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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX 5**

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan for Global Challenges - Partnerships for 2021

**Action document for the ‘strengthen associations of local authorities’ action**

**ANNUAL PLAN MEASURE**

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation and action plan within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

**1. SYNOPSIS**

**1.1. ACTION SUMMARY TABLE**

<b>1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic act</b>	Strengthen associations of local authorities [OPSYS/CRIS] number: 43543  Financed under NDICI-Global Europe
<b>2. Team Europe initiative</b>	N/A
<b>3. Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The action will be carried out in EU partner countries.
<b>4. Programming document</b>	‘Global challenges’ multiannual indicative programme (2021-2027)
<b>5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results</b>	‘Global challenges’ multiannual indicative programme (2021-2027) ‘Partnerships’ pillar, specific objective 3: Strengthened local authorities at global level Expected results 1: Institutional and financial sustainability of associations of local authorities is increased; their capacities and those of their members are strengthened; coordination between them is enhanced
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>6. Priority area(s), sectors</b>	Decentralisation, local governance, local development, public administration
<b>7. Sustainable development goals (SDGs)</b>	Main SDG: 17 Other significant SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16
<b>8 a) DAC code(s)</b>	15112 — Decentralisation — Local development
<b>8 b) Main delivery channel @</b>	10000 — Public sector institutions 32000 — Network

<b>9. Targets</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and human development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human rights, democracy and governance			
<b>10. Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective @</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster risk reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>11. Internal markers and tags</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Digitalisation @ Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity @ Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Reduction of inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>				
<b>12. Amounts concerned</b>	Budget line(s) 14.020243: EUR 2.2 million from ‘global challenges’ programme Additional EUR 2.8 million from sub-Saharan Africa programme, as follows: 14.020120 – EUR 1 120 000 (West Africa) 14.020121 – EUR 1 092 000 (East and Central) 14.020122 – EUR 588 000 (Southern and Indian Ocean) Total estimated cost: EUR 5 million			
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>13. Type of financing<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Direct management</b> through grants			

## 1.2. SUMMARY OF ACTION

In 2015, the Commission decided to engage at political level with five global and regional associations of local authorities (ALAs). This was the result of a worldwide structured dialogue with civil society organisations (CSOs) and local authorities (LAs) in 2010/2011 and the Commission’s 2013 Communication on *Empowering LAs in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes*<sup>2</sup>.

The commitment led to the conclusion of 6-year (2015-2020) strategic framework partnership agreements (FPAs) with United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF), the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-A) and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA. These strategic partnerships (to be renewed in 2021) are accompanied by financial commitments from the Commission through five specific grant agreements (SGAs) covering the new programming period (2021-2027).

This proposed action for 2021 will ensure the continuation of the partnerships established through the 2021-2027 FPAs, in line with the LAs component of the ‘global challenges’ MIP.

The overall objective of the action is to help improve the enabling environment for LAs by supporting multi-level governance through partnerships with the UCLG-A and the UCLG, in line with the Commission’s commitment to truly inclusive multilateralism, where the voices of civil society, the private sector, social partners and LAs count (Communication on *Strengthening the EU’s contribution to rules-based multilateralism*<sup>3</sup>).

In particular, it will aim to increase ALAs’ transparency, accountability, advocacy capacities and empowerment, including in multilateral settings. This will enable them to play their role and contribute to policy-making on the development agenda (e.g. Policy Forum for Development) and policy implementation processes, in particular in relation to the localisation of the SDGs.

This should result in:

- the increased institutional, operational and financial sustainability of ALAs;
- the strengthening of their capacities and those of their members;
- the enhancement of coordination between ALAs; and
- an increase in their capacities to impact and contribute to regional and global policy-making processes on development for the localisation of SDGs.

The action will contribute to and develop synergies with Team Europe initiatives focusing on decentralisation and urban interventions (including sustainable cities), and those in areas in which LAs and ALAs have key competences, e.g. water and sanitation, education, health, climate change, environment, migration and local economic development.

