



Forum Cities and Regions for International Partnerships

The role of Local and Regional Authorities in the Global Gateway:
Booklet on examples from practice

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Introduction

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the **9th Forum “Cities and Regions for International Partnerships”**, this year dedicated to the **contribution of Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) to the EU’s Global Gateway strategy, including in fragile contexts**. We warmly thank all representatives of local and regional governments, EU Delegations, European institutions, development finance institutions, and partners for joining us in Brussels to actively shape this important dialogue.

The Global Gateway is the European Union’s strategic offer for sustainable and responsible investments around the world. The implementation has made rapid progress in its first years and one insight has become increasingly evident: **investments are most impactful and sustainable when they are rooted in territories and shaped together with LRAs**. Across regions and sectors, meaningful engagement with LRAs is emerging as a key success factor, yet their potential role in the Global Gateway strategy and its 360-degree approach remains **largely underutilised**.

This booklet, which is derived from a larger research commissioned by DG INTPA and conducted by ECDPM, has been prepared to **support participants in navigating the Forum discussions**. It offers **insights from 46 Global Gateway initiatives across different sectors and regions** where LRAs are already engaged, directly or indirectly through complementary 360-degree projects, being as **consulted stakeholders, implementing partners, beneficiaries or even as lead governance actors**. These examples show that **territorial approaches work**: they reinforce ownership, improve service delivery for local communities, unlock private sector engagement, and strengthen resilience, even in fragile contexts.

There is however a huge **untapped potential**, due notably to several structural bottlenecks: limited decentralisation, restricted access to finance, capacity constraints at the local level and insufficient involvement of LRAs during the early planning and design stages of investments. At the same time, the analysis reveals **promising pathways: EFSD+ guarantees** unlocking local borrowing, **sub-sovereign lending** through development banks, **Financing-not-Linked-to-Cost (FNLC)** grants at the local level and **decentralised cooperation** schemes with European local authorities are opening new opportunities for enhanced LRA engagement in the roll-out of the Global Gateway.

The Forum builds on these findings. Through contributions of practical experiences, **targeted working groups and matchmaking opportunities**, we aim to move **from evidence to action**, identifying **where and how LRAs from partner countries and from Europe can scale up their contribution to the Global Gateway**, side by side with EU institutions, Member States, and other Team Europe partners.

We hope this booklet will **inspire exchange and cooperation** throughout the Forum and beyond. We wish you constructive discussions, new partnerships, and a successful Forum.

Acknowledgements

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The study has been conducted by Amandine Sabourin and Martina Sainaghi (TALD Facility). It is a living document, aiming at identifying Global Gateway projects, in which local and regional authorities have been involved.

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The analysis and views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not represent those of the European Commission, the European Committee of the Regions or any other institution. Any errors or omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

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List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AECID	Agencia Estatal Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo
AFD	Agence française de Développement
AICS	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
AIMF	Association internationale des maires francophones
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CIEDEL	Centre international d'Etudes pour le développement local
CLGF	Commonwealth local governments forum
CoG	Council of Governors (Kenya)
CoR	European Committee of the Regions
CRM	Critical Raw Materials
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUD	Communauté Urbaine de Douala
CUY	Communauté Urbaine de Yaoundé
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DC	Decentralised Cooperation
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
EFSD+	European Fund for Sustainable Development +
EIB	European Investment Bank
ENABEL	Belgian agency for international cooperation
ESG	Environmental, social and governance standards
EU	European Union
EUD	EU Delegation
FEC	Fonds d'équipement communal
FIIAPP	Fundación para Internacionalización de las Administraciones Públicas
FNLC	Financing not linked to cost
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
GAM	Greater Metropolitan Area - San José
GG	Global Gateway
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
ICCN	International Climate Councils Network (DRC)
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
INTPA	International Partnerships
JEFIC	Joint European Financiers for International Cooperation
KfW	Credit Institute for Reconstruction (Germany)
KSIP 2	Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project
Las	Local authorities
LRAs	Local and regional authorities

MS	Member states
NALAG	National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
PPP	Public private partnership
RMF+	Risk Management Framework+
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SECAP	Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (Jordan)
SLEC	Service Local Energie Climat (Morocco)
TAIEX	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGL	Unión Nacional de Gobiernos Locales (Costa Rica)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VNG	Association of Netherlands Municipalities

Argentina - Investment Agenda Global Gateway - Green Hydrogen in Argentina, with the provinces of Chubut, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego

In Argentina, the Global Gateway investment agenda on green hydrogen is designed to involve provincial governments at various stages while shaping the country's energy transition (€4 million project). The provinces Chubut, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego have been actively engaged through regular roundtables with the EU Delegation, contributing to regulatory development, planning, and coordination of the sector. Their role is pivotal in ensuring alignment between national strategies and local development plans, particularly in creating and implementing a regulatory framework for green hydrogen. Provincial authorities also benefit from a targeted capacity-building initiative, led by Spain and Germany's cooperation agencies, enabling them to strengthen public management, promote inter-ministerial coordination, and acquire the technical expertise needed to manage and regulate the sector in line with EU standards. Beyond governance, the programme invests in citizen awareness, knowledge transfer, and infrastructure optimisation, ensuring that provincial engagement translates into inclusive and sustainable green growth.

Not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme between Braga with Villa Maria; Cordoba (Spain) with Cordoba (Argentina); Avellaneda with the Comune di Pordenone.

- **Stakeholders involved:** provincial governments (Chubut, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego), Federación Argentina de Municipios (indirectly linked); European Commission, Spain (AECID, FIIAPP), France (AFD), Italy, Germany (GIZ).
- **Timeline:** not mentioned.
- **To know more:** [Large-scale green hydrogen project – Global Gateway \(Argentina, Morocco, Namibia\)](#), [Developing the sustainable lithium value chain in the Salta and Jujuy provinces in Argentina – Global Gateway \(EU\)](#)

Argentina – Sustainable Waste Management Project with the Province of Jujuy

As part of the Global Gateway portfolio in Argentina, the Sustainable Waste Management Project in the Province of Jujuy places local authorities at the centre of implementation. The province is the main partner, benefitting from a €44 million loan from the EIB and an €11.7 million contribution from the European Commission, with a sovereign guarantee from the national government.

The provincial government works in close coordination with all municipalities, ensuring that each develops and applies integrated waste management programmes. Through this project, local authorities are supported not only financially but also via technical assistance and capacity building, enabling them to phase out untreated waste dumping, improve recycling systems, and create jobs in waste treatment. The project illustrates how Argentina's federal framework allows subnational entities to access and manage international financing under the Global Gateway.

Not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme between Braga with Villa Maria; Cordoba (Spain) with Cordoba (Argentina); Avellaneda with the Comune di Pordenone.

- **Stakeholders involved:** Province of Jujuy (lead partner), European Commission, European Investment Bank (EIB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).
- **Timeline:** 2018-ongoing.
- **To know more:** [Jujuy Integrated Waste Management Project Fiche](#), [Integrated Waste Management Programme in Jujuy – EIB project pipeline](#)

Bolivia - Projects related to the exploitation of rare earths and other critical resources

In Bolivia, the EU is preparing the ground for Global Gateway investments in critical raw materials (CRM) by focusing on enabling the environment rather than direct project financing. Local authorities — including municipal governments, Indigenous autonomous authorities, and traditional community authorities — are central to this process. So far, they have been actively involved in preparatory work, such as structured dialogues, studies, and training, which map their mandates and strengthen their governance capacity. This engagement reflects the importance of LRAs in Bolivia in this sector, who hold significant legitimacy and the power to block or facilitate large-scale investments. Although no loans or grants are foreseen under this initiative, local authorities receive substantial non-financial support through capacity building in resource management, participatory planning, environmental and social standards, and citizen accountability. Their involvement ensures that any future investments in CRM are socially anchored, adapted to territorial needs, and aligned with the principles of environmental justice and respect for indigenous rights.

Though the CRM initiative itself does not include any DC mechanisms for the moment, there is a potential to build on over 30 years of municipal partnerships.

- Stakeholders involved: Indigenous Original Peasant Authorities, EUD, France (AFD), Sweden (SIDA), Spain (AECID).
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2026.

Brazil – Pará and Maranhão More Connected

The Pará and Maranhão More Connected GG programme invests over €311 million to expand sustainable connectivity in the Amazon, combining submarine cables, terrestrial networks, and SMART Nodes that link digital access with climate and seismic monitoring. The initiative is not only about infrastructure: it also builds state-level capacities in cybersecurity, digital governance, and the provision of inclusive public services, targeting in particular indigenous and low-income communities.

Thanks to Brazil's federal framework, the states of Pará and Maranhão are directly responsible for implementation and co-financing, demonstrating how subnational entities can engage in complex international partnerships under the Global Gateway. This creates tangible potential entry points also for European LRAs and businesses to collaborate on climate-smart digital services, e-government, and inclusive skills development.

