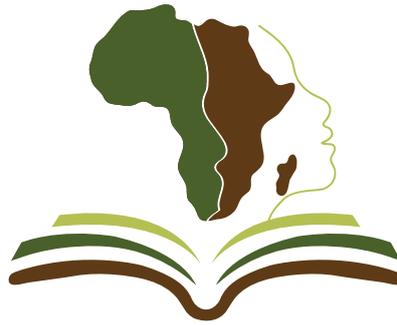




UCLG AFRICA  
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa  
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis d'Afrique  
CGLU AFRIQUE



REFELA



LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' CHARTER FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICA  
ميثاق الجماعات المحلية للمساواة بين الجنسين في إفريقيا  
CHARTRE DES COLLECTIVITES TERRITORIALES POUR L'EGALITE DES GENRES EN AFRIQUE  
CARTA DAS AUTORIDADES LOCAIS PELA IGUALDADE DE GÉNERO NA ÁFRICA

LOCAL AND REGIONAL  
GOVERNMENTS' CHARTER  
FOR GENDER  
EQUALITY IN AFRICA

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' CHARTER  
FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICA

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## INTRODUCTION

Organized by the United Nations in Beijing in 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace marked a significant turning point for gender equality, providing governments with an opening to recognize that *“equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women, and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families ...”*. In September 2000, in the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, the Heads of State and Government pledged to *«promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable»*. Fifteen years later and in the same spirit, the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's fifth goal (SDG 5) similarly called on the States to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by the end of this decade.

Despite major efforts to deliver on these commitments made by the national and local governments, partners in development, civil society organizations and many other stakeholder groups, significant gender-based disparities persist around the world in all areas of life. This state of affairs led to the launch of the Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris in July 2021 under the leadership of UN WOMEN.

In Africa in particular, even though they represent more than 50% of the population, millions of women are still excluded from any formal economic channels and represent less than a quarter of decision-makers. Yet, recent studies<sup>1</sup> indicate that gender equality between women and men would help give a boost to sustainable development. Therefore, seizing on developments brought about by decentralization in Africa that have put subnational governments front and center when it comes to meeting the populations' needs, local and regional governments, as the decision-making level closest to the people, wish to firmly commit to joining the momentum worldwide for gender equality.

The present Charter has been drawn up to provide the officials and citizens of local and regional governments in Africa with a roadmap to guide them in developing territorial policies promoting the mainstreaming of gender equality in all aspects of governance and local life. It is an initiative of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa), through its Standing Committee on Gender Equality, the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA). The document consists of six parts:

- a declaration of intent that sets forth the signatories' commitments in detail;
- a preamble that recalls the different reference instruments relating to gender equality at the African and international levels;

<sup>1</sup> The African Union's Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) (2018-2028)

- the general guidelines that present the concepts at work as well as the Charter's underlying principles and values;
- the key statements that identify the priority areas for action;
- the accompanying provisions for the Charter's implementation;
- the final provisions.

## DECLARATION OF INTENT, COMMITMENTS

We, representatives of African local and regional governments that have acceded to this Charter, pledge to:

- Notify the national governments of the subnational government's accession to the Charter and its incorporation into the nomenclature of texts governing the local/regional government's functioning;
- Facilitate the effective implementation of this Charter by systematically integrating the gender perspective into any territorial development plans, our bodies of governance and management procedures at the local and regional levels, while also ensuring that personnel capacities are strengthened for greater effectiveness;
- Make gender mainstreaming visible in all communications (written or oral) pertaining to the local/regional government's state of affairs, activities or prospects that are aimed at the national government, our local and regional governments' bodies of governance, citizens, development partners and all other stakeholders;
- Set up a joint committee respectful of parity within our local and regional governments made up of the different stakeholders, tasked with monitoring and evaluating the Charter's implementation on our territories, as well as being responsible for actively participating in the assessment of its application at the continental level;
- Be an advocate for accession to the Charter by lobbying on its behalf in our circles, national associations or networks made up of local and regional governments, including among our partners when taking part in decentralized cooperation programs or projects.