<sup>1</sup> Article 27 of the NDICI Regulation.

<sup>2</sup> Brussels, 15.5.2013 COM (2013) 280

<sup>3</sup> Brussels, 17.2.2021 JOIN (2021) 3

## 2. RATIONALE

### 2.1. CONTEXT

Being closer to citizens than other public institutions, LAs have a responsibility to listen to local communities and act on their opinions while acting as catalysts for change.

Support for LAs and their participation in the pursuit of internationally agreed goals is acknowledged as a core factor in EU policy-making. LAs play an essential role in strengthening democratic governance, ensuring the relevance of the multilateral system and preserving its legitimacy, promoting local ownership of development policies and processes, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable growth. In humanitarian crisis contexts, LAs can be important players in addressing the needs of those living in the most vulnerable situations and in promoting resilient communities and cities. Their role as development actors in their own right has been gradually recognised by the international community and enshrined in the New European Consensus on Development (paragraph 69). At sub-national level, LAs (including branches of government or municipal and district authorities) play an important role in addressing global challenges.

In the last two decades, international ALAs have started to seek participation in the formulation of development policies and the delivery of international cooperation at local level. They also play an important role in promoting and supporting good local governance and decentralisation reforms.

International and regional ALAs are instrumental for improving the role and activities of LAs and their national associations in partner countries. In many partner countries, the ALAs are still weak; in many, they do not even exist.

The EU's growing commitment and engagement with LAs in the past decade are framed by:

- Agenda 2030, which applies to all countries at all levels of development, taking into account their different capacities and circumstances, and the fact that LAs have an important role to play for the localisation of the SDGs;
- the 2016 global strategy for the EU's foreign and security policy, which provides an overall vision for integrated worldwide engagement and sets out the EU's plans to address priority issues such as energy, security, migration, resilience and climate change;
- the 2017 European Consensus for Development, which acknowledges the importance of LAs' involvement in achieving the SDGs in general and sustainable cities in particular;
- the 2013 Communication on *Empowering LAs in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes*, through which the EU aims to promote the role of LAs and their associations at global, regional and national levels as policy- and decision-makers, in favour of transparent and accountable policy-making and service delivery at local level;
- the 2013 conclusions of the Council of the European Union, which welcome the Commission's proposal for working with ALAs at sub-national, national, regional and international levels;
- the 2018 Commission staff working document on *Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries*<sup>4</sup>, which discusses how EU external policy and cooperation contributes in cities to the implementation of Agenda 2030, the New Urban Agenda, the New European Consensus on Development and the EU's approach to resilience;
- the 2018 Council conclusions on cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries, which underline that sustainable urban development and inclusive, balanced, integrated territorial and urban policies are essential for achieving SDG 11 ('make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable') and all the other SDGs;
- the gender action plan III (2021-2024), in particular the commitment to enable the conditions for the equal participation of women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity in decision –making;
- the 2021 Communication on *Strengthening the EU's contribution to rules-based multilateralism*, in particular the commitment to truly inclusive multilateralism where the voices of civil society, local authorities, private sector, etc. count.

<sup>4</sup> Brussels, 18.5.2018 SWD (2018) 269

## 2.2. PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Despite being increasingly recognised as development actors, ALAs still face significant constraints in contributing effectively to good governance and inclusive development, and providing their members with adequate services. This is mainly due to the lack of adequate institutional/organisational capacities and human/financial resources.

To address these challenges, the action will focus on ALAs' main functions, which include:

- (i) experience- and knowledge-sharing with a view to enhancing LAs' capacities, including those allowing more participation by women, young people, people with disabilities and marginalised groups;
- (ii) coordination and providing a platform for discussion among members;
- (iii) quality supervision of LAs' performance in local policy-making and service delivery;
- (iv) promotion of gender equality and women's participation in local decision-making;
- (v) promotion and coordination of participative local development plans;
- (vi) advocacy of members' interests in national policy dialogues with central governments and other national stakeholders, and in regional and international forums.

