



Recognition of inspiring experiences, best practices, and innovations in urban and territorial governance, decentralization, and local development

**LOCAL LEADERSHIP
EXCELLENCE AWARD**



PRESENTATION OF NOMINATED EXPERIENCES

Pan-African Edition 2025

Learning Conference: September 29 – October 3

*Awards Ceremony: November 6, 2025 in Dakar, Senegal,
on the sidelines of FIDEPA06*

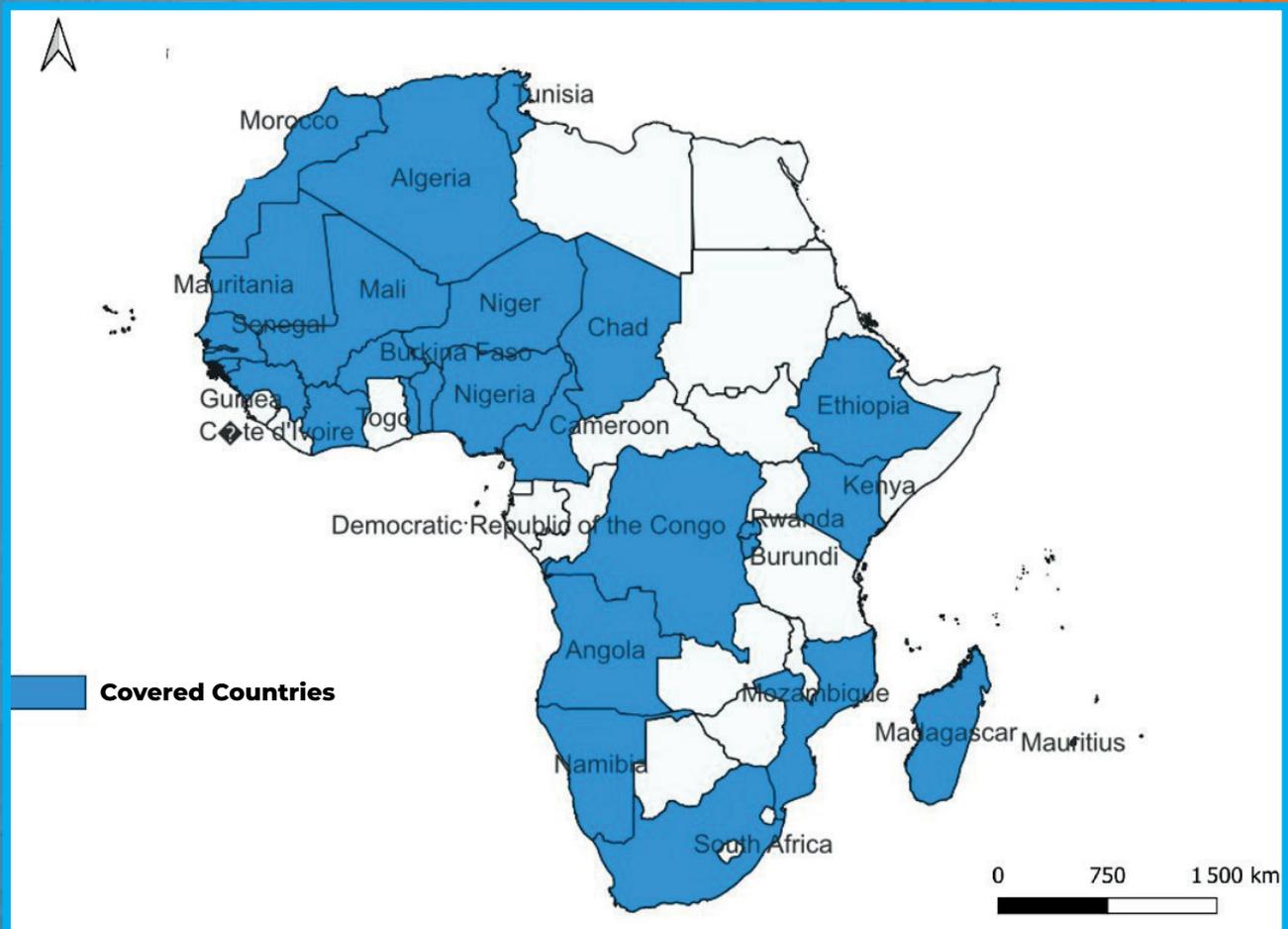


TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION	3
II. THE NOMINEES	3
1. <i>MINISTRIES</i>	3
2. <i>LOCAL AUTHORITIES</i>	7
3. <i>TRANSFORMATIVE CITIZENS</i>	24
4. <i>CHILDREN AND YOUNG CREATORS</i>	27
5. <i>JOURNALISTS AND COMMUNICATORS</i>	29
6. <i>ACADEMICS – RESEARCHERS</i>	32
III. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE	34
IV. STEERING COMMITTEE	35

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

In 2013, the continent adopted Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, which places African populations at the heart of the continent's development. In this dynamic, several instruments were established, notably the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration in 2011, and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development in 2014, which encourage States to institutionalize transparent systems for recognizing excellence and innovation in governance and decentralisation.

During the 5th Ordinary Session held on 20 December 2024 in Tunis, the Ministers responsible for the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee on Public Service and Administration, Local Governments, Urban Development and Decentralisation (STC No. 8-AU), adopted the principle of the Pan-African Awards Programme for Decentralisation, Governance, and Local Development.

The Local Leadership Excellence Award had already been organized in previous editions at the national and sub-regional levels. This Pan-African edition, organized by the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy in Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, aims to reward Ministries, local authorities, journalists and communication professionals, academics and researchers, children and young creators, and citizens engaged in innovative initiatives that promote access to public services, citizen participation, and inclusive governance. It encourages the sharing of best practices, innovations, and inspiring experiences to contribute to strengthening solidarity among African States and promoting a form of decentralisation adapted to the realities of the continent.

II. THE NOMINEES

Launched on 27 March 2025, the Pan-African edition of the Local Leadership Excellence Award (PELL AFRICA) received a total of **734 applications** from **28 countries**, coming from ministries, local authorities, journalists and communication professionals, academics and researchers, children and young creators, and transformative citizens. The applications were evaluated by a scientific committee composed of distinguished personalities and experts from various African countries. The Award Steering Committee released the official list of 57 nominees who participated in the learning conference held online from 29 September to 03 October 2025.

1. MINISTRIES

1.1 Ministry of Territorial Administration – ANGOLA

In Angola, the process of decentralisation and the strengthening of local governance has progressively evolved, supported by the Constitution, which guarantees legal and financial autonomy to local authorities. This framework is complemented by a legislative package that includes Law 13/20 on the financial regime and Law 27/19 on the organisation and functioning of municipalities. Since 2018, the executive has implemented transfers of responsibilities and revenues from ministries to provincial governments, and from these to municipalities, increasing municipal revenues from around 3.8 million Kz in 2017 to more than 26.6 billion Kz in 2023. The institutionalisation of communes will be carried out through universal suffrage, ensuring gender parity with a

minimum of 30% women on electoral lists, further strengthened by the creation of the Network of Women in Local Authorities.

Citizen participation is promoted through the participatory budget, which allocates 25 million Kz per municipality, and through the Municipalities and Cities Fair of Angola, a platform for exchanging experiences that, in 2025, will bring together 21 provinces and more than 100,000 visitors. Training of local staff has been a priority, with more than 34,000 civil servants trained by ENAPP in 2024. Municipal performance evaluation is encouraged through the Award for the Best Municipality in Angola, launched in 2023, which recognises good practices in areas such as urban planning, health, education, and inclusion. In the environmental sector, projects such as the Cafu Channel and the Cuvelai River Basin stand out, strengthening climate resilience and food security.



The new political-administrative division (Law 14/24) has expanded to 21 provinces and 326 municipalities, bringing services closer to the population. All these efforts aim to consolidate local democracy, strengthen good governance, promote inclusion, and ensure that municipalities play a central role in the sustainable development of the country.

1.2. Ministry of the Interior and Security – IVORY COAST

The Ivorian Constitution (Title 13) recognizes regions and municipalities as local authorities endowed with legal personality and financial autonomy. It guarantees their free administration and stipulates that any transfer of responsibilities from the State must be accompanied by equivalent resources. The regulatory framework is complemented by several key laws, including the 2003 law on the transfer of responsibilities, the 2012 law on the organisation of local authorities, and the 2014 law on autonomous districts. Recent innovations include the digitalisation of management (SYGIDAN, electronic revenue collection), participatory budgeting, and platforms for training and citizen participation. Local democracy is governed by the 2012 law and the electoral code. In the regions, the president of the regional council is the head of the winning electoral list. In municipalities, the mayor and deputy mayors are elected by council members. The mixed voting system ensures representativeness and political plurality.



In 2024, the State transferred more than 253 billion CFA francs to local authorities through shared tax revenues and grants. An ongoing reform aims to make the system more equitable and transparent. In parallel, local authorities may mobilise non-tax revenues, while taxation and borrowing are strictly regulated. Digitalisation of revenue collection, driven by the PAMREC project, strengthens transparency and performance. Capacity-building efforts rely on job and skills reference frameworks (REC), already piloted in Bouaké and

San Pedro, as well as on regular training programmes. Institutional performance is assessed by interministerial commissions based on planning, budgeting, and accountability. Citizen participation is made mandatory through recent circulars and decrees, and is further enhanced by initiatives such as COSAY, PCNCI, and PAGOF. The 2019 law and the 2020 decree introduce a 30% quota for female candidates, with incentive-based funding in cases of enhanced gender parity.