## PREAMBLE

We, the members of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa), representing African local and regional governments, and its Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA),

**Reaffirming** our commitment to uphold the principle of equality between women and men, as enshrined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), the IULA<sup>2</sup> Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government (1998) and the Paris Local and Regional Governments' Global Agenda for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life (2013);

**Inspired** by the Manden Charter (Malian Empire), which enshrined as early as 1236 the equality between women and men and the need for a harmonious partnership between them, stating that "one life is not superior to another life" and that "women are to be represented at all levels of governments";

**Convinced** that "the Africa we want" can only be achieved with the commitment and the equitable and effective participation of all its children, women and men, girls and boys, without discrimination of any kind;

**Welcoming** the progress made in the implementation of global, regional and national development frameworks promoting gender equality and the economic, political and social empowerment of women;

**Recognizing** the important role and crucial place of men and boys in any efforts to bring about a transformative paradigm shift aimed at ending prevailing patterns of gender bias and introducing conditions conducive to gender equality;

**Whereas** Africa faces challenges involving persistent gender stereotypes and barriers to reducing inequalities between women and men that must first be tackled at the local level, as affirmed in the African Charter on Principles and Values of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development (2014);

**Convinced** that the establishment of equality between women and men in all spheres of public, private, professional, political and economic life will make it possible to transform into reality the vision of a prosperous Africa built upon productive territories that create wealth and jobs and are inclusive of women, men and young people, without discrimination of any kind, ensuring that "no one and no territory is left behind";

Propose this **Local and Regional Governments' Charter for Gender Equality in Africa** and invite African local and regional governments to accede to it and to implement its provisions as set forth below:

<sup>2</sup> International Union of Local Authorities (IULA)

# PART I

## CONCEPTS, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

### ARTICLE 1: CONCEPTS

*In this Charter, unless otherwise indicated, the following definitions apply:*

**"Territorial authority"** refers to a subdivision of the national territory created as a legal entity governed by public law or regulation, with administrative and financial autonomy, exercising powers within its boundaries that have been granted to it or devolved by the central State;

**"Local government"**<sup>3</sup> refers to a structure of government other than the national government that has authority over a defined geographical constituency within a country's national borders, endowed with legal status and financial autonomy. Local government thus defined must also have an elected decision-making assembly, an elected or appointed executive body, and an administration under the authority of the decision-making body and the executive body, at the service of the population living on its territory. This term is often used interchangeably with "local authority";

**"Charter"** refers to the Local and Regional Governments' Charter for Gender Equality in Africa;

**"Decentralization"**<sup>4</sup> refers to the transfer of powers, responsibilities, capacities and resources from the national level to any subnational levels of government with the aim of strengthening the latter's ability to foster people's participation and deliver quality services;

**"Gender equality"**<sup>5</sup> refers to a state in which women and men have equal access to opportunities to fully exercise their human rights and realize their potential, and in which they are able to contribute to, and benefit equally from, a community's political, economic, social and cultural development;

**"Equality between men and women"**<sup>6</sup> refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys;

**"Gender"**<sup>7</sup> refers to the roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society deems appropriate for men and women at a given period of time while "sex"<sup>8</sup> refers to the

<sup>3</sup> UCLGA Constitution of 2016

<sup>4</sup> African Charter of Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development (2014)

<sup>5</sup> Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Module 3, Gender and Gender Equality, A Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform Training Program

<sup>6</sup> The African Union's Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) (2018-2028)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> UNESCO University Course on Gender Theory for the Undergraduate Level (Madagascar)

anatomical and biological differences between men and women;

“**Parity**” here means that each sex is equally represented; women and men enjoy equal representation in both public and private institutions and in decision-making bodies (e.g. a parity assembly);

“**Signatory or member**” refers to the local/regional government that has affixed the signature of its duly mandated representative to the Charter, thus confirming its accession to the Charter.

## ARTICLE 2: PRINCIPLES

By acceding to this Local and Regional Governments’ Charter for Gender Equality in Africa, the signatory local and regional governments recognize and accept the fundamental principles that follow:

**Equality:** Women and men possess equal dignity as human beings and their equality is a fundamental right;

**Equity:** The way women and men are treated in all situations must take into account their respective individual and collective needs. This treatment may be the same or different, but it must be equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and must offer the same opportunities for all;

**Compliance with the law:** The local and regional governments acceding to the Charter pledge to uphold the laws and regulations, as well as any regional and international instruments and agendas subscribed to by their national governments, including those addressing equality between women and men;

**Subsidiarity:** Problems must be dealt with at the level of governance closest to the populations and communities concerned and should only be delegated to another level in the case where an appropriate response cannot be found at this closest level;

**Participation:** The involvement of equal value of women and men in decision-making and in public and civil life is a measure of the vitality of any democratic society and provides a foundation for sustainable development;

**Representation:** The act of citizens inclusively mandating women and men to represent them in their local government’s bodies of governance is the mark of a society that places equal value on the managerial capacities of women and men, that respects diversity and differences in decision-making processes, thereby guaranteeing the high standard of the local administration’s response to identified needs;

**Eliminating gender stereotypes:** Deconstructing gender-based prejudice and discrimination rooted in traditions and customs is key to rendering it possible for women and men to make the most of their full potential.

