![Decentralisation & Local Governance logo]

Development Partners Network on

Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG)

19th Annual Meeting, 15 – 18 May 2023

Marrakech, Morocco

Hosted by the Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group of UCLG

Content

1. Starting Point: 19th DeLoG Annual Meeting together with CIB

The 18th DeLoG Annual Meeting together with the Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group of UCLG offered the opportunity to discuss current approaches in the field of Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG) and explored possibilities of cooperation with other organizations. During this meeting, DeLoG members had the opportunity to discuss the strategic positioning of the network. A particular focus was to put on **the future path of DeLoG** and the prerequisites for a prosperous development of the network in the upcoming years.

Thus, the Annual Meeting pursued the following goals:

> ► In-depth exchange and mutual learning on selected topics from the DeLoG working groups (e.g. Gender at the local level), focussing on examples and experiences of members and strategic partners.
> ► Open space sessions for peer-to-peer exchange on current topics, activities, and products presented by members and partners.
> ► The transition of DeLoG: Discussing possible options for the development the network and planning the next activities and priorities under changed conditions.

In the session on Tuesday, May 16th, concrete steps to advance DeLoG as defined in the DeLoG Strategy 2021 - 2024 were agreed, including discussions around the following aspects:

1. **Impact**: The Secretariat presented a draft for the assessment of the past 16 years of DeLoG.
2. **Ownership**: Discuss expectations, sharing responsibilities and taking ownership after the termination of hosting of the Secretariat by GIZ.
3. **Transition**: Discuss collaboration options & hosting models.

Main takeaways from the last DeLoG **strategic workshop (1st & 3rd of June 2022)**:

• The **Secretariat has been strong**, providing an informative space. Over the last years, this **caused certain "laziness" among Members and Partners**. M&Ps need to take the initiative, motivate others to be more active. **Ownership** is created by the **distribution of responsibilities**.
• **DLG relevance is increasing**, there is passion for DLG and within DeLoG exists loyalty and unity. Beside virtual spaces, face to face meetings strengthen interaction and commitment and should be offered again (for example as a side event, informal meet up at conferences).
• DeLoG has **evolved in terms of formats, members, and steering**. The visibility of DeLoG in the policy space should be strengthened again, for example through policy dialogue.
• **Topics** and **member's landscape should be diversified**, including a strong focus on practitioner's knowledge sharing about approaches and progress in the „field ". The role of **DeLoG Focal Points** as primer contact persons needs to **transition into the role of coordinators** within the member organization, establishing contact to "field" colleagues interested in DLG networking.
• Members and Partners suggested focusing on three thematic areas. DLG and Gender, Local Finance, Strengthening of Local Democracy.
• The need to **diversify membership** is broadly acknowledged. This also implies to revise membership and to **strengthen the culture of engagement and commitment**.
• Broad sympathy for **mix between fair share model and DeLoG Club**. This possible model should be further explored and implemented.

On Wednesday May 17th, participants divided into groups (breakout sessions) to further work on one (or more) of the thematic areas: **Innovation**, **Coordination** as well as **Policy Dialogue & Advocacy**.

2. Strategic Reflection

2.1   Presentation: Strategic Reflection – Christian Luy (DeLoG Secretariat)

Quantitative Data of 16 years of DeLoG

- 16 webinars conducted
- 8 DeLoG in Dialogue sessions held
- 6 rounds of tutored e-learning courses completed
- 7 regional/in-country courses organized
- 63 newsletters sent out
- 1,125 newsletter subscribers
- 290 articles published on the website since its relaunch in 2018
- 1,585 followers on Twitter

- **2006 – 2011:**
  - Clear mandate established in 2006
  - Donors met and coordinated to harmonize approaches on decentralization and local governance
  - Aid effectiveness agenda, structural development, and support of DeLoG through a Secretariat and Annual Meetings
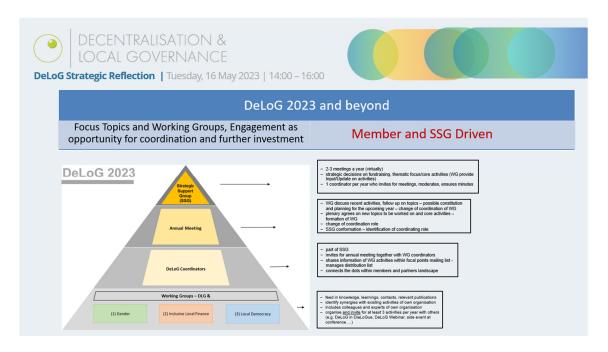 - ➔ **Donor-driven approach**

