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UNDP ART Initiative

Territorial Partnerships for Implementing the SDGs at Local Level

2015 Report to the Board
December 2015

List of acronyms

DC	Decentralized Cooperation
COs	UNDP Country Offices
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
FAMSI	Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity
FMDV	Global Fund for Cities Development
GTF	Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for the Post-2015 Development Agenda towards HABITAT III
ICGs	International Cooperation Guidelines
ILO	International Labour Organization
LD	Local Development
LED	Local Economic Development
LGLD	Local Governance and Local Development
LRGs	Local and Regional Authorities
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
ORU-FOGAR	Organization of Regions United
RSC	Regional Service Centre
SHD	Sustainable Human Development
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

1. THE UNDP ART INITIATIVE: 2015 IN REVIEW

2015 marked the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the new universal and more complex 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, defining a new plan of action to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and achieve sustainable prosperity for all. To guide its implementation, the Agenda sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals – the SDGs – and 169 related targets to be reached by 2030. 2015 was also characterized by the launch of the new programme phase of the ART Initiative, which, building on the successful experiences, strategies and mechanisms developed over the last 10 years, aspires to link territories' development paths to international policies and actors, and *vice versa*, in view of advancing towards the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. For this reason, UNDP proposed to establish a Hub for Territorial Partnerships within the UNDP Brussels Representation Office, aimed at facilitating the harmonization of development actors with the UNDP LGLD Framework and programmes and at strengthening global local development partnerships to be translated into concrete initiatives at the country level. The hub is strategically positioned since the UNDP Brussels RO has the key role of maintaining and furthering strong relationships with the European Union, the major international donor and one of the key development actors currently looking for partners to implement initiatives based on a territorial approach to development.

Alongside the efforts made in consolidating and expanding UNDP's partners' network, throughout the 2015, the ART Initiative has further increased its engagement at the international level. Through continued joint advocacy with major LRG networks, ART contributed to the recognition and acknowledgement of the crucial role of LRGs and the local level within the 2030 Agenda, particularly in light of the implementation process of the SDGs. Through the ART Initiative, UNDP advocated for strengthening the role and competences of LRGs within international development conferences and Forums, while promoting experience-sharing channels with and among decentralized and territorial partners. As part of this global engagement, UNDP, through ART, co-organized in October 2015 the Third World Forum of Local Economic Development (LED) as the culmination of a partnership-based global process aimed at throwing light on the potential of LED as a means for implementing the SDGs at the local level. With the aim of offering concrete support to countries and territories for an effective implementation of the SDGs and in continuity with the *Dialogues on localizing the post-2015 agenda*, UNDP, through ART, also embarked in the elaboration of a Toolkit for facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. Through the organization of focus meetings at the local, national and global level, experiences and best practices are being collected with a view to identifying successful strategies and tools to advance towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

In close coordination with Regional Hubs continuous support has been provided to UNDP's Country Offices (COs) and in view of informing and of involving DC partners in already existing Local Governance and Local Development (LGLD) programmes such as Burundi, Cuba, Lebanon, Morocco and Myanmar. On the other hand, new integrated LGLD initiatives have been formulated in Algeria, Cape Verde, Mexico, Paraguay and Tunisia in line with the key priorities and working lines identified by the UNDP LGLD Framework.

Overall, in 2015, UNDP ART was successful in combining an international engagement in favor of the recognition of the importance of the territorial level as the key dimension of sustainable development with a more substantial support to concrete initiatives on the ground. These efforts contributed to expanding UNDP's partnership base at the local, national and international level, and to positioning the organization as an effective and reliable partner for implementing the SDGs at the local level.

2. THE UNDP ART INITIATIVE: ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS IN 2015

The key activities and related results of the year 2015 are presented below, following the four outputs of the initiative's Project Document approved in April 2015:

Output 1. UNDP's partnership with LRGs and DC partners expanded to promote the implementation of the post 2015 agenda at local level

With the adoption of the new Project Document, the Initiative entered in a new programme phase to support implementing the new development agenda at local level. To do so, it fostered a strategic alliance with local governance stakeholders and facilitated the alignment and harmonization of territorial partners' actions towards UNDP corporate projects/programmes and policies, setting the stage for the launch of the hub for territorial partnerships (upon the approval of the UNDP LGLD Framework). The Initiative also supported UNDP COs and Governments in the formulation and implementation of country programmes in support of integrated local development processes.

Activity Result 1.1: A Hub for Territorial Partnerships for Local Development established and operated within UNDP Brussels

The Hub for Territorial Partnerships for Local Development is expected to act as a corporative platform for expanding UNDP local development partnership base. The Hub will be the operational arm at UNDP's disposal to strengthen the already-existing cooperation with LRGs and their associations – national and global – as well as with the wide variety of stakeholders of local relevance in view of jointly informing, formulating and implementing LGLD initiatives at the country level. Indeed, one of the key aim of the Hub is to align Decentralized Cooperation (DC) and development partners with the UNDP LGLD Framework and related programmes. For this reason, the Hub has been strategically established within the UNDP Brussels RO, so to capitalize on the technical and financial relationship matured with the EU Institutions as well as on the extensive range of Brussels-based development partners.

Pending the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda and the postponement of the approval of the UNDP LGLD Framework, the Hub for Territorial Partnerships has not been launched officially yet. The launch is foreseen during the first quarter of 2016. Nevertheless, the ART Initiative has been active in 2015 to informally engage DC and other development partners on the future launch and key mission of the Brussels Hub.

Activity Result 1.2: Decentralized Cooperation actors' expertise (LED, service delivery, etc.) harmonized and aligned with UNDP's LGLD programmes

The strategic positioning of UNDP ART Initiative/Hub for Territorial Partnership within the UNDP Brussels RO guarantees a continuous engagement with DC partners and Brussels-based development actors on a daily basis. In 2015, this favored major efforts to align partner's expertise with the upcoming UNDP LGLD Framework as well as with already-existing or newly formulated LGLD programmes.

2015 UNDP ART has been consolidating relationships with its traditional set of DC partners, namely: Italy, Spain and France. In continuity with the Dialogues on Localizing the Post-2015

Agenda, DC Italian partners such as Tuscany, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Trento Province, etc. have been involved in the Initiative's work on the implementation process of the SDGs – particularly in the elaboration of the Toolkit for facilitating the SDGs implementation at the local level. They have provided technical expertise and financial support to UNDP LGLD programmes, such as Myanmar and Cuba, while experience-sharing channels have been opened with partner countries' DC actors, for instance, through the facilitation of the mission of Ecuadorian LRGs representatives to Milan and Tuscany. In Spain, DC has picked up again resulting in the reappearance of important traditional partners such as Valencia, Catalonia, the Basque Country, as well as the Balearic Islands. 2015 has also been a critical year in upgrading the partnership with traditional French DC actors. UNDP ART, jointly with the French Delegation of External Action of Territorial communities (DEACT) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gathered into a single strategic process and partnership the different initiatives built through the past decade between several French actors and UNDP. These efforts have been successful in promoting a common vision on the implementation of the SDGs at the local level within international debates and policy dialogues and in facilitating the involvement of French DC partners into UNDP LGLD programmes, such as the ART-supported PADIT platform in Cuba, or Cameroun earlier in the year.

