



## Creation of a Global Alliance for Smart Cities in Africa to provide access to clean energy and connectivity, and launch of a smart lamppost program

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Emerging markets and developing countries, mainly in Africa, are key areas where investments are needed to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In a recent paper published by the UNEP FI<sup>1</sup>, the remaining gap in terms of financial flows to be allocated to meet the SDGs objectives is estimated at around US\$ 2.5 trillion per year until 2030, with Africa representing nearly half of the gap.

Moreover, in order to reach the SDGs, it is paramount to:

- refurbish infrastructure and accelerate transition in developed markets and
- innovate and create resilient infrastructure to leapfrog in developing markets.

To successfully leapfrog to sustainable development, emerging and developing countries in Africa have to embrace the opportunity offered by digitalisation and to rethink their business models around it. The creation of the Global Alliance for Smart Cities in Africa (GASCA) is part of this ambition and aims to collectively explore concrete ways to support African development.

GASCA is a multi-skilled alliance founded by top African companies and global players sharing a common vision around the importance to build sustainable innovative solutions in Africa. The alliance is open to new partners sharing the same ambition. The founding members of the alliance are:

- **R20 – Regions of Climate Action:** A not-for-profit international organization founded by Arnold Schwarzenegger that works to support sub-national governments around the world to develop and secure financing for green infrastructure projects;
- **The Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation:** Advisor and supporter to collaborative partnerships, the Foundation supports projects around the world that build climate resiliency;
- **Africa Development Solutions Group (ADS):** A pan-African group, including manufacturing assembling operations in Africa and **Solektra International**, a leading company in solar energy solutions (PV, LED) investing in economic growth and employment in Africa;
- **JCDecaux:** The number one outdoor advertising company worldwide partnering with 4,031 cities in more than 80 countries, invented a model providing cities with street furniture and public services (such as bus shelters, city information panels, automatic public toilets, recycle bins) at no cost, financed by qualitative advertising spaces;

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP FI: United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative.

Link to the report published in November 2018 "[Rethinking Impact to finance the SDGs](#)".



- **Signify** (formerly Philips Lighting): World no1 lighting company with the purpose to unlock the extraordinary potential of light for brighter lives and a better world;
- **Societe Generale**: One of the leading European banks and a long-standing partner of the African continent with operations in 19 countries. Societe Generale pledged to play a driving role, along with private and public sector players, in sustainable development in Africa, notably by leveraging on the Bank's know-how in energy and infrastructure financing as well as its unique expertise in impact-based finance.

A first action the GASCA advocates in favour of is the development of an ecosystem of smart lampposts. These smart lampposts pose a leapfrog solution, both in terms of technology and business model, as they tackle two of the major pain points communities in Africa are facing: access to energy and connectivity. The smart lamppost addresses these two pain points both in cities and rural areas:

- **Technological leapfrog**: The smart lamppost, thanks to its off grid solar PV panel and battery, can bring energy in areas where there is no electricity. This solution does not necessarily require an extension of the national grid which, in most cases, requires tremendous investments. On top of that, the smart lamppost can provide telecommunication and connectivity services, being a potential internet relay. By solving these challenges, the smart lamppost can further provide additional services such as mobility, security, smart education, smart healthcare or citizens' wellbeing solutions.
- **Business model leapfrog**: This will require the set-up of a new ecosystem, which aims at generating derived revenues from smart lampposts and thus enabling the public sector to envisage investments beyond their current budgets. The key for the emergence of such a business model is to further develop cooperation by building public-private partnerships to address the technical, commercial and financial aspects of the smart lamppost.

In this perspective, the GASCA is fully open to welcome more members from the public sector as well as clean tech, financial and service companies joining the initiative with the aim to further develop smart solutions in Africa.

GASCA contemplates a first implementation of the lamppost programme in Rwanda. Home to Smart Africa Alliance and the acclaimed Transform Africa Summit, Rwanda is a critical player in advancing digital technologies over the continent, and is at the forefront for village development through its "Green Village Programme".



