



DECENTRALISATION & LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Development Partners Network on Decentralisation & Local Governance (DeLoG)



17

years

of DeLoG

A global network to steer decentralisation and local governance

Funded by



Bundesministerium für
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit
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Swiss Agency for Development
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Canada
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Canada

Managed by



Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Abbreviations

African Development Bank (AfDB)
Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG)
Development Partners Network on Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG)
European Commission (EC)
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
German Development Bank (KfW)
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
Strategic Support Group (SSG)
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

IMPRINT

Published by:
DeLoG Secretariat
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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Disclaimer:
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1.

Overview and introduction

The 'Development Partners Network on Decentralisation and Local Governance' (DeLoG) is a network of 48 bi- and multilateral development partners and specialised institutions working in the field of Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG). Through the promotion of more harmonised and aligned interventions, the network aims to improve development effectiveness in the field of DLG. Established in 2006, DeLoG operates as a hub and network for knowledge exchange across diverse organisations, as well as a platform for joint learning. Until 2023, the network was funded by various donors including the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and others. The total investment volume exceeded 7.5 million Euros during this period. Until June 2023, the network's activities have been facilitated by the DeLoG Secretariat, hosted by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) at its offices in Bonn.

DeLoG's initial concept was developed during the International Conference on Local Development in Washington, D.C. in June 2004. The idea gained further traction as a possible response to the Paris Declaration (2005). An initial workshop was initiated in 2006 by the European Commission (EC), African Development Bank (AfDB) and the German Development Bank (KfW), with the intention to enable donor organisations to address local governance and decentralisation in a more coherent way. This initiative quickly gained momentum within the community of funding partners, becoming the global platform to share knowledge, develop joint strategies and projects, and align global agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The secretariat has been a crucial enabler for the network. Provided with a mandate to facilitate conversations, coordinate and harmonise activities and keep members and partners informed, the secretariat has laid the groundwork for continued growth. This report therefore provides an overview and insight into the work and impact of the network over the years, with the aim of providing a resource for further advancement. It also provides recommendations on how the network can continue to develop and evolve.

The central question or challenge for DeLoG is how to transform a secretariat-driven network into a member-driven network, which thrives and develops independently regardless of the presence of a central institution with allocated resources. The past 17 years have left DeLoG with a strong brand, mutual trust between members and partners, and validated formats and mechanisms to advance DLG. Moving forward, the strategic direction and activities of the network will be driven by its members.

The introduction of this report contains general information on DeLoG and its project phases, as well as the methodology used for this report. The executive summary (chapter 2) captures and presents the most important lessons learned and recommendations, followed by the impact briefs (chapter 3) with more in-depth information on key aspects of DeLoG. The conclusion (chapter 4) entails closing remarks, and the annex provides further information such as the list of DeLoG members and partners.

The four focus areas of this report capture the different dimensions that were crucial for the network to thrive, which are:

1. Coordination and harmonisation
2. Learning and capacity development
3. Communication and knowledge exchange
4. Workstreams

The corresponding impact briefs contain key information on those areas, as well as good practices, lessons learned and further resources.

Annual meetings of DeLoG

2010 Washington
World Bank, co-hosted with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAid), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)

2013 New York
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and United Nations-Habitat

UNITED STATES

BELGIUM

2006 Brussels
EuropeAid

2011 Brussels
EuropeAid and co-hosted by the Swiss Development Agency (SDC)

2017 Brussels
Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC)

NETHERLANDS

2018 The Hague
International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VGN International)

SWEDEN

2014 Visby
Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (SIDA), with the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD)

GERMANY

2006 Frankfurt
German Development Bank (KfW), with European Commission and African Development Bank (AfDB)

2007 Berlin
German Development Bank (KfW)

2012 Berlin
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), German Development Bank (KfW) and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

SWITZERLAND

2019 Bern
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

FRANCE

2008 Paris
French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE), French Development Agency

2016 Paris
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAEE)

SLOVAKIA

2009 Bratislava
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), co-hosted with the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MOROCCO

2023 Marrakech
UCLG-CIB Working Group, UCLG Africa, African Local Government Academy


ONLINE

2020
DeLoG Secretariat

2021
DeLoG Secretariat

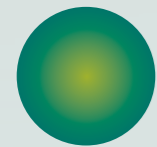
2022
DeLoG Knowledge and Dialogue Days 2022, hosted by the DeLoG Secretariat

DeLoG AT A GLANCE

Since its launch in 2006, DeLoG and its members and partners have (key data to be visualized as infographics)

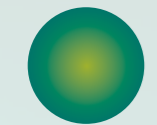
- ▶ Held 16 official in-person annual meetings in 13 different locations and 10 different countries, as well as 3 virtual annual meetings.

