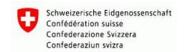# Development Partners Network on Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG)

16th Annual Meeting

13 September - 23 September 2021

Online Meeting

Hosted by Member & Partner Organisations
SDC, BMZ, ADB, UNDP, NALAS, Norad, UN-Habitat, ICLD
with support by the DeLoG Secretariat

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 – OPENING

High-Level Policy Dialogue on Inclusive & Resilient Decentralisation and Local Governance Reforms & Institutions
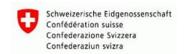
Context

The 2030 Agenda calls for effective, transparent, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (SDG 16) and encourages the creation of meaningful multi-stakeholder partnerships (SDG17). Its core principle of "Leaving No One Behind" guides actors and stakeholders involved in decentralisation and local governance reform processes and in the localisation of the SDGs. Local governments react to crises and shocks and are at the forefront of protecting citizens and providing multi-faceted responses and services. Local functions and responsibilities enable local sustainability, local resilience and local regeneration. The local level is crucial for addressing challenges of peace and the prevention of violent extremism while increasing social cohesion and ensuring long-term stability and prosperity.

Over the last years, and especially since the outbreak of COVID-19, the environment and the global agenda on DLG have changed. DeLoG members and partners adapt DLG approaches under the pressure of social, economic, ecological and political challenges. The provision of equal and secure access to public services is a core responsibility of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs). Clearly defined functions and mandates as well as access to finance for LRGs are necessary to enable them to fulfil that responsibility. These objectives are at the centre of DLG reform processes and a prerequisite for sustainable solutions and reaching the SDGs. What should increasingly matter in a globalized world is the wellbeing of each human being in their local surroundings. Donors often support what communities and LRGs are advocating for: increase in ownership by the communities, larger investments in local capacity-building and the provision of adequate funding or access to national and international financing mechanisms for LRGs. However, there is not one uniform approach by donors, and approaches change over time. So, what changes and strategic shifts do donors and development partners envisage in their DLG support to address the changing environment and challenges of our time? How can DLG support be adapted to effectively meet the most urgent needs of local communities? How can donors measure, enable, mobilise and adapt to what is most needed/urgent?

Trying to discuss challenges and opportunities linked to such questions, the opening panel set the scene for this year's DeLoG Annual Meeting and provided room for policy dialogue allowing members and partners to exchange on their strategies and priorities. The key question to be addressed was how the support for inclusive and resilient DLG reforms is evolving in the face of the current global challenges and what role partnerships and networks like DeLoG should play in the future.

Key Interventions:

- **Dr. Thomas Gass,** Ambassador, Assistant Director General, Head South Cooperation Department, SDC, Co-Chair Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

- **Dr. Ingolf Dietrich**, Director, 2030 Agenda; poverty; democracy; rule of law; equality; human rights; education; Commissioner for Sustainable Development, BMZ

- **Emilia Saíz**, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

- Tatiana Badan, Mayor of Selemet, Moldova, President of the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS)

- **Hemanthi Goonasekera**, Chief Executive Officer, Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities (FSLGA)

- **Dr. Neila Akrimi**, Senior Manager Strategy & Development, VNG International

Key Messages & Conclusions:

- The demand for effective service delivery through local governments increases globally since the begin COVID-19 pandemic, while the space for manoeuvre for local finance is reduced through the lack of revenue, economic downturn and tendencies of (fiscal) re-centralisation.

- The localisation of the 2030 Agenda requires effective implementation of decentralisation and local governance support programs. Therefore, approaches to support should be context specific and resilient.

- The support of decentralisation reforms in specific sectors, like for example health, environment or local economic development, allows to improve service delivery and address effectively citizen's needs.

- Digitalisation represents an opportunity for local public administration and accountability, but also increases the risk of exclusion and centralisation (centralised data and solutions).

- Inclusive local governance requires the integration of diverse stakeholders. Civil society organisations are enabling actors to better understand, and address populations needs; youth as well as women are key drivers for equality and change.

- Local governments are crucial to strengthen trust and state people relation in times of authoritarian backsliding, weakened democracies and re-centralisation.

- Emergencies, especially in cities, request flexible funding mechanisms and the adaptation of urban governance approaches.

