

**CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD METROPOLITAN DAY
(OCTOBER 7)**



metropolis



UCLG AFRICA
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis d'Afrique
CGLU AFRIQUE

**UCLG-Africa, in Partnership with Metropolis,
organizes a Virtual Conference on:
"Covid-19 and Metropolitan Management:
Lessons Learned from the Global Health Crisis"**

on Tuesday 6 October, 2020

From 1:00pm to 4:00pm (Rabat, Morocco Local Time)

Link to the Zoom :

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83680504306?pwd=ODEwT3ZiNFpMcjNxdTBNaTIPQ0syUT09>

ID Meeting: 836 8050 4306

Password: 399619

With the support of:



Context and Rationale

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the fragility of what makes metropolises strong: the concentration of population, jobs, income, and means of production and consumption linked to the connection to the globalized economy, itself linked to the speed of communication and transport systems.

COVID-19 could rightly be qualified as the metropolitan pandemic because the contamination of the continent arrived through the gateway of the metropolises, and because of their density and the many relationships they maintain in their countries and within their regions of origin, the metropolises were the main sources of the pandemic's spread.

In order to face a pandemic that took all world leaders by surprise, States had to take drastic measures to fight the pandemic and stop its spread, including confining populations to their homes, stopping economic, cultural and sports activities, imposing barrier measures to reduce the speed of the spread of the disease such as social distancing or the wearing of masks, encouraging the adoption of individual and collective hygiene behaviors, particularly regular hand washing.

African metropolises have a particular configuration in that a large proportion of residents live in informal settlements, often densely populated with insufficient infrastructure and equipment and poor access to essential services, including water and sanitation. In this configuration, compliance with containment and barrier measures has been particularly difficult, and to enforce them the State has had to resort to the forces of law and order, whose brutality has often proved to be counterproductive to the population's adherence to the measures enacted. Very often the authorities of the said metropolises were questioned by the populations in the face of the blunders of the forces of law and order, all the more so since many of them who earn their living day by day in the informal sector had no choice but to go out and work in the street or in the market to feed their families.

The State also took important safeguard measures during the period of containment and cessation of activities, including the freezing of rent payments, the suspension of payment of water and electricity bills, the freezing of bank charges and the suspension of repayments of bank loans in certain cases; the suspension of the payment of certain taxes and fees due to local governments without specifying how the corresponding sums will be repaid or compensated.

The State has also created a solidarity fund that is often replenished by local authorities, companies and individuals. The metropolises have had to extend the State's effort by mobilizing themselves to reach a larger proportion of the most disadvantaged populations. This effort has, for example, resulted in the emergency extension of water and sanitation networks, the installation of water supply by cisterns where access to the network was not possible, large-scale disinfection campaigns in public spaces, and also, when the means were available, the distribution of food baskets for the most needy populations.

This active solidarity with the most disadvantaged was able to recreate within the populations of the metropolises, whatever their social condition, a sense of belonging to a community of destiny in the face of health hazards and a need for collective solidarity to deal with them. This contrasts with the usual feeling of mistrust of each other and the long habit of leaders and populations alike to the practices of social and spatial discrimination and injustices of all kinds observed in these metropolises.

The COVID pandemic crisis has thus opened a window of opportunity to put back on the agenda the negotiation of a new social and civic contract at the metropolitan level, with a view to contributing to the safer, more inclusive and sustainable cities called for in SDO 11 of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda.

The COVID-19 pandemic was in many ways a shock which, after a period of astonishment, has caused an awakening to the inadequacies of metropolitan societies, but also to the opportunities they offer for re-examining living together.

The celebration of World Metropolis Day (on 7 October each year) offers an ideal opportunity for this necessary introspection and this indispensable prospective reflection :

- What is the new post-COVID normality we are moving towards?
- What are the pitfalls to be avoided?
- How to prepare cities to face the next health or environmental crises?
- What innovations have emerged and how can they be promoted and supported to better prepare metropolises to face health and environmental risks and crises?
- What directions should be taken so that African metropolises are more economically productive, more socially just and secure, more culturally rich because they are attentive to preserving and promoting diversity, and more ecologically sustainable?

- How can we ensure that metropolitan governance integrates citizen participation?
- How can we increase the sense of belonging to the same metropolitan community and ensure that living together will not be called into question in the post-COVID situation?

It is to this set of questions and to many others that the Virtual Conference which will be organized by UCLG-Africa, in Partnership with Metropolis, will attempt to provide answers based on the experiences of different metropolises and the lessons learned from them by policy makers, professionals, researchers, private sector entrepreneurs and civil society organizations.

Main Objective:

The Celebration of World Metropolis Day will be an opportunity to share the lessons learned from the global health crisis at the metropolitan level.

Specific objectives:

The Webinar will offer a space to:

- Discuss the challenges encountered by metropolitan areas during the health crisis;
- Learn about the degree and terms of engagement of Metropolitan Areas in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Understand the real issues for these entities and see how they are preparing for the post Covid-19;
- Exchange good practices among Peers
- **Launch of the initiative of the creation of the African Metropolitan Network (TBC).**

Target audience:

- African metropolises that are members of Metropolis: Abidjan, Accra, Addis Ababa, Alexandria, Antananarivo, Bamako, Bangui, Brazzaville, Cairo, Casablanca, Cotonou, Dakar, Douala, Durban, Gauteng, Harare, Johannesburg, Libreville, Marrakech, Niamey, Nouakchott , Rabat, Tunis, Victoria and Yaoundé;
- Other Metropolises around the world;
- Representatives of the State, international organizations, local authorities, the private sector, civil society, universities and the media.

Date and Venue

Tuesday 6 October, 2020 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm (Rabat, Morocco Local Time).

on Zoom Platform of UCLG-Africa.

Languages of work: Arabic, English, French, Portugese.

Draft agenda

Time	Activities
12:30	Welcoming and setting the stage
01:00pm	Official Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Welcome address by the Representative of UCLG-Africa.- Speech of Mr Mohamed Boudra, President of UCLG, President of AMPCC, Mayor of the City of Al Hoceima, Morocco (TBC).- Speech of Mr Octavi de La Varga Mas, Secretary General of Metropolis.
01:30pm	Keynote Speaker (TBC)
02:00pm	African Peer Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Ms Souad Ben Abderrahim</i>, Mayor of Tunis, President of the National Federation of the Cities of Tunisia (FNVT), Tunisia.- <i>Mr Mohamed Sadiki</i>, President of the Communal Conseil of the City of Rabat, Morocco.- <i>Mr André David</i>, Mayor of Victoria, Seychelles.- <i>Mr Emile Gros Raymond Nakombo</i>, Mayor of Bangui, Republique Centrafica.- Other experiences (TBC)
03:15pm	Questions & Answers.
03:45pm	Launch of the Initiative of the creation of the Network of African Metropolis (TBC)
04:00pm	Lessons learned and Recommendations.