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ALDA Flagship Initiative

#Ter4Dev

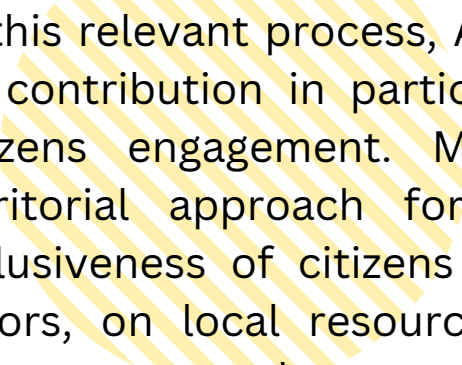


Territorial partnerships for
local governance and Development

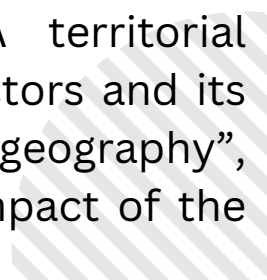


Context

- Through the European Consensus on Development (2017), the EU together with its member countries, reaffirms poverty eradication as its primary development objective integrating the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and underlining the links between development and other European policies, such as peace and humanitarian aid. In terms of implementation, the consensus prescribes to build better tailored partnerships with a wider range of stakeholders and reaffirm the European commitment to policy coherence for development.
 - In the framework of its expanding relations with local authorities (LAs), the EU (DG INTPA) decided in 2018 to support an innovative initiative of decentralised cooperation. The overall objective of the resulting “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” programme is to promote integrated urban development by fostering peer-to-peer exchanges among Local Authorities of EU Member States and countries in the Global South around shared challenges. ALDA has been involved for taking part in the Global Meeting 2024 and for contributing in the process.
 - In the actual debate, the territorial approach is also considered a potential means to respond to the Global Gateway strategy, that is the EU’s contribution to narrowing the global investment gap worldwide, “a template for how Europe can build more resilient connections with the world” as declared by the President Ursula von der Leyen.
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In this relevant process, ALDA is trying to collaborate and make its contribution in particular on participatory democracy and citizens engagement. Moreover, we firmly believe that a territorial approach for local development builds on the inclusiveness of citizens as key democratic and development actors, on local resources' mobilisation, and on the role of autonomous and accountable local authorities as catalysts for development.

- Following a conference on “Living Territories” (2018), the White Paper produced by the AFD, AUDA-NEPAD, BMZ, CIRAD, European Commission, FAO, GIZ, OECD, and UNCDF, titled “Fostering Territorial Perspective for Development - TP4D”, and the new White paper (2023) identified common principles of territorial approaches and described their contributions to policy action, people-centred development, and coherent governance, as a central and relevant framework for all the associations engaged in the territorial cooperation.
 - Territorial approaches to development have been increasingly recognised as a powerful means for implementing more appropriate analytical and operational mechanisms in global contexts. A territorial perspective considers the territory as a space of governance for human activities where future projects are conceived and implemented. A territory is governed and influenced by a community of actors dealing with common challenges by defining appropriate actions and policies; a community of actors, who represent different interests and different capacity to pursue their interests; actors who mobilize and create interdependencies between resources and places, not limited to formal administrative boundaries. A territorial approach recognizes the role of this multitude of actors and its transformative power, and rooted in this specific “geography”, increases the effectiveness of the action and the impact of the interventions.
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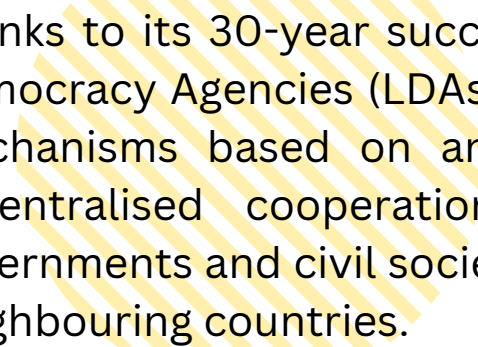


- Within the Agenda 2030 framework and the interlinkages between the SDGs, territorial approaches are highly relevant providing systemic, context-specific, spatially anchored, and inclusive efforts for sustainable development. Moreover, the rights-based and participatory nature of territorial approaches can support the development of more inclusive and equitable long-term solutions. This strategic framework is the key reference for the overall ALDA's action.
- At the same time, at global level, the operating environment of the territorial approaches is becoming more resource-constrained, uncertain, and complex. The perimeters of action is unstable for several reasons, some of which are related to the low availability of reliable data, high dependence on national transfers, especially in fragile and vulnerable contexts; Lack of stable and skilled professional teams, and inefficient multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms.

