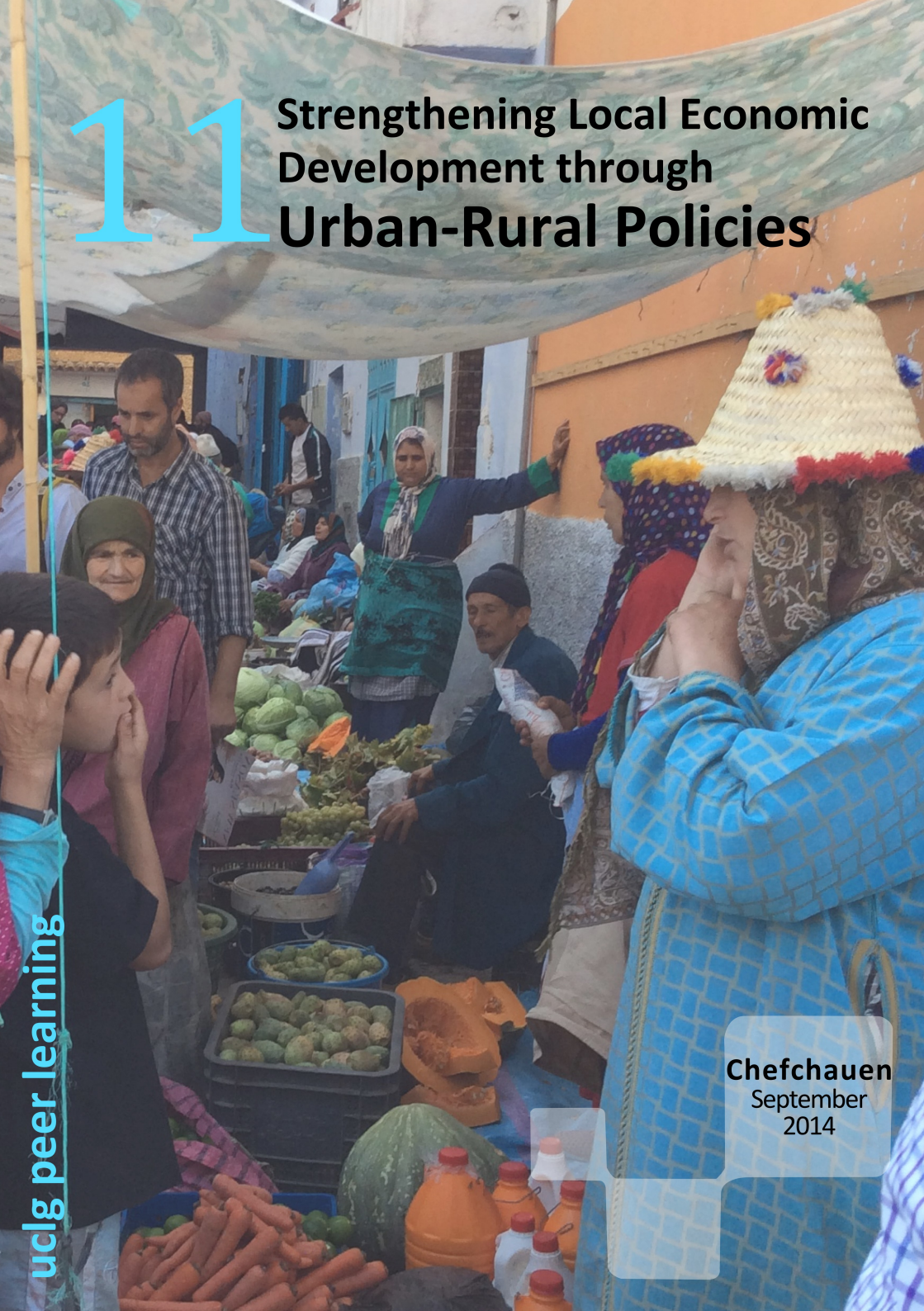


# 11

## Strengthening Local Economic Development through Urban-Rural Policies





## Foreword



The UCLG Working Group on Intermediary Cities was created following a series of meetings held between 2013 and 2014 – the learning event in Kwadukuza, South Africa, the Lleida International Forum on Intermediary Cities (June 2013, Spain), the 4th UCLG Congress (October 2013, Rabat), the 2014 World Urban Forum and the 3rd International Forum of the Medinas (April 2014, Tangiers) – and in continuity with the Urban Strategic Planning Committee's response to the growing need to create spaces for discussion and learning. It has positioned intermediary cities on the global agenda.

The city of Chefchaouen assumed the leadership of the Working Group upon its launch in April, seeking to encourage more intermediary cities in all regions to share policies, challenges and strategies.

For our City Council, assuming the leadership of the working group is a unique opportunity to reflect on issues shared with other cities with similar characteristics, in order to improve our strategies, as well as to find solutions that are adapted to our needs, potential and obstacles.

Our city is the capital of the province Chefchaouen. We have a population of approximately 50,000 inhabitants. With a high percentage of our population being of rural origin and a low socio-economic status, our city faces the great challenge of generating employment opportunities for all productive population groups, in particular young people and women.

The improvement of the well-being of our fellow citizens lies in the consolidation of a policy on sustainable local economic development, which would promote employment opportunities, and also gradually help to regularize the informal economy strongly rooted in our region. It is also important to foster the creation of small- and medium-sized businesses that provide added value to the responsible use of resources.

We are aware that the potential of our city is directly linked to the value of our cultural and natural heritage, concentrated in the medina (old centre) and the traditional rural landscapes. In 2010, as recognition of this value, UNESCO acknowledged Chefchaouen as an emblematic community in terms of the Mediterranean diet. At the same time, the Reserve for the Intercontinental Biosphere of the Mediterranean was created, including the national natural parks of Talassemtant and Bouchachem.

In this context, our town had the great honour to act as the host of a UCLG learning event. The support of UCLG, UCLG Africa, ILO and FAMSI made possible a rich and fruitful exchange between mayors and municipal leaders from eleven countries in the Mediterranean and West Africa, as well as representatives of regional and national administrations.

We hope that the outcomes and ideas gathered in this publication will motivate our network of intermediary cities to move forward together in the definition of strategies and policies that allow local governments to occupy the position they deserve in the development of their territories, as well as mobilize more cities in all regions.



## PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

FMDV, ILO, UCLG, UCLG Africa, CIMES, CEPES,  
FAMSI, University of Abdelmalek

## PARTICIPATING REGIONS and CITIES

**Tanger-Tetouan Regional Council**, Morocco

**Mopti Regional Council**, Mali

**Diputación de Jaén**, Spain

**Chefchaouen**, Morocco

**Tetouan**, Morocco

**Sousse**, Tunisia

**Tripoli**, Lebanon

**Djerba**, Tunisia

**Kindi**, Burkina Faso

**Odienné**, Côte d'Ivoire

**Sikasso**, Mali

**Timbuktu**, Mali

**Saint Louis**, Senegal

**Kaolack**, Senegal

**Guidan-Roundji**, Niger

**Djougou**, Benin

**Ndali**, Benin

**Boghé**, Mauritanie

**Aneho**, Togo

**Las Cabezas de San Juan**, Spain



## Overview of contents

This publication captures the main highlights, conclusions and learning outcomes of the event “Urban-Rural Policies for Local Economic Development: South-South and triangular cooperation”, held in the city of Chefchaouen, Morocco, from 24 to 27 September 2014.

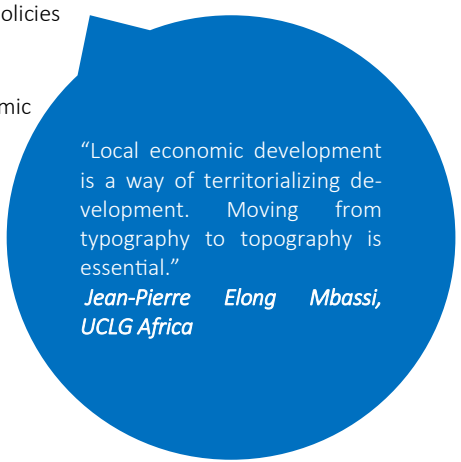
The event was jointly organized by the city of Chefchaouen, UCLG Africa, the two UCLG Working Groups on Intermediary Cities and Local Economic Development and FAMSÍ (the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity); and counted on the technical and financial support of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The three-day event attracted 40 participants from the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean as well from West Africa, and included local elected officials, practitioners, councillors, civil society representatives, NGOs, local entrepreneurs and representatives of local development agencies and chambers of commerce.