Although not linked to the GG project, the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme has supported a partnership between the municipalities of Rio de Janeiro and Milan.

- Stakeholders involved: State of Pará (PRODEPA – Empresa de Tecnologia da Informação e Comunicação do Estado do Pará), State of Maranhão (ATI – Agência Estadual de Tecnologia da Informação do Maranhão), EC, France (AFD), IDB.
- Timeline: 2025-2031.
- To know more: [IDB Project fiche](#), [Signature Proparco partners with IDB Invest and BRK Ambiental Maranhão](#).

Cambodia - Bakheng Water Supply Project

In Cambodia, the Bakheng-3 Water Supply Project represents a major Global Gateway investment to respond to the rapidly growing demand for water in Phnom Penh (through an EC grant of €12 million and an AFD loan of €200 million). Building on the infrastructure delivered under Bakheng-1 and Bakheng-2, this new phase goes further by directly involving local actors in the governance and professionalisation of the water sector. The Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority (PPWSA) plays a central role in implementation and in managing the restructuring of the utility to ensure long-term sustainability of services. Local engagement is reinforced through the inclusion of the Phnom Penh Municipality in the project's Steering Committee, allowing local authorities to participate in strategic guidance and oversight. In parallel, the programme extends its reach nationally by providing capacity building and technical assistance to provincial water utilities, enhancing their ability to deliver reliable and climate-resilient water services. In this way, the project demonstrates how municipal-level ownership and professionalisation of services can be combined with national capacity-building to create a more integrated, efficient, and sustainable water sector.

- Stakeholders involved: Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority, Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, Phnom Penh Municipality, EC, France (AFD).
- Timeline: 2025-2031.
- To know more: [EIB Summary sheet](#), [Water treatment plant in Phnom Penh in Cambodia](#)

Cameroon - Waste & water management – Flood prevention and sanitation in Douala

The Waste and Water Management project in Douala focuses on improving flood prevention and sanitation across the city. With a total investment of €154 million—combining a €150 million AFD loan for urban drainage and a €4 million EU-funded grant for plastic waste and circular economy—the initiative aims to strengthen the city's resilience to flooding while enhancing infrastructure for sustainable waste disposal. The Communauté Urbaine de Douala (CUD) is the main local partner, responsible for planning and implementation. The CUD's tasks include strengthening administrative structures, managing stakeholder engagement, developing transport observatories, and structuring artisanal transport within formal systems.

The Waste and Water Management project will be implemented in close coordination with another EU-funded project on urban mobility, in which the CUD is also actively involved. This combination of transport reform, environmental management, and governance strengthening creates a model of multi-sectoral urban development where European LRAs and private actors can find multiple entry points from sharing expertise on urban mobility to partnering on recycling and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" on "Support to the urban communities of Douala and Yaoundé in the implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP)" involving the Communauté Urbaine de Douala, Communauté Urbaine de Yaoundé, Bordeaux Métropole

- Stakeholders involved: CUD, CUY, EC, France (AFD).
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2026.
- To know more: [Programme de Lutte contre les Inondations à Douala et à Yaoundé](#).

Cameroon - Support to Urban Mobility, to develop a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Yaoundé

The Communauté Urbaine de Yaoundé (CUY) plays a central role in the MoVE Yaoundé project, acting as the main local authority responsible for planning and coordinating the development of the Bus Rapid Transit system, with €10.87 million allocated for preparation and an estimated €150 million for the BRT investment. Its responsibilities include establishing and managing a Public Transport and Soft Mobility Unit, recruiting and supervising staff, and participating in technical studies covering concept design, environmental and social impact assessments, as well as preliminary planning.

The CUY is also tasked with ensuring that soft mobility and urban design standards are integrated throughout the project. Support to the CUY comes in the form of both financial and non-financial assistance: funding for technical studies and capacity-building is channelled through international partners, while technical assistance, project management support, and staff training strengthen the institution's capacity to manage complex urban mobility projects. Although peer-to-peer partnerships with other local authorities are not yet established, the CUY benefits from indirect knowledge exchange through international expertise, positioning it to play a long-term role in the project's successful implementation.

Not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" on "Support to the urban communities of Douala and Yaoundé in the implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP)" involving the Communauté Urbaine de Douala, Communauté Urbaine de Yaoundé, Bordeaux Métropole.

- Stakeholders involved: CUY, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, EC, Germany (BMZ, GIZ), France (AFD).
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2025.
- To know more: [MoVE Yaoundé](#), [Team Europe: MoVe Yaoundé](#).

Chad - TEI on Green secondary cities

The TEI on Green Secondary Cities supports Chad's secondary cities in building more sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient local economies. Local authorities play a central role: they validate and operationalise development plans, identify local priorities, and take ownership of investments. Under this TEI, the idea is to reinforce municipal governance and provide administrative, financial, and planning support, while also creating multi-actor consultation frameworks that link municipalities with national institutions, civil society, and the private sector. By strengthening agriculture and livestock value chains, the initiative stimulates local economies while improving access to basic services and promoting social inclusion. Importantly, it also fosters stronger ties between secondary cities and the N'Djamena-Douala corridor, showing how urban development can be linked to regional economic integration. The sustainable development of these cities is essential to the success of Global Gateway investments on the corridor, ensuring that local populations benefit fully while reducing risks of exclusion or instability.

- Stakeholders involved: Chad municipalities, EC, France, Spain, The Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Switzerland.
- Timeline: since 2021 (implementation ongoing).
- To know more: [Chad - Secondary Cities | Capacity4dev](#).

Costa Rica - Promoting sustainable urban mobility in the Greater Metropolitan Area of Costa Rica, including Electrification of San José's bus fleet (Flagship project)

The project supports Costa Rica's ambition to transform mobility in the Greater Metropolitan Area, with a flagship focus on the electrification of San José's bus fleet. It is part of broader Team Europe efforts on green recovery, decarbonisation, and sustainable urban mobility.

LRAs are placed at the forefront, with the Municipality of San José playing a leading role in the governance, planning, and implementation of urban mobility measures. With financial contributions of the EC (€5 million) and the BMZ (€500 000), and expecting a further investment of €250 million on the train, the project strengthens coordination between municipalities and central government bodies, while fostering peer-to-peer learning with transport authorities and operators from Europe and the region. Importantly, the project demonstrates how international financing and technical assistance can catalyse sustainable mobility reforms in centralised governance systems. It also creates opportunities for European LRAs and private sector actors to partner in areas such as e-mobility, urban planning, and clean transport technologies.

The project includes peer-to-peer learning from transport authorities and companies from other cities in the region. Moreover, although not linked to the GG project, the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme has supported a partnership between the municipalities of Coslada and Tibás.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipality of San José, Ministry of Transport, Bank of Costa Rica, EC, Germany (BMZ/GIZ).
- Timeline: 2024–2027.
- To know more: [Electrification of the urban bus fleet in Costa Rica](#), [Costa Rica Electric Train – EIB Summary Sheet](#).

Costa Rica - mUEve: Movilidad Sostenible, Urbanismo, Equipamiento, Valoración del Espacio Público, y Enverdecimiento y Equidad

As part of the GG portfolio in Costa Rica, the €4.9 million mUEve project is transforming mobility planning and governance in Costa Rica by promoting Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) around the Electric Train corridor in the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM).

This project, funded under the "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" EU programme, works directly with 15 municipalities to plan and implement infrastructure improvements around train stations and schools, ensuring inclusive access for women, vulnerable populations, and multimodal transport users. Through an intermunicipal cooperation agreement, the 15 municipalities jointly design and execute interventions, while contributing to a Sub-Regional Urban Development Plan aligned with national and regional mobility strategies.

A key feature is the strong decentralised cooperation dimension: the Unión Nacional de Gobiernos Locales (UNGL) partners with European municipal associations including the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), Fomento de San Sebastián (Spain), and Diputación de Guipuzkoa (Spain). This cooperation fosters peer-to-peer learning, exchange programmes, and twinning, ensuring knowledge transfer between Costa Rican and European cities. The approach is scalable, offering a practical model for other countries seeking to align sustainable transport, urban development, and local governance under Global Gateway.

- Partners involved: 15 municipalities of the GAM, UNGL, VNG, EUD, Spain (Fomento de San Sebastián, Diputación de Guipuzkoa).
- Timeline: 2019–2025.
- To know more: [mUEve project](#), [VNG: mUEve](#).

Côte d'Ivoire - Urban mobility and planning in the city of Bouaké - Mambo project

The €55 million Mambo project in Bouaké, financed through a blending operation, aims to modernise urban mobility and strengthen public transport systems. Building on earlier EU-funded initiatives such as the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan and “Bouaké Ville Durable,” the project focuses on developing infrastructure including bus stops, road networks, and market areas, while preparing the ground for an expanded role of SAUTRA, the Abidjan-based transport company, in Bouaké.