## ARTICLE 3: VALUES

The African values underpinning this Charter are:

- fraternity;
- solidarity’
- respect for women and men, girls and boys as human beings;
- community participation;
- the preservation of life and the common good.

# PART II:

## PRIORITY ACTION AREAS

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### ARTICLE 4: LEADERSHIP AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Recognizing that women and men have equal value as well as the equal ability and freedom to hold public office and to participate in the governance of their community at all levels of decision-making, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) promote the equal representation of women and men in the deliberative and executive bodies of local and regional governments and in all local platforms, and comply with the international and national measures and policies aimed at improving women's representation in decision-making circles;
- 2) encourage political parties to include women in their decision-making bodies and to place them on electoral lists in an eligible position in order to promote their political empowerment;
- 3) facilitate the genuine and non-discriminatory participation of women, men and young people in any consultation platforms touching on local matters, resorting as needed to different means such as training, capacity building or mentoring, to assist those who are inexperienced, marginalized or in vulnerable situations;
- 4) promote the efficient mobilization of the territorial authority's human capital through the fair and equal integration of women and men in public governance;
- 5) systematically take gender perspectives into account when defining, drafting and implementing policies and programs for sustainable development;
- 6) establish adaptive and inclusive approaches to attain broader public participation and civic involvement among women, men and youth, without discrimination of any kind, to ensure that all social components are represented in local governance and decision-making mechanisms;
- 7) ensure that all citizens, women and men alike without discrimination, receive information relevant to them in real time and through channels readily accessible to them, and support the development of education and training programs that strengthen leadership skills and learning about democracy among women and young people;
- 8) encourage the participation of young people of both sexes in all local initiatives, in particular by supporting the creation and running of youth associations, by experimenting with youth municipal or regional councils and by promoting the development of young leaders, both women and men.

### ARTICLE 5: PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing that gender mainstreaming in planning can offer all citizens, women and men, an opportunity for dialogue with the political, administrative and socio-economic actors of a local/regional government, paving the way towards a shared collaborative vision of local development that is sustainable, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) ensure that the specific needs, concerns and opinions of women and men, without discrimination of any kind, are taken into account in policies and programs promoting sustainable development through a participatory approach at all levels of decision-making;
- 2) introduce and support the operation of inclusive platforms in view of attaining the meaningful, equitable and increased participation of all, both women and men, in the different stages of planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of all local/regional governmental projects and programs in order to ensure that they effectively meet the needs of all, without creating or exacerbating any inequalities;
- 3) ensure the active and equal participation of women and men in decisions touching on environmental management and conservation in order to tap into traditional knowledge on the sustainable use of biodiversity, know-how that is usually safeguarded by women;
- 4) promote a responsible local economy by supporting innovative business practices that respect the environment and ethical values, thus enabling wealth creation in a fair and sustainable way for both women and men alike;
- 5) set up programs to preserve and promote the tangible and intangible local cultural heritage, including traditions, languages, customs, handicraft activities, together with and for the benefit of women and men, girls and boys, without discrimination of any kind, so as to ensure its efficient contribution to local development;
- 6) encourage gender mainstreaming in local and regional governments' climate change actions and in territorial plans and programs that promote conservation of the environment and protection of biodiversity while also developing capacity-building programs that help improve women and men's access to jobs arising from the shift to a greener community.