The exchange of practices between cities from Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Spain, Niger, Benin, Mali, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Mauritania and Burkina Faso was an important milestone for the two UCLG Working Groups, as well as for the UCLG South-South exchange initiative. It succeeded in widening recognition on the issues of local economic development, decent work and the importance of intermediary cities in the global agenda; notably within the framework of the Post-2015 agenda, and towards the 3rd Forum on Local Economic Development and Habitat III in 2016.

The following topics were explored and are summarized in this publication:

1. Introduction
2. Context
3. The challenges of urbanization in urban-rural policies
4. The case of Chefchaouen
5. Rural-urban territories and sustainable economic development
6. Initiatives and solutions for decent work
7. South-South and triangular cooperation and recommendations
8. Conclusions, next steps and final declaration



“Local economic development is a way of territorializing development. Moving from typography to topography is essential.”

*Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi,*  
UCLG Africa

# 01 INTRODUCTION



Photo: Habib Noui ©

The UCLG Working Groups on Intermediary Cities and Local Economic Development aim to contribute to the development of initiatives for collaboration and cooperation between local governments and associations in order to enrich the debate within UCLG and to participate in the elaboration and implementation of policies. The development approach adopted by both Working Groups implies a territorial focus, based on endogenous resources and obeying environmental sustainability criteria. This view of local development must be championed through public participation and must involve an integrated vision of the territory.

For UCLG, the Working Group on Local Economic Development and a strong network of intermediary cities, are fundamental elements to:

- Address the key issues of today; especially by exploring new views gained through networking.
- Share experiences, tools and strategies for application in local development.
- Debate the fundamental components of local development strategies.
- Reflect on the need to articulate responses adapted to the global context, based on local realities.
- Recognize and share opportunities, innovative experiences and challenges by learning together from the successes and mistakes of the past to agree on frameworks for common action.

South-South and triangular cooperation serves to understand and develop policies towards urban planning, and creates sounding boards for initiatives. As highlighted during the last learning event organized in Maputo, Mozambique, the exchanges between cities may also focus on the relationship between the municipality and the informal economy sector. This approach characterises the partnership between the ILO and UCLG.

Under the leadership of Mr Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, the meeting underlined the importance of urban policies oriented towards economic and social development that seek to address the needs and potential of rural areas. Local elected officials recognized that the strategic urban and territorial planning of intermediary cities requires taking into account relationships between rural and urban spaces, as well as bringing together all development actors, in particular businesses, social partners, citizens and civil society. The conclusions of the meeting were brought together in the key outcome document, the Chefchaouen Declaration.



“Combining a strategy for intermediary cities and local economic development is the only way to safeguard the economy of proximity and its jobs through the local economy.”

*Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of  
Chefchaouen, Chair of the UCLG  
Working Group on Intermediary Cities*

Chefchaouen’s urban-rural development approach enabled participants to understand how the management of public (food) market systems according to the food cycle, which entails production, distribution and consumption, works in practice. Participants also noted that the municipality of Chefchaouen’s Local Development Agency represented one of the biggest assets for the dynamization of the city’s economic and social fabric. It is the first public agency of its type to be developed in Morocco, and was supported by FAMSİ.

Future activities were envisaged and discussed, and the event also collected constructive feedback on the UCLG concept papers on Intermediary Cities and Economic and Social Development. Those inputs will be taken up in the Post-2015 global agenda and Habitat III processes.





## 02 Context

To compare the challenges of cities and towns in North Africa, the Mediterranean and West Africa, it is important to consider their **historical, political and economic backgrounds**.

### Early influences

From a historical point of view, the cities involved in the exchange have a strong common historical and cultural background; being submitted to the same kind of architectural, economic and political influences since the Phoenician times.

**During the middle-age period**, Morocco and Al-Andalus were, at times, part of the same kingdom, which ranged from Toledo to Timbuktu. This opened up a large perspective on business in terms of geography, cultural and religious exchanges, and human mobility; and was actually the first ever globalization phase observed in the world, focused around the Mediterranean Sea. With the domination of the Arab language, their rules, norms, ways of living in the city, and fiscal policies, were applied in this region.

This created a strong historical link, background and identity among the North African cities, and those in the deep south of Europe, Spain in particular. Today, this proximity is still felt around the Mediterranean Sea and is manifest in cultural expressions.

This “city culture” was also transmitted through the nomads of Mauritania and Mali to West African cities, which were more traditional and less dense, based on a tribal structure, kingdoms and the exchanges between them. Timbuktu was the social, economic and political centre.

### Colonization

Later, **between the end of the 19th and 20th century**, colonialism influenced cities through its key objective: exploring resources and installing an economy based on the political management of these resources. Especially in the French-influenced area, expanding from North to West Africa, this was achieved through installing a specific type of management in the territories and “resource-rich areas” that would allow them to “bring resources back to the homeland”. This gave meaning to the city in terms of a **point of transit**. The territorial management was also focused on generating market places. This colonial influence was thus characterized by:

- **The construction of important infrastructure like ports, railways and airports**, which created cities that continued to grow with time, or juxtaposed French urbanism next to the medinas, e.g. in North African cities.
- **A centralized system to manage political power**, following the centralized systems already in place to manage fiscal and spatial power.



- **Urban planning based on the need to make the transit system sustainable**, through the creation of:
  - Administration buildings and areas;
  - Residential areas for foreigners, and others for the local people; and
  - Education facilities, water and sanitation, and leisure facilities, which were built for the military communities and local people that were part of or important for the system.

## Recent political and social change

Despite the decentralization processes which began in the second half of the 20th century in many countries, their political and administrative heritage remains.

During the 20th and 21st century, Mediterranean cities have been exposed to a broad diversity of economic interest and trade, including tourism, cultural and educational exchanges, and migration (Southern Mediterranean communities to Europe). Urbanization occurred much faster in this region than in West Africa. Therefore, **the two regions have similar backgrounds, but also many differences.**

**The Arab Spring** that has been spreading over the southern shore of the Mediterranean since 2011 is the manifestation of people's discontent with the political systems in force. Social and political identities are changing. Young people, unemployment, local power, identities and freedom of expression are determining factors of the new situation observed in the Mediterranean region as a whole.

In West Africa, however, mentalities are still linked to “political life” and “economic life” as before: i.e. the ideal that the State is there for the people and the central government takes decisions for the cities – “**l'Etat providence**” as it is called in French. It restricts people's pro-activity and limits local economic development initiatives. In contrast to France, the competences of the local authorities are very limited, often reduced to implementing administrative procedures like birth certification or population statistics. As they have limited competence in land administration, the spatial pattern of West African cities remains urban sprawl, with little infrastructure and no transport, and “no reason to get compact”.

In this sense, the **biggest gap between West Africa and North Africa is expression and exposure.** The historical background in the Mediterranean has shown that the culture of the start-up, people seeking independence, better conditions and improvement where it is needed has always been present, as proved by the Arab Spring.

Specifically, the Arab Spring allowed for a shift in power in Tunisia. This transition was viewed with optimism, and is supported by a new constitution. It has also seen success in Morocco, generating significant changes in social and political points of view and a new constitution for the country. This has had an impact on the acceleration of the 'Advanced Regionalization

Process', bringing decisions on finances and the economy back to regional level.

In West Africa, on the other hand, the political and economic elites are an obstacle for sharing power, wealth and land, which provides additional challenges to managing urbanization.

### Current challenges

Countries in this region are facing a difficult recovery from the crisis implying a weak growth. It results in a low employment rate. It particularly affects women employment which is very low in international comparison but also the youth. Despite the important progress made in education, with literacy rates and university degrees increasing constantly, qualified education is not any longer a way out of poverty.