2015 also presented important opportunities with so-called non-traditional DC partners. That is the case – following the participation of ART to several international development debates in Germany – of the partnership discussions with Engagement Global – the German government's organisation responsible for supporting German cities to engage in development. Preliminary exchanges have also been initiated on common working priorities – such as SDGs, LED and DC partnership modalities – with a variety of Turkish DC actors as well as Brazilian actors such as the National Confederation of Municipalities (CNM).

Additional step towards the harmonization of DC partners with UNDP's LGLD Framework and programmes have been taken through the concretization of joint projects and initiatives at the country level, through the implementation of the Innovation in Sustainable Territorial Partnerships project (I-STEPS). I-STEPS contributed to fostering harmonized support to partner countries' ongoing LGLD processes – Ecuador, Lebanon and Montenegro – through the joint financial and technical work of four European cities and regions – Milan, Barcelona, Bilbao and the Basque Country. In line with the priorities identified by the UNDP LGLD Framework, I-STEPS contributed to strengthening the capacities of LRGs in partner countries through knowledge and innovation sharing processes, while promoting enabling environments for their fulfillment as development actors. It is important to mention that Medellin (Colombia) has joined the initiative thereby expanding the scope and dialogue around the I-STEPS initiatives considerably. In Ecuador, all partners are supporting three provinces and cities in effecting an efficient transformation of the productive matrix.

2015 has also witnessed an initial involvement in strategic Mediterranean initiatives, i.e. through a partnership with the French Region of Provence Alps Cote d'Azur, UNDP ART is being considered as a partner in the Youth Employment Initiative in the Mediterranean, proposed by the Luxemburg Presidency of the EU. The partners of this initiative are the Luxemburg Presidency of the EU, the World Bank, and the Union for the Mediterranean (discussions are still in an initial stage). The partnership between the UNDP ART initiative and FELCOS Umbria was further developed in 2015 through their joint ongoing support to the Mediterranean Beekeepers Association. Stemming from the alliance around beekeeping between UNDP ART and FELCOS Umbria in several countries in the past (Dominican Republic, Morocco, Lebanon and Sri Lanka), this initiative was up scaled to a regional level, through the European Commission funded

Mediterranean Cooperation project, that aims at strengthening food security in the region. In the framework of the project, exchanges between local producers from the participating countries (Algeria, Lebanon, Italy, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Tunisia) were facilitated, in particular through the organization of the National Beekeeping Forum (Lebanon, May 2015) and the Mediterranean Forum (Tunisia, November 2015), where local and national authorities, local producers, MYPEs, decentralized cooperation partners, European Commission representatives and multilateral agencies were brought together. With the aim of fostering joint regional Mediterranean LED strategies and initiatives and by capitalizing on UNDP ART's long-standing experience and partnerships, preliminary steps have also been taken to support the establishment of a Mediterranean network of Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs).

The Initiative has also facilitated visits of partner countries' DC actors to Brussels in view of strengthening technical and financial cooperation with the EU and Brussels-based DC partners. For example, the missions of the Moroccan General Director of Local Communities and of the Bolivian Vice-Minister of Trade and Exports, which have both resulted in successful alliances in support of the regionalization process in Morocco and of trade policies in Bolivia.

[Activity Result 1.3: Financial and technical resources mobilized in support of implementing the integrated LGLD draft framework](#)

The ART Initiative has continued to effectively build upon the well-established partnership and fundraising basis, as well as ventured to explore new opportunities towards the implementation of the upcoming LGLD Framework.

Very positive results have been achieved through the continuous engagement with the EU counterparts, the Brussels-based Institutions, as well as with the country-based Delegations. As an outcome of this dialogue and upon direct request of the Government of Algeria, an ambitious joint LGLD programme was formulated by UNDP ART, UNDP Algeria, UNDP RBAS and the EU. The programme of 12MEUR – 8MEUR EU; 2MEUR Algerian Government; 2MEUR Japan Government – is currently in the process of being expanded through a call for proposal for LRGs and Civil Society where the ART Initiative is formulating a joint proposal with European and Algerian LRG partners.

Another result has been the formulation of an LGLD/localizing SDG programme in Cape Verde – 2,5 MEUR initial funding by the Government of Luxembourg. The Programme looks into linking the local, national and international dimensions of sustainable development, also counts on a possible technical and financial support of the European Commission's DG REGIO and DG Research and Innovation. The cooperation, which aims at opening channels for experience sharing with EU Regions and territories, with particular attention to innovation, has already captured the attention of additional interested partners, e.g. Spain.

In addition, as part of the ongoing partnership with Italy, ART has managed to mobilize technical and financial resources (for an amount of 850,000 EUR) for an initiative aimed at promoting LED through a linkage to the valorization of historical heritage in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.

2015 was also an important year for furthering the mobilization of technical and financial resources of DC partners in support of LGLD related initiatives at the country level. Among others with DEACT/France, interested to develop a system facilitating alignment of French DC actors towards UNDP LGLD programmes. A new agreement for supporting UNDP through human

resources for strengthening this cooperation and better capitalize on already achieved results is currently being renewed.

Also, in the context of I-STEPS, several agreements have been signed with the European DC partners involved in the initiative, for an amount of 165,000\$.

In view of providing support to countries and territories in the implementation process of the SDGs and following up on the *Dialogues on Localizing the post-2015 Agenda*, UNDP ART has embarked in the elaboration of a Toolkit for facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. This initiative counts on an extensive mobilization process of DC actors and development partners' financial and technical resources. Indeed, several actors – such as the Association of French Departments; Tuscany; EU Committee of the Region; OECD, among the others – have already manifested their availability in organizing and funding focus meetings to gather key inputs for the Toolkit's mechanisms elaboration.

Moreover, UNDP ART made strides in strengthening relations with foundations, through a concrete engagement at the international level by supporting their active role as development promoters and by opening new potential channels of financial cooperation.

[Activity Result 1.4: The formulation, launching and implementation of integrated LGLD programs in line with UNDP's integrated LGLD Framework supported](#)

Through the gradual mainstreaming of UNDP ART's approach and mechanisms at the UNDP corporative level, 2015 has witnessed a major support of the Initiative to COs, Regional Hubs and National Governments in the formulation and implementation of innovative LGLD programmes, reflecting the priorities and working streams identified by the upcoming UNDP LGLD Framework. These efforts have resulted in ART supported formulation missions as well as the successful involvement of DC partners' technical expertise. In Mexico, for instance, upon a request made by the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL) in collaboration with the UNDP CO, ART conducted a formulation mission in January 2015 and supported the CO in developing a new programme to strengthen the multi-level territorial governance and the regional local economic development strategy, with a view to improving the living conditions of excluded populations. Funding is still under discussing with the Government.

ART continued to support the UNDP CO Tunisia and the Tunisian National Government in finalizing and piloting the *Articulation of Territorial Networks for an Integrated and Sustainable Local Development in Tunisia* project, recently approved. The support included participating in formulation missions, mobilizing decentralized cooperation networks, as well as engaging with relevant national and local counterparts within country in order to finalize the project components and reach a final agreement among the Ministries. It is expected that the project will be launched in the first quarter of 2016.

Upon request of the National Government and the CO Paraguay, ART continued its engagement with ITAIPU Paraguay – one of ART's key private sector partners in Latin America – aiming at launching an integrated LGLD programme that has been formulated late 2014. However, negotiations between the Government, ITAIPU and UNDP have taken longer as expected, but after another mission in December 2015, there are indications that the programme will be launched in early 2016.

