



# Decentralisation and Local Governance in Fragile Contexts

DeLoG 15th Annual Meeting, July 7 – 16, 2020 (online)





**Input 1: The Status Quo Defied:**  
The legitimacy of traditional  
authorities in areas of limited  
statehood in Mali, Niger, and Libya  
Volkert Doop (VNG International)



International



## **The Status Quo Defied: The legitimacy of traditional authorities in areas of limited statehood in Mali, Niger, and Libya**



DeLoG Annual Meeting - 16 July 2020

# Challenges and Problems

1. **Politicization of traditional authorities:**
  - Attempts to change the status quo
  - Increased importance of money in elections
2. **Violence:**
  - They abandon their area of influence
  - They are kidnapped and/or assassinated
  - They align themselves with armed groups
  - Entrenched in armed governance
  - They are fragmented



Focus Group Discussion with Traditional Authorities in Niamey, Niger.  
Source: VNG International



# Consequences

- Short-term: instrumental & beneficial
- Long-term: undermining legitimacy of traditional authorities
- Armed actors determine leeway for traditional authorities
- Community members increasingly turn to armed group actors
- Traditional authorities : danger of moving from mediator to conflict actor & security threatened



**Focus Group Discussion with Traditional Authorities in Mali.**  
Source: Clingendael CRU

# Implications for programming

## Traditional Authorities as governance actors

- Embedded in different post-colonial governance structures
- Traditional structures are increasingly rejected
- Sole governance structures in areas of limited statehood
- Crucial as entry points to improve governance and security

## Recommendations

- Address the politization / exclusive tendencies of TA's
- In Niger : codification of traditional authorities' customs

# Implications for programming

## Traditional Authorities under armed governance

- Relationship TA's & AG's marked by TA's necessity for protection
- Limited authority and legitimacy depending on legal context
- Division of communities also divides TA – which makes inter-communal mediation more challenging
- AG's perceived by communities as being more effective in governance

## Recommendations :

- Positive examples of community reconciliation may lead to improved legitimacy
- Local conflict prevention / de-escalation may prevent further spiraling



# **Input 2:** The Nexus between Decentralisation and Peace: The Case of Burkina Faso Jerome Schroth (GIZ)



The background image is a composite. On the left, a soldier in a grey uniform and a white turban-like head covering is shown in profile, looking towards the right. He is holding a rifle. On the right, a group of people, including men and children, are standing in a line, looking towards the camera. The image has a semi-transparent white overlay on the left side where the text is located.

# **The Nexus between Decentralisation and Peace**

## **The Case of Burkina Faso**

DeLoG Annual Meeting, 16th July 2020

# Agenda

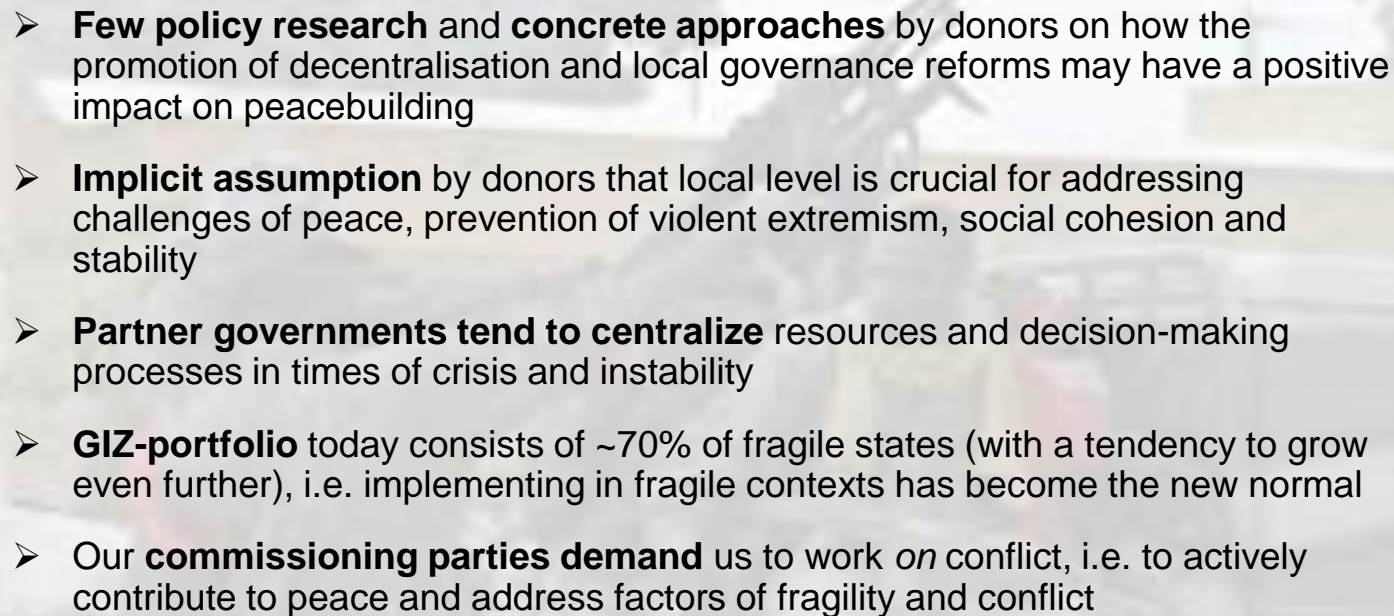
1. Why this study?
2. How did we proceed?
3. Three main take-aways