- **2012 – 2019:**
  - Consolidation in terms of structure, mandate, and governance (DeLoG Charta)
  - Development of courses (face-to-face and e-learning), website, and newsletters
  - Growth of members and partnerships, increased visibility as a brand
  - In-country coordinations to strengthen decentralized local governance (DLG) implementation
  - ➔ **Secretariat-driven approach**

- **2020 – 2023:**
  - Consultation process and development of DeLoG Strategy 2020 – 2024
  - Mainly virtual formats and frequent communication through newsletters and website
  - Shift towards more knowledge exchange and diverse topics
  - SSG (Strategic Support Group) and Secretariat-driven approach
  - DeLoG Survey 2020 provided insights on member expectations and areas of improvement
  - Key findings from DeLoG Survey 2020:
    - Purpose of DeLoG: virtual formats, mixed membership, connections to city networks, gathering relevant actors
    - Need for periodic perspective on development trends
    - Strong Secretariat required for consistent follow-up and limited capacities for work program implementation
    - Call for strategic directions, added value, niche focus, and membership development
    - Importance of including policy research institutions and think tanks in the network
    - Exploration of relations with other constituencies (private sector, CSOs) for addressing priority issues
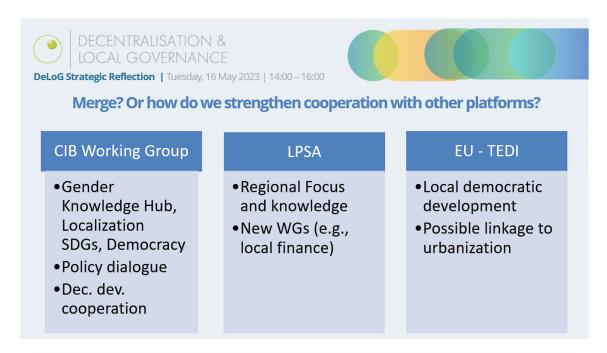 - ➔ **Secretariat- and SSG-driven approach**

2023 – on:

- Emphasis on working group and topic-related knowledge exchange
- Engaging in policy dialogue and connecting with other networks like CIB, LPSA, and TEDI
- Prioritizing local and global south voices as the core element for fostering positioning and influence

➔ **SSG (Strategic Support Group) and member-driven approach**

From now on:

- The Secretariat will conclude its work on June 30.
- The future is uncertain and open-ended.
- There is currently no financed host or minimum coordinator for DeLoG.
- The continuation of DeLoG relies on outspoken commitment.
- Commitment is fragile when ownership is not shared but strong in a community of engaged and like-minded individuals.
- DeLoG still holds its brand value.
- There is still interest, relevant topics, and common challenges that should be addressed within DeLoG.

DeLoG Strategic Reflection | Tuesday, 16 May 2023 | 14:00 – 16:00

Merge? Or how do we strengthen cooperation with other platforms?

CIB Working Group	LPSA	EU - TEDI
• Gender Knowledge Hub, Localization SDGs, Democracy • Policy dialogue • Dec. dev. cooperation	• Regional Focus and knowledge • New WGs (e.g., local finance)	• Local democratic development • Possible linkage to urbanization

The focus on cooperation and existing cooperation environment:

- Evaluating the existing cooperation environment is important.
- Identifying other emerging or existing networks and their relationship with DeLoG.
- Structuring an approach and focusing on topics, advocacy, and academia.
- Assessing the network that aligns with our current resources.
- Considering whether DeLoG should remain standalone or channel resources and concentrate on merging with other networks.
- Recognizing the presence of overlapping member and partner organizations within DeLoG.

DeLoG Strategic Reflection | Tuesday, 16 May 2023 | 14:00 – 16:00

Recommendations

Diversity: Keep on diversifying voices within the network, current challenges require out of the box thinking

Flexibilty: Stay flexible and open for emerging topics or trends – for example sectorial approaches, direct local interventions

Coordination: Foster In-country coordination including CSOs, LAs and other actors (political will)

Networking: DeLoG is more than the sum of ist focal points. Members staff should be encouraged to take part of the network

Translation Translate the DLG agenda internationally into new programs for actions, jointly with LG Associations and its networks

DeLoG Strategic Reflection | Tuesday, 16 May 2023 | 14:00 – 16:00

Open Exchange & Discussion

Guiding Questions

» Where are we heading to, "The End" or the "Brand and Platform"?