## ARTICLE 6: FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH, GOODS AND SERVICES

Convinced that the fair distribution of wealth, goods and services is one of the pillars for the prosperity and sustainable development of territories as well as being a guarantor of greater harmony within society, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

### Fair distribution of wealth

- 1) facilitate and encourage the education and training of women and men at all levels and in all disciplines, particularly the fields of science, technology and economics, to increase their ability to pursue economic opportunities and narrow the existing gender gap in these areas;
- 2) promote the creation of decent jobs equally accessible to both women and men;
- 3) establish and/or support public and/or private outreach and training initiatives in rural and urban areas intended to foster the widespread use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by all, including women, young people and other vulnerable groups, in view of improving access to information, shared knowledge and opportunities;

### Provision of goods and services

- 4) develop programs that provide essential services based on a broad participatory identification of needs and an assessment of the economic, social, cultural and environmental effects and impacts that any response to these needs have on women, men, youth and vulnerable groups;
- 5) take the necessary steps to obtain up-to-date information, disaggregated by gender, on the number and whereabouts of a territorial authority's different social components so as to efficiently and equitably manage the provision of essential services, ensuring that 'no one is left behind';
- 6) develop and maintain local infrastructure and facilities so as to ensure that all local residents, without discrimination of any kind, including migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees and persons deprived of their liberty, have access to quality essential services in an equitable manner at costs that are commensurate with the incomes of the greatest number of people and in a way that respectfully considers any specific variables pertaining to women, men, young people and vulnerable groups;
- 7) establish and oversee the functioning of joint committees respectful of parity to manage this work, ensuring that the decisions to construct and manage the different facilities are based on input from both women and men and that community-based organizations are involved in the delivery of services;

- 8) ensure that the availability and quality of essential services delivered to the population are assessed qualitatively and quantitatively using gender-sensitive indicators, paying special heed to the specific needs of women and men, girls and boys, without discrimination of any kind.

## ARTICLE 7: PROFESSIONAL EQUALITY AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

### Professional equality

Mindful of territorial authorities' responsibility as an employer in promoting and enforcing equality between women and men in the workplace within their administration and territorial structures, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) offer equal employment opportunities to women and men within the territorial administrations and semi-public companies in which local and regional governments are stakeholders and promote fair, equitable and secure conditions of employment, such as equal pay for work of equal value, career advancement, protection against all types of harassment, the right to enjoy the benefits available to spouses and children, including that of exercising responsible parenting;
- 2) raise awareness and, where needed, increase employees' ability to factor in gender equality considerations into their professional relations, the way in which cases are handled, how users are treated, the running of projects and programs and the choice of service providers;
- 3) promote and support, including through budget allocations, the development of public and/or private childcare facilities to give parents, both women and men, greater job fulfilment, with respect to employment preservation as well as professional development.

### Economic empowerment of women

Recognizing the many obstacles that women and girls must overcome to gain access to economic opportunities, and especially their reduced prospects for receiving wages, an education and/or training due to time expended on unpaid activities such as providing assistance, care or handling other family responsibilities, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) promote a legal framework that supports women's economic empowerment and ensure the participation of women and girls, without discrimination of any kind, including immigrants, internally displaced persons, and women from other vulnerable groups, in the development and implementation of local economic policies;
- 2) promote the education and professional training of girls and women in the scientific, technical and economic fields, in partnership with the central government, as well

as the civil society organizations and community-based organizations, with a view to developing local human capital and improving their employability and access to economic opportunities;

- 3) support associations of women producers and promote their access to productive resources and economic opportunities, in particular by encouraging local financial institutions to develop innovative mechanisms for their benefit, creating platforms for the promotion and marketing of their products and services, and building up their capacity to use information and communication technologies;
- 4) develop the labelling and certification of the designations of origin of local products based on traditional know-how, often in the possession of women, and make the most of decentralized cooperation to promote the fair trade of these products;
- 5) conduct information and awareness-raising campaigns, in partnership with the central government, civil society organizations, community-based organizations and the media, to help traditional leaders and women learn how to improve their prospects for land ownership, often a prerequisite for gaining access to credit.