The action is aimed at building partnerships through a multi-stakeholder approach involving the following partners:

- LAs (duty-bearer) – public institutions with legal personality, a component of the state structure below the level of central government and accountable to citizens. They are the backbone of democratic systems of governance and, although their mandates vary from country to country, have historically been responsible for urban planning and service delivery;
- global, regional and national associations of local authorities (ALAs) (duty-bearer) – umbrella organisations based on membership and representativeness at sub-national, national, sub-continental, continental and international level. ALAs should be organised as autonomous entities in accordance with the legislation in force in the country of registration. National ALAs may be composed of a representative body elected by its member LAs and a permanent secretariat;
- central government institutions (duty-bearer) have a responsibility for helping LAs fulfil their mandates and strengthen local service delivery;
- CSOs are key partners, given their complementary scope of action and the role they play in responding to citizens' needs;
- private sector – local service providers benefit from and contribute to the action. Partnerships with the private sector could allow municipalities to develop local economic development strategies that combine local skills, resources and ideas to stimulate the local economy.

## 3. DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

### 3.1. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The overall objective (impact) of this action is to improve the enabling environment for LAs by supporting the improvement of multi-level governance through partnerships with the UCLG-A and the UCLG, in order to increase their transparency, accountability, advocacy capacities and empowerment. This will enable the ALAs to play their role and to contribute to policy-making on the development agenda and policy implementation processes, in particular in relation to the localisation of the SDGs.

The specific(s) objective(s) (outcomes) are to:

1. improve global and regional ALAs' capacities, including those enabling them to be 'socially responsible' (i.e. uphold all human rights, transparency, accountability, non-discrimination and participation principles);
2. improve the role played by global and regional ALAs in contributing to the regional and global development agenda.

The outputs contributing to the corresponding specific objectives (outcomes) are:

- 1.1 Institutional, operational and financial capacities of global and regional ALAs are strengthened;
- 1.2 Global and regional ALA members benefit from improved services;
- 2.1 Increased contribution of global and regional ALAs to regional and global policy implementation processes, including at EU level;

### 3.2. INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES

#### Activities relating to output 1.1:

- Training and technical support put in place to build ALAs' institutional and operational capacities to fulfil their functions *vis-à-vis* their members in line with human rights-based principles (respect of all rights, non-discrimination, accountability, transparency and participation);
- Institutional and organisational capacity strengthening (including gender aspects).

#### Activities relating to output 1.2:

- Facilitating experience- and knowledge-sharing within and among ALAs, particularly with a view to enhancing their members' capacities, including in terms of women empowerment;
- Improving ALAs' peer-to-peer learning (e.g. UCLG-A's African Local Government Academy (ALGA); in the field of women's empowerment, peer learning could also involve women local political leaders on gender issues such as best practices relating to work-life balance, gender budgeting, etc.);
- Design and implementation of networking and gender-sensitive communication strategies.

#### Activities relating to output 2.1:

- Supporting advocacy initiatives of regional and/or global ALAs to act jointly as strategic partners for key policy-makers;
- Global and regional ALAs intervene in key global and EU policy-making mechanisms and processes, such as the Policy Forum for Development.

#### Activities relating to output 2.2:

- Supporting initiatives (workshops, events, etc.) of regional and/or global ALAs to formulate policies on SDG localisation;
- Using ALAs as mediators in organising regional and global debates linked to local realities and communities;
- Facilitating awareness-raising campaigns on decentralisation reform and local/urban development.

### 3.3. MAINSTREAMING

Mainstreaming in AAPs is very general and may be ensured before the mandatory analysis at action level. This section is based on the mainstreaming annex. We suggest keeping it.