» Who could coordinate the SSG from July to December 2023?

» Anyone willing to co-coordinate the working groups with NALAS, FCM, ICLD?

» Who will further develop the cooperation with CIB, LPSA and TEDI?

2.2 Summary of the Open Discussion

Participants: Samina Anwar (UNCDF), Jamie Boex (LPSA), Dominic Bourcier (GAC), Karim Boussak (VNG), Cécile Casey (Cidel), Franziska Döring (DeLoG), Andrea Ferrari-Bravo (EU), David Jackson (UNCDF), Ryan Knox (SALARi), Johan Lilja (ICLD), Christian Luy (DeLoG), Tracy Mamoun (Southern Voice), Benjamin Oloyede (DeLoG)

Online: Paloma Labbe (UCLG), Joachim Roth (NALAS), Elton Stafa (NALAS), Rolf Swart (VNGi), Joelle Piraux (ENABEL) Diana Vakarelska (UNICEF)

Feedback from members and partners:

ICLD
- Acknowledges the value of the DeLoG brand and emphasizes the importance of preserving it.
- ICLD proposes a half-year coordination period with reduced activities on a rotating basis.
- Willingness to collaborate on joint activities with other members and partner institutions.
- Recommends the formation of a small group with a specific mandate.
- Suggests that GIZ should become a member of DeLoG.

GAC
- Feels sadness, presentation seems like a conclusion.
- Emphasizes the importance of localization and building blocks at the local level.
- Worst outcome: Dissolution of DeLoG, including as a brand.
- Emphasizes the need to foster synergies as much as possible.
- Recognizes DeLoG's distinctiveness from other local governance associations.
- Appreciates the existence of the three working groups on DLG and gender, finance, and democracy.
- Calls for a more future-oriented approach.
- Suggests a second option of a rotating system.

NALAS
- Positive support offered.
- Expresses willingness to continue the dialogue within the working group on local finance.
- Offers coordination assistance for the working groups.
- Also offered a half-year coordination role of the secretariat.
- Considers the exchange of experience as the biggest benefit of the DeLoG network.
- Highlights that DeLoG is not solely focused on policy dialogue.
- Stresses the need for commitment within the network.

VNGi
- Emphasizes brand development as a policy market.
- States that VNG will not be able to coordinate the secretariat this year.
- However, coordinating the secretariat in the second half of 2024 could be a possibility.

EU
- The TED initiative presents an opportunity for DeLoG partners and members to contribute under its umbrella.
- Suggests the creation of a thematic working group (sub-group) within TEDi, specifically focusing on decentralization and local governance.
- Clarifies that the TED initiative/network is not primarily focused on project implementation in the context of decentralization and local governance.

UNCDF
- The DeLoG network and the experiences of its members are valuable for comparing strategies.
- DeLoG originated as a development partner network.
- Highlights ICLEI and Cities Alliance as key stakeholders in the field of decentralization and local governance, emphasizing strong cooperation with UNCDF.
- Suggests a focus on advocacy and institution building.
- Offers a small amount of funding for one year of secretariat coordination.
- Emphasizes the importance of creating knowledge content for the network.
- Notes that development partners in DeLoG are mostly from the north.
- Proposes that Southern Voice should be included as part of the Strategic Support Group (SSG).

Southern Voice
- Allies are already present within DeLoG.
- Expresses ambition to go even further – southern perspective.
- Southern Voice offers to handle the secretariat role based on their experience as a globally operating civil society organization (CSO).

LPSA
- Offers logistical support in a mid-term perspective.
- Identifies two parallel lines of coordination: a) donor coordination and b) operational coordination.
- LPSA offers operational coordination for the working groups.
- Emphasizes the importance of a value-based approach to development cooperation in the future, particularly in the context of DLG.

SALAR
- Emphasizes the need to strengthen a stronger thematic focus, particularly on urban crisis, considering the development peace nexus approach.

