

MILAN URBAN FOOD POLICY PACT

5TH MUFPP AFRICAN REGIONAL FORUM

17 - 19 JULY 2023

DAKAR, SENEGAL

REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

From the **17th to the 19th of July 2023**, the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact**, together with NGOs **ACRA and Mani Tese** and the city of Dakar, held the 5th MUFPP Regional Forum in Africa in Dakar, Senegal.

The main objective was to **support African cities interested in developing more sustainable urban food systems**, by promoting cooperation and knowledge sharing and by providing new tools to build effective food policies and actions.

The forum is part of the MUFPP **Fellowship Programme** and the **regionalization process** of the MUFPP, in continuation with the Pact's previous regional fora: Dakar 2016, Brazzaville 2018, Niamey 2019 and Ouagadougou 2021.

The event gathered **19 city officials from 12 African cities**: the hosting city of Dakar, together with Antananarivo, Bafoussam, Bamako, Douala, Durban, Nairobi, Niamey, Ouagadougou, Praia, Thies and Ziguinchor, as well as 10 African and 24 European and Brazilian Food Wave climate activists.

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OPENING REMARKS

The first day of the Forum started with the welcoming remerks from the **Vice Mayor of the Municipality of Dakar, Mr. Jean Louis Ndiaye,** and from **Anna Scavuzzo, Vice Mayor for the Municipality of Milan.** The MUFPP Secretariat introduced the objectives of the Forum and the history of the Pact, focusing on the lively regionalization process in the African region.
To update the city officials and to introduce the Milan Pact to those cities who were not yet signatories, the MUFPP Secretariat presented the state of the Pact.

At the 5th Regional Forum in Africa, after 8 global fora and 621 Milan Pact Awards practices collected, through 6 MPA editions, 270 signatory cities are committed "to develop sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse, that provide healthy and affordable food to all people in a human rights-based framework, that minimize waste and conserve biodiversity while adapting to and mitigating impacts of climate change".



TRAINING CITY OFFICIALS: THE FOOD POLICY ACTION CANVAS

The most technical outcome of the forum foresaw the presentation of a tool named **Food Policy Action Canvas (FPAC)**, presented by the experts from the Food Sustainability Lab of the **School of Management of the Politecnico di Milan**.

Born in 2017, the Food Sustainability Lab stemmed from a solid research activity of several years on the topics of food recovery and redistribution and sustainability-oriented innovation. The Lab promotes various applied research projects, involving companies and trade associations, the Third Sector and public institutions. The Lab has developed, as part of the Milan led **Horizon Food 2030 "Food Trails"** project with the involvement of different stakeholders, the FPAC, with the objective to assist cities in developing practical and relevant food policy actions and to guide them in implementing those actions.

The tool was developed starting from the business model canvas, a strategic management template used for developing new business models and documenting existing ones. The business model canvas was then adapted to the notion of urban food policy, thus creating the FPAC. The tool has proven **easy to use and adaptable**, as it facilitates the reflection for policy makers, and helps identify objectives, priorities, map stakeholders and beneficiaries and assess practices already in place.

During the forum, facilitators supported the participants in creating their own FPAC. City officials and young activists worked together, whenever possible grouped according to their city or geographical area of origin. The pairing between officials and activists allowed the creation of a lively environment where different perspectives and life experiences were taken into consideration.

Each group was asked to select a food policy action already existing in their respective city and analyze it through the lens of MUFPP categories: Governance, Sustainable Diets and Nutrition, Social and Economic Equity, Food Production, Food Supply and Distribution, Food Waste.

Participants then had to fill out a **stakeholder map**, reflect on the impact of the action, and identify barriers, drivers and enabling factors. The Canvases were then presented to the other participants and discussed in plenary. As a way forward, City officials agreed to continue the reflection back in their cities, sharing the draft canvas with colleagues from different departments.





THE ROUNDTABLE BETWEEN CITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS – PARALLEL SESSION

The second day of the Forum offered an occasion of exchange between international cooperation agencies, international organizations and MUFPP African city officials. The session was articulated in three separated but connected sections:

· The presentation of **AfriFOODlinks project**;

· The presentation of the **Green Cities Initiative by the FAO** ;

· The **roundtable between development agencies, international organizations, and city officials.**

AfriFOODlinks

The Project Coordinator, from coordinating organization **ICLEI Africa**, presented AfriFOODlinks, an 11,8 million Euro Horizon Europe project, running from December 2022 until November 2026. AfriFOODlinks is among the first experiences of **Horizon Europe project conceived, led and run by African institutions**.

AfriFOODlinks aims to improve food and nutrition security while delivering positive outcomes for climate and the environment, and building socioecological resilience in 65+ Cities (**15 African and 5 European Hub & Sharing cities** and 45+ Network Cities) cities.

The presentation served a double purpose: on the one hand, cities that are not already participating in the project got acquainted with it, and had the chance to express their interest in becoming involved as network cities; on the other, international organizations and development agencies could receive information regarding a large ongoing project, that could intersect with their own strategic objectives.

Green Cities Initiative – FAO and Rikolto

FAO and Rikolto representatives presented the Green Cities Initiatives, explaining how their respective organizations are **increasingly interested in observing the role of cities** following the fast and unprecedented urbanization in Africa.

The Green Cities initiative's approach is then based on **four core principles**:

The use of a **systemic approach** that entails a multi-stakeholder involvement, here including the mobilization of local universities/research;

The importance of fostering **urban-rural links**, while adapting to the context;

The **leave no-one behind** principle, encompassing the concepts of food security for all, access to green spaces for all, job creation and an inclusive economy and participatory governance.