Local authorities are direct beneficiaries and central actors in this initiative. Bouaké City Hall receives capacity building to design and manage transport strategies, implement road safety measures, and coordinate inclusive mobility planning. Through the Bouaké Urban Mobility Working Group which it leads, the municipality benefits from technical assistance on financing mechanisms, regulatory frameworks, and mototaxi regulation. The City Hall is also preparing for the establishment of a future mobility organising authority, supported by the creation of a road accident observatory within its structure.

Although not directly linked to the Global Gateway initiative, the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” programme has supported partnership between the municipality of Bouaké, Reutlingen in Germany, and Bobo Dioulasso in Burkina Faso.

- Stakeholders involved: Bouaké City Hall, SAUTRA (Abidjan-based transport company), Bouaké Urban Mobility Working Group (GTMU), EUD, France (AFD).
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2026.

Democratic Republic of Congo - Green corridor Kivu-Kinshasa

The €1.2 billion Green Corridor Kivu-Kinshasa is a Global Gateway flagship investment structured around diverse activities focusing on key protected landscapes such as Virunga, Yangambi, Garamba, and Opemba, as well as along the Congo River. It aims to preserve over 100,000 km² of primary forest while creating 0.5 million jobs and generating 1 million tonnes of agricultural production by developing value chains that reduce conflict and safeguard ecosystems.

In a fragile context marked by limited state presence, local and regional authorities are essential: they ensure territorial planning, project monitoring, infrastructure maintenance, and community mediation, anchoring the initiative in local legitimacy and stability. In that context, they are consulted, as well as beneficiaries. Their role makes possible a 360-degree approach that links biodiversity conservation, livelihood opportunities, energy access, and governance, reinforced by innovative public-private partnerships such as those with the Virunga Foundation and International Climate Councils Network (ICCN).

Distinct from Global Gateway, the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” initiative supports cooperation between the Congolese province of Nord-Kivu and the Belgian municipality of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre.

- Stakeholders involved: EC, Belgium, France, Germany, Virunga Foundation, ICCN, European private sector actors.
- Timeline: not mentioned.
- To know more: [Global Gateway: A Green Corridor](#), [Virunga Conservation and Development Initiative in DRC](#), [The Kivu-Kinshasa Green Corridor \(official website\)](#), [The Kivu-Kinshasa - Project fiche](#).

Dominican Republic - Local authorities and non-motorised transport

The €10 million EU CIF-funded project seeks to integrate non-motorised transport into the Dominican Republic's growing mobility systems, where car use remains dominant.

Local authorities are at the centre of this transition: municipalities, also represented through the Dominican Municipality League, are included in the governance structure of the National Institute for Transportation, which coordinates the implementation. Municipal representatives may also participate in the programme's Steering Committee, ensuring that territorial priorities and citizens' concerns are reflected in planning. This role is reinforced by the broader decentralisation and fiscal reforms underway in the country, which strengthen municipalities' competences in areas such as territorial planning, traffic regulation, and public space management. By combining these reforms with project-based support, the initiative helps municipalities gradually shift perceptions of non-motorised transport from a threat to an opportunity, laying the foundation for more inclusive and sustainable urban mobility.

No formal partnerships between Dominican and European municipalities exist yet, but there is strong potential for future cooperation—particularly linking municipalities engaged in non-motorised transport initiatives with European cities and private actors investing in sustainable mobility, urban planning, and green infrastructure—thereby supporting the implementation of GG-projects and fostering a shift towards more sustainable urban governance.

- Stakeholders involved: National Institute for Transportation, Dominican Municipality League, EC, France (AFD).
- Timeline: 2022–2027.
- To know more: [Upgrade of Santo Domingo's urban transport](#), [Sustainable Urban Mobility Programme](#), [Iacif: Sustainable urban mobility support](#).

Dominican Republic - Comprehensive programme for tourism and urban development of the Colonial City of Santo Domingo

The €80 million programme (€77 million as an IDB loan and €2 million EC grant) supports the revitalisation of the Colonial City of Santo Domingo, combining urban development with heritage protection and social inclusion. While the Ministry of Tourism manages the overall project and financing, the Municipal Government of the National District plays a key role in implementation, ensuring that local priorities and urban management capacities are integrated into decision-making.

The EU contribution, in particular, focuses on rehabilitating 140 houses for vulnerable residents, resolving long-standing legal issues and directly improving living conditions. This illustrates how LRAs, when positioned as implementing partners, can ensure that urban regeneration projects balance tourism-driven growth with tangible benefits for local communities.

There is some potential for further exchanges and opportunities with European municipalities on heritage-based tourism and inclusive urban regeneration, to create better conditions to fully implement the GG projects in DR.

- Stakeholders involved: , IDB, Ministry of Tourism, Municipal Government of the National District, Ministry of Culture, Strategic and Technical Committees, EC.
- Timeline: 2016–2026 (EU component 2022–2026).
- To know more: [IDB Project Detail](#), [Integrated tourism and urban development program for the colonial city of Santo Domingo](#).

Ecuador – Solid Waste Management, Fast Cities European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) Guarantee in Cuenca

The Solid Waste Management project in Cuenca, Ecuador, highlights how municipalities can directly access international financing under the Global Gateway framework. The Municipality of Cuenca, through its sanitation company EMAC, received a USD 25 million loan from AFD, covered up to 70% by an EU EFSD+ guarantee. This structure gave the city both financial leverage and risk mitigation, allowing it to modernise waste management infrastructure and services. While the project was not designed with decentralised cooperation in mind, it demonstrates how a medium-sized municipality can be an active partner in implementing complex, loan-based projects, supported by technical expertise from European development actors. Local authorities thus play a dual role as both direct borrowers and operational implementers, ensuring that waste management improvements are tailored to the city's specific needs.

Decentralised cooperation in Ecuador is gaining momentum, with Cuenca pioneering a municipal financing model now inspiring peer-to-peer exchanges with other cities like Loja. Supported by Global Gateway guarantees, these initiatives open new avenues for municipal investment, coordination among Ecuadorian LRAs, and partnerships with European counterparts. Although separate from the Global Gateway project, the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” programme has supported a partnership between La Palma del Condado (Spain) and the Ecuadorian municipalities of Mira and Montúfar.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipality of Cuenca, EC, France (AFD), Germany (GIZ).
- Timeline: Project announced in 2024.
- To know more: [EFSD+ in Cuenca Press release](#).

Ghana - Urbanisation programme

The EU-Ghana Partnership for Sustainable Cities is a €360 million programme (including a loan, grants and an investment) addressing regional inequalities and promoting inclusive urban development, with a focus on the northern regions. It is structured in three phases: urban planning, structured investments, and finally large-scale infrastructure in water and sanitation.

Local authorities are at the heart of the initiative, despite the absence of an administrative entity for cities in Ghana's system. Municipalities are directly involved in urban planning, the supervision of PPP contracts, and the piloting of new service delivery models such as solid waste management, recycling, and recreational spaces. Their role in project design, monitoring, and advocacy helps to ensure that investments respond to community needs and contribute to reducing fragility. The consultation of NALAG, the national association of local authorities, further strengthens coordination and representation of municipal voices across the programme's phases.

While not directly linked to the Global Gateway project, the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” initiative has supported Ghana in maintaining and strengthening the twinning relationship between the metropolis of Sekondi-Takoradi and the city of Palermo in Italy.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipalities involved in the project, National association of local authorities in Ghana, Government of Ghana, EC, France (AFD), Denmark (DANIDA), UNICEF, Invest International, EIB.
- Timeline: 2024–2032.
- To know more: [EU-Ghana Joint Programming 2021–2027 \(Global Europe instrument\)](#).

Guatemala - Strengthening Local Governance for Water, Trust, and Sustainable Development

LRAs in Guatemala have played a central role in strengthening governance, transparency, and sustainable development across three complementary EU projects: the €0.5 million Altiplano Marquense water governance initiative (GIGAM), the €0.8 million Dry Corridor open government project in Zacapa, and the €2.4 million Petén Itzá Lake basin territorial planning project. In these initiatives, municipalities have participated actively from the design phase, contributing to policy formulation, co-design of planning instruments, and implementation of inclusive and participatory strategies. These projects illustrate how empowering local authorities with technical and institutional support can improve public services, increase citizen trust, and create conditions for future decentralized cooperation and stakeholder engagement.

This dynamic has already materialised through exchanges and partnerships: Guatemalan municipalities have visited Spain to identify good practices in managing solid waste, water, and other public services, while collaboration with the Institute of Municipal Development and associations of municipalities has strengthened peer-to-peer learning. Partnerships with Basque municipalities have further supported the transfer of knowledge and municipal best practices, reinforcing local capacities for sustainable territorial development.