Finally, local authorities contribute to combating climate change and to implementing the national urban strategy, thanks to major regulatory frameworks (Environmental Code, Urban Planning Code, PNHDU, SNAT) and flagship projects (SDUGA, SIGFU, PARU) supported by the State and technical and financial partners.

1.3. Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee – KENYA

The 2010 Constitution of KENYA introduced a decentralized governance system that created 47 county governments endowed with legal and financial autonomy, aimed at promoting democracy, equitable development, and citizen participation. Counties have legislative and executive powers, supported by laws such as the County Governments Act (2012) and the Public Finance Management Act (2012), which operationalize their functions. Revenues are shared between the national government and county governments, while counties also collect autonomous revenues through taxes and fees, with innovative mechanisms such as digital collection systems and GIS property mapping enhancing efficiency. Public participation is legally mandated in planning and budgeting, with models such as participatory budgeting strengthening accountability and inclusion. Institutional reforms, including county public service boards and the Kenya School of Government, support professionalization and capacity-building in county public services.



Gender equality is promoted through the two-thirds rule, although challenges remain in its full implementation. Transparency is ensured through audits, procurement regulations, and oversight by bodies such as the Auditor-General and the Controller of Budget. Counties also play a key role in climate governance, with the Climate Change Act (2016) requiring county climate strategies and local initiatives such as the FLLoCA programme supporting resilience. The Nairobi Climate Action Plan and local projects such as community biogas plants illustrate sustainable practices. Urban governance is guided by the National Urban Development Policy and supported by donor-funded programs such as KUSP and SUED, while public-private partnerships and land value capture mechanisms finance infrastructure. Despite these successes, counties face challenges including weak implementation, delayed financial transfers, and inequalities in service delivery.

1.4. Ministry of Local Government – RWANDA

Decentralisation, local governance, and development in RWANDA are structured and implemented through a comprehensive constitutional, legal, and institutional framework. The Constitution grants local authorities legal powers and financial autonomy, complemented by specific laws regulating districts, the City of Kigali, and sub-district entities. Local democracy is strengthened through elections organized by communities, with accountability mechanisms allowing citizens to replace underperforming officials. Financial autonomy is supported by local revenue collection, state transfers, and contributions from development partners, while the innovative use of IT systems ensures transparency and prevents corruption. RWANDA emphasizes performance contracts (imihigo) and results-based management tools to annually assess and reward local authorities.



Citizen participation is institutionalized through planning processes, budget consultations, and community activities such as Umuganda, ensuring that development priorities reflect grassroots needs. Gender equality is a cornerstone, with constitutional guarantees requiring women to occupy at least 30% of decision-making positions, reinforced by education and political will. Transparency is promoted through digitized systems for audits, recruitment, procurement, and tenders, reducing corruption risks. Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are integrated into local development strategies, with practices such as reforestation, terraced farming, and plastic reduction incorporated into local policies. Urban governance is guided by a national spatial master plan and an urbanization strategy supported by dedicated institutions and projects.

1.5. Ministry of Urban Planning, Local Authorities, and Territorial Development – SENEGAL

The Senegalese Constitution enshrines decentralisation as a fundamental principle, guaranteeing local authorities legal personality, financial autonomy, and free administration (Articles 67 and 102). The General Code of Local Authorities (2013) specifies that any transfer of responsibilities must be accompanied by the corresponding resources. The ongoing Act IV of decentralisation aims to strengthen the transfer of powers and introduce territorial hubs. Financially, the State supports local authorities through regulated transfers (FDD, FECT, decentralized BCI, CEL). The FECT, in particular, funds equipment through allocations distributed based on criteria of equity, performance, and solidarity. Local authorities also have their own resources (taxes, levies, regulated borrowing), although their fiscal autonomy remains limited by the national framework. Local democracy is based on the



direct election of councillors, mayors, and presidents of departmental councils, strengthening their legitimacy. Citizen participation is institutionalized in the Code of Local Authorities, notably through consultation frameworks, advisory councils, and participatory budgeting, already practiced in more than 100 municipalities and in the process of formal institutionalization.

SENEGAL has also adopted absolute gender parity (2010 law), reinforced by the National Observatory of Parity, and promotes gender equality in local governance. Capacity-building is led by the National Center for Local Public Service and Training (CNFPLF), responsible for job reference frameworks and training strategy. Institutional performance is monitored through Mandatory Minimum Conditions (CMO) and Performance Indicators (IdP), linked to the FECT. Finally, local authorities are involved in climate change mitigation through a methodological guide for developing Territorial Climate Plans (PCT), aligned with the Paris Agreement, and in urban management through appropriate methodological and financial mechanisms.

2. LOCAL AUTHORITIES

2.1. Local Authorities Nominated in the Citizen Participation and Engagement Category

Municipality of Bargny: Bargny, a Laboratory of Citizen Engagement in the Service of the Public Interest – SENEGAL

Located in the Rufisque Department, Dakar Region, SENEGAL, the Commune of Bargny stretches over approximately 4 km along the Atlantic coast. Recognizing the importance of citizen participation in local governance and facing challenges related to infrastructure and living conditions, the municipality established a framework conducive to community engagement under the concept “Bargny, a Laboratory of Citizen Engagement in the Service of the Public Interest.”

To this end, the commune institutionalized an inclusive participatory planning approach, actively involving citizens, local associations, and the diaspora in the co-creation of public policies. This initiative has mobilized stakeholders around concrete projects, contributing to achievements such as neighborhood paving, public lighting, school renovations, development of public spaces, stormwater management, and the creation of a digital media library. Moreover, gender considerations, notably through the renovation of the “Girls’ School” and the inclusion of women in consultation bodies, demonstrate the commune’s commitment to equitable governance. This approach has strengthened residents’ trust in the local administration.



**Mayor
Djibril FAYE**

Municipality of Khombole: Primary Schools Modernization Program Co-Designed with the People of Khombole – SENEGAL

To promote citizen participation through co-creation, ensure equitable access to modern and sustainable school infrastructure, strengthen community engagement, and promote environmental sustainability, the Commune of Khombole, located in the Thiès Region of SENEGAL, launched the “Primary Schools Modernization Program Co-Designed with the People of Khombole.” The objective is to make Khombole’s primary schools modern, sustainable, and well-equipped through the involvement of the local community.

This initiative stands out for its community co-construction approach, mobilizing local skills (craftspeople, citizens, associations) without relying on external labor. The integration of an ecological component (tree planting, landscaping) enhances sustainability. This inclusive and sustainable approach, combining community engagement and eco-responsible practices, represents an innovative response to the commune’s educational and environmental needs. The initiative has significantly reduced costs while improving the quality of school infrastructure. It mobilizes citizens around a common goal, strengthens solidarity, and concretely improves access to education.



**Mayor
Magueye BOYE**

Municipality of Nako: Two (02) Hours for My Nako – BURKINA FASO

The Commune of Nako is a rural commune located in the Poni Province, South-West Region of BURKINA FASO. With the aim of allowing each citizen to dedicate two hours of their time each week to actions benefiting the community, the municipality launched an initiative called “TWO (02) HOURS FOR MY NAKO.” Each week, the municipal team organizes an outreach visit to a central location to meet with a cluster of villages. The goal is to explain the commune’s ongoing and planned activities and to encourage citizen participation in local governance.

As a result, the initiative has led to voluntary payment of local taxes, the creation of a taxpayer database, the organization of community days by citizens, mobile court sessions resulting in the issuance of six hundred (600) birth certificates, sanitation days, and the wearing of traditional attire. The initiative has also enabled the establishment of a consultation framework for customary authorities, the community-led construction of a “House for Persons with Disabilities,” the creation of infrastructure management committees, complaint management committees, and village committees for monitoring and maintaining rural roads.



**Special Delegation
Representative
Constant Faba
TRAORE**

Through this initiative, several positive changes have been observed, including improved fiscal responsibility with increased local revenue, better adherence to traffic rules, youth participation in communal activities, and the creation of multiple development associations, thereby fostering social cohesion and community well-being.

Nyarugenge District Local Government - RWANDA

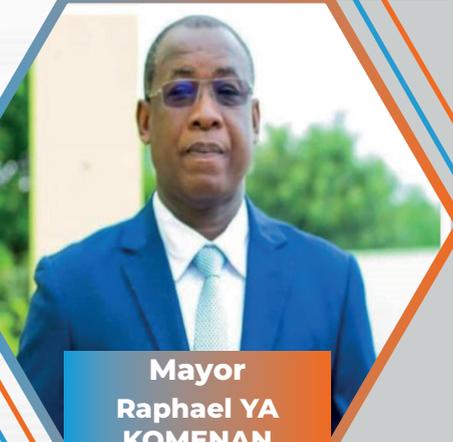
The local government of Nyarugenge District in RWANDA, with a population of over 1.16 million and covering 26,338 km², launched the “Citizen Participation and Engagement” initiative in 2017 to empower communities in decision-making and strengthen democratic governance. The project aims to promote transparency, accountability, and inclusion by ensuring that all citizens, including youth, women, and marginalized groups, can express their views, shape policies, and co-create local development solutions.