## ARTICLE 8: PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS AGAINST VIOLENCE

Recognizing that violence against women and girls in the physical and virtual worlds, and in all settings (public, private, professional, political, economic), constitutes a violation of their fundamental rights and stands in the way of achieving the goals of equality between women and men as well as the fostering of a climate of peace and harmony in our communities, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) initiate and/or endorse outreach, information and awareness-raising campaigns targeting all sectors of society in order to counter any harmful practices, including those rooted in customs and traditions, that help propagate discrimination and spur on violence against women and girls in their domestic, professional, political, economic and public life, whether in a physical or digital environment;
- 2) promote educational, information and awareness-raising initiatives for all, especially women and girls, focusing on sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- 3) organize and/or support specific training aimed at those called upon to respond to incidents of violence against women and girls, in particular law enforcement agencies, as well as social services responsible for providing counselling and support to victims;
- 4) establish and/or promote, including through budget allocations, the operation of public or private structures that provide support to women and girls who are victims of violence, particularly those that offer shelter and accommodation, health services, legal and judicial assistance, counselling and other necessary support;

- 5) develop a system to track violence and delinquency within the local/regional territory, using gender-sensitive indicators and data from the central governments, in view of devising appropriate strategies to combat these issues.

## ARTICLE 9: PROMOTION OF PEACE AND SECURITY

Fully aware of the key role played by local and regional governments in promoting peace and security, and in preventing, managing and resolving conflicts, as well as in accepting and integrating migrants, refugees and displaced populations, most of whom tend to be women and children, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) involve women and men on an equal basis in mechanisms and processes for the prevention, early warning, management and resolution of conflicts and disputes at territorial level, as well as in all local initiatives promoting peace and security;
- 2) ensure the presence of women alongside men when developing and implementing post-rehabilitation and recovery programs in response to crises, regardless of whether they concern health, economics or other issues arising from conflicts, natural disasters and the like;
- 3) set up crime prevention strategies and programs using a participatory approach, involving women and young people in particular, in order to improve security in the community's public spaces, especially for women and girls;
- 4) provide relief to migrants, refugees and displaced populations, women, men, children and other vulnerable groups, in the spirit of solidarity, fraternity and fundamental African values, without discrimination of any kind, and in keeping with the provisions of the Charter of Local and Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration;
- 5) promote, without any discrimination whatsoever, the peaceful integration of migrants, refugees and displaced populations, including women, men, children and other vulnerable groups, into the economic and social life of the community, including but not limited to offering access to decent housing, integrating girls and boys into schools, protecting young girls and women against all forms of gender-based violence or human exploitation, and supporting the creation of income-generating activities for women and men of productive age.

## ARTICLE 10: PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Recognizing that the prism through which any society is deemed more or less befitting of humanity is its commitment to the flourishing of its children, girls and boys, especially since their healthy development is essential to its prosperity, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) take all appropriate measures to ensure that children, girls and boys alike without discrimination, are registered from birth or, in the case of the children of migrants, refugees or internally displaced persons, from the moment of their arrival on the territory so that they are assured an identity and the full exercise of their rights;
- 2) ensure that all children, girls and boys alike without discrimination, including those with special needs, benefit from responsible parenting and have access to quality basic education, primary health care, recreational and artistic activities, and other essential services, so that they may develop their full potential unhindered;
- 3) work with central governments, civil society organizations and school leaders to ensure that gender stereotypes are removed from educational curricula and that school-age girls and boys have equal access to opportunities;
- 4) ensure that all appropriate measures are taken, including the abolition of detrimental traditional practices, to protect girls and boys, without discrimination of any kind, from any form of violence, abuse or human exploitation, and to launch public campaigns to educate them about the importance of clearly understanding the causes, expressions and consequences of violence and of eschewing it in all its forms, including physical, psychological or sexual abuse.

## ARTICLE 11: COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS- RAISING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Firmly believing that the commitment to implement this Charter and its wholesale adoption by the local community can only become a reality through the use of widespread communications targeting all citizens, women and men, without discrimination of any kind, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) notify all social components, without any discrimination and using the most appropriate channels, of its signing of the Charter and the ensuing changes that its adoption will bring to the organization of local life, as well as highlight its new commitments using the different communication tools at the local authority's disposal;
- 2) enter into a productive partnership with the media in view of bringing about a transformative change in attitudes that is more conducive to gender equality, and promote, including through budget allocations, public and/or private local outreach, information, education and awareness-raising initiatives on gender equality;
- 3) hold information and awareness-raising sessions with traditional leaders and other stakeholders to explore how to gradually shift away from harmful and discriminatory practices rooted in customs and traditions to a value system that promotes gender equality.