#### **Environmental protection & climate change**

This action will promote the role LAs play in facing the challenges posed by environmental degradation and climate change and in building resilience to the increasing occurrence of climate extreme events. The ALAs will be supported in their advocacy role on climate change and environmental issues in global and regional debates, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (CoP) and the Covenant of Mayors. ALAs will seek to strengthen their members' capacities, especially cities' capacities to address specific environmental challenges such as urban mobility, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. LAs in cities will therefore be prompted to take action and integrate urban environmental issues in their local development plans, identify and avoid carbon-locking decisions infrastructure, launch and engage in stakeholder dialogues covering climate and environmental issues, support transitions to a low-carbon, climate-resilient, green and circular economy and promote green and blue infrastructure.

#### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per the OECD gender DAC codes identified in Section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. Accordingly, it will promote women's representation and role in decision-making processes where ALAs are involved and within LAs and ALAs at national level. Building on past experience and practice, the ALAs will integrate gender issues and women's rights in their policies, programmes and advocacy activities, and in their conferences and debates on development issues. Attention will be paid to the ALAs' gender forums, such as the UCLG Standing Committee on Gender Equality and the UCLG-A's network of African elected women, *REseau des Femmes Elues Locales d'Afrique* (REFELA). The action will strengthen gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, and support processes to remove obstructions in achieving equality dynamics based on norms providing equal access to urban local

decision-making, local governance and implementation, assets, benefits, service delivery and employment, and related salaries.

### Human rights and democracy

LAs and ALAs contribute to the promotion of human rights and democracy by virtue of their role and mandate. They are important players in enhancing local democracy based on representation and accountability. They are also guarantors of the respect of human rights at local level.

### 3.4. RISKS AND LESSONS LEARNT

Category	Risks	Likelihood (high/medium/low)	Impact (high/medium/low)	Mitigating measures
External environment	Weak (administrative, legal and financial) national enabling environment in partner countries, preventing ALAs from working with LAs	M	M	EU Delegations to engage on enabling environment through policy dialogue at all levels. Commission and global and regional ALAs to tailor interventions on the basis of proper assessments at country level.
People and organisation	Weak capacities of global and regional ALAs Failure to adhere to human rights, conflict- and gender-sensitivity requirements and 'leave no-one behind' principle	L	H	Experience from first generation of FPAs with ALAs has improved environment and strengthened ALAs' capacities. This needs to be consolidated further. Thorough gender, human rights and context analyses and regular reflections on how to implement relevant recommendations. Monitor implementation of 'do no harm' principle.
Planning, processes and systems	Mismatch between objectives set by Commission and global and regional ALAs	L	M	Strengthened consultation and cooperation between EU and global and regional ALAs through established forums (e.g. Policy Forum for Development and Forum of Cities and Regions for Development Cooperation).

#### Lessons learnt:

The intermediary and final evaluations of the 'Development Cooperation Instrument' programme to support LAs in 2014-2020 identified strategic achievements (e.g. FPAs and LAs' substantial contribution to the elaboration of Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda) that helped boost the role of LAs as development and political actors. The relationship between the EU and ALAs shifted from being one of donor-beneficiary to strategic engagement. The 'CSOs-LAs' thematic programme offered useful channels to involve hard-to-reach groups and deliver responses to local needs through the components managed by the EU Delegations. It gave bilateral cooperation stronger leverage through its complementarity with geographical programmes and other EU financing instruments.

This has been confirmed in 2021 by the final evaluation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) FPA, which highlighted that:

- the partnership architecture (institutional, operational and financial arrangements) has provided suitable conditions to empower global and regional/continental ALAs, in particular their capacity to fulfil their mandate (representation, advocacy, service provision to members);
- FPAs and the corresponding strategic grant agreements (SGAs) are instrumental to implementing the strategic partnership. They act at two complementary levels:
  - the SGA provides additional funds to ALAs; and

- the 6-year FPAs provide (beyond its political dimension) enough time to implement complex activities and consolidate outputs and results.