In the region, vulnerable employment is low when Social protection is developed. However, informal jobs are increasing everywhere. It is the case for example in Northern Africa, where 52.2% of the total employment has been informal between 2010 and 2014. This situation underlines the need to strengthen job creation, facilitate job formalization and to facilitate access to social protection, especially in remote areas. Another perspective of evolution would be to re-orientate trainings according to the needs of the market so the skilled workforce

The crisis around the **Ebola epidemic** is worsening the situation further, as it impacts trade, connectivity and economic clusters between cities and countries. An economic impact assessment by the World Bank group in October 2014 estimates losses for West Africa could reach 32 billion dollars by 2015. As of 1 December in Guinea, Liberia and the Ivory Coast alone – countries that were experiencing a growth in GDP before – losses already amounted to more than 3 billion U.S. dollars.

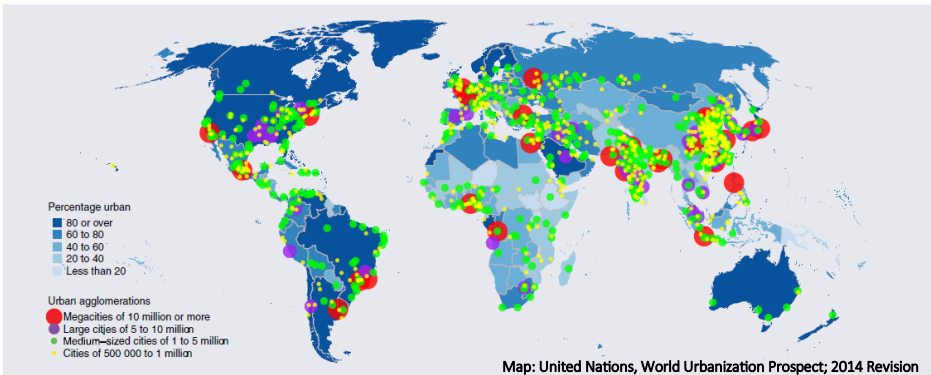
### Looking ahead

Cities are at the heart of a dynamic that should encourage national decision makers to accelerate decentralization. Cities in these regions are joining UCLG and working towards Habitat III, which will on human liveability in cities. The following key elements remain important for both regions to consider in tackling the challenges ahead:

- Empowerment and accountability.
- Education and raising awareness among local elected officials.
- The willingness of national political leaders to see the regional and local elected authorities as partners for sustainable development, including for economic strategies.
- A global political positioning to express the potential of the cities and citizens to get involved in the participatory process of decision-making and local economic development.
- National, regional and local employment strategies that redirect benefits to the regions.

# 03 The challenges of urbanization in urban-rural policies

Percentage urban and location of urban agglomerations with at least 500,000 inhabitants, 2014



Global urban population growth is propelled by the growth of cities of all sizes

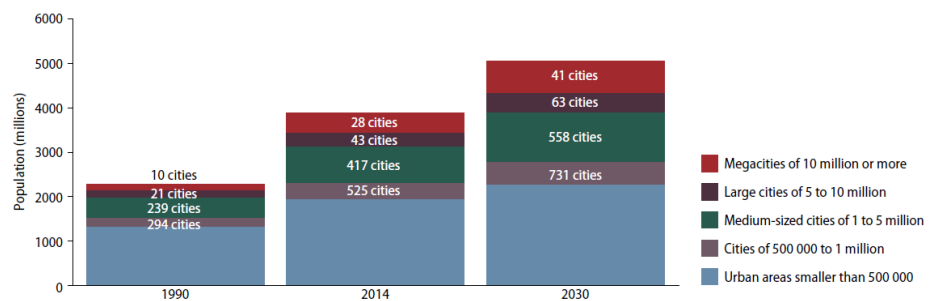


Figure 1: United Nations, World Urbanization Prospect; 2014 Revision

Population distribution by city size varies across major areas in 2014

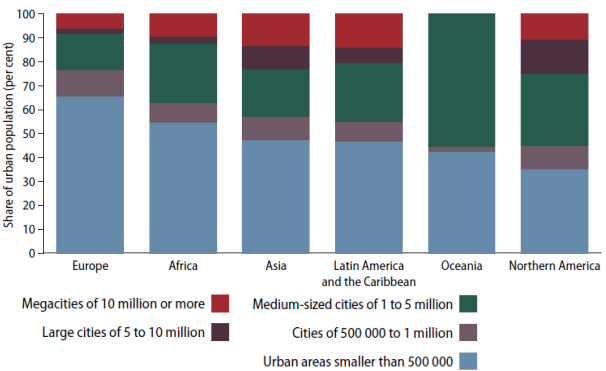


Figure 2: United Nations, World Urbanization Prospect; 2014 Revision

*Bah Guera Chabi, Mayor of Ndali*, reported that his city is growing at 3 to 4% per year, and he is mainly informing the Government on new communities to be considered in the national plan.

“Megacities” are notable for their size and concentration of economic activities. In 1990 there were 10 cities with more than 10 million inhabitants (figure 1), but these so-called “megacities” were home to only 153 million people; representing less than 7% of the global urban population. Today, the number of megacities has nearly tripled to 28, and the population they contain has grown to 453 million, but this still only represents 12% of the world’s entire urban population. Consequently, **61% of the world’s urban population lives in intermediary cities**. Yet, the growing gap between intermediary cities and large metropolitan areas is evident.

**In the Mediterranean and West Africa**, intermediary cities are growing exponentially. The 10 cities that participated in the event in Chefchaouen indicated annual growth rates of 4 to 5%. However, some cities and their leaders see themselves as only slowly becoming “intermediary”. Despite having populations of up to 100,000, their ability to intermediate between the rural and urban territories, for example through urban planning, service management and motivating economic growth, is very limited.

*Mayor of Odienne:* “In my city, I am only in charge of health services. I mainly provide birth and death certificates, which allows me to observe urbanization and densification, but not to intervene or influence it.”

### West African and Mediterranean cities face similar challenges

Although not at the same scale and or within the same time frame, cities from West Africa and the Mediterranean face the same problems: rapid growth, high youth population, unemployment, difficulties in controlling and managing urbanization, and limited fiscal resources and decentralized powers. Many cities also have limited or no competences in terms of land use planning.

*The Mayor of Djerba* reported a sequence of plans that were approved in the last decade, which allow for the expansion of the city with housing for 2,600 inhabitants, as well as large touristic areas. However, the employment created in this construction boom falls short for the local population.

In the Mediterranean, cities plan for growth, although pressure from the private sector is high and they often fall short in effective protection of the environment or land. In Andalusia, for example, the real estate boom took root in cities that lacked sustainable planning. It has impacted natural resources, in particular on the coast, but also in suburban areas. The social impact was only revealed recently, with citizens unable to pay their mortgages and falling into poverty.

Urbanization was described as a problem by some local leaders, who reported the loss of fertile and agricultural land. Yet, it was also acknowledged that

urbanization is a consequence of migration; a reality in Africa's development that must be accepted. People move for new opportunities, to escape the poverty cycles of large rural populations and receive services. In reality, it is almost impossible for local leaders not to welcome urbanization, since it comes with the creation of jobs, income shifts and economic booms.

### Recognizing the potential of the intermediary level

Intermediary Cities are centres of social, economic and cultural interaction and are considered as the economic heart of larger rural areas. They provide access to infrastructures and basic services such as health care and education to urban and rural areas. They act as (inter) mediators and are places "in between" local and global markets. These cities are also points of transition; a first stop for a population that is looking for jobs and better income.

Intermediary Cities also allow for close connection to communities and for efficient decision-making thanks to their potential of proximity, unique to the intermediate city. It helps promoting a more just planning process as the scope and scale is more easily encompassed than in big cities. The most basic right of access to common space and opportunities, as well as urban services - the right to know, understand and review the plan and/or city programme - is more achievable at intermediary cities' scales. The possibility for non-motorized transport can be promoted and foreseen. Compactness and proximity are spatial factors that have a positive impact and will result in higher quality of life.

*Thomas Baguemzane,  
Mayor of Kindi:*

*"Urbanization entails many problems: we destroy valuable land, the farmers capital."*

Intermediary cities are the interaction point between urban and rural, and offer opportunities to expand access to services, such as health care and education, for large numbers of people in an economically efficient manner. As the territory and the social, economic and cultural fabric is known, leaders can build close connections with communities and involve them in decision-making processes.