DeLoG 2023



Strategic Support Group (SSG)

- ▶ 2-3 meetings a year (virtually)
- ▶ strategic decisions on fundraising, thematic focus/core activities (Working Group provides inputs/updates on activities)
- ▶ 1 coordinator per year who invites for meetings, moderates, ensures minutes



Annual Meeting

- ▶ Working Group discuss recent activities, follow up on topics – possible constitution and planning for the upcoming year – change of coordination of Working Group
- ▶ plenary agrees on new topics to be worked on and core activities – formation of Working Group
- ▶ change of coordination role
- ▶ SSG conformation – identification of coordinating role



DeLoG Coordinators

- ▶ part of SSG
- ▶ invites for annual meeting together with Working Group coordinators
- ▶ shares information of Working Group activities within focal points mailing list – manages distribution list
- ▶ connects the dots within members and partners landscape



Working Groups – DLG &

(1) Gender (2) Inclusive Local Finance (3) Local Democracy

- ▶ feed in knowledge, learnings, contacts, relevant publications
- ▶ identify synergies with existing activities of own organisation
- ▶ includes colleagues and experts of own organisation
- ▶ organise and invite for at least 3 activities per year with others (e.g. DeLoG in DiaLoGue, DeLoG Webinar, side event at conference, etc.)

Project phases and highlights

Chart that visualises the general phases of the network:



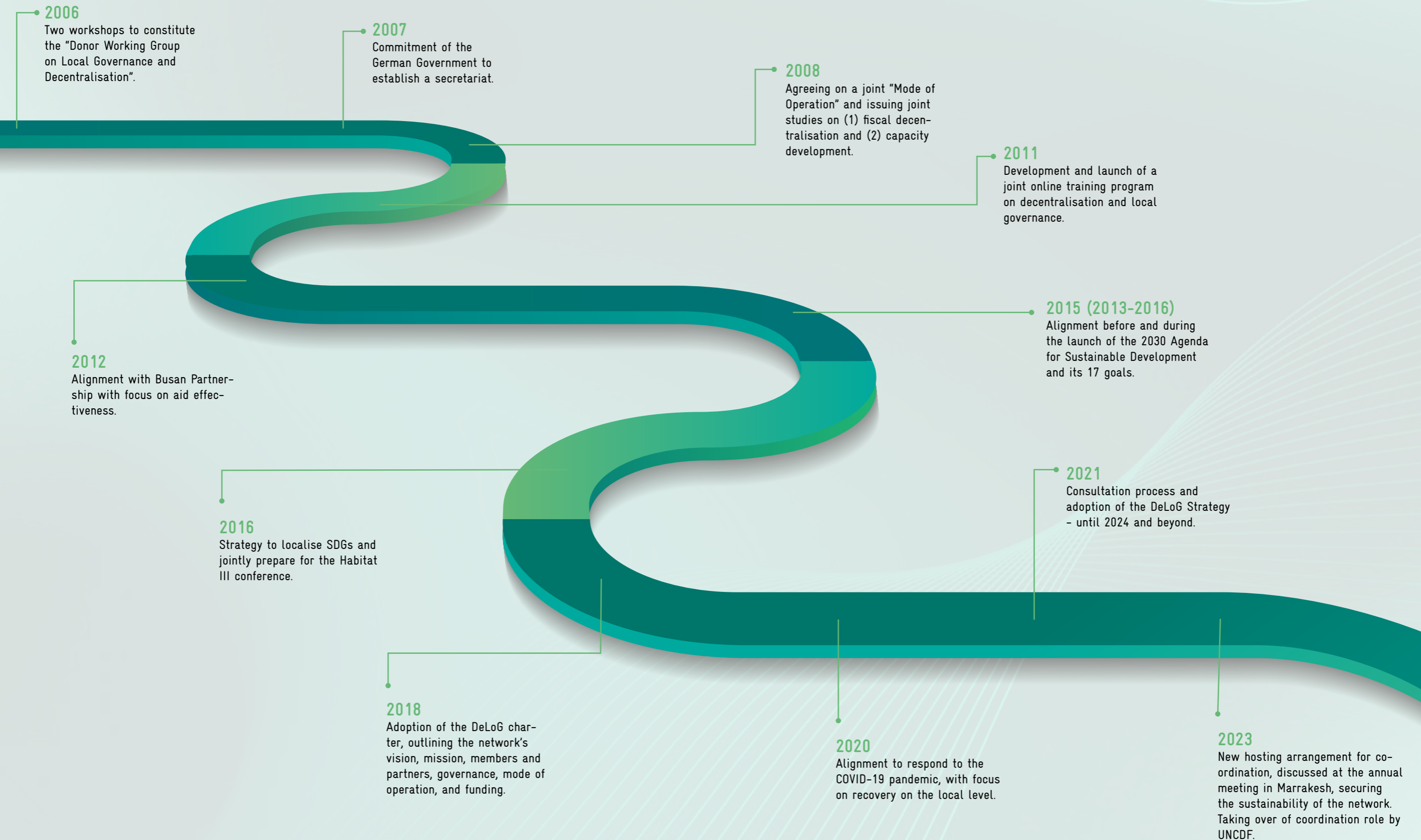
Methodology

The main data sources used in this report were annual meeting notes and annual reports from 2006 to 2023. In addition, the current and former DeLoG coordinators were interviewed to share their experience and perspectives on the network. Further sources included social media, newsletter, and website data.

The data included in this report can therefore be seen as reliable, and the general intention is to paint a picture of DeLoG’s work and impact over the years, rather than a detailed account of each year’s activities. For this, the additional information provided in the annual meeting notes and the insights shared by the DeLoG coordinators were crucial.

The main challenge with the available data sources was that the documentation throughout the years did not happen in a fully systematic and coherent way. This led to certain gaps in the data, e.g., regarding the use and response of the website and Twitter. The main data sources, such as details on the annual meetings, are nonetheless quite complete.

The following timeline shows key events in DeLoG's development over the years



2.

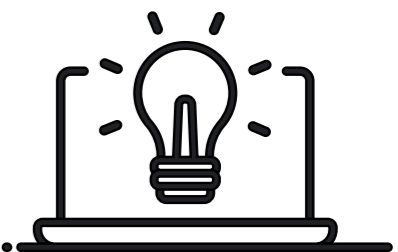
Executive summary

The sections on “DeLoG at a glance” and “project phases and highlights” illustrate that DeLoG has been a strong and reliable network for funding partners for almost two decades. This section is structured in:

- ▶ **Lessons learned:** Insights into the coordination of the network, and what made it successful.
- ▶ **Recommendations:** Suggested action steps to take forward.

The lessons learned and recommendations refer to DeLoG as such. The impact briefs below provide more specific information and insights into different areas of the network.

“DeLoG is a common good. It moves beyond institutional interests and enables Members & Partners to create synergies.”



Lessons learned



Maintaining the character of an informal network

Members opt to join DeLoG voluntarily, alongside their traditional work commitments. The result being that the network should provide and enable additional value for member engagement. A key added value lies in knowledge exchange in a trusted environment, for which the informal character is crucial. This has been highlighted by members since the beginning of the network.


In this regard, the in-person annual meetings played an important role, providing participants the opportunity to connect on a personal level, creating mutual understanding, building trust, and developing new ideas for joint activities.



Establishing and maintaining the secretariat – as an enabler for member and network growth


The secretariat has been crucial for engaging network members and keeping the public informed, bridging staff changes in member organisations, inviting and encouraging participation from existing members, and enabling participation and strategic decisions. Having a secretariat therefore made it possible for the network to expand to new members and partners, and onboard them into the ongoing activities. The secretariat was also essential in the development of new formats such as online courses, webinars, and in-country courses.