There are strong leverage effects and interactions between the two instruments.

The strategic partnership has boosted and developed ALAs' advocacy strategies at global, regional and national levels. As a result, during the evaluation period, ALAs gained and secured influence in key global debates on worldwide challenges and in key EU policy-making mechanisms. However, to increase effective influence, ALAs expect more political support from their EU partner.

The strategic partnership has provided the ALAs with a significant opportunity to design and launch new and ambitious initiatives, such as the ALGA (launched under the UCLG-A's SGAs). These initiatives are instrumental to the achievement of an important part of the partnership's objectives, namely the strengthening of LAs' capacities to better fulfil their mandate in EU partner countries.

In view of the above, the following recommendations are reflected in this action document:

- provide services to strengthen LAs and national ALAs' technical capacity to fulfil their mandate, boosting their access to learning, knowledge, sharing, peer2peer and decentralised cooperation modalities;
- create tools and launch practices to induce synergy among LAs and ALAs within a network, beyond the great diversity and propensity to dispersion;
- provide ALAs with technical support to help them promote, actively engage in and influence multi-level, multi-stakeholder dialogue mechanisms in regional and global spheres;
- create and develop advocacy mechanisms to ensure that the diverse and dispersed LAs make their positions heard with one strong voice as the LA constituency, at the right moment, to the right interlocutors and in the right forums.

### 3.5. INTERVENTION LOGIC

The intervention logic for this action is that regional and global ALAs are gradually gaining prominence in the formulation and implementation of policies and agreements connected to the international development agenda, bringing forward local concerns and priorities, and supporting actions through knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning.

EU policy documents recognise that ALAs are in a unique position to play this role of ensuring connections between citizens and the lowest tier of the government structure. However, despite being increasingly recognised as development actors, ALAs (at global, regional and national level) still face significant constraints to their ability to contribute effectively to good governance and inclusive development, and to provide their members with adequate services. This is partly due to insufficient institutional/organisational capacities and human/financial resources.

Through the 'global challenges' programme, the EU aims to strengthen representative, membership-based regional and global ALAs, in order to maximise the effectiveness of their work as development actors and partners in global/regional (including EU) policy-making on development-related topics.

More specifically, under the 2021 AAP and the 2021-2027 MIP, the EU is maintaining support that enables five global and regional ALAs to play their role in favour of enhanced governance and more effective local development outcomes.

This action is aimed at consolidating LAs as an accountable, autonomous and responsive sphere of government, instrumental to state building and the rule of law, deepening local democratic governance, building trust between citizens, public authorities and multilateral organisations, and responding to public demand for improved access to basic services and living conditions, through the mobilisation of natural, social, economic and cultural resources for sustainable development.

Global and regional ALAs are supported at institutional and operation level (specific objective 1), giving them the means and skills to act as representatives in international forums, i.e. improve their advocacy capacity (specific objective 2), and to ensure their effectiveness on behalf of their members (specific objective 1).

The implementation phase seeks to foster the sharing of knowledge and experience to enhance members' capacities (specific objective 1). This will enable national ALAs to represent LAs' interests through dialogue with central government.

### 3.6. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

At action level, the indicative logframe should have a maximum of 10 expected results (impact/outcome(s)/output(s)).

It constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. If baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be given for each indicator on signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediate targets (milestones) for the output and outcome indicators where relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action, depending on the different implementation arrangements.

The activities, expected outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated in the course of the action without the need to amend the Financing Decision.