### Intermediary cities key to balancing territorial, economic and social development

Promoting the role of intermediate-sized cities can help to address the problems of excessive centralization of economic and administrative functions, while also responding to the challenges of providing urban infrastructure and basic social services for the urban poor.

*Nassar Fakhilanjri,  
Chamber of Commerce,  
Chefchaouen: Do we  
take into account the  
importance of planning  
for the economy?*

In order to do so, sustainable urbanization requires that cities generate better income and employment opportunities; expand the necessary infrastructure for water and sanitation, energy, transportation, information and communications; ensure equal access to services; reduce poverty; and pre-



serve the natural assets within the city and surrounding areas. However, during the workshop, local leaders and UCLG Africa identified the fact that there is a “lack of consciousness” in the sense that intermediary cities in the region are not connecting with each other, centres and peripheries. Furthermore, they lack resources and recognition from regional and national levels.

### The need for strategic planning and land use policies

As in other contexts, in Morocco, many cities have not yet met the demands of the existing population in terms of services, but find themselves confronted with the needs of the new population too. They have to be supported in addressing service demands upfront and controlling urbanization, in particular for the urban poor. As identified by many participants from West Africa and the southern shore of the Mediterranean, the urbanization process is not always controlled. Local officials mentioned two side effects:

- Urban expansion uses rural land and therefore destroys rural activities and jobs
- Urbanization attracts the rural population without guaranteeing decent work but increasing housing demands

History has shown that policies that aim to restrict rural-urban migration are ineffective at forestalling city growth, and can even produce economic, social and environmental problems. In recent years, a growing number of countries have been favouring other strategies for rural and urban development, such as allocating land rights, managing land use, land redistribution, creating regional development zones, and promoting economic diversification and competitiveness in rural areas through the mobilization of investments and the improvement of rural livelihoods.

These land policies can help to regulate and avoid the accelerated consumption of fertile and valuable plots, and are thus able to control city growth in time if managed properly in conjunction with the demands of urbanization. However, two questions remain to be explored:

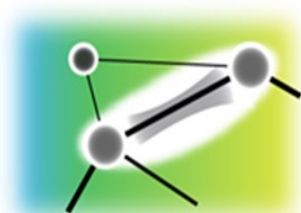
- Can we change land value in view of the future need for green and fertile areas that nurture the population and environment?
- How can environmental and culturally sensitive land be protected?

*Mr Rachid Amerniss from the urban agency of the Tetouan Region emphasized the need to control urbanization and respond to the high housing demand in intermediary cities (a total of 30,000 units for the next 3 years in Tetouan and Chaouen alone).*

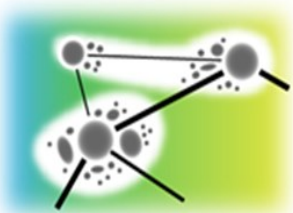
### Enhancing the potential of suburban areas as a necessary focus for sustainable growth

The concept of suburban areas was introduced during the session. A suburban area is the fringe between central areas – usually combining traditionally

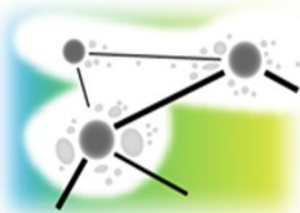
urban areas of cities and towns with the more rural, open hinterland – that follow a logic of agro-productivity. These are often areas in change and transformation, mostly from rural to urban use, and are usually highly productive. Since they often have access to water, they may be used as gardens and/or small-scale agriculture plots, and are increasingly foreseen for urban expansion, which requires urban services (water, streets, electricity, waste, transport, waste water etc.). Suburban areas also increase land values, which, if urbanization is planned well, can be used to finance growth and public infrastructure.



Growth of urban corridors



Urban sprawl and segregation of functions



Loss of green and agricultural land

The urban world has not seen the rural world, not only financially. It is important for us to foster networking, inter-municipal and intergovernmental cooperation.

Ahmed Khalid Benomar, representative of the Municipal Promotion and development Northern Province Agency—APDN, emphasized the need to address rural and environmental protection hand-in-hand with urban expansion, and to foster inter-municipal co-operation. “Planning has been a task limited to large cities, and the agency will support planning in all municipalities. To better integrate rural activities, jobs and work in the city, local leaders need to strengthen the urban-rural dialogue. They need to position the intermediate city within its social, economic and cultural environment.”

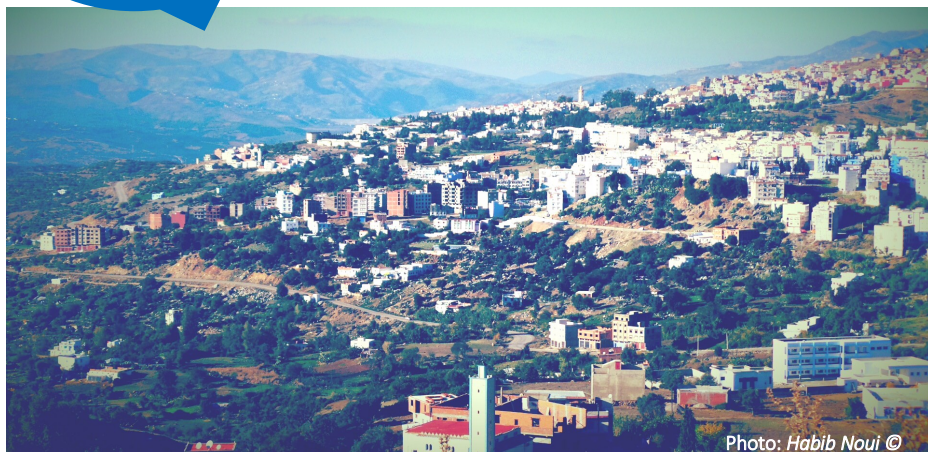


Photo: Habib Noui ©

The loss of green and agricultural land is also visible in cities like Chefchaouen, which has a developed medina but poorly-defined land use in peripheral areas.

## 04 The case of Chefchaouen



Today we are in a global economy in which small scale economies can gain weight by generating a critical mass. This small-scale economy is the alternative to drawing a different future for our planet.

### General lines of action: public policies based on dialogue between actors

The city of Chefchaouen developed several lines of action, to which projects and public policies are inscribed. All lines of action are built upon a process of participation, a dialogue that enables the adaptation of projects and policies to meet the needs of the population. In this sense, Chefchaouen takes advantage of its scale, in terms of its size and thus proximity to citizens. The different lines of action are:

**Innovation based on culture:** Innovation allows a synergy between local culture, public policies and instruments. This is possible thanks to the creativity of the population and the confidence of the local government in their human resources and civil society.

**Participation in the decision-making process:** By involving the population in decision-making processes, Chefchaouen facilitates the integration of the needs and concerns of the population within planning processes and local development projects. It can also be an instrument to ensure social cohesion.

**Rural-urban dialogue:** The focus of the interaction is on intermediation as a strategy, with two questions in mind:

- How can the specific urban culture of Chefchaouen become a driver for a new rural aesthetic, creating new jobs?
- Can the rural areas help in leading the urban areas towards a more sustainable, green development?

**South-South-North cooperation:** The positive tendency of Chefchaouen to be active in the areas of international cooperation (bilateral, multilateral and decentralized) has enabled the City Council to lead some South-South (and triangular) cooperation initiatives with countries in West Africa. Up to now, the focus of the cooperation projects was on good governance, however, in previous years, local economic development and the environmental and energy efficiency sectors have become more interesting.

With respect to **local economic development**, new perspectives have been included in the strategic lines of action of the City Council. Some of these are:

- Cultural and alternative tourism: identification and signposting of routes, tourist information office, agro-tourism strategies, value of the Mediterranean diet, etc.
- Professional opportunities for the vulnerable young population: school workshop projects.
- Support for female cooperatives and small producers.
- SMEs: Centre for the revitalization of productive fabric, business incubators and collaboration.
- Fair trade: Souk Beldi.