All this contributed to trust and resilience within the network, as a foundation to build capacities around DLG globally and respond jointly to challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

 **Engage in joint projects and issue joint studies early on**

DeLoG started with an initial donor survey in 2006, and further country studies in 2007, which mapped out current practices of donor organisations in the field of DLG. The studies highlighted the need for a coordinated approach that goes beyond information sharing, and towards joint funding mechanisms and partnership arrangements. Engaging with the results provided the network an academic underpinning and highlighted the relevance of DeLoG.


In subsequent years, DeLoG members issued joint studies, developed formats such as online courses, and ran different collaborative efforts, like side events or webinar. This not only produced specific outcomes, but also furthered the members understanding of each other's agendas, strategies, and working methods. This, in turn, formed a strong foundation for engaging in international agenda setting.

 **Fostering policy dialogue between members, partners, and other stakeholders**

The network has been crucial for funding partners to align before, during and after events and discourses such as the 2030 Agenda. The network also played a key role in highlighting the importance of international work of local and regional governments and their associations, as well as bringing topics of decentralisation and local governance into international agendas. Examples include the High-Level Forum in Busan (2011), the Habitat III conference (2016), or the response to the COVID-19 pandemic (2020 onwards).

Building on trusting relationships between members and an aligned strategy, the network was able to influence national and global policy, and to place the topic of DLG in relevant discourses.

“ The immense added value I get from being active in the DeLoG network is that, due to its warm, cooperative atmosphere, members trust each other, speak from the heart and share their knowledge, practical experiences as well as very hands-on methods and tools


 **Workstreams and thematic areas for members engagement**

Workstreams are the thematic areas within DeLoG that members work on voluntarily. The DeLoG secretariat's role was to facilitate and support these workstreams, without guiding their direction. This led to members taking ownership of the workstreams and linking their engagement through DeLoG to their own organisations' agendas via active engagement in the workstreams. According to members' feedback, this was a key aspect which fostered consistent and long-term participation in the network.

A key aspect was to dedicate time to the workstreams at annual meetings, and therefore enable members to have in-depth conversations and share their thinking with the entire group.


Recommendations



 **Foster exchange and diversity within the network**

Knowledge exchange and active participation are the heart of DeLoG. Moving forward, all members should be invited to contribute, and place a special focus on diversifying the voices within the network.

Current challenges around DLG require out of the box thinking, new and different perspectives and active involvement of multiple actors. Over the past years, the network intended to include more stakeholders from the Global South and held its first annual meeting on the African continent in Marrakesh, during spring 2023. However, there remains room for improvement, which could entail inviting respective organisations into DeLoG's Strategic Support Group (SSG), giving them prominent spaces during annual meetings, and involving them as experts in national and regional capacity building measures.

 **Fostering in-country coordination mechanisms to align around DLG interventions**


The in-country courses of past years have shown the potential to translate global strategies into national agendas and policies. Yet this process requires strong local coordination, partnerships, and an active involvement of governments.

Building in-country coordination mechanisms could therefore include building and strengthening partnerships with national actors (governments, civil society, local networks), plan and host further in-country courses, develop customised online materials and courses, and leverage the expertise within existing member and partner organisations.

 **Enable DeLoG focal points as multipliers within their own organisations**

DeLoG focal points serve as a main contact between the network and the member or partner organisations to which they belong. This role could shift towards becoming a coordinator within the member organisation, and/or establishing contacts to experts or country staff in related fields that would benefit from DLG.

This would enable DeLoG to expand its reach and integrate its activities. Member organisations, in turn, would benefit from the expertise of the entire network to make their own agendas and interventions more relevant by embedding DLG strategically.

 **Break the DLG silo and enter other fields of development cooperation**

DLG links to many other areas such as disaster risk management, climate, education or health. The network could create a link between DLG and the challenges a country or region faces and support other actors to advance their agendas.

This could also include developing and strengthening partnerships to other networks and constituencies (private sector, civil society organisations), and highlights the importance of including policy research institutions and think tanks (especially from the global south) into DeLoG.

★ Maintain structures for strategic steering

To engage members, develop joint strategies and carry out shared activities, the steering of the network is crucial. Mechanisms such as the SSG have proven to be valuable, and one recommendation is to set up a core group with key stakeholders in parallel as a continuous steering mechanism.

The annual meetings, furthermore, served as the central forum to convene, discuss, align, and decide. If possible, this forum should be maintained. An additional opportunity could be to meet and organise side-events at other official conferences, and to continue to offer online formats to allow accessible and inclusive participation globally. From a secretariat and steering group driven network; it needs to switch to a member driven network.