Results	Results chain (@) Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@) (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
<b>Impact</b>	Further improve enabling environment for LAs by supporting improvement of multi-level governance through partnerships with UCLG-A and UCLG in order to increase their transparency, accountability, advocacy capacities and empowerment. This will enable ALAs to play their role and contribute to policy-making on development agenda and policy implementation, in particular in relation to localisation of SDGs.	1 Number of policy papers acknowledging importance of ALAs as development actors	1 Commission Communication, May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final)	1 Policy papers acknowledging importance of ALAs as development actors (by 2024)	1 2	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Capacities of global and regional ALAs have improved	1.1 Number of members attending workshops organised by global and regional ALAs (broken down by sex). 1.2 Number of members taking part in peer-to-peer exchanges organised by global and regional ALAs	1.1 Commission Communication, May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final) 1.2 2018 Commission SWD on <i>Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries</i>	1. 11 000 members attending workshops organised by global/regional ALAs (by 2024) 1.2 500 members attending peer-to-peer exchanges organised by global/regional ALAs (by 2024)	1.1 Interim and final reports submitted by global/regional ALAs 1.1 Participants lists from workshops organised by global/regional ALAs 1.2 Interim and final reports submitted by global/regional ALAs 1.2 Participants lists from peer-to-peer exchanges organised by global/regional ALAs	
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Role played by global/regional ALAs in contributing to	2.1 Number of policy documents and position papers drafted by	2.1. Commission Communication, May	2.1 30 policy documents and position papers (by 2024)	2.1 Interim and final reports submitted by global/regional ALAs	

	regional/global development agenda has improved	global/regional ALAs to influence policy dialogues at international and EU levels	2013 (COM(2013) 280 final) 2.2 2018 Commission SWD on <i>Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries</i>		2.2 UCLG and UCLG-A websites	
<b>Output 1 (relating to outcome 1)</b>	1.1 Institutional, operational and financial capacities of global/regional ALAs were strengthened	1.1.1 Number of statutory meetings and events organised annually by UCLG and UCLG-A (percentage of female participants)  1.1.2 Number of actions (projects) implemented annually by UCLG and UCLG-A  1.1.3 Percentage of membership fees collected annually by UCLG and UCLG-A	1.1.1 Commission Communication, May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final) 1.1.2 2018 Commission SWD on <i>Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries</i>	1.1.1 Statutory meetings/events organised annually by UCLG and UCLG-A (by 2024)  1.1.2 Five actions (projects) implemented annually by UCLG and UCLG-A  1.1.3 5% increase in membership fees collected annually by UCLG and UCLG-A	1.1.1 Interim and final reports submitted by UCLG and UCLG-A  1.1.2 UCLG and UCLG-A websites  1.1.3 UCLG and UCLG-A's accounting and financial documents	
<b>Output 2 (relating to outcome 1)</b>	1.2 Services provided by UCLG and UCLG-A to their members improved	1.2.1 Number of workshops organised by global/regional ALAs (percentage of women participants) 1.2.2 Number of peer exchanges organised by global/regional ALAs (percentage of female participants)	1.2.1 Commission Communication, May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final) 1.2.2 2018 Commission SWD on <i>Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries</i>	1.2.1 1 000 members attending workshops organised by global/regional ALAs (by 2024) 1.2.2 500 members attending peer-to-peer exchanges organised by global/regional ALAs (by 2024)	1.2.1 Interim and final reports submitted by global/regional ALAs 1.2.1 Participants lists from workshops organised by global/regional ALAs 1.2.2 Interim and final reports submitted by global/regional ALAs	