Improving partnerships for stronger interconnected and resilient territories


In this framework, ALDA has been launching a new Flagship Initiative aimed at building resilient and powerful partnerships by connecting territories valorising their good practices, experiences and values.

ALDA is a unique European association acting at global level as an international alliance of local and regional authorities, and civil society organisations, addressing and facing local issues for more inclusive, fair and sustainable communities.



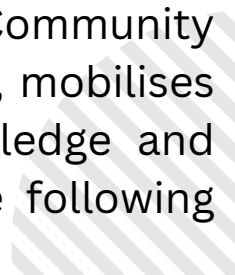
Thanks to its 30-year successful experience of promoting Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs), ALDA firmly believes in partnership mechanisms based on an innovative method of multilateral decentralised cooperation, with full engagement of local governments and civil society organisations from Europe and the neighbouring countries.

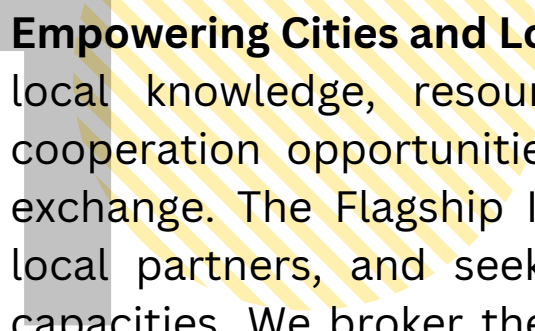
The LDAs are locally-based organisations, funded and supported by both local partners and international associates with a long-term joint programme providing financial and political support to accompany local democracy and civil society empowerment for a more sustainable development.

 With this flagship initiative, ALDA aims to contribute to the following purposes, strengthening existing collaborations and building new ones with European institutions and International organisations:

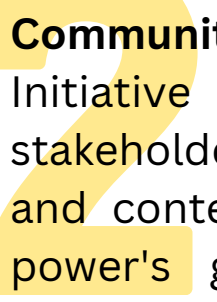
- Support structured dialogue with local and regional governments, and between them and CSOs as key actors for an anchored territorial co-operation;
- Contribute to the Team European cooperation initiatives to support decentralization reforms and LRG empowerment;
- Leverage the full potential of decentralized cooperation, by strengthening the role and active participation of cities and local governments;
- Strengthen the Territorial Approach to Local Development, within the analytical and operating processes (design, implementation and monitoring phase) as part of the ALDA's mission.

To respond to these purposes, ALDA, with its Community (including members, regional branches and networks), mobilises its experience gained in various contexts, its knowledge and know-how to promote a methodology based on the following pillars:

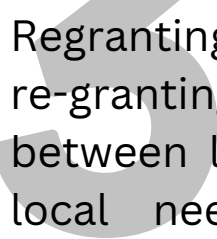





1 Empowering Cities and Local Initiatives: Recognizing the value of local knowledge, resources and capacities as a basis for cooperation opportunities, capacity-building and peer-to-peer exchange. The Flagship Initiative could identify and prioritizes local partners, and seeks to both bolster and harness their capacities. We broker the sharing of evidence, lessons, insights and technical expertise among cities and territories to align efforts, learn from each other and improve the impact of their actions.