★ Identify an inclusive financial model for DeLoG's future

For DeLoG to function well and grow its impact, it needs continuous funding. So far, members did not have to pay a fee, which was also part of its success and makes inclusion of diverse actors possible.

Moving forward, a fair share model could be implemented. This would mean that members with the financial means contribute to the secretariat or other costs to run the network. Additionally, the network could be used to pool resources, e.g., for issuing studies or running joint interventions. These cost-saving aspects could be used as arguments to further fund the core of the network.

Another opportunity is linked to entering other fields of development: Through cooperation with fields and actors with more funding, it could be possible to co-finance DeLoG's activities. For this, developing partnerships is key.

★ Use the network for your own agenda(s)

DeLoG lives from and for its members. It should therefore be highlighted that member and partner organisations can use the network to place their own agendas – may it be around strategic topics, influencing the public discourse or starting new projects and initiatives.

The network can serve as a platform to identify allies, pool resources, start a sub-group or actively engage in the given processes and working groups.

The intentional use of the network might then also motivate members to engage more deeply and support in shifting their role from focal points to coordinators.

★ Making a case for the network and a secretariat

Further funding and member engagement might depend on whether the network is able to make a case for its work. The past 17 years have shown the value of DeLoG and the secretariat, yet at times it was difficult to convey that value to others.

A recommendation therefore is to be systematic with data collection (e.g. participation at events) and document the impact of the contributions DeLoG enables. This could be to collect evidence on policy changes and implementations, or how members influence international agenda setting.

This would make it possible to link the work of the secretariat and the network to larger changes in the development field – making a case for itself and DLG as such.

3.

Impact briefs

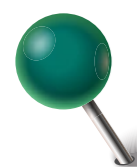
The impact briefs provide an in-depth view on specific working areas of DeLoG.

Coordination and harmonisation

Coordination and harmonisation refer to the secretariat's work to involve and align with network members across various topics. These aspects guide the overall direction of DeLoG. This was mostly achieved through the annual meetings and in-country workshops.

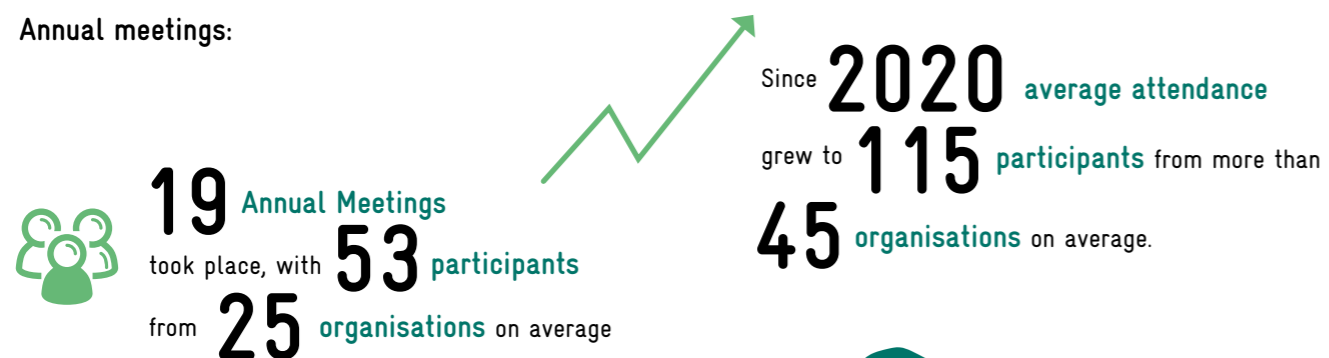
An important step was to establish the Strategic Support Group (SSG) with rotating membership from each of the member organisations. As such, the secretariat and SSC were able to prepare and facilitate dialogues on relevant topics, and guide decisions around the strategic direction of the network.

These activities on coordination and harmonisation were the foundation for international agenda setting. DeLoG members aligned around crucial conferences and moments in time, such as Habitat III or the 2030 Agenda. The combination of a global network with an aligned strategy and local in-country presence put DLG on the agenda of governments and actors globally.