As previously mentioned, UNDP ART has successfully capitalized on its partnership with the EU through the joint formulation of an ambitious LGLD programme in Algeria, which was carried out

through a close collaboration between the EU Delegation, the UNDP CO, UNDP ART and ART's counterparts in the Commission.

Following the Algerian case, UNDP ART has conducted several missions to Cape Verde in order to define the details of the LGLD programmes, which will be launched at the beginning of 2016. Also in this case, major cooperation efforts at the HQ levels in Brussels have resulted into a concrete partnership within the programme's context with the EU counterparts – DG REGIO and DG R&I.

ART continued to support the UNDP CO Lebanon to appraise the current situation of the four LEDAs established in the country within the framework of the previous UNDP ART FP and suggest a strategy for the LEDAs' further support and sustainability.

In conclusion, in Mauritania, various missions were conducted 2015 to support the development of a roadmap for the implementation of a national LED strategy in the country. The support also included facilitating and participating in a workshop with national and local stakeholders in preparation of the launch of the strategy.

In line with its continuous engagement in promoting the localization of the Post-2015 Agenda, UNDP ART has launched the process of elaborating a Toolkit for facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. Building on the alliance matured during the Dialogues on Localization carried out in 2014, UNDP, in partnership with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and UN-Habitat, aims at developing a set of tools in support of countries and territories for localizing the 2030 agenda. The Toolkit is elaborated following a background analysis of the past MDGs implementation experience and through the collection of inputs and experiences from various experienced stakeholders. Various focus meetings have already been carried out in 2015 within the framework of *the Latin American and Caribbean Forum on Territorial Economic Development (Quito, 18-20 May 2015)*; *the Third World Forum of Local Economic Development (Turin, 13-16 October 2015)*; *the "Semaine Économique de la Méditerranée" (Marseille, 4-7 November 2015)*; *AFRICITE (Johannesburg, 30 November – 3 December)*, and *COP 21 (Paris 4 – 13 December)*.

Output 1

UNDP's partnership with LRGs and DC partners expanded to promote the implementation of the post 2015 agenda at local level

Baseline

No decentralized cooperation partner (from the partner and donor countries) is aligning its development initiatives with UNDP LGLD programmes in partner countries

Indicators Output 1:

Indicator 1: # of agreements signed between UNDP and DC partners

7 agreements signed between UNDP and DC partners

This include the agreements signed with: Basque Country (Spain); Centre national de la fonction publique territoriale (France) ; City of Bilbao (Spain); City of Milan (Italy); Cooperación Universitaria al Desarrollo - Conferencia de Rectores de las Universidades Españolas (Spain); Water Right Foundation (Italy). Support the agreement signed by UNDP Regional Hub in Panama with the Union of Latin American Universities.

Indicator 2: # of partnerships aligned towards UNDP LGLD programmes

41 partnerships aligned towards UNDP LGLD programmes

Partnerships with the following DC actors were facilitated (in brackets the partner country): Alsace, France (Cameroun); Aquitaine, France (Bolivia);

Indicator

of agreements signed between UNDP and DC partners

of partnerships aligned towards UNDP LGLD programmes

Targets

15 decentralized development partners (from partner and donor countries) aligning their development initiatives with UNDP LGLD programmes in partner countries

5 decentralized development partners (from partner and donor countries) signed agreements with UNDP

Aquitania, France (Cuba); Association Nationale des Villes et Pays d'art et d'histoire et des Villes, France (Cuba); Baden Wurtemberg, Germany (Burundi); Brazilian Service Support to Micro and Small Enterprises (Capo Verde); Champagne Ardennes, France (Madagascar); Champagne Ardennes, France (Morocco); Cities Alliance (Tunisia); City of Como, Italy (Morocco); City of Florence, Italy (Ecuador); City of Malaga, Spain (Cameroon); City of Medellin, Colombia (Ecuador); City of Milan, Italy (Ecuador); City of Milan, Italy (Myanmar); City of Pavia, Italy (Ecuador); City of Turin, Italy (Lebanon); City of Turin, Italy (Myanmar); Commonwealth Local Government Forum (Myanmar); Confederação Nacional dos Municípios, Brazil (Uruguay); Cuba cooperation, France (Cuba); CUF, France (Cuba); ERVET, Italy (Ecuador); European Association of Regional Development Agencies (Bolivia); European Business Network (Bolivia); Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canada (Cuba); Felcos Umbria, Italy (Cuba); Felcos Umbria, Italy (Kosovo); Felcos Umbria, Italy (Tunisia); Garapen, Spain (Bangladesh); ISGlobal | Barcelona Institute for GlobalHealth, Spain (Cuba); ISGlobal | Barcelona Institute for GlobalHealth, Spain (Tunisia); Legacoop Emilia Romagna, Italy (Cuba); Martinique, France (Cuba); Nord pas de Calais, France (Albania); Pays de la Loire, France (Burundi); Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy (Albania); Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy (Cuba); Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy (Montenegro); Region of Trentino Alto Adige, Italy (Cuba); University of Venice, Italy (Ecuador).

Output 2. Knowledge and expertise systematized and exchanged to strengthen developmental capacities of LRGs and local governance institutions

Building upon existing knowledge sharing networks, in 2015 the programme contributed to ensuring that this knowledge was well linked to concrete development initiatives and strategies and, secondly, to establishing links and exchanges between different systems of knowledge. By tapping into the vast experience and knowledge of local level practitioners and local and regional governments' officials and experts, the initiative started to set up operational mechanisms that facilitate decentralized knowledge exchange in a meaningful way to strengthen the developmental capacities of local governance stakeholders.

Activity Result 2.1: Developmental capacities of LRGs, associations thereof and local governance institutions in partner countries to deliver basic services enhanced

In 2015, UNDP ART has been continuing its engagement to foster LRGs and their associations' developmental capacities through different means and by working at different levels. These efforts have resulted in an advocacy process in favor of strengthening LRGs' capacities as development promoters as well as in stronger innovative partnerships with and among subnational authorities.

The global, regional and national advocacy on the critical role of the LRGs in the implementation of the SDGs is creating an important space for LRGs to receive more resources and support not only from development partners, but also from the very national governments, thereby strengthening LRGs capacities on a permanent basis.

Another effective way of strengthening developmental capacities of LRGs has been through facilitating the participation of LRGs and their associations in international policy debates as well as major relevant conferences. Not only is the exposure to international debates and policy debates important but it also allows LRGs to learn through peer-to-peer exchange and to forge respective partnerships. Relevant events have been the Latin American and Caribbean Forum on Territorial Economic Development (Ecuador, May 2015); the Seventh Atrocities Summit (South Africa, December 2015); and, of course, the Third World Forum of Local Economic Development (Italy, October 2015), the World Social Forum (Tunisia, March 2015); the Commonwealth Local Government Forum Conference (Botswana, June 2015); the 2nd Meeting of the *Mediterranean Forum of Public Service* (Tunisia, June 2015); and the Conference on "*Making Decentralization and Local Governance Reform Work: Innovations and Opportunities in Europe and Eurasia*" (Ukraine, December 2015) – organized by UNDP and the Ukrainian Government.

ART also engaged with LRGs and their associations in developing tools for strengthening the capacities of their members, e.g. the formulation of the UCLG LED strategy and related tools for cities. Working with the international associations of LRGs provides a huge leverage effect and allows to reach a large number of LRGs worldwide. In 2016, it is foreseen to engage more closely with UCLG and ILO in a joint learning agenda for cities around the themes of SDG localization and LED.