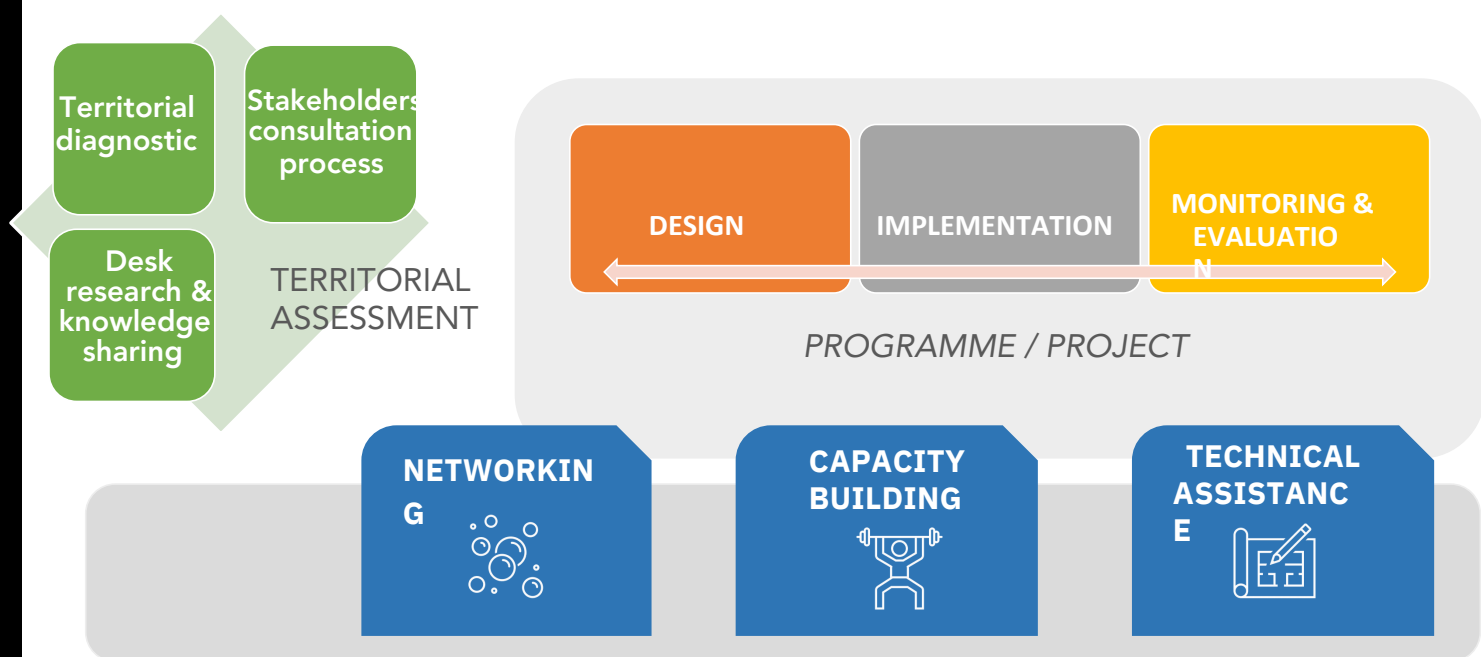
2 Community Engagement: The cornerstone of the Flagship Initiative is systematic participatory community and stakeholders engagement. The approach varies across countries and contexts, but consistently focuses on understanding the power's geography, priorities, capacities, needs and risks. Unlocking the potential of the territory means legitimizing local actors to collectively identify development strategies, the endogenous resources from which to start, and the programmatic dimension to give coherence to the various fields of action.



3 Regranting scheme as funding opportunities. ALDA's approach to re-granting (financial support to third parties) serves as a bridge between local authorities, institutions, and citizens to address local needs. ALDA's 5-step methodology on re-granting, developed and tested over the years, includes phases from preparation to visibility and capitalisation of results.



4 Learning and evaluation: Understanding, adapting and rethinking. Some of the current approaches and plans don't effectively serve territorial priorities because they distort local needs by analysing them through the lens of the exogenous systems. At the same time, the lack of sufficient and adequate data at a local scale often limits the evaluation of the impacts of actions and interventions. This could be a field of study to be promoted in synergy with other organizations and research institutes. The aim is to understand why and, where desirable, how approaches can be replicated and brought to scale, identify promising new practices, and develop them for replication in other contexts.



Web Bibliography

- Among other processes, publications, and events it is worth mentioning:
- OECD report (2020) on territorial approaches as pathways to localise the SDGs.
- GIZ Stocktaking on Territorial Approaches (2021)
- Global Gateway
- Territorial approaches for sustainable development - White Paper for Policy Formulation and Project Implementation
- Fostering territorial perspective for development - Towards a wider alliance, TP4D White Paper of 2018



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