

Urban Highlight

CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE: CoM SSA IV

The **Covenant of Mayors for Sub-Saharan Africa (CoM SSA)** was established in 2015 as part of a global effort to support cities in implementing **sustainable local climate and energy policies**. This initiative is built upon the successful model of the Covenant of Mayors in Europe and aims to enhance urban resilience and access to sustainable energy across Sub-Saharan Africa. CoM SSA has grown over the years into a vital platform for encouraging cities to take concrete climate actions.

CoM SSA is supported by funding from the European Union, with a total of **EUR 44 million** mobilised to date. The programme involves a range of international funders—the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (**BMZ**), the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (**AECID**) and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and implementing partners—AECID, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (**GIZ**), and Agence Française de Développement (**AFD**) along with its subsidiary, the Agence Française d'Expertise Technique Internationale (**Expertise France**).

CoM SSA partners with a range of civil society organisations, local and regional authorities and networks, throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, including ICLEI Africa which hosts the integrated CoM SSA Secretariat and Technical Helpdesk. These organisations play a crucial role in supporting signatory cities across the region.

Over the years, the initiative has gathered over **388 signatories from 40 countries**, collectively representing more than **160 million citizens**. It encompasses a diverse array of cities, using French, English, and Portuguese as operating languages. Since its launch, CoM SSA has **facilitated the preparation of numerous projects** aimed at advancing sustainable urban planning and climate action, projecting the **mobilisation of investments worth €670M** and potential reduction of GHG emissions by 18 million tonnes over the 15 years following the projects' implementation.

CoM SSA's objectives focus on building capacity for urban resilience, improving energy access, and formulating climate action plans known as Sustainable Energy Access and Climate Action Plans (SEACAPs). The initiative has succeeded in aiding cities to align themselves with the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), awarding Adaptation, Mitigation, and Access to Energy badges to institutions demonstrating significant commitment.

In October 2025, the European Commission has launched **CoM SSA Phase IV (2025-2029)**, with continued support from the programme's funders and partners. In this new phase, the focus will be on unlocking urban climate-related investments enabling cities to **translate their climate action plans into bankable projects**, developing and implementing SEACAPs, and fostering city partnerships. Phase IV emphasises **practical implementation and investment** in city-led climate initiatives, further strengthening international cooperation and support for sustainable urban development in the region.

This launch marks another step in the ongoing journey of empowering Sub-Saharan cities to achieve climate resilience and sustainable energy access, reinforcing the initiative's commitment to fostering urban sustainability.