Key data

Annual meetings:



In-country courses:

4 in-country courses took place in MOZAMBIQUE, BENIN, ALBANIA and the DR CONGO to align and coordinate interventions with relevant stakeholders



Insights and good practices

- ▶ The initial donor survey in 2006 and country studies in 2007 mapped out current practices of donor organisations and highlighted the need for a coordinated approach that goes beyond information sharing, and towards joint funding mechanisms and partnership arrangements.
- ▶ To strengthen the shared vision of DeLoG, the network developed a general "Mode of Operation" (2008) and "Specific Guiding Principles" (2009) early on, which served as basis for conducting collaborative efforts such as joint studies or workstreams.
- ▶ Keeping an informal character enabled a safe space for members and partners, which remains the foundation of trust building and information sharing among organisations. Good practices were to factor in time for informal exchange at annual meetings, and to regularly check with members on their needs (e.g. through evaluation surveys).
- ▶ Having a secretariat in place enabled relationship building with strategic partners and individuals on a bilateral level. This, in turn, made it possible for the network to grow, despite fluctuations in staff. Therefore, it helped to be aware of the relevance DeLoG has for the agendas of members, as well as maintaining contact in-between annual meetings and strengthening personal connections.
- ▶ Another crucial role of the secretariat was to facilitate discussions on strategic work plans for the network. These workplans provided orientation and were typically agreed upon during the annual meetings.
- ▶ Developing and implementing joint projects, studies and training formats fostered collaboration between partners, and enabled a shared understanding of DLG. Examples are the study on "Harmonization and Aid Effectiveness" (2011) and the e-learning course on "Enhancing the Effectiveness of Decentralisation and Local Governance Reforms" (piloted in 2013, see impact brief 2).
- ▶ Developing a common understanding and positioning, e.g. for the post 2015 agenda, made it possible to place the topic of decentralised governance in national and international discourses. Examples are Habitat III (October 2016), or the Conference on Development Finance (Addis Ababa, July 2015). The trust and continuous exchange among members therefore made it possible to actively engage in international agenda setting.
- ▶ Establishing the Strategic Support Group (SSG) strengthened shared ownership. It played an important role in guiding decisions concerning the preparation of the Annual Meeting in 2018 and in discussing and drafting the new DeLoG charter that was eventually adopted by all network members.
- ▶ Hosting the annual meetings online from 2020 to 2022 made it possible for more people and organisations to join, expanding the network. This trend continued in 2023, with the annual meeting being the most highly attended one so far (168 participants from 84 organisations).

Further resources

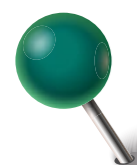
- ▷ [DeLoG charter](#)
- ▷ [Specific guiding principles](#)
- ▷ Publications on harmonisation and donor support alignment:
 - [Donor program harmonization, aid effectiveness and decentralized governance](#)
 - [Fiscal decentralization and options for donor harmonisation](#)
 - [General guiding principles for enhancing alignment and harmonisation on local governance and decentralisation](#)
 - [Alignment strategies in the field of decentralisation and local governance. A review of country practices and experiences](#)
 - [Train4dev course: harmonisation, decentralisation and local governance](#)

Learning and capacity development

Learning and capacity development refers to activities carried out by the DeLoG secretariat and the network members to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of stakeholders in the field of DLG. The activities were mostly targeted at two audiences:

1. Staff and practitioners within donor organisations
2. Local and regional institutions to strengthen policy and governance

DeLoG collaboratively developed an e-learning course in 2013 aimed at local partners and national senior staff and established further formats such as the national and regional in-person courses over the years to come. This highlights DeLoG's ambition to be an inclusive network and integrate the global discourse with local, national, and regional capacity development.



Key data

← E-learning courses: Enrolment and completion



The e-Learning course on "Enhancing the Effectiveness of Decentralisation and Local Governance Reforms" was conducted

6 times from 2016–2022, with over
280 participants
over the years

← Regional courses



4 regional courses

took place in the Philippines (2), Burkina Faso and Cambodia to convene stakeholders and facilitate conversations.