					1.2.2 Participants lists from peer-to-peer exchanges organised by global/regional ALAs	
<b>Output 1 (relating to outcome 2)</b>	2.1 Contribution of global/regional ALAs to regional/global policy implementation processes, including at EU level, increased	2.1.1 Number of ALAs drafting policy recommendations and participating in negotiations on development issues with support of action	2.1.1 Commission Communication, May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final) 2.1.2 2018 Commission SWD on <i>Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries</i>	2.1.1 30 ALAs drafting policy recommendations	2.1.1 Minutes of meetings 2.1.2 Participants lists from meetings 2.1.3 UCLG and UCLG-A websites	
<b>Output 2 (relating to outcome 2)</b>	2.2 Advocacy of global/regional ALAs for effective localisation of SDGs increased	2.2.1 Number of annual international meetings organised by global/regional ALAs on localisation of SDGs with support of action (percentage of female participants) 2.2.2 Number of annual regional meetings organised by global/regional ALAs on localisation of SDGs with support of action (percentage of female participants)	2.2.1 Commission Communication, May 2013 (COM(2013) 280 final) 2.2.2 2018 Commission SWD on <i>Cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries</i>	2.2.1 One annual international meeting organised on localisation of SDGs 2.2.2 One annual regional meeting organised on localisation of SDGs	2.2.1 Interim and final reports submitted by UCLG and UCLG-A 2.2.2 Interim and final reports submitted by UCLG and UCLG-A	

## 4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1. FINANCING AGREEMENT

It is not envisaged that a financing agreement will be concluded with the partner country to implement this action.

### 4.2. INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The indicative operational implementation period for this action, during which the activities described in Section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 24 months from the date on which the Commission adopts this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

### 4.3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Commission will ensure compliance with the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties, including review procedures, where appropriate, and EU restrictive measures<sup>5</sup>.

#### 4.3.1. Direct management (grants)

##### Grants: (direct management)

##### (a) Purpose of grant(s)

The main objective is to maintain involvement with the ALAs with which the EU has an FPA, i.e. for this action, the UCLG and the UCLG-A, so as to contribute to the implementation of EU policy on the empowerment of local actors. The support improves the effectiveness of their work as development actors in their own right, helps to empower them to be able to exercise their main functions and build the capacities of their member LAs, and improves their advocacy capacity in voicing the needs of local communities in regional and international dialogues relating mainly to regional integration processes and international development agenda/commitments.

SGAs will be awarded under this action as follows:

- (i) UCLG (International Secretariat) – operating grant, which can last for a maximum 12 months.
- (ii) UCLG-A – operating grant, which can last for a maximum of 12 months.

The results will contribute to the two specific objectives aimed at improving global and regional ALAs' capacity to provide services to their members and to represent the voice of their members in international and regional forums, so as to influence the development agenda.

##### (b) Type of applicants targeted

Under this action, the applicants targeted are global and regional ALAs operating in partner countries and at EU level.

##### (c) Justification of a direct grant

The FPAs signed with five ALAs in 2015 (to be renewed in 2021) are based on a thorough assessment of their representativeness as membership-based organisations whose main institutional objective is to represent their members in regional and global dialogues. The conclusion of the FPAs followed an assessment of their eligibility (including their *de facto* monopoly status) and a formal negotiation.

The February 2015 negotiation report and the 2015-2020 FPAs provided for the possibility of concluding SGAs to achieve common political priorities and objectives.

The conditions set when the FPAs were first concluded (in 2015) have not changed. Furthermore, independent monitors have confirmed that the agreed FPA provisions are appropriate, as is the implementation of the partnerships through SGAs.

<sup>5</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu). The sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying sanctions regimes. The data is based on legal acts published in the *Official Journal* (OJ). In the event of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, the OJ prevails.

The award of a second generation of grants for the new FPA period is therefore considered justified.

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer, the grants may be awarded to the UCLG and UCLG-A without a call for proposals, and this is justified because the beneficiaries are in a legal or factual monopoly situation, in accordance with Article 195(c) of the Financial Regulation.

**(d) Exception to the non-retroactivity of costs**

The Commission does not authorise the eligibility of costs prior to the submission of the grant application, but only from the date of the signature of the grant contract. Moreover, under operating grants, the costs may not be eligible before the starting date of the beneficiary’s financial year covered (and the grant agreement must be signed within 6 months of that starting date).

**4.4. SCOPE OF GEOGRAPHICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR PROCUREMENT AND GRANTS**

The geographical eligibility conditions in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of the origin of supplies purchased, as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents, apply.