- Stakeholders involved: Various ministries of the government, Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Municipalidades del Altiplano Marquense, 7 municipalities, EUD, Spain (AECID), Germany (GIZ), CONEXX-Europe, Swisscontact, Helvetas Germany, FAO.
- Timeline: Petén Itzá Basin: 2025-2028. The other two projects are closed..
- To know more: [Altiplano Marquense GIGAM Project](#), [Dry Corridor open government project in Zacapa](#), [Petén Itzá basin Project](#).

Guinea-Bissau - EU for Green and Inclusive Cities

In Guinea-Bissau, the EU provides €21 million to support basic services and participatory urban planning in Bissau and secondary cities. In parallel, a larger €182.8 million investment combining grants and loan strengthens the Guinea-Bissau section of the Praia-Dakar-Abidjan Corridor, while complementary civil society initiatives promote good governance and decentralisation.

Local authorities are central to these reforms: the municipality of Bissau plays a driving role in planning and implementing waste management and urban services, while deconcentrated services and municipal actors are directly engaged in service delivery and citizen participation. The Ministry of Public Administration, supported by the EU, is relaunching the decentralisation process, offering municipalities new responsibilities and opportunities. These dynamics create an enabling environment for LRAs to gain capacity, experiment with participatory planning, and partner with local enterprises, including small and medium enterprises and informal recyclers in waste management. By linking urban reforms with major corridor investments, the projects demonstrate how Global Gateway can bridge national infrastructure priorities with locally driven development, opening pathways for decentralised cooperation and private sector involvement.

In Guinea-Bissau, while cooperation between local and European authorities is not yet formalised within the current projects, it is actively encouraged through technical exchange and shared governance mechanisms.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipality of Bissau, Deconcentrated state services, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Power, Ministry of Public Works, EC, EIB, UN-Habitat, World Bank, Instituto Marques de Valle Flor, Italian NGOs Mani Tese & ACRA.
- Timeline: 2022-ongoing.
- To know more: [Praia-Dakar-Abidjan Corridor](#), [Rehabilitation of the road Bissau/Safim](#).

India – CITIIS Programme

The Cities Investment to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) programme in India demonstrates how international financing can be channelled to municipalities for urban transformation. The programme combines €200 million in loans from AFD and KfW with a €12 million EC grant, creating a blended structure that supports 18 large urban municipalities.

While the loans are formally contracted by the Ministry of Finance, municipalities are the direct implementers of projects, focusing on sustainable urban development and innovation. Local authorities benefit not only from access to substantial financing but also from technical assistance and capacity building, helping them to design and execute projects that respond to local priorities in line with national urban policies. This model shows how Global Gateway projects can strengthen municipal ownership while operating within a centralised financial framework.

- Stakeholders involved: Ministry of Finance, 18 participating municipalities, EC, France (AFD), Germany (KfW).
- Timeline: 2018-ongoing.
- To know more: [CITIIS](#), [€12 million EU grant press release](#), [CITIIS 2.0 - AFD press release](#).

Indonesia - Support for Infrastructure Investments in Indonesia (S4I)

In Indonesia, local authorities stand to benefit significantly from the Support for Infrastructure Investments in Indonesia programme, which aims to strengthen Indonesia's development finance ecosystem by supporting PT Sarana Multi Infrastruktur PT SMI to act as a catalyst for structural transformation and sustainable growth. It seeks to expand access to financing for municipalities and regencies to promote inclusive urban development, while enhancing funding mechanisms for renewable energy investments, thereby contributing to Indonesia's long-term infrastructure needs and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through this initiative, Indonesian municipalities and regional enterprises are benefiting from improved capacities in project preparation, procurement, and environmental and social safeguards. As a result of the support given to PT SMI through S4I, Indonesian municipalities will also have better capacities to develop critical infrastructure and will strengthen their access to financing. Within Indonesia's regulated borrowing framework, where subnational governments can access domestic loans only with prior approval from the Ministry of Finance, this initiative represents an important mechanism to facilitate infrastructure investment. Not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme between the cities of Berlin and Jakarta.

- Stakeholders involved: PT Sarana Multi Infrastruktur (PT SMI), EC, France (AFD), Germany (KfW), Ministry of Finance.
- Timeline: 2019–2026.
- To know more: [Support for Infrastructure Investments in Indonesia \(S4I\)](#), [PT SMI: S4I](#), [KfW - Indonesia: S4I](#).

Jordan - Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans SECAPs in Greater Amman, Madaba, Mafraq & Um El-Jimal

The EU supports three complementary initiatives in Jordan's municipalities to foster sustainable urban development and green growth: the expansion of the Ghabawi Landfill Gas System in Greater Amman, which increases landfill gas production and clean energy generation; the Climamed Programme, aimed at supporting climate action at the municipal level through the implementation of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAP); and EU support to the Green Economy, which strengthens local governance, public-private partnerships, and municipal capacity to implement sustainable and inclusive development projects.

Local authorities are central to all three initiatives. They lead SECAP implementation, coordinate with the Ministry of Local Administration for permissions on larger interventions, and actively participate in project monitoring and community engagement. Greater Amman Municipality manages landfill operations and associated PPPs, while other municipalities in Madaba, Mafraq, and Um El-Jimal implement SECAP measures tailored to their territories.

Technical assistance from EU regional and bilateral programmes, combined with peer-to-peer exchanges through the Covenant of Mayors, helps municipalities build capacity, develop proposals for Global Gateway financing, and replicate best practices across the country.

- Stakeholders involved: municipalities of Madaba, Mafraq, Um El-Jimal, Ministry of Local Administration, Greater Amman Municipality, EUD.
- Timeline: Implementation ongoing.
- To know more: [Ghabawi Landfill Gas System](#), [Um El-Jimal: ClimaMed](#), [Climamed Programme](#).

Kenya - Involvement of County Governments in Kenya's Digital Transformation and Urban Development under the Global Gateway Initiative

Under the EU-Kenya Green and Digital Partnership, county governments play a central role in advancing digitalisation and urban development initiatives aligned with Global Gateway priorities, within the broader EU support of €435 million for Kenya's digital transformation across 32 projects. Key initiatives include human-centred digitalisation projects, such as Last Mile Connectivity for Primary Schools, digitalisation of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, and the creation of Digital Transformation Centres, alongside the Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP 2) focusing on urban development and slum upgrading. County governments, through their departments of Physical Planning, Lands, and Urban Development, serve as implementing agencies for infrastructure, digital skills hubs, and community-based interventions, ensuring that projects respond to local needs.

Local authorities benefit from capacity building and institutional strengthening, with training for county officers, support in transforming public facilities into Digital Skills Hubs, and guidance in participatory planning via Community Development Plans. Counties actively contribute to digital transformation by implementing e-government platforms and civic tech solutions. The Council of Governors (CoG) and the ICT and Knowledge Management Committee provide formal platforms for cross-county dialogue, policy consultation, and strategic alignment with national ICT standards. Last but not least, counties' services are also directly responsible for implementing county-level activities and financial reporting. This approach illustrates how devolved governance can be leveraged to localise digital transformation, strengthen public service delivery, and create replicable opportunities for decentralized cooperation.

While not yet formalised as decentralised cooperation, emerging initiatives at the county level illustrate growing openness to international collaboration and peer learning. Furthermore, strategic recommendations underline the potential to institutionalise a County–EU Digitalisation Forum under the Council of Governors, which could serve as a platform for structured dialogue, technical exchange, and future decentralised cooperation between Kenyan counties and European LRAs.

- Stakeholders involved: Kenyan national ministries, 47 county governments, CSOs, EUD, UNICEF, Germany (KfW, GIZ), France (AFD), Estonia (ESTDEV).
- Timeline: 2020–2026 (KISIP 2); other digitalisation initiatives ongoing or in preparation.
- To know more: [Digitalization for TVET](#), [Digital Transformation Centres](#), [Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project](#).

Lao People's Democratic Republic - Team Europe Partnership with Lao PDR to increase sustainable and inclusive Trade, Investment and Connectivity in the Agriculture and Forestry sectors

In Lao PDR, local authorities play a leading role in the implementation of the €100 million (loan and grant) Team Europe Partnership for Trade, Investment and Connectivity in the Agriculture and Forestry Sectors (TICAF), a Global Gateway flagship initiative. The project aims to promote sustainable, inclusive, and green growth through investments in agriculture, forestry, and value-chain development. Khammouane province is a particularly active partner, especially under the Protection and Sustainable Use of Forest Ecosystems and Biodiversity - PROFEB component, co-financed by the EU and Germany and implemented by GIZ, which focuses on strengthening community participation, particularly women, and sustainable forest management, aligning actions with the country's environmental commitments under its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

The province's engagement was instrumental in supporting Hin Nam No National Park's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2025. Complementary programmes such as Skills for Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry and Citizen Engagement for Good Governance, Accountability and Rule of Law further reinforce local capacity building, participatory governance, and inclusive rural development in the province.