### Intermediation to create value in the territory

Local development opportunities require human and economic value. This is accomplished by exploring what already exists, while adding new perspectives for the actors present in the territory, and new working and social cultures. The strategy to add value to the territory in the city of Chefchaouen focuses on the interaction of urban and rural areas as components of an integrated territory. The interaction between rural and urban areas can be found in different spheres:

- The '*souk*' or rural market generates a link between rural and urban areas in an economic, social and spatial sphere.
- The rural residents that migrated into the city are an essential element of the peripheries. This area of the population is at the centre of the mediation between the rural and urban space, at an aesthetic and economic level.
- The transformation of rural to urban areas is also a crucial point of interaction.

### Search for a new balance in the territory: concrete actions based on new criteria

Chefchaouen is a good example to be shared with the African Union of Architects, AUIA. AUIA's definition of sustainability is based on the Leipzig Charter (2007). The **goal is to plan an intelligent and balanced future for our territories by integrating** five different areas. In this way, the territory becomes the sum of values over a geographical/physical space

capable of generating wealth. The five criteria for development are: cultural, social, economic, environmental and human. Chefchaouen is an advocate of this approach to creating a sustainable city, as outlined below:

### Cultural criteria

- **Architectural Charter of the city of Chefchaouen:** Chefchaouen has a strong architectural and aesthetic culture recognized at a national and international level, and protected by a legal document validated by the Ministry of Housing, the Mayor of Chefchaouen and other public stakeholders. This public document indicates aesthetic and architectural guidelines to preserve the city's cultural value.
- **Value of the Mediterranean diet:** The traditional gastronomy of the region responds to existing agriculture and agro-activities, with a close relationship with the mountain area. This project, developed within a cooperation framework, aims to give value to all the products and suppliers of the food chain. To accomplish this goal, the project focuses on the traditional know-how of the population, aiming to save and preserve a culture based on an agricultural tradition. At the same time, this generates economic cohesion in the territory.
- **School workshop project:** As a response to the urbanization of the rural areas of the city and in order to generate new sources of income for the vulnerable population, the school workshop project promotes training like gardening, forging, jewellery making, traditional masonry, traditional painting on wood, etc., as well as self-employment within agro-tourism in and around the city, the marketing of local products in the medina, and other initiatives. This initiative counts on the support of several actors within decentralized cooperation (FAMSI, Cordoba Provincial Council, etc.).

### Social criteria

- **Communication through social networks and ICT initiatives:** This was aimed to create a sense of belonging in the community (Facebook, etc.).
- **Construction of new sports facilities:** New sports facilities were created in the city, especially for young people, in order to create spaces for leisure with a positive meaning.
- **Empowering civil society:** This aims to make new initiatives useful to the whole community. In 2011, the House of Associations (*Casa de las Asociaciones*) was created as a place of work and training that the City Council made available to more than 100 associations. It also hosts dialogue tables where associations can directly interact with the local government to identify needs and shape the sectorial initiatives developed by the City Council. In 2012, the City Council created the Municipal Group for Development and Cooperation (*Grupo Municipal para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación*) to



facilitate consultation with associations active in the field of cooperation and to jointly identify cooperation projects and exchange information about activities.

- **Communal Development Agency:** The creation of such an agency enables the coordination of all the above-mentioned actions. It also creates a more direct channel of communication between citizens and the local government, seeking to build a culture of sustainable democratic participation.

#### Economic criteria

- **Creation of cooperatives and SMEs:** Chefchaouen supports these initiatives in the areas of crafts and services, among others, through the creation of an incubator and collaboration. This project is funded by the Barcelona Provincial Council and managed by Chefchaouen and Vilafranca del Penedès.
- **Rural tourism:** A few years ago the *Promotion and development Northern Province Agency* (APDN) developed an interesting and successful project. The initiative worked on rural tourism in the region of Chefchaouen, linking the sea with the mountains through trails along waterfalls, rivers, etc. using donkeys from the region. At the same time, there was a project for rural cottages along the trails. The integration of this with other projects encouraged the establishment of decent work, based on a project of networks in the urban areas which attempted to structure the rural economy from the city. Recently, the Granada Provincial Council developed a series of studies related to the promotion of agro-tourism, support for cooperatives on the peripheries of the city, the identification of gastronomic routes and guides of traditional recipes of the region.
- **Valorization of tangible and non-tangible heritage:** The attractiveness of the city is generated not only by the unique aesthetics of the city, but also by the local culture and hospitality of the citizens.
- **Strategic management:** Chefchaouen has been successful in strategic management to create wealth through territorial opportunities, with several cross-cutting lines of work and projects, as well as mobilizing the administration and citizens to work together.

#### Environmental criteria

- **Bouhachem park:** In this successful initiative, the park is managed by Bouhachem local authority, with the community living in the area responsible for the preservation of the forest, as well as the control of all the activities carried out there. The park is located on the outskirts of the city, which also means that the expansion of the city has been stopped in this area, creating a way to seek a balance for the future, preserving the land and its resources. The objectives of this initiative include the environmental protection of the territory, landscape, religious and historical heritage, as well as the

promotion of the sustainable development of the population and an improvement in their quality of life.

### Human criteria

- **Relationship with citizens:** A close relationship between the local government and the citizens of Chefchaouen is an important tool for the implementation of public policies. The City Council of Chefchaouen is seeking ways to strengthen this relationship in order to facilitate a better understanding of needs, proposals and initiatives, as well as to improve the implementation of economic, cultural and social development projects, within the framework of international and national cooperation. To accomplish this, it is important to raise awareness and provide training for the population. The scale of the city enables Chefchaouen to create alliances with the citizens and involve them in city projects. Participation initiatives implemented so far have been successful in both regional and national contexts.



## 05 Rural-urban territories and sustainable economic development

To create jobs and a sustainable economic environment, intermediary cities need to work openly and inclusively with the neighbouring areas. The participants of the learning event took the example of Chefchaouen, where a model for urban-rural policies for local economic development has been developed.

### Preserving cultural, agricultural and natural environment key to sustainable urban-rural policies

Preserving the agricultural, cultural and natural heritage of the Chefchaouen region is an essential element of the city and its strategy related to neighbouring areas. As noted by representatives from academia, Chefchaouen land use system is mainly agricultural and agro-silvo-pastoral. Despite the particular attention given to the preservation of the natural heritage in Chefchaouens' strategy, the urbanisation process is creating challenges regarding land occupation. Current land occupation is considered as high, with density in the Rif mountains and high pressure on resources. However, the rural environment of Chefchaouen is described as vibrant and dynamic. The main challenge has been to shift from a vertical model of intervention to a more horizontal approach.

Representatives from NGOs have emphasized how crucial it has been for the city of Chefchaouen to operate an *“agro-paysage”* (agro-landscape) and peripheral study in order to build concrete proposals for the tourism sector and the agri-food sector, involving all stakeholders on the ground. This has helped to strengthen the economic and social fabric, and to develop an economy that is at the service of the social services.

The main outcomes of the urban-rural strategy put in place by Chefchaouen have been preserving and rehabilitating the landscape and the know-how of the rural workers, launching awareness campaigns to reinforce ownership, and emphasizing the regional dimension of the territory. Participants noted that enlarging the spatial dimension of the territory has been key to providing access between rural areas and urban areas.

### Enabling structures to promote local economic development – The Municipal Agency

The participants noted that the creation of a Municipal Agency for Local Development represented one of the biggest assets for the dynamization of the city's economic and social fabric. These kinds of structures create spaces where actors can meet and develop together projects and new synergies. The Municipal Agency for Local Development allows the creation of strategic plans and instruments of implementation that are accompanying the current development of Chefchaouen. It is the first public agency of this kind to be developed in Morocco, and is supported by FAMSI. Its geographical powers also enable links between Chefchaouen and Tetouan.

The '*souk*' (rural market) is a link between rural and urban territories from an economic, social and spatial point of view. The market takes place every Monday and Thursday close to the medina and is attended by wholesalers, small producers, farmers, cooperatives and anyone else with an interest in the economic and social scene. The market is the space where small scale activities take place that generate social and economic dynamics and strengthen social cohesion, which is fundamental for the territory. The products in the market come from rural areas close to the city (small producers, especially women) and agricultural rural areas in other regions (wholesalers). The Chaouen market is particularly clean and tidy, and mainly managed by women.