Through a structured process involving awareness campaigns, public consultations, workshops, surveys, and the creation of local committees, citizens actively participated in planning, budgeting, and monitoring activities. These efforts resulted in 12 structured meetings with the district council, the implementation of 8 community initiatives such as school rehabilitation and water access points, and the active participation of over 300 residents in planning documents and budget sessions. Communities also organized voluntary actions such as clean-up campaigns, infrastructure maintenance, and mobilization for tax compliance, demonstrating strong ownership and sustainability.

The project has improved service delivery, strengthened accountability through monitoring committees, and institutionalized inclusive practices within governance structures. Ultimately, the initiative has enhanced trust between citizens and authorities, empowered vulnerable groups, and created a replicable model of participatory democracy that promotes transparency, equity, and responsive governance.

Municipality of Ouelle: Citizen Call – Interactive Radio Program for Local Accountability in OUELLE – IVORY COAST

By virtue of its status as a member of the OGP initiative and with the aim of providing the population with an inclusive and democratic space for expression, the Commune of Ouellé, located in the department of the same name in IVORY COAST, launched an initiative called “Citizen Call: Interactive Radio Program for Local Accountability in Ouellé.” Through an interactive radio framework aligned with the functioning rhythm of the Municipal Council, this program aims to promote accountability and citizen oversight of municipal actions, inform the population regularly about deliberations and decisions, clarify progress and challenges in project implementation, and encourage the participation of youth, women, and vulnerable groups.



**Mayor
Raphael YA
KOMENAN**

Through this simple, inclusive, and low-cost channel, three community initiatives have been identified and supported: the repair of two village water points, the establishment of sanitation committees in the city's villages and neighborhoods, and awareness-raising actions on the maintenance of public infrastructure. Additionally, the population actively contributed to the maintenance of boreholes through local contributions, demonstrating genuine ownership. Over 125 people from different villages and neighborhoods of the city indirectly participated in the preparation of the three-year programs and the 2026 Budget through questions asked during the broadcasts. These contributions enriched the 2026-2028 Three-Year Program.

Thus, the "Citizen Call" program actively engages residents who ask questions, express their needs, and monitor commitments live, fostering more open and sustainable local governance.

2.2. Local Authorities Nominated in the Transparency and Accountability Category

Municipality of Khombole: Local Digital Participatory Democracy – SENEGAL

With a population of 20,397 inhabitants spread over an area of 5.5 km², the Municipality of Khombole, located in the Thiès region of Senegal, launched a Local Digital Participatory Democracy (LDPD) initiative in 2022 to enhance transparency and citizen participation in municipal governance. The project relies on interactive digital tools (website, "Mayor's Tik," budget debates, quarterly bulletins, annual reports, and a Wolof-language video journal) to facilitate access to information and accountability. These mechanisms promote direct dialogue and regular reporting. Awareness campaigns accompanied the launch to encourage citizen engagement. Broadcasting in Wolof allowed the inclusion of non-literate populations. The initiative has increased the involvement of residents, including vulnerable groups, in municipal decision-making, particularly in budget planning. It has also reduced administrative costs, improved resource allocation, and contributed to modernizing local governance, strengthening trust between the administration and citizens, and serves as a replicable model of digital participatory governance for other municipalities.



**Mayor
Magueye BOYE**

Municipality of Kozah2: A Municipality That Reports – Innovation in Public Accountability – TOGO

With a population of 78,204 inhabitants over an area of 314.78 km², the Municipality of Kozah2 is located in Togo. Since 2021, the municipality has implemented an initiative entitled "A Municipality That Reports: Innovation in Public Accountability." This innovative approach focuses on the public dissemination and explanation of budgetary documents

(initial budgets and administrative accounts) to strengthen transparency and accountability.

Using simplified materials translated into local languages, along with public outreach tours in all cantons and villages, municipal officials report directly to citizens in the presence of traditional leaders, community representatives, and decentralized government services. This initiative has improved the understanding of budgetary data, increased citizen engagement—including in remote areas—and enhanced dialogue between authorities and residents. It has strengthened trust, reinforced rigorous municipal management, and promoted community participation in the planning and monitoring of local projects.

Built on local resources and institutionalized within the municipal operations, this experience represents a sustainable and replicable model of transparent and inclusive local governance..



Mayor
Kossiwa KABIYA

Rural Municipality of Pelengana: Public Reporting of Municipal Management by Village – MALI

With a population of 143,835 inhabitants over an area of 327.799 km², the Rural Municipality of Pelengana in Mali has, since 2022, implemented village-level public reporting of municipal management to bring budgetary information closer to citizens and strengthen transparency and trust between elected officials and the population.

Each year, sessions are organized at 12 reporting sites, tailored to the size of the villages, providing broad access to information on budgets, completed projects, and future plans. The initiative, embedded in the Local Government Code, engages elected officials, traditional leaders, management committees (schools, health, water), youth, women, and civil society. It has increased citizen participation, improved dialogue and citizen oversight, strengthened the legitimacy of elected officials, and raised local tax collection rates.



Mayor
Mamou BAMBA

The process includes preparatory work, reporting sessions in local languages, and follow-up on recommendations. Documented and disseminated with the support of PADRE-GIZ, this experience has been recognized as a “good practice” in Mali. Sustained over time and experiencing strong growth in participation (from 1,151 participants in 2021 to over 2,000 in 2024), it represents an inclusive and sustainable model of participatory local governance.

Municipality of Poa: 2024 Self-Assessment of Municipal Performance – BURKINA FASO

With a population of 47,503 inhabitants over an area of 221 km², the Municipality of Poa in Burkina Faso has implemented a municipal performance self-assessment initiative to evaluate its local governance, identify strengths and weaknesses, and improve the quality of public services.

The process is based on a permanent self-assessment committee, supported by Swiss Cooperation and the DGDDL, which follows a six-step participatory methodology: capacity building, data collection, analysis, reporting, and adjustment. This experience promotes greater transparency in public financial management, strengthens citizen participation, and improves municipal revenue mobilization. It has led to increased accountability among elected officials and municipal staff, greater citizen engagement, and more rigorous budget planning.



**Delegation President
Romaine SAWDOGO**

Results are communicated to the municipal council and citizens through public postings, social media, and feedback sessions, fostering a climate of trust and a culture of constructive self-criticism. Institutionalized since 2019, this sustainable initiative represents an original and replicable model of good local governance based on self-assessment, transparency, and participation.

Waterberg District Municipality: Evaluating Waterberg's Journey Towards Fiscal Integrity: A Five-Year Review of Unqualified Audits and Budgetary Efficiency in Local Governance – SOUTH AFRICA

The Waterberg District Municipality in South Africa, covering an area of 44,913 km² with a population of approximately 763,000 inhabitants, launched in 2023 the initiative “Evaluating Waterberg’s Journey Towards Fiscal Integrity: A Five-Year Review of Unqualified Audits and Budgetary Efficiency in Local Governance.”

This initiative aims to strengthen budgetary discipline, ensure transparency, and improve fiscal efficiency while promoting accountability and citizen participation in local governance. Through comprehensive training programs for financial staff, the adoption of advanced financial management tools, and a culture of participatory governance, the municipality has engaged communities, traditional leaders, and other stakeholders in setting budget priorities and monitoring performance.



**Executive Mayor
Jack MAEKO**

These efforts have been supported by public consultations, citizen budget guides, digital platforms, and community radio, making governance more inclusive and transparent. The project has also emphasized compliance with the Municipal

Finance Management Act and strengthened oversight through the Municipal Public Accounts Committee, ensuring flawless audits and efficient service delivery.

The initiative has enhanced public trust, expanded participation opportunities for women and youth, and created a replicable model of transparent and sustainable governance.

2.3. Local Authorities Nominated in the Inclusion, Equality, and Equity Category

Akébou1 Municipality: Development of the Dougan–Carrefour Tchakpali Road over 3 km with the Construction of 2 Causeways – TOGO

Located in the Akébou Prefecture in the northwest of the Plateaux Region in Togo, the Municipality of Akébou1 launched the initiative “Development of the Dougan–Carrefour Tchakpali Road over 3 km with the Construction of 2 Causeways.” The project aims to provide vulnerable youth in Dougan with sustainable economic opportunities by enhancing their skills, civic and entrepreneurial spirit, and supporting them in creating or expanding community-recognized income-generating activities.

Through an inclusive approach of training, mentoring, and support for self-employment, the initiative has promoted the socio-economic integration of vulnerable youth. By engaging unemployed youth in structured productive activities and training, the project has strengthened social cohesion and local capacities to address vulnerabilities.

Once isolated and marginalized, Dougan now benefits from improved accessibility, facilitating the transport of agricultural products and access to healthcare. Youth, previously faced with migration and idleness, have become drivers of local development through the creation of microenterprises and self-employment. This new dynamic has stimulated the local economy and inspired other localities within the municipality.

The initiative has fostered a strong sense of collective responsibility and civic engagement in local development. Notably, 70 young people (including 40 women), divided into two teams led by team leaders, have gained structured and secure employment through a microfinance account for regular payment of their allowances. All participants were able to save at least 40,000 F CFA and received a grant of 60,000 F CFA to start or strengthen an income-generating activity (IGA).

Local Municipality of Matlosana: Public Participation – SOUTH AFRICA

The Local Municipality of Matlosana in South Africa, covering the Klerksdorp-Orkney-Stilfontein-Hartebeesfontein (KOSH) area with a population of over 640,000 inhabitants, launched in 2016 the “Public Participation” initiative to strengthen inclusion, equality, and equity in local governance.