- Stakeholders involved: Khammouane provincial authorities, EUD, EIB, France, Germany (GIZ).
- Timeline: 2021–2027.
- To know more: [TICAF launch](#), [PROFEB](#), [CEGGA II](#), [STAF](#).

Libya - Zliten fish processing center

The €4.4 million REBUILD Project demonstrates how local authorities in Libya can take the lead in municipal development, even in a context of political fragmentation and insecurity. The municipality of Zliten plays a central role, co-financing the construction of a refrigeration and storage facility at the artisanal fishery port, while also participating in training, technical assessments, and collaborative design workshops.

Across ten municipalities, mayors' networks and local universities support capacity building, municipal resource generation, and participatory planning, ensuring that interventions align with local needs. The project strengthens fisheries infrastructure for economic diversification, food security, and export compliance, while piloting models for decentralised governance and municipal service delivery. Through strong leadership at the municipal level, combined with partnerships facilitated by the Nicosia Initiative, the REBUILD Project illustrates the replicability of decentralised cooperation and offers concrete entry points for European partners to engage in municipal capacity building and local development across Libya.

This project is good illustration of the GG 360 approach using decentralised cooperation. Within the project, decentralised cooperation is already taking shape through partnerships between the Autonomous Province of Trento, the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, and the Italian National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics, working alongside Libyan municipalities. Building on these foundations, there is strong potential to expand decentralised cooperation in areas such as fisheries, municipal services, and sustainable local development.

- Stakeholders involved: Ministry of Marine Wealth, Center for Libyan Export Promotion, Marine Biology Research Centre, Zliten Municipality, 10 Libyan municipalities, EC, CoR through the Nicosia Initiative, IOM.
- Timeline: 2021 – 2025.
- To know more: [REBUILD Project](#), [Nicosia Initiative](#).

Madagascar - 'Tous redevables': an integrated approach

The €13 million 'Tous Redevables' project in Madagascar adopts an integrated approach to strengthen democratic governance, transparency, accountability, and citizen participation, while directly involving local authorities in both program design and implementation.

Municipalities are consulted to ensure that interventions align with local development priorities, and the Fond de Développement Local provides resources for LRAs to invest in larger-scale projects. The project also links the private sector to local development planning, fostering collaboration between businesses and municipal authorities. Associations of mayors are already engaged to reinforce accountability and provide step-by-step support to municipal leadership.

This approach illustrates how LRAs can drive local governance reforms and participate actively in development initiatives, offering replicable models for decentralized cooperation.

No formal decentralised cooperation partnerships are yet in place within the project, but the Association Internationale des Maires Francophones (AIMF) could play a key role in supporting national mayors and facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges throughout the project's implementation.

- Stakeholders involved: Local authorities from Madagascar involved in the project, EUD, France (Expertise France).
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2025.
- To know more: [Tous Redevables project](#).

Malawi - Ulimi ndi Chilengedwe m'Malawi (UCHI) – Greening and Growing programme

The €10.6 million UCHI project supports decentralised natural resource and ecosystem preservation in Malawi. District Councils are in the driving seat of the action, covering 12 districts (Chitipa, Karonga, Rumphi, Nkhata Bay, Mzimba, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Dedza, Ntcheu, Zomba, Chikwawa and Nsanje). They are directly responsible for managing the budget, reporting, and implementing measures such as land use planning, watershed management, soil conservation and forest regeneration. The project is designed to accompany the strengthening of the decentralised approach, by building capacity for whole districts and improving coordination across ministries, councils, and communities. Malawi has strong decentralised governance structures and the National Local Governance Finance Committee provides an important mechanism to reinforce fiscal decentralisation through transfers to local authorities. The Malawi Local Government Association has been engaged by some beneficiary District Councils as a co-applicant, although it does not have formal structural linkages with them. While no regional or international networks are currently involved, the structured engagement of District Councils, coupled with training mechanisms and fiscal transfer systems, could offer potential entry points for decentralised cooperation and replicability in other contexts.

While no decentralised cooperation partnerships are currently embedded within the project, there is strong potential to develop them through the structured engagement of district councils and dedicated training mechanisms. These components could provide an effective entry point for future collaboration with European local and regional authorities.

- Stakeholders involved: 12 District Councils, Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change, Ministry of Local Government and Culture, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi Local Government Association, EUD.
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2025.
- To know more: [UCHI project](#), [Greening and Growing Malawi](#).

Mauritania - Support for the Nouakchott region for resilient and equitable sustainable development

The €0.5 million ARENDRE project supported the Région de Nouakchott, including its nine communes, to strengthen sustainable, equitable, and resilient urban development. The region acted as lead applicant and primary implementing authority, coordinating political decision-making and execution of activities such as the Urban Mobility Plan, pilot transport lines, and improved public lighting. Communal and regional consultation committees ensured the active participation of municipalities, embedding local priorities in project design and implementation. LRAs benefited from significant capacity building through training, technical assistance, and knowledge-sharing facilitated by co-applicants such as Grand Paris Sud, Fonds Mondial de Développement des Villes, and the Centre international d'Etudes pour le développement local (CIEDEL). The project also mobilised the Association Mauritanienne des Communes du Sud, within the broader Réseau des Collectivités pour la Participation Citoyenne des Territoire network, enhancing peer-to-peer exchanges with cities like Dakar, Bamako, Évry, and Kayes. These partnerships illustrate both the replicability of the approach and the strong potential for further decentralised cooperation, already reinforced through existing ties such as the Sustainable Municipal Partnerships programme involving Rosso and Nouakchott.

Within the project framework, Grand Paris Sud and the Fonds Mondial de Développement des Villes are partnering with the Nouakchott Region and its communes, providing extensive capacity-building for elected officials and technical staff through training, ongoing support, and peer-to-peer exchanges within networks such as RECOPACTE, which brings together cities including Bamako, Dakar, Évry, Kayes, and Nouakchott. Beyond this initiative, the cities of Rosso and Nouakchott also participate in the Sustainable Municipal Partnerships Programme, further strengthening inter-municipal and international cooperation.

- Stakeholders involved: Nouakchott region, Association Mauritanienne des Communes du Sud, EUD, Belgium (ENABEL), Grand Paris Sud, Régie autonome des transports parisiens, Fonds Mondial de Développement des Villes, CIEDEL.
- Timeline: Project under closure.
- To know more: [ARENDRE project](#), [FFEM - Pour un développement durable](#).

Mauritania - Coordination unit with LAs for an integrated package of actions

In Hodh El Chargui, a region heavily affected by the influx of Malian refugees, several EU-supported projects are underway within an integrated humanitarian-development-stability nexus. Initiatives such as the €20 million TAWAFOUG project aim to foster socio-economic development and improve protection and living conditions for host communities, refugees, and returnees. Other projects such as the €18 million RIMFIL, the €8 million MIRECAM and the €4 million KARAMA focus respectively on developing sustainable agricultural and pastoral sectors, supporting the socio-economic integration of displaced persons and host communities, and improving protection and living conditions in the communes of El Megve and Fassala, in a region where the population has doubled due to the refugee crisis, placing severe strain on local cohesion and service delivery. The Conseil régional du Hodh El Chargui and local authorities are central actors in this approach. They play a decisive role in selecting intervention areas and priority infrastructures, ensuring that actions in health, education, rural development, and fisheries respond directly to local needs. Their participation in steering committees provides them with the capacity to review, propose, and reorient project activities, reinforcing ownership and accountability. This structured involvement of local authorities not only enhances the sustainability of the interventions but also demonstrates a model of participatory governance that could be replicated in other fragile regions facing displacement-related pressures.

- Stakeholders involved: EC, Belgium (ENABEL), NGO ACF Spain.
- Timeline: Projects recently launched, currently in early implementation phase.
- To know more: [TAWAFOUG](#), [RIMFIL](#), [MIRECAM](#), [Coordination Unit for the National Migration Management Strategy](#).

Mexico - Completion of the Master Plan and definition of a commercial Strategy for the Port of Guaymas, Sonora (Mexico)

In Mexico, a GG Flagship project establishes a maritime trade corridor between the Port of Sines (Portugal) and the Port of Coatzacoalcas (Mexico), connecting to the Interoceanic Corridor of Tehuantepec. It aims to diversify EU energy supply, promote clean energy, and strengthen industrial value chains through private sector investment. One component of the flagship project supports the completion of a strategic Net-Zero Master Plan and the definition of a commercial strategy for the Port of Guaymas, Sonora.

