

New coming Local Economic Development Agencies in the international network ILS LEDA and increased visibility



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Seven new Local Economic Development Agencies have recently been or are going to be established, thanks to the efforts of the UNDP ART Gold Programs in Sri Lanka, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, and Lebanon. They will add themselves to the 48 Agencies participating in the ILSLEDA (International Service for Local Economic Development Agencies) network.

One of the results of these recent efforts is the increased visibility of the LEDAs promoted by the ART programs. It is worthwhile to mention the recent IADB (Inter American Development Bank) "Learning Guide on Productive Integration and Territorial Economic Development", prepared by Francisco Alburquerque Llorens, which gives great emphasis on the role of the LEDAs for local economic development and several times quotes the LEDAs here introduced as reference.

See http://www.iadb.org/mif/guia_pip.cfm?language=Spanish.

All these LEDAs are different due to the institutional, socio-economic and cultural specific characteristic of each context. In all the cases they have in common:

- a participatory approach and management;
- an over-municipal territorial dimension (with some exceptions)
- the public-private membership, including local government's, territorial delegations of national government, other public institutions, associations of producers, workers, and civil society, educational and cultural institutions, other social institutions including NGOs, centers of research, banks, etc.
- the effort to support a fair development, combining the objective of a competitive territorial development with the one of inserting the most disadvantaged people in the economic mainstream, in order to reduce structurally the poverty.
- the designed goal of being self-sustainable after the start-up

The RUEDA Agency in Sri Lanka



The UNDP ART GOLD Program in Sri Lanka started in 2007 the process to establish a LEDA in the Southern Province – Rueda-, inaugurated in September 2008. The LEDA members are the Southern Provincial Development Authority and Departments, the Export Development Board (Southern Province Office), the Municipal and district councils, the District Chambers of Commerce, the University of Ruhuna, relevant social NGOs, the Ruhunu Development and Sanasa Banks, farmers associations, the Board of Investment (Southern Province office), the Southern Development Authority (SDA), the Industrial Development Board (local branch).

The LEDA of Rivera in Uruguay



The UNDP ART Program and the Government of Uruguay - OPP *Oficina de Planeamiento y Presupuesto* - started in 2007 the process to establish the Development Agency of the Rivera Department. The Agency, inaugurated in October 2008, is now fully operational. Its members are the Rivera Departmental Government (*Intendencia*), the National Government Departmental Delegations (Ministry of Social Affairs, Agriculture, Tourism), the Association of traders, the Associations of farmers, the representations of Neighbors Committees, relevant NGOs and local industries.

The new four LEDAs in Lebanon

In January 2008 started in Lebanon in the framework of the ART GOLD Program, the process to implement four LEDAs in the areas: North, South, Bekaa, and Southern Suburbs of Beirut. The final steps for the LEDA establishment and the statute are going to be finalized with the founder members. The business plans are also defined. The Lebanese LEDAs founders members are, in general, Municipalities and Unions of Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Association and Federations of artisans, farmers and industry, universities, relevant NGOs, The Ministry of the Interior assured a special authorization for permitting the participation of the local administrations into the LEDAs.



The LEDA of El Seibo in Dominican Republic



The ART GOLD Program and the UNDP Country Office in Dominican Republic started in 2008 the process for establishing a LEDA in the Seibo Province. The LEDA is foreseen to be inaugurated in March 2009. The promoter institutions have already been identified, whether the objectives, the mission, the organization, and the business plan are going to be finalized in the next weeks.

The first actions of all the above-mentioned LEDAs are in general in supporting prioritized value chains in the sectors of agro-food, sustainable and natural tourism, forestry, arts and crafts, light industry, in promoting social inclusion, and enhancing territorial marketing. The effort of the ART GOLD programs for the creation of the LEDAs have been supported by ILSLEDA, either through technical assistance and training on the field, than through at distance accompaniment.