The major instrument through which ART strengthens developmental capacities of LRGs and their associations are the facilitating of territorial partnerships through Decentralized Cooperation, South-South; Triangular Cooperation – aimed at fostering peer to peer experience and knowledge sharing in view of informing LGLD related policies and initiatives within territories.

Within the framework of the assistance and promotion of LRGs development capacities, the role of research and of the academia has been continuously highlighted as a key source of innovation, considered essential to inform development policy formulation, also at the local level. As part of its ongoing engagement with universities and their international and national networks, the ART initiative has signed an agreement with the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (Conferencia de Rectores de las Universidades españolas- CRUE) aiming at supporting territorial development processes and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local level.

Moreover, UNDP ART has participated in delivering a summer training program “*Cooperation, conflict and global order: A critical approach to international study*”, in association with Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, by providing a presentation on the anticipated role of universities in supporting the delivery of the 2030 Development Agenda.

Activity Result 2.2: Regional platforms to facilitate SSTC for territorial practices (fully integrated with UNDP’s overall mechanisms and strategy on SSTC and in coordination with UN Office for South South Cooperation) established and operated

In 2015, UNDP CO Brazil and UNDP ART have advanced considerably on the negotiation with the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (SABRAE) in the formulation of a new South-South territorial exchange platform for territorial experiences in LA, aimed at mobilizing and exchanging knowledge and practice on LED. Shortly before concluding the negotiations, an agreement was suspended due to a major restructuring process within SEBRAE. The negotiations have though being taken up again during the WF on LED in Turin (where SEBRAE is an Executive Committee member). Meanwhile very positive signals have been received and a finalization of the agreement and launch of the project is still a viable possibility.

Furthermore, in consistency with its renewed global projection, UNDP ART was invited to contribute to the United Nations High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation held in Macau, where it supported the positioning of local and regional levels within the framework of SSTC, particularly in view of ensuring the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Future engagement will show if and how UNDP ART will be able to support the development of a territorial SSC component within the SSC office overall architecture.

Activity Result 2.3: Voluntarism for strengthening LRGs capacities fostered by establishing and operating an exchange mechanism for LRGs officials

In support of their established partnership in the new LGLD Framework, UNDP ART and UNV have elaborated a project concept note that aims to establish a volunteerism system that would allow LRGs and other public institutions to strengthen their capacities by exchanging competent LRG officers between LRGs for periods between three to six months. However, there have been delays in launching the project due to difficulties in securing funding for the project within UNV. Pending donor interest the project/mechanism could be launched in 2016.

Activity Result 2.4: Capacities of sub national level international development cooperation agencies (or equivalents such as units, offices, etc.) in partner countries enhanced

The engagement with sub national level international development cooperation agencies and the enhancement of their capacities is part of the work done at the country level by the Framework Programmes in which they report accordingly. The ART Initiative however involves local development agencies from partner countries in relevant initiatives, such as the DC agency of the City of Medellin within the I-STEPS project, or the international network for the implementation of

the SDGs at the local level. Another example is the creation of Chefchaouen's Local Development Agency aimed at channeling DC partners alongside two development priorities previously identified and agreed by territorial stakeholders (within the framework of the AGORA project).

Activity Result 2.5: Innovative territorial development experiences and practices systematized and documented

Communication and Outreach

In 2015, the web-platforms used by the ART Initiative have reached an outstanding number of users. Until 2015, the publications shared on the open/digital library had reached more than 355,000 impressions, 31,500 reads, with a floating average of 400 impressions per publication and reaching 7,100 impressions for Annual Report "UNDP ART – 2014 in Review" and 12,650 impressions for the publication "*Manuel pour la capitalisation de l'expérience – Programme ART GOLD du PNUD Maroc*" (See issuu.com/artpublications). Likewise, ART had reached over 900 followers on Twitter and 900 likes on Facebook. In 2015, at least 15 publications (including books, brochures, annual reports, systematizations and others) have been developed to create better resonance with key partners and provide clarity on the territorial approach and related tools' contribution to international development processes.

As in previous years, the annual review newest edition *UNDP ART – 2014 in Review* was produced, published and widely disseminated. The report presents the leading results of the Initiative's contribution to national policies on local development through its participation in the ongoing global development discussions.

Lastly, UNDP ART, through a grant agreement, has supported FELCOS Umbria in establishing a communication platform for knowledge sharing, to facilitate the harmonization and engagement of territorial networks and DC actors in between and with the multilateral sector.

Policy Positioning

In 2015, ART produced the *Localizing the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Dialogues on Implementation* Report together with the co-facilitators of the Dialogue on Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda, namely UN-Habitat and the GTF. The Report was an outcome document of the Dialogues on the implementation of the Post-2015 Development contributing to the acknowledgment of the importance of implementing the SDGs at the local level within the 2030 Agenda. In addition, ART has contributed to various newspapers and books through articles on the strategic role of territories within the Post-2015 era and on the potential of LED as a means for achieving the new 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Systematization of countries' experiences

In 2015, the following territorial experiences were systematized: i) the experience of the COSDEPRO in Bolivia; ii) the guide for the institutions that monitor the water management in El Salvador; iii) the systematization of the ART Programme in Dominican Republic; and iv) a LEDAs' assessment in Lebanon.

Output 2

Knowledge and expertise systematized and exchanged to strengthen developmental capacities of LRGs and local governance institutions

Baseline

No platform for SSTC for territorial practices, no exchange mechanism for LRG officers yet established

Indicators

A platform for SSTC for territorial practices established

Exchange mechanism for LRG officers established

of SSTC cooperation between sub national development partners established

of LRG official exchanges facilitated through the established mechanism

of territorial development experiences and practices documented

Targets

A platform for SSTC for territorial practices established

Exchange mechanism for LRG officers established

5 SSTC cooperation between sub national development partners established

5 LRG official exchanges facilitated through the established mechanism

3 territorial development experiences and practices documented

Indicators Output 2:

Indicator 1: A platform for SSTC for territorial practices established

The process for establishing a platform for SSTC for territorial practices in LA was initiated.

In partnerships with a number of identified LRGs' associations and other regional associations, and in collaboration with the UNDP Regional Hub in Panama, the set-up of a platform for facilitating further the share and exchanges of territorial practices was initiated. The platform could be fully operational in 2016 with the possible collaboration of other key partners such as the Iberoamerican General Secretariat, Iberoamerican Federation of Metropolitan Cities, Iberoamerican Municipal Union, National Confederation of Municipalities of Brazil, and possibly, the Brazilian Service Support for Micro and Small Enterprises.

Indicator 2: *Exchange mechanism for LRG officers established*

A proposal for establishing an exchange mechanism for LRG officers was formulated

The exchange mechanism was planned to be launched in collaboration with UNV, with which a project proposal was developed. However, there have been delays in launching the project due to difficulties in securing funding for the project.

Indicator 3: *# of SSTC cooperation between sub national development partners established*

5 SSTC cooperation between sub national development partners were established

This include SSTC at local level between: Brazil and Capo Verde; Brazil and Uruguay; Colombia and Ecuador; Ecuador and Bolivia; Spain, Morocco and Mauritania.

Indicator 4: *# of LRG official exchanges facilitated through the established mechanism*

No LRG official exchange was facilitated through the mechanism

As the exchange mechanism was not operationalized yet the exchanges could not be facilitated.