The State of Sonora, through its implementing partner IMPULSOR, is fully engaged in the project, driving the development of the Master Plan and ensuring alignment with local priorities. The EU will provide €250,000 in grant support using the Finance Not Linked to Costs (FNLC) approach for local authorities, while technical expertise is contracted from the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, an arrangement that also offers strong potential for future decentralized cooperation in port management and urban development. Local authorities are in the driving seat, coordinating with IMPULSOR and engaging with stakeholders to guide the port transformation, which aims to generate green jobs, strengthen regional economic growth, and enhance trade connectivity. The intervention builds on prior work under the PoABI initiative, translating diagnostic assessments and institutional engagement into a finalized Master Plan and commercially viable strategy.

Not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” programme between Guadalajara and Barcelona.

- Stakeholders involved: State of Sonora (via IMPULSOR), ASIPONA Guaymas Port Authority, EC, Port of Antwerp-Bruges.
- Timeline: 2025-2026.

Morocco – Multiple projects supporting the regionalisation policy, implemented via the Fonds d'équipement communal (FEC) and regions

In Morocco, the EU supports the regionalisation policy of the country through several projects, to support regions and municipalities in strengthening public services and resilience to climate change. Several Global Gateway-related projects illustrate how loans are channelled to local and regional authorities through the Fonds d'équipement communal (FEC) and directly to regional governments. More than 100 municipalities benefit indirectly from an AFD loan of over €100 million channelled via the FEC, enabling investments in local services and infrastructure.

At the regional level, the Guelmim-Oued Noun Region accessed a €12 million loan from the EBRD, guaranteed by the EU's EFSD+. The support to the regionalisation policy also goes through initiatives like Service Local Energie Climat (SLEC) in Tangier. These projects underscore Morocco's advanced decentralisation framework, where local and regional governments are able to mobilise domestic and international finance with sovereign backing, while also highlighting how loan guarantees can mitigate risks and expand access to credit.

Although not explicitly embedded within the projects, triangular decentralised cooperation is emerging between the Tangier-Tetouan region, the Sud-PACA Region in France, and Catalonia in Spain. There is also strong potential for cross-border collaboration on the management of natural parks, marine resources, and other shared environmental priorities. The Covenant of Mayors is likewise active in Morocco, supporting local authorities in advancing sustainable urban and climate initiatives.

- Stakeholders involved: Guelmim-Oued Noun Region, Souss Massa Region, Béni Mellal-Khénifra, EC, EBRD, EIB, France (AFD).
- Timeline: 2022-Ongoing.
- To know more: [Service Local Energie Climat](#), [Guelmim-Oued Noun Region loan](#).

Mozambique - VAMOOZ Digital

The €10 million Vamoz Digital GG project contributes to Mozambique's inclusive growth by fostering digital transformation through skills development, digital entrepreneurship, and the strengthening of innovation ecosystems. Local authorities, both at provincial and municipal levels, are central to the action, engaging from the design stage through implementation and monitoring. They provide political vision, leadership, and physical spaces for Tech Hubs, which are developed through public-private consortia.

Local authorities are directly involved in the selection of grantees, contribute to International Telecommunication Union-led studies, and benefit from capacity development through workshops and consultations. Their staff, such as Community Media Centre Managers, are among the direct beneficiaries, gaining skills to improve digital services for communities. Coordination between the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), International Telecommunication Union, local governments, and sub-implementing entities ensures the integration of local priorities into the hubs' operational strategies, while national associations and international partners complement these efforts with broader decentralisation and digitalisation initiatives.

Although not directly linked to the Global Gateway initiative, the EU-funded "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme has supported partnership between the city of Beira and the Provincia Autonoma di Trento (project MUDAR, ending 2025), and one between the cities of Pemba and Reggio Emilia (project MAIS PEMBA, ending 2025). A partnership with Catalan Cooperation (project SIRI) is also active in the country.

- Stakeholders involved: local consortia, Mozambican Association of Municipalities, Mozambican Association of Information Technology Professionals and Enterprises, EUD, Italy (AICS), International telecommunication union, Confederation of economic associations, Association of European Chambers of Commerce.
- Timeline: 2025-2027.
- To know more: [Vamoz Digital project](#), [ITU: Vamoz Digital](#).

Namibia - Implementation of partnership on raw materials value chains and renewable hydrogen

In Namibia, Global Gateway support is advancing the implementation of the EU–Namibia Strategic Partnership on Sustainable Raw Materials Value Chains and Renewable Hydrogen, signed in 2022 and endorsed with a joint roadmap in 2023. The initiative mobilises over €1.3 billion in grants and loans to reinforce Namibia's role as a key partner in green energy and raw materials. Local authorities and municipalities are not direct recipients of funding but stand to benefit indirectly, particularly through complementary projects such as Clime Investor 3 Blended Finance, which allows eligible municipal projects to access financing opportunities for infrastructure. Moreover, urban centres and coastal towns are closely connected to strategic infrastructure developments, including port expansion studies in Walvis Bay and Lüderitz, which are conducted in cooperation with Namport and major European ports. These investments highlight the relevance of local governance in ensuring that urban planning, service delivery, and community engagement align with the country's broader transition towards renewable hydrogen and resilient raw materials value chains.

Decentralised cooperation is embedded within the project through partnerships between the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, the Port of Rotterdam, and Namport, focusing on high-level frameworks, digitalisation, and port expansion studies in Walvis Bay and Lüderitz. In parallel, a new partnership is being prepared between the Lüderitz City Council and VNG, expected to begin in early 2026. This initiative will enhance the Council's capacity to deliver essential services in water, sanitation, and solid waste management, and to ensure that upcoming large-scale industrial developments generate tangible benefits for local communities. Lastly, while

distinct from Global Gateway activities, the EU's "Partnerships for Sustainable Cities" programme has also established a partnership between Bremen and Windhoek, and one between Walvis Bay and Czerwonak.

- Stakeholders involved: Namibian Government, Namport, Walvis Bay, EUD, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, EIB, Port of Antwerp-Bruges, Port of Rotterdam, Lüderitz.
- Timeline: 2023–ongoing.
- To know more: [EIB to support green energy in Namibia](#), [Raw Materials Value Chains and Renewable Hydrogen](#), [EU-GET.transform](#), [Technical Support to the Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme](#).

Nepal - Cities 4 Women: Inclusive and Climate Resilient Urbanisation

In Nepal, local authorities are at the forefront of the €5.5 million Global Gateway project supporting gender-responsive and climate-resilient public open spaces, as municipalities face rapid urban growth and severe climate vulnerabilities. Municipalities and wards are in the driving seat, identifying and prioritising small-scale infrastructure projects through participatory and consultative processes integrated into their annual plans. Close collaboration with municipal officials has been central to designing practical tools such as the Step-by-step Municipal Planning Guideline and the Gender-sensitive Participatory Decision-Making Manual for Municipalities. Municipal councils and ward committees play a decisive role in ensuring inclusive planning, community consultations, and the implementation of proof-of-concept projects at the ward level. A Challenge Fund pools co-financing from municipalities and the project, showing strong local ownership. To build capacity, urban planners and designers are embedded within municipal engineering departments, ensuring technical support for planning, design, and the preparation of bankable infrastructure. Mayors have already taken the lead in mobilising additional resources, presenting projects to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which highlights the municipalities' growing role not just in planning but also in leveraging partnerships for larger-scale investments.

The project facilitates internal city-to-city exchange events for peer learning, offering indirect benefits through exposure to best practices, and supports international exchanges between cities and institutions from Europe and LRAs participating in the project – examples are institutions from Finland. There are also opportunities for further strengthening of knowledge exchanges with European peers could also help in mobilisation of resources, urban planning and design, and technology discussions.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipal Association of Nepal, Municipalities involved in the projects, EUD, Finland, UNOPS, Cities alliances, UN-Habitat.
- Timeline: 2023-2027.
- To know more: [Cities 4 Women](#), [Cities 4 Women: Cities Alliance](#).

Nigeria – Omi Eko - “Waterways Investment for the Development of the Environment of Lagos State”

The Global Gateway Omi Eko project showcases how subnational governments can play a lead role in major infrastructure investments supported under the Global Gateway. The Lagos State Government is the central partner in this €360 million operation, which combines a €130 million loan from AFD, a €170 million loan from the EIB, and a €60 million EU grant.

While the loans are on-lent through the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Lagos State Government is directly responsible for implementation and repayment, positioning it as both borrower and operator. The project aims to expand and modernise water-based transport in Lagos, reducing congestion and pollution while improving urban mobility for millions of residents. Beyond financing, the initiative also provides technical assistance and institutional support to strengthen Lagos government’s capacity to manage large-scale infrastructure projects, setting a precedent for subnational access to blended international financing in Nigeria.

While no formal decentralised cooperation partnerships are currently in place, the project offers strong potential for future exchanges and collaboration. Opportunities exist to replicate and disseminate the project’s model among local authorities across the region, and to establish peer-to-peer cooperation with European counterparts engaged in similar urban mobility and sustainable transport initiatives.