Sustainability and resilience: interventions include circular economy, the management of natural resources and ecosystem protection, consider climate risks, and aim at promoting sustainable diets.

Roundtable between development agencies, international organizations, and city officials

The third part of the session featured the **gathering of representatives of development agencies and international organizations, focused on fostering the exchange of African approaches to urban food systems.** The goal was to collect examples of existing funded projects with replicable strategies or actions that can be successfully implemented across Africa and to explore cooperation and synergies.

Invited representatives were asked to **present programmes, actions or strategies targeting urban food systems in African cities - if any-, and in particular in African cities partners of AfriFOODlinks project.**

Attending organizations were: **the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation – AICS (HQ and Dakar Office), USAID, the World Bank, UN-Habitat, the International Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN**.

Among the main takeaways was noted the **increasing interest from international organizations in working with cities and local governments and to adopt an urban approach in developing strategies of intervention**. This was expressed in particular by the representative of the World Bank, who underlined two major challenges in supporting this type of actions: firstly, he noted that historically, the World Bank has worked at national level, and not with cities and communities, and secondly that impactful intervention on food system need a comprehensive approach, while organizations and agency often work by themes such as food security, overlooking the urban context.

IUCN underlined the need for localization, coupled with a stronger focus on partnerships with the private sector.

City officers responded vividly to these inputs, in particular inviting organizations to collaborate directly at the local level, and even underlining how often decentralization is praised in theory while development interventions still target mainly central governments. Some also underlined the lack of feedback mechanisms and communication between local/cities and state/national level, emphasizing the need for a multilevel governance approach.

FAO then suggested joint advocacy actions between the MUFPP, international organizations and development partners, to invite governments to support local administrations in their development efforts around food systems.

THE PARTICIPATION OF FOOD WAVE YOUNG ACTIVISTS – Parallel Session

FoodWave young activists participating in the forum took part in the groups, providing their inputs in filling out the Canvases, having thus the possibility of advocating for the role of climate your activists in the policy design process of local administrations.

For these regards, the Forum offered an **opportunity for activists to meet City officials** and be involved in the reflection behind the making and development of urban food policies. Moreover, the participation of young climate activities in the Forum and in the compilation of the canvases, gave to City officials the unique opportunity to dialogue and interact with urban youth, involved in food policies and initiatives at the local level. The interaction between local administrations and youth is pushed forward by the MUFPP and mentioned in different recommended actions of the MUFPP Framework for Action.

FOCUS SESSIONS ON AGROECOLOGY

Co-organizing **NGO Mani Tese presented its experience in the Azione TerrAE coalition.**

Created in 2019, the coalition brings together diverse actors with the main purpose of working for agroecological transition in Western Africa. Members include not only NGOs, but also the academic sector through research institutes and producers with realities such as that of Reti Semi Rurali.

The objective of Azione TerrÆ is to support the **agroecological transition in West Africa** in international cooperation policies and programs, starting with the Italian Cooperation. In fact, responding to crises in the region requires a systemic, multi-actor approach that focuses on the issues of land and peasant agriculture, the involvement of women and young people. The coalition has organized seminars inviting stakeholders and consultations in the process that led to the elaboration of the position paper, with the aim of lobbying Italian cooperation to place agro-ecology at the heart of its strategies. Agroecology is not just in rural development, but also as part of the development of society as a whole and there is a call to mobilize for urgent and coordinated action, focusing on the crisis in West Africa.

As ACRA representative underlined, **Agroecology was recognized internationally by the FAO in 2019**. An approach must be adapted to the working context. Yet the relationship between agroecology and urban nutritional systems is not in the manifesto, but important work on the emergence of agroecology in urban policies is underway, as envisaged in the **Ouagadougou Declaration following the 2021 MUFPP Regional Forum**, approved by participating cities.

FIELD VISITS IN DAKAR

To close the Forum with a first-hand experience, two field visits were organized.

City officials were invited to witness the most successful urban agriculture practice in Dakar, the micro-gardens.
The practice was launched in **2006 in partnership with the city of Milan and NGO ACRA** to respond to the issue of increasing urbanization in the city and to give an alternative source of healthy and nutritious food to groups of citizens in vulnerable conditions, such as people living with disabilities, unemployed women and youth, and elderly people.
Micro-gardening consists of growing vegetables, fruit and herbs in small fields or on tables in densely populated areas of the city.
Micro-gardens create jobs, because people can earn an income as well as having a healthier and more complete diet, and they require little investment and low technological expertise because they use recycled materials and local products. Produce is usually used for self-consumption, and what is not consumed by the beneficiaries – most of the time women - is sold in local markets.
City officials could visit the gardens, interact with beneficiaries, ask questions to the local administrators and assess the results of the practice.
Field visits like this one are offered in the perspective of exchange and potential replication of best practices.

In parallel, **the young climate activists met two local associations to discuss the state of climate activism in the country.** The meetings took place at Hann Park in Dakar, one of the biggest urban parks in the city.
They had the chance to meet **Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement du Sénégal** (JVE Sénégal), a non-profit civil society organization that plays a key role in preserving the environment and promoting sustainable development in Senegal; and **Action pour la Justice Environnementale** (AJE), an association active at the national level to the ecological interests of communities in the face of environmental damage.



5th MUFPP Regional Forum in Africa

Dakar, Senegal

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