Indicator 5: *# of territorial development experiences and practices documented*

6 territorial development experiences and practices documented

The experiences and practices systematized include: COSDEPRO, Bolivia; Guide for the institutions that monitor the water management in El Salvador; Local Economic Development as a means to localize the SDGs; Systematization of the ART Programme in Dominican Republic; the experience of ART REDES in the Department of Nariño; the assessment of the LEDAs in Lebanon.

Output 3. A strategic exchange between UNDP and LRGs facilitated and operationalized

The 2030 Agenda clearly emphasizes the role of the local actors in advancing towards an effective implementation of the SDGs at the local level. LRGs, together with their associations, can play a key role as local champions to ensure this will happen, by defining strategies, providing instruments and monitoring development advancements within their territories. UNDP, through ART, has engaged in a strategic partnership process with LRGs and their national and global associations in view of informing international policy debates about the importance of the territorial dimension of development and, at the same time, in view of promoting and supporting joint LG/LD related initiatives at the country level. The establishment of the Advisory Committee for LRGs to UNDP, delayed because of the postponement of the launch of the LGLD Framework, will represent the culmination of this sharing process.

Activity Result 3.1: LRG Advisory Committee to UNDP established

The establishment and operationalization of the **Advisory Committee of Local and Regional Governments to UNDP (UNDP LRGs AC)** represents one of the main future work streams for the UNDP ART Initiative. Pending the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda and the official launch of the UNDP LG/LD Strategy postponed at the end of 2015, the establishment of the committee has been delayed. Nevertheless, a first draft concept note has been shared with UNDP Senior Management in New York and it is currently under evaluation.

Moreover, even though the UNDP LRGs AC was not established, the initiative has already made strides in engaging DC and development partners in the process by informally discussing the overall concept and specific aims of the AC within several meetings and conferences. For instance, the engagement with some French partners also led to the inclusion of a component directly referring to the UNDP LRGs AC within the agreement prepared between the French Foreign Ministry and UNDP, in order to guarantee support and credibility to the process.

Activity Result 3.2: A Secretariat to the UNDP LRG Advisory Committee established and operated

The AC Secretariat will be responsible for the smooth functioning of the Committee, serving as key coordination mechanism. Pending the evaluation and approval of the Advisory Committee proposal by UNDP Senior Management, the Secretariat of the body has not been established yet.

Activity Result 3.3: Systematic exchange and interaction between UNDP and key LRGs and their associations promoted

Over the past year, the ART Initiative has continued to be actively involved in strengthening innovative alliances and creating systematic channels of mutual learning and expertise sharing with and among LRGs and the associations thereof in a systematic way, which contributed to strengthening the developmental capacities of these actors and advancing the recognition of their role in achieving development outcomes.

At the national level, ties have been strengthened with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Brazilian National Confederation of Municipalities, the association of Dutch Municipalities, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces and the Union of Turkish Municipalities. Concrete steps forward have also been taken with the Association of French Regions (ARF) and

the Association of French Departments (ADF), which also ensured technical as well as financial contribution to UNDP's related LG/LD initiatives.

The relations built with the sub-national associations contributed towards the achievement of two major objectives: firstly, gathering their knowledge and expertise in a systematic manner to inform development initiatives within their territories; and secondly, fostering partnerships in view of supporting LG/LD related initiatives in partner countries. In this regards, building on the results of the Dialogues on Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda and on the partnerships strengthened throughout this process, UNDP ART made strides in fostering its engagement with national associations of LRGs that shall directly inform the process for the elaboration of the "*Toolkit for facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level*". A number of technical roundtables were organized at this end; this include for example working sessions in the framework of the Mediterranean Economic Week, Marseille (France); 7th Summit of Africities, Johannesburg (South Africa); etc. (see activity result 1.4).

The strengthening of the linkages between LRGs, European DC partners and the UN development system and the systematic exchange of their knowledge and expertise is also one of the aims of the I-STEPS initiative. In view of driving the elaboration of the related activities at the country level forward, systematic exchanges on LG/LD process were promoted between the involved DC partners, including through the creation of a virtual space for knowledge sharing between European and Latin American LRGs.

The initiative has also strongly reinforced its partnerships with the major international associations of sub-national authorities to facilitate further the knowledge and expertise sharing on local governance and local development related issues. In continuity with the alliance matured during the years, UNDP, through ART, has consolidated its relationships with the global association of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), of Regions United (ORU FOGAR), Platforma as well as the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments for Post-2015 Agenda towards Habitat III. The strong alliance created was translated into the cross-fertilization of knowledge and expertise informing policy debates towards the implementation of the SDGs at local level. For example, building on the strong alliance matured with the EU counterparts and the Committee of the Regions in particular, UNDP, through ART, jointly organized, together with LRGs and their associations, sessions and debates on promoting the role of the local authorities in the Post-2015 era within the context of the European Development Days (EDDs) and 4th Assises of Decentralized Cooperation (4ADC).

[World Forum of Local Economic Development](#)

As part of these efforts, the initiative strongly contributed to the open working process of the World Forum of Local Economic Development, promoted by UNDP ART together with other international organization and associations of LRGs.

Launched in 2011 with the First Forum of LED celebrated in Seville (Spain), followed by the second edition held in Foz de Iguazu (Brazil), the process reached a climax in 2015 with the celebration of the 3rd edition of the event, held in Turin (Italy) in October. Involving more than two thousands of sub-national authorities, development actors of different nature belonging to different world's regions, the process facilitated the creation and strengthening of alliances through innovative partnerships modalities, promoting expertise sharing and joint policy formulation to be translated concretely on the ground.

As part of the same ongoing process, UNDP ART facilitated the participation, contribution and exchange among LRGs and their Associations in a number of global and regional events defining the roadmap to the Third World Forum of LED. This include the *Latin America and Caribbean Forum on Territorial Economic Development*, organized by ART, in collaboration with the UNDP Ecuador CO and other organizations, in Quito, Ecuador in May 2015; and the side event on LED organized in Gaborone, Botswana, in the framework of the *Commonwealth Local Governments Conference*; among others. UNDP, through this process, was successful in fostering the creation of partnerships with and among national and sub-national partners and their associations, particularly, in view of systematizing the exchange of knowledge and best practices to feed initiatives at the country level, and to shade light on the potential of LED, with its set of diverse and widely applied practices and tools, as a means to implement the SDGs at the local level.

Activity Result 3.4: Development debates and international policy processes - in alliance with its LRG partners - informed

During the process leading to the definition of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, UNDP, through ART, has been actively engaged in development debates and international policy process to jointly promote, together with sub-national authorities, the importance of the local level and of territorial processes within the new development framework.

Localizing the SDGs

Much has been done to advance the recognition of the role and importance of the local dimension to effectively implement the new agenda and have a concrete impact on people's life in partnership with a variety of stakeholders. Within the context of the **EU-UNDP High-Level Policy Dialogue** promoted by the UNDP Brussels RO (Brussels, April 2015), ART engaged with the counterparts at the European Commission DG Development and Cooperation to put on the table a point of discussion on the localizing process of the SDGs - considering the synergies between the two institutions' strategies on LGLD and the potential of extending the UNDP-EU joint work in support of local development processes. A similar perspective, and particularly the importance of sharing successful development experiences and best practices was reiterated by UNDP, through ART, during the **25 Years of INTERREG Conference** organized by the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU in September 2015. The potential of further facilitating the sharing of practices and expertise between European and other regions LRGs was also reflected by ART through a written contribution to the special edition of the INTERACT bulletin. The overall engagement with the EU on the importance of the local level and on engaging LRGs within the new development framework resulted in a concrete policy and strategic partnership with the EC DG Research and Innovation and the EC DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations; the two DGs, in fact, have been actively involved in the upcoming LGLD programme in Cape Verde, which envisages the set-up of a territorial platform to articulate the local, national and international dimensions of development.

