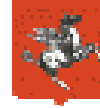




euro-africanpartnership
FOR DECENTRALIZED GOVERNANCE



Consiglio regionale
della Toscana

Study Tour and Seminar

Aide Memoire

Theme: “Strengthening of Women Leaders Associations in Local Governments”

1. BACKGROUND

The “Euro-African Partnership for Decentralized Governance and Decentralized Cooperation” is an initiative promoted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Regional Assembly of Tuscany and CALRE, the Conference of European Legislative Regional Assemblies (www.euroafricanpartnership.org).

The project is the follow-up of the first Conference of European and African Regional Assemblies held in Florence in September 2004. In the final declaration of the conference, the participants, over a hundred representatives of sub-national assemblies of Europe and Africa, suggested the foundation of an Observatory “as a focal point for the exchange of information and best practices in the area of decentralization and decentralized cooperation, and for the training of regional and local elected and officials in partnership with all the relevant international actors.”

The project aims at leveraging the forces of decentralized cooperation from Europe and Africa with a view to: (i) stimulating an exchange of experiences on strategies and models of decentralized governance; (ii) supporting decentralization processes in Africa as a means for achieving peace and development through the reinforcement of good governance, democracy, and the rule of law; (iii) creating a strategic partnership and strengthening the existing relationships among European and African local actors.

The Euro-African (EUA) Partnership project is based on the promotion of partnerships for enhanced participatory democracy process and improved service delivery in the African continent. The project also focuses on strengthening institutional and human resource capacities of local government councils in Africa.

Against this background and in the wake of the Pre-Conference Seminar for Elected Women Local Government Leaders “**Strengthening Women leadership in Local**

Government for Effective Decentralized Governance and Poverty Reduction in Africa: Roles, Challenges and Strategies” held last May in Yaoundé (Cameroon) (<http://www.unpan.org>), the Euro-African Partnership is organizing a study tour for a delegation of five women representatives of the African local authority associations. The study tour will take place in Italy from 8 to 14 December 2008.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY TOUR

The conclusions of the Pre-Conference Seminar for Elected Women Local Government Leaders have highlighted the importance that “elected women leaders in local governments establish a network at national and regional levels to bring them together and provide a forum through which issues and challenges confronting them in their work can be addressed in a sustainable manner”.

Following the Pre-Conference recommendations, the overall purpose of the study tour is to promote the exchange of experiences and an open dialogue between European and African women representatives of local authority associations on decentralization processes and decentralized governance, promoting a network among elected local women leaders associations. In particular, the study tour aims at providing hands-on experience with the Italian local governments’ associations and promoting a mutual understanding on the topics of women local government networks and decentralization processes.

The study tour focuses on the following objectives:

- ✓ To continue and further strengthen the political dialogue among local governments associations from Africa and Europe
- ✓ To examine good practices on women leaders participation in decentralized governance and local governments in Africa
- ✓ To carry forward the debate on decentralization processes and matters concerning strengthening women’s leadership capacities for effective implementation of decentralized governance
- ✓ To consolidate knowledge and information-based actions among the local government networks
- ✓ To build capacities and foster mutually advantageous cooperation actions

3. THEMATIC FOCUS: International Seminar

Within the context of the Study Tour, a seminar titled “*The Network of Women Representatives of Local Authority Associations: Moving towards Decentralization, Good Governance and Innovation*” will be organised on 12 December. The seminar has the specific aim of building awareness and interest discussions about women leaders’ participation in decentralized governance and local governments in Africa and in Europe as well as exchanging ideas on the impact of women representatives of local authority associations on political institutions and agendas.

The conference will be also an opportunity to discuss the outcomes of the Pre-Conference Seminar for Elected Women Local Government Leaders.

The study tour and in particular the seminar will focus on the following topics:

- How women's presence in local government affects decentralization policy outcomes: exchange of European and African experiences.
- How women representatives of local authority associations work to promote and strengthen democratic and decentralized governance.
- How the role of local authority associations could promote a specific leadership capacity building of women in local governments
- How partnerships of women representatives of local governments associations between Africa and Europe could support and strengthen decentralized governance policies and strategies implementation.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study tour and the seminar are intended to be an opportunity for women representatives of local governments associations to have a deep understanding of a range of experiences of African and European local administration and regional planning.

During the study tour, the women representatives of local governments associations will have the opportunity to meet with the representatives of local government networks, and local authorities in Rome and Tuscany. They will also have the opportunity to visit different facilities delivering services to citizens, and participate in ad-hoc roundtables organized on the occasion of the study tour by national counterparts.

The seminar will represent a venue of meeting among experts, practitioners and representatives of central and local institutions to discuss and identify strategies and approaches for promoting women's presence in leadership and for enhancing Euro African collaborations.

5. OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES

The outputs expected from the Study Tour include:

- Recommendations on measures to enhance women contribution to the effective implementation of decentralization and decentralized governance; and
- A contribution to promote synergies and partnership between Europeans and African women local government networks.

6. TARGET GROUP

The Study Tour and the Seminar participants will include:

- Elected women representatives from local governments associations from Ghana, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- Representatives of Governments and assemblies of European local and regional institutions.
- Other experts and practitioners

7. VENUES AND DATES

The Study Tour will be held in Italy for eight days 8 to 14 December 2008. The seminar will be held in Florence on 12 December.

8. CONTACT PERSONS

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