## ARTICLE 12: PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Affirming the instrumental role played by partnership and cooperation in ensuring the coherence of policies and actions that promote gender equality, as well as in strengthening their synergy and amplifying their effects and impact, the local and regional governments acceding to this Charter undertake to:

- 1) promote concerted and collective efforts, at local, national and international level, with the different public and private actors working for gender equality to tackle the major challenges and obstacles in this area, particularly the barriers limiting women's participation in local and national decision-making;
- 2) work with the central administrations responsible for gender equality to fuel the cultivation of an institutional, legislative and regulatory environment that is conducive to the anchoring of gender equality in national and subnational policies and activities, as well as to benefit from the expertise and possibly even the resources available at national level;
- 3) cooperate with local and regional governments from other African countries and continents and their associations to exchange good practices for gender equality and perhaps draw inspiration from them for the definition and implementation of their own initiatives in this field;
- 4) make the most of opportunities arising from participation in large international forums on decentralization and local development involving subnational governments and cities to collectively share experiences and come together to advocate for gender equality at African and international levels.

## PART III

### ACCOMPANYING PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER

#### ARTICLE 13: ACTION PLAN

Support for the implementation of this Charter is provided by the Standing Committee on Gender Equality of UCLG-Africa, which has developed a three-year Action Plan for this purpose to assist local and regional governments as they adopt the Charter and carry out its application. This three-year action plan consists of activities such as awareness-raising, advocacy, capacity-building of member local and regional governments and sharing of good practices, including enlisting the help of civil society organizations and the media to implement it.

#### ARTICLE 14: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Standing Committee on Gender Equality of UCLG Africa has established a monitoring and evaluation system that capitalizes on existing mechanisms already proven to work within the community of local and regional governments, such as peer review, and makes it possible to measure the degree of progress in terms of gender equality.

This system, created and operated by UCLG-Africa, relies primarily on the use of multi-stakeholders responsible for the governance of this monitoring and evaluation mechanism, in which all the relevant stakeholders are represented, including locally elected representatives and their national associations, national administrations, civil society organizations, actors from the economic sector as well as the academic and research community.

Each signatory pledges, as a matter of principle, to take part in the above-mentioned monitoring and evaluation system.

#### ARTICLE 15: VISIBILITY

UCLG Africa, through its Standing Committee on Gender Equality, undertakes to provide each member local or regional government with a logo and other visual aids attesting to its accession to the Charter, which are to be displayed on each signatory's communication materials, such as websites, magazines and social media accounts.

## PART IV

### FINAL PROVISIONS

#### ARTICLE 16: ACCESSION AND SIGNATURE OF THE CHARTER

Accession to this Charter is open to all African local and regional governments and takes place following the adoption of a decision or resolution to this effect by the decision-making body of the subnational government, mandating the head of the executive body to sign the Charter's Act of Accession, in accordance with the legal and regulatory procedures in force in their respective countries.

Membership takes effect after receipt by the UCLG-Africa Secretariat General of the Act of Accession signed by the head of the executive body of the local/regional government, bearing the official stamp of the local/regional government concerned, accompanied by the decision or resolution taken by the competent decision-making body authorizing this accession.

Membership is officially acknowledged by way of a letter sent by the Secretary General of UCLG-Africa to the head of the executive body of the local/regional government confirming the formal receipt of the Act of Accession. This acknowledgement of receipt shall constitute validation of the Charter's signing by the local or regional government concerned.

#### ARTICLE 17: ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CHARTER

This Charter shall enter into force upon its adoption by the competent bodies of UCLG-Africa and in particular its Standing Committee on Gender Equality.

#### ARTICLE 18: REVISION OF THE CHARTER

Any member local or regional government may propose one or more amendments to the Charter and lodge this text with the Secretary General of UCLG Africa. The Secretary General shall then communicate the proposed amendment to the other members for their opinion. The latter have a period of six (6) calendar months to transmit their opinions to the Secretary General of UCLG-Africa. At the end of this period, all the opinions received shall be analyzed and summed up in a draft amendment proposal to be submitted for approval to the next UCLG-Africa general assembly, following its pre-validation by

REFELA's general assembly, in accordance with the same procedures and forms as those used for the adoption of the present Charter. Any amendment adopted pursuant to these provisions shall enter into force with immediate effect.

Adopted by the General Assembly of UCLG-Africa held in Kisumu (Kenya) on XXXX

## THANKS

We express your gratitude and send our sincere thanks to the various partners, below, who have contributed to the realization of this project.



### Kingdom of Morocco

Since its creation in 2011, the Network of Local Elected Women has the Kingdom of Morocco as its greatest privileged partners.