- Stakeholders involved: Lagos State Government, Lagos State Waterways Authority, Federal Ministry of Finance, EC, EIB, France (AFD), private sector.
- Timeline: 2023-2030.
- To know more: [Lagos State Inland Waterways Transport Project](#).

Pakistan - EU support for sustainable economic development through demand-driven TVET

As part of the GG projects in Pakistan, the EU supports sustainable economic development through the €64 million TVET IV initiative that places provincial and regional authorities at the core of implementation.

Local governments, particularly through their sectoral departments of agriculture, energy, and water management, are actively engaged in project formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Dedicated Project Implementation Committees at the provincial and regional level ensure strong coordination, with leadership provided by the Secretary of the respective Planning & Development Department. These committees bring together provincial TVET Authorities, the Punjab Vocational Training Council, and the TVET Directorate of Gilgit-Baltistan, which all operate under subnational mandates, alongside national bodies, private sector representatives, and the EU Delegation. By embedding project management structures within provincial and regional administrations, the action strengthens institutional ownership and enhances the capacity of local authorities to align vocational training with local economic priorities, particularly in agribusiness, water, and energy.

While decentralised cooperation is not yet embedded within the project, there is potential for future peer-to-peer exchanges, particularly through access to regional and international TVET systems.

- Stakeholders involved: National Vocational & Technical Training Commission, TEVTAs (Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan), Punjab Vocational Training Council, TVET Directorate Gilgit-Baltistan, EU, Germany (GIZ, KfW), Italy, British Council, Business and Industry Associations.
- Timeline: 2023–2028.

- To know more: [TVET Reform](#), [GIZ: TVET Reform](#).

Paraguay - Accompanying the PARACEL investment with a contribution on TVET

In Paraguay, local authorities are engaged in the upcoming €12 million EU-supported programme accompanying the Global Gateway PARACEL sustainable [cellulose and forestry investment](#).

The role of LRAs is primarily consultative, with advisory councils led by local mayors and involving both public and private sector actors. These councils, already operational and independently managed according to local and national practices, were initially set up with EU support through previous budget support and complementary measures. They provide a platform for dialogue with the private sector to align vocational training with labour market needs, ensuring that the initiative strengthens TVET in line with local development priorities.

While decentralised cooperation is not yet embedded within the project, in 2024 a Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) mission was carried out from Paraguay to Finland involving national and LRAs as well as local and regional Finnish institutions. Potential opportunities for decentralized cooperation in connection with the project could also be explored further in the future.

Lastly, though not linked to the Global Gateway framework, the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” project promotes cooperation between the Paraguayan municipality of Mariano Roque Alonso, nine partner municipalities, the Provincial Council of Jaén (Spain), and the Colombian municipality of El Carmen de Viboral.

- Stakeholders involved: Local authorities, Ministry of Education, EUD, UNICEF, France (Expertise France), Finland, Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos.
- Timeline: Implementation starting in 2026.
- To know more: [Sustainable Cellulose and Forestry investment](#).

Peru - Bridging water and sanitation gaps in Chimbote & Nuevo Chimbote

In Peru, the €281 million “Bridging Water and Sanitation Gaps in Chimbote & Nuevo Chimbote” Global Gateway project demonstrates the strong involvement of local actors through SEDACHIMBOTE, the municipal-owned public water utility serving both cities. SEDACHIMBOTE has been engaged from the project preparation phase, accompanying complementary studies to ensure feasibility, and will play a central role throughout implementation. It will directly benefit from EU-financed technical assistance aimed at strengthening its operational, financial, and commercial capacities, particularly in tariff structuring, asset management, and reduction of non-revenue water. Staff training and institutional strengthening will ensure that the utility becomes more autonomous and resilient, capable of maintaining and operating the infrastructure after project completion. As a direct beneficiary, SEDACHIMBOTE will participate in decision-making on capacity-building activities and sign a commitment agreement outlining its responsibilities.

- Stakeholders involved: Ministry of Finance, National Urban Sanitation Program, Chimbote, Nuevo Chimbote, SEDACHIMBOTE (utility), EU, France (AFD, Expertise France).
- Timeline: 2026–2030.

Republic of Congo - Green resilient cities

In the Republic of Congo, the Green Resilient Cities initiative places local authorities at the centre of sustainable urban development and decentralisation efforts.

Mayors' associations and individual municipalities have been closely involved throughout the diagnostic, consultation, and strategy formulation phases, participating through interviews, site visits, focus groups, and workshops. This engagement has already contributed to tangible progress in citizen participation, flood management, and waste management. The upcoming EU technical assistance will further scale up this work by developing a support programme that integrates local authorities into green growth investments, while mapping partners, identifying priority sectors such as sanitation and urban resilience, and designing action scenarios. The Association of Mayors of Congo, led by the mayor of Brazzaville, could emerge as a key partner in linking communities with town halls. Discussions with networks and international organisations such as Cities Alliance and UN-Habitat highlight the potential for broader partnerships.

Although decentralised cooperation is currently limited—active mainly in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire—strong opportunities exist to reactivate it, particularly through established links such as Pointe-Noire–Le Havre, and with European local and regional authorities from France, Belgium, Germany and Morocco on urban resilience, sanitation, and local public service improvement.

- Stakeholders involved: Local authorities, Association of Mayors of Congo, EC, France (AFD), African Development Bank Group, UN agencies, World Bank.
- Timeline: Preparation phase starting in 2025.

Rwanda - Inclusive, smart, and climate-proof urban development of Rwandan satellite cities

In Rwanda, the €35.5 million Inclusive, smart, and climate-proof urban development of Rwandan satellite cities Global Gateway programme highlights the central role of local authorities in shaping resilient and participatory urban growth. The districts of Rwamagana and Nyamata are directly engaged in strengthening technical expertise—mobilising engineers, planners, and architects—while also receiving training and coaching on inclusive and sustainable urban development. Local authorities contribute to consultancies and studies, facilitate participatory planning through digital tools such as Urban Dynamic Maps, and promote data coordination across citizens, the private sector, and government. The Local Administrative Entities Development Agency provides additional institutional backing, ensuring that multi-level governance and local ownership are embedded in the project's design and delivery. This approach enhances not only infrastructure development but also inclusive governance, bridging central and local levels of decision-making and implementation.

While decentralised cooperation is not yet embedded within the project, there is potential for collaboration given the presence of Swedish, Dutch, German, French, and Belgian cooperation actors in the country.

- Stakeholders involved: EC, Belgium (ENABEL), Local Administrative Entities Development Agency, Districts of Rwamagana and Nyamata.
- Timeline: 2024–2029.
- To know more: [Inclusive, smart and climate-proof urban development](#), [Urbanisation programme - Rwanda](#).

Rwanda - Hanga Hubs

The €4.8 million Hanga Hubs project in Rwanda seeks to boost digital innovation and employment through the establishment of technology hubs in the secondary cities of Muhanga, Nyagatare, Rubavu, and Rusizi. LRAs acted mainly as indirect beneficiaries, with their cities hosting the hubs and benefiting from new opportunities for business support and youth employment. Their involvement took place primarily through consultations via national coordinating bodies such as the Ministry of ICT and Innovation and the Rwanda Information Society Authority. While LRAs did not receive direct funding, they gained indirect support through the creation of local tech ecosystems and entrepreneurship services. The Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities was not engaged in this initiative, reflecting the country's centralised governance structure, which limits local authorities' direct role in large-scale projects. Nevertheless, by anchoring the hubs in city contexts, the project created openings for stronger future LRA involvement in digital innovation and local economic development.

Lastly, no formal decentralised cooperation partnerships have yet been established through the project, but there is strong potential for future collaboration, particularly in the digital sector. The city-based focus in secondary cities such as Muhanga, Nyagatare, Rubavu, and Rusizi provides an entry point for peer-to-peer exchanges and the development of innovative local solutions in digitalisation, fostering capacity-building and knowledge transfer between local authorities. This potential can build on the presence of Swedish, Dutch, German, French, and Belgian cooperation actors in the country.

- Stakeholders involved: Cities of Muhanga, Nyagatare, Rubavu, and Rusizi, Ministry of ICT and Innovation, EC, Rwanda Information Society Authority, Rwanda ICT Chamber.
- Timeline: 2021-2025.
- To know more: [Hanga Hubs project](#), [EEAS Press release](#).

The Gambia - Projects in local governance, basic services, and sustainable development

In The Gambia, local authorities are consistently involved in Global Gateway-related interventions, both as beneficiaries and as actors in consultation and implementation processes. Although the central government leads on large-scale infrastructure projects—such as solid waste management, where borrowing constraints limit direct LRA engagement—the EU Delegation ensures that municipalities and their associations are systematically consulted.