In alliance with LRGs partners, UNDP ART fed and animated international events on the role of the local level in occasion of the **European Development Days** and the **Fourth Assises of Decentralized Cooperation**, as well as it facilitated debates during the "Initiative to Pilot Illustrative Work on Governance in the context of the SDGs Global Workshop" (Tunisia, April 2015) and the "World Social Forum" (Tunisia, March 2015).

Moreover, always with the aim of informing policy debates on development cooperation and the importance of the local dimension of development, UNDP ART has strengthened successful relationships with DCF UN/DESA. This allowed to contribute to the elaboration of policy briefs on

the role of the local level for monitoring and accountability systems and to advance the recognition of DC as an innovative cooperation modality. The alliance was reflected through the entire **Development Cooperation Forum process**, with the participation in preparatory events e.g. DCF High Level Development Symposium “*Development Cooperation a new era: making the renewed global partnership for sustainable development a reality*”, celebrated in Uganda in November 2015, where ART moderated the panel on effective local monitoring and accountability systems, while stimulating debate on the key role of DC partnerships as an example of renewed global partnerships to be translated into concrete initiatives on the ground

[South-South Cooperation](#)

Building on its long-standing expertise on innovative partnerships modalities, ART also informed and contributed to various national and global events, such as the *Six Forum of Communities' International Actions* (France, June 2015) and the *High-level Multi-stakeholders Strategy Forum on South-South Cooperation for Sustainable Development* (China, August 2015). During these events, ART supported the positioning of local and regional levels within the framework of SSTC, particularly in the framework of the global partnership needed to land the new development agenda.

[Local Economic Development](#)

Throughout the whole 2015, ART has continued to lead and support the World Forum of LED process, to stimulate LED policies and to promote the global dialogue on LED. The biannual World Forums of LED, co-organized and facilitated by the ART Initiative, are the cornerstones of this global process. Together with the co-organizing institutions (Municipality and Metropolitan City of Turin, UCLG, ORU FOGAR, SEBRAE, ILO), ART has been fully involved in the organization of the 3rd World Forum of LED that took place in Turin, Italy, in October 2015.

In preparation of the Turin Forum, the ART Initiative facilitated preparatory events on LED at several levels throughout the whole 2015. Among the others: the Latin America and Caribbean Forum on Territorial Economic Development held in Quito (Ecuador) in May 2015; and the special session on *Local Economic Development as a mean of implementing the Post-2015 Agenda and the SDGs in Africa* promoted within the context of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), celebrated in Gaborone in June 2015. Both events have contributed to capture regional perspectives and experiences on the potential of LED as an integrated strategy to implement the SDGs at the local level and to engage local, national and international partners in light of the upcoming Turin Forum in October.

The 3rd World Forum of Local Economic Development focused on how LED can contribute to the implementation of the SDGs by promoting partnerships at different levels and by providing instruments able to create more sustainable, equitable and inclusive development environments. Participants to the Forum discussed and agreed that LED, fully rooted in the specificity of territorial contexts, is an effective people-centered response to major global trends and challenges. LED has been analysed as a transversal and inter-sectorial approach that has the potential to have an impact on national and global economies through a bottom-up paradigm. Moreover, being a strategic and partnership-driven process, LED promotes multi-actor coordination and multi-level articulation, which also fosters social trust and cohesion. In synthesis, the Forum highlighted that LED represents one of the key means for the effective and sustainable implementation of the SDGs at the local level. The potential of the LED World Forum process derives from the immense variety of actors involved, forging alliances and concretely collaborating on the ground. Indeed, the Turin Forum gathered more than 2.000 participants from 130 countries representing a large

variety of sectors – local, regional and national governments; private sector; civil society; academia; business networks; foundations etc. It represents a good example of a renewed *global partnership* as referred to by the 2030 Agenda, which can be transformed into territorial partnerships that directly impact people’s lives. Participants to the Forum were able to share experiences and best practices, strengthening partnerships to translate the global policy debate into concrete action on the ground, particularly through the Framework Programmes made available at the country level by UNDP.

The success of the third edition of the forum further reinforced the alliance matured between UNDP and the co-organizing partners, which have already shared their engagement in organizing the Fourth World Forum of Local Economic Development in 2017. Indeed, the process leading to the fourth edition has already started with side-events organized in the framework of the “*Semaine économique de la méditerranée*” (France, November 2015) and the *7th Africités Summit* (South Africa, December 2015) on LED and the role of LRGs in advancing towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

UNDP LGLD related strategies

Thanks to the new phase of the programme, the ART approach and expertise has gradually been integrated in the newly restructured BPPS, being part of the GP RAI architecture. This mainstreaming effort, in addition to confirming the relevance of the territorial approach to development, meant an increased contribution to UNDP strategies and policies relevant to ART competences and filed of action. The ART engagement was also a way to validate UNDP strategies together with the wide networks of LRGs and DC actors. These efforts will be further strengthened in 2016, particularly in light of the implementation process of the new development goals.

Output 3

A strategic exchange between UNDP and LRGs facilitated and operationalized

Baseline

No LRG Advisory Committee and Secretariat to UNDP established

Indicators

A LRG Advisory Committee to UNDP established

A LRG Advisory Committee Secretariat established and operational

of advisory Committee meetings held per year

of UNDP policies informed through the AC mechanism

Indicators Output 3:

Indicator 1: A LRG Advisory Committee to UNDP established

A LRG Advisory Committee to UNDP was not established.

Pending on the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda and the official launch of the UNDP LG/LD Strategy at the end of 2015, the LRG Advisory Committee to UNDP could not be established and operationalized. Nevertheless, a first draft concept note has been already shared with UNDP Senior Management in New York and it is currently under evaluation. LRGs and associations thereof have been already informed about the upcoming establishment.

Indicator 2: A LRG Advisory Committee Secretariat established and operational

A LRG Advisory Committee Secretariat was not established and operationalized.

Indicator 3: # of advisory Committee meetings held per year

No Advisory Committee meeting was held.

Indicator 4: # of UNDP policies informed through the AC mechanism

UNDP policies were not informed through the AC mechanism.

Output 4. UNDP ART framework programmes/territorial platforms strengthened and linked to regional and global processes

The UNDP ART Initiative in 2015 continued to guaranteeing support to ongoing UNDP ART framework programmes and territorial platforms, through direct expertise sharing, particularly looking at innovative strategies for an effective implementation of the SDGs at the local level. It also facilitated their linkages to international events and policy debates, informing specifically the Post-2015 elaboration process.