Mayor
Yawo SODAGNI

The project aims to ensure that historically marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities, have equitable access to opportunities and a meaningful voice in municipal decision-making.

Through structured processes—including stakeholder identification, trust-building, public meetings, surveys, workshops, and multilingual communication campaigns via radio, posters, and local newspapers—the municipality has created spaces for citizens to express their views on issues such as ward delimitation, service delivery, and voter registration. More than 39 community consultation meetings, capacity-building workshops, and awareness campaigns were held, reaching over 1,500 participants, including representatives from civil society and other municipalities.



**Mayor
Stella Lebohang
Mondlane**

Despite challenges posed by limited budgets and logistical constraints, the initiative has promoted transparency, empowered communities to co-create solutions, and enhanced accountability through structured feedback loops and engagement with the Municipal Council. The project has fostered greater citizen participation, increased inclusion in governance processes, and contributed to institutionalizing participatory democracy as a guiding principle of local governance.

Ogou 1 Municipality: Promoting Gender Equality in the Municipality – TOGO

Located in the Ogou Prefecture (Togo), with its administrative center in Atakpamé, the Municipality of Ogou 1 launched the project “Promoting Gender Equality in Ogou 1 Municipality.” The project aims to advance equality between women and men through an inclusive and participatory approach.

Progress has been made in gender-responsive municipal budgeting, incorporating actions to support women across various sectors. Inclusive educational programs have been established, and initiatives for women’s economic empowerment are beginning to take shape. Maternal and child health services have also been strengthened, contributing to improved healthcare in the municipality. The initiative has reinforced local authority while consolidating municipal services.



**Mayor
Yawa KOUIGAN**

Distinguished by its co-creation approach and participatory implementation, involving local communities, authorities, and civil society organizations, the project provided initial training to municipal staff, women, youth, and stakeholders to enhance their skills on gender-based violence (GBV) issues. A comprehensive diagnostic was conducted, complemented by a facilitator’s guide to inform strategic decision-making.

Additionally, 54 discussion sessions reached over 4,500 people, including 2,947 women, raising community awareness on GBV. Home visits reached 703 individuals, and four public events integrated GBV topics into local life. Six sketches and forum-theater performances were also organized, promoting interaction and dialogue. Finally, the construction of a Women’s Promotion Center represents a tangible and lasting outcome, providing a dedicated space for defending women’s rights.

Overall, this collaborative dynamic has fostered ownership, effectiveness, and sustainability of the actions undertaken.

Thiaroye Sur Mer Municipality: ‘Ndékki Sama Fondé’ (My Morning Bowl of Porridge) – SENEGAL

The Municipality of Thiaroye Sur Mer is one of the 12 arrondissement municipalities of the city of Pikine, with a population of 72,500 inhabitants and covering an area of 3 km². In 2024, the municipality launched the initiative “Ndékki Sama Fondé” (My Morning Bowl of Porridge), as part of its 2028 Strategic Development Plan. This initiative aims to combat child malnutrition, improve school performance, and stimulate the local economy. The project implements a daily school meal model using local products to support the local economy. It relies on Territorial Coaching and a co-creation and shared governance approach, involving parents, teachers, local producers, and public and private partners. The process is structured into five stages: mission definition, participatory diagnosis, multi-stakeholder synergies, pilot implementation, and change support.



**Mayor
El Mamadou
NDIAYE**

The pilot phase began at the Case des Tout-Petits in Thiaroye Azur, reaching 122 students and financed by the municipality and companies through CSR initiatives, with plans to gradually expand to five schools by 2026, covering 2,806 students. Results show improvements in children’s nutrition, health, and school attendance. The project’s effectiveness relies on the optimization of local resources and the controlled cost of meals (200 FCFA). The initiative promotes local production, creates economic opportunities, and strengthens social cohesion. The experience has also enhanced the capacities of elected officials, technicians, and local staff, and has inspired a local public policy that establishes school nutrition as a strategic priority.

Tône 3 Municipality: Inclusive and Resilient Food Security – TOGO

Tône 3 Municipality is located in Togo in the Tône Prefecture, which is part of the Savanes Region. It has a population of 60,276 inhabitants with an area of 278.3 km². The municipality is launching the project Inclusive and Resilient Food Security – Tône 3 Municipality (Togo) in 2024. This project aims to strengthen food sovereignty by promoting the inclusion of vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities, and sustainably improving agricultural yields. The initiative promotes

resilient agricultural practices and adapts agriculture to climate change while improving access to inputs, infrastructure, and markets.

Concrete actions include the creation of a sales kiosk exclusively for persons with disabilities, the development of a market garden site equipped with a solar-powered borehole and a drip irrigation system managed by a group of persons with disabilities, a school farm, also equipped with a solar-powered borehole, which trains farmers during the rainy season and produces fresh maize in the dry season, and the establishment of a seed bank managed by an inclusive cooperative. The project has also set up a rice processing unit and training for beneficiaries. Three tricycles have been provided for waste collection and support for the school farm, and a rice processing unit and beekeeping equipment have been provided to diversify income. Training has strengthened the skills of seed producers, beekeepers, and processors.



**Mayor
Nanmoupa DOUTI**

2.4. Local Authorities Nominated in the Category of Budgetary Effectiveness and Efficiency

Diamaguène Sicap Mbao Municipality: Participatory Budget Governance and Sustainable Territorial Development – SENEGAL

The Diamaguène Sicap Mbao Municipality, located in the Dakar Region with an estimated population of 169,861 inhabitants over 7.3 km², initiated in 2023 a reform of participatory budget governance and sustainable territorial development. The initiative aims to mobilize more internal resources, modernize fiscal management, and strengthen transparency in budget execution. The process relies on several innovations: geolocated economic census of taxpayers, introduction of tax cards, fiscal zoning with organized collectors, creation of a community tax committee, and progressive digitalization of budget monitoring. The approach is accompanied by the launch of structuring projects with high social impact within the framework of the program “Sopi Xar Kana Mou.”



**Mayor
Cheikh Aliou BEYE**

The results are notable: local revenues have doubled in three years, reaching nearly 920 million FCFA in 2024, with a projected budget of 2.2 billion in 2025. The budget execution rate exceeds 99%, and the share of the budget dedicated to investment has increased from 25% to over 36%. These achievements have enabled the construction of visible infrastructure (schools, maternity clinics, roads, sports facilities), strengthening citizen trust and the legitimacy of the municipality, which was recognized with an International Local Leadership Award in 2025..

Est-Mono 1 Municipality: Budgetary Effectiveness and Efficiency – TOGO

Est-Mono 1 Municipality, located in Togo, launched in January 2024 an initiative entitled “Budgetary Effectiveness and Efficiency” in order to optimize the use of public resources. The objective is to strengthen transparency and the quality of services provided to citizens by maximizing results for each franc spent. The process is based on a participatory and rigorous approach: assessment of citizen needs, prioritization of actions, preparation and adoption of a budget aligned with local priorities, monitoring and evaluation, and independent audits. The innovation lies in the use of digital tools such as SIG Recette and SOLAF, allowing real-time monitoring of revenues, expenditures, and projects.



**Mayor
Koffi AKABA**

In terms of results, the municipality has succeeded in reducing unnecessary expenses, improving the quality of public services, strengthening transparency, and increasing citizen trust. The initiative has also enabled local actors to be held accountable, better plan investments, and establish participatory and inclusive governance. The main challenge remains the continuous mobilization of citizens, training local actors on new technological tools, and finding mechanisms to keep the budget adapted to the changing needs of the community. Nevertheless, this experience constitutes a good practice in local governance, replicable and sustainable, promoting more transparent, accountable, and development-oriented public management.

Khombole Municipality: « Natt Naatal » SENEGAL

The Khombole Municipality, located in the Thiès Region of Senegal, faces significant needs in financing its local development. To address this, the municipality launched in February 2025 the project “Natt Naatal,” which means in Wolof “Let’s Develop Khombole through Taxation.” This initiative aims to strengthen the mobilization of local tax resources by raising public awareness about the importance of taxes, promoting fiscal civility, and diversifying revenues through the exploitation of tax niches such as property tax, economic value added, and informal sector activities. It also seeks to involve citizens in the preparation of the municipal budget to consolidate transparency and trust. The project relies on a close-proximity communication strategy using local radio, posters, street theater, as well as engagement with community and religious leaders. A



**Mayor
Magueye BOYE**

major innovation lies in the introduction of tax stickers, designed to recognize taxpayers who are up to date with their obligations and make the system more transparent. Although still in its early stages, “Natt Naatal” has already expanded the base of registered taxpayers, reduced

collection costs, and restored a climate of trust between the administration and citizens. In the long term, the expected results are a significant and sustainable increase in tax revenues, greater financial autonomy for the municipality, and increased citizen participation in local governance.

However, the project faces several challenges: the need for solid institutional anchoring, strengthening the technical capacities of local actors, and establishing mechanisms that ensure both fiscal equity and continued public adherence.

