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GOLD III and the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals

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The Third UCLG Global Report on Decentralisation, **GOLD III**, is currently contributing to the debate on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and on the Post 2015 agenda by presenting the vision of local authorities on the current situation of basic services in different regions of the world, concentrating on two aspects: access and management of services.

Progress made to date confirms that in the majority of countries, local authorities have direct or indirect responsibility in the management of water, sanitation, solid household waste and to varying degrees, urban transport. However local authorities in some regions do have the power and the resources necessary to provide these services.

The report will allow us to test whether in countries where there is the greatest delay in implementing the MDG, local governments lack the necessary resources and capacities to correctly address them. This situation is principally dominant in sub-Saharan Africa and in South Asia. Furthermore, problems of access to basic services are increasingly concentrated in marginal neighbourhoods on urban peripheries. For example, statistics confirm that 85% of inhabitants in African urban zones have better access to water and 55% to sanitation; in informal settlements of cities, access is always below 20-30% (figures comparable or superior to rural areas). Furthermore, in many cities, the demand is beginning to exceed the provisional capacities, effecting the quality and frequency of the service.

Conversely, where progress can be noted in the achievement of the MDG it is generally owing to the work of local governments, in strict collaboration with national governments. Some countries have developed policies aimed at guaranteeing access for the poorest (South Africa), or through direct grants to the poorest families (Brazil).

The involvement of local governments in the governance of basic services is not only fundamental for the MDG but also for the majority of the objectives that are under debate for the Post 2015 Agenda.

In view of this, the report analyses the evolution of the management methods for services and determines that, in terms of the financing for the infrastructure of basic services – in particular in big cities experiencing rapid growth, the principle of self-funding or financing through the payment of services (“water pays water”) does not allow authorities to meet needs and results in accumulated delays in social and territorial terms.

A first draft of the regional reports are currently being finalized and will be presented and debated in the regional seminars in the various UCLG sections between March and June. During these debates, recommendations will be collected and proposed that will reinforce the conclusions of the Report.

The final version of the **GOLD III Report** will be presented during the [4th UCLG World Congress in Rabat \(Morocco\)](#) in October 2013, and will be published in 2014 on the eve of the date determined by the International Community for the evaluation and revision of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Tags: [GOLD III Report](#)
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