Activity Result 4.1: Ownership and scaling up of processes of existing and new UNDP ART framework programmes supported

ART launched its Framework Programmes (FPs) in 2005. Since then, the Initiative has worked with multiple actors to improve impact and sustainability using a common framework. FPs provide the instruments that allow implementing development actions in response to the organized and prioritized demands of territories, therefore facilitating articulation of development partners in support of existing local development processes. Furthermore, they facilitate the linkages that allow implementing and connecting international processes to tangible results at the local level. Beyond the ART FPs, 2015 has also witnessed the progressive mainstreaming of ART's integrated territorial approach (its methodology and tools) within UNDP's LGLD Framework and related initiatives. In 2015, ART supported and informed UNDP LGLD Programmes in Burundi, Cuba, and Lebanon, Morocco and Myanmar.

In 2015, ART supported National and Local Governments in the scaling up process leading to the institutionalization of the mechanisms developed in the context of the ART FPs e.g. in the Dominican Republic, including through a systematization process, and in Morocco. In Mauritania, ART provided a strong support in the institutionalization of the mechanisms and tools of the ART FP and in developing a new strategy on LED. Through various missions, it also contributed to the formulation of a new phase of the programme, which foresees a full national ownership of the ART promoted instruments and tools and should be launched in 2016.

Activity Result 4.2: Local governance stakeholders and national authorities linked with international partners and relevant international policy processes

UNDP, through ART, was able to capitalize on its global range of action to link stakeholders of local and national relevance to international debates contributing to inform policy process about the key role of the local level, while facilitating the creation of experience sharing channels among a wide variety of stakeholders.

In line with the 2030 Agenda call for a new global partnership to be landed into local environment sand initiatives, UNDP facilitated links and the participation of national and local stakeholders of ART FPs and UNDP LGLD programme in different international policy processes and debates, such as:

- UCLG Retreat, Spain, February 2015
- Universal Exposition 2015 (EXPO 2015), Italy, May-October 2015;
- European Development Days, Belgium, May-June 2015;
- 4th Assises of Decentralized Cooperation, Belgium, June 2015;
- Commonwealth Local Government Conference, Botswana, June 2015;
- United Nations High-Level forum on South-South Cooperation, China, August 2015
- Seventh Africities Summit, South Africa, November-December 2015.

Of particular relevance in fostering international debates and policies process on territorial development processes, it is the contribution to the UN/DESA DCF, which is looking into Decentralized Cooperation modalities and effectiveness since a couple of year. Within this context, UNDP ART supported the elaboration of policies and studies supporting the positioning of LRGs in sustainable development. Particularly, UN/DESA relied on UNDP ART for the participation of LRGs and actors of local relevance in the Decentralized Cooperation Forum High-level Symposium held in the Republic of Korea (April 2015) and within the DCF HL Symposium “Development Cooperation a new era: making the renewed global partnership for sustainable development a reality”, celebrated in Uganda in November 2015.

The ART Initiative is already looking beyond 2015, facilitating the involvement of LRGs partners in the process towards the *Habitat III* Conference that will take place in Quito in 2016. In this regards, it supported the involvement of UCLG’s Coordinator World Work Group for I-Cities and Member UNESCO Chair for Intermediate Cities and World Urbanization in the preparatory session towards the Habitat III Conference: “*Promoting Transformational Change through Sustainable and Inclusive Cities*” held in Cuenca in November 2015.

As mentioned before (Activity Result 3.3), UNDP, through the strategic position of the Brussels Hub for Territorial Partnerships, was also key in facilitating linkages between local and national authorities and international partners, particularly the EU and European counterparts. That was the case of the missions to Brussels of local and national authorities of Morocco and Bolivia, which resulted in political and technical alliances respectively supporting the regionalization process in Morocco and the economic diversification in Bolivia.

Of course, the co-promoted World Forum of LED process is the key framework established by UNDP, through ART, to connect local and national stakeholders with international policy debates and development partners. The added value of the whole process – that brought to Turin more than 2.000 participants from 130 countries – is its capacity of forging alliances at different levels among partners of different nature able to translate the global policy debate into concrete actions at the local level. The World Forum process follows a cycle strategy: the LED experiences and policies developed at the local level are made available to inform and promote a shared vision on LED at the global level, which, through the establishment of innovative alliances, is translated again into concrete integrated actions at the local level. Local and national authorities and stakeholders are linked with international debates and partners, which in turn support the definition of integrated LED framework at the country level.

[Activity Result 4.3: UNDP Country Offices and Governments supported in the formulation and establishment of programmes \(or components thereof\) based on specific expertise such as Decentralised Cooperation systems, territorial approach, LED, etc. \(with and through Regional Hubs\)](#)

2015 has witnessed the mainstreaming of ART Initiative’s methodology, strategies and instruments within the overall UNDP approach towards LGLD related initiatives and policies as well. This has been translated in an increased support to UNDP COs and Governments on key issues such as the promotion of integrated local development systems and of innovative cooperation modalities, particularly in view of formulating, implementing or scaling up various programmes.

The ART Initiative understands and makes use of LED as a means to implement the new SDGs at the local level, thus achieving Sustainable Human Development. The LED

component/processes set in motion by the various ART FPs and channeled through COs or Regional Hubs attest the Initiative's capacity to translate UNDP's LED approach and strategy into concrete results, while also articulating these processes at the subnational, national and international levels. Based on the increasing demand in 2015 by COs to receive support on integrating and/or implementing LED policies and strategies, this year ART has been active in a number of countries. For instance, in **Mauritania** as well as in **Tunisia**, ART contributed to the formulation and implementation of a new sustainable and articulated LED regional strategy to support territorial competitiveness, generation of sustainable resources, creation of stable jobs and food security thanks to the optimization of local resources and emergence of human and technical capacities. The expected results of the LED component also include creation of opportunities for women to be included in the cycles of production.

ART stresses the need to apply a territorial approach and involve decentralized cooperation partners starting from the beginning of the programming phase, in order to improve experience sharing and capacity building processes and to coordinate the development strategies and initiatives of the different partners involved within a territory. In **Myanmar**, ART provided the CO with its expertise to enable partners intervene in a coherent and complementary way on the issues of territorial planning, while engaging also territorial partners as Italian decentralized cooperation actors.

In 2015, ART continued supporting territorial platforms used by COs to implement their operational programmes at the local level. For instance, ART facilitated the involvement of French decentralized cooperation partners in the PADIT (Articulated Platform for Integrated Territorial Development) in **Cuba** by bringing Cuba CO, Cuban government and various French and Cuban DC partners together at a meeting in Paris organized by ARF.

[Activity Result 4.4: Capacity of Regional Hubs with regards to Decentralized Cooperation and in building regional DC and territorial SSTC networks reinforced](#)

Over 2015, the ART Initiative has been responding and offering support to various country demands, and serving COs, in close coordination with the Regional Hubs (upon the conclusion of the UNDP restructuring process) and in line with the UNDP regional strategies.

[Regional Bureau and Hub for Arab States](#)

2015 has seen an active collaboration with the Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) with regards to common resource mobilization, designing projects and building partnerships with the EU. Collaborations and inputs on different initiatives have materialized in the joint work to the formulation of the programmes in Algeria and in the joint support to the Lebanon LGLD programme. ART has also been instrumentally supportive to RBAS in the preparation of formulation and exploratory missions to Palestine and Tunisia and enabled the mobilization of technical and financial resources for LGLD programs and initiatives. For instance, ART facilitated the mission of representatives of the Regional Hub in Amman to Brussels in order to discuss about a possible ART technical assistance in the context of the UNDP regional response to the refugee crisis, while – building on the alliance ART matured with the EU counterparts – exploring potential synergies and entry points for financial support of the EU within the region.

