



NGF-FORAF DESK REPORT
ON
THE 78TH UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA) EVENTS

NEW YORK, USA

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Executive Summary

This report seeks to provide an overview of the events the NGF and FORAF/UCLG Africa participated in during the 78th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) meetings held in New York, USA from September 16th -20th 2023.

Local and regional governments have been at the forefront of policies supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, caring for people and the planet, through public service provision, local policy fostering social inclusion, ecological transformation, and the creation of alliances and partnerships. The Local and Regional Government Forum (LRGF) at the SDG Action Weekend highlighted their commitments of the local and regional government constituency towards the 2030 Agenda, with a special focus on local acceleration and local accountability through the lenses of the 12 transitions and crosscutting enablers of the High-Impact Initiatives and their relationship with action taking place at sub-national level. A special emphasis was placed on inspiring, scaling up, and demonstrating that a new trajectory for the SDGs is possible by showcasing how local and regional governments are driving progress on the goals. To this end, coalitions led by the constituency that have multiplier effects and build on local global partnerships, solidarity, international cooperation and subsidiarity were presented.

Other activities at the sidelines of the UNGA included, SDG Summit Mobilization Day, US-Africa Municipal and Sub-Sovereign Investors Forum (organized by UCLGA) where the FORAF President (Dr. Fayemi) made a presentation advocating for increased investment in subnational entities, DEVEX (with presentations by NewGlobe) and having the NGF Chairman (Governor Kwara) in a panel session on “*Transforming Education*”, The Nigeria Economic Growth & Trade Summit (organized by the Nigeria Governors’ Wives Forum) aptly themed “*Stemming Migration Flows by Providing Basic Needs*” which had in attendance by members of the Nigeria Governors’ Forum, specifically Governors of Kwara (Chairman), Lagos, Kaduna, Oyo, Akwa Ibom, and Gombe.

In conclusion, although the world is still far off track from achieving the SDGs, significant and sustainable change can only be achieved when both national and subnational entities go beyond incremental changes to transform our societies and achieve the 2030 agenda. The overarching message at UNGA78 was a reaffirming commitment to a world without poverty and hunger, that addresses the challenges and opportunities of demographic change and urbanization, the curbing of inequalities within and among territories, to empower women and girls, youth, and historically marginalized groups, and achieve equality; to resolve to preserve our ecosystems, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and transform our relationship with nature; and a commitment to rebuilding trust between communities and public institutions.

Eghosa M. Omoigui, MBA

Head, Stakeholder Relationship & SDGs

1. Local and Regional Governments Forum: SDG Summit Mobilization Day

The event was led by the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments, facilitated by United Cities and Local Governments, UN DESA, UN-Habitat, UNDP and the Local2030 Coalition.

High-impact localization policies and partnerships for the goals currently in place and new innovative commitments were announced as well as the specific localization needs and aspirations of local and regional governments to bring SDG implementation back on track by looking directly at the SDG Summit's political declaration.

In addition, the Forum contributed to the High-Impact Initiative on SDG Localization.

Objectives:

The objectives of the Local and Regional Government Forum at the SDG Action Weekend were to:

1. Announce voluntary actionable and scalable commitments by local and regional governments towards the acceleration of the 2030 Agenda through the lenses of the 12 transitions and crosscutting enablers of the high-impact initiatives.
2. Present existing coalitions led by the local and regional government constituency that have multiplier effects to contribute to the High-Impact Initiative on SDG Localization.
3. Illustrate high-impact localization policies from local and regional governments to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.
4. Launch the constituency's political declaration with the priorities and aspirations of local and regional governments towards the SDG Summit and the UNGA high level week.



2. SDG Action Weekend

To maximize the Summit's impact, the United Nations Secretary-General convened an SDG Action Weekend, which generated opportunities for stakeholders, UN entities, and Member States to convene inside the United Nations Headquarters and set out specific commitments and contributions to drive SDG transformation between now and 2030. The SDG Action Weekend helped ramp-up momentum towards a successful SDG Summit and facilitated the contribution of all relevant actors to the SDG Summit.