Pikine Ouest Municipality: ‘Fit to Perform’ Program: Implementation Process of Factors for Improving Budgetary and Financial Performance – SENEGAL

Pikine Ouest Municipality, located in the Dakar Region of Senegal, launched in January 2023 the “Fit to Perform” program to sustainably improve its budgetary and financial performance. The project is based on three pillars: the establishment of a competent and motivated municipal team, the implementation of performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the actions of services, and the construction of revenue-generating infrastructures (parking lots, nautical complex, mini-football field). The municipality adopted a structured approach based on the PDCA method (Plan – Do – Check – Act), complemented by a comprehensive census of fiscal potential, a zero-tolerance policy towards tax evasion, and rational budgeting. These efforts have borne fruit: between the periods 2019-2022 and 2023-2024, operating revenues increased by 46.7%, reaching an average of over 500 million FCFA per year. At the same time, investment effort rose from 9.25% to 21.59%, allowing the municipality to generate, for the first time, savings dedicated to investment. The financial autonomy ratio reached 86.3% in 2024. These results are concretely reflected in better control of the wage bill, which decreased from 55.9% in 2021 to 43.4% in 2024, an improvement in social services, including food assistance covering nearly 58% of households in 2024, and strengthened citizen trust in the local administration. The challenge, however, remains significant: surpassing the symbolic threshold of one billion in annual revenues, increasing savings capacity for investment, and maintaining this performance momentum over time.



**Mayor
Cheikh DIOP**

Thiès Nord Municipality: Strategies for Budgetary Effectiveness and Efficiency in Local Authorities: Case Study of Thiès Nord Municipality – SENEGAL

Thiès Nord Municipality, located in Senegal with a population of nearly 300,000 inhabitants over 44.5 km², launched in 2023 an innovative experience to improve its budgetary effectiveness and efficiency. The main objective is to strengthen local financial autonomy by combating tax evasion (estimated at 96% for certain taxes) and high dependence on state transfers. The approach is based on a comprehensive census of taxpayers (nearly 3,000 economic units), public awareness campaigns, a tax reform (increase and adaptation of rates), the creation of a Local Tax Office, and digitalization through the GIL0 software.

This tool allows data centralization, automated calculations, and fraud reduction. The results are significant: increase in revenues (+447% on the hydrocarbon tax in 2024; +180% for the ODP), improvement in the collection rate (from 38% to 72% in 18 months), and an increase in revenue per inhabitant from 7,276 FCFA in 2022 to 9,799 FCFA in 2023. Budgetary transparency has improved through the regular publication of accounts, and public services (roads, lighting, sanitation) have been strengthened.

The main challenge remains the resistance of certain actors to change and the sustainability of reforms in the face of persistent evasion practices. Nevertheless, the Thiès Nord experience, based on digital innovation, participatory governance, and institutional reform, constitutes a sustainable and replicable model for other Senegalese municipalities.



Mayor
Mouhamadou
DIAKHATÉ

2.5. Local authorities nominated in the category of Solidarity and Assistance to Vulnerable and/or Marginalized Communities

Bargny Municipality: Bargny in Solidarity: A Municipality Serving the Most Vulnerable – SENEGAL

Located in the Rufisque Department, Dakar Region, Senegal, Bargny Municipality implemented the experience “Bargny in Solidarity: A Municipality Serving the Most Vulnerable.” It aims to respond effectively to emergency situations (recurring rain floods and coastal erosion), strengthen social cohesion, and ensure equitable access to basic services. In the face of floods and coastal encroachment, the municipality intervenes through dredging operations, pumping, and the distribution of food aid.

The experience also supports returning migrants, particularly in cases of canoe capsizing or deportation abroad, providing moral, logistical, and legal assistance. Additionally, persons living with disabilities benefit from donations, support for entrepreneurship, and parasport activities. By placing people at the heart of local public action, this approach has helped restore the dignity of vulnerable individuals, prevent their marginalization, and strengthen social cohesion. This social proximity has promoted greater community cohesion and increased citizen engagement around resilience and solidarity issues.

Thus, the experience has strengthened public trust in local authorities, creating a sense of inclusion and recognition, especially for the most marginalized groups (disaster-affected families, returning migrants, persons with disabilities). “Bargny in Solidarity” has contributed to embedding a culture of governance based on equity, solidarity, and social justice.



Mayor
Djibril FAYE

Eastern Regional Council: Construction of a Reception Center for Internally Displaced Students and Pupils in the Eastern Region at Fada N’Gourma – BURKINA FASO

The Eastern Regional Council of Burkina Faso has its capital in the town of Fada N’Gourma, located a few kilometers east of the capital Ouagadougou. Following a logic of seeking solutions to the urgent and complex concerns of the population, the Council promoted inter-municipal cooperation by launching the “Construction of a Reception Center for Internally Displaced Students and Pupils in the Eastern Region at Fada N’Gourma.” This project aims to improve the living and studying conditions of internally displaced pupils and students from the Eastern Region. The construction and equipping of the Center has improved study and accommodation conditions for 80 vulnerable pupils and students, reduced school dropouts—especially among girls, decreased the educational expenses for the parents of these vulnerable pupils and students, and reduced the daily requests made to municipal and regional authorities regarding accommodation issues for internally displaced pupils.



President
Bernard KOMBERE

Golfe 1 Municipality: Promotion of Inclusive Employability for Youth, Impoverished Women, and Marginalized People Living in the Ghettos of Golfe 1 Municipality – TOGO

Located in the Autonomous District of Greater Lomé, Golfe 1 launched the experience “Promotion of Inclusive Employability for Youth, Impoverished Women, and Marginalized People Living in the Ghettos of the Municipality.” It aims to promote employability as well as the development of inclusive economic initiatives for youth, women, and vulnerable or marginalized people within Golfe 1 Municipality. Through this initiative, 200 young people were trained in entrepreneurship and skilled trades, 95% of whom had no prior experience. Among them, 100 received support, producing 80 business plans, with 44 funded for 120 million FCFA, resulting in the creation of 44 companies and 100 direct jobs. In parallel, 100 vulnerable women were trained and supported, generating the same number of jobs, while the Digital Academy Center facilitated the integration of 80 additional young people.



Mayor
Koamy Gbloekpo GOMADO

Finally, in an inclusion-focused approach, 20 ghettos were mapped, reaching 200 marginalized youth, 100 of whom received support and 30 were trained in new income-generating activities. The initiative strengthened self-esteem, economic autonomy, and confidence in the future for beneficiaries, particularly youth, women, and formerly marginalized ghetto residents. They are now recognized as genuine economic actors, some even becoming role models within their community.

Golfe 2 Municipality: Inclusion and Sanitation in the Service of Urban Resilience (THIMO) – TOGO

In order to improve the social and environmental resilience of vulnerable communities in Golfe 2 Municipality, located in the Autonomous District of Greater Lomé, the initiative “Inclusion and Sanitation in the Service of Urban Resilience (THIMO)” was launched. It aims to provide social assistance through the professional integration of marginalized people and contribute to the improvement of the living environment. It emphasizes the use of local labor to carry out sanitation and rehabilitation works while generating temporary employment for marginalized groups (unemployed youth, women, disadvantaged persons). The initiative has strengthened community solidarity, civic engagement, and social cohesion by actively involving beneficiaries in identifying needs and implementing sustainable solutions. It has raised awareness among more than 1,500 residents, mobilized and trained over 300 local actors who benefited from temporary income and valuable professional experience. Moreover, more than 15 community sites have been developed and gutters rehabilitated, fostering a local dynamic of solidarity and proximity governance to improve the living environment.



**Mayor
Noukafou KODJO**

Ogou 1 Municipality and the Federation of Municipalities of Togo: Women’s Promotion Center in Ogou 1 and Gender Equality in Municipalities – TOGO

Located in the Prefecture of Ogou, whose capital is Atakpamé, in the Plateaux Region, the pilot municipality of Ogou 1 and the association of municipalities of Togo implemented the experience “Women’s Promotion Center in Ogou 1 and Gender Equality in the Municipalities of Togo.” The initiative aims to raise awareness and strengthen the capacities of local actors on gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence (GBV). The approach is based on information, consultation, awareness-raising, and capacity building of actors. The initiative has sensitized more than 1 million people, including men, women, and youth, strengthened the capacities of municipal staff on gender equality indicators and GBV, raised awareness among local elected officials on GBV, ensured political ownership of a topic often reserved for health professionals, and improved service provision for the reception and support of victims in four municipalities. A center was built to allow women victims of GBV to receive training and acquire financial autonomy. This led to the inclusion of GBV issues during municipal deliberation sessions. A guide of good practices was developed and disseminated to municipalities to encourage capitalization. Gender and GBV focal points were designated in the beneficiary municipalities.



**Mayor
Yawa KOUIGAN**

2.6. Local governments nominated in the category Territorialization of Public Policies and International Agendas

Dalifort Foirail Municipality: Senegal Green Mobility - SENEGAL

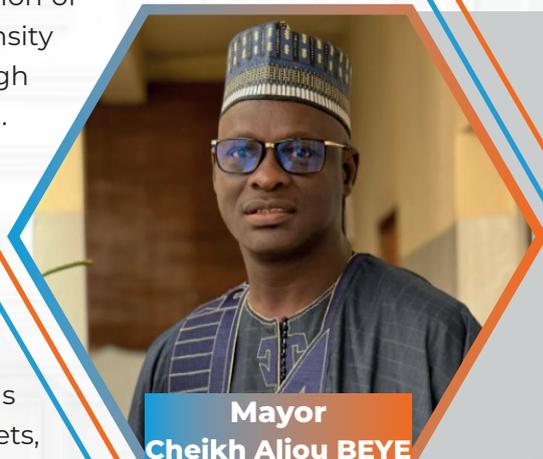
The municipality of Dalifort Foirail, located in the Dakar region of Senegal, covers 3.15 km² and has approximately 39,096 inhabitants, with a population density of 14,600 inhabitants/km². It is highly urbanized and faces pollution related to transportation. The initiative “SENEGAL GREEN MOBILITY”, launched in January 2025, aims to promote sustainable mobility through the use of electric vehicles. The project is based on a territorial assessment, strategic planning, installation of charging stations, distribution of electric vehicles, awareness campaigns, and training for young people. It addresses climate, economic, and social challenges, in alignment with the Municipality Development Plan, the SDGs, and national energy transition policies. The results include a measurable reduction in air and noise pollution, creation of local jobs, improved mobility, and greater inclusion of women and youth. The model relies on public-private partnerships, participatory governance, and active capitalization of results. It is recognized as a good practice transferable to other territories, with prospects for expansion and innovation. Dalifort Foirail thus becomes a driving force in urban ecological transition.