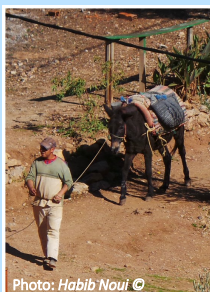




In continuity with the Municipal Agency for Local Development, a Municipal Group for Development and Cooperation ensures the territorial marketing of the city and its rural areas. To better archive the region's data and in order to plan ahead, it has launched a database to catalyze resources and best practices, notably of small- and medium-sized businesses.

## The Mediterranean diet

The Mediterranean diet refers to a lifestyle. It is a set of skills, knowledge, practices and traditions that revolve around obtaining food from the landscape and bringing it to the table, including processing, preservation, preparation and consumption. It is also a valuable piece of cultural heritage that embraces the Mediterranean population as a whole, combining landscapes, crops, cultivation techniques, markets, culinary spaces and gestures, flavours and fragrances, colours, social gatherings and celebrations, as well as innovation and traditions.





The Agency and the Municipal Group have also set up a mechanism in aid local financing. In this process, a partnership between the municipality and an association of entrepreneurs, as the core interlocutor, has been crucial.

The work of the Municipal Agency has been possible because of previous strategic planning within the region. Documentation on the urbanism of the region, urban management and maps, as well as a “*plan de zonage*” (zoning plan), were collected to build on urban-rural strategic planning. Solidifying infrastructure was a core objective of the Agency, as part of the medina’s planning and renovation strategies.

The founders and workers of the Agency showed how the concept of the Agency is a fundamental tool, both in the execution of projects and in the advisory process of urban-rural development. It allows for collective thinking, a detailed assessment of projects and their impacts, and a network approach that enables opportunities for development. It also allows for synergies between municipalities, rural areas and cities. Participants recommended that the system of such Agencies should be harmonized, particularly in its legal framework, and its political positioning.

Overall, the Municipal Agency for Local Development is a good example of how to preserve traditional and rural work in an urban context, enabling the safeguarding of artisanal trade but with a lever effect on growth and job creation.

### Enhancing local economic development through urban-rural dialogue and fiscal decentralization

This was also outlined by the *President of the Local Economic Development Working Group, Paco Toajas*, citing the experience of Spain, which has been decentralized over the last 30 years: “At the end of the 1980s, local governments became co-responsible for local development, and municipalities were allowed to define their strategies. Later on, the municipalities were integrated into EU structural funding. Finally, solidarity funds were created that allow municipalities to finance international cooperation.”

From West Africa to the southern shore of the Mediterranean, participants acknowledged that progress towards decentralization, including through budget decentralization, involvement of local economic and social actors in social dialogue are essential elements to foster local economic development. Local budgets only count for 3% of national budgets and explain the weakness of local economic development in many countries.

In West Africa, for example, public investment in local authorities only counts for 5% of the overall national budget. This shows how

the distribution of public resources is one of the main hindrances to local economic development. Cities and towns are increasingly removed from their historical contexts; they have to become more open, “useful and accountable administrations”.

The following recommendations to deal with this were noted during the event:

- A first strategic recommendation shared by delegates was that social dialogue, including business leaders and organizations as well as trade unions and civil society representatives **are key to develop a comprehensive view and plan for local development.** **Building an inclusive dialogue around territories**, including entrepreneurs, local leaders and other representatives of civil society is the first challenge ahead.
- The second recommendation shared was the importance of local actors to make **socio-economic data and information** available. In Africa, West Africa in particular, this data is only available on a national level and the sub-national level is not dealt with. The example of the Ecoloc tool was quoted. This has enabled the development of a dashboard to facilitate local economic decisions and improve the relevance of local economic development strategies. Statistics should reflect the current situations and potentialities of each territory : key indicators include employment, unemployment, proportion of the women in the workforce, education, major sectors of activities.
- A third tool was emphasized by intermediary city leaders: **intercommunality**. Joint strategies between cities and municipalities, and between urban and rural communities, can be relevant tools to set up local economic development strategies. The primary sector (agriculture) remains the main wealth of intermediary cities in Africa. Therefore, urban-rural interconnections are at the centre of local economic development and strengthen it. This urban-rural space allows economic exchanges to develop, since local economic development begins with the intermediary city a central pole and expands to the surrounding areas.
- Finally, local economic development requires **resource mobilization and availability of investment**. Considering the fiscal weakness of local authorities, local economic development needs to be reinforced through a higher tax rate; not necessarily by higher taxation, but by enlarging the number of contributors.

Overall, local economic development strategies should favour a common vision between the urban and rural communities and allow the strengthening of urban-rural dialogue to better serve citizens with social services and to develop decent work.

Intermediary cities need to work more in clusters and in solidarity to become systems that allow production and consumption to be considered local opportunities. This will enable the creation of an alternative model to the agglomeration of capital, people and problems that affect metropolitan areas.

## 06 Initiatives and solutions for decent work

### Employment, social cohesion and improving women's autonomy common challenges for West African and Mediterranean countries

The International Labour Organization, using available national data, has shown that the southern Mediterranean countries remain hit by high unemployment, especially among young people and women. Long-term unemployment greatly affects quality of life, and data shows that there is a correlation between the level of qualification and the unemployment rate. Unemployment in qualified young people is dramatic: 47% of young people with a degree in social science are unemployed; and Libya and Egypt have the youth unemployment levels of Greece and Spain. Participants also confirmed the increase in qualified young people without jobs. For example, Burkina Faso has a youth population of 80%, of whom only 20% are in formal employment. This highlights that the paradigm of education as a guarantee for jobs is not working as expected. The informal employment rate is also correlated with the level of social protection, and it is increasing on a global basis for women and young people.

#### DECENT WORK

Work is central to people's well-being. In addition to providing income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities. Such progress, however, hinges on work that is decent. The ILO has developed an agenda for the community of work providing support through integrated Decent Work Country Programmes developed in coordination with its constituents. Putting the Decent Work Agenda into practice is achieved through the implementation of the ILO's four strategic objectives, with gender equality as a crosscutting objective:

- Creating Jobs – an economy that generates opportunities for investment, entrepreneurship, skills development, job creation and sustainable livelihoods.
- Guaranteeing rights at work – to obtain recognition and respect for the rights of workers. All workers, and in particular disadvantaged or poor workers, need representation, participation, and laws that work for their interests.
- Extending social protection – to promote both inclusion and productivity by ensuring that women and men enjoy working conditions that are safe, allow adequate free time and rest, take into account family and social values, provide for adequate compensation in case of lost or reduced income and permit access to adequate healthcare.
- Promoting social dialogue – Involving strong and independent workers' and employers' organizations is central to increasing productivity, avoiding disputes at work, and building cohesive societies.

ILO studies revealed, however, that the most effective way to increase GDP would be to reduce unemployment among women, which is often equivalent to formalizing their work. If unemployed women worked, the GDP in the region would increase by 20%; however, if young people were employed it would only increase by 2%. Some possibilities were outlined:

- Create employment
- Formalize employment
- Provide guidance for young people
- Improve social dialogue
- Improve the juridical social framework

Leaders and actors from West Africa and Spain made clear that the issue of improving women's autonomy is also central to tackling the challenges of economic and social development in these countries.

### **A new local economic development approach needed**

Today, 50% of the revenue of intermediary cities comes from the commerce of proximity. However, given the constraints that the intermediary level faces in terms of resources and political powers, this model does not allow for long-term sustainability. Participants also made clear that supporting national plans on employment can have very different impacts at the local level.

This can be seen in the case of Andalusia, Spain, where youth unemployment has hit 50%. A lack of coordination between the social communities and the administration appears to be part of the challenge, and participants noted that the Spanish national government is also limiting the possibilities for local economies to develop.

Decentralization is considered a first step for taking on these challenges. Local and regional public policies have helped to influence capacity-building and the development of new structures based on the territories' assets, and the number of projects is growing every day. This shows that local economic development and urban policies are the only way to find solutions to sustainability. It also shows that the territory is not an isolated, independent element, but a space of interactions.

In line with this concept, participants showcased the lever effect of decent work in rural areas. In Senegal for example, one thousand jobs created in the agricultural sector implies the creation of three thousand more, considering the linked services.