**Why this study?**

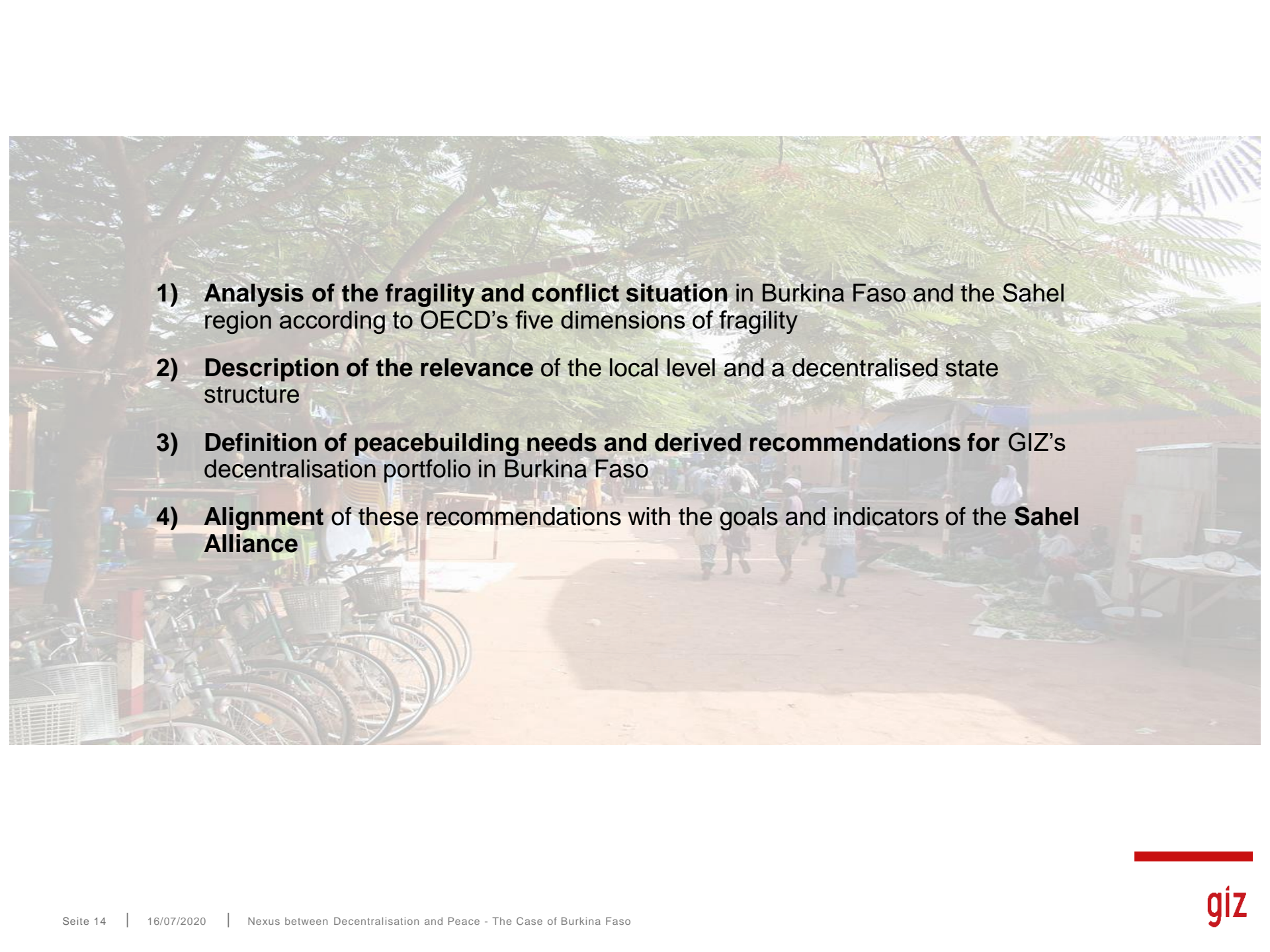


- 
- **Few policy research** and **concrete approaches** by donors on how the promotion of decentralisation and local governance reforms may have a positive impact on peacebuilding
  - **Implicit assumption** by donors that local level is crucial for addressing challenges of peace, prevention of violent extremism, social cohesion and stability
  - **Partner governments tend to centralize** resources and decision-making processes in times of crisis and instability
  - **GIZ-portfolio** today consists of ~70% of fragile states (with a tendency to grow even further), i.e. implementing in fragile contexts has become the new normal
  - Our **commissioning parties demand** us to work *on* conflict, i.e. to actively contribute to peace and address factors of fragility and conflict



**How did we proceed?**



- 
- 1) **Analysis of the fragility and conflict situation** in Burkina Faso and the Sahel region according to OECD's five dimensions of fragility
  - 2) **Description of the relevance** of the local level and a decentralised state structure
  - 3) **Definition of peacebuilding needs and derived recommendations** for GIZ's decentralisation portfolio in Burkina Faso
  - 4) **Alignment** of these recommendations with the goals and indicators of the **Sahel Alliance**





# ALLIANCE SAHEL

Friedensbedarf	Empfehlungen für das Dezentralisierungsprogramm und drüber hinaus	Bezüge zu den Zielen der Sahel-Allianz											
		Dezentralisierung & Basis-Dienstleistungen			Governance			Bildung & Jugendbeschäftigung			Innere Sicherheit		
		Ziel 1	Ziel 2	Ziel 3	Ziel 1	Ziel 2	Ziel 3	Ziel 1	Ziel 2	Ziel 3	Ziel 1	Ziel 2	Ziel 3
1) Stärkung der sozialen Kohäsion	a) Beratung der zuständigen Generaldirektion im MATDC b) Stärkung von unabhängigen und bürgernahen Medien, u.a. lokale Radiostationen c) Konstruktive Einbindung traditioneller Autoritäten und religiöser Führer d) Unterstützung des nationalen Versöhnungsprozesses			a) b) c)			a) b) c) d)		a) b) c)	b) c)		a) b) c) d)	d)
2) Gesellschaftliche und sozioökonomische Mobilisierung von Jugendlichen	a) Zugang zu Jugendlichen und Teilhabe stärken b) Integration in den Arbeitsmarkt fördern c) Förderung von Unternehmensgründungen und Selbständigkeit	a) b) c)	a) b)	a) b) c)		a) b)	a) b)	a) b)	a) b)	b) c)			
3) Förderung des Zugangs zu Basisdienstleistungen und Verbesserung der Lebensgrundlagen der marginalisierten Teile der Bevölkerung inkl. der Binnenvertriebenen	a) Wiederaufbau/ Stärkung staatlicher Dienstleistungen in den entlegenen Regionen b) Stärkung aufnehmender Kommunen mit Fokus auf Mittelstädte										a) b) c) d) e) f) g)	a) b) c) d) e) f) g)	a) b) c) d) e) f) g)
4) Reform des Sicherheitssektors	a) Verbesserung der Kompetenzen der Polizei zur Erbringung bürger-naher Dienstleistungen b) Verbesserung der Strafjustiz c) Reglementierung nicht-staatlicher Milizen d) Verbesserung des Grenzmanagements e) Verbesserung der Koordination zwischen den Sicherheitskräften f) Reform der Streitkräfte g) Stärkung internationaler Kooperationen im Bereich Frieden und Sicherheit	d)			a) b) c) d)	d)	a) d)						

DÉCENTRALISATION ET SERVICES DE BASE

GOUVERNANCE

EDUCATION ET EMPLOI DES JEUNES

SÉCURITÉ INTÉRIEURE



## Three main take-aways





## Go (More) Local!

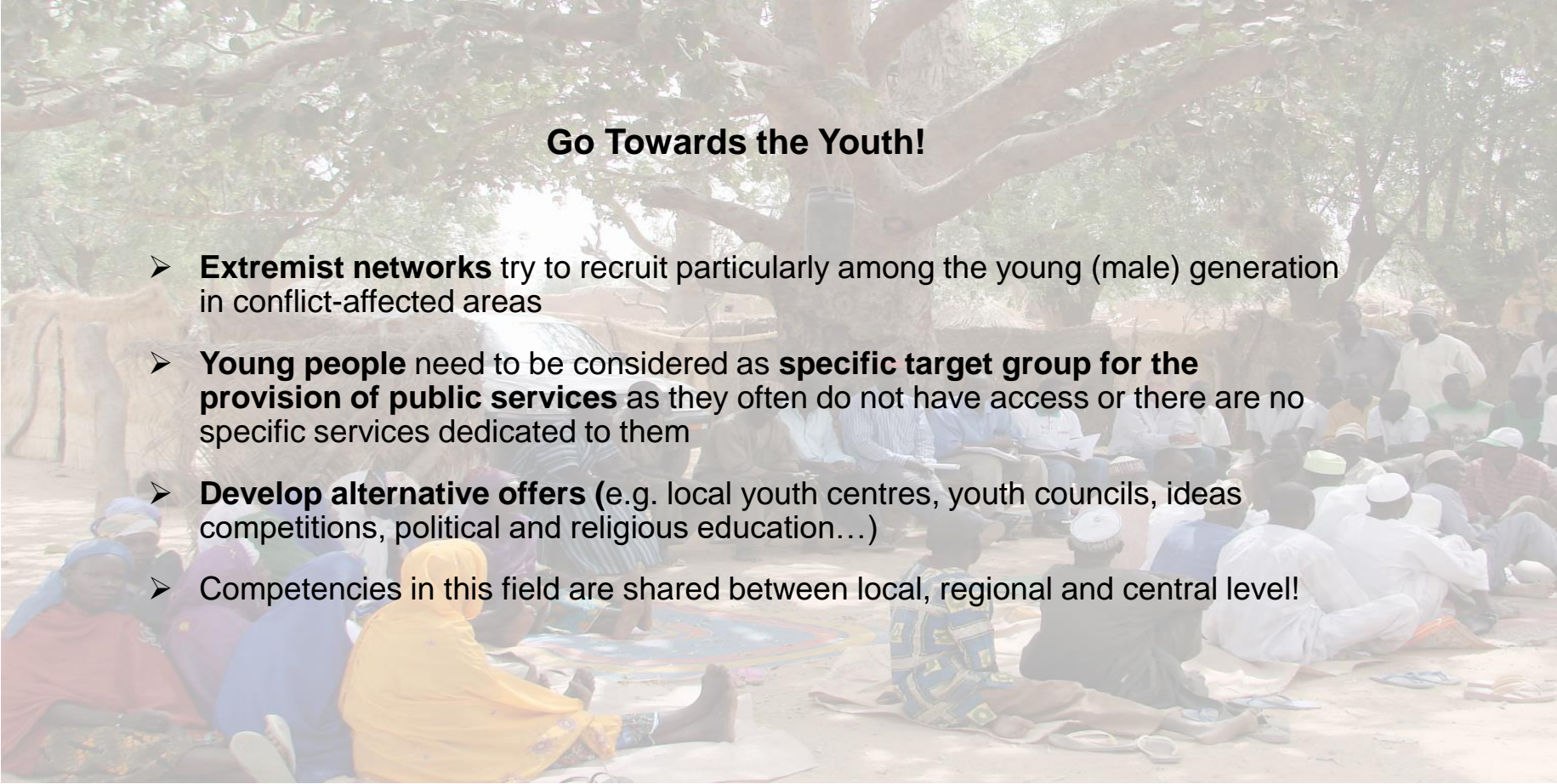
- **Drivers of change** are rather to be found **at local level** whereas **actors at central level** often do not show consciousness and political will for adopting to the changed context
- **Impacts and quick-wins** for the population are more likely to be achieved at local level than in advising complex and slow reform processes at national level
- However, Sector Ministries and their deconcentrated structures are still crucial for the delivery of public services as many competencies are shared! (*multi-level approach*)
- **Central level is not abandoned**, but a shift of stress towards local actors



A photograph of a group of people, mostly men, sitting on the ground under the shade of a large, spreading tree in a village setting. They are dressed in traditional or semi-formal clothing. The scene is outdoors with other trees and structures visible in the background.

## Go Beyond the State!

- Population at the local level often does **not have access to justice** or perceive the legal system as **corrupt and inefficient**
- In local conflict resolution and mediation, **traditional leaders and religious authorities** play an important role as they have a high legitimacy and credibility among the population
- This system needs to be **modernized by making the state a facilitator** in local conflict management and **formalizing the role of traditional leaders and religious authorities** in these processes
- However, these actors are not without risks and need to be assessed before an official cooperation is started!



## Go Towards the Youth!

- **Extremist networks** try to recruit particularly among the young (male) generation in conflict-affected areas
- **Young people** need to be considered as **specific target group for the provision of public services** as they often do not have access or there are no specific services dedicated to them
- **Develop alternative offers** (e.g. local youth centres, youth councils, ideas competitions, political and religious education...)
- Competencies in this field are shared between local, regional and central level!



# Thank You!

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**Cities Alliance**  
Cities Without Slums



**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**Enabel**

 Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland





 Bundesministerium für  
Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit  
und Entwicklung



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**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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 **UCLG**  
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and Local Governments



 **USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

 **VNG**  
International

 **THE WORLD BANK**



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

See you on **September 23 !**