



Concept Note

REFELA Conflict Management Training

Date: 7 June 2021 (English: Arabic & Portuguese interpretation) &

8 June 2021 (French)

Zoom

1. Introduction and background

Africa is experiencing the world's fastest rate of urbanisation and according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the continent's population is projected to double between now and 2050, and two-thirds of this growth will be absorbed by urban areas. With this rapid increase in urbanisation, local governments have the challenge of meeting the needs of their current inhabitants and future ones too. According to United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (2017), the concentration of people, power and profit in cities, as critical arenas, creates opportunities for sustainable and peaceful development, however the rapid rate of urbanization can contribute to the disruption of established interests and power balances. It changes a society's political economy and economic geography by moving power away from rural, often agrarian, forces, towards industrial, commercial and urban actors, disrupting established social institutions, and changing identities. Inevitably, these socio-economic and political changes are contested, and that contestation can generate conflict, including conflict over how the city, and those who live within it, should be governed.

Accelerated social and economic changes are likely to occur in these growing urban areas and these changes in cities can cause political instability, inequality and unemployment, among other factors, contributing to the potential for conflict. The link between urbanization, unrest, violence and conflict is complex. Violence in urban areas is heterogeneous, not uniformly distributed, and does not correlate in any straightforward manner to population size or urban geography. Urban violence takes many forms, from inter-personal and gender-based violence, to riots and protest action, to more structured and well-organized forms of criminal or political violence, including communal contest and terrorism (Cockayne, Bosetti and Hussain, 2017).

The variety of factors associated with urban conflict, including complex patterns of causation and interdependence, makes the eradication of violence extremely difficult. In order to better mitigate, manage and resolve urban conflicts, understanding has to be built around the nexus

of urbanisation, local governance and conflict, and how best to address both the causes and effects of urban conflict.

2. Rationale

Capacitating cities and local government stakeholders with the skills and knowledge to manage conflict is a proactive measure that will support their efforts to prevent and mitigate conflicts that may arise in these increasingly densely populated urban environments. Addressing and managing conflict at these urban levels not only mitigates the potential for violence in those immediate localities, but also can prevent local conflicts from escalating to larger and intractable conflicts.

In its creation, REFELA, in UCLG Africa, supports the participation of women in governance through exchanging ideas and information, and fostering active participation in debates. The REFELA dialogues involve discussions on issues pertaining specifically to locally elected women in Africa, as well as broader issues around local governance as a whole. As a permanent committee of UCLG Africa, REFELA members use their unique position to raise the profile of the network and campaign for development issues effecting municipalities and cities.

In light of this role, ACCORD will support REFELA in strengthening their conflict management skills, as a means to assist their efforts to address the governance and development issue of increasing urban conflict.

3. Objectives

ACCORD will be conducting the training over three hours. The training will first be conducted in English and then in French. The objectives for this training will be to:

- Strengthen conflict analysis skills.
- Increased understanding of approaches to mediation and negotiation.

4. Expected Outcomes

Deepened knowledge and understanding of gendered conflict management skills, specifically conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation.

5. Training Specific Details

Venue: Zoom

Gender representation: 100% female

Sector representation: Female mayors and local government officials in Africa