← Learn4Dev (learning platform of EU) with DeLoG in charge of DLG



DeLoG joined the

learn4dev network

and hosted various training courses on DLG



Insights and good practices

- ▶ Developing the **joint e-learning course** in 2013 was an opportunity for network members to align on thematic issues, strengthen their institutional collaboration and harmonise their approaches to DLG. This, in turn, supported general alignment and strategy development within the network.
- ▶ The e-learning course served as a flagship program to place the topic of DLG within donor organisations and other relevant stakeholders. It therefore gave DeLoG visibility and credibility.
- ▶ Participants of the e-learning courses have different levels of expertise in the field of DLG. To be relevant, a balance has to be found between general training and information sharing, and more specialised content and discussions. The e-Learning Course was revised in 2021 and was adopted by UNICEF to be published as an open-source and self-paced e-learning course until the end of 2023
- ▶ The in-country courses have been crucial to adapt the work of the network to local contexts. Here, it is important to carefully consider the intention of the course, to then be able to select participants and make sure that the discussions lead to concrete outcomes.
- ▶ For the in-country courses, the strong support from national governments is evidenced by the strong buy-ins, both for hosting the course and for translating it into policy changes.
- ▶ A central outcome of the DeLoG capacity development measures was to provide individuals with a deeper understanding of the overall topic of DLG, and to integrate it further into their organisations and work environments. It is difficult to identify what exactly this enables, but it contributed to DLG being a more visible topic across spectrums.

Further resources

- ▶ **Reports from country and regional courses**

Communication and Knowledge Exchange

Communication and knowledge exchange refers to peer-learning activities and internal exchange sessions organised by network members, as well as general activities carried out by the secretariat to share and spread information, such as the newsletter, website, and Twitter. It highlights the participatory nature of DeLoG and provides insight into member-driven initiatives in relation to the network.

The two most important outcomes of DeLoG's communication and knowledge exchange activities were to

- (1) create and maintain a visible brand, and
- (2) disseminate knowledge and expertise of members to the public.

Twitter: Followers increased from **183** to **1588** (from 2016 to 2023), reaching **419500** page impressions in 2020. 


Key data

▶ DeLoG in dialogue sessions

5 in Dialogue sessions held to convene practitioners around relevant topics.

▶ Local heroes talks and DeLoG consultations

▶ Knowledge exchange: Webinars


16 webinars held from 2018 to 2022, reaching up to **180** participants 

▶ Communication: Newsletter, website and Twitter.

Website: More than **500** people visit the DeLoG website every month since 2011

Newsletter: More than **80** newsletters sent out since 2008, reaching more than **1100** people on average since 2016.

Insights and good practices

- ▶ Investing into the relaunch of the website was the foundation for solidifying DeLoG's brand. The value of a central and well-designed website goes beyond click rates: it is an investment into a shared external representation and creating public recognition.
- ▶ Establishing the newsletter as a central communication channel, both for network members and the public.
- ▶ Utilizing Twitter made it possible to amplify the relevant work of the network and its members, and to respond quickly.
- ▶ Diversifying formats for knowledge exchange early on paid off. The network's experience cohosting webinars since 2018 made it possible to strengthen their online formats throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and the variety of different formats made it possible for a wide range of stakeholders to get in touch with DeLoG and the work of its members.
- ▶ The DeLoG in Dialogue events presented a space and forum for the network to link DeLoG's work to issues such as gender equality and engage with the broader public on the future of DLG related to specific topics.
- ▶ The webinars and DeLoG in Dialogue sessions furthermore served as a platform to bring together experts from different organisations, and therefore to strengthen the dialogue among these organisations.
- ▶ In 2022, the regular annual meeting was reframed as the " DeLoG Knowledge and Dialogue Days", aiming to invite a broader audience into the conversation around DLG. This supported the ambition to open the network to new members, especially from the Global South.

Further resources

- ▶  Webinar reports
- ▶  DeLoG in Dialogue

Workstreams

Members and Partners want to ensure thematic agility within DeLoG to feed information and priorities into long-term development strategies. While some topics require long-term development, emerging trends need to be identified fast and demand driven. This led to the adaption and extension of work-streams along cross-cutting topics like gender equality and local democratic governance.

Therefore, members and partners decided in 2021 to focus on three thematic areas: DLG and Gender, Local Finance, Strengthening of Local Democracy.