Areas of Engagement for DeLoG:

- Dialogue around inclusive and resilient decentralisation and local governance reforms must include more voices from the global south.

- Provide a platform for constant exchange of donor and municipal perspectives to better understand local government challenges, learn from best practices and tailor approaches.

Suggested further reading / more information:

Article Website

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 Agenda

DeLoG Opening: High-Level Policy Dialogue - Concept Note

DeLoG Activity Timeline

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 - <u>MEASURE, ASSESS & INFORM</u> hosted by **ADB**

Context

A central aim of decentralisation processes and strengthening local governance is to facilitate better allocation of resources to local governments that could in turn be used to provide effective, efficient, and accessible public services tailored to the needs of the local population and support local sustainable development. Local governments and community-based organisations are located closer to citizens and are often better equipped to assess and respond to local communities' needs, collect local data and information and use it to enhance inclusion of marginalised groups in decision-making and in accessing and improving quality services. Multidimensional and context-sensitive assessments, supported by local data collection that take into account the complex structures, relationships and incentives underpinning decentralisation and local governance (DLG) reforms, are a prerequisite to address exclusion and poverty.

The linkages between decentralisation and inclusion need to be further strengthened by developing and enhancing monitoring and evaluation methods (e.g. collection of innovative local practices, and processing and using of disaggregated data). Policymakers and program implementers need enhanced local involvement in monitoring, as well as updated and disaggregated data for a comprehensive analysis of a development situation at a given point in time (and across time), and to monitor, prepare and respond to impacts of policies, programs and shocks like the ongoing global pandemic.

The need for further improvement in the process of assessing results, outcomes, and impacts of inclusive DLG reforms is unabated. The reporting on the progress of implementing reforms as well as the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the identification of priority needs and demands heavily relies on local governments and stakeholders monitoring, supported by good, easily accessible, and disaggregated data. In this regard, subnational SDG reporting efforts have made important progress over the past years, mainly through local governments reviews (Voluntary Local and Subnational Reviews - VLRs and VSRs), civil society monitoring systems and impact assessments, among others. Assessing the impact of these efforts' entails understanding how they constitute political processes leading to improved multilevel dialogue, more inclusive approaches to sustainable development and institutional reform. Therefore, this session aims to track good practices and capitalise on lessons from different contexts.

Key Interventions:
- **Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) Network**, **Dr. Celia Reyes**
  - The CBMS tool is designed to provide policymakers with a good information base for tracking the micro level impacts of various adjustment policies and policy shocks particularly on the vulnerable groups in the society.

- **SDG reporting at local level as a mechanism to strengthen multilevel governance, policy recommendations, Edgardo Bilsky, UCLG GOLD**
  - VLRs/ VSRs are yearly reports monitoring and assessing the localization of the SDGs since 2017. The reports analyses the "institutional enabling environment" for localization, the contributions made by LRGs in the implementation different goals and targets following the HLPF cycle.

- **Lessons learned from 30 years of supporting local and regional authorities in Burkina Faso, Alexander Widmer, SDC**
  - The SDC approach in supporting decentralization, which is a pioneer in supporting the decentralisation process in Burkina Faso, has set itself the goal of capitalizing on its experiences. This support for decentralization has been carried out according to subsequent programs.

- **Inclusive performance measurement framework, Elena Pierce, FCM**
  - Working to achieve gender parity and developing inclusive processes to assess citizens' needs are proven measures that FCM has implemented in various settings and locations. The measurement framework helps to achieve these goals by assisting "governments of developing countries to improve their ability to deliver programs that support gender equality at all levels of government and in all sectors."

Key Messages & Conclusions:

- Citizens and community networks are key actors to provide information to improve data for decision making and to strengthen accountability. Community Based Monitoring Systems are an opportunity to strengthen the relation between local (government) institutions and establish databases to improve for example service delivery at the local level. Developing a practical and easy monitoring system like CBMS, which could be used in different country contexts, helps to monitor progress beyond project/program life cycles.

- The reporting through voluntary local and subnational reviews about the progress of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda widens the debate and facilitates engagement of communities (whole of society approach). Reporting is an instrument to strengthen the dialogue in the multi-level governance system and to provides a platform to voice local development needs.