LRAs directly manage EU-funded grants and partner with NGOs on community projects, including green energy and organic fertiliser initiatives. They benefit from programmes supporting decentralisation, such as the EU-UNDP project that strengthens local councils and their national association, enhancing participation in budget support dialogue and ensuring local priorities inform national reforms.

No formal decentralised cooperation projects have been established yet within the project, but the project context shows significant potential building on the EU-UNDP above-mentioned project, which strengthens the national associations of LRAs and supports village development councils to promote local governance and community-driven initiatives. Separate from Global Gateway, the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” programme supports cooperation between the Belgian city of Ostend and Banjul, and between Kanifing and Peterborough, to build climate-resilient cities.

- Stakeholders involved: Local authorities, Gambia Association of Local Government Authorities, central government, EC, EIB, France (AFD), UNDP.
- Timeline: Ongoing across multiple interventions.
- To know more: [Towards Green Growth](#), [Sustainable water supply in the Greater Banjul Areas](#), [GREAT project](#).

The Philippines - EU-PH Green Economy Partnership (Green Local Government Units)

Local authorities stand at the forefront of the €23 million EU–Philippines Green Economy Partnership, which is part of the EU’s Global Gateway portfolio in the Philippines.

They are acting as both implementers and innovators in advancing circular economy practices. Sixty Local Government Units (LGUs) are directly involved—twenty as core partners and forty as targeted beneficiaries—receiving technical, financial, and policy support to integrate circularity into urban planning and service delivery. Each participating LGU leads its own Local Circular Economy Action Team, anchored in the Mayor’s Office and city departments, to steer local initiatives, mobilise budgets, and coordinate with national ministries. Among them, Pasig City exemplifies how local leadership drives innovation: it transformed its traditional materials recovery facility into the Innovation for Circular Economy Hub, a multi-purpose centre combining waste aggregation, training, Research and Development, and peer-learning for other partner LGUs. The Hub complements community-level activities such as food banks, mobile redemption centres, and awareness campaigns, making Pasig a reference for inclusive, community-based circular economy solutions. Similar initiatives are emerging in other partner LGUs through inter-local cooperation, knowledge exchanges, and the creation of a Mayors’ Fellowship for Circular Economy.

No formal partnerships between Philippine and European LRAs yet, but there is strong potential for future cooperation—particularly linking Pasig City and other Green LGUs with European regions and private actors investing in waste management, recycling, renewable energy, and green innovation.

- Stakeholders involved: 60 participating LGUs, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of the Interior and Local Government, EUD, UNDP, local SMEs
- Timeline: 2024 – 2028.
- To know more: [EU–Philippines Green Economy Partnership](#), [Green LGUs](#).

Togo - GEDEC - Waste management and sanitation at city level

In Togo, the €4.7 million Gestion des déchets et décentralisation programme illustrates how local authorities are central to Global Gateway initiatives in waste management and sanitation. Five municipalities—Zio 1 (Tsevié), Ogou 1 (Atakpamé), Tchaoudjo 1 (Sokodé), Kozah 1 (Kara), and Tône 1 (Dapaong)—jointly lead the action, owning the infrastructure and services, and chairing local steering committees where mayors bring together communities, the private sector, and decentralised state services.

Their role is reinforced by national legislation that attributes sanitation responsibilities to communes, ensuring that local governments are not only implementers but also decision-makers. The Faïtière des Communes du Togo further strengthens municipal ownership by participating in national steering and technical committees, while also managing project resources. Despite limited capacities and funding, municipalities are building sustainable, climate-resilient sanitation services that improve public health, reduce environmental degradation, and serve as models for replication across Togo and within regional networks.

Currently, no formal partnerships between Tongolese and European LRAs have been established, but there is strong potential for decentralised cooperation on waste management and sanitation especially within the Covenant of Mayors for Sub-Saharan Africa network. Lastly, although not linked to the GG project, a partnership has been supported by the EU-funded “Partnerships for Sustainable Cities” programme between Haho and Bapaume (France).

- Stakeholders involved: five municipalities, Faïtière des Communes du Togo, decentralised state services, communities, EUD, France (Expertise France), private sector.
- Timeline: 2023 –2026.
- To know more: [GEDEC Togo](#), [Lancement du projet GEDEC](#).

Uzbekistan - Digitalisation and Integration of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure

In Uzbekistan, local authorities are directly engaged in the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, a €6.78 million EU-funded flagship Global Gateway initiative that addresses the lack of integrated data management systems for urban development.

Samarkand, selected as a pilot city, plays a central role thanks to its stronger institutional capacity, good relations with the central government, and motivation to strengthen its urban governance through innovation. Local governments in Samarkand and Fergana are key beneficiaries, actively participating in pilot activities and receiving technical support, training, and inclusion in policy dialogues. Their involvement ensures that territorial planning, disaster risk reduction, and climate-sensitive urban development strategies are grounded in local realities, while reinforcing coordination with national authorities. By embedding municipalities into digitalisation processes, the project enhances their role in evidence-based decision-making and long-term climate resilience.

No formal decentralised cooperation partnerships are currently in place within the project. However, there is potential for future collaboration through capacity-building initiatives and peer-to-peer exchanges focused on urban planning and digital governance.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipalities of Samarkand and Fergana, Ministry of Finance, EUD, World Bank.
- Timeline: Implementation is expected to start in 2026.
- To know more: [EU strengthens digital and economic ties with Uzbekistan under GG](#).

Zambia – NEWZA – Nexus Energy and Water programme for Zambia

In Zambia, local authorities are actively engaged in the Global Gateway €118.1 million NEWZA programme through their collaboration with regional water utilities across six provinces (Eastern, Southern, Central, Copperbelt, Northern, and Muchinga). While the programme is primarily driven at the utility and ministry level, municipalities benefit directly from the strengthened water and sanitation service delivery, and their role is reinforced through awareness campaigns and institutional water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives.

By contributing to service delivery via utilities such as Chambeshi, Eastern, Lukanga, Nkana, and Southern, local authorities help translate the programme's integrated energy-water-digital strategies into tangible improvements for communities. Their involvement is crucial for building local ownership, enhancing operational efficiency, and ensuring that clean water and sanitation reach vulnerable populations while strengthening climate resilience.

Future decentralised cooperation could build on this engagement, particularly in developing energy-efficient digital infrastructure for public service delivery, leveraging the existing partnership between Zambia and Germany in the water utility sector.

- Stakeholders involved: regional water utilities (Chambeshi, Eastern, Lukanga, Nkana, Southern), EU, Germany (BMZ, GIZ, KfW), UNICEF, .
- Timeline: 2024 – 2028.
- To know more: [NEWZA programme](#), [Press Release Green Nexus Programme](#).

Zimbabwe - Building resilient and inclusive cities

In Zimbabwe, local authorities are placed at the centre of the Global Gateway portfolio, playing a decisive role in shaping and implementing projects that combine governance reforms with climate-resilient urban development, using PPPs.

Through the €9.3 million Transparent and Accountable Governance in Zimbabwe - TAGZIM project, pilot municipalities and provincial governments are directly engaged in the design and execution of initiatives to digitalise local governance, strengthen public financial management, and embed participatory planning. The €41 million Green Cities project positions the municipalities of Bulawayo, Harare, Mutare, and Gweru as core partners from the outset, co-designing sub-projects, receiving technical assistance, and leading infrastructure upgrades in water, sanitation, waste management, and urban mobility. Similarly, the CLGF initiative has enabled municipalities such as Bulawayo, Norton, and Gwanda to establish Local Development Forums, apply inclusive planning frameworks, and train officials on gender-responsive governance and citizen engagement. National associations such as Zimbabwe Local Government Association, Association of Rural District Councils, and Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe further reinforce the leadership role of local authorities by co-chairing steering committees and contributing to the formulation of projects. Altogether, these initiatives demonstrate how Zimbabwean municipalities are not only beneficiaries but also drivers of transformative change, linking decentralisation reforms with green and inclusive local development.

The projects in Zimbabwe show strong potential for decentralised cooperation, even if formal partnerships are not yet established. TAGZIM fosters exchanges, digitalisation, and decentralised governance, creating opportunities for future peer-to-peer learning. The Green Cities project offers potential for collaboration on climate planning, waste management, and digital city governance. Additionally, dormant links with Germany (e.g., Masvingo) and existing connections between Harare and Munich could be leveraged to strengthen knowledge exchange.

- Stakeholders involved: Municipalities of Bulawayo, Harare, Mutare, Gweru, Norton, Gwanda, Zimbabwe Local Government Association, Association of Rural District Councils, and Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe, EUD, France (Expertise France, AFD), Germany (GIZ), Switzerland (SDC).
- Timeline: Green Cities: 2024-2028; TAGZIM 2024–2029; CLGF: 2018–2021.
- To know more: [TAGZIM](#).