The weekend generated opportunities for the engagement of Member States, relevant Intergovernmental Organizations, and other stakeholders in the lead up to the SDG Summit. Key to the UCLG were discussions around how to actualize the goal of SDG 11 (Sustainable cities). Various presentations indicated that a huge amount of investment is required. There were several examples in where subnational entities have localized the SDGs. For instance, SDG 13: Freetown, Serie lone, has successfully planted 1 million trees within the last 3 years, and have stretched their initial target of 2023 to 5 million trees by 2030. Thus creating 1,500 green jobs.

SDG 4: Buenos Aires presented reports on Nature based solutions for climate mitigation through the preservation of fauna and green areas.



UN Secretary General addressing the SDG Summit

3. DEVEX: Transforming Education (In partnership with NewGlobe)

The event explored outcomes to help improve the quality of education in low- and middle-income countries. It also shed light on what is needed to equip everyone from teachers to education ministries with the data tools needed to drive improved learning outcomes for all. SDG 4 is quality and accessible education: By 2035 there will be more youth entering unemployment. The Chairman stated that funding and investment in education is the key to stem the tide. In Kwara state, the government is on track to putting technology in every classroom. He stated that yes, it is expensive and will need to be scaled for wider reach, but the first step is to ensure teachers are equipped with the right tools. i.e. a tablet.

In Nigeria, Kwara has led in the innovation using data to reduce digital illiteracy with the launching of KwaraLearn in April 2022, having leveraged the experiences of Edo and Lagos States which were the pioneers in the e-Learning platforms. The IFCs are saying there is need to localize aid, and States need to increase the use of domestic resources to mobilize development. The world is off track on achieving SDG 4, and what needs to be done is for development finance agencies to focus on high-impact areas for innovation investment that would outperform the current GDP ratio to education.

Education Cannot Wait:

222 million children and youth are currently in armed conflict around the world, victims of environmental disaster areas who are out of school or under learned. Financing is a challenge, as US\$1.5bn is required to lift 20 million children out of uneducated category by 2026, out of which US\$950m was pledged during UNGA78. However, 10x of what is budgeted is needed to fully eliminate the gap.

From the natural disasters and ongoing conflicts across the globe, there is a correlation between climate change and education.



DEVEX: Governor Kwara (NGF, Chair) in a panel session

For further insights to the NGF Chairman’s comments and contribution to the session, kindly refer to Appendix 1: DEVEX: Transforming Education: Overcoming Crisis, Improving Learning Outcomes

4. UCLGA: US-Africa Municipal and Sub-Sovereign Investors Forum

The Inaugural US-Africa Municipal and Sub-Sovereign Investors Forum was held on September 18, 2023, at Wall Street Hotel, New York City, USA. The Forum was organized by the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa) in the framework and at the fringes of the September 2023 meetings of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The theme chosen for the Forum was ‘Investing for Local Impact’. The Forum brought together over one hundred delegates representing the UN agencies; African Union institutions; the US cooperation agencies; the US Association of Black Caucus State legislators; Africa and US Mayors and Leaders of Subnational and Local governments; Africa and US Development Finance Institutions; Africa and US Business community; investors, experts and professionals. In attendance were in person, the Mayor of the largest city in the US and the Mayor of the smallest city in the US, who is also historically the youngest mayor in the US aged 18 years on appointment. The Forum was structured around three sessions: the first session was the official opening; the second session addressed Market Practice Exchange, Collaboration and Investment Opportunities in Africa; the third session was about Investors’ response to the call for investment in African cities and territories.

The official opening was marked by an inspiring welcoming address and opening statement by **Hon Eric Adams, Mayor New York City**. He highlighted, among others, the fact that Mayors of the four largest cities in the US were run by African Americans. He therefore underscored the importance of bringing delegations of business leaders from these cities to invest in Africa; “to Invest in order to improve the living conditions of the people in Africa, not only to Exploit and Extract value at the detriment of the African people”. Keynotes were made by leaders of subnational entities as well as organized private sector. They included: **Hon. Shawyn Patterson-Howard, Mayor of Mont Vermont, NY**, and President of African American Mayors Association (AAMA), **Hon. Laura Hall**, President, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, **Dr. Julius Garvey**, US Surgeon and Investor, **Mr. Mohan Vivekanandan**, Group Executive, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), **Mr. Solomon Quaynor**, Vice-President for Private Sector, Infrastructure and Industrialization African Development Bank (AfDB), **Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas**, CEO of the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD and **Dr. Fayemi Kayode**, President of the Forum of Regions of Africa, FORAF.