Different ways forward to build a sustainable local economic model were explored by participants, including adopting the following general guidelines and technical and structural tools shared by participants.

## Union of apiculture cooperatives "RIF Chefchaouen"

112 members (14 cooperatives)

The union of apiculture cooperatives "RIF Chefchaouen" is financed by AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) with support from the IPADE Foundation and the Association of Local Development of Chefchaouen (ADL), the National Human Development Initiative and the Provincial Delegation of Agriculture.

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## General guidelines for local economic development

- **Expand** sources of growth and guarantee employment at an affordable rate.
- **Facilitate** the formalization of employment and explore ways to include the informal sector.
- **Improve** social dialogue with all partners (civil society, trade unions, entrepreneurs, development actors).
- **Orientate** training towards the need(s) of the market and reform professional training.
- **Reinforce** the capacity for analysis and prospecting of the labour market.
- **Foster** the contributions of women to the implementation of innovative projects or cooperatives, which enable women to access decent jobs and acquire more economic and social autonomy.
- **Spatialize** the information of local activities and actors.
- **Allow** for external strategies of local activities and the regional or international projection of territories.
- **Enable** the broad inclusion of entrepreneurs and social partners in the definition process.

## Technical and structural tools to strengthen local economic development

**Decentralized cooperation:** Shared initiatives from Chefchaouen, Villafranca de Penedès, the Ivory Coast and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region. Its proximity and Mediterranean identity, as well as its southern roots, have made the city of Chefchaouen and its dynamics a centre of exchange. This created great opportunities for the City Council to benefit from several decentralized cooperation initiatives with European partners concentrated in the Mediterranean area, either bilaterally or through networks of local communities. All of them, though small in financial terms, are considered as strategic opportunities and are aligned with the development strategy of the city.

**Cooperatives:** From Spain to Morocco, cooperatives show the complementarity of the private sector and associations/civil society. They need to be supported by the public authorities. The organization CEPES Andalusia has demonstrated the importance of the cooperative as an alternative form of business. It also shows that entrepreneurship is not only based on firms with capital. The importance gained by cooperatives and their potential shows that connections with the international movement of cooperatives worldwide could be explored. Harmonization among countries in the Maghreb could also be explored. A more flexible and adequate local fiscality for cooperatives has also been identified as a strong asset, as experienced by Andalusia.



## Cooperatives in Morocco, a way to promote decent work

Cooperatives are important in improving the living and working conditions of women and men globally as well as making essential infrastructure and services available even in areas neglected by the state and investor-driven enterprises. Cooperatives have a proven record of creating and sustaining employment – they provide over 250 million jobs today; they advance the ILO's Global Employment Agenda and contribute to promoting decent work.



### Cooperative AMLAY

11 members

AMLAY is financed by the AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) with the support of the IPADE Foundation and the ATED Association.

The site-visits are a fruitful space for the participants to understand the projects and initiatives. first hand .

**Labelling:** As shown by CEPES Andalusia, and distribution and exportation agreements for olive oil, the notion of the Mediterranean diet aims to increase the value of traditional agricultural products. Since agro-production is a key factor in Morocco's economy, it is important to promote quality, as well as higher prices for these products.

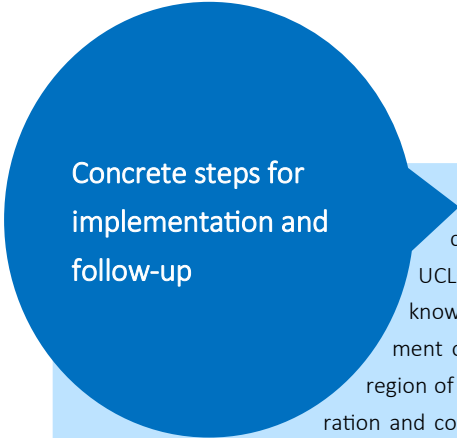
**Professional training and schools for entrepreneurs:** A training school for entrepreneurs has been set up in Andalusia, Spain, with outstanding results. In a region hit by 50% youth unemployment, it is a concrete example that professional training is indispensable for the entrepreneurs. 50 firms were created following the launch of the training school, thanks to a strong political will, bringing added value to the region's economic and social fabric.

**Creation of freelance jobs:** In Jaen, Andalusia, Spain, 300 people took on self-employed work, which has led to the creation of new companies, strengthening the economic and social fabric in the region and fostering growth.

**Micro-credit:** Initiative of Mauritania. However, this is only viable on a technical basis and must be accompanied by capacity-building.

**Recuperation of dry land and access to land value:** As shared by Niger and FMDV.

**Technical and structural support for local authorities:** Saint Louis, Senegal, has developed technical support for local authorities to aid local economic development, thanks to the Regional Development Agency, which is similar to the Northern Morocco Development Agency. It accompanies the local elected officials in infrastructure development, and allows for long-term strategies for the economic development of territories, especially on tourism and services. New planning policy papers also help local officials to better foresee and link urban strategies with rural areas.



### Concrete steps for implementation and follow-up

As a result of the event a mentoring activity was conducted. The city of Chefchaouen supported by UCLG, visited the city of N'Dali in Benin to share knowledge and assist the city of N'Dali in the development of a Local Economic Development Strategy for the region of Borgou. This was the first step for durable collaboration and cooperation between Chefchaouen and its Local Development Agency and the city of N'Dali, whose mission fits into the same dynamics.

## 07 South-South and triangular cooperation and recommendations

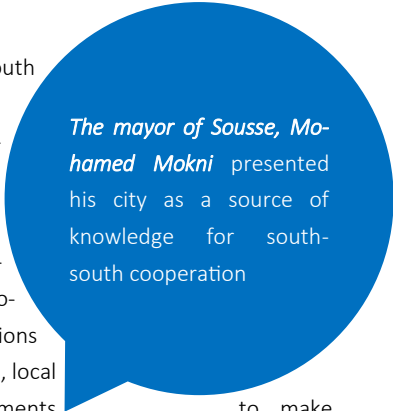
Participants unanimously acknowledged the advantages and assets of decentralized cooperation, and more specifically of South-South and Triangular cooperation. It allows for adapting knowledge in the South and can provide benefits in terms of time and money. It also allows for the development of innovative, replicable and sustainable solutions as well as the sharing of such initiatives among partners.

### A way forward for the joint agenda on intermediary cities and local economic development

A plea was made for a renewal and reshaping of North-South dialogue,

implying equal cooperation between countries, and municipalities. There is a clear lack of resources in the South and the presence of developed countries is therefore essential.

Around the world, and especially in Africa and Mediterranean countries, we have seen North-South cooperation projects being fertilized in the South, thanks to other contributions from the South and the support of the North. In many cases, local authorities are facing challenges with their national governments



*The mayor of Sousse, Mohamed Mokni presented his city as a source of knowledge for south-south cooperation*

to make decentralized cooperation stronger and more powerful, with adequate resources.

Leaders and actors in Chefchaouen reaffirmed how vital it is to combine and join the strategies on intermediary cities and local economic development.

FAMSI reiterated that the Andalusian model for cooperation, developed from the 1980s onwards, was strengthening the power of local governments to define local economic strategies, within the framework of decentralized cooperation. It includes political and financial support, enabled by Structural Funds.

Participants affirmed that networks are essential for cities. New networks should enable the definition of framework policy documents and regional visions on local economic development. It should also take into account differences in realities in terms of decentralization, the recognition of the territory and its relations with civil society. It should entail a database that will enable the sharing of best practices, starting with three main poles: Andalusia, Morocco and the Caribbean region. An open consultation and the inclusion of the African network of 1,200 experts that should help to organize the African contribution to the two Working Groups is also important. Up until now, development has been seen from a national view-

point, including in the tools used. The approach needs to become local. Economic development is actually the aggregation of the numerous local economic developments.


Local economic development should not be divided into silos, as this favours dumping, including fiscal and environmental dumping. Starting within territories, it is essential to relocate development and reduce the ecological footprint, preserve identities and enrich the production system. A strategic alliance between the ILO and UCLG has been formed to develop this agenda in the long run.