Mayor
Mamadou MBENGUE

Municipality of Diamaguène Sicap Mbao: Youth Employability and Professional Integration - SENEGAL

The municipality of Diamaguène Sicap Mbao, located in the Dakar region of Senegal, covers an area of 7.3 km² and has a population of 209,862, including 101,918 young people. With a population density of 23,269 inhabitants/km², it is highly urbanized and faces high unemployment and a weakly structured local economic fabric. To address these challenges, the municipal government launched in December 2024 the PAGLACIM program, focused on youth employability and professional integration for young people, women, and artisans. The initiative is based on a territorial diagnosis, the creation of seven municipal incubation centers (construction, agri-food, crafts, etc.), training in soft skills, digital marketing, and business management, as well as the modernization of economic infrastructures (markets, garages, cold storage facilities). It has supported more than 1,500 beneficiaries. The project engages national and international partners (Germany, Turkey, Poland) and aligns with the “Senegal 2050” strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is built on inclusive governance, participatory planning, and active capitalization of results. Reproducible and cost-effective, it serves as an inspiring model for



Mayor
Cheikh Aliou BEYE

other local governments. Diamaguène Sicap Mbao thus positions itself as a pilot territory for the territorialization of public policies in favor of employment and local innovation.

Municipality of Khombole: Professional Integration Assistance Office – SENEGAL

The Municipality of Khombole, covering an area of 5.5 km², is located in the Thiès region. The population of Khombole stands at 20,397 inhabitants, including 9,855 men and 10,542 women. In March 2025, the municipality launched the Professional Integration Assistance Office (BAIP). The BAIP initiative is an innovative territorial program aimed at facilitating youth employability. It is based on a participatory diagnostic that identified training, guidance, and entrepreneurial support needs. Developed in partnership with the HRA firm, it provides a structured local service desk offering reception, advice, guidance, and follow-up services. The program aligns with the territorialization of public policies, consistent with national strategies (ANPEJ, DER/FJ, 3FPT) and international agendas (SDGs, Agenda 2063). It mobilizes local resources, leverages public-private partnerships, and relies on participatory governance. Despite its recent launch, the BAIP has already strengthened the coordination of local initiatives (VEFP, PCONB), generated strong community support, and initiated a process of result capitalization. Its light yet effective methodology, institutional anchoring, and replicability potential make it an inspiring model for other municipalities. Future prospects include contractual partnerships with national programs, financial autonomy, and scaling up results at the inter-municipal level. The BAIP represents a concrete, inclusive, and sustainable response to the challenges of youth professional integration.



Mayor Magueye BOYE

Ngor Municipality: Club of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World – SENEGAL

Ngor Municipality, located in the Dakar region of Senegal, covers an area of 4.377 km² and has a population of approximately 28,215 inhabitants, including 11,509 youth. Faced with high urban pressure and the degradation of its coastline, Ngor Municipality launched in November 2024 an ambitious initiative aimed at having its bay join the Club of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World. This project is based on a participatory diagnosis, a concerted development plan, and the establishment of a local governance committee. It aims to enhance maritime heritage, promote sustainable tourism, and strengthen social cohesion. The initiative enabled the active involvement of youth, women, and fishermen, mobilized local and international partners, and successfully integrated the bay into the Club in June 2025. It constitutes a model of inclusive, resource-efficient, and replicable governance, aligned with the SDGs, Agenda 2063, and ECOWAS priorities.



Mayor Mame Maguèye NDIAYE

Sikasso Regional Council: The State–Region Contract Plan (CPER) 2015–2019 of Sikasso – MALI

The Sikasso region, located in southern Mali, covers an area of 71,790 km² and has more than 4.2 million inhabitants. Mostly rural, it relies on an agrosilvopastoral economy. The 2015–2019 State–Region Contract Plan (CPER), the first of its kind in Mali, was designed to deepen decentralization through regionalization. It enabled the development of 1,100 hectares in Kléla and the rehabilitation of 23 km of rural roads, improving market access, food security, and mobility. The participatory approach mobilized local stakeholders, strengthened social cohesion, and fostered ownership of the projects. Agricultural incomes diversified, rural exodus decreased, and Kléla’s reputation was restored. The CPER also attracted partners such as the Swiss and Danish cooperation agencies, which funded complementary infrastructure (bridges, access roads). Integrated into the regional Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plan (PDESC), it served as a model for other local authorities and inspired a second generation of CPERs. Its sustainability relies on inclusive governance, capitalization mechanisms, and active dissemination of results. The Sikasso CPER represents a successful territorialization of public policies, with lasting effects on the local economy, governance, and regional planning.



**President
Yaya BAMBA**

3. TRANSFORMATIVE CITIZENS

3.1. Ana BAPTISTA: Pioneering Initiatives in Mozambique to Transform GBV Prevention and Response Since 2007 – MOZAMBIQUE

«Ana Baptista, a public health physician and specialist in gender-based violence (GBV), has led pioneering initiatives in Mozambique to transform GBV prevention and response since 2007. In a context marked by structural inequalities, humanitarian crises, and limited access to services, she became the Ministry of Health’s first technical adviser and helped expand clinical, psychosocial, and legal support for survivors from only three health centers to more than 70% of the country’s facilities. She developed national protocols, training tools, and GBV quality-assurance instruments, now used by the WHO and adopted in several countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Despite institutional resistance, social stigma, and limited resources, she strengthened a community protection network and drove political and cultural change. Her impact already extends beyond national borders, inspiring change across continents and demonstrating that local solutions—combined with evidence, leadership, and community trust—can transform silence into systems



and violence into healing.

3.2. KUMESSI Yawovi Evenunye: Socio-Economic Development Support and Strengthening Project (ProRADSEC) – TOGO

Implemented in the rural commune of Kloto 3 in Togo, the ProRADSEC project aims to improve the socio-economic and environmental living conditions of local populations through the promotion of youth entrepreneurship, the socio-economic inclusion of women, improved access to basic services, and strengthened citizen participation. It places particular emphasis on agroecology and sustainable land management to ensure food security while preserving the environment. The initiative is part of a sustainable development approach, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national policies, while harnessing the potential of rural areas. Among the actions carried out are awareness-raising activities in 19 villages on the importance of identity documents and assistance in obtaining nationality certificates for 50 young girls, as well as the issuance of birth certificates for 200 people. The project also facilitated the establishment of a 'citizen's office' and the construction of social infrastructure such as market sheds and a potable water supply system.



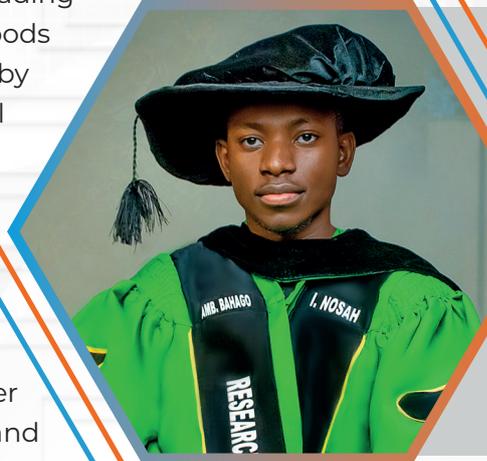
3.3 FOTSO DIEUDONNE NGASSA : Gajo Livestock - CAMEROON

Gajo Livestock is an initiative that connects livestock farmers around the world with experts to ensure the production of standardized and traceable livestock products. The experience stands out for the integration of an artificial intelligence called 'Farm Genius 2.0.' This AI acts as a digital veterinary assistant, capable of diagnosing animal diseases and suggesting treatments. The goal is to improve animal health, food security, rural employment, and citizens' quality of life. The GAJO Livestock initiative has had a significant and lasting impact on improving the living conditions of farmers and their communities. Thanks to the intuitive and accessible mobile application, farmers can now monitor the health of their animals, plan veterinary care, receive health alerts, and manage their livestock more efficiently. Sustainably, GAJO promotes farmers' empowerment, the digitization of the livestock sector, and enhanced animal traceability, which is essential for local and international trade. The application also contributes to raising awareness about sustainable livestock management, reducing the environmental impact of intensive farming.