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#### About R20

R20 – Regions of Climate Action is a not-for-profit international organization founded in 2011 by the former Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, in cooperation with the United Nations and a number of leading Regions, Development Banks, Clean-Tech companies, Academia and NGOs, to support sub-national governments around the world to develop and secure financing for green infrastructure projects. Through its unique value chain approach, R20 mobilizes, connects and collaborates with a wide range of actors to fast-track the transition to inclusive, resilient and low-carbon societies. R20 is headquartered in Geneva and has, since its founding, worked on projects in Algeria, Mali, Nigeria, and Tanzania as well as Southern China and Brazil.

#### About The Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation

The Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation is dedicated to the protection and wellbeing of all Earth's inhabitants. Through collaborative partnerships, the Foundation supports projects around the world that build climate resiliency, protect vulnerable wildlife, and restore balance to threatened ecosystems and communities.

#### About Africa Development Solutions Group (ADS) / Solektra International

ADS Group was launched in 2004 by world-renowned African entrepreneur Samba Bathily who pioneered the financial structuring of major infrastructure projects, particularly in the field of new technologies and clean energy. Samba Bathily is also one of the co-founders of the AfroChampions Initiative, an African private sector-led platform designed to advance Africa's economic integration. ADS is a dynamic group active in the sectors of finance and consulting; technologies; industries; renewables and access to water; distribution and franchising; infrastructures and construction; automobile and logistics. A strategic company in the ADS group, Solektra International was founded in 2014 and launched an initiative that promotes awareness and usage of innovative solar solutions providing African communities in rural areas with access to clean energy. To date, more than 1600 cities and villages have been positively impacted. Results include deployment of solar solutions such as the installation of street lamps, and domestic and community kits in 17 countries throughout Africa.

#### About JCDecaux

JCDecaux, the number one outdoor advertising company worldwide present in 80 countries, is the partner of 4,031 cities with over 10,000 inhabitants. For more than 50 years, JCDecaux products have been the benchmark in innovation, quality, aesthetics



and functionality. In an era of smart cities, JCDecaux is well positioned to play a major role in the evolution of urban models and in the creation of more sustainable, friendly and comfortable cities.

Currently positioned as number one in outdoor advertising in Africa, the Group, thanks to the know-how of its employees and the use of local resources it requests, adopts since 2006 innovative offers to accompany the unequalled growth of this continent. With its economic model of financing street furniture through advertising, particularly relevant in Africa, JCDecaux is answering the growing infrastructure and service needs of cities, while considering their budget constraints.

#### About Signify

Signify (Euronext: LIGHT) is the world leader in lighting for professionals and consumers and lighting for the Internet of Things. Our Philips products, Interact connected lighting systems and data-enabled services, deliver business value and transform life in homes, buildings and public spaces. With 2018 sales of EUR 6.4 billion, we have approximately 29,000 employees and are present in over 70 countries. We unlock the extraordinary potential of light for brighter lives and a better world. We have been named Industry Leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for two years in a row. News from Signify is located at the Newsroom, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Information for investors can be found on the Investor Relations page.

#### About Societe Generale

Societe Generale is one of the leading European financial services groups. Based on a diversified and integrated banking model, the Group combines financial strength and proven expertise in innovation with a strategy of sustainable growth, aiming to be the trusted partner for its clients, committed to the positive transformations of society and the economy.

Active in the real economy for over 150 years, with a solid position in Europe and connected to the rest of the world, Societe Generale has over 147,000 members of staff in 67 countries and supports on a daily basis 31 million individual clients, businesses and institutional investors around the world by offering a wide range of advisory services and tailored financial solutions. The Group is built on three complementary core businesses:

- **French Retail Banking** which encompasses the Societe Generale, Cr dit du Nord and Boursorama brands. Each offers a full range of financial services with omnichannel products at the cutting edge of digital innovation;
- **International Retail Banking, Insurance and Financial Services to Corporates**, with networks in Africa, Russia, Central and Eastern Europe and specialised businesses that are leaders in their markets;
- **Global Banking and Investor Solutions**, which offers recognised expertise, key international locations and integrated solutions.

Societe Generale is included in the principal socially responsible investment indices: DJSI (World and Europe), FTSE4Good (Global and Europe), Euronext Vigeo (World, Europe and Eurozone), four of the STOXX ESG Leaders indices, and the MSCI Low Carbon Leaders Index.

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