In his presentation, Dr. Fayemi indicated that Nigeria needs at least \$3trillion to close its infrastructure gap, as an investment not a grant. To address the infrastructure gap, Nigeria has established Infrastructure Corporation (InfraCorp), a government-backed infrastructure investment vehicle established and co-owned by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) and Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA). For Dr Fayemi Kayode, the Africa Territorial Trade and Investment Agency (ATIA) being set up by UCLG Africa as a special purpose vehicle to be the appropriate framework to channel investment and funds to African cities and subnational and local governments,

should be considered as a key instrument to foster municipal and sub-sovereign investment. “Africa is ready and open for investments not aid”.



New York Mayor, Mr. Eric Adams



FORAF President, Dr. Fayemi



Panelists at the Opening Ceremony

For further details on the Investors Forum, and the FORAF President’s comments and contributions, kindly refer to Appendix 2: US-Africa Municipal and Sub-Sovereign Investors Forum Report, and Appendix 3: FORAF President’s Opening Remarks.

Updates on ATTIA: African Territorial Trade and Investment Agency

Below are specific updates on ATTIA as relating to NGF being a member of FORAF.

As a member of FORAF, NGF is expected to mobilize its members so that the States subscribe to ATTIA and become members of the cooperative society.

Access to funding will be by four financing options:

1. On balance sheets funding,
2. Off balance sheets financing,
3. Green Climate Fund financing, and
4. investment grants,

Clarity was made on who will guarantee the sub-national municipal bonds proposed under the ATTIA. The bonds will be guaranteed by ATTIA and international financial institutions. Guarantees will be offered not only to ATTIA for bond issues, but also to the member subnational governments that will benefit from ATIA loans.

How will Nigeria's states and local authorities access this instrument?

To have access to ATTIA, you have to be a member of ATTIA by paying your share of the capital. This participation amounts to 100,000 euros for each member.

5. UNGA78: CitiIQ Presentation on SDG Tracking for Sub-nationals

The SDG Desk of the NGF Secretariat is exploring a collaboration with Citi IQ, a Canadian based firm with expertise in city data providing services for several cities globally and their correlations to SDGs. Several meetings have been held since July 2023 to understand and customize the solution. A summary of the need analysis is detailed in Appendix 4: Measuring SDG Performances for Sub nationals.

The Managing Director of CitiIQ was at the UNGA and was scheduled to make a demo presentation to the NGF Chairman at the sidelines of the NGWF event, on the data driven solution. However, due to the unavailability of a meeting room at the Nigerian Embassy this presentation was rescheduled to a virtual meeting at a date after UNGA.



MD/CEO CitiIQ, Don Simmons with NGF Head, SDG and Technical Assistant to NGF Chairman

6. UNGA78: The Nigeria Economic Growth & Trade Summit

The Nigeria Economic Growth & Trade Summit was organized by the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum and was aptly themed “*Stemming Migration Flows by Providing Basic Needs*”.

The summit held at the Nigerian Embassy and had in attendance by members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, specifically Governors of Kwara (Chairman), Lagos, Kaduna, Oyo, Akwa Ibom, and Gombe.



Attending the Opening Ceremony of the summit with the First Lady of Nigeria: Governor Oyo, Lagos, Kwara (Chairman), Kaduna, Gombe and Akwa Ibom

For further details on the NGWF event, kindly refer to Appendix 5.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

- The next Executive Council and PAC meeting is scheduled for November 6-7, 2023, in Lagos. This event is organized by ALGON President in collaboration with UCLGA Secretariat.
- Intra Africa Trade Fair (IATF) organized by Afrexim bank is holding from November 9-15, 2023, in Cairo, Egypt
- 3rd Africa Sub-sovereign governments Network Conference (AfSNET) is holding on November 14, 2023, at the sidelines of the IATF in Cairo, Egypt

Appendix

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Appendix 2: US-Africa Municipal and Sub-Sovereign Investors Forum Report

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Appendix 4: Measuring SDG Performances for Sub nationals.

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