3.4. Bahago I. NOSAH - NIGERIA

Bahago I. Nosah, a humanitarian actor in Nigeria, has been leading an integrated initiative on food security, nutrition, and livelihoods in northwestern Nigeria since 2021, a region deeply affected by armed conflicts, chronic poverty, insecurity, and environmental degradation. His approach combines emergency response and sustainable development: nutrition-sensitive cash transfers, seasonal food assistance, rapid support for internally displaced persons within 72 hours, and training programs on financial literacy, agricultural practices, and income generation. In collaboration with partners such as AC, AHSF, UNICEF, USAID, and WFP, he has supported over 50,000 vulnerable households, particularly women, children, and displaced persons, thereby improving their access to stable food, essential health services, and regular income. Women have been able to start small businesses through grants and training, while displaced farmers regained their independence by restarting their farming activities.



3.5. Bruno RATOVOARISON: Participatory Leadership and Lasting Impact – MADAGASCAR

This project, initiated by the local president of JCI Toliara, aims to mobilize young people to address the challenges of their community, such as poverty, lack of opportunities, and environmental degradation. Through a participatory assessment, several initiatives were launched: the digital literacy program 'DigiKids Lab,' reforestation and cleanup campaigns, as well as youth entrepreneurship support programs. The approach is based on transformational leadership that promotes co-creation and the active involvement of young people in projects with high local impact. These are integrated initiatives aligned with the SDGs to improve living conditions in Toliara.



More than 120 children have been trained in digital skills through DigiKids Lab, and young people have acquired skills in leadership, digital marketing, and entrepreneurship. Over 3,000 mangrove seedlings have been planted to protect the coastline, enhance biodiversity, and combat climate change. Eight entrepreneurial projects have been incubated, some of which have received funding and mentorship support.

4. CHILDREN AND YOUNG CREATORS

4.1. Assa MATSUSSE : Xo teka mintxumu swa ku - MOZAMBIQUE

Assa Matusse, known as ‘Menina do Bairro’ in Mozambique, is a singer and songwriter whose artistic work goes beyond music: she advocates for social causes related to the well-being of girls and adolescents, the promotion of gender equality, and the fight against violence. The song ‘Xo teka mintxumu swa ku’ (2023) directly addresses the issue of gender-based violence and sexism in Mozambique and worldwide, and is also used in campaigns against femicide.

As an ambassador for the sociocultural association Horizonte Azul (ASCHA), she contributes to the defense of human rights, with a focus on girls and women in marginalized and rural areas. Her artistic aesthetic highlights ancestral references and Mozambican culture, reinforcing the role of language and music as instruments of social transformation.



4.2. Abdou-Azize – BLAAZY : sossorobougou - BURKINA FASO

Abdou-Azize, known as Blaazy Slameur engagé, from Bobo-Dioulasso in Burkina Faso, uses his music as a powerful lever for peace, inclusion, and social cohesion. Through his creation ‘Sossorobougou,’ he authentically addresses issues related to social tensions in unplanned urban areas, calling for unity, solidarity, and dialogue. His commitment is also expressed through writing workshops aimed at strengthening the expression of young people and rural communities.

Despite significant financial constraints linked to self-production, Blaazy Slameur has carried out this project with conviction, making his work a tool for civic education and cultural advocacy. With his artistic future focused on themes of participatory governance, inclusion, and peace, Abdou-Azize embodies the vision of engaged art serving a fairer and more peaceful society.



4.3. Euphony Club Lycée pilote Sfax1: mi querido – TUNISIA

The Euphony Club group in the Sfax region had a deeply enriching experience participating in the musical creation « بوب حملا اي - mi querido ». This journey allowed the group members to develop not only their artistic skills but also important values such as mutual support, respect, and democratic

collaboration within the team. The song addresses a universal and poignant theme: an impossible love between two people from countries in conflict, inspired by the story of a Palestinian poet.

The group's creative approach is based on inclusive collaboration, where every voice is heard and valued, illustrating a true team spirit. Despite financial and organizational constraints, the group remained united and creative, demonstrating strong resilience. Euphony Club plans to explore themes such as participatory governance, inclusion, and peace in the future, convinced that music is a powerful vehicle for social change.



4.4. Club Morocco88 Lycée Moulay Youssef: Elemental Symphony – MOROCCO

Saad Azar El Khaïter, co-leader of the Morocco88 Club at Lycée Moulay Youssef in Rabat, successfully coordinated the creation of the music video 'Elemental Symphony.' Drawing on his experience in logistical management, planning, shoot supervision, and social media communication, Saad Azar El Khaïter demonstrated rigorous leadership in service of a collective project.

This initiative aims to raise awareness about environmental protection through art, engaging a multidisciplinary team of high school students in all phases of creation. The structured collaborative work, rigorous organization, effective partnerships, and civic engagement reflect a strong ability to unite diverse talents around a universal message. The project's critical and popular success highlights the power of music as a driver of social and environmental impact, led by motivated and responsible youth..



4.5. Tunisia 88 at Lycée Teboulba: Eclipse – TUNISIA

The students of Tunisia 88 at Lycée Teboulba created 'Eclipse,' a musical project completed in 2025, which became much more than an artistic endeavor – it was a transformative journey of teamwork, resilience, and creativity. 'Eclipse' stands out for its artistic harmony: the symbolic theme of the impossible love between the sun and the moon, the haunting maqam kurdī evoking nostalgia and separation, and the visuals that bring the story to life. Each member left a personal mark on the project, making it not only a musical work but also a human creation full of authenticity and emotion.



The team emphasizes that their strength lies in unity and passion, which allowed them to turn a dream into reality. In the future, they intend to continue using music as a tool to promote participatory governance, inclusion, and peace, convinced of its power to raise awareness and inspire positive change in society.

5. JOURNALISTS AND COMMUNICATORS

5.1. Press Article

Oumar BA, keurmassaractu.com - SENEGAL

Oumar Ba is an economic journalist specializing in natural resources and the environment. His article, 'In Dakar, Access to Drinking Water Has Strengthened Women's Empowerment,' published in March 2025 on Keur Massar Actu, analyzes the impact of public investments in water supply on the living conditions of women in the Dakar region.

The article highlights how improved access to drinking water has reduced the burden of domestic tasks, freeing up time for income-generating activities and children's education. This report illustrates a solutions-oriented approach to journalism by showing how public policy can concretely enhance women's empowerment and contribute to social justice.

The objective was to raise awareness among policymakers about the positive effects of universal access to water and to encourage other African countries to invest in this vital sector.



Gaustin DIATTA, Le Soleil - SENEGAL

Gaustin Diatta is a reporter for the national daily Le Soleil, with a strong interest in governance, social justice, and climate change issues. His article, 'Floods, Soil Salinization, Coastal Erosion, Isolation: The Blues of the Inhabitants of Lower Casamance Islands,' published in April 2025, describes the vulnerability of the residents of the islands in the Ziguinchor region, who face major environmental challenges such as erosion, rising waters, isolation, and difficulties in accessing essential services.

Through this report, he seeks to raise public awareness and call on authorities to urgently improve the living conditions of island communities.



By adopting a development journalism approach, Gaustin Diatta also highlights local resilience best practices and showcases the courage of populations who struggle daily against the impacts of climate change.

Mawutondji Gérard GODONOU, RFI Mondoblog, Sô-Ava - BENIN

Mawutondji Gérard Godonou is a web journalist and local development consultant. His article, 'Sô-Ava: An Unprecedented Telethon to Finance the Commune's Development Projects,' published in June 2022 on RFI Mondoblog, reports on an original initiative by the commune of Sô-Ava, located on the shores of Lake Nokoué in Benin. Faced with a low level of local resource mobilization, the local authorities, with the support of the mayor, young volunteers, and the diaspora, launched a citizen telethon called "Ló ze to d'eme". The event raised over 44 million CFA francs in three months, intended for the construction of a multipurpose hall serving the community. The report highlights best practices such as inclusive and participatory mobilization, transparency in fund management, close communication with the community, and the strengthening of social cohesion. This innovative experience clearly demonstrates how local authorities can invent new participatory and solidarity-based mechanisms to drive their own development.



5.2. TV Documentary

Abdou Karim Mbacké NDIAYE, Dakaractu - SENEGAL

Abdou Karim Mbacké Ndiaye is a photojournalist at Dakaractu. His report, 'Ngor: Night Dive into the Hell of Drugs and Prostitution – the Yellow Vests Discover...,' broadcast in June 2025, highlights the rise of insecurity, juvenile delinquency, drug use, and prostitution in public and symbolic spaces, notably the beach and places of worship. Alarmed by these issues, a youth collective called Ngor Debout initiated volunteer night patrols, with moral support from the village chief and traditional authorities. The report documents this courageous civic initiative, emphasizing the importance of community mobilization and emerging local leadership in addressing urgent social challenges. This documentary was produced independently and aims to raise public awareness, call on authorities to act, and promote youth-led participatory governance..



Abdoulaye TOUNKARA, Emerging Africa – MALI

Abdoulaye Tounkara has been a communications officer at the Regional Council of Sikasso since 2018. His documentary work, ‘Golden Book of the Regional Council of Sikasso (2010-2020),’ published in November 2021 in *Afrique émergente* magazine, recounts a decade marked by the consolidation of decentralization and the implementation of the Regional Strategic Development Plan toward 2035.

The document consolidates achievements in participatory governance, economic development, transparency, and partnerships with donors, while serving as a valuable institutional memory for future generations. Designed as a communication and advocacy tool, this book highlights local best practices, transparency in public management, and citizen involvement in strategic decision-making. The aim was to showcase the collective efforts of the Sikasso region, enhance institutional visibility, and inspire other local authorities. This notable achievement was not without technical, logistical, institutional, and human challenges.



Aboudou Wahabou Touraré ABOUBAKARI, SU TII DERA FM Radio of Nikki – BENIN

Aboudou Wahabou Touraré Aboubakari is the Editor-in-Chief of Radio SU TII DERA FM in Nikki, Benin. His radio report, ‘Participatory Budget: What if We Listened to the Youth and Children of Africa?,’ broadcast in July 2025, focuses on integrating the concerns of young people and children into local public policies.

Inspired by the MASTA on participatory budgeting organized by the UCLG Africa, it highlights best practices developed in Benin, such as youth parliaments and municipal councils for children, as well as initiatives in Senegal like youth centers, structured employment programs, and child protection strategies. The report underscores the importance of allocating budget lines specifically for this group, considered the next generation, to promote inclusive and sustainable development. The objective is to raise awareness among policymakers about the need to invest more in youth and children and to encourage more participatory local policies.



6. ACADEMICS – RESEARCHERS

6.1 PhD Candidates

FERNANDO LIGUE ENGAMBA, University of Ngaoundéré – CAMEROON

Fernando LIGUE ENGAMBA is a Cameroonian PhD candidate in social and political sciences. His thesis, titled “Traditional Power and the Notion of ‘Democracy’ in Eastern Cameroon: Rethinking the Common Interest of Social Groups through the Lens of Endogenous Practice Dynamics”, aims to analyze the interactions between traditional power structures and modern democratic concepts. By confronting the Western vision of democracy with African cultural specificities, his research highlights how endogenous governance practices can redefine the common interest of social groups and contribute to contextualized political and social development, while enriching academic reflections on vernacular African political thought. The historico-anthropological approach relies on semi-structured interviews with traditional authorities, ethnographic surveys, thematic analysis, and sources covering pre-colonial, colonial, and contemporary periods. Despite social and cultural resistance, data access challenges, and security instabilities, the researcher favors a participatory approach, respectful of local norms, supported by ethical training, logistical flexibility, and community partnerships.



FANOINA NY RIANA RAZAFINDRAKOTO, University of Madagascar

Fanoina Ny Riana RAZAFINDRAKOTO is a Malagasy PhD candidate whose thesis focuses on “Participatory Democracy and Scientific Diplomacy: Towards Inclusive Governance of Medicinal Biodiversity in Madagascar”. This work highlights Madagascar’s endemic plant mega-diversity (80% endemism), threatened by climate change, deforestation, and overexploitation, and proposes inclusive governance to enhance medicinal plants by integrating traditional knowledge, scientific research, and social justice. It aims to develop a transparent public policy, supported by scientific diplomacy and the Nagoya Protocol, for health sovereignty and a sustainable phytopharmaceutical chain, making Madagascar a model of biodiversity-solidarity alliance. The qualitative and strategic methodology combines document analysis, semi-structured interviews with key actors (researchers, traditional practitioners, ministries, NGOs, local communities), case studies, and systemic mapping of issues, with prospective development scenarios and policy recommendations. Facing constraints such as poor intersectoral coordination, weak intellectual property frameworks, biopiracy, and stakeholder fragmentation,



she prioritizes innovative approaches including local labeling, technology transfer platforms, territorial innovation hubs, and multi-stakeholder dialogue based on scientific diplomacy.

BENILDE ADELAIDE MATSINHE SAMBO, University of Porto – PORTUGAL / MOZAMBIQUE

Benilde Adelaide Matsinhe Sambo is a Mozambican PhD candidate. Her thesis, “Discourses, Narratives, and (In)Visibilities of Women in the Context of Democratization in Mozambique (1960-1983)”, studies the participation and representation of women—particularly the figure of Joana Simeão—in Mozambique’s decolonization and democratization processes. She examines how colonial and democratic discourses intersected with gender issues and how initiatives for women’s rights sought to challenge the patriarchal order. Her approach combines socio-semiotics, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology, using bibliographic research, descriptive analysis, case studies, and literature review, with particular attention to orality and oral sources. Faced with the prevalence of nationalist narratives, cultural resistance, and a lack of studies on Lusophone popular cultures, she adopts a participatory, contextualized approach, involving local actors and respecting cultural norms to anchor her research in community realities.



6.2. Researchers

ISSA ISSOUFOU, André Salifou University, Department of Sociology-Anthropology – NIGER

Issa Issoufou is a Nigerien researcher engaged in analyzing local development dynamics. His article, “Local Development Challenges in the Light of Participatory Democracy in the Rural Commune of Tirmini (Zinder-Niger)”, explores local development issues in the rural commune of Tirmini (Zinder, Niger) through a qualitative approach based on interviews with 73 organized actors and 102,795 residents across 60 villages. The study reveals that top-down strategies from decision-makers obscure the understanding of local development. Local actors, however, identify major issues: rotational migration disrupting family structures, climate change inducing social transformations, and the emergence of female begging as a survival strategy. The article aims to equip local managers to better respond to the real needs of populations. Despite the post-crisis political context of July 26, 2023, administrative continuity offers an opportunity to strengthen participatory democracy.



Mhamed LKAIHAL, PhD in Public Law and Political Science, Founder of African Institute of Smart Governance – MOROCCO

Mhamed Lkaihal is a Moroccan researcher with a PhD in public law and political science from Mohammed V University. His work, “Towards Innovation in Information Systems for the Valorization of Moroccan Local Authorities’ Assets”, proposes an innovative Heritage Information System (SIS) model for Moroccan local authorities, aimed at enhancing their assets and strengthening local governance. He demonstrates that current systems (Asset Management System [SGP] and Accounting Information System [SIC]) are fragmented, opaque, and poorly suited to transparency and performance requirements. Using Lüder’s contingency theory and New Public Management principles, he conceptualizes an integrated SIS, standardized according to IPSAS standards, capable of accurately reflecting local public action. The study identifies political-administrative obstacles as the main barriers to innovation, while Local Development Companies (SDL) provide an apolitical managerial lever. The work advocates for sincere, consolidated heritage governance, enabling territorial actors to better manage programs and exercise democratic oversight.



Laouali brah MALAM MAMAN, Abdou Moumouni University Niamey – NIGER

Laouali Brah Malam Maman is a Nigerien researcher with a multidisciplinary profile in applied sociology, governance, regional integration, and strategic local planning. His article, “Decentralization and Local Governance in Niger: Weaknesses in Establishing Sustainable Local Development”, analyzes the limits of the decentralization process in Niger, initiated in the early 2000s. Despite ambitions for administrative proximity and citizen participation, results remain mixed. Based on interviews and documentary analysis, the study highlights structural weaknesses: low capacity of local authorities, inadequate training for elected officials, incomplete transfer of competences, and dominance of political agendas. It also examines the effects of insecurity, poverty, and dependency on external aid. The author proposes recommendations for more functional local governance: institutional strengthening, local taxation, citizen participation, and improved coordination. The goal is to make decentralization a lever for sustainable social and democratic transformation..



III. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The scientific committee is composed of personalities from civil society, academia, media, development partners, and elected representatives’ associations from Africa and around the

world, working in governance and local development. This committee conducts technical analysis of applications and presents its conclusions to the Steering Committee. It also drafts the memorandum to be submitted to the COPIL for validation. The committee members are:

1.	Mrs. Anjara MANANTSARA (President)	Madagascar
2.	Mr. Joseph ANICET NKE	Cameroon
3.	Mr. Abdoulaye CISSE	Senegal
4.	Pr Madiagne DIALLO	Senegal
5.	Mr. Mamadou DIOUF	Senegal
6.	Mrs. Tatiana ETOA	Cameroon
7.	Mr. Kimball GALLAGHER	United States
8.	Mrs. Sabiha HOMRI	Tunisia
9.	Mr. Victor JAFAR DOS REIS	Mozambique
10.	Dr. Saide JAMAL	Mozambique
11.	Mrs. Zukiswa KOTA	South Africa
12.	Dr. François MENGUELE	Togo
13.	Dr. Moustapha NDIAYE	Senegal
14.	Dr. Siddiq NONDICHAO	Egypt
15.	Mrs. Rahmatouca SOW	Morocco
16.	Dr. Ousseynou TOURE	Senegal
17.	Mrs. Gaokgakala Sobatha-Lelatheg	Ethiopia
18.	Dr. Najat ZARROUK	Morocco
19.	Mr. Jean Jacques YAPO	Ivory Coast

IV. STEERING COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for:

- i) providing political guidance,
- ii) offering advisory support to the Scientific Committee,
- iii) announcing the final results following the selection process,
- iv) finalizing the memorandum containing recommendations addressed to the ecosystem of actors in decentralization, governance, and local development.

It is composed of:

- ▶ **Minister of Urban Planning, Local Authorities, and Territorial Development of Senegal** (Represent CTS n°8/UA) - PRESIDENT
- ▶ **Mr. Mamadou Oury DIALLO**, President of IODP Africa
- ▶ **Mrs. Khadija Mahécor DIOUF**, Co-President of IODP Africa
- ▶ **Mr. Issaka Garba ABDOU**, African Union Commission
- ▶ **Mr. Jean Pierre Elong MBASSI**, Secretary-General of UCLG Africa
- ▶ **Dr. Greg MUNRO**, Director Cities Alliance
- ▶ **Mrs. Anjara MANANTSARA**, President of the Scientific Committee
- ▶ **Mr. Bachir KANOUE**, Secretary-General of IODP Africa



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