The Commission’s authorising officer may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

**4.5. INDICATIVE BUDGET**

<b>Indicative budget components</b>	<b>EU contribution (EUR)</b>	<b>Third-party contribution (identify currency)</b>
<b>Implementation arrangements</b> — see Section 4.3		
Grants (direct management) — see Section 4.3.1		
4.3.1 — Direct operating grant through FPA with UCLG	EUR 2 200 000	N.A
4.3.1 — Direct operating grant through FPA with UCLG-A	EUR 2 800 000	N.A
<b>Evaluation</b> — see Section 5.2 <b>Audit</b> — see Section 5.3	To be covered by another decision	N.A.
<b>Contingencies</b>	N.A	N.A.
<b>Totals</b>	EUR 5 000 000	N.A

**4.6. ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The FPAs and related SGAs will be managed by Commission HQ.

**5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

**5.1. MONITORING AND REPORTING**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner’s responsibilities. To this end, the implementing partner must establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and produce regular (not less than annual) progress reports and final reports. Every report must provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced and the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes), as measured by corresponding indicators, including in terms of human rights and gender equality, using as reference the logframe matrix. SDG and GAP III indicators will be preferred.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits, both through its own staff and through independent consultants that it recruits directly for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

*Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:*

A dedicated monitoring and evaluation mechanism (MEM), contracted through the support measures of the ‘global challenges’ programme, will be put in place. It will monitor and evaluate the FPAs and related SGAs signed with ALAs. The team of experts to be recruited should be responsible for finding baseline data and assessing the extent to which the action has achieved the expected results and the expected overall objective. A reference group composed of representatives from the Commission (in principle from DG INTPA) and FPA ALA beneficiaries will support the external evaluators. The Commission, as contracting authority, will set and manage the work of the MEM. The aim of the reference group, as the political and technical steering committee of the MEM, will be to guide the work of the MEM and to help the contractor to set clear indicators to assess ALAs’ performances and discuss results.

## **5.2. EVALUATION**

In view of the nature of the action, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out for this action or its components, via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

The envisaged mid-term evaluation will be carried out for learning and other purposes, in particular with respect to the improvement of ALA members’ capacities.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision). It will also be gender-sensitive and assess the effective integration of relevant cross-cutting issues and implementation of the five working principles of the human rights-based approach, in terms of process and outcomes. In addition, the active and meaningful participation of all identified stakeholders, including rights-holders, should be ensured throughout the evaluation process.

The evaluation reports will be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination<sup>6</sup>. The implementing partner and the Commission will analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on follow-up action to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if appropriate, the reorientation of the project.

## **5.3. AUDIT AND VERIFICATIONS**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

## **6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials relating to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States.

However, action documents for specific sectoral programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in cooperation facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

<sup>6</sup> See best [practice of evaluation dissemination](#).

## APPENDIX 1: REPORTING IN OPSYS

An intervention (also referred to as a ‘project’ or ‘programme’) is the operational entity associated with a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework and aimed at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the Commission’s operational follow-up of its external development operations. As such, they constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary interventions are contracts or groups of contracts producing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other reportable-result contracts is considered a ‘support entity’. The sum of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the institution.

Primary interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or HQ operational unit).

The level of the primary intervention is set in the related action document and is revisable; it can be a(n) (group of) action(s) or a (group of) contract(s).

Tick in the left-hand column one of the three options for the level of definition of the primary intervention(s) identified in this action.

In the case of ‘Group of actions level’, add references to this action and other actions concerning the same primary intervention.

In the case of ‘Contract level’, add the reference to the corresponding budgetary items in point 4.6 (Indicative budget).

<b>Option 1: Action level</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
<b>Option 2: Group of actions level</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Action reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#): <Present action> <Other action>
<b>Option 3: Contract level</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single contract 1	Direct operating grant through FPA with UCLG
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single contract 2	Direct operating grant through FPA with UCLG-A