DeLoG Secretariat
- GIZ will contribute as a member of DeLoG, bringing its expertise to the network.
- It is suggested to establish a core group comprising GAC, Southern Voice, ICLD, UNCDF, EU (TEDi), and VNG, as key stakeholders in advancing the objectives and activities of the DeLoG Secretariat.

2.3   Follow Up

The options for continuing the DeLoG secretariat can be summarized as follows:

1. Half-year rotating coordination: ICLD proposes a system where different members take turns in coordinating the secretariat for half-year periods with reduced activities. This approach ensures shared responsibility and collaboration among members.
2. NALAS coordination: NALAS offers to take on a half-year coordination role of the Strategic Support Group (SSG). They express positive support and willingness to continue the dialogue within the working group on local finance, as well as LPSA, highlighting the exchange of experience as a significant benefit of the DeLoG network.
3. Southern Voice as secretariat: Southern Voice, a globally operating civil society organization, expresses ambition to handle the secretariat role, bringing a southern perspective to the network. Their offer emphasizes the presence of allies within DeLoG and their experience in operating as a CSO.
4. Core group establishment: It is suggested to form a core group consisting of key stakeholders, including GAC, Southern Voice, ICLD, UNCDF, EU (TEDi), and VNG, to advance the objectives and activities of the secretariat. This collaboration would leverage the expertise and resources of these organizations.
5. Financial support: UNCDF offers a small amount of funding for one year of secretariat coordination, emphasizing the importance of creating knowledge content for the network. Exploring additional funding sources and partnerships is crucial for the financial sustainability of the secretariat.

These options provide various approaches for the continuity of the DeLoG secretariat, incorporating rotating coordination, external organizations (especially CSOs from the Global South), collaboration among key stakeholders, and financial support. Overall, the feedback and proposals highlight the importance of preserving the DeLoG brand, fostering collaboration, addressing future challenges, and ensuring commitment and coordination among members to enhance the effectiveness of the network. The final decision depends on the consensus and preferences of the DeLoG network and its members. The final decision of the future of the DeLoG network, especially the coordination of the secretariat, needs to be made during the Extended Strategic Support Group meeting in June 2023.

3. Joint CIB & DeLoG Day – Part I: Panels

3.1 Setting the Scene – Why CIB and DeLoG Join Efforts?

CIB

The Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group of the world organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a technical platform for professionals from Local Government Associations (LGAs) and individual local governments active in the field of capacity development and local government development cooperation. CIB aims to advance the effectiveness and quality of international policies and programmes of local and regional governments and their associations. The CIB achieves its purpose by exchanging knowledge and information, enabling coordination and cooperation among its members and within UCLG. And through joint advocacy for the role of local governments in development cooperation, at national and international levels

DeLoG

The 'Development Partners Network on Decentralisation and Local Governance' (DeLoG) is a network of 48 bi- and multilateral development partners, specialised institutions and Civil Society Organisations working in the field of Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG). DeLoG strives to **transform** towards a diverse multistakeholder engagement and partnership. It brings together the **triangle** of donors, local governments, civil society to strengthen local governments globally and facilitates dialogue and learning, bringing together partners to coordinate and create partnerships on **country level** for improved, inclusive, and well-functioning subnational and local governance systems. The three thematic working groups on DLG and 1) gender, 2) inclusive local finance, and 3) local democracy aim to create platforms for knowledge exchange and dialogue by organising joint activities such as webinars, annual meetings, and discussions.

Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG) from a joint perspective

A variety of networks and initiatives exist around local governance and local governments. Some target associations, other bring engaged donors together, others address individuals engaged in the field of DLG. So far, networks distinguish themselves from others, for example by advocating for a specific perspective, topic and often directed to a specific audience. The "local" is approached so differently today, but what matters in the end is the impact. So, often we have similar purpose, efforts and approaches about how we can best support and strengthen local governance for improving people's life. But we do it with our different toolboxes. How can we overcome and interlink those? How can we bridge the viewpoints for more complementarities and harmony? By structuring our cooperation and partnership for the achievement of sustainable development at the local level!

The unique characteristics of both networks (CIB and DeLoG)

➔ **CIB**s' strengths lie in mor than 15 years of experience, the strong link with UCLG, the global network of LGAs and LGs, from all regions (with regional secretariats/capacity), its solid group of active members (professionals), consisting of local government associations and cities worldwide, including those from the Global South (GS), and their practical experience through actively working on decentralised and international cooperation for development.