In 2012, thanks to the advocacy of REFELA's women of with the Moroccan authorities, the Kingdom of Morocco, through the General Directorate of Territorial Communities of its Interior Ministry, has since granted an annual grant to REFELA to support its actions., such as the development of this Charter initiated thanks to the request expressed by the network to UCLG Africa, UCLG, and CEMR.

[www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu)



### European Union

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its content engages only PLATFORMA, CEMR, and UCLG Africa and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union.

[www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu)



### United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa)

Being an institutional advocate of the Charter in Africa, UCLG Africa is the umbrella organization and the unified and representative voice of local governments in Africa. It was founded in 2005 in the city of Tshwane, South Africa, following the unification of three groupings of local authorities according to the official language of their respective countries (anglophones, francophones, and lusophones).

As the African chapter of the world organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), UCLG Africa has among its members the 51 national associations of local authorities active on the African continent, as well as 2 000 cities and territories with a population equal to or greater than 100,000 inhabitants and who are direct members. Through its members, UCLG Africa represents a little more than 350 million African citizens.

The vision defined by its members at UCLG Africa is to contribute to the unity of Africa and to promote the development and integration of the African continent from its territories. To do so, UCLG Africa aims to promote decentralization, support local authorities in the exercise of their mandates, support the creation and development of national associations of local authorities, represent and bring the voice of local authorities in Africa at the level regional, continental and international level.

[www.uclga.org](http://www.uclga.org)



### Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA)

The REFELA network brings together all the women leaders and / or elected representatives of regional authorities in Africa. It was set up at the request of the members of UCLG Africa meeting at the Africities Summit in Marrakech in 2009, and was set up in March 2011 in Tangier, under the aegis of UCLG Africa with the support of the Kingdom of Morocco.

UCLG Africa' s Constitution adopted by the extraordinary general assembly meeting in November 2016 in Marrakech, Morocco, have established REFELA as the Standing Committee for Gender Equality of UCLG Africa. As such, REFELA members represent Africa on UCLG's Standing Committee on Gender Equality.

REFELA currently has 30 national chapters on the African continent. REFELA promotes the agenda of the emancipation of women and equality between women and men within African local authorities and for this purpose has supported the development of the Local Authorities Charter for Gender Equality in Africa.

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



### **United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)**

As a global network of cities, local, regional, and metropolitan governments and of their associations, UCLG is committed to representing, defending and amplifying the voices of local and regional governments, so as not to leave anyone or any territory behind. Together, we are the sentinels of the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of every individual in every community around the world, seeking a life where the ideals of the SDGs are breathed.

Through cooperation, dialogue and knowledge sharing, we, as a global organization, walk the talk, working to advance global responses and actions through commitments and actions. innovative agreements, which will become the common denominators transcending borders and bringing communities together, in order to empower the local governments and have them increase their reach.

[www.uclg.org](http://www.uclg.org)



### **Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)**

Created in 1951, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions is the oldest association of European cities and regions. It brings together 100,000 local authorities through 60 national associations.

CEMR is the European chapter of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and represents the local and regional authorities of Europe at the international level. CEMR promotes the construction of a united, peaceful, and democratic Europe, based on local autonomy and respect for the principle of subsidiarity.

CEMR defends the interests of local and regional authorities so that their voices be heard in Europe, with an emphasis on local democracy and autonomy. This advocacy work is based on the experience of CEMR and that of its member associations.

[www.cemr.eu](http://www.cemr.eu)



### **PLATFORMA**

PLATFORMA is the pan-European coalition of local and regional authorities - and of their associations – that are active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. All local and regional authorities are key players in international cooperation for sustainable development. PLATFORMA is a center of expertise on the international action of local and regional governments, which brings together local and regional authorities, their European and international networks, as well as regional and national associations.

Together with its partners, PLATFORMA defends the role of local and regional authorities in EU development policies, promotes international cooperation between cities and regions around the world and facilitates the exchange of knowledge between local authorities and regions and their associations.

In 2015, PLATFORMA ratified a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with the European Commission. Its signatories are therefore committed to acting against poverty and inequalities in the world, while advocating for local democracy and sustainable development, while respecting common values and objectives.

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) hosts the PLATFORMA secretariat.

[www.platforma-dev.eu](http://www.platforma-dev.eu)