[Regional Bureau and Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

As part of the efforts to find synergies with relevant partners and in particular with the EU (see activity 3.4) and strengthening knowledge and technical understanding and competences of the

on the territorial approach to development, UNDP ART facilitated the participation of a representative from the Regional Center in Panama in the *EU training on the Territorial Approach to Local Development*, held in Bogotá in June 2015. Since last year the EU made strides in developing an integrated strategy to work with Local Authorities and their associations, and the engagement of the Regional Center in Panama within the training in Bogotá was also aimed to throw light on potential opportunities of cooperation between the EU and UNDP at the Regional level.

An active collaboration with the center was also triggered by the organization of the Latin American and the Caribbean Forum on Territorial Economic Development that aimed at fostering a partnership at regional level and building a regional position on LED to be presented to the 3rd World Forum of LED (see activity 3.3).

Finally, given the key importance of crosscutting issues within the 2030 Agenda such are gender, youth, and minorities exclusion, UNDP ART is actively working with the Gender Cluster of the Regional Center in Panama to support policies and initiatives formulation within the region, while directly informing international debates. The Gender Cluster supported the organization of a session of the Turin Forum highlighting the issue of women empowerment in Local Economic Development. Capitalizing on ART's wide and strong networks of partners, the Regional Center is supported in its initiative to furthering the LED agenda and related gender initiative in the region. In this regards, also a triangulation on the programme with SEBRAE is currently ongoing to analyze potential entry points and strategies to strengthen relationships with the private sector.

[Regional Bureau and Hub for Africa](#)

Similarly, in 2015 UNDP ART has increasingly strengthened ties with the Regional Center in Addis Ababa, particularly with regards to LED initiatives. Within the roadmap leading to the Turin Forum, the Regional Center directly participated in the special session on LED organized by ART in the Commonwealth Local Government Conference, while also supporting the mobilization of partners and delegations to the Third World Forum of Turin. Already engaged in the organization of the Forth Forum in 2017, these ties will be strengthened in 2016, also from a programmatic and operational perspective.

[Regional Bureau and Hub for Europe and Central Asia](#)

Even though on a different scale compared to the other regional hubs, the ART Initiative is building on its expertise and networks of partners to foster relations with the center in Istanbul. This engagement resulted in a collaboration in the contexts of the conference on "*Making Decentralization and Local Governance Reform Work: Innovations and Opportunities in Europe and Eurasia*" (Ukraine, December 2015), where ART was invited to share and exchange on territorial partnerships, territorial reforms and SDGs' localization. It is envisaged that the relations with the ECIS Hub will be strengthened in 2016 through the definition of a roadmap for a strategic partnership, particularly in the framework of SDGs implementation and review at local level.

[Regional Bureau and Hub for Asia and the Pacific](#)

Overall, the definition of clear links with the Bangkok Hub was delayed throughout the 2015. Nevertheless, the connections established represent a great basis to furthered relations in the following year, particularly in relation to Local Economic Development and partnership building with local, national and international development actors. As an example, ILO and UCLG are initiating a joint learning initiative for LRGs in relation to the SDGs and inclusive LED strategies.

UNDP, through the ART Initiative, is invited to be part of this alliance, including the involvement of the Regional Hub for further synergies with these key partners. Local Economic Development and the localization of the SDGs will represent the main points of connection between the Initiative and the hub, particularly building on the expertise ART is already channeling within the region through some COs.

Output 4

UNDP ART framework programmes / territorial platforms strengthened and linked to regional and global processes

Baseline

13 ART CO level framework programmes/ UNDP LGLD programmes actively supported

5 ART framework programmes with full national ownership

Indicators

of framework programmes/UNDP LGLD programmes strengthened

of framework programmes with full national ownership

of relevant international events with participation of local governance stakeholders from ART framework programmes

of UNDP Country Office/ Governments supported in formulating programmes (or components) based on specific ART expertise

Indicators Output 4:

Indicator 1: # of framework programmes/UNDP LGLD programmes strengthened

16 framework programmes/UNDP LGLD programmes strengthened

It was provided support to the following ART framework programmes: Albania, Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Gabon, Mauritania, Nicaragua and Uruguay. It was provided support to a number of ongoing UNDP LGLD programmes, including Burundi, Cuba, Lebanon, Morocco and Myanmar, and the recently launched in Tunisia.

Indicator 2: # of framework programmes with full national ownership

7 ART framework programmes with full national ownership

A number of ART Framework Programmes have been informing local and national development systems and their full national ownership was facilitated. This is the case for the ART Framework Programmes of Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco and Uruguay.

Indicator 3: # of relevant international events with participation of local governance stakeholders from ART framework programmes

10 relevant international events with participation of local governance stakeholders from ART framework programmes

LRG and other local governance stakeholders from ART Framework Programmes participated in a number of events, among others: 2015 Commonwealth Local Government Conference, Botswana; 2015 European Development Days, Belgium; 2015 Semaine Economique de la Méditerranée, France; 2015 World Social Forum, Tunisia; 4th Assises of Decentralized Cooperation, Belgium; Africities 7th Summit, South Africa; Good Governance Forum, Myanmar; Latin American and Caribbean Forum on Territorial Economic Development, Ecuador; Promoting Transformational Change through Sustainable and Inclusive Cities, Habitat III process, Ecuador; 3rd World Forum of Local Economic Development, Italy.

Indicator 4: # of UNDP Country Office/ Governments supported in formulating programmes (or components) based on specific ART expertise

6 UNDP Country Office/ Governments supported in formulating programmes (or components) based on specific ART expertise

Upon the request of the UNDP COs and/or Governments it was supported the formulation of programmes based on ART expertise in: Algeria; Capo Verde; Mauritania; Mexico; Paraguay and Tunisia.

3. SUMMARY OF ART EXPENDITURES IN 2015

Accumulated budget expenditures by Outputs

	AWP 2015-Budget allocation	2015 Allocation	Expenditures by Outputs	Implementation rate
Output 1	UNDP's partnership with LRGs and DC partners expanded to support the implementation of the post 2015 agenda at local level	950,000	1,006,458	106
Output 2	Knowledge and expertise systematized and exchanged to strengthen developmental capacities of LRGs and local governance institutions	400,000	347,212	87
Output 3	A strategic exchange between UNDP and LRGs facilitated and operationalized	240,000	261,501	109
Output 4	UNDP ART framework programmes/territorial platforms strengthened and linked to regional and global processes	1,260,000	651,221	52 ¹
	Total in USD	2,850,000	2,266,392	80

¹ The relatively low expenditure rate is related to the low delivery rate of the ART support to the Myanmar COs. In contrary to earlier agreements, the COs was not yet ready to receive a mission for planning a territorial/area based and DC module within its country programme in 2015. The support of the ART Initiative was therefore limited to provide an expert for 5 months supporting the organization of the second LRG forum in Myanmar. Currently we are discussing a possible 2016 engagement in light of the new political developments.

Budget appropriations by Category for the AWP 2015

A number of major tasks have been undertaken across the four (4) Outputs of the Programme budget and in alignment with the UNDP ART Prodoc document 2015-2017. Activities were undertaken according to the Outputs' related functions.

During 2015, the budget appropriations by Category show that Category Development results at the UNDP CO level has the largest allocation of 29%. Support to knowledge sharing and capacity development make up 26% of the total budget. Other priority Categories such as "New countries" continue to be allocated relatively smaller proportions of the budget– 2% — as illustrated in Chart below.