➔ **DeLoG** counts on 16 years of work experience, and a growing network of national and international institutions (from CSO's to the donor community) sharing knowledge, approaches, and resources around effective DLG support and local challenges worldwide.

A strengthened and closer cooperation and partnership between CIB and DeLoG brings the local government and development partners perspective together and allows:

o Building a **joint narrative with strong visibility** on how and why the support of local governance and decentralization matters to change people's life.
o Strengthening of constructive **dialogue** between local government representatives and development partners to improve local approaches, for example in a specific country context or specific theme of intervention
o **Advocacy** for the voice of local governments in the international and national dialogue influences global policy processes.
o Creation and promotion of new and **diverse partnerships** between local governments, for example as part of decentralized development cooperation efforts.
o Call for **DLG champions**, including female/young actors as well as donors, ministries, local authorities, etc.
o Document, test, and highlight **DLG innovations,** share and examine failures, and identify research gaps to be addressed.
o Develop and offer tailor-made **training opportunities** for both constituencies and its members.
o Intensifying the exchange and activities within the three thematic working groups for both constituencies.

Conclusion: A stronger cooperation between both networks leads to more integration of the Global South and diversifies partner perspectives, focusing on horizontal partnerships and creative DLG innovations. By combining and bringing together our audiences and spaces for learning we improve our cooperation, and we overcome our previous weak points and boost our joint strengths.

Open Discussion:

- ICLD: How to concretize and organize this joint vision? There are several potential collaborative activities, such as advocacy, but further planning is needed.
- Southern Voice: Appreciates the flexible mandates of CIB and DeLoG in the face of rapidly evolving challenges.
- UCLG: The activities outlined in the joint vision are still somewhat vague. We need a more practical approach and should avoid creating parallel ideas. Instead, we should integrate new joint activities into existing platforms to enrich and support them.
- UNCDF: It's not the time to reinvent the wheel; rather utilizing existing tools. There should be explored how to connect advocacy efforts with capacity-building tools. The opportunity to do so is currently available, and it's needed to focus on accessing it. Additionally, many development partners no longer see DLG as they did in the past. Recommends to approach this from a different angle and coordinate advocacy. Assisting people in this regard would be a practical application of the joint vision.
- Platforma: The joint vision effectively identifies what needs to be done. However, tools are needed to convince those who are not yet convinced or do not understand.
- LPSA: It's positive that the joint vision acknowledges the significant changes occurring in the world. As the world evolves, so do its priorities. A crucial aspect of the joint vision is not only to communicate with those who already support CIB and DeLoG but also to involve other communities and help them understand the importance of local governance.
- SALAR: Agrees that the joint vision should be specific. There's a need to outline the successes that have been achieved. Suggests an internally documentation of offered tools that have the maximum human impact.
- DeLoG: Currently, there is no overarching strategic orientation in place.
- CIB: There is a lack of connecting information, which is crucial because the aim must be not only impactful but also effective. The question becomes: How do we make our narrative concise? How do we ensure that our efforts result in joint action and methods? Suggests a focus on these questions.

3.2 Placing DeLoG Partners in the Spotlight – DLG from a Donor Perspective

GAC
- Focus on strengthening coordination efforts among DLG (Decentralization and Local Governance).
- Keep DLG at the forefront of attention.
- Acknowledge the difficulty in gaining attention for DLG issues.
- Recognize the need to change the narrative surrounding DLG.
- Revive efforts to promote DLG.
- Acknowledge the challenges in selling the concept of DLG.
- Highlight the tendency of donors to work with local actors as CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) rather than engaging with local governments.
- Emphasize that DLG is an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the long run.

EU
- Encourage forward-thinking.
- Improve the shaping of a common space.
- Position Local Authorities (LA) at the center of the agenda.
- Provide solutions and expertise.
- Focus on developing solutions for national authorities.
- Acknowledge the difficulty in prioritizing local authorities.
- Utilize national associations as a point of entry.
- Support decentralization through global budget allocation for local authorities.
- Foster partnerships with local authorities to promote decentralization.
- Address the unclear continuity of DLG within the TEDi initiative, involving EU member states and CSOs, with a focus on global democracy.