- The support and impact of DLG reform processes is long-term and needs to better understand. Long term impact assessments help to analyse holistically and are an important tool for communication and policy dialogue around reform needs and approaches.

- Inclusivity within DLG support require an inclusive measurement framework. This framework is an important tool to strengthen women in local leadership, inclusive and gender sensitive policies and public services.

Areas of engagement for DeLoG:

- The potentials of SDG Reporting and CBMS for DLG Support should be further explored, especially its effect on improved multi-level dialogue and DLG approaches.

- Support the development of Voluntary Subnational Review guidelines and disseminate them among members and partners.

- Discuss and present methods to measure long term impact of DLG support and inclusion within DeLoG.

Suggested further reading / more information:

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 – Agenda

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 – Measure, Asses & Inform Concept Note

The CBMS Research Program

UCLG Gold: Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) 2021

Swiss Cooperation in Burkina Faso – SDC Capitalisation of Experience (*video in french*)

FCM Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership

DeLoG AM Session Presentations

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 – <u>ADAPT</u> hosted by UNDP

Context

Resilience is often defined as the ability of "individuals, communities and states and their institutions to absorb and recover from shocks, whilst positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term changes and uncertainty" (OECD, 2013). Resilience is thus inherently interlinked with inclusion. States that are more open and inclusive tend to be more prosperous, effective and resilient over the long term (OECD, 2020). The multiple and overlapping patterns of social exclusion prevent people from exercising their rights and opportunities, hindering poverty reduction by leading to higher rates of poverty among marginalised groups and reducing the productivity and resilience of the whole society. As social exclusion prevents the realisation of rights and exacerbates poverty, it in turn affects societies' ability to achieve the SDGs and can further lead to conflict and violence.

Shifting social, political and economic dynamics are giving rise to phenomena that compound the existing challenges of local governance in fragile, post-conflict and disaster-affected settings. Democratic backsliding and autocratisation has been on the rise for the past ten years and economic downturn due to several financial crises, as well as other events has increased. Inequalities and polarisation are steadily rising, and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are set to further contribute to this trend. Local governments have been first responders to shocks like the pandemic and are at the forefront of providing multi-faceted responses and services. The provision of equal and secure access to public services is therefore a core responsibility of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs), but political crises and conflicts as effects of social and economic difficulties, created widespread fragility and vulnerability. Furthermore, the effects of climate change are becoming progressively more concrete and visible, giving rise to another set of crises: natural disasters.

The 2021 DeLoG Annual Meeting finds local governments still on the frontline of the COVID-19 global pandemic. This local and multi-level crisis management continues as depleted resources and lowered revenue streams present undermine public service delivery, infrastructure maintenance, and sustainable development initiatives, just as the need for them is at all-time high. For some regions, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings, the pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing crises spurred by rapid urbanisation, concentrated poverty, depleted environmental resources and social instability. In these contexts, COVID-19 has placed further strain on already over-stretched municipal governments and stressed populations. The two key concepts of resilience and inclusion are key to responding to these challenges and building sustainable solutions, starting from the local level.

The "Adapt" session of the 2021 DeLoG Annual Meeting allowed network members to share lessons learnt and identify priority areas on support to inclusive and resilient DLG support for risk management and recovery through the lenses of multi-level governance. This also led into developing new thematic focuses as envisioned in the new DeLoG Strategy 2021-2024. To allow for broad applicability of the discussion for network members, this may include local authorities dealing with issues of disaster and fragility, violent conflict, or political, social and/or economic instability. This included contexts that are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Interventions:

▪ **Is there opportunity in stress testing local democratic governance institutions?**
  - Charles Cadwell, Institute Fellow, Urban Institute

▪ **Review of urban risk and resilience trends, needs and priorities for cities**
  - Rajeev Issar, DRR and Urban Risk Management Specialist, UNDP

▪ **Lessons for inclusive local governance and peacebuilding in Yemen**
  - Joshua Rogers, Project Manager, Berghof Foundation

Key Messages & Conclusions:

- Crises are stress tests for existing multi-level governance systems and the capability of local governments to adapt. Analysis from Nepal, Indonesia and Moldova shows how the distribution of powers influence service delivery, and that this tendency is reinforced by a lack of autonomy and centralised micromanagement and the appearance of local power entrepreneurs (crisis opportunists) who are beneficiated during crisis. The capability of local governments to adapt during crisis therefore depends on clear intergovernmental relations.