Also, as of April 2022, the DeLoG Secretariat, hosted by giz and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) signed a

special agreement to enhance the exchange on gender equality and women's rights as well as to diversify the exchange around decentralisation and local governance (DLG) by including voices of the Global South into DeLoG.

Members and partners can engage and take active roles in these workstreams, which can include bringing in knowledge or relevant contacts, aligning with the work of their own organisation, or hosting activities such as webinars or side events at conferences. The workstreams have enabled focused and in-depth discussions among members, out of which joint activities such as commissioned studies or public events have emerged.

► A central component was inviting members to link their engagement in DeLoG to their own organisations' agendas via active engagement in the workstreams. According to members' feedback, this was a key aspect which fostered consistent and long-term participation in the network.

► Gender has become a central area and workstream during the past years. The topic of gender equality has been part of DeLoG for many years, but has lately been put into centre, which is underpinned by an agreement signed to advance gender equality and women's rights. This, again, shows DeLoG's capacity to make space for relevant topics and convene experts around them.

Further resources

► [Gender Knowledge Libraries of DeLoG Members](#)

Insights and good practices

- The wish to form (and close) certain workstreams came from members, mostly during annual meetings. The DeLoG secretariat's role was to facilitate and support these initiatives, but not to determine the direction. This led to members taking ownership of the workstreams.
- Certain workstreams remained relatively stable and relevant over time, such as inclusive local finance. Other workstreams, however, were more temporal and linked to specific discourses, such as recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This flexibility made it possible to discuss, learn and relate to current global developments.
- In other cases, the focus of existing workstreams shifted. An example is the past workstream on local governance in fragile contexts, which is now part of the workstream on local democracy. One success factor was to give members the freedom to coordinate and shape workstreams while integrating what has been done in the past.

- Monitoring and evaluation have been a workstream or topic of discussion at different points in time. Yet it functioned more as a space to share needs and challenges rather than developing joint solutions or harmonised approaches in measuring DLG. An opportunity might be to consolidate the different studies DeLoG and its members carried out, and develop shared guidelines on research on DLG.
- A general observation is that certain workstreams are directly DLG-related (such as inclusive and local finance), whereas others are more cross-cutting (e.g. gender). Having the flexibility to have both types of workstreams made it possible for the network to centralise expertise and stay connected to the public.

Annex

Interview questions for DeLoG coordinators

The following questions were asked to former DeLoG coordinators:

1. What was your personal motivation to coordinate the DeLoG network? What did you want to enable?
2. What were your biggest challenges on the way, and how did you address (and potentially overcome) them?
3. What is the most significant success DeLoG had during your time as a coordinator? What do you think made that success possible?
4. In 5 years time: What do you wish DeLoG to be remembered for?
5. What was a key learning for you personally from your time as a coordinator? What's something you will remember and carry forward?
6. Is there anything else you would like to share related to DeLoG?

List of DeLoG's members and partners

- ▶ Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
- ▶ African Development Bank (AfDB)
- ▶ Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
- ▶ Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- ▶ Berghof Foundation
- ▶ Cities Alliance (CA)
- ▶ Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)
- ▶ Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)
- ▶ Democracy Works Foundation (DWF)
- ▶ Enabel (former Belgian Technical Cooperation)
- ▶ EU-Commission (Directorate-General for International Partnerships)
- ▶ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- ▶ Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
- ▶ Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO - former DFID)
- ▶ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- ▶ German Development Bank (KfW)
- ▶ Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
- ▶ Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV)
- ▶ Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments
- ▶ Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
- ▶ International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG)
- ▶ Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA)
- ▶ Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
- ▶ Local Public Sector Alliance
- ▶ LOGIN Asia
- ▶ Lux-Development (LuxDev)
- ▶ Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs France (MEAE)
- ▶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands (MINBUZA)
- ▶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland (FORMIN)
- ▶ Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS)
- ▶ Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)
- ▶ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- ▶ Ro Aid (Romania's International Development Cooperation Agency)
- ▶ Southern Voice
- ▶ Spanish Agencia for International Development Cooperation (AECID)
- ▶ Swedish International Center for Local Democracy (ICLD)

- ▶ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- ▶ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- ▶ The centre for Africa-Europe relations (ecdpm)
- ▶ The Hague Academy for local governance
- ▶ UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- ▶ UN Habitat
- ▶ United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- ▶ United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa)
- ▶ United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- ▶ United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- ▶ United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- ▶ World Bank