Democracy Works Foundation
- Recently joined DeLoG.
- Active in eight countries, supporting DLG efforts.
- Promote Southern voices in the dialogue.
- Recognize the absence of voices from the Global South.
- Engage in discussions on the legal framework for DLG policies.
- Pay attention to the role of political parties.
- Recommends analysing and understanding the changing dynamics while avoiding self-centric approaches.
- Provides the example of Malawi, where DLG is seen as a significant aspiration.

UNCDF
- Highlights that DLG goes beyond mere involvement.
- Emphasizes the need to build natural partnerships and allies.
- Recognizes that municipalities play a crucial role in long-term DLG solutions.
- Addresses the challenges of limited financial support for DLG empowerment.
- Acknowledges that local governments possess knowledge and solutions and focus on empowering them through new expertise and alliances, rather than viewing them as mere implementation mechanisms.

3.3 CIB Members in the Spotlight – DLG from a Practitioner Perspective

UCLG Secretary
- Conducting a comprehensive assessment for the entire UCLG family in relation to decentralization and local governance (DLG).
- The UCLG ecosystem is always democratically elected by the people.
- Engaging in advocacy for localization and striving for equal cooperation among stakeholders.
- Ensuring that all systems within UCLG undergo the necessary transformation towards DLG.
- Addressing the numerous challenges faced by local governments in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Prioritizing discussions centered around people and their involvement in local governance, while fostering alliances.
- Acknowledging the complexity of the global landscape and the need for a flexible, adaptive governance approach.
- Recognizing the importance of the United Nations in promoting multilateralism and facilitating global-to-local input.
- Being responsive to context and values in the pursuit of effective DLG.
- Embracing a new era of learning through practical experiences and establishing collaborative mechanisms with partners and sections.
- Engaging in joint initiatives with DeLoG to advance DLG goals.
- Developing capacities for learning and generating alternative advocacy strategies.
- Promoting adaptive governance practices to address evolving challenges.

VNGi
- Presenting tangible results and prioritizing capacity-building efforts.
- Maintaining a strong focus on local governance associations.
- Translating frameworks and policies into specific programs to facilitate implementation.
- Highlighting the lack of attention given to localization in ministries and advocating for its integration.

- Promoting constructive dialogue and consensus-building with ministries.
- Recognizing the significance of knowledge products and their role in guiding policy discussions.
- Advocating for bottom-up policy development based on case studies and successful examples.
- Utilizing case studies and exemplary practices for effective advocacy and strategic discussions.
- Supporting the growth of local associations to enhance their influence at the national level.
- Actively engaging in strategic conversations and addressing the existing imbalance between national and local levels.
- Encouraging donors to allocate resources towards local-level programs.
- Establishing stronger relationships with national governments for increased influence.
- Seeking allyship with various groups, including journalists and traditional leaders, to amplify their impact.

Local Government Association of Zambia
- Recognizing the need for a robust legal framework to support local governance.
- Seeking policy guidance to strengthen democratization efforts.
- Acknowledging the pivotal role of local authorities as key actors in the DLG process.
- Involving traditional leaders and donors in the transition process for their valuable input.
- Highlighting the significance of the national assembly as a platform to advocate for local policies.
- Calling for recommendations to enhance DLG efforts.

4. Joint CIB & DeLoG Day – Part II: Workshops

4.1 Workshop: Innovation

During the workshop on innovation for decentralization and local governance (DLG), moderated by Boris Tonhauser (Platforma) and Pascal Lavoie (FCM), several challenges were identified:

- One of the challenges discussed was the duplication of information, which creates inefficiencies and hinders effective decision-making.
- Connecting the dots between various stakeholders and sectors was recognized as another significant challenge, requiring improved coordination and collaboration.
- Digitalization emerged as a pressing challenge, particularly in rural areas, where access to technology and concerns about data security need to be addressed.
- The lack of interest and investment resources in DLG initiatives was highlighted, emphasizing the need to generate greater awareness and commitment from stakeholders.
- Putting ideas into practice was identified as a challenge, indicating the importance of effective implementation strategies to transform concepts into tangible actions.
- Ensuring inclusive service delivery that reaches all members of the community, including marginalized groups, was recognized as a complex challenge that needs to be addressed in DLG efforts.
- Effective information management was deemed crucial, requiring robust systems to collect, analyze, and utilize data for evidence-based decision-making.
- Adequate human resource management, including capacity building and skills development, was identified as essential for successful DLG implementation.
- Overcoming the global North vs. global South divide and moving away from old patronage thinking were recognized as challenges that require transformative thinking and collaboration between different regions.
- Building capacity in institutions at various levels, from local to national, was identified as a vital challenge to strengthen DLG initiatives.
- Defining and clarifying the responsibilities of municipalities in the DLG framework emerged as an important challenge, ensuring clear roles and effective governance structures.
- DLG efforts face challenges posed by conflicts and climate change, requiring innovative approaches to address the unique circumstances and complexities that arise in these contexts.
- The impact of urbanization on DLG efforts was also highlighted, calling for strategies to effectively manage rapid urban growth and ensure equitable and sustainable development.
- Addressing these challenges will be crucial for advancing innovation in decentralization and local governance and achieving meaningful progress in inclusive and effective service delivery.

Based on the challenges discussed, the following recommendations were proposed for innovative decentralization and local governance (DLG):

1. Replicability with adaptation to the context:
    o Promote innovative DLG practices that are replicable in different contexts, while ensuring adaptability to address specific local needs and challenges.
    o Foster knowledge sharing platforms and networks to facilitate the exchange of successful DLG models that can be adapted and implemented in diverse settings.

2. Communication and language with artificial intelligence:
    o Explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to improve communication channels in DLG, enabling efficient data processing and analysis for informed decision-making.
    o Develop AI-driven language translation tools to facilitate effective communication between stakeholders who speak different languages, promoting inclusivity and collaboration.

3. Diversity of partnerships, including academia and art:
    o Encourage collaborations between DLG practitioners, academia, and the art community to bring diverse perspectives, innovative ideas, and creative approaches to address complex governance challenges.
    o Foster interdisciplinary research and artistic interventions to promote public engagement, enhance community participation, and generate innovative solutions for DLG.

4. Flexibility with regard to changing contexts and the speed of change:
    o Embrace flexibility in DLG approaches to accommodate evolving contexts, such as conflicts, climate change, and rapid urbanization, by adapting policies and strategies accordingly.
    o Foster agile governance frameworks that can respond effectively to emerging challenges and take advantage of new opportunities, ensuring DLG remains dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances.

By implementing these recommendations, innovative DLG practices can be developed and nurtured, leading to more effective and inclusive governance systems that address local needs, leverage advanced technologies, engage diverse stakeholders, and adapt to evolving contexts and the speed of change.

4.2   Workshop: Coordination

During the workshop on coordination for decentralization and local governance (DLG) with a special focus on the transition of the DeLoG network, moderated by Neila Akrimi (CIB), Johan Lilja (ICLD) and Benjamin Oloyede (DeLoG), several challenges were identified:

- Translating visions to concrete actions.
- Establishing common ground on the importance of local governance for development.
- Understanding the differences in local governance approaches.
- Enhancing structural dialogue through annual meetings.
- Strengthening coordination and connections among DLG members and donor organizations.

Based on the challenges discussed, the following recommendations were proposed for a stronger coordination between UCLG, CIB and DeLoG with regard on decentralization and local governance (DLG):

1. Increase Secretariat meetings to twice a year.
2. Establish an advocacy group for local governments and create an advocacy arena.
3. Form a group to explore new funding possibilities, such as green finance for cities.
4. Strengthen cooperation between DLG, CIB, and UCLG to reinforce capacities.
5. Improve knowledge management and foster collaboration between donor organizations and CIB.

4.3   Workshop: Policy Dialogue & Advocacy

During the workshop on policy and advocacy for decentralization and local governance (DLG), moderated by Christian Luy (DeLoG), several challenges were identified:

- Two levels: technocrats and politicians: Need to address both groups with different messages and approaches to effectively engage them in DLG policy and advocacy.
- Lack of understanding what local governments can do: Many stakeholders have limited knowledge of the capabilities and potential of local governments in driving decentralization and local governance.
- Risk of not involving local governments: Excluding local governments from policy and advocacy discussions poses a significant risk to the effectiveness and sustainability of DLG initiatives.
- Sharp profiles: Local governments need to cultivate distinct and compelling profiles to showcase their strengths and contributions in DLG.

Based on the challenges discussed, the following recommendations were proposed for policy and advocacy in decentralization and local governance (DLG):

1. Tailor messages and strategies:
   - Develop tailored messages and communication strategies for technocrats and politicians, considering their different roles and perspectives in DLG.
   - Craft targeted messages that resonate with each group, highlighting the specific benefits and relevance of DLG to their responsibilities.

2. Build awareness and understanding:
   - Increase awareness and understanding of the capabilities and potential of local governments in driving DLG.
   - Educate stakeholders about the role and contributions of local governments, emphasizing their importance as key actors in governance and development.

3. Ensure meaningful engagement:
   - Foster meaningful engagement and collaboration with local governments in policy and advocacy discussions on DLG.
   - Create platforms and mechanisms for local governments to actively participate and contribute to decision-making processes.

4. Showcase success stories:
   - Highlight success stories and case studies that demonstrate the positive impact of DLG initiatives driven by local governments.
   - Showcase these examples to raise awareness, build support, and advocate for effective DLG policies and practices.

Annex: Gender Equality & Inclusive Governance Workshop, 16/5/2023

Moderators/Speakers: Pascal Lavoie (FCM), Jacqueline Muthura (VNG International) & Jacqueline Moustache-Belle (UCLG Africa)

1. Presentation by Pascal Lavoie on the CIB Gender Equality & Inclusive Governance **Gender Knowledge Hub**
   - Objective: Develop a knowledge sharing and learning hub focused on gender equality and inclusive governance within CIB.
   - Components: Online repository (iterative) on enhanced CIB website, Curation of resources, Dedicated meetings on selected themes/issues, LGA Toolkit, Advocacy / Champion program, Strategic partnerships (ex.: with DIBa, Refela, DeLoG, others), Evidence-base to support LGA advocacy.

2. Presentation by Jacqueline Moustache-Belle on UCLG Africa's Charter for Local Gender Equality
   - Find UCLG Africa's **Local and Regional Governments' Charter For Gender Equality in Africa** here: **CHARTE-DES-COLLECTIVITES-EN.pdf (uclga.org)**

Workshop: Advancing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Local Governance Together

- Three-layered round-table brainstorming
  - Layer 1: interactive experience sharing on specific issues
  - Layer 2: Identifying a priority challenge for each sub theme
  - Layer 3: Brainstorm solutions and building collective commitment

- Topics within different groups:
  - Group 1 - Gender Responsive Municipal Services
  - Group 2 - Women in Local Administration
  - Group 3 - Women in Local Politics
  - Group 4 - Gender in the Context of Crisis

Statements of intention

Group 1 – Gender responsive municipal services

- Practical and strategic needs require addressing gender-responsive municipal services.
- Explore financing options for associations and projects that empower women.
- Suggested solutions include institutionalizing the gender perspective within municipalities.
- Emphasize the importance of capacity building and creating an enabling environment.
- Raise awareness among both men and women about gender sensitivity.
- Conduct trainings and influence plans to support gender-responsive practices.
- Train women in leadership roles and involve them as focal points and managers in municipal services.

Group 2 – Women in Local Administration

- Target women for training and capacity building efforts.
- Ensure women's participation by encouraging their registration.
- Identify barriers at an international strategic level.
- Focus on building women's leadership capacities instead of relying on gender quotas.
- Challenges include social and cultural barriers and traditional gender roles as caretakers.
- Biases and perceptions that hinder women's progress beyond traditional roles.
- Proposed solution: Provide leadership training.
- Encourage engagement as allies and partnerships for development.
- Develop a common action plan as CIB to advance the process.

Group 3 – Women in Local Politics

- Politics is often challenging for women in a patriarchal system.
- Recognize that addressing these issues requires considering the broader ecosystem that upholds the status quo.
- Suggested the establishment of an advisory environment to inform women about what to expect in politics.
- Women possess diverse capacities that need to be acknowledged and valued in the political sphere.

Group 4 – Gender in the Context of Crisis

- Women's leadership roles are often recognized only in times of crisis, raising questions about why it takes such extreme situations to realize their value.
- Gender issues have been reduced to a mere checkbox exercise, undermining the fundamental nature of gender equality.
- It is essential to gain a profound understanding of what gender truly means for our cities and local authorities.
- A more radical and courageous approach is needed, taking risks in funding to ensure inclusive voices are heard and represented.