metropolitan City of Turin, Italy, which have co-hosted the three editions of the World Forum of LED over the years.

An ongoing process

Since 2011 with the first World Forum in Seville, Spain, this long-standing process has been consolidating a *global alliance* for enhancing the policy debate and a shared vision on LED.

- ❖ The first Forum was the culmination of a fruitful collaboration between territorial actors, decentralized cooperation networks and Local Economic Development Agencies and offered a timely opportunity to present the territorial experiences on how economic development can advance sustainable human development within different territories.
- ❖ In 2013, the city of Foz do Iguazu, Brazil, hosted the second edition of the event, bringing together representatives of local, regional and national governments, multilateral organization, academia, the private sector and many socio-economic actors of the territories. 4.000 participants focused their discussions on appropriate instruments for creating and fostering public-private partnerships at the local level.
- ❖ Finally, in October 2015, the third edition of the World Forum of LED was celebrated in Turin, Italy, gathering more than 2.000 participants from 130 countries. The event focused on how LED can contribute to achieve more inclusive, equitable and environmentally sustainable development outcomes, through dialogue and direct engagement of local stakeholders, promotion of decent work, horizontal and vertical policy coherence and integrated planning frameworks. The discussions were organized around innovation, employment and urbanization - the main thematic pillars of the forum.

Implementing the SDGs at local level

LED constitutes today a consolidated set of diverse and widely applied practices and tools, directed at enlarging equal opportunities for income and decent work. In the context of the newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, LED stands out for the potential contribution that represents as a strategic and operational approach to localize the new development goals.

Sustainable LED strategies enable local people to build upon local resources and make use of their advantages and specific knowledge endemic to their territory. The 2030 Agenda specifically recognizes that in an increasingly global economy, cities and regions come to the fore and are important channels of the transformation at play.

At the same time, the pursuit of LED has changed from a low-priority function of local governments to a central concern that encompasses the interests of all actors at local level. Thus, LED has the potential to land the global partnerships and

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strategies at the local level in which all-local stakeholders work together to define priorities, and plan and implement development strategies.

A permanent coordination mechanism to advance the dialogue on LED

The 2030 Agenda calls for a new global partnership instrumental for moving from promises to performance, from good intentions to actual improvements on the ground. The World Forum of LED and its related partnership process is an excellent example of such a new *global partnership*. Its remarkable potential stems from the very fact that a large number of diverse global, national as well as local actors are united by the desire to work together in enhancing international policies and their ultimate implementation at the ground. This global LED alliance demonstrates how the 2030 Agenda's global partnerships can be transformed into territorial partnerships that directly impact people's lives.



Next steps

In order to facilitate the process and ensure a proper coordination among all the involved partners and stakeholders, the creation of a *permanent coordination mechanism* will play a vital role in the lead-up of next edition of the Forum.

The establishment and activation of such permanent coordination mechanism will assure:

- The institutionalization of the elaboration of the forthcoming editions of the Forum as well as the inter-Forum processes, paving the way for more successful outcomes and achievements.

- Well managed communication and exchange mechanism among members that can ensure the continuity of the process, by easing the creation of trust and consensus.
- The continuity of the activities organized and promoted between forum and forum, including decentralized, south-south and triangular cooperation, capacity building, research, and information sharing. These activities will assure the implementation of the previous forum's action plan and prepare for the next one.

Africa contributing to the 4th World Forum of LED

After the celebration of the forums in Europe and Latin America, the Executive Committee favors the next edition of the event to take place in Africa. This will allow debating further on the policies and initiatives already promoted by African countries, in line with the Agenda 2063 and the newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and enriching the shared vision on LED with the African experience and perspectives.

In 2017, the next forum represents an opportunity for continuing a high quality advocacy of LED that can better inform international development processes and global debates, while building on the experiences of a great diversity of actors engaged. Special topics could also be addressed within the African context, such as decent employment, social protection floors and participatory processes, including the involvement of civil society, workers and employers organizations.

Why hosting the event?

Hosting the forum is an opportunity to involve local stakeholders, and build and reflect on their own practices in an international context. The host will join the Executive Committee of the next forum and play a key role in advancing the LED discussion and policies within the overall context of the global development agenda.

The next host country/organization not only will play a leading role in defining the Forum's work streams and thematic focus but will also engage a wide range of stakeholders in a global alliance for LED, as well as will have the opportunity to present and share its territories' experiences, while feeding the global debate.

Are you interested?

Have a look at the web site: www.ledforumtorino2015.org

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