### Recommendations from participants

The workshop ended with group work on concrete recommendations, which can be summarized as follows:

- School workshops and professional training: to allow the safeguarding and development of artisanal jobs.
- Promoting the Mediterranean diet: participants from Niger and Benin saw a series of opportunities to apply these concepts in their territories.
- Urbanism codification and municipal development plans: knowledge sharing is important for those cities wishing to increase their competences with regard to planning.
- Study trips: to improve knowledge of civil and entrepreneurial societies.
- Community farms: to enable the accompanying of projects throughout the value chain across the whole territory.
- Territorial marketing.
- Creating a network of business incubators by sector.
- Dialogue spaces with funding organizations.
- Peer learning: the Tunisian cities of Sousse and Djerba offered to share their experiences in management and planning to West African cities.

The academic network of intermediary cities is also a very interesting opportunity to promote South-South cooperation based on an equitable exchange, with the participation of the North. Indeed, it is an alternative opportunity for the establishment of a new dialogue between North and South based on equity, mutual learning and a “win-win” exchange.



As highlighted by *Firdaous Oussidhoum CIMES expert*, cooperation should generate knowledge for all

## 08 Conclusions, next steps and final declaration

Proactive group work enabled participants to provide suggestions for practical follow up and to conclude the event with a roadmap.

### Round table outcomes

Participants agreed that the exchange created new opportunities to learn and to challenge existing mindsets and assumptions about urban-rural policies and local economic development in intermediary cities. The round table discussions gave practitioners and local leaders the space to share and exchange experiences and opinions, and engage in debates. Focusing on the question of how to develop public policies, and taking into consideration the specific context of intermediary cities, these discussions also enabled a closer look at intermediary cities in North and West Africa. In this context, the following points were highlighted as the key take-aways from the meeting.

### The importance of setting local development goals within a framework of autonomous local management

Decentralization in North and West Africa has been a fragile process. Local authorities only receive between 3% and 8% of public expenditure, which leads to a position of weakness and vulnerability, and increases the gap between capacities and competences. Participants agreed that local economic development was essential to fostering solutions to these issues, including:

- The valorization of local resources as potential capital.
- The need for a constant exchange of experiences on financing.
- The importance of a solidarity-based economy in local development.
- The organization of community farms and cooperatives according to local resources. (This initiative can be linked with cross-cutting projects to ensure both that the entire territory and the value chain is covered in territorial production).

A thematic line involving basic public services and infrastructure projects was proposed within the debates, and the following topics were emphasized as particularly interesting:

- Sanitation and waste management
- Transport management
- Water resources and water management
- Public lighting
- Environmental management towards sustainability

## The importance of the legal dimension

Some key legal elements to foster the development of urban-rural polices were discussed by the participants:

- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) allow the integration of public and private stakeholders, capital and resources in the interest of development. It is a possible alternative in the framework of triangular cooperation, as well as within the framework of local institutions, schools, etc.
- The Municipal Agency for Development was raised as a strategy to manage development at the local scale.
- Tools to implement synergies and the initiatives of civil society and local governments.

## The human dimension: capacity building through intermediary cities

The capacity-building component was valued as a strategic effort for intermediary cities. A vast majority of the participants highlighted the importance of projects and policies that work towards capacity building, especially for vulnerable social groups. However, the capacity building of elected officials and practitioners should also be taken into consideration, due to the fact that in many cases local governments remain weak as a result of a lack of professional competency. The nature of the targeted activities were, among others:

- A training concept based on the resources of the territory. An example of further education based on local resources is the school workshop project implemented in Chefchaouen.
- Strengthening capacities and human resources to give continuity to actions, projects and policies.
- A database of experiences and best practices of local economic development, as well as one for possible donors.
- Strengthening networking between municipalities for the identification of projects and advocacy.
- Municipal investment plans.
- Inclusiveness: young people and women as potential social groups to be supported through public policies.

## The economic insertion of women and young people

Is vital to promote and increase the employability of young people. To do so, urban-rural perspectives are needed in order to create new employment opportunities that take advantage of the existing link between urban and rural areas. The school workshop project carried out by Chefchaouen was positively assessed by the participants as a training approach that takes into consideration the full potential of the urban-rural region. The educational alternatives developed in Niger and Benin also constitute examples of best practices for the way forward on this



particular topic. Another important issue underlined in the debate was the promotion of equity and equal opportunities through initiatives on training and improving employment opportunities.

### Spatial planning aspects

Chefchaouen, Djerba and Sfax presented experiences and examples that were particularly interesting for cities in West Africa. The following topics were identified as priorities for possible cooperation projects:

- Support for spatial planning through the establishment of a Town Planning Code, Global Development Plan and Detailed Development Plan (experiences presented by Djerba and led by the Association of Architects of Tunisia).
- Heritage rehabilitation and social cohesion.
- Plans to preserve and enhance intangible cultural heritage (crafts, traditional product production, etc.).

### Final declaration

At the end of these exchanges the participants: expressed their acknowledgement and their appreciation for the South-South and Triangular exchanges during the three days of seminars.

The workshop made evident the crucial role of local governments for the implementation of a local development strategy that takes into account the needs for decent work. These strategies are based on the particular situation of intermediary cities, particularly the synergies between rural and urban spaces, their position as intermediaries, their capacity to create links between cities and the national, regional and global economic environments regarding people, resources and goods.

The following observations were highlighted:

Population growth requires a commitment from all local actors for a local economic development that contributes to increasing social cohesion, reducing inequalities, providing access to decent work and contributing to poverty eradication.

Intermediary cities have a central role in redefining the relations between the rural and urban spaces of the same territory. A positive outlook on migration is required, because it is a condition for the strengthening of the economic dynamism and ensuring a balanced development of urban spaces.

Urban and territorial strategic planning in the framework of intermediary cities needs to consider the relationship between rural and urban spaces, and involve all actors of development, particularly businesses, social partners, inhabitants and civil society. It should enable the creation of short-, medium- and long-term strategies. South-South and Triangular cooperation is a useful instrument for its implementation.

Youth employment is perceived as a decisive challenge. Population growth in cities and rural

areas is a challenge for education, professional training and the development of a competitive economic environment.

Women's contributions to development are essential. Local governments can accompany the implementation of innovative projects, of cooperatives, which allow women to access decent jobs and acquire more economic and social autonomy.

In many countries, decentralization is an ongoing project. Legal clarification and simplifications are necessary. Fiscal decentralization needs to be expanded and local governments need stable and guaranteed budgets.

Recognized the importance of South-South and Triangular cooperation, which constitutes an exchange among equals, the encouragement of good practices and the identification of innovative projects.

Participants committed themselves to enrol and participate in intermediary cities and local development networks, to contribute to their development and to strengthen the exchange of good practices and capacities. They wished to be informed of the results of the meeting in Pasto (Colombia), which will be centred on the relations between rural and urban areas, particularly food markets, the interdependence of labour markets, and urban strategies. They support the organization of a new meeting in West Africa, with the support of UCLG and UCLG Africa, which could focus on local economic development. Through this network, and in connection with Ecoloc, the tools for analyzing human, economic and social situations shall be shared.

Took note of the importance of the ongoing discussions for the definition of a global agenda for development, poverty reduction and access to decent work. The definition of objectives in relation to Post-2015, the Forum for Local Economic Development in Turin (2014) and Habitat III are occasions to promote the localization of development within the context of South-South and Triangular cooperation. Participants committed to provide inputs, as well as to support the promotion of local economic development and decent work in their countries and regional organizations.

Participants invited UCLG, the ILO, UCLG Africa, FAMSİ, the network of intermediary cities and the LED Working Group, and other partners involved in the same issues, to strengthen cooperation and exchange among themselves, and to elaborate common positions on local economic development and decent work. A first stage could be a seminar in preparation for the preparatory conference of Habitat III in Nairobi and the LED Forum in Turin.

The exchanges were based on the work of two working groups organized by UCLG, one on intermediary cities and the other on local economic development. These exchanges were made possible thanks to the hosting and efficient organization of the Chefchaouen municipality, UCLG and its partners, UCLG Africa, FAMSİ and the ILO, in the framework of its strategy for the promotion of South-South and Triangular cooperation and decent work. Reference was also made to the exchanges between Maputo and Durban, which recognized the importance of the informal economy in connection to urban policies.

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