- Urban resilience is affected by the lack of coordination between the central government and cities. The high density of urban areas requires solid information and data to prioritise locations for adaptive urban governance. Political economy analysis of urban needs must include the diverse range of urban stakeholders and especially community networks. Further, it is necessary to leverage social capital is necessary to strengthen urban resilience, including the use of new technologies and digital innovation for better data.

- Local government actors need space to come together and jointly plan to overcome the often-observed fragmentation and operating in silos of local governance actors. Strengthening the integration of actors and policies through policy dialogue and peer-to-peer networking will lead to more and better development results. Capacities are often dormant, so mechanisms of peer learning and the use of existing legal frameworks can help to leverage local potentials to adapt. This also implies mechanisms of dialogue with central level authorities, to encourage a better and more coherent understanding of local realities. Development partners should encourage the exchange between local government representatives and apply flexible instruments of support, for example by speeding up disbursement.

Areas of Engagement for DeLoG:

- Establish space for knowledge exchange about how to conduct political economy analysis for inclusive urban development needs, how to manage risks in fragile and urban setting, instruments for foresight and adaptive programme management.
- Discuss how to strengthen local government associations (LGA) in their crucial task of creating momentum for improved dialogue and coordination between levels of government to further clarify which services are expected and should be provided by local governments.
- Development partners and DeLoG have a crucial role to play advocacy and programmatic support through flexible financing mechanisms, on data and technological innovation. DeLoG to work with members to identify and prioritise key areas for donor support on LG resilience in crisis.
- Establish channel for exchange on existing and emerging best practice for DLG programming in crisis-affected contexts and promote the role of local governance systems and local actors in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus debate (incl. pure humanitarian guidelines) within DeLoG.

Suggested further reading / more information:

DeLoG AM 2021 Agenda

DeLoG AM Session Presentations

Berghof Foundation Seven lessons for inclusive local governance and peacebuilding in Yemen

Berghof Foundation Changing local governance in Yemen

Local Public Sector Alliance

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 – MOBILISE hosted by Norad & NALAS

Context

Resilience is often defined as the ability of "individuals, communities and states and their institutions to absorb and recover from shocks, whilst positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term changes and uncertainty" (OECD, 2013). Resilience is thus strictly interlinked with inclusion. In general, states that are more open and inclusive tend to be more prosperous, effective and resilient over the long term. Today, local governments all over the globe face numerous challenges related to decreased financial resources, increased portfolio of services to follow increased citizens' expectations, pressure for a quick post COVID-19 recovery and local development. All this happens in the context of inadequate fiscal decentralisation, overlapping responsibilities, and underfunded competences.

The fiscal and public finance relations between central governments and Subnational Governments (SNGs), which is often referred to by the term of multi-level governance, define the fiscal responsibilities and allocation of sufficient resources for each level of government. It is crucial to find the right balance of responsibilities between central government and SNGs at different levels. If SNGs are not given the appropriate fiscal responsibilities and adequate resources, broader decentralisation and local governance policy objectives like more inclusive societies and ''building-back-better'' from the pandemic will be frustrated, and the potential economic and developmental benefits of decentralisation will not fully materialise. The balance between delegated responsibilities and the resources that are allocated (or powers to raise revenue) to SNGs to meet those responsibilities is at the center of the fiscal decentralisation debate.

Mobilising own financial resources for inclusion and investments in resilience-building are often very limited for subnational governments due to the lack of administered competencies for tax collection or missing technical equipment and data. It is therefore often said that the only good local taxes and user fees are those, that are easy to administer locally, are imposed mainly on local residents, and do not cause problems of harmonisation or competition between different levels of government. While the principle of subsidiarity seems to be a good argument for decentralization, small SNGs struggle to raise sufficient revenues to survive, and lose out on the benefits of economies of scale, unless they can conceive and execute cost-effective reforms that expand the tax base and improves the collection of revenues. So, if SNGs are inadequately resourced they cannot appropriately provide public services, which will undermine their usefulness and will lead to a lack of legitimacy in the eyes of local citizens and communities with far-reaching consequences for the inclusion of citizens in local political processes. Through multi-stakeholder engagement like NGOs, CSOs, private sector enterprises and other actors the mobilisation of citizens can be strengthened.

Key Interventions:

- **How to mobilise stakeholders to deal with the consequences of COVID-19 – Experiences from Southeastern Europe**
    - Turgut Tuncay Önbilgin, President, Istanbul Investment Agency
    - Elton Stafa, Technical Expert on Decentralisation and Fiscal Decentralisation, NALAS
- **Resilient and inclusive revenue mobilisation in Afghanistan**
    - Antony Lamba, Chief Technical Advisor, Afghanistan Country Office, Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, UN-Habitat
- **Approaches to inclusive local finance in Ghana**
    - Raphael Frerking, Program Manager, GIZ
    - Alf Bremer, Component Manager, GIZ

Key Messages & Conclusions

- External shocks like the COVID-pandemic evidence the need of constant dialogue and clearly defined mandates between levels of government. Vertical and horizontal communication and coordination must be strengthened and inclusive to make sure that intergovernmental-dialogue and processes don't decline because of external shocks. Therefore, multi-level-governance approaches and coordination are pivotal. Local Government Associations (LGA) have a key role to play in the intergovernmental dialogue.

- The potentials of subnational revenues are often unpacked. Examples from Ghana and Afghanistan show how to increase subnational revenues in an inclusive and resilient manner.

- More and efficient local resource mobilisation are crucial for flexibility and adaptability of local governments especially in times of external shocks. The experience from southeastern Europe show a decrease of 30% of local revenues, while on the other hand earmarked funds increased. These developments limited local governments flexibility and obstructed them in meeting the needs and expectations of citizens. It must be ensured that local resources and measures are implemented inclusive, resilient and accordingly to the LNOB-principle.

- Exchanges and policy dialogue in networks like DeLoG facilitate peer learning, help to identify innovative best-practices and lessons-learned, and show how local governments and communities can mobilise resources and stakeholders.

Areas of Engagement for DeLoG:

- Exchange around COVID recovery strategies, resilient revenue mobilisation and inclusive fiscal decentralisation;

- Discuss how to strengthen local government associations (LGA) in their crucial task of creating momentum for improved dialogue and coordination between levels of government to further clarify which services are expected and should be provided by local governments;

- Open spaces for transparent dialogue whether formal or informal and include stakeholders like civil society, academia and think-tanks.

Suggested further reading / more information:

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 - Agenda

DeLoG AM Session Presentations

NALAS Handbook on Decentralised Cooperation

NALAS Observatory

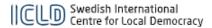NALAS Survey: SEE Local Governments in Post COVID-19 Socio-Economic Recovery

Norad - Reforms of Tax Administration and Systems: A Mapping of Current Analytical Tools and Frameworks

DeLoG, ATI & Norad Webinar-Series

- The Role of Subnational Domestic Revenue Mobilisation for Public Service Delivery

- Opportunities and Challenges of Property Tax Reforms for Localising the SDGs

GIZ Ghana - Good governance enables inclusive development

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 – <u>ENABLE</u> hosted by ICLD & UN-Habitat

Context

The multiple and overlapping patterns of social exclusion prevent people from exercising their rights, deprive them from development opportunities, hinder poverty reduction efforts by leading to higher rates of poverty among marginalised groups hence reduce the productivity and resilience of the whole society. In turn, this also has an important effect on the social contract, weakening the trust and connection between public institutions – national and local, and communities. Because social exclusion prevents the realisation of rights, exacerbates poverty, and undermines the social contract, it affects societies' ability to achieve the SDGs and can further lead to conflict and violence.

The challenge therefore is to ensure that approaches, mechanisms and stakeholders are enabling inclusion and resilience for sustainable development.

Decentralisation and local governance (DLG) support aims not only at making governance mechanisms at all levels and between levels efficient and well-integrated. Making decentralisation processes and local governance systems sustainable, inclusive and resilient entails that a whole-of-society approach is adopted. Different stakeholders like civil society, academia and think tanks have central roles to play to ensure that development processes are context sensitive and the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised like migrants, refugees and women, are taken into account. These elements are key for development actors that wish to enable inclusion, resilience and sustainability.

For development actors, ensuring equal access means empowering local governments and ensuring that they can support inclusion, through partnerships, capacity development and strengthening of multi-level governance and decentralisation processes. Building platforms and possibilities to favor social and economic innovations and address challenges is a fundamental part of processes that support inclusion. Often such innovations may enhance identification of needs and enable otherwise marginalised groups to voice their needs, ensuring that all societal groups are visible and benefit from public services. In this regard, strengthening local democracy and local participation in the political process is also key to bringing citizens' voices to the public decision-making level. Both development actors and local governments and actors are responsible for ensuring that access to justice and accountability are offered. They can uphold and protect human rights by allowing participation of various groups in the political process and subsequently enhancing resilience at local level.

Linked to strengthening local governments and local democracy and participation, is empowering civil society actors that not only allow inclusion of all voice but also transparency and accountability. Furthermore, they often know communities and local specificities better than other actors and can effectively contribute to building resilience.
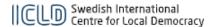

Key Interventions:

Enable and support human rights at the local level
- Katarina Westman, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- Rikard Eduards, Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD)
- Morten Kjaerum, Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)

Enabling participation and inclusion of local stakeholders through enhanced multi-level governance
- Martino Miraglia, UN-Habitat
- Gabriela Mercurio, Cities Alliance
- Ville Taajamaa, Focal point for Agenda 2030, Espoo Municipality, Finland
- Diana Wachira, Programme Officer at Pamoja Trust, Kenya

Key Messages & Conclusions:

- The ultimate realisation of human rights (HR) happens at the local level and is a crucial element to build forward fairer. The 2030 Agenda and SDGs are a window of opportunity to support HR holistically, especially at the local level. The globally observed tendency of democratic backsliding is reinforced through the COVID-19 pandemic and calls for human rights-based approaches (HRBA) and strengthening of local democracy. Civil society organisations are key enabling actors. The support of dialogue amongst local actors help to strengthen local accountability and accessibility for duty bearers. Human rights cities and networks of local governments represent an opportunity for mutual learning and cooperation to strengthen HR.

- The local reporting of SDG progress provides an instrument to enable and engage stakeholders at the local level. As the city of Espoo showed, the identification of an own set of strategic priorities, objectives and indicators provides a path to a common understanding of the meaning and relevance of sustainable development. When citizens understand what the 2030 Agenda means to them, it is easier for local governments to cover all the dimensions of sustainability.

- The COVID 19 pandemic showed the importance of collaboration between local governments, local communities and their representatives. The example of Pajoma Trust showed the importance of not only focusing on local governments for addressing human rights locally but also on civil society organisations and community-led initiatives to push for human rights spaces. Enabling participation of local communities and civil society organisations and the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships improves local governance performance during crisis and recovery, for example by providing data about marginalized areas, local populations' needs and infrastructure.

Areas of engagement for DeLoG:

- Facilitate exchange of best practices and lessons learnt of integration of human rights-based approaches in DLG support programs.

- Ensure dialogue amongst members and partners on how rights-based approaches can be operationalised and civil society actors can be integrated to strengthen local democracy. Assess potentials to foster new partnerships for HRBA.

- Start a collaborative writing process on best practices for CSO inclusion and HRBA and present the results at the World Urban Forum 2022.

Suggested further reading / more information:

Agenda

DeLoG AM Session Presentations

ICLD Municipal Partnership Programme – Human Rights Network

SIDA Human Rights-Based Approach Toolbox

Human Rights Cities Network

Kenya: Keeping Water and Information Flowing in Informal Settlements

Cities Alliance - Secure Tenure in African Cities

DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 - <u>CLOSING</u> hosted by The Secretariat

Context

The DeLoG Annual Meeting 2021 focused on four key elements of Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG) support: informing, enabling, mobilising and adapting for inclusive and resilient DLG reform efforts and institutions. During the five online sessions members and partners presented their approaches to address challenges and leverage opportunities for more inclusive and resilient DLG support.

The closing session is the space to look back and to highlight conclusions and key messages by the hosting organisations. Members and partners briefly showcased new initiatives and new members and partners presented their interest in joining DeLoG. The DeLoG Strategy 2021 – 2024 and its fifth objective aims at the identification of a long-term host and sustainable funding for the secretariat and serves as a basis for the discussion within the network to define next steps for the strategic and future development of the secretariat and network.

Key Interventions

- **Berghof Foundation's interest to join DeLoG:** The Berghof Foundation Operations gGmbH is an *independent, non-governmental* and *non-profit organisation.* Through its projects it enables dialogue, supports mediation, educates for peace, and research conflict dynamics. The Berghof Foundation shifts conflict away from violence and towards sustainable peace. There is growing portfolio of work that focuses on strengthening inclusive local governance and the closely related field of local dialogues and conflict mediation. By joining DeLoG it aims to strengthen this work and to participate in knowledge exchange and joint learning between network members. There is much to learn from the established expertise on strengthening local governance represented in DeLoG, and Berghof can contribute to the network's expertise in the areas of conflict analysis, (local) dialogue and mediation, and the nexus between local governance and peace.
  New Focal Point: Joshua Rogers, Project Manager

- **UNDP, Social Innovation Platforms (SIP):** The SIP is an innovative approach to enhance Local Governance in increasingly complex and interconnected local contexts. It complements traditional LG interventions and helps strengthen 'good local governance' through new forms of collaborations (& trust) between Governments (MLG), Communities and the private sector. Examples of Indonesia, Thailand and Pakistan illustrate how SIP work. New partners to join the (informal) but 'Global Conversations on Social Innovation Platforms for Local Governance' are very much welcomed.
  Contact: Patrick Duong, Regional Advisor, Lead SDG Localization, UNDP Asia-Pacific

- **NALAS, Decentralisation Observatory: The observatory provides access** to timely, accurate, reliable and comparable indicators and information on local governance in South East Europe. The regular published reports and statistical briefs as well as different types of visualisations and data sets are available on the online data base.
  Contact: Jelena Janevska, Knowledge and Communication Manager, NALAS

- **ADB, Localising SDGs App:** ADB in collaboration with the Community Based Monitoring System Network (CBMS) developed an app for data collection based on the CBMS tool to measure SDG localisation and rolling it out to local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs).
  Contact: Rachana Shrestha, Senior Public Management Officer, ADB

- **UCLG, [MOOC on Subnational Government Finance](#):** This Massive
  Open Online Course (MOOC) builds on the work of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment and brings together a wealth of resources developed to reach out to all communities, governments and individuals wishing to learn about subnational public finance. As it is open to a wide variety of backgrounds, there are no prerequisites to taking this course. It provides a basic understanding of the main technical and political issues of subnational government finance in different regional contexts. It also provides a set of tools to analyse the subnational finance ecosystem in an informed, context-based and comprehensive manner.
  Contact: Mathilde Penard

- **UCLG, Publication on EU financing for local development:** Published in May 2021, the study is available [here](#).
  Contact: Paloma Labbé

- **UCLG, World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment:** The 3rd round to gather and analyse data has started and members and partners are very much invited to join the effort, by either revise country data, provide contacts within the country or share and disseminate the data. The new report will be available 2022.
  Contact: Serge Allou

Key Messages & Conclusions

- The current funding by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) will be extended until June 2022. This extension gives more time to clarify the future of DeLoG. There are two options:

  > **Option A:** Other members of the DeLoG Network join the SDC in contributing to the core funding. Closely linked to this is the question of the hosting of the secretariat: A new set up for the hosting of the Secretariat, currently at giz, needs to be identified.

  > **Option B:** No other members will contribute of the core funding, so the DeLoG Secretariat will finish its work in spring 2022. In that case, the orderly dis-engagement is at stake, including the capitalization of DeLoGs work and learnings.

- The funding could be combined directly with possible host organisations. For example, DeLoG Members provide support in different ways to municipal umbrella organisations, sometimes there are already existing agreements. Why not include the hosting of the DeLoG Secretariat in such an existing agreement? Based on that idea, the possibility to co-host the secretariat between two or more organisations should also be assessed.

- **Until the 15th of November 2021** members and partners will reach out to the secretariat to further discuss the possibility of funding and/or hosting. Based on the feedback, the Strategic Support Group (SSG) will invite for a follow up meeting with donors and interested host organisations to